

Screen Play: **GunPowder - Dingus's Gold**

Topic 80 Article 2

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GunPowder

Dingus's Gold

By Wayne Halm

Scene 1

(Joe the bartender is behind the bar polishing glasses, Snake Oil is sitting at a table playing with some cards. Dingus enters through the swinging doors. Dingus is all cleaned up with his hair slicked down, he is wearing his same old clothes but they are obviously clean and pressed. Dingus sneers at Snake Oil as he walks past Snake Oil gets up and leaves. Dingus continues up to the bar and orders from Joe.)

(Camera fades from black and starts with a wide shot of the whole room showing Joe with the glasses. As Dingus enters it follows him closing in.)

Dingus: Give me a whisky will you Joe. *(Dingus slaps a coin down on the bar.)*

Joe: Sure thing Dingus. *(Joe reaches down and comes up with a shot glass and a bottle, he pours a shot for Dingus and picks up the coin.)*

Dingus: That Snake Oil is a low down varmint. I just don't know why the Marshall let him out of jail.

Joe: The way Marshall Millon sees it, now that everyone knows about him, he's harmless. Besides he probably got tired of feeding him.

Dingus: *(Takes a sip of his whisky)* Ahhh, that's good, and I need it, I've been dealing with "bee-row-crats".

Joe: *(A puzzled look on his face)* Dealing with what Dingus?

Dingus: Bee-row-crats. That's a new word that Gabby learned me, it means all of those Government people. Like George over in the Land Office, he is a nice enough guy, but he is a bee-row-crat.

Joe: Oh, I see. Yeah, Gabby does seem to know a lot of words. How is your claim processing going anyway?

Dingus: Slow, it's going slow, cause that's how bee-row-crats are, slow. George says it will be ready today, but you can't believe a bee-row-crat. I may have to make out one of those "wills" and leave my claim to my kids, I'll probably be dead and gone before he gets finished.

Joe: You don't have any children Dingus.

Dingus: I'm working on that too. *(Dingus downs the rest of his drink and motions for another - Joe pours another).*

Joe: Ahh, Gabby! You are a slick one there Dingus, and looking awful sharp too. Of course, the competition is rather slim now that almost every man in town is up in the mountains looking for your gold. *(Joe gets thoughtful)* But maybe that the way you planned it. You are a slick one Dingus.

Dingus: Fools, everyone of them. The towns better off with them crawling around up there like a bunch of gophers.

Joe: You ain't worried about them finding your strike? Where is your claim anyway?

Dingus: Oh no. I ain't telling. Once old George gets finished with his re-search and filing, I can go put out my stakes. Then all of you can come admire my property. *(Dingus gets a mean look on his face)* Till then, I ain't saying a word.

Joe: *(Joe get defensive, hands up palms out)* Oh, I didn't mean nothing by that Dingus, honest I didn't. I just want to laugh at those fellas when they come dragging back into town. Here that last one is on the house.

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Dingus: Why thank you kindly. *(Dingus sips his whisky and looks at Joe out of the corner of his eye).*

(The camera closes in real tight on Dingus's face as he talks sip and glares, then fades to black.)

Scene 2

(Joe the bartender is still behind the bar polishing glasses. Dingus is sitting at a far table by a window with a clerk looking guy, their heads real close together and whispering. Gabby enters from the back room, starts to go over to Dingus, thinks better of it and walks over to Joe.)

(Camera fades from black and starts with a wide shot of the whole room showing Joe with the glasses and Dingus and the clerk. As Gabby enters it follows her closing in.)

Gabby: *(Leaning over to whisper to Joe)* Who is that with Dingus Joe?

Joe: That's George from over at the Land Office. I guess they are discussing Dingus's claim.

