

Undead Outlaws

by
Matthew David

mattmdavid@gmail.com
818-618-4765

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT - NEAR DUSK

An open stretch of dry, desolate desert. Sagebrush grows in patches and brittle tumbleweeds sit immobile.

HAZE, late 20s, a handsome, well-educated scoundrel, dressed like an old west cowboy, drags a low-quality COFFIN. Haze is dirty, bedraggled, and dehydrated.

The coffin's construction is unusual - wheels are built on and a harness for a mule to pull it is attached, though its currently worn by Haze to pull the coffin.

HAZE

Lightheadedness is actually caused by a drop in blood pressure and blood volume. Blood volume drops because the body is literally drying out. Lightheadedness is accompanied by confusion and a sluggishness of cognitive brain stuff. Fainting like a little sissy isn't uncommon, though thankfully we're not quite at that stage yet.

Haze walks over a tumbleweed, getting it caught on his boot. He kicks it away awkwardly, almost falling over, and continues on. He looks up to the horizon and sighs.

HAZE

I really should have drank my own urine. (Pause) You know, the fact that the dynamite at the vault blew too soon, the sheriff untied himself, and our getaway horses ran away isn't my fault.

Unintelligible, muffled swearing now emits from the coffin in a steady stream.

Haze takes out a POCKET WATCH, presses it against his head for a moment, then flips it open. Instead of numbers, the watch shows strange symbols and only a single hand on the clock face. He closes the watch.

The swearing from the coffin stops. Haze sighs in relief. The swearing starts up again.

HAZE

Well, if you're going to be like that, maybe you'd like to drive.

(CONTINUED)

The coffin lid opens a fraction of an inch.

GRAVELLY VOICE
(from within coffin)
Haze?

HAZE
Yeah, Ern?

GRAVELLY VOICE
(from within coffin)
You're terrible at being a
criminal.

HAZE
I know, Ern.

GRAVELLY VOICE
(from within coffin)
And could you NOT go over every
damn rock in the desert? If I
still had a stomach, I'd be
nauseous.

EXT. DESERT HILLTOP - CONTINUOUS

A Mysterious Figure on horseback watches Haze pulling the coffin in the distance. With a kick of the spurs, the horse takes off after them.

EXT. CLIFF SIDE - NEAR DUSK

Haze stands on a sheer cliff, looking down at a set of train tracks some 30' below. In the distance, the SUN IS SETTING. A vulture sits on a nearby rock, watching Haze.

HAZE
Okay...I have a testable
hypothesis.

A GROAN emits from the COFFIN.

HAZE (CONT)
It stands thus: that two subjects,
jumping on the back of a train
moving at approximately 40 miles
per hour, would not only survive,
but be transported to a land
flowing with water, whiskey, and
wanton women.

Haze cracks the coffin lid an inch.

(CONTINUED)

HAZE

What do you say Ern? Care to be part of this grand experiment?

GRAVELLY VOICE

(from within coffin)

You're an idiot.

Haze SLAMS the lid shut.

HAZE

Thank you Ern, your contribution to science will not be forgotten.

A GUNSHOT rings out, a puff of dust rising up by Haze's feet.

Haze dives behind the coffin, drawing his own GUNS, six shooters. Several more GUNSHOTS ring out, some of them hitting the coffin.

GRAVELLY VOICE

Ow...ow....ow...

The gunshots stop.

ELLIE

Gentlemen!

A woman dressed in cowboy style, complete with a duster, lazily walks toward Haze, reloading. Her HORSE stands several feet away.

ELLIE (CONT)

(cheerful)

I'm Ellie and it will be my joy and privilege to arrest you today. You are to drop your weapons and come with me back to Sand City, where you will be held accountable for your crimes of attempted theft, destruction of property, and illegal usage of alchemy.

HAZE

Can't we just talk about this?

Haze pops up and FIRES several times at the woman. She staggers from the shots, but remains standing. She recovers and continues reloading her SIX SHOOTERS.

