

ICARUS - WAYFARING SHERIFF

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FADE IN:

TITLE

Episode [Blank] - Wayfaring Sheriff

"Jet Black: Betrayal may come easily to women, but men live by iron-clad codes of honor.

Faye Valentine: You really believe that?

Jet Black: I'm trying to, real hard." - Cowboy Bebop

INT. ICARUS/CREW QUARTERS - EVENING

The crew looks themselves over in the mirrors within their lockers. They make sure they look their best in their dress uniforms.

Tanaka buttons up her jacket. As she reaches the top her gaze drops to the engagement ring on her necklace. She allows her finger to hold it for an instant, then straightens up her collar.

Ajax slips her metal arm through her jacket, putting it on as Montgomery smooths the creases in his, picking off every hint of dust.

Vera appears in the doorway, her jacket open, tags hanging off. She's completely disheveled.

VERA

Can someone give me a little help?

INT. ICARUS/DAVIS' QUARTERS - EVENING

Davis stands in front of the mirror in his dress uniform. He double checks that his medals are straight, uniform perfect.

Gideon lounges in the chair opposite his desk, wrinkling his uniform.

GIDEON

I hate parties.

DAVIS

No you don't.

GIDEON

You're right. I hate these kinds of parties.

DAVIS

Everyone does.

GIDEON

Then why do they have them?

DAVIS

To make themselves feel important.

At least we've been invited instead of getting stuck with baby-sitting duty.

GIDEON

I'd rather have to guard it. When you're on guard duty you get stay in the background. Being invited means we'll actually have to talk to these people.

DAVIS

There's food.

GIDEON

Weird rich people food. Puffy pastries and jams made of stuff.

DAVIS

Eloquent as always.

GIDEON

Don't start. We'll have plenty of that by the end of the night.

DAVIS

Agreed.

INT. WINTERS' OFFICE - EVENING

Winters stands in front of her mirror, dress uniform polished beyond perfection. She practices her best upper class smile in the mirror.

WINTERS

Nice to meet you. A pleasure meeting you. We were so pleased to receive your invitation.

ESTABLISHING SHOT:

The Hawk shuttle swoops beneath puffy clouds toward Apollo's surface. The Governor's mansion gleams in the distance as limos below crawl in procession toward it.

They pass over fields. Tall, snow covered mountains loom in the distance. On the horizon a large town of short buildings can be seen in the setting sun.

INT. HAWK SHUTTLE - EVENING

The crew sits uncomfortably, trying not to wrinkle their uniforms. The shuttle shakes from light turbulence as they sit in silence.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/BALLROOM - EVENING

The room is full of aristocrats in frilly dresses and gentleman's coats. Colorful banners stretch across the room as servants in spotless suits carry silver trays.

The Governor himself stands on a balcony over looking the dance floor, flanked on either side by opulent staircases. The large window behind him is dark with the shadows of a setting sun.

Davis enters the ballroom to the soft claps of the rich. He awkwardly nods his thanks as the rest of his team follow in.

Kapoor and Hernandez break for the food as Tanaka and Montgomery head for the Orion's field team, gathered together on the far side of the room. Winters makes her way to the governor's balcony.

Davis spots Major Anderson across the room, who raises his glass in greeting. Davis makes his way over.

DAVIS

At least there's one friendly face here.

ANDERSON

It isn't so bad. They look impressive but they're mostly harmless.

Hey, thanks again for saving our asses the other day.

DAVIS

Don't worry about it. I'm sure it won't be long before you have to return the favor.

(MORE)

DAVIS (CONT'D)

How's the ship?

ANDERSON
Still in for repairs.

How'd you get roped into coming to this thing?

DAVIS
Was invited by name.

ANDERSON
Price of being famous.

DAVIS
Guess so. You?

ANDERSON
Can't claim to be busy when I don't have a ship.

DAVIS
Good point. How'd Malik get out of coming?

ANDERSON
The Polaris? Said something about tracking a pirate back to it's cove.

DAVIS
I thought this was their kind of thing, all glitz and glamour.

ANDERSON
They wouldn't be caught dead out here. This may be the rich and famous but they're still colonist.

DAVIS
(With dread)
I guess I better mingle, get this over with.

ANDERSON
Good luck.

Davis heads off into the crowd.

On the balcony above him, Winters talks with the Governor.

GOVERNOR GRANT

I must say it is truly wonderful work that your ship is doing, Commander.

WINTERS

Oh Governor, you are too kind.

GOVERNOR GRANT

No, really. The humanitarian aid and the suppression of these pesky little rebellions that insist on ruining our efforts at constructing a better society. What would we do without you?

WINTERS

With all the public works you've been building one would think they would see the benefits of civilization.

An older woman wearing far too much makeup and covered in jewelry butts in.

MADAM

It's pure jealousy. They want to live in high society without putting in the work. My grandfather helped build this town with blisters on his hands and sweat on his brow.

They don't understand the value of hard work.

WINTERS

I'm sure. And what is that you do?

MADAM

Well I, I administer the estate and over see the servants.

WINTERS

Taxing work I'm sure.

GOVERNOR GRANT

Ladies if you'll excuse me it's almost time to honor our guest.

Davis stands on the dance floor below, politely nodding to a woman old enough to be his grandmother.

OLD WOMAN

I simply do not understand the youth of today. Do they not understand that we have their best interest at heart?

You know, years ago, they tried to rebel against Earth and it didn't take. All that death and fighting and for what?

Davis nods, struggling to fake interest.

Xiao joins them.

XIAO

Ma'am?

OLD WOMAN

Yes dear?

XIAO

I believe the governor wants to speak with you.

OLD WOMAN

Oh what does he want now?

Xiao pushes her along as she heads off for the balcony.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)

Always something with him, you know he used to play in my garden as a boy.