Gabby: Oh god. Bureaucrats, that could take hours, bureaucrats do love to talk. They talk more than any other people on earth and don't really say anything. I know, cause I dated one back in St. Joe, for a little while anyway. Henry Wrinkle was his name and he honestly believed that all a girl wanted to do was listen to him talk. I know, cause he never got around to doing anything else. He talked about his work, he talked about his family, he talked about politics, he talked about the weather, he talked about everything but us. Not that he was rude or anything, Henry was always the perfect gentleman, just boring. Then I met Rowdy Yates (Joe rolls his eyes and settles in for a long one). Now Rowdy, that was a man that a girl could listen to forever, of course he didn't talk all that much, but he knew how to...

Dingus: YaaaHooo, I'm rich, I'm rich.

(Gabby turns to watch as Dingus starts dancing around the room, first with George then he grabs Gabby, Miss Amanda, Blondie, and Carmen rush into the room to watch.)

(As Dingus gets up to dance the camera pulls back far enough to show everyone)

Dingus: I'm rich, I'm rich, I'm rich. *(Dingus keeps singing while dancing)*

(As Dingus sings and dances the camera zooms in on the window.)

(Snake Oil peers in through the window straight at the camera with a wicked grin then leaves)

(The camera pulls back far enough to show the whole group.)

(Dingus is still dancing and singing. He turns lose of Gabby and grabs Miss Amanda still singing. Dennis rushes through the door)

Dennis: What's all the commotion? Yall are disturbing a peaceful afternoon.

Miss Amanda: Yeah, Dingus what is this all about?

Dingus: I'm rich, I'm rich Miss Amanda. Old George over there has done all of his research and legal stuff. Now all I got to do is go out tomorrow and drive my stakes. Then I can start loading up the gold. I'm rich, I'm rich. Oh, I need two witnesses to come with me. Would you come along Dennis?

Dennis: I don't see why not. I'll talk to Marshall Millon but I'm sure he won't mind.

Gabby: Can I be your other witness Dingus? I'm a real good witness. Can I go with them Miss Amanda?

Blondie: Oh, I want to go too. I've never seen a real gold strike. Dingus? Miss Amanda?

Carmen: You know I'd like to go too, if it's not too far. We are sure not doing very much here.

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Dingus: Sure, you can all come alone. It's about two hours by horse, maybe five by wagon. We can leave in the morning, get the stakes in tomorrow afternoon, stay the night, maybe dig some gold the morning after, and come back in the afternoon.

Miss Amanda: Carmen is right, business is slow to say the least. Yeah, you can all go. In fact if it's alright with you Dingus, I'd like to come along myself. I could use a couple of days in the country.

Dingus: That would be just fine Miss Amanda. The more the merrier. How about you George?

George: Thanks Dingus but I have to work tomorrow, all of those men off in the mountains left me a pile of paperwork.

Miss Amanda: Joe can you handle the place by yourself for a couple of days?

Joe: Not a problem Miss Amanda. With Dingus gone, the only customer I'll probably have is Snake Oil.

Dingus: Then tomorrow it is.

(Camera fades from black.)

Scene 3

(Joe the bartender is still behind the bar polishing glasses. Marshall James Millon and Miss Amanda are setting at a table talking.)

(Camera fades from black and starts with a wide shot of the whole room showing Joe with the glasses and James and Amanda. Then closes in on James and Amanda.)

James: It does sound like a good trip Amanda. But I'm not too keen on all of you women being out there by yourselves.

Miss Amanda: It's sweet of you to worry James. But we won't be by ourselves, Dingus and Dennis will be with us. Sarah Adams is coming along too, she said that with Sour Dough off in the mountains she may as well cook for someone. So she is bringing her frying pan.

James: That frying pan has kept Sour Dough in line for all these years, With it along I guess you'll be safe enough. But it's sure going to be quiet around here. With all of the men off digging up the mountains - Why, I even saw Snake Oil buy a pick, shovel and pan this afternoon. Now with you girls going off with Dingus, I guess Joe, George, Doc, and me will be the only ones left in town.

Miss Amanda: Are you going to miss me James?

James: Well, yeah Amanda, I am.

Miss Amanda: Then why don't you come along too?

James: I'd like to Amanda. If I didn't have to meet with those Pinkerton men coming in on the evening stage tomorrow I would. But the next morning I'll follow your trail out and come back with you all. As Marshall I should see that gold country anyway.