(CONTINUED)

Haze gets a good look at her for the first time. ELLIE, excessively cheerful, looks late 20s, with a face crisscrossed with stitches and skin patches of different shades. NECK BOLTS stick out of her neck.

HAZE (CONT)

A patchwork? They sent a patchwork bounty hunter after us?

ELLIE

Yup. You boys must have really pissed off someone important.

Ellie raises her guns and fires several more shots. Haze dives back behind the coffin.

In the distance, a TRAIN WHISTLE blows. Haze glances down the tracks to see a very distant train. He looks toward the sun, almost dropped below the horizon.

HAZE

(whispering to self)
C'mon, c'mon, c'mon.

Ellie jumps on top of the coffin and looks down at Haze, guns pointed.

ELLIE

Well necromancer, you going to come quietly?

Haze puts his hands up. He glances toward the almost-set sun.

HAZE

Well, I might...

The SUN SETS.

HAZE

...but I doubt he will.

Ellie looks confused. The coffin lid EXPLODES upward, sending Ellie flying, crashing down several feet away.

ERN, a male mid 50s zombie cowboy, no nonsense, pessimistic, stands up. Ern's skin is dried out, and patches of bone can be seen.

The train gets steadily closer.

Ern picks up a large piece of BROKEN COFFIN LID and bashes a rising Ellie with it, dropping her to her hands and knees. He kicks her in the gut a couple times for good measure.

Haze grabs a long length of ROPE that was hanging from the side of the coffin and starts tying a lasso.

Ellie kicks out and trips Ern. The two roll away from each other and stand, staring each other down. Ellie cracks her neck, her neck bolts SPARK a few times. Ern POPS his knuckles.

Haze runs towards Ellie's horse with the rope.

HAZE (CONT)

Anytime, friends.

Ern and Ellie charge, wrestle, and exchange a series of blows. Ellie lands the most blows, and proves the quicker and the stronger. She grabs Ern's arm as he attempts another punch, and with a yank, rips his ARM off. Ern stumbles backwards.

ELLIE

Whoopsie!

ERN

Hey! Give that back!

Ellie kicks Ern and he goes flying. Haze lassos Ellie and attempts to pull. She twists her arm around the rope and pulls harder back, causing him to stumble toward her. She gives him a good kick in the gut.

Ern slaps the rump of Ellie's horse, which takes off. The rope attached to Ellie goes taut, and Ellie is pulled away by her horse.

ELLIE

(yelling)

I don't take this personally!

The train ROARS down the tracks and starts speeding past Haze and Ern. They make a break for it, jumping aboard the roof of the very last train car.

INT. FREIGHT CAR - CONTINUOUS

The freight car is filled with stacks of boxes, most labeled "Potatoes."

A trapdoor in the roof opens and Haze drops down. A one armed Ern awkwardly follows.

(CONTINUED)

HAZE

All the comforts of home.

ERN

This is going to keep happening,
you know.

Haze strikes a match and lights a lantern hanging by the door.

HAZE

Hey, and at least I won't starve!

Haze feebly tries to open a nailed shut box.

ERN

Haze, we need a plan.

HAZE

Ern, I need a crowbar.

Ern grabs the lid of the crate and rips it off. It's filled with potatoes.

ERN

At this rate you'll never get the funds you need in time! Maybe you should think about going back to the University on your hands and knees and explaining everything.

Pause.

HAZE

Do you know if potatoes hold a lot of water?

Ern grunts, storms off and sits behind a box.

HAZE (CONT)

(sigh)

It's a little musty in here.

Haze opens the freight car door. Outside, the landscape speeds by. Haze also notices a HORSE with no rider trying to keep up with the train. It starts falling behind.

HAZE (CONT)

Now what the heck--

Ellie comes swinging around the corner and kicks Haze in the face, sending him sprawling into a stack of boxes, which in turn heap on top of Ern. She lands in the doorway.