As soon as she's on her way, Xiao turns back to Davis.

DAVIS

Thanks.

XIAO

Consider us even for the other day.

DAVIS

What are you going to do when she figures out your lying?

XIAO

Like she'll remember by the time she gets up those steps.

They look over to see the old woman talking off Gideon's ear at the base of the stairs.

From the center of the balcony, the Governor clinks his glass. The crowd below him turns their attention to him as he spreads his arms in an attempt at showmanship.

GOVERNOR GRANT

Thank you, thank you. We have gathered here today to celebrate my re-appointment as Governor of Collins Town, finest region of Apollo.

The crowd claps politely.

GOVERNOR GRANT (CONT'D)

Thank you, thank you. However, there is someone else we should be celebrating today. Not one, but two heroes are in our midst.

Major Alexander Davis, and First Sargent Oliver Gideon. Though they soar now high upon the wings of their ship, the Icarus, they once struggled in the mud of Aries.

Through their brave efforts, many were able to escape with their lives, and the order of the Union was preserved.

Let's raise our glasses-

The window SHATTERS as the governor lifts his glass. Winters pulls him down and away as a the beam of a Seraphim lance crashes into the balcony.

The beam explodes, destroying the center of the balcony and raining debris on those below. The aristocrats dive to the ground or crouch with their arms over their heads, afraid to move.

Winters jumps to her feat, blood pouring down her face and arms from the blast's shrapnel. She whisks the Governor away as the field team springs into action.

Gideon takes Kapoor and Hernandez outside to look for the attacker as Tanaka sees to the wounded. Anderson and the soldiers of the Orion rush out to secure the mansion.

Davis stands in the center of floor amongst a sea of crouching people. He stares past the smouldering balcony and through the shattered window, in to the night beyond.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/GRANT'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

The Governor sits, collapsed in a chair as Tanaka sees to his wounds. Winters and Davis stand near by, the blood on Winters' face beginning to dry. Anderson leans against the wall by the door.

GOVERNOR GRANT

(Hysterical)

My word, an assassin. An assassin, can you believe it. Tried to kill me in my own home, during my own party.

Barbarians, brutes. I'm going to die at the hands of devilish fiends.

Tanaka finishes bandaging his wounds.

DAVIS

Well?

TANAKA

He's fine. A few cuts.

GOVERNOR GRANT

Cuts?

Tanaka heads over to bandage Winters only to be impatiently waved away.

GOVERNOR GRANT (CONT'D)

These are not mere cuts, these are wounds of body and soul.

If I cannot be save in my own home where can I? What are we paying you soldiers for if not to protect us.

DAVIS

We're doing everything we can Governor.

The door opens, Xiao and Gideon step in.

WINTERS

Report.

XIAO

Building's secure. We have patrols on the ground and the roof.

DAVIS

Any trace of the assassin?

GIDEON

No. We found where he fired the lance from. He and it were both gone.

GOVERNOR GRANT

I want this town searched. Every basement, cupboard and pantry until this scoundrel is found.

DAVIS

We go to door to door and the only thing we'll find is a populous ready to riot.

We will do our best to find who attacked you but we need your help.

WINTERS

Does anyone stand out as wanting to hurt you?

GOVERNOR GRANT

My subjects love me. Who would dare want to attack me in my own home on a night of celebration. Most of the town was here.

DAVIS

Most of the nobles were here. What about the rest of your... *subjects*.

GOVERNOR GRANT

Oh they are no doubt filling their bellies with cheap rum or dancing to the pedestrian screeching they call music.

ANDERSON

I'm guessing your not real popular with those folks.

GOVERNOR GRANT

How could they not love me. I've spent a fortune this year on public works. Fountains and statues and buildings. They should worship me.

DAVIS

Right.

Davis walks away from the Governor, motioning for Anderson and Winters to huddle up.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

We're not going to get very far with him.

WINTERS

Command is going to want answers. This program is supposed to be about avoiding rebellions not sitting back as they happen.

ANDERSON

We should split up. Hit the town and surrounding area, see what we can find.

WINTERS

I agree. The locals are bound to know more.

MAJOR

I hate to do this to you, but since we have the ship why don't we do the searching and you do the guarding.

ANDERSON

I'd really like to disagree with you, but I can't think of any compelling reasons. We'll take baby-sitting duty while you have all the fun.

MAJOR

Hey at least you don't have to do anymore talking to them.

ANDERSON

I wouldn't have to listen to them either if the bastard had finished the job.

MAJOR

That's why I like you, Anderson. Always looking on the bright side of things.

EXT. COLLINS TOWN - MORNING

Davis and Winters walk through the town, a mixture of mid western main street and new England colonial architecture lines the streets.

DAVIS

You could have stayed with the ship, or the Governor.

WINTERS

Many eyes will be watching this. I can't risk you messing it up.

DAVIS

I doubt the governor has enough pull to mess up your career.

WINTERS

Certainly not. His assassination in our presence and the subsequent rioting however, could irreparably damage the reputation of the program and my ship.

DAVIS

And here I thought you didn't care about the little people.

They stop, looking around at the pristine store fronts and their aristocratic owners.

Across the street, a restaurant owner dressed in pompous garments berates a waiter sweeping the storefront.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

We won't learn anything new here.

ESTABLISHING SHOT:

EXT. COLLINS TOWN/OUTSKIRTS - MOMENTS LATER

The buildings are skinnier, taller and made more of brick than of wood. The store front windows are more cramped with wears. Those walking about wear a simpler dress.

Davis eyes a little old lady tidying up a display of wooden furniture in her storefront and heads inside.

INT. MAY'S FURNITURE - MOMENTS LATER

The bell above the door rings as Davis and Winters enter the cramped shop. Couches, tables and chairs crowd the floor space of the tiny shop.