Miss Amanda: Yes James, you really should see it. *(Miss Amanda looks directly into the camera smiling coyly and shaking her head slightly.)*

(Camera fades from black.)

Scene 4

(Joe the bartender is still behind the bar polishing glasses. Miss Amanda, Gabby, Blondie, Dingus, and Dennis are setting at tables near the swinging doors. Dennis and Dingus have bedrolls on the table near them, Dennis's roll has a shirt sleeve and a pants leg hanging out.)

(Camera fades from black and starts with a wide shot of the whole room showing Joe with the glasses and group by the doors. Then closes in on group.)

Dennis: Sarah should be alone any minute with that big wagon of hers.

Miss Amanda: That sure was kind of her to take care of everything for us.

Blondie: Yes, this way we can all ride together *(Beaming at Dennis)* and talk the whole way.

Gabby: I remember back in St. Joe my Uncle had a big wagon like that. We used to take it out on hayrides on summer nights. *(Everyone puts their head in their hands in misery and groans)* Supervised of course. Why one night when we was about five miles from his house... *(A loud scraping sound comes from the out of camera view).*

Miss Amanda: Oh no you don't.

(Camera pulls back to show the entire room. Carmen is dragging a large trunk toward the door. There is a purse on top of the trunk.)

(Miss Amanda walks over to Carmen and picks up the purse.)

Miss Amanda: Mrs. Adams is bringing water, food, and blankets for us. You don't need all of this so just put it back. *(She hands the purse to Carmen.)* If it don't fit in here it don't go.

Carmen: Ok, Ok. *(She sadly drags the trunk back into the back room.)*

(From off camera outside the door comes the sound of horses and a wagon. Then Sara Adams yelling "Whooa horse whooa".)

Blondie: Sarah's here.

(The group goes out the door with "Good Mornings" etc. Miss Amanda is last and she pauses and looks around slowly then back to Joe.)

Miss Amanda: You alright with this Joe?

Joe: Sure thing Miss Amanda, don't worry. Have a good time. I'll take care of things here.

Miss Amanda: Thanks Joe. I appreciate that. *(Yelling)* Carmen, you had better hurry up.

(Miss Amanda goes out the door. From off camera outside Sarah - "Morning Amanda", Amanda - "Morning Sarah", Sarah - "Here, ride up here", Dennis - "Let me help you Miss Amanda". Then Sarah Adams yells "Giddi up there horse, Yaaah". The sound of horses and a wagon starting to move.)

Carmen: Wait for me. Wait for me.

(Carmen comes running out of the back room yelling "wait for me" and out the door still yelling.)

(Camera fades to black.)

Scene 5

(The entire group is walking through some trees. They are walking single file, Dingus in the lead then Gabby, then the rest, Dennis is bringing up the rear. Dingus is carrying some very prominent stakes and a hammer, plus a huge bundle of blankets on his back. Dennis has a huge sack on his back, a shovel in one hand and a pick in the other .)

(Camera fades from black wide enough to get the whole group, Gabby is already talking, then the camera tightens up on her and Dingus.)

Gabby: So there we were, five miles from home in the middle of the night and the horse slips out of his harness and runs off. We were stranded in the dark. Well the only thing we could do was walk. We walked and walked and walked, it was a good thing that the moon was bright so we could see a little. That helped us stay on the road, those ditches were full of snakes. *(Gabby shudders and starts looking down at the ground around her feet.)* Dingus, I thought you said that we could take the wagon the whole way.

Dingus: I thought that we could. I just didn't count on it being so big.

Gabby: *(Still looking carefully around her feet)* And I thought you said that it was just a little way when we got out of the wagon.

Dingus: Well, last time I was riding the mule, and it really didn't seem that far. But we're here now, this is it. We'll make camp here. There's a downed tree over there for firewood, and a creek down there. *(Dingus points as he speaks.)*

(They had come into a clearing. The whole group mills around and drops their loads then sits. Miss Amanda sitting on the bundle of blankets, Sarah standing beside her.)