(CONTINUED)

ELLIE

Okay, now--

Haze recovers and charges at Ellie, who sidesteps and trips him...right out the door! Haze manages to grab onto the doorway, flailing widely.

ELLIE (CONT)

Whoopsie again! Hey! I'm supposed to take you in alive. No dying!

Ellie reaches for Haze, but Haze scrambles up the side of the train car to the roof.

There's a shifting of boxes behind Ellie. She turns just in time to see Ern kick a large box at her. She too goes flying out the door and manages to grab on to the edge of the train car.

ERN

Haze!

Haze pops his head through the roof trap door.

HAZE

Get up here! I've got an improvisation!

Haze reaches his hand down. Ern jumps, grabs his hand, and Haze manhandles him up. He slams the trapdoor shut. Ellie drags herself back into the train car.

EXT. TRAIN CAR ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

The trapdoor flies off its hinges with Ellie's punch. She pulls herself up to the roof.

Haze and Ern are on the edge of the train rooftop a car ahead of Ellie.

ERN

We're almost at the river. On the count of three. One...two...

ELLIE

Don't jump! If you two die I'll get into a lot of trouble!

ERN

Three!

Ern and Haze, hand in hand, jump. Ellie sprints and jumps off the edge of the train too.

As she falls, she sees Haze and Ern hanging from the side of the train from a ROPE.

EXT. SMALL RIVER - CONTINUOUS

The train passes by on the bridge overhead. Ellie splashes down in the water and surfaces, watching the train leave. She punches the water in frustration.

EXT. TRAIN CAR ROOFTOPS - CONTINUOUS

Haze and Ern hang from the side of the train.

ERN

Aw, damn it! I should have asked
for my arm back...

EXT. CITY OF CROSSROADS - DAY

The city of Crossroads is a frontier town, small, and fallen on hard times. The streets are empty.

The sign in front of town reads "Welcome to Crossroads. Population 150 souls - 50 living." The numbers have been crossed out numerous times - the number of the living was once much higher.

The train pulls in to town and Haze kicks a BOX labeled "Potatoes" off the train before it enters the station, then jumps off himself.

ERN

(from inside the box)

Ow...

Haze awkwardly manhandles the box behind a building.

HAZE

I'll be back after dark.

Ern grunts.

Haze saunters into town, hitting the main street while eating a raw POTATO. He surveys around him.

HAZE

(whisper)

Hot damn...

Haze takes off running, dives toward a horse trough, and dunks his head in.

Someone clears their throat O.S. to get Haze's attention.

(CONTINUED)

Haze looks up to see SHERIFF AMBROSE, 50s, humorless, stiff, and skeletally thin. His BADGE is prominent on his shirt.

HAZE
Howdy Sheriff.
(motions to trough)
Can I buy you a drink?

SHERIFF AMBROSE
Can I ask what you're doing up in
the middle of the day? It's almost
high noon.

Haze awkwardly stands up.

HAZE
Oh, just a simple traveling potato
salesmen, here to sell my wares.

Haze holds up the half eaten potato.

The sheriff looks down at Haze's holstered GUNS, then up to a bulge in his shirt pocket. He reaches into Haze's pocket, takes out the POCKET WATCH, and flips it open.

SHERIFF AMBROSE
You a practitioner of the Dark
Arts, sonny?

HAZE
No, sir. No, uh, I mean I have
been known to dabble a little, that
is to say, at the University I
attended, uh, where my studies
focused on, among other things,
this and that, that is to
say...Necromancy--

The sheriff grabs him by the arm and drags him into a nearby building.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

A spartan front office of this frontier doctor's office.

The Sheriff pulls Haze in. Nearby, SAVANNA, a mid 20s woman, attractive, hardened, is pouring a glass of water from a pitcher.

SAVANNA
Who is this?

(CONTINUED)

SHERIFF AMBROSE
Necromancer.