A short, plump woman tidies up behind the counter, her round glasses drooping on her nose. She speaks to them without looking as she dusts her shelves.

MAY

Hello, come in, come in. What can we do for you today? A chair, how about a couch, or a lovely breakfast nook?

She puts down her duster and turns around to face them.

MAY (CONT'D)

Who are you? You're not from around here.

DAVIS

Good morning Ma'am. No we're not from here, we-

The woman takes off again, fluttering around the store.

MAY

Are newlyweds, just in town? In that case we have beds, well we don't have beds but we can make beds and cribs, we have cribs.

No time like the present to get started on the little ones. Or how about a dresser-

WINTERS

(Impatiently)

Ma'am.

MAY

Yes?

WINTERS

We are not here to buy anything.

MAY

Oh? Then why are you here, this is a business after all and -

WINTERS
 (Impatiently)
 Ma'am. We need to ask you some
 questions.

The old woman circles back behind the counter.

MAY
 Oh, about what?

DAVIS
 The attack on the Governor's
 mansion last night. We-

MAY
 An attack? Oh my. Ben! Ben get out
 here!

They hear shuffling from the back as an old man makes his way
 to the counter.

BEN
 What is it now you old crow?

MAY
 The governor was attacked last
 night.

BEN
 Is he dead?

MAY
 I don't know.
 (To Winters)
 Is he dead?

WINTERS
 No, he-

MAY
 (To Ben)
 Not dead.

Her husband finally appears from the back, wiping his hands
 with an old rag.

BEN
 Damn. To think we were almost rid
 of that slouch.

He looks at Davis and Winters.

BEN (CONT'D)
 What do you want?

They open their mouths to speak, promptly shutting them as May rambles on again.

MAY

They want to ask us questions about the governors' attack, why they don't think we had something to do with it?

BEN

Damn it May, can you quit your squawking for one second. We'll be here all morning if you'd don't let them talk.

DAVIS

We don't think you had anything to do with the attack, we're just trying to get the lay of the land.

Can you tell me why you don't like the Governor? We were under the impression he was popular.

BEN

Oh sure. Those idiots in their frilly little dresses love him. He cuts their taxes, looks the other way when complaints are brought against their businesses. He's wonderful to his friends.

But us little people? Treats us like rodents. To be tolerated until he can have us all round up and shot, or sent to the mines.

MAY

Oh Ben, it isn't that bad. He has raised the taxes awful high though.

WINTERS

What about the public works constructed under his administration?

BEN

Ha! Is that what he's calling them?

Public works my ass. He's been putting up statues of his ugly mug all over town and the damn fountain doesn't even work.

DAVIS

What do you mean it doesn't work?

BEN

See for yourself, it's in the center of town.

MAY

It works fine, he won't turn it on is the problem.

WINTERS

Why not?

MAY

He won't pay for it. Says if we want it we'll have to pay for it out of our taxes.

We're struggling as it is, no one wants to raise their taxes for a silly fountain.

DAVIS

Do you know of anyone who would go far enough to try and kill him?

BEN

Half the bloody town. Hell I'd take a swing at him myself if I were a younger man.

MAY

Oh stop.

DAVIS

How about anyone with access to a Seraphim lance?

MAY

A Sarah what's it?

DAVIS

Seraphim lance. Pole looking thing with crystals on either end. Shoots a big laser that explodes.

Normally used as an anti-tank weapon.

BEN

Never heard of it. That one of them alien things.

WINTERS
(Patronizing)
Yes. It's an alien thing.

BEN
We mostly see human stuff around here. Don't care much for them alien goods.

DAVIS
Thanks for your help.

Davis and Winters head out.

MAY
How about a chair before you go? Or a rest on one of our sofas.

They make their escape without looking back.

EXT. COLLINS TOWN/TOWN SQUARE - MORNING

The large fountain in the center of town sits dry. Davis and Winters stare at it as the upper classes of Collins go about the day's business.

They move on to a tall statue of the Governor, towering over the park benches of the square. Its granite surface glows in the morning sun.

A shorter statue, the size of a man if not for the pedestal it stood on, sits in the governor's shadow. The smaller bronze statue depicting a man in a long duster goes almost unnoticed in the presence of the far more impressive statue.

Winters stops a man passing by and points at the bronze statue.

WINTERS
Who does that honor?

MAN
Oh that's Sherman's statue. He saved the town from a pirate raid a few years back. Also an old friend of the governor.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/BALLROOM - MORNING

The Governor supervises workers busy repairing the shattered balcony and window.

GOVERNOR GRANT
Careful, careful. There are
priceless works of art in this
room. Not that you philistines
would know.

The Governor takes a swig from his glass of wine as Davis and
Winters enter.

GOVERNOR GRANT (CONT'D)
Oh Commander, please tell me you've
caught the brigand who's done this
to my lovely abode.

DAVIS
We're working on it.

The town's people mentioned a
pirate raid a few years back. They
could have been involved in this.

Can you tell us about it?

Grant wheels around.

GOVERNOR GRANT
Oh yes. The pirate raid. That takes
me back to the wild days of my
youth.

A viscous attack by the lowest of
criminal scum. I stopped that raid
you know. That's how I became
Governor.

The people saw my brave leadership
and begged me to take the position.

DAVIS
Then who's Sherman?

GOVERNOR GRANT
Oh, him.

The Governor takes another sloppy drink from his glass.

GOVERNOR GRANT (CONT'D)
And old friend. He helped me fight
back the pirates. A brash fellow.
All fight and no thought.

WINTERS
What happened to him?

GOVERNOR GRANT

I'm not sure. He was up for the governorship as well. Disappeared shortly after I was elected.

You... You don't think it could be him. Come for me after all these years?

WINTERS

No need to jump to conclusions. We still have many avenues to pursue.

The Governor collapses into a chair.