(Camera pulls back to show them all getting into the clearing and sitting. Then closes in on Miss Amanda and Sarah.)

Miss Amanda: Well, I wanted exercise and fresh air. I'm half way there, and if I ever catch my breath again I'll have the fresh air.

Sarah: Yeah, that was quite a hike, I ain't as young as I used to be. But this is a good place, we'll do just fine here.

(Camera shifts to Dingus and Dennis who are standing together looking out into the trees.)

Dennis: So there is a creek down there.

Dingus: Yeah, a real nice one, cool, clear, about waist deep, with a gravel and sand bottom. Real pretty.

Dennis: So you know a lot about this creek do you?

Dingus: *(Getting suspicious.)* Well I saw it last time I was here.

Dennis: *(Getting right in Dingus's face)* Then why in tar nation did you let me carry that bag of water jugs out here from the wagon?

Dingus: Sorry Dennis, I guess I wasn't thinking.

Dennis: Why I ought to...

(Camera fades to black.)

Scene 6

(The camp site is all set up. Blankets are spread for sleeping. A fire is going with a pot hanging over it on a tripod. Sarah, Miss Amanda, Gabby, and Blondie are sitting peeling potatoes. Carmen walks up with a bucket of water. Dingus, carrying stakes, and Dennis, carrying the hammer, approach the sitting group.)

(Camera fades from black wide enough to get the whole camp scene, then tightens up on the group as everyone gets together.)

Dingus: Ladies, Dennis and I are going over yonder *(Dingus points away from the direction that Carmen entered)* a piece and drive my stakes. We'll be gone a while but if you need anything just holler.

Miss Amanda: That's what you come for. Go get your work done, we'll be fine.

Blondie: Be careful Dennis.

Sarah: There'll be beans, taters, and salt meat in two or two and a half hours.

Dennis: That sounds awful good. We'll be back by then.

(Dingus and Dennis walk off in the direction indicated. The women watch them enter the woods as Miss Amanda drops the last of the potatoes into the pot.)

Miss Amanda: Well that does it for the potatoes.

Sarah: Pour the water over them Carmen so they don't get stale.

(Carmen talks as she pours the water into the pot.)

(Camera is behind Carmen as she bends way over to pour into the pot on the ground.)

Carmen: That creek is real nice, clean and cool. I know that we didn't bring any clothes for it, but there isn't anyone around. So lets go down there and swim and wash up a bit.

Blondie: You mean with no clothes on? Out here in the open? Should we do it?

Gabby: Yeah, skinny dippin. There ain't nobody around. Let's do it.

(The three girls giggle.)

Miss Amanda: Well, my poor feet could use a soaking. *(A big grin.)* Yeah, let's do it.

Sarah: These beans got to simmer for another couple of hours anyway.

(Miss Amanda takes a piece of paper and pencil out of her purse and writes a note which she places on the blanket. The women all get up and walk off in the opposite direction from Dingus and Dennis.)

(Camera is fades to black.)

Scene 7

(The camp site is all set up. Blankets are spread for sleeping. A fire is going with a pot hanging over it on a tripod. But the campsite is empty. Dingus and Dennis walk in, Dingus carrying the hammer.)

(Camera fades from black wide enough to get the whole camp scene, then tightens up on Dingus and Dennis.)

Dennis: That didn't take near as long as I thought it would. But Dingus, I got to tell you. This don't look like any gold country that I ever heard of.

Dingus: I thought the same thing, but there it was. I guess it's like they say "gold is where you find it." Say where is everybody?

(Dennis sees the note Miss Amanda left, picks it up and reads it.)

Dennis: They all went down to the creek to bath.

Dingus: *(Grinning)* That could be dangerous.

Dennis: *(Confused look on his face)* How's that?

Dingus: *(Still grinning)* All those women down there all by themselves.

Dennis: *(Still confused)* nah, they'll be alright.

Dingus: *(Still grinning)* But they are all alone Dennis. Down there with no protection, and no clothes. Why anything could happen.