Savanna, shocked, puts the pitcher down and runs to block the Sheriff and Haze from the door to the examining room.

SAVANNA
Oh no you don't!

The Sheriff points at the ground, looking at Haze.

SHERIFF AMBROSE
Stay.

He turns to Savanna.

SHERIFF AMBROSE (CONT)
She's in debt.

SAVANNA
We're working to pay it off, damn it. You can't just assume she's going to die! We have rights. Eeek!

The Sheriff picks up a struggling Savanna. He looks at Haze and nods to the door.

SHERIFF AMBROSE
Go.

SAVANNA
Put me down! And don't you dare, Necromancer!

Haze, reluctant, goes through the door.

INT. DOCTOR'S EXAMINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Haze and the Sheriff enter a frontier style examining room, complete with old fashioned medical instruments and jars full of powder. Savanna, in a huff, enters after them.

Sitting on the examining bed is MARIETTA, late 40s, gruff, direct.

MARIETTA
Sheriff Ambrose, can't we just get this over with and let me die already. It's the waiting I can't stand. And who is this?

(CONTINUED)

SHERIFF AMBROSE
Necromancer.

SAVANNA
We have rights!

MARIETTA
Savanna, shut up! Well, Mr. Death,
what are you staring at? Never
seen a damn dying woman before?

HAZE
(gentlemanly)
Never one so attractive and who has
taken dying so gracefully.

MARIETTA
(beaming)
See sheriff? That's how you talk
to a lady. You lie through your
teeth. I'm Marietta, by the way,
and this is my lovely daughter
Savanna.

SHERIFF AMBROSE
She ain't got long left,
necromancer.

Haze motions to the Sheriff, who hands the POCKET WATCH back to Haze. Haze crosses to Marietta and puts it against her forehead. He flips it open and looks at the clock face.

HAZE
How did you know it was fatal?

SHERIFF AMBROSE
Had a little plague go through
town. Every person who got it
dropped. Marietta here is the last
one.

HAZE
A "little plague?" What are the
symptoms?

SHERIFF AMBROSE
Who do you think you are, a
doctor? Get to it.

Haze, now all business, grabs several bottles of powder and liquids, a mortar and pestle, and gets to work mixing.

Haze stops after grabbing another bottle and stares at it.

(CONTINUED)

HAZE

Huh...

SHERIFF AMBROSE

There a problem?

HAZE

I...don't think so. I've just never seen red geist weed before. It's usually blue.

SHERIFF AMBROSE

Must grow different in these parts...

HAZE

Must...

Haze takes out some of the geist weed and gets back to work.

SAVANNA

Severe weakness, sweating, and dizziness.

HAZE

Pardon?

SAVANNA

You asked about the symptoms.

HAZE

(pause)

Dry mouth?

SAVANNA

(surprised)

Yes. You've seen this before?

HAZE

I hope not...

SAVANNA

Well, we've had this before, but only a case or two a year. Always fatal. It wasn't long after Necromancer Flint arrived that there was a widespread outbreak.

Haze takes out a pair of wire rimmed SMOKED GLASSES. He looks at Savanna - she's surrounded by a soothing WHITE GLOW. Marietta's AURA is chaotic, pulling out from her body in random directions as if it's a torn up blanket caught by a strong wind.

(CONTINUED)

Haze takes off the glasses and gets back to business.

HAZE
Drink this.

MARIETTA
About damn time.

Haze offers Marietta a CUP of his black, tarlike mixture. Marietta drinks.

HAZE
By the power vested in me by...

Haze glances at the sheriff.

HAZE
...a legal authority, I hereby temporarily deny your passage to the afterlife.

Haze takes the cup. Marietta puts her head down.

MARIETTA
(weak whisper)
Mr. Necromancer...my daughter...is single...

SAVANNA
Mother!

