

PINKERTON GIRL

Pilot: "Child of a Cherokee Woman"

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FADE IN:

INT. COVERED WAGON - DAY

Hands of a teenage girl make a doll from corn husks.

Crammed among belongings in the back of the wagon, slim, petite, green-eyed ISABELLE EAST (16), long dark hair tied back, sways from its movement.

Isabelle gives the doll to her blonde cousin, MOLLY EAST (8). Molly smiles, puts a little dress on it.

DANIEL (O.S.)

Whoa!

SUPER: "Kansas Territory. Spring, 1860."

EXT. COVERED WAGON - CONT.

On the driver's seat, Molly's father, DANIEL EAST (30s), pulls back reins. Oxen moo. Wagon halts. Molly's brother, JIMMY EAST (10), jumps down.

Daniel helps his wife, CLARA EAST (30s), from driver's seat.

Isabelle lifts Molly from the back of wagon, looks around.

They're in a wooded grove.

An ox's leg is examined by Daniel. Clara joins him.

DANIEL

(stands)

Needs to rest until he's fit.

CLARA

There was a stream not far back.
I'll send the children with
Isabelle to do a wash. How about I
make biscuits? It's been a while
since we've had fresh made.

Daniel smiles. They share a gentle kiss.

EXT. STREAM - LATER

Clothes dry on the grassy bank. In the water, in just chemises, Isabelle washes Molly's long, golden locks.

A knife beside him, Jimmy sits on the bank while fishing.

EXT. WOODED GROVE - CONT.

On the trail beyond the trees, with intense looks, two outlaws ride fast. They almost collide with the Easts' wagon, quickly halt the horses.

The gruff, heavier OLDER OUTLAW (40s) confronts Daniel.

OLDER OUTLAW
Why ya in the middle a' the trail?

DANIEL
I apologize. We've got a lame ox.

The slick YOUNGER OUTLAW (30s) eyes...

Clara, pan in hand. She appears alarmed. Daniel joins her.

YOUNGER OUTLAW
(lascivious grin)
Looks delicious.

DANIEL
Biscuits. Perhaps you men would
like to --

OLDER OUTLAW
(hisses at partner)
-- We ain't got time fer biscuits!
But, we can take time ta see what
else these fine folks might 'ave.

Slowly, he draws his pistol, points it at...

Daniel, who holds Clara tight.

EXT. STREAM - CONT.

A GUNSHOT rings out, followed by Clara's SCREAM. Isabelle hurries out of the water, grabs Jimmy's knife.

ISABELLE
Stay here!

Barefoot, she runs off. There's a second GUNSHOT.

EXT. WOODED GROVE - CONT.

Clara's body lies across Daniel's. Blood from bullet holes in their heads pools on the ground.

The Older Outlaw holsters the pistol, gets off his horse.

YOUNGER OUTLAW

What the hell? We coulda had a
little fun with 'er before --

OLDER OUTLAW

-- If we ain't got time fer no
biscuits, we sure as hell ain't got
time fer socializin'!

The Younger Outlaw dismounts, grabs a biscuit from the ground, blows off dirt, takes a bite. He follows his partner to the wagon.

Isabelle arrives, stands over Daniel's and Clara's bodies. A hardened look clouds her face. As if in a trance, she goes to the wagon, removes a hatchet from the side.

The men exit the wagon, head toward their horses.

A flash of metal flies through the air, sinks into the back of the Younger Outlaw's skull.

Isabelle sprints to the other side of the wagon.

The Older Outlaw glances over his shoulder, sees...

On the ground, hatchet embedded in his skull, remnants of the biscuit tumble from his dead partner's slack-jawed mouth.

The Older Outlaw fumbles for his pistol. A whip flicks it from his hand.

Briefly stunned, he sees, charges toward...

Isabelle, ox whip in hand. She steps aside, trips him. He falls facedown on the dirt.

Isabelle tosses the whip, straddles him. She jerks his head up by the hair, brings her knife to his throat. With a single swipe, she extracts justice.

She pulls the hatchet from the Younger Outlaw's skull, stands over the body, bloodied knife and hatchet in her hands.

INT. BALTIMORE SALOON - NIGHT

The atmosphere is somber. An AGITATED MAN (40s) enters.

AGITATED MAN

(angry)
Lincoln has won!

SUPER: "Baltimore, Maryland. November 6, 1860."

At a table, a thin DIGNIFIED MAN (38), dressed in funeral black, grits his teeth. His eyes blaze with fury. In an Italian accent, he quietly sneers.

DIGNIFIED MAN

It is our sacred duty to prevent
him from taking office.

With him are a dark-featured BROODING MAN (26); a wavy-haired TIMID MAN (20); and a curly-haired SOPHISTICATED MAN (22). All have slopping mustaches. They solemnly nod.

Alone at a corner table, a clean-shaven, FAIR-HAIRED MAN (32) slowly sips a beer, studies the others.

EXT. CAMPBELL FARM - DAY

Beyond the west bank of the Mississippi, smoke curls from chimneys of meagre huts. In a frost-covered field, slaves pull dead corn stalks.

IN DISTANCE: The stately, columned Campbell home.

SUPER: "Eastern Missouri. Campbell home. Late November."

INT. CAMPBELL PARLOR - CONT.