Dennis: *(Catching on and grinning)* Yeah, maybe we should go provide some protection, sort of watch over them, ahh discretely of course.

Dingus: *(Grinning and elbowing Dennis)* It would be the gentlemanly thing to do.

(Dingus and Dennis rapidly walk off in the direction the women took.)

(Camera is pulls back to show Dingus and Dennis hurrying into the trees then fades to black.)

Scene 8

(Dennis and Dingus are creeping toward some bushes in slow exaggerated tiptoe steps. They are putting their fingers to their lips urging each other to be quiet and grinning from ear to ear. There is giggling and splashing coming from behind the bushes.)

(Camera fades from black wide enough to get the bushes and the guys' creeping movements, then tightens as they near the bushes.)

(As Dennis and Dingus arrive at the bushes they kneel down. Dingus puts his hand on the limbs in preparation for moving the leaves aside. They give each other a final look and nod the go-ahead. There is still lots of giggling and splashing from beyond the bushes.)

(Camera stays back far enough to get the action, then closes in over their shoulders with Dingus's hand and the leaves in view.)

(Dingus parts the leaves to reveal a small clearing. Across the clearing is another row of bushes with dresses hanging on them. In front of the dresses stands Mrs. Adams, arms crossed, frying pan in hand. Dingus moves the leaves back and the two stare at each other with wide eyes scared looks.)

(Camera clearly shows the hand, the leaves parting, the view beyond, and the leaves closing. Then pulls back just far enough to show the guys faces.)

Dingus: (Whispering) Ah, Ah, I could use some coffee. How about you Dennis?

Dennis: (Whispering) Ah - yeah, there is nothing like a good cup of coffee in the afternoon.

(The guys very quietly creep away from the bushes back toward the camp.)

(Camera pulls back to show the guys creeping, then fades to black.)

Scene 9

(The camp site is all set up. Blankets are spread for sleeping. A fire is going with a pot hanging over it on a tripod. A coffee pot sits in the edge of the fire. Dingus and Dennis are sitting near their bedrolls sipping coffee, the picture of innocence.)

(Camera fades from black wide enough to get the whole camp scene, then tightens up on Dingus and Dennis.)

Dennis: This is real good coffee Dingus.

Dingus: Well when you've spent as much time on the trail as I have you learn. Now that I'm rich maybe I will settle down.

Dennis: How much gold do you reckon....

(Dennis is interrupted by yelling from Mrs. Adams "Hey, get away from there" the guys turn their heads toward the sound in alarm but not moving yet. Then "I said", a loud bong obviously the frying pan hitting something, Dennis and Dingus cringe at the sound, "Where did the other one go" another pause "Come back here you varmint". The guys scramble to their feet just as Mrs. Adams runs up to them frying pan in hand.)

(Camera stays tight on Dennis and Dingus to catch their expression until the jump to their feet. Then it backs a way a bit to show the three of them.)

Mrs. Adams: Where'd he go? Did you see him?

Dingus: See what?

Mrs. Adams: Coyotes.

Dingus: Coyotes?

Mrs. Adams: Yeah, the four legged kind. There was two of them. I got one *(she waves the frying pan)* but the other on ran off with Carmen's dress. Dennis, you'd better give me that spare set of clothes you have in your bedroll

Dingus: Coyote. We'll go find for it.

Mrs. Adams: Good, but look that way. *(she points away from the creek.)*

(Camera fades to black.)

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Scene 10

(It's dark, there is a full moon up, a coyote howls in the distance. All is quiet in the campsite, the fire is low, all are asleep under blankets. Two blankets with hats over the faces on one side of the fire, four blankets on the other side with purses next to them, and one in between with a frying pan on its chest.)

(Camera fades from black with a shot of the full moon. As the coyote howls the view drops to the quiet campsite wide enough and bright enough to show the whole situation. Then fades to black again.)

Scene 11

(It's morning at the campsite. Mrs. Adams is kneeling stirring a pant at the fire when James Dillion walks up.)

(Camera fades from black fairly tight on Mrs. Adams, as James walks up just his legs are in view.)