Marietta sighs, closes her eyes, leans back, and goes still. Haze holds up a small mirror to her mouth. No condensation appears. He looks at the sheriff and nods.

HAZE
So...I'd like to have a word about this "little plague."

EXT. MAIN STREET OF CROSSROADS - CONTINUOUS

Haze and the Sheriff exit the doctor's office.

SHERIFF AMBROSE
Not much more to say. It came, it hit hard, wiped out nearly a quarter of the town, and then vanished.

HAZE
Was it something in the food? The water? Does your doctor have any idea how it was

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HAZE (CONT)

transmitted? Vermin, airborne, any ideas?

SHERIFF AMBROSE

Nope.

HAZE

Very helpful. Say...why doesn't this town have its own necromancer? I mean, I see the office there next door.

SHERIFF AMBROSE

He got called away. I think you earned yourself a day's stay at the inn on me.

HAZE

Oh! Uh, thanks, but I should really get going now. I've got to, uh...

SHERIFF AMBROSE

Sell more potatoes?

HAZE

Yes. No! I mean, I've got to--

SHERIFF AMBROSE

You still have to finish up with Marietta tonight. Am I right?

HAZE

Yeah...Well, I guess a day in a real bed wouldn't hurt anything. Not that I'm really tired.

INT. INN ROOM - DAY

A spartan frontier inn room on the second floor with a window overlooking the main street.

Haze drops into the bed and falls asleep instantly, fully clothed.

INT. INN ROOM - DUSK

Haze wakes up, scratches himself, and looks out the window which offers a clear view of Crossroads as darkness creeps over town.

EXT. CITY OF CROSSROADS - CONTINUOUS

As the sun SETS, a rooster CROWS.

A number of street lamps flare up with WHITE FLAMES, casting a soft, ghostly white light over the town. Street lamps flare up over the Boot Hill style cemetery as well. Coffins, covered in thin layers of dust, open, and zombies raise up. They shuffle into town, performing manual labor at the train station, on the farms, etc. The living move amongst them on their own tasks.

A BOY of about six is led by the hand by a GRANDFATHERLY ZOMBIE. The child skips merrily along.

A pattern emerges - zombies tip their hats to the living and will move off the sidewalk to give them room.

INT. INN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Haze yawns and turns from the window.

INT. TAVERN ROOM OF INN - NIGHT

A brightly lit, traditional frontier tavern with one exception: incense burns in multiple locations.

The BARTENDER, 40s, is currently gluing a finger onto a ZOMBIE PIANO PLAYER. The zombie flexes the finger a few times, goes to the piano, and starts playing.

Haze sits at the edge of the bar, watching. He has a MUG of beer in front of him.

HAZE

Not a bad job.

BARTENDER

We've had to do a lot of our own repairs since our necromancer skedaddled. I doubt he'll be able to play for more than a few hours before it falls off again. I hear you're going to be the new necromancer.

(CONTINUED)

HAZE

Oh, no, I plan on leaving as soon as I finish up with Marietta. Say, I notice this town has a lot of zombies.

BARTENDER

Yup, lots of debtors who couldn't pay up before the plague hit them, so they're working it off now.

HAZE

Who are they in debt to?

BARTENDER

The mayor.

Savanna enters the bar.

SAVANNA

Mr. Necromancer--

HAZE

Haze. My name is Haze.

SAVANNA

Mr. Haze, shouldn't we be attending to my Mother instead of...

She glares at his mug of beer.

SAVANNA

...gallivanting. Isn't it a bit early for that?

HAZE

I was...what do you mean by "we?"

SAVANNA

I was the last necromancer's assistant. I'll be helping with the procedure.

HAZE

Your own mother???

SAVANNA

Needs must, Mr. Haze.

HAZE

Fantastic...

INT. NECROMANCER'S WORKSHOP ROOM - NIGHT

Multiple strange and exotic tools hang from the walls. JARS filled with liquid and severed appendages sit on shelves. Some of the appendages twitch. A soft CHICKEN CLUCKING noise can be heard.