GOVERNOR GRANT

An angry wraith of the past, come to exact his jealous rage upon me.

DAVIS

Alright, I'll play, why would he want to kill you after all this time?

GOVERNOR GRANT

I don't know. Maybe he finally snapped. He was soldier once, like you. Bad things happened to him. He carried many demons.

The governor takes a nervous slip from his glass.

DAVIS

I'm sure. Anyway, we'll keep poking around, see what we can find.

They walk away. The Governor hardly notices them leave, his mind occupied with memories of an old friend.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/DINING ROOM - NOON

Davis, Winters, Anderson, Gideon, and Xiao sit around the Governor's fancy dining room table. They eat a quick lunch off pristine plates.

Winters eats off her plate with all manner of a lady, while the others impatiently shovel food into their mouths.

DAVIS

What have you got?

GIDEON

The farmers hate him. When they heard he was attacked they openly cheered. Same with the miners. This whole region is on the verge of rebellion.

A servant moves down the line with a tray of cakes, bending over next to each person to offer them one.

Davis and Anderson wave him off. Winters politely takes one and Xiao eagerly plucks one from the tray, then spins around to take another as he walks on.

ANDERSON

We've had to remove three different people from the property for throwing beer bottles over the fence and it's only noon.

This is not a popular man.

WINTERS

The only way to narrow it down is to find the weapon.

ANDERSON

The Governor's preparing his guard to start searching the town for it. Things are going to get real messy when they start kicking in doors.

DAVIS

Can we convince him otherwise?

ANDERSON

Not unless we can find the attacker first.

DAVIS

Any leads on the pirates?

GIDEON

There wasn't a lot of information on the raid. Mostly local reporting.

Seems the pirates were all killed or arrested. I doubt someone would still hold a grudge against him.

DAVIS

What have we got on Sherman?

They look around the table to see who has the info. Xiao realizes she's up and takes the cake out of her mouth.

XIAO

Got his file from Command.

Guy was a real bad ass. Started out Army, transferred to Navy and made Captain in his twenties, one of the youngest ever.

All around remarkable career.

ANDERSON

Until?

XIAO

Responded to a distress signal only to be ambushed by three pirate gunships.

He somehow managed to take them all out, but his ship was heavily damaged in the process. They lost FTL and Coms.

Drifted for almost two weeks before someone found them. By then everyone had either died from their wounds or from the ship's failing systems.

Sherman was the only survivor.

He lost an arm and leg, now metal prosthetics, and left the Navy after recovering from his wounds.

After that the record gets thin. He drifted from place to place mainly getting into trouble. Then dropped off the radar completely.

GIDEON

I asked around. The locals practically worship this guy.

He showed up in town several years ago without a credit to his name. Worked as a farm hand outside of town for a while, basically getting his shit together.

DAVIS

Where's the pirate raid fit in?

GIDEON

It seems Sherman had given up being a fighter, became some kind of passivist, humanitarian type. Doing charity around town.

At the time the town was paying protection money to a pirate outfit operating in the system. They missed a payment, pirates attacked.

The others nod, they've heard this story before.

GIDEON (CONT'D)

Some say Sherman lost it, others that he was the answer to their prayers. He led the town in beating back the pirates almost single handed. The guy's a living legend.

DAVIS

And the Governor?

GIDEON

According to the farmers?

Grant was friends with Sherman. Shy type that didn't have a lot of friends. He was basically a side kick in the fight against the pirates.

After the battle the town's people wanted Sherman to be governor, but he declined. Claimed to have found a new purpose in life, but recommended Grant for the spot.

The way the farmers tell it, that's the only reason he got the job.

DAVIS

So we have a lying governor, a people who hate him, and ghost of a suspect with no foreseeable reason to attack him?

ANDERSON

Sounds about right.

And a missing alien weapon.

DAVIS

Winters, Anderson why don't you see if you can get the governor to reconsider his search. Or at least delay it.

I'll take Gideon to the farm Sherman stayed at, see what we can find out.

ANDERSON

Sounds good. Xiao can coordinate the baby sitters, make sure the grounds are secure.

Davis nods as he returns to his lunch.

EXT. FARM - AFTERNOON

Davis and Gideon approach the farm. A blonde woman comes out of the house to meet them. An old man sits in a rocking chair on the porch.

MARY

There something I can help you with?

DAVIS

How are you today Ma'am?

MARY

Fine. Want to tell me what your doing on my land?

DAVIS

We'd like to talk to you about Sherman.

MARY

He dead?

DAVIS

No. At least we don't think so.

MARY

He in some kind of trouble?

DAVIS

We hope not. Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions?

She nods and heads for the porch, waving for them to follow.

Davis and Gideon sit at a small table as the old man rocks in his chair. Mary pours them some lemonade and takes a seat.

MARY

Sherman showed up years ago. Back then he was a useless drunk. Fond of cards and the fights that follow.

Papa took him on as a farm hand cause he used to be in the Navy too. Let Nathan sleep in the barn.

DAVIS

He goes by his first name now?

MARY

He did while he was here. Said his last name reminded him of the bad times.

GIDEON

Did he ever tell you what he went through?

MARY

Yeah. Rough stuff.

GIDEON

So he was comfortable enough to open up to you?

MARY

Yeah. We were close.

GIDEON

Close enough for him to come back here if he as in trouble?

MARY

I'd hope so. He's always welcome here.

DAVIS

How long did he stay for?

MARY

Couple years. Got sober, gave up gambling. He really started over. Thought he was going to settle down once and for all.

Then those pirates came.

OLD MAN
Damn pirates.

The old man zones back out, staring off into the fields.

MARY
Hush Papa.

There was no warning. Bastards came out of the sky shooting. Did strafing runs all over town.

Most people were too scared in the aftermath to even leave their homes, much less plan a counter attack.