In the elaborately furnished room, Isabelle oversees lessons for Jimmy and Molly. Her and Molly's hair is shoulder length.

ISABELLE

Molly, do problems one through
five. Jimmy, write the difference
between the philosophies of
Aristotle and Socrates.

From outside, the sound of a buggy draws her to the window.

EXT. CAMPBELL HOME - CONT.

Debonair TIMOTHY WEBSTER (38), dark hair, impressive mustache, helps trim, lovely HATTIE LAWTON (23) from buggy.

HATTIE

Try not to show your personal
misgivings, Tim. Look at this as
just a normal assignment.

WEBSTER

(British accent, serious)
I find it far from "normal."

INT. CAMPBELL PARLOR - CONT.

Isabelle remains at the window.

JIMMY (O.S.)
Who's here?

ISABELLE
I don't know.

She turns her attention to the children.

In a huff, ample-bodied, sour-faced AUNT SALLY (40s) enters.

SALLY
Isabelle, you have company. Come,
children.

Jimmy and Molly look to Isabelle.

ISABELLE
Do as your Aunt Sally asks.

Sally motions for Hattie and Webster to enter. She follows the children from the room, closes the door.

Webster addresses Isabelle in a business-like manner.

WEBSTER
I'm Timothy Webster. This is Miss
Hattie Lawton.

HATTIE
(kindly)
Hello, Isabelle. May we sit?

Isabelle gestures for them to take a seat on the divan. She sits on a chair opposite.

WEBSTER
Miss Lawton and I are employed by
the Pinkerton Detective Agency.

Sharply, Isabelle inhales.

Webster removes an envelope from his coat pocket.

WEBSTER (CONT'D)
This is for you.

Isabelle hesitates before she takes it.

WEBSTER (CONT'D)
It's a thousand dollars.

Amazed, Isabelle blinks at the amount.

WEBSTER (CONT'D)

Reward money for the... incident in
Kansas Territory last spring.

Isabelle stiffens, looks as though she wants to bolt.

HATTIE

Those were very dangerous men.
They'd committed many crimes before
crossing paths with you and
yours... What you did was
extraordinary.

WEBSTER

(reluctantly)

Which brings us to the other
purpose of our visit.

He nods for Hattie to elaborate.

HATTIE

(gently, to Isabelle)

An account of your exploits was
brought to the attention of Mr.
Pinkerton. As a result, he extends
an invitation to join us...

With a look of unease, Isabelle furrows her brow. From
outside, the sound of Jimmy's and Molly's laughter.

HATTIE (CONT'D)

... As a Pinkerton operative.

Isabelle's eyes widen.

WEBSTER

Mr. Pinkerton is employed by
railroad companies to oversee the
safety of our newly elected
president and his family, as they
travel.

ISABELLE

(quietly, pensive)

The Lincolns.

HATTIE

He also hopes to establish a
personal security unit for them. He
feels someone such as yourself
could help in that enterprise.

ISABELLE
 (defensive)
 Me? How?

HATTIE
 It's feared Mrs. Lincoln is also a target for adversaries. It would be advantageous to have someone who could become close to her and the boys, to help monitor their safety.

WEBSTER
 Although it's doubtful Mrs. Lincoln would allow an unrelated woman in the household, due to her being rather possessive of her husband.

Hattie gives him a disapproving glance, then looks back to Isabelle with a reassuring smile.

HATTIE
 Which is why you're a perfect candidate. Because of your youth. And presumed innocence... You'd be handsomely compensated.

Isabelle goes to the window, gazes out.

VIEW THROUGH WINDOW: Jimmy and Molly play tag, laugh.

As she studies the children, Isabelle appears conflicted.

WEBSTER (O.S.)
 We realize this is a lot to expect of someone your age. So it's understandable you wouldn't --

ISABELLE
 -- I appreciate the importance of what you're asking.

With a look of determination, she turns away from the window.

Hattie gives Webster a condescending grin.

Slowly, he exhales, seems disappointed.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)
 Before I'm able to give you an answer, I need to go home.

HATTIE
 (looks around, confused)
 "Home"?

ISABELLE

To my family. In Indian Territory.

WEBSTER

If you decide to join us, you need to be in Chicago by the first week of February.

HATTIE

(tentative, to Isabelle)

Would you like us to accompany you to... Indian Territory?

ISABELLE

I can get there on my own.

With a smile and nod, Hattie looks to...

Webster. He slightly shakes his head.

INT. ISABELLE'S BEDROOM - DAY

REFLECTION IN DRESSING TABLE MIRROR: With scissors, Isabelle cuts her hair to below her ears.

EXT. CAMPBELL HOME - CONT.

On the front porch, dressed as a boy, a valise at her feet, Isabelle hugs Jimmy and Molly, with hands behind their backs.

MOLLY

(tearfully)

Why do you have to go?

ISABELLE

It's difficult to explain. I may not be gone long. Continue with your lessons... We can write...

The children appear dejected.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Never forget how much your folks loved you... And conduct yourselves in ways that would make them proud.

From behind his back, Jimmy hands her a...

Tiny wooden box. Isabelle slides open the lid, removes a snake's rattle. She shakes it, smiles.

JIMMY
To remember us by.

MOLLY
And this.

She extends a...

Braid of her blonde and Isabelle's dark hair, woven together.
Isabelle takes it, blinks back tears.