James: Morning Sarah

Mrs. Adams: *(Without looking up)* Morning Marshall, I heard you coming. *(She hands him a strip of bacon.)*

(Camera pulls back far enough to show both of them plus leaves room for Carmen.)

James: Thank you. *(He takes a little bite and chews)* That's real good.

Mrs. Adams Amanda told me that you was coming, but you must have got up awful early to be out here so soon.

James: Yeah, I woke up early and couldn't get back to sleep, just too quiet in town. So I figured that I may as well get started. I was half way out here by daylight.

Mrs. Adams Sure. It's hard sleeping when it's quiet. Why I can hardly sleep at all without Mr. Adams snoring. Of course I slept quite well last night, Dingus and Dennis filled in just fine in the snoring department.

(James chuckles at the joke then gets a surprised look as Carmen walks up in Dennis's spare clothes.)

Carmen: Good morning Marshall.

James: Morning Carmen, what's the clothes all about?

Carmen: Yesterday while I was taking a bath some coyotes came along and snatched my dress. Mrs. Adams killed one of them but the other one got away with my dress. Dingus looked and looked for it but all he could find were a few scraps that caught on the bushes. So I have to wear Dennis's spare clothes. That coyote howled and laughed at us all night. Do you need any more firewood Mrs. Adams?

Mrs. Adams Yeah, we could use a few more sticks.

(Carmen walks to the edge of the clearing and bends from the waist to pick up a piece of wood. James watches, openly admiring the view.)

(Camera follows Carmen, closing in slightly on her backside as she bends over. Then shifts to a close up of James.)

James: *(Staring, nodding his head slightly, and mumbling)* Now that fashion could catch on.

Miss Amanda *(Speaking from off camera, voice cold as ice.)* Coffee, James?

James: *(Matts eyes go wide)* Uh oh uh, yes, thank you Amanda.

(Camera pulls back enough to show James with Miss Amanda standing beside him and, Mrs. Adams is kneeling in front of them.)

(Miss Amanda is holding out a cup by the handle. James takes the cup in his hand and quickly switches it to the other hand by the handle. Miss Amanda grabs James by the arm and walks him away.)

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James is vigorously shaking his burned hand. Mrs. Adams watches and chuckles almost to her self. Then she turned to look at Carmen who is still picking up wood.)

(Camera shifts to a close up of Mrs. Adams as James and Miss Amanda walk away. Then shifts to a rather distant view of Carmen, then back to a close up of Mrs. Adams.)

Mrs. Adams *(Thoughtful and quietly)* He got blistered for it, but the Marshall is right.

(Camera fades to black.)

Scene 12

(James is standing sipping his coffee looking out into the trees. Dennis walks up.)

(Camera fades from black to show James looking thoughtful and Dennis approaching. It tightens up on them as they start talking.)

Dennis: Good Morning James.

James: If you say so Dennis.

Dennis: Well I do. *(Dennis grins)* For some of us anyway.

James: *(Irritated)* Funny, very funny.

Dennis: I guess you didn't have any trouble following our trail.

James: No, that wagon left ruts deep enough for me to follow in the dark. Somebody else followed them too.

Dennis: What you say? Who?

James: Just after daylight I noticed another set of prints along your trail. I kept my eyes open then and spotted Snake Oil in a cold camp about a mile over that way.

Dennis: Snake Oil, that low down varmint. What did you do?

James: Keep it down will you. Nothing, I just came on up here. He didn't see me. The way I figure it he followed the tracks out here planning to wait for you to go back to town, then jump Dingus's claim. We'll have to round him up on the way back to town.

Dennis: That we will James, that we will, and none too gently either.

James: Don't say anything just yet, no use spooking the others.

(From off camera Blondie calls.)

Blondie: Dennis, Marshall, we are going to dig some gold, Yall come along.

(Dennis looks quizzically to James, James nods his head.)

Dennis: *(Loudly)* We'll be right there Blondie.

(James and Dennis walk off camera.)

(Camera fades to black)

Scene 13

(The whole group is walking through the trees, Dingus and Dennis in front, followed by James and Miss Amanda, then the rest.)