Marietta lies gray and cold on the examining table, a white sheet covers her body, except for a square empty patch over the stomach. she has a tube filled with a blue liquid inserted into one nostril.

Haze stands over Marietta, a long HOOK in one hand that he's currently jamming into Marietta's other nostril.

Savanna drives a KNIFE into Marietta's abdomen.

SAVANNA

Well, that was strangely satisfying.

She cuts through the skin in a sawing motion. Haze stares at her.

HAZE

You're a might bit peculiar.

Haze struggles to free his hook from Marietta's nostril. Her head BANGS against the table several times.

SAVANNA

So what exactly is a big city necromancer doing all the way out here?

HAZE

Oh, just passing through on my way to fame, adventure, and glory.

SAVANNA

Well, I'd say you're some kind of fraud, you act like a fraud, but you do seem to know what you're doing.

A SMALL MYSTERIOUS CREATURE walks through the dark shadows of the room, watching Haze and Marietta.

HAZE

Thanks...wait. Now what is that supposed to--

Marietta's eyes pop open. She grabs Haze's hand holding the hook.

(CONTINUED)

Marietta twitches her nose. She grabs Haze's hook, jerks it a certain way, and pulls it out.

MARIETTA

There you go, dear. I think it was caught on some cartilage.

HAZE

Much obliged, mam.

MARIETTA

Why does my head feel like it's full of soup?

HAZE

I was just finishing up liquefying your brains. Speaking of which, here they come.

A pinkish liquid flows from Marietta's other nostril. Haze pulls out the blue liquid tube.

HAZE (CONT)

(to Savanna)

Bellows.

Savanna, up to her arms in Marietta's INTESTINES, nods. She grabs a small BELLOWS DEVICE with a tube and glass jar attached. Haze inserts the bellows tube into Marietta's nostril. Savanna starts pumping. Pinkish ooze drains through the tube and fills the jar.

MARIETTA

Ahhhh...that feels so much better. Oh, hello Savanna. Such a pleasure finally getting to see where you work...since I've never been invited here before.

SAVANNA

Mother, don't start...

Savanna returns to emptying out Marietta of her internal organs.

The small mysterious creature FLAPS up to a high shelf. The chicken CLUCKING noise continues.

HAZE

Did either of you just hear--

(CONTINUED)

MARIETTA

I mean, I only have to go and die to see what kind of a livelihood my daughter leads. Oh, speaking of which, Mr. Necromancer, will you be furthering my daughter's training?

HAZE

Pardon?

More FLAPPING distracts Haze. He peers into the shadows.

MARIETTA

She wants to be a Necromancer one day. Go off to the University of the Dead and everything. Not that I have any clue how she's going to afford the tuition if she's not going to sell off her corpse for labor.

HAZE

(surprised)

You're not?

SAVANNA

That's none of your business.

HAZE

But surely WHAT THE HELL?!?

A furious FLAPPING assaults Haze, who bats his hands ineffectively. The flapping stops and JEBEDIAH, the undead zombie rooster, lands on the examining table next to Marietta. Jebediah has lost a few feathers and is in a state of decay. His eyes are wide open, unblinking, and disturbing.

SAVANNA

Oh, don't mind Jebediah. He was the old necromancer's pet. He's harmless.

Haze holds up a small SCALPEL in defense. Jebediah follows his every movement with his undead chicken eyes.

HAZE

Harmless?!? He could have taken my eye out.

MAYOR HIGGINS

Come now, Necromancer. Don't tell me you're afraid of a chicken.

(CONTINUED)

Standing in the doorway is MAYOR HIGGINS, big, bear-like, good natured, dressed like a gentleman, 40s, shadowed by the Sheriff. The Mayor finishes removing his gloves, then outstretches an arm as if to shake Haze's hand.