EXT. STAGECOACH STATION (FORT SMITH) - DAY

In the rugged-looking frontier town, a stagecoach arrives.
Dressed as a boy, Isabelle climbs out, the valise in hand.

SUPER: "Fort Smith, Arkansas."

LIVERY STABLE

Isabelle approaches the scruffy PROPRIETOR (50s), who tosses
hay to corralled horses.

ISABELLE
I'd like to buy a horse.

PROPRIETOR
That so, young man? These 'ere are
fer sale.

Isabelle glances at the horses, frowns.

A "paint" mare is alone in a corral.

ISABELLE
What about that one?

The Proprietor follows her gaze.

PROPRIETOR
That's an Injun pony. Can't be
ridden. Ornerly as hell. I keep 'er
'cause she's purty ta look at, an'
has birthed some fine babies.

ISABELLE
How much?

The Proprietor removes his hat, scratches his bald head.

PROPRIETOR
You can 'ave 'er fer twenty bucks.
Extra two fer saddle an' bridle.

Isabelle pays the twenty-two dollars.

ISABELLE
No bridle. Just the halter.

PROPRIETOR
It's yer funeral.

He puts on his hat, leaves.

With a rope behind her back, Isabelle slowly approaches the mare, speaks softly.

ISABELLE
(in Cherokee; subtitled)
*Don't worry, pretty girl. I'm not
going to shove a piece of metal in
your mouth.*

The Proprietor returns with the saddle and blanket. He appears surprised as...

The mare lets Isabelle attach the rope to the halter, then put the blanket and saddle on. Isabelle ties the valise to it, secures the end of the rope to the halter for reins.

The Proprietor smirks, expects the mare to buck.

Effortlessly, Isabelle mounts, rides off in a smooth lope.

PROPRIETOR
I'll be damned.

EXT. CHEROKEE COMMUNITY - EVENING

On the crest of a hill, Isabelle halts the mare.

IN DISTANCE: Cherokee men, women, and children prepare for nightfall among crudely built cabins.

SUPER: "Indian Territory."

EXT. CHEROKEE COMMUNITY - SMITHY - LATER

A bucket of water splashes over the head and shirtless, muscular chest of the tall Negro blacksmith, ELIJAH (ELI) (38), his hair peppered with gray.

CHEROKEE (O.S.)
Leotie!

As he dries off and puts on a shirt, Eli appears curious.

Spotted mixed-breed dogs happily bark and run alongside Isabelle, "Leotie" to the welcoming Cherokee, as she rides past. She halts the mare in front of Eli, smiles down at him.

ISABELLE
Hello, Eli.

ELI
Isabelle?

His look of bewilderment turns into a wide grin. He lifts her from the saddle. Her legs dangle in the air.

SAMUEL (O.S.)
(British accent)
Isabelle? By Jove, is that you?

ISABELLE
Pépé!

Eli puts her down. She runs, falls into the embrace of her white-haired, life-worn grandfather, SAMUEL EAST (70s).

SAMUEL
Such a welcome surprise! But how --

ISABELLE
-- Would've written, but knew I'd get here before you picked up the mail.

They're joined by Isabelle's maternal grandmother/Samuel's companion, AYITA (60s). A full-blooded Cherokee, her weathered face and teary eyes light up with a smile.

Isabelle goes from Samuel's arms to Ayita's.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)
Mémé Ayita.

With a look of sadness, Ayita fingers Isabelle's short hair.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)
(in Cherokee; subtitled)
On my own, it's safer if I look like a boy.

AYITA
Come, you are in time for supper.

She steers Isabelle away.

The dogs vie for Isabelle's attention as she and Ayita head toward a modest cabin.

INT. SAMUEL'S CABIN - NIGHT

Samuel's fist slams a rustic table, where he and Eli sit. Isabelle and Ayita gather dirty plates.

SAMUEL
Absolutely not! I forbid it!

ISABELLE
But, Pépé --

SAMUEL
-- I've lost both sons... May never again see two of my grandchildren. You have no idea what's been asked of you!

ISABELLE
Yes. I do. Because of you, I read books and the newspaper. I'm well-versed in history enough to know Mr. Lincoln will be remembered...

On verge of tears, she takes a deep breath, slowly exhales.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)
What's it all for, if not something like this?

ELI
(to Samuel)
She's right.

SAMUEL
(accusingly)
You want her to go?

ELI
(shakes head)
But if she feels she must, then she must.

SAMUEL
It's too dangerous!

ELI
I'll go with her.

SAMUEL
(shocked)
You'd risk your freedom? After all these years?

ELI

Samuel, you know full well if it weren't for Jacob, I'd have never known how freedom feels. I promised I'd watch over his daughter. No doubt he would have supported her in this endeavor... So will I.

SAMUEL

(to Isabelle)

You're not here to ask my permission, are you?

ISABELLE

(slightly shakes head)

For your blessing.

Samuel's shoulders slump in defeat. Slowly, he nods.

With a smile, Isabelle gives him a hug.

From a decrepit armoire, Ayita removes a man's suit. She hands the jacket to Eli.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)

Pépe, we know how you feel about politics... And especially politicians.

Samuel's eyes narrow in anger.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)

But, as you've said, if the Republicans were in power, they could end slavery.

She glances at...