(Camera fades from black to show the group then tightens on Dingus and Dennis as they start talking.)

Dennis: How are you going to know where to start digging Dingus.

Dingus: I figure on starting right where I found the last nugget. Which is right here.

(Dingus slams the shovel into the ground, it crunches. Everyone else gathers round as Dingus throws out a shovel full. It contains dirt, leaves, sticks, and gold nuggets. Everyone but James kneels down and starts picking up nuggets and dropping them into a pot that Mrs. Adams has brought. James stands looking out through the trees.)

(Camera pulls back as Dingus slams the shovel to show the whole group.)

Dennis: Well I'll be. Gold, in the first shovel full!

Blondie: Look at the size of these things!

Carmen: Beautiful!

Gabby: So much Gold!

Dingus: *(Dancing a jig with the shovel)* I'm rich, I'm rich, I'm rich.

Miss Amanda: That you are Dingus, that you are.

Mrs. Adams: Throw out some more Dingus. Blondie, Carmen, watch out for that poison ivy behind you.

(Dingus digs some more. Everyone is sifting through the upturned dirt picking out nuggets and saying things like "gold", "look at this one" and there must be a mountain of it. James is still standing watching the trees, he glances down, bends to pick up something, examines it in his hand, and watches the trees some more.)

(Camera fades to black).

Scene 14

(The whole group is still around the digging as at the end of the last scene, the hole is bigger, the pot is full of nuggets, and everyone is dirtier. Dingus throws out another shovel full and they sift through it.)

(Camera fades from black to show the group on the ground.)

Dennis: There wasn't anything in that shovel Dingus, try on the other side.

(Dingus shifts over and digs out another shovel full of dirt and drops it on the pile, they all excitedly sift through it.)

Blondie: Here's another one!!

Dennis: *(pulling out and holding up a piece of rotting canvas)* What's this?

(Everyone falls silent and freezes with a glum look about them, sensing that something is wrong)

Gabby: That's just an old rag Dennis, come on Dingus dig some more. *(But the sense of wrongness prevails and no one moves)*

(Camera shifts to a close up of Dingus.)

Dingus: *(Looking at the canvas and nodding his head slowly in sad recognition)* That's a piece of rotten canvas Dennis, and Marshall, that thing you've got in your hand is a lock ain't it?

(Camera shifts to a close up of James.)

James: *(Reluctance on his face)* Yeah, Dingus, I'm afraid it is.

(Camera shifts to a close up of Dingus.)

Dingus: One of them old timey kind that Wells Fargo used to use on gold cargo bags before that stage got robbed twelve years ago, ain't it?

(Camera shifts to a close up of James.)

James: *(Reluctance still on his face)* Yeah, Dingus, I'm afraid it is.

(Camera shifts to a close up of Dingus.)

Dingus: And you figure that the fellows that robbed the stage buried the bag of gold here and never came back for it, probably got themselves killed. That's what you figure ain't it?

(Camera shifts to a close up of James.)

James: *(Reluctance still on his face)* Yeah, Dingus, I'm afraid it is.

(Camera shifts to a close up of Dingus.)

Dingus: And in this situation, the right thing to do, the proper thing to do, the legal thing to do, is to give them their gold back, ain't it?

(Camera shifts to a close up of James.)

James: *(Reluctance still on his face)* Yeah, Dingus, I'm afraid it is. *(a pause with a smile growing on James's face)* But Dingus as I recall t here is a thousand dollar reward for recovery of the gold.

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(Camera shifts to a close up of Dingus.)

Dingus: Yeah, that's what I recall too. *(Louder)* I'll take it. And everybody here gets a share.

(Everyone is relieved and happy again.)

(Camera shifts to a close up of James.)

James: I'll process everything when we get back to town. Dig around a little more to make sure we got it all. We'll want to break camp and get back to town before dark with all that gold. *(James looks off into the trees smiling).*

(Camera fades to black.)