MAYOR HIGGINS (CONT)

Allow me to introduce myself. I'm the Mayor of these parts. Mayor Higgins.

Haze reaches to shake the Mayor's hand, but Jebediah lands on the Mayor's arm. Haze shies away.

HAZE

Uh, you'll pardon me if I don't shake hands.

MARIETTA

Mr. Mayor, so nice of you to visit.

The Mayor pets the rooster on the head.

MAYOR HIGGINS

Of course my dear. And might I just say, such a lovely liver that you have.

MARIETTA

(proud)

Never a drop of alcohol!

MAYOR HIGGINS

So, Mr. Haze, I understand that you're going to be our new town necromancer.

HAZE

What?

SAVANNA

What?

HAZE

Uh, no, that's not the case--

MAYOR HIGGINS

The Sheriff here tells me you're a fine performer of the dark arts.

HAZE

I'm afraid I'm on the run, I mean, I've got to run, that is to say I have to--

MAYOR HIGGINS
A fine addition to the town, I say!

HAZE
Uh--

SHERIFF AMBROSE
Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR HIGGINS
Yes, Sheriff?

SHERIFF AMBROSE
He said no.

MAYOR HIGGINS
Really? Why Mr. Haze, when did you
change your mind?

HAZE
Well, I--

MAYOR HIGGINS
This is a blow. But we'll make
do. We always do.

HAZE
I'm sure you will.

MAYOR HIGGINS
Please let us know if you change
your mind. And now, I must be
off. Good evening Mr.
Haze. Ladies.

Jebediah flaps off into the darkness. The Mayor and Sheriff
leave.

SAVANNA
Ready for the stuffing.

Savanna rips open a large sack full of cotton.

MARIETTA
Not too much now. I'd like to at
least keep a bit of my figure.

HAZE
Finish up. I've got some business
to attend to that I was rudely
interrupted from.

SAVANNA

Such as?

INT. TAVERN ROOM OF INN - NIGHT

The tavern has filled up with several patrons. A card game is being played. The Zombie Piano Player plays a merry WESTERN TUNE. Haze, at the bar, downs his GLASS OF WHISKEY.

HAZE

Ahhh....

Ern's dried out SEVERED ARM is slammed onto the bar next to Haze. Haze looks up into the smiling face of Ellie.

HAZE (CONT)

Well, that didn't take lo--

Ellie decks him. Haze goes flying, SMASHING into several chairs and a table. Patrons across the bar stand. The Zombie Piano Player plays on, unperturbed.

BARTENDER

Patchwork!

ELLIE

Nothing to be alarmed about everyone. Just official business of the state.

Haze, struggling to stand, draws one of his GUNS, which Ellie kicks away. She picks him up by his shirt collar and throws him into a wall.

ELLIE (CONT)

That wasn't very nice what you did, tricking me like that.

HAZE

Madam, I do apologize for any inconvenience.

Haze takes several swings at Ellie. All of them connect, body shots and face shots. Haze pauses.

ELLIE

(unfazed)

So am I to understand that you're not coming quietly?

Pause. Haze punches her in the face again. Ellie grabs him by the neck, lifting him off his feet and choking him.

(CONTINUED)

HAZE
(choking)
Sorry.

Ern jumps on Ellie's back, putting her in a headlock. She drops Haze, who stumbles backwards.

ERN
Were you going to leave me in that damn box all night?

HAZE
(coughing)
Ern, I think we need to focus on the present.

ELLIE
I like that! Live in the moment!

Ellie jumps backwards into a wall, smashing Ern into it. He lets go.

HAZE
Together we can take her!

Haze charges. Ellie kicks him. Haze goes flying into the card table. Ellie grabs Ern and hurls him over the bar into the rows of liquor bottles.

Ellie picks Haze up.

ELLIE
Oh, don't let me forget to add the damage in here to your charges.

She headbutts Haze, knocking him unconscious.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF TAVERN - NIGHT

Haze, tied up and slumped over the back of a horse, wakes up. Ern is tied up next him.