Eli. The jacket fits at the waist, but is tight in the shoulders and arms. The sleeves are inches too short.

SAMUEL

It will lead to war.

ISABELLE

Sometimes wars are necessary.

Ayita places her hand on Samuel's shoulder.

AYITA

(lovingly)

You've taught her well, Old Man.

Disheartened, Samuel shakes his head.

EXT. STAGECOACH STATION (FORT SMITH) - DAY

In Samuel's altered suit, Eli stands at the heads of two horses hitched to a wagon.

Isabelle, dressed as a boy, and Ayita are in the back.

SUPER: "Fort Smith, Arkansas. Late January, 1861."

Samuel exits the station. He gives Isabelle a stagecoach ticket and document. She reads it, looks to Samuel. They share a knowing nod.

Samuel hands Eli a ticket and document.

SAMUEL

Your ticket to West Memphis... And a notarized letter stating you're a free man, should the need arise. I've taken the liberty of writing your name as "Elijah East."

Tears of gratitude rise in Eli's eyes. Reverently, he folds the document, puts it in the inside coat pocket.

Isabelle jumps from the back of the wagon.

Eli helps Ayita out. He grabs two valises, carries them to the stagecoach, hands them to the driver.

Samuel extends his hand, pulls Eli in for a hug.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(quietly)
Stay safe, my son.

Eli blinks back the tears. He and Ayita hug.

Ayita and Isabelle embrace.

ISABELLE

(in Cherokee; subtitled)
Keep the Old Man warm.

With a tearful smile, Ayita nods.

Isabelle gives Samuel a kiss on his tear-streaked cheek, then joins a middle-aged couple in the coach.

Eli climbs on top, sits beside the driver.

Samuel puts his arm around Ayita's shoulders.

From inside, Isabelle waves as the coach heads out of town.

EXT. FERRY BOAT - DAY

Across the Mississippi River, Isabelle and Eli travel from Arkansas to Memphis, Tennessee. They disembark, head toward a gangplank to a moored steamboat.

SUPER: "Memphis Port, Tennessee."

Eyes wide with fright, Eli stops, stares.

Two men, armed with muskets and accompanied by dogs, watch over a group of chained, ragged slaves, who shiver and cower.

SLAVE HANDLER (O.S.)
Where do you belong, boy?

Eli turns to face the...

Brutish SLAVE HANDLER (50s), whip in hand. He glares at Eli.

ISABELLE (O.S.)
With me.

She comes between Eli and the Handler.

SLAVE HANDLER
Yer's, hey? Got papers?

Isabelle hands him the document Samuel gave her.

He takes his time to study it.

SLAVE HANDLER (CONT'D)
You need to come with me.
(to Eli)
Stay here, boy.

He exchanges a conspiring sneer with the other men.

Sweat eases down Eli's face.

Isabelle appears desperate, seems to have an idea.

ISABELLE
(to Handler)
Your name?

SLAVE HANDLER
What the hell does it matter who --

ISABELLE
-- So I can tell my father, who is a solicitor, whom it was who questioned my veracity...

With a worried look, the Handler steps back.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)

... And attempted to separate me
from his property.

SLAVE HANDLER

No need ta get uppity, young man.
I'm charged wi' securin' runaways,
an' this buck a' yers looks like
he's done a good share a' work.

ISABELLE

My father has worked him hard --
which is what he'll do with you, if
you make us miss our boat!

She snatches the document from his hand. He blinks with
uncertainty, joins the other men.

Eli trembles.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)

(shaken, fearful)

We can turn back.

With a deep breath, Eli straightens, leads the way up the
gangplank, steps onto the steamboat.

EXT. CHICAGO - DAY

On a busy street, Isabelle makes her way around mud and
mounds of snow. Eli follows with the valises.

SUPER: "Chicago, Illinois."

EXT./INT. PINKERTON DETECTIVE AGENCY - MOMENTS LATER

SIGN ON FRONT DOOR: Written around the emblem of an eye:
"Pinkerton's National Detective Agency. 'We Never Sleep.'"

Inside, Hattie hurries from an office with papers in hand.
She nearly collides with Isabelle as she and Eli enter.

HATTIE

Isabelle! And, you must be Elijah.
I'm Hattie Lawton.
(to Isabelle)
We received your telegram. Come,
Mr. Pinkerton is looking forward to
meeting both of you.

She leads the way.

HATTIE (CONT'D)

As you may know, this was the first
detective agency established in
America -- ten years ago.

(proudly)

And the only one in the world to
hire women as operatives.

INT. PINKERTON'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

The tough-looking Scotsman, ALLAN PINKERTON (43), stocky,
dark hair, bearded, sits at a desk.

In front of him, palms on desk, Webster leans into his face,
appears/sounds angry.

WEBSTER

A sixteen-year-old girl --

In a mild-mannered voice, Pinkerton interrupts.

PINKERTON

(Scottish accent)

-- I feel it's worth a try. If --

Hattie ushers in Isabelle and Eli.

Pinkerton stands.

PINKERTON (CONT'D)

Miss East? Elijah, I presume? I'm
Allan Pinkerton.

Eli puts down the valises to shake Pinkerton's hand.

PINKERTON (CONT'D)

(to Isabelle)

You've met Mr. Webster.

WEBSTER

Hello, Isabelle.