But Nathan... He knew what had to be done. Started going by Sherman again. Rounded up the other towns folk. Showed them how to convert the mining tools into weapons.

We were ready the next time they came. Blew 'em right out the damn sky. They tried hitting us with landing parties, but Sherman had planned for that too.

Fighting only lasted two days.

GIDEON
We heard Governor Grant and he were friends?

MARY
Gavin? Oh yeah. Those two hung out all the time. Not long after coming into town Nathan saw Gavin getting picked on by some of the miners, put an end too it.

Gavin used to be an account before he went into politics. Helped Nathan pay of his debts.

GIDEON
We were told he fought in the raid, too.

MARY
We all did.

He fought beside Nathan.
(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Used an old hunting rifle. Not a bad shot either once he stopped being afraid of the noise.

DAVIS

We've heard... conflicting accounts of how he got the governorship and not Sherman.

Mary laughs.

MARY

Nathan never wanted to be governor.

Not his style. After the raid he told me he remembered his purpose. The reason he had joined the military in the first place.

To help protect people from the scum of the universe. To look out for the little guy.

I begged him not to go. Stay here on the farm, start a family. But that's not the man Nathan was.

He told the town's people to elect Grant, then left town.

DAVIS

Has he ever come back?

MARY

He does from time to time. Mostly when he's been shot up and needs a place to stay. Or when he's feeling lonely, wants to see a familiar face.

DAVIS

Do you know what a Seraphim lance is?

MARY

N-

OLD MAN

I used to have one them.

Got it off a pirate when I was in the navy. Bastard held on to it tight too. You'd think a dead man would learn to let go.

(MORE)

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

The hell every happened to that thing?

MARY

You sold it Papa, to help pay for the farm. Remember?

OLD MAN

Nope. Then again can't remember my name half the time either. Peter.

MARY

Michael.

OLD MAN

Oh yeah.

MARY

Alzheimer's.

DAVIS

Well ma'am we won't take up any more of your time. Thanks, you've been a great help.

MARY

Sure. And if you see Nathan tell him to pay us a visit.

DAVIS

Will do.

Gideon finishes his glass as Davis shakes Mary's hand.

Davis turns to the old man.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

And thank you for your service sir.

OLD MAN

Sure. Anytime.

(To Mary)

What service?

Davis and Gideon walk away from the house.

DAVIS

Think it was the same lance?

GIDEON

Oh yeah.

EXT. COLLINS TOWN/TOWN SQUARE - AFTERNOON

Davis and Gideon make their way back towards the governor's mansion. Guards in military uniforms go door to door, searching the buildings.

GIDEON

Looks like the other's failed.

DAVIS

Get the team back to the ship. I want them suited up and ready to go.

GIDEON

Yes sir.

Gideon walks away, lifting his gauntlet. Davis stares off into the distance and calls Gideon back.

DAVIS

Gideon.

He turns back.

GIDEON

Yeah?

DAVIS

I might need you here.

Gideon looks down the street where a rabble of farmers are making their way toward the town. They hold hunting rifles and pipes in their hands among other makeshift weapons.

The guards notice the oncoming mob and begin to head toward the town square.

Soon there are two camps, one of guards and the other of angry farmers squaring off in the center of town. Davis and Gideon rush into the center.

FARMER

We let you run our town for long enough. You got no right to come into our homes.

The guards on the other side form into a perfect phalanx, preparing to push the mob out of town.

DAVIS

Hold it! Nobody move.

Gideon turns to the guards, trying to get them to stand down as Davis turns to the farmers.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

I need all of you go to back to your homes. We will sort this out.

FARMER

How you going to sort this out? You government just like them.

A bottle flies past Davis, smashing as it hits the ground.

The line of guards begin moving forward. The crowd of farmers hurl insults, begging the guards to come at them.

Davis and Gideon are pushed back to back, mobs on either side ready to devour the first thing they grab hold of.

A sharp whistle cuts through the noise like a razor.

Both groups freeze. As the crowd parts Davis and Gideon look toward the fountain. A man in a brown duster stands on the fountains edge, a cowboy hat lowered to hide his face.

He tips the brim of the hat up, causing wild cheers to erupt from the farmers. The man casually hops down from the fountain and strolls toward Davis.

The guards and farmers part like the sea for Moses, closing around him as he passes.

SHERMAN

Must be new around here to challenge these fine folks.

New cheers burst from the farmers. Sherman wears a cocky, wry smile as he holds his metal hand out to Davis.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

I'm Sherman.

DAVIS

I figured.

Sherman lowers his hand, unshaken.

SHERMAN

So what's the Ghost of Aries doing all the way out here on Apollo?

DAVIS

I was invited. Why don't you and I go someplace a little more private. I can tell you the whole story.

SHERMAN

And leave these people here to tear each other's throats out? Wouldn't be very responsible of me.

Sherman turns to the farmers.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Listen up. I know you boys are angry, and you've got every right to be. But this ain't the way.

I didn't fight off a bunch of pirates to watch you fine folks burn this town to the ground.

So go on home, take care of your families and I'll sort this mess out.

The crowd grumbles and groans as they head out.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Go on now, before I decide I'd rather be sleeping with your wives while you're gone.

He then turns to the guards.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

And you lot, you know better than this. Searching people's houses, tearing them apart like thugs. You ought to be ashamed.

The guards lower their heads, embarrassed.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

You go back to your barracks and think what you've done.

The crowd of guards dutifully marches out of the square, shoulders slumped.

Sherman turns to Davis.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)
No better than children. I leave
this town for five minutes and
they're at each others' throats.

Davis does not reflect Sherman's sunny smile. He's out of
patience and doesn't like Sherman's sudden appearance.

DAVIS
Good timing. Roll back in town when
things start to get messy.