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Scene 15

(The entire group is walking through some trees. They are walking single file back along the path from the campsite to the wagon. Sarah in the lead then Miss Amanda, then the rest all are carrying bundles. Dennis and Dingus are carrying the very visible pot of gold. James is bringing up the rear, still looking around into the trees.)

(Camera fades from black wide enough to get the whole group, then closes on Dennis and Dingus as they are about to go behind some bushes.)

(Dennis stopping and turning to James who is behind)

Dennis: Matthew, when we get back to the wagon are we going to go pick up Snake Oil?

James: *(Chuckling)* No, I don't think that will be necessary.

(Camera pulls back to show the three of them going behind the bushes toward the wagon then fades to black.)

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Scene 16

(Camera fades from black to a wide shot of the now abandoned camp site, the sitting log and camp fire ashes are recognizable. Snake Oil, shovel and gold pan in hand sneaks across the campsite toward Dingus's claim. Camera fades to black.)

Scene 17

(Inside the saloon at night. There are a bunch of men at the bar all with at least one very prominent stark white bandage on their fingers, most with purple or pink medicine on their faces. Joe is behind the bar and James and Miss Amanda are seated at a table.)

(Camera fades from black to show the whole saloon then tightens on James and Miss Amanda. Then a close up on Miss Amanda, the camera stays on Amanda)

(Miss Amanda cringes and closes her eyes at the sound of a glass breaking.)

Joe: *(Off camera)* Hey, be careful there.

Cowboy: *(Off camera)* Sorry Joe, can I have another?

Miss Amanda: *(Opening her eyes, a little exasperated)* So, the gold is gone now?

(Camera pulls back still fairly tight on James and Miss Amanda)

James: Yeah Amanda, I telegraphed Wells Fargo first thing this morning, they had a deposit in the bank for Dingus by noon and the gold went out on the afternoon stage.

Miss Amanda: You know James it was fun but I can't say I sorry to see it go. One night out on the trail was enough for a girl like me, a bath and my bed felt so good when we got in last evening.

James: I do know what you mean Amanda. I...*(Doc walks up and James looks up at him)* Well hey Doc.

Doc: Evening Amanda, James. Mind if I join you?

Miss Amanda: No, not at all, grab a chair. *(waving toward the bar)* We've been noticing your handiwork.

(Miss Amanda cringes and closes her eyes at the sound of more glass breaking.)

Doc: Sorry Amanda. I did the best I could gold fever is a terrible thing.

James: How's that Doc?

Doc: It seems to turn off the brain James. All of these guys have been out of town at least once or twice, but you couldn't tell that from what I saw today. They started coming in this morning, and kept coming all day, if Sarah Adams hadn't come over to give a hand I would still be working on them. As it was I treated them and she painted and bandaged them. That purple you see is Iodine for the scraps, the pink is Calamine lotion for the poison ivy, the red is just plain old sunburn, and the white is practically all of the bandages that I have.

Miss Amanda: *(starting to get the giggles)* Joe, bring Doc a beer, sounds like he could use one.

Doc: Thanks Amanda, I can use one. Today I've seen thousands of blisters, busted fingers, twisted ankles, cuts, scraps, bruises, cactus needles, wasp stings, scorpion stings, what could only have been a fist fight, a couple of snake bites, and one coyote bite.

Miss Amanda: *(Laughing now)* Coyote bite?

Doc: Yeah. Snake Oil, he came in about an hour ago, more blisters than I could count, scraps, poison ivy, and a coyote bite on his rear. Sarah was about finished with him when I left. She was real tickled about the coyote bite.

(Camera pulls back to show Snake Oil entering the Saloon, then tightens on a very unhappy Snake Oil. He had a ridiculously large bandage from elbow to finger tip on each hand and half of his face is

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painted purple and the other half pink. The camera pulls back to show the whole room as snickers go around. Snake Oil turns and walks back out of the Saloon, showing a large tear in the seat of his pants. General laughter breaks out. The camera tightens on Miss Amanda who is laughing uncontrollably.)

Miss Amanda: I'll bet she was Doc, I'll bet she was.

(Camera fades to black)

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