(extends hand to Eli)

Elijah. Timothy Webster.

WILLIAM PINKERTON (15), a younger version of his father,
minus the beard, barges into the room.

WILLIAM

Hey, Dad, I just heard a --

He stops, glances at Isabelle with an air of arrogance.

PINKERTON

William, I'd like you to meet Miss
Isabelle East. And her friend,
Elijah.

(to Isabelle and Eli)

My son, William.

WILLIAM

(surprised she's a girl)

"Isabelle"?

With a look of distrust, he scans her from head to foot.

PINKERTON

(to Isabelle)

Heard you had some facility with
disguise. Miss Lawton can teach you
a few more tricks that will surely
come in handy. And, from what I've
been told, perhaps you, in turn,
can impart some of your skills onto
her... and William.

WILLIAM

(offended)

Me?

PINKERTON

(to Isabelle and Eli)

I'd offer you a seat, but we're
rather in a rush, having received
rumors of secessionist plots to
assassinate Mr. Lincoln as he and
his family travel to Washington.

Eli shoots a look of alarm to Isabelle.

PINKERTON (CONT'D)

I'm sending Webster and Miss
Lawton, acting as husband and wife,
to Perrymansville, Maryland. Miss
East, I'd like you to accompany
them, as their "niece."

Isabelle nods.

PINKERTON (CONT'D)

Elijah, since Maryland's a slave
state, perhaps you'd pose as such?
That is, if you don't mind being on
the payroll.

Eli's eyes widen.

PINKERTON (CONT'D)
 (consults pocket watch)
 Your train leaves in two hours.

From his wallet, he removes money, hands it to Isabelle.

PINKERTON (CONT'D)
 For dresses and a warm coat. Also a
 wig. Elijah, you could do with a
 coat, and additional suit.

He offers money to...

Eli. Tentatively, he takes it.

ISABELLE
 (earnestly)
 Mr. Pinkerton, thank you for this
 opportunity.

PINKERTON
 Welcome to the Agency.
 (smiles)
 We never sleep.

Hattie leads Isabelle and a stunned Eli out.

William and Webster give Pinkerton concerned looks.

He ignores them.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY (MARYLAND) - EVENING

Overseen by a snobbish DESK CLERK (40s)...

Webster signs the registry.

Nearby, in a wig and nice coat, Isabelle waits with Hattie.

Behind them, with their bags, Eli appears quite stately in a
 new woolen coat.

SUPER: "Perrymansville, Maryland."

The Clerk gives Webster two keys.

DESK CLERK
 Rooms four and six. Breakfast
 served five to seven, dinner eleven
 to one, supper six to eight.
 (glances at Eli)
 Slave quarters are in the barn.
 They eat behind the kitchen.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Webster enters. Hattie, Isabelle, and Eli follow. Eli places a bag on each of two beds.

WEBSTER

(quietly, to Hattie)

Tomorrow, you and Isabelle do some shopping, try to meet ladies, see if there's any talk of secession. Elijah, you can help with their packages, and such.

Eli nods.

WEBSTER (CONT'D)

I'll visit the military facility, ingratiate myself to the officers, determine any rebellious leanings, make them feel I agree with them.

He checks pocket watch.

WEBSTER (CONT'D)

(stern, to Isabelle)

I'll be back in ten minutes for supper. Be ready.

He leaves. Eli follows with his and Webster's bags.

ISABELLE

Is he always so unpleasant?

HATTIE

Mr. Webster? Don't take it personally. You should know, he and Mr. Pinkerton are in disaccord about your working as an operative.

ISABELLE

Why's that?

HATTIE

Because you're so young. And a girl. He and his wife have had four children. Sadly, two passed. Their daughter, Sarah, is only a year younger than you.

ISABELLE

Oh...

(then)

How does his wife feel about you and...

HATTIE

... Our pretending to be married?
Fortunately, she's as committed to
the cause as much as Mr. Webster.

ISABELLE

So... if I weren't here...

HATTIE

To maintain the appearance of being
married, we would share the same
room. And bed.

(slightly hesitates)

Nothing more.

ISABELLE

Are you married?

HATTIE

I was. Briefly. Small pox.

ISABELLE

I'm sorry.

She goes to the window, looks down.

OUTSIDE WINDOW: Eli carries his bag toward the barn.

INT. BARN - CONT.

Among other Negro men, Eli finds an empty bed. He sets down
the bag, removes his fine new coat. Carefully, he folds,
places it on the foot of the bed.

A few poorly clothed slaves stare at him with resentment.

Eli stretches on the bed. From his shirt pocket, he removes a
harmonica, starts to play.

As they listen, the slaves' hardened looks soften.

MONTAGE - DETECTIVE WORK IN PERRYMANVILLE

-- At the military facility, Webster meets the officers. He
joins them for drinks at a bar.

-- Hattie and Isabelle visit a shop, introduce themselves to
women, have tea with them.

-- In Church, Webster and Hattie sing. Next to them, Isabelle
looks around. In the balcony, Eli sits with other Negroes.

END MONTAGE

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

From outside, Webster, Hattie, and Isabelle enter.

DESK CLERK (O.S.)
Mr. Webster, you have a telegram.

Webster goes to the front desk, takes it from the Clerk. He rejoins the others, reads the telegram, appears concerned.