SHERMAN
Oh I keep tabs on this place. Heard
things were heating up.

DAVIS
You can drop the act.

SHERMAN
Excuse me?

DAVIS
This cowboy facade. I know a show
when I see one. You want to tell me
what you're doing in town?

Sherman drops the act, stepping toward Davis. Sherman takes
on the air of an old soldier.

SHERMAN
These are my people. I watch over
them. I stop them from killing each
other.

DAVIS
The Governor would disagree. That
why you tried to kill him?

SHERMAN
No.

I tired to kill him because he's an
evil son of bitch that these people
need to be protected from.

Gideon looks over at Davis.

GIDEON
Did he just admit to attempted
murder?

SHERMAN

Look, we're all soldiers here. I know who you are, what you two did on Aries.

This is a different landscape, the frontier. There are things at work here you don't understand.

You've attended your party, had your fancy cakes. You should move on.

Plenty of pirates to fight and rebellions to suppress.

DAVIS

You kill the governor and there's going to be a rebellion here.

SHERMAN

Killing the governor is the only thing that can stop it.

Sherman turns to walk away.

DAVIS

I'll have to stop you.

A breeze kicks up the dust on the street as Sherman looks to the sky.

SHERMAN

I expect so. Good luck.

Sherman walks off.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Anderson sits back in his chair, Winters sits straight in her's as Davis stands by the window, looking out onto the governor's yard.

ANDERSON

Both field teams are standing by.

WINTERS

They should remain on alert for the remainder.

ANDERSON

Why haven't we locked him up?

DAVIS

You mean aside from the riots that would result?

ANDERSON

He admitted to attempted murder of a governor.

DAVIS

For all we know he's covering for someone else, like the woman on the farm.

WINTERS

We can not sit idly by and wait for him to attack.

ANDERSON

Well we can't kick in his door either. We'd be beaten to death with pitchforks.

WINTERS

Why wouldn't they stab you with them, being pitchforks and all?

ANDERSON

(Shrugs)
Takes longer, more painful.

Winters gives a half nod/half shrug to concede the point.

Davis looks at them from the window.

DAVIS

What if we invited him in?

ANDERSON

I don't follow.

WINTERS

He and the Governor are old mates.

We could throw a party.

ANDERSON

Like a homecoming?

WINTERS

Why not? The governor is fond of his parties. We could convince him it will simmer down the populace.

DAVIS

And it will give me a chance to talk to him, find out what this is all about.

ANDERSON

What if he tries something at the party? More importantly why am I of all people suddenly the voice of reason?

DAVIS

He'll try something at the party. Too good an opportunity not too.

WINTERS

Then I suppose it comes down to who is more clever. Him or us.

Davis looks back out the window.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/BALLROOM - NIGHT

The ballroom is once more a buzz with guest. The governor stands atop his reconstructed balcony as his guest wine and dine.

Davis stands by a table where he can see Gideon posted by the doors and Winters on the reconstructed balcony with the Governor.

They don't have to wait for long. The double doors leading into the ballroom swing open as Sherman strolls into the party with Mary on his arm.

He wears his old duster in a mockery of the high fashion of those attending. Mary however wears her best dress, which is still far below the others.

The crowd politely claps as he enters, Davis does not. The Governor takes his place, center balcony.

GOVERNOR GRANT

The guest of the hour has finally arrived. I suppose he needed to find his coat.

The crowd gives a teasing laugh.

SHERMAN

Thought there might be a draft, what with the broken window and all.

The crowd falls silent. The Governor covers his anger with a grin. He steps to the side, motioning toward the fixed window.

GOVERNOR GRANT

Here in the civilized part of the galaxy we have craftsman to repair damages immediately. Unlike the seedy dens you must be used to.

SHERMAN

Civilized? Didn't any one tell you this was the colonies?

GOVERNOR GRANT

The colonies have changed since you've been gone old friend. We've brought peace and stability to these lands.

SHERMAN

Yeah. Saw a whole lot of that peace and stability out by the fountain today.

The Governor's smile fades.

Sherman turns to the crowd.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Although I'm not sure you can call it a fountain when there's no water running through it.

The Governor forces his smile to return.

GOVERNOR GRANT

I see you have much to discuss with our fellow guest. Let's have a toast to an old friend.

He raises his glass.

GOVERNOR GRANT (CONT'D)

And enjoy the festivities.

He takes a sip from the glass and returns to his prized guests on the balcony.

Mary gives Sherman a kiss on the cheek. She heads for the stairs as Sherman heads for Davis.

He saddles up next to the Major, idly picking at finger foods on the table behind them. Davis remains on guard.

SHERMAN

What's the matter Major, not one for mingling?

DAVIS

Let's just say these aren't my people.

SHERMAN

These aren't anyone's people. Hell, most days I doubt they are people.

DAVIS

Why do it?

You found a new life, a new home. Even a new purpose. Why throw it all away over an old friend?

He tones down the western act.

SHERMAN

That's the thing about homes and purposes. They need defending.

Sometimes it's from pirates. And sometimes it's from friends.

Davis looks up at the balcony. Mary is talking to the Governor. Winters stays close by.

DAVIS

Why not stay here, be a farmer or a sheriff? Settle down with Mary?

SHERMAN

Cause there's people out there that need help.

Little people. Too small for the government to notice or care about. So I care about them.

DAVIS

Who's going to protect them when you're in jail, or dead?

SHERMAN

I guess we'll find out.

Mary and the Governor head for the stairs, Winters tries to follow but is waved off by the Governor.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Why didn't you?

DAVIS

Why didn't I what?

SHERMAN

Settle down after Aries. Buy a farm somewhere and leave the army.

DAVIS

Thought about it. Still am.

SHERMAN

And?

DAVIS

People out there are falling through the cracks. Someone's got to be there to catch them.