ERN
Did you enjoy your whiskey?

HAZE
Why yes, it was quite refreshing. You know, for a bodyguard, you're pretty terrible at your job.

Ern stares at him. He then struggles violently to get at Haze.

(CONTINUED)

ERN

C'mere! Just let me get my--

Ellie knocks them both on the head.

ELLIE

Okay gentlemen, the next train isn't due for a couple days. I figure if we ride hard, we can beat it back to Sand City. Sound like a good idea?

HAZE

Uh...no?

Ellie laughs.

MAYOR HIGGINS

Excuse me! Mrs. Patchwork!

Higgins, the Sheriff, and two dozen ZOMBIE TOWNSFOLK walk down the street toward Ellie.

MAYOR HIGGINS (CONT)

I'm the Mayor of this town. What seems to be the trouble?

ELLIE

No trouble at all, Mr. Mayor. Just taking these criminals back to justice.

The zombies surround Ellie. The Sheriff quietly walks around their perimeter to behind Ellie.

MAYOR HIGGINS

Criminals? I'm afraid there must be some mistake. That's our town necromancer that you have there.

ELLIE

Pardon?

MAYOR HIGGINS

Isn't that right, Haze?

HAZE

Uh, yes! Right! Absolutely!

ELLIE

Mr. Mayor, these men are wanted by the State.

(CONTINUED)

MAYOR HIGGINS

But this is my town, Mrs.
Patchwork. I believe I have
jurisdiction here.

ELLIE

I'm afraid you're mistaken Mr.
Mayor. It doesn't work like that.

MAYOR HIGGINS

(sighs)

Look, I know of a quick way to get
this sorted out.

The Sheriff BLASTS Ellie point blank with a SHOTGUN. The
impact sends her flying forward into the ground. The
zombies tackle her en masse, pinning her.

ELLIE

Hey, what do you think you're
doing?

The Sheriff takes out a short length of metal fence
WIRE. He jumps on Ellie's back and twists one end of the
wire around one of her neck bolts. When he twists the other
end of the wire around the other neck bolt, SPARKS shoot out
and the Sheriff jumps back. Ellie seizes, then goes still.

MAYOR HIGGINS

There, I believe that should do it.

The zombies lift Ellie up and support her on either
side. Her body is limp, though her head still
functions. She focuses on the Mayor.

ELLIE

(groggy)

Mr. Mayor...I'm sorry to say
that...I'll have to report you for
this...

The Mayor nods at the zombies. They drag Ellie away.

ELLIE (CONT)

And on a personal note...I don't
much care for...

The Mayor walks over to Ern and Haze, still tied to the back
of the horse.

MAYOR HIGGINS

Well well, I am mightily pleased
that you decided to stay after all,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAYOR HIGGINS (CONT)

Mr. Haze. Welcome to Crossroads. I'm sure you'll soon become a valuable member of the community.

The Mayor smiles. Haze manages a weak smile in return.

INT. NECROMANCER'S MANSION ENTRY HALL - DAY

An opulent mansion interior. The overall style here is frontier meets goth.

Animal heads of elk, bear, buffalo, and jackalope hang from the walls, some of which turn to look at Haze and Ern as they enter.

A grandfather clock sits at one end of the hallway. Inside is a visible and beating human heart that powers it. The chandelier, which contains seemingly empty bulbs, lights up with a pale white light that fills the interior.

Haze whistles in appreciation.

HAZE

Now this is more like it!

Haze rushes off to start peering in doorways.

ERN

You realize we're trapped here.

HAZE

I've got my own office! I've never had an office before.

Haze runs to another doorway.

ERN

This is a cage.

HAZE

No, this is a den.

Haze exits through another door.

ERN

(yelling)

Haze, the mayor is a corrupt, cut throat son of a bitch. We're in real trouble here.

Haze yells back from another room.

(CONTINUED)