WEBSTER
Isabelle, why don't you go order some ice cream for all of us?

ISABELLE
"Ice cream"?

HATTIE
You've never had ice cream?

Isabelle shakes her head.

HATTIE (CONT'D)
You're in for a treat. Go on, we'll join you shortly.

Isabelle leaves.

HATTIE (CONT'D)
(quietly, to Webster)
What is it?

WEBSTER
You and Isabelle are to meet with Allan in Philadelphia. Elijah and I are to go to Baltimore.

He looks toward the...

DINING ROOM

At a table, a waiter takes Isabelle's order. He leaves.

LOBBY

Hattie follows Webster's gaze.

HATTIE
Don't worry, she'll be fine.

DINING ROOM

Hattie and Webster join Isabelle.

HATTIE (CONT'D)
 (to Isabelle)
 There's a change of plans. You and
 I will be going to Philadelphia.

Isabelle gives her a look of uncertainty.

HATTIE (CONT'D)
 (upbeat)
 You'll enjoy it. It's a great place
 to shop.

The waiter brings the ice cream.

As she tastes it, Isabelle's eyes widen.

With a look of paternal contentment, Webster studies her.

INT. HOTEL ROOM (BALTIMORE)- DAY

Stretched on the bed, Webster writes in a small notebook.
 There's a knock at the door.

SUPER: "BALTIMORE, MARYLAND."

Webster opens the door to Fair-Haired Man, who was in saloon
 the night Lincoln won. He's PINKERTON OPERATIVE HARRY DAVIES.

DAVIES
 Timothy Webster?

Webster nods, motions for him to enter. He glances down the
 hall, closes the door.

DAVIES (CONT'D)
 Harry Davies.

They shake hands.

DAVIES (CONT'D)
 I've gained the trust of an Otis
 Hillard, convinced him we share his
 secessionist sentiments. Have
 arranged for you to meet.

WEBSTER
 Good work.

DAVIES
 He was recently questioned by a
 congressional committee, looking
 into groups allegedly hostile to
 the government.

INT. BALTIMORE SALOON - NIGHT

Lively piano music plays as Webster follows Davies through the crowded room to a table where...

OTIS HILLARD (26) sits. Glass in hand, he appears drunk.

DAVIES

Otis.

HILLARD

(glances up)

You look sober. What's wrong with you?

(to nearby waiter)

Let's get some drinks here!

As they sit, Webster gives Davies an amused look. The waiter takes their order.

DAVIES

Beer.

The waiter looks to Webster, who nods. The waiter leaves.

DAVIES (CONT'D)

(to Hillard, re Webster)

This is the gentleman I told you about. He --

HILLARD

(quietly, to Webster)

-- Good to meet a fellow supporter. Since called before that damned committee in Washington, need to be very careful in what I say.

(looks around)

Government spies could be anywhere.

Davies gives Webster a side eye.

WEBSTER

(seriously, to Hillard)

It pays to be cautious.

HILLARD

What brings you to Baltimore?

DAVIES

Remember, I said he was --

HILLARD

(snaps)

-- I want to hear it from him!

Davies and Webster exchange an uneasy glance.

WEBSTER
 (to Hillard)
 Not sure what Harry told you, but
 I'm a stockbroker.

Hilliard narrows his eyes with distrust.

Webster takes out his wallet.

WEBSTER (CONT'D)
 And... as such, I've taken up a
 collection from some of my clients,
 who strongly believe in your cause.

He gives Hillard a wad of money.

Slightly, Hillard relaxes, looks toward a...

Nearby table. The Dignified Man, dressed in black, and Timid Man, both in the Saloon the night Lincoln won, finish drinks. They leave.

Hilliard watches.

Davies follows his gaze. The waiter brings two beers.

HILLARD
 (gulps last of drink)
 If you gentlemen will excuse me.

He leaves.

DAVIES
 (quietly, to Webster)
 Told him you're a tradesman. Guess
 that's close enough.
 (sips beer)
 Cipriano Ferrandini just left... A
 fervent anti-abolitionist, rumored
 to head a secret secessionist group
 Hillard says is referred to as
 "Knights of the Golden Circle."

WEBSTER
 Italian?

DAVIES
 Corsican. Been here about ten
 years... Works as a barber.

EXT. BALTIMORE SALOON - LATER

Davies and Webster exit.

The Timid Man and Brooding Man (in saloon the night Lincoln won) join them.

BROODING MAN
Come with us.

WEBSTER
(calm)
Don't believe we've met.

Brooding Man pushes Webster to keep walking.

Davies gives Webster a worried look.

Slightly, Webster shakes his head for Davies not to resist.

EXT./INT. HOME IN BALTIMORE - NIGHT

The two Men direct Davies and Webster up the front steps.

DRAWING ROOM

Flickering candles illuminate Webster and Davies as they enter the large room, where about twenty men silently wait.

Hillard approaches, nods to the two Men.

The Men leave Webster and Davies with Hillard, join the Sophisticated Man, who was also at the saloon the night Lincoln won.

Dignified Man stands behind a table with a small wooden box.

DAVIES
(whispers to Webster)
Ferrandini.

Hillard directs Davies and Webster to join the others as they form a semi-circle around Dignified Man/Cipriano Ferrandini.