Grant and Mary slip out of the ballroom arm in arm, deeper into the manor as they chat like old friends. Gideon slips out soon after to tail them.

EXT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION/ROOF - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Gavin and Mary stroll out onto the roof.

GOVERNOR GRANT

After all these years how can you pine after that old fool.

You should come stay at the manor, with me.

MARY

You know I could never leave Papa and the farm.

GOVERNOR GRANT

We have a very fine medical staff here. We could get him the best of care. You know they have new treatments in the old worlds, better facilities.

Mary sighs, walking ahead of Grant. She pulls an old ballistic pistol from somewhere in her dress, leveling it at the Governor's face.

MARY

I know all about your facilities.

GIDEON

Drop it.

Gideon steps out from the shadows, his pistol firm in his hands as he trains it on Mary.

She sighs and drops the pistol, putting her hands up.

Gideon lifts his gauntlet to his face.

GIDEON (CONT'D)

We're on the roof.

The nightly breeze drifts over the roof top as they wait.

Davis and Winters come through the door, pistols at the ready.

Davis moves in to secure Mary as Winters secures the Governor.

They don't even notice as Sherman calmly strolls out onto the roof behind them.

Gideon finally sees him, wheeling around to point his pistol at the unarmed man.

DAVIS

It's over Sherman. It was a good plan, but an obvious one.

We could never allow you to kill a governor.

SHERMAN

Not trying to kill him. Well, not yet.

I thought I'd kidnap him first.

GIDEON

Hard to do seeing as your outnumbered.

Sherman smiles.

A shuttle swoops in from behind Davis and Winters. Farmers repel from it onto the roof with hunting rifles strapped to their backs.

SHERMAN

You should consider a recount.

WINTERS

You're making a mistake.

SHERMAN

Actually everything's going to plan. For once.

Now let's forget all of this hostility and go for a little ride.

With little choice, they lower their weapons.

INT. SHERMAN'S SHUTTLE - NIGHT

Mary flies the shuttle as Sherman stands at the front. He keeps a pistol trained on his prisoners while a farmer stands guard at the rear hatch.

Davis, Winters, Gideon and Grant sit defeated and angry. Sherman's cowboy persona is completely gone, replaced by the old soldier.

WINTERS

Do you realize what will happen to these people? This region will be considered in open rebellion and placed under martial law.

SHERMAN

We're not rebelling.

WINTERS

I supposed you think of it as liberation then?

DAVIS

She's right. Aries was left a smouldering crater filled with the bones of the dead. Is that what you want for your new home?

SHERMAN

All I want is to protect these people. I can't do that while he lives.

DAVIS

Why? What is that he's done that warrants his death?

If the people are so upset they can have him removed from office.

SHERMAN

It won't matter. The next one will continue where he left off. A message has to be sent. Something to show that we will not stand for this.

DAVIS

Stand for what?

SHERMAN

You'll see. Soon enough.

They fly on in silence.

EXT. PRISON - NIGHT

The shuttle swoops into a valley in the mountains. A large, multistory prison sits in the middle covered in spot lights.

INT. SHERMAN'S SHUTTLE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sherman walks over and grabs Gavin, hauling him into the cockpit.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER (O.S.)

This is a restricted air space, please identify or turn back immediately.

Gavin remains quiet.

SHERMAN

They'll shoot us down if you don't.

The Governor leans in to the console.

GOVERNOR GRANT

This is Governor Grant, authorization code seven nine alpha six.

FLIGHT CONTROLLER

Code confirmed. Enjoy your visit, Governor.

EXT. PRISON - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The shuttle circles over the prison to a VIP landing pad on the roof.

INT. PRISON/WARDEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The group strolls from the roof into the warden's office.

The warden and a guard are waiting to receive them. Sherman and Mary shoot them dead before they have a chance to speak.

The office is well decorated, with an expensive desk and placards. One side of the room is dominated by a wall of cameras.

Sherman heads for the cameras while Mary secures the door. The farmer watches over the rest. Davis joins Sherman by the cameras.

DAVIS

What is this place?

SHERMAN

It used to be a prison.

Davis looks at one of the camera feeds. Two aliens, a Rota and Phage [Type Needed] wait for entrance at a secure door.

DAVIS

(Shocked)

Aliens?

Gideon and Winters join him as the Governor slouches behind the warden's desk.

GIDEON

That one's Phage. What the hell?

Grant goes to touch a hidden button under the desk. Sherman wheels around shoots the desk, almost without looking.

SHERMAN

(Stern)

Don't.

He turns back to the wall of cameras. The aliens have been granted passage through the secure door and move into a cell block.

The humans have been gathered like cattle in the center. The aliens look down at the cowering masses, preparing to make their selection.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

I first heard rumors about a trafficking operation six months ago when I rescued some people on a Rota Cruiser.

(MORE)

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

It took me three months to find where it was. You could imagine my shock, learning it was in my own backyard.

He angrily turns toward Grant.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Or that my best friend was behind it.

This slime has been selling political prisoners to aliens. So they can harvested, cut up and experimented on.

WINTERS

Those are serious allegations.

MARY

They aren't allegations. The proof is all over this facility.

SHERMAN

At first I was just going to kill him. Allow the people to discover and shut down this place on their own.

But after seeing the powder keg this town had turned into I realized it would only lead to all out war.

(To Gavin)

This way I can expose you for the monster you are.

The Governor abruptly stands, having pulled a hidden gun from the desk.

He shoots the farmer and turns the gun on Sherman before he can draw his weapon.

With the pistol aimed at Sherman, Mary hesitates, holding her weapon on the Governor. Sherman doesn't even blink.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Why must you constantly find ways to disappoint me, old friend?

GOVERNOR GRANT

Old friend, old friend, shut up!

Always running around playing the hero. Swooping into to save the day.