FERRANDINI
Raise your right hands. Repeat: "I swear allegiance to the cause of Southern freedom, and to safeguard the God-given institutions it possesses."

The oath is mumbled by all, including Webster and Davies.

FERRANDINI (CONT'D)

Never shall the hireling Lincoln
become president!

He withdraws a long, curved blade from beneath his coat,
brandishes it above his head.

MANY

Hoorah!

FERRANDINI

When he arrives at the Calvert
Street Station, only a few police
will be on hand. We shall create a
diversion to distract them... And
one of our own will shoot the black
Republican.

Many cheer. Davies and Webster exchange a slight glance.

FERRANDINI (CONT'D)

Who shall do the deed? Who should
assume the task of liberating the
nation of the foul presence of the
abolitionist leader?

The men regard each other.

FERRANDINI (CONT'D)

There are paper ballots in this
chest. One is marked in red, to
designate the assassin. You are
sworn to secrecy as to the color of
the ballot you've drawn -- to
protect the identity of the honored
patriot.

Some of the candles are extinguished to darken the room, and
prevent knowledge of who draws the fatal ballot.

All the men file past the table, withdraw a folded ballot
from the box. The last to take one, Ferrandini pockets it.

FERRANDINI (CONT'D)

(hushed, steely tone)
God bless our noble cause.

Sophisticated Man positions himself so Webster unwittingly
bumps into him. He drops his ballot.

WEBSTER

Excuse me.

He picks up the folded ballot, returns it to Sophisticated Man. Face to face with Webster, Sophisticated Man glares.

SOPHISTICATED MAN
This group is closed to strangers.

Webster remains calm.

WEBSTER
Understandably so.

SOPHISTICATED MAN
(slowly grins)
However, I hear you made a considerable contribution to the cause.

WEBSTER
(nods)
And there's more where that came from.

EXT. HOME IN BALTIMORE - CONT.

Webster and Davies hurry away. They turn a corner, unfold and compare ballots.

BALLOTS: Both marked red.

The two men share a worried look.

INT. HOME IN BALTIMORE - SAME TIME

In the drawing room, Hillard and Ferrandini remain with a few other men.

Ferrandini takes the ballot from his pocket, unfolds, shows it to Hillard.

HILLARD
(re ballot)
Red.
(concerned)
You shouldn't be the one to --

FERRANDINI
(smiles slyly)
-- There were eight red ones.

INT. CONTINENTAL HOTEL (PHILADELPHIA) - NIGHT

Under crystal chandeliers, amid music and dancers, tall, lanky, formally attired ABRAHAM LINCOLN (52) and short, stout MARY TODD LINCOLN (43) interact with guests in the ballroom.

SUPER: "Continental Hotel, Philadelphia."

Hefty, bearded, Illinois Senator NORMAN JUDD (46) approaches Lincoln, whispers to him. Lincoln follows Judd.

Seeing them, Mary frowns. She forces a smile, turns back to mingle with nearby guests.

HOTEL ROOM

Judd enters, followed by Lincoln.

LINCOLN

This better be as important as you say, Norman.

He's surprised to see Pinkerton.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Allan!

PINKERTON

(smiles, bows)
Mr. President.

LINCOLN

Still "Senator"... at least for a while longer. What brings you to Philadelphia?

PINKERTON

Business, regrettably. My operatives in Baltimore have unearthed a plot for your assassination. It's imperative you bypass the city and accompany me to Washington. Immediately.

Rather than concerned, Lincoln sounds offended.

LINCOLN

Now? Like a thief in the night?

JUDD

You need to take the threat seriously.

LINCOLN

You agree my family and I --

PINKERTON

-- Not the family. Just you. They will continue as scheduled. Or, so it shall appear.

LINCOLN

Allan, in the years we've known one another, what makes you think I'd agree to such a plan?

PINKERTON

You're right. Which is why I've devised a subterfuge.

On the door to the adjoining room, he raps three times. It opens. Hattie enters, followed by Mary Lincoln -- or SOMEONE WHO LOOKS LIKE HER.

LINCOLN

Mary! Why'd you leave our guests?

Realizing he's been duped, he smiles at Pinkerton.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

You are a master of disguise. What about my boys?

PINKERTON

My son, William, is close to Robert's looks and, with the proper boots, his height. We've secured midgets to pose as Willie and Tad.

Lincoln's smile wanes.

LINCOLN

If word got out... No. I will not agree to it. If you ladies will excuse me...

(bows to them)

... I need to return to my guests.

ISABELLE AS "MARY"

(upset)

Don't you realize how important your safety is to the nation, and that Mr. Pinkerton is doing his best to ensure it?

Shocked by Isabelle's insolence, Hattie blinks.

Pinkerton stifles a grin.

Mouth agape, Judd stares at "Mary."

Lincoln smiles, turns to Pinkerton.

LINCOLN

You do know how to pick 'em.
Tomorrow, I have an engagement I
will not cancel. After that, I'll
consider the option of bypassing
Baltimore.

Slowly, Isabelle exhales a sigh of relief.

INT. HOTEL BASEMENT - NIGHT

Overcoat draped across his shoulders, brim of a flat-crowned hat obscuring his face, Lincoln leaves with Pinkerton.

LINCOLN

(mutters angrily)
This is not how I envisioned
arriving in Washington, Allan.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

In just a camisole and bloomers, Isabelle sits at a dressing table, writes a letter. An arrowhead, attached to a thin leather strip, hangs from her neck.

On the table, the braid and snake's rattle.

ISABELLE (V.O.)

"Dear Jimmy and Molly. I hope you
are well. I hold you fast in my
heart, and think of you daily. Eli
and I are on an adventure. I'm
unable to tell you about it at this
time..."

She picks up the braid, thoughtfully studies it.

ISABELLE (V.O.)

"... Suffice it to say, it's an
adventure which could achieve
tremendous good. However, it can't
compare to the difficult, yet
amazing adventure we experienced
last spring..."

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

EXT. WOODED GROVE (KANSAS TERRITORY) - DAY (ONE YEAR AGO)

Bloodied knife and hatchet in her hands, Isabelle stands over the Outlaw's body. Molly screams. Isabelle looks up.

In shock, Molly and Jimmy stare at her.

ISABELLE

I told you to stay put!

Molly tries to rouse Clara and Daniel.

MOLLY

Mama. Papa. Wake up!

Isabelle drops the knife and hatchet, pulls Molly away. She speaks in a calm, measured tone.

ISABELLE

Listen to me. Both of you. I don't know who those men were, or why they...

(takes deep breath)

There may be others, and they won't like what I... So, we need to leave. Now.

Jimmy studies his parents' bodies. Tears rise in his eyes.

JIMMY

Shouldn't we bury them?

ISABELLE

Can't spare the time. Go unhobble the oxen. We'll take the men's horses. Molly, we need to gather some clothes, just your pa's and Jimmy's. Also the sewing kit, food, and cooking items.

She looks at the Outlaws' bodies.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)

Jimmy... Bring all the firearms. Including theirs.

Jimmy picks up the knife. Gently, he takes Molly's hand.

JIMMY

Come, Sis.

Isabelle watches them leave, bites back tears.

EXT. FURTHER DOWNSTREAM - LATER

Tears course down Molly's cheeks as Isabelle cuts her long strands with scissors. She holds Isabelle's ponytail.

Isabelle, hair cut below her ears, gives Molly her severed hair, then goes to the horses, tied to a tree. She puts the scissors in a saddlebag, removes two pairs of pants.

Slowly, Jimmy approaches, stares at Isabelle as if seeing her for the first time.

ISABELLE
(from his expression)
Sorry you saw... It had to be done.

JIMMY
Before you came to live with us, I heard Aunt Sally tell Mama she didn't like taking you in, because you're a "half-breed savage."

ISABELLE
I suppose... after what I did... you probably feel the same.

JIMMY
No... I think you're the bravest person I know.

Eyes red and puffy, Molly joins them, holds up the braid of her golden locks entwined with Isabelle's dark ones.

ISABELLE
(sadly)
It's beautiful.

EXT. WOODED GROVE - DAY

On horseback, two traditionally dressed Kaw teenage boys, well-muscled TAKODA (17) and chubby CHAYTON (15), look up. The arrowhead hangs from Takoda's neck.

Buzzards circle in the sky.

MOMENTS LATER

Takoda and Chayton chase the buzzards away, lead their horses from Daniel's and Clara's bodies to the Outlaws'.

At the wagon, Chayton looks inside.

Takoda kneels, studies hoof prints on the ground.

EXT. STREAM - MOMENTS LATER

From the Easts' clothes, spread on the bank, Chayton picks up Molly's dress. He shares a look of concern with Takoda.

Takoda glances at the hoof prints, mounts his horse.

With a shake of the head, Chayton mounts and follows.

EXT. WOODED GROVE - DAY

Burly, shabbily dressed PINKERTON OPERATIVE JENSEN (30s) and clean-cut, in long overcoat and tie, PINKERTON OPERATIVE ROBERTS (40s) arrive at a gallop, sharply rein in the horses.

They dismount. Jensen leads his horse to the Outlaws' bodies.

JENSEN

Looks like someone's done our work
for us.

He inspects the skull of the Younger Outlaw.

JENSEN (CONT'D)

Ax.

He studies hoof prints on the ground.

JENSEN (CONT'D)

Unshod.
(to Roberts)
Indians did this.

By the hair, Roberts lifts the Older Outlaw's head, stares at the slit throat. He nods.

At Daniel's and Clara's bodies, he kneels.

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

No mystery as to who killed them
folks.

ROBERTS

(quiet, regretfully)
If we hadn't lost the trail, they
might still be alive.

He stands, slowly exhales.

ROBERTS (CONT'D)

Least we can do is get them in the
ground.

He goes to the wagon, finds a shovel.

LATER

The Outlaws' bodies strapped facedown behind their saddles, Roberts and Jensen ride away.

ON GROUND: A freshly dug grave. Etched on a cross made of branches: "Unknown man and his assumed wife."

EXT. PRAIRIE - DAY

Jimmy and Molly ride together.

A pair of wolves dart from the tall grass.

The horse rears, spills the children on the ground. It runs off. The wolves nip at its legs.

Isabelle dismounts, holds her skittish horse's reins. She gets a pistol from saddlebag, hovers over Jimmy and Molly.

More wolves pursue the runaway horse. They bring it down.

Molly screams.

Nearby, a large wolf growls, with bristling fur and long canines bared in a vicious snarl.