You don't know what it's like to have to protect these people day in and day out.

Pirates and slavers and rebels and brigands. It never ends. Crises after crises. And they are never happy!

They want more and more and all the while the precious Union demands more taxes, more soldiers, more resources.

The aliens offered us protection and money. We could finally fix this dump up. Build public works and schools.

SHERMAN

Or statues of their wise and powerful leader.

GOVERNOR GRANT

Shut up. You don't know what it's like. You've never been responsible for anything.

A dumb, washed up drunk skipping his way though life. How nice it must be to drift from world to world without a care.

SHERMAN

I had responsibilities once. Felt their blood drip down my arms as the air left their lungs.

Not as challenging as parties and having the right pastries for your guest, I'm sure.

GOVERNOR GRANT

Oh boo who. Poor little Sherman who lost his ship to pirates. Cry me a river.

(MORE)

GOVERNOR GRANT (CONT'D)
People die, cold and alone. That's
the way it works.

(To Mary)
You saw it.

During the raid. Men and women we
grew up with, went to school with.
Catching a stray bullet out of dumb
luck. Bleeding out in the dirt,
alone and afraid for nothing!

But some people, some people live.
They have parties and dance and
enjoy a good show.

Tears spill down the governor's face.

He steadies, his resolve growing. He stills the shaking
pistol as the tears slide down his face, holding it on
Sherman.

GOVERNOR GRANT (CONT'D)
I'm going to enjoy my life. You nor
anyone else is going to get in my
way.

Sherman walks toward him, calm as a stroll through the park.
With each step Gavin's gun wavers a little more.

SHERMAN
I know buddy.

This world is a dark and cruel
existence. Everyone tries to get by
with what they have.

Some aren't so lucky.

He stands directly in front of the desk. The pistol an inch
from his chest.

Sherman stares past the Governor to some horizon only he can
see.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)
I died once. On a ship of ghosts,
lost in an endless sea.

I could feel the blood drain out of
me. Felt it getting thinner in the
rest of body.

(MORE)

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

I felt my lungs spasm, collapsing as they failed to take in enough air.

I was too tired to even grasp for breath. I was out there all alone. No one to come to my rescue.

I didn't feel the comforting hand of god or the love of those back home. I didn't feel pride on a mission completed or in knowing I had saved other people from further attack.

All I felt, was cold. A chill in the air around me that seemed to strike at my very soul.

I closed my eyes.

Sherman closes them.

And I awaited the release that only death could bring.

He snaps out of it, snatching the gun out of Gavin's hand.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Maybe you should remember that the next time you think of threatening me.

He whips Grant across the face with the pistol, driving him down into the chair.

Sherman walks back over to the wall of cameras. A camera shows landing pads with two alien vessels on them.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

We have two alien vessels that will soon start loading people. We need to stop them and shut down this facility.

Any ideas?

Davis lifts his gauntlet.

DAVIS

Anderson, you get all that?

ANDERSON (O.S.)

Yeah. That is one scary dude.

DAVIS
I was talking about the ships.

ANDERSON
Oh yeah. We can take them when ever
your ready.

DAVIS
Do it. Then storm the facility with
both teams.

ANDERSON
Sounds good. Stand by.

Sherman looks at Davis, an unspoken question on his face.

DAVIS
We've been tracking you pretty much
the entire time. After your whole
fountain dance we knew you had to
have a ship.

WINTERS
We thought you would use it to
escape the governor's mansion after
the party.

Gideon crouches next to the farmer, checking his wounds. He's
dead of course.

GIDEON
But this worked too.

MARY
You boys can smack each other on
the bottoms latter, we have a
facility to secure.

DAVIS
Yes Ma'am.

Davis heads over to the desk and activates the intercom
system.

INT. PRISON - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Guards around the facility stop and listen as he speaks.

DAVIS (O.S.)
This is Major Davis of the Union
Army. This facility is in violation
of Union law.

(MORE)

DAVIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It is being secure by Army personnel. Anyone who resist will be shot without warning.

Throw down your weapons and await escort by Army personnel out of the facility.

Some guards throw down their weapons and run, others dig in for a fight.

INT. PRISON/WARDEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

DAVIS

That should help.

They hear the roar of shuttles as Anderson's force rockets past the prison. The facility is rocked by the explosions of destroyed defenses and alien ships.

SHERAMN

So should that.

INT. PRISON/WARDEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT - LATER

The Governor sits in the warden's chair, with the air of a defeated child. The rest stand around the desk with Anderson, discussing how the battle went.

Xiao guards the door as Kapoor enters from the roof.

KAPOOR

Shuttle's ready when you are, sir.

Davis nods Kapoor away.

ANDERSON

What do we do with the governor?

SHERMAN

A message still needs to be sent to the tyrants across the colonies that this will not be tolerated.

WINTERS

He needs to face trial for his crimes.

SHERMAN

So he can escape? Or bribe his way free? No.

They turn to Davis, who stares down at the pathetic governor.

DAVIS
Let it be recorded that the
Governor was turned to over
Sherman's custody at...

He looks down at his gauntlet.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Twenty three hundred.

What he does with the governor is
his choice.

Davis walks away.

WINTERS
You can't be serious, he'll kill
him.

DAVIS
Not our problem.

Davis exits, leaving Sherman to decide the fate of the
governor.

INT. ICARUS/SHUTTLE BAY - NIGHT

The crew unloads from the shuttle, heading off to their own
corners of the ship.

INT. BRIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

Davis and Winters stand on the command platform of the ship.
Cid flicks his switches to powers up the Icarus.

CID
Ready for lift off, awaiting your
command.

WINTERS
Take her up.

CID
Aye, aye. Lift off in ten, nine...

EXT. APOLLO - NIGHT

The Icarus powers up and heads off into night sky.

FADE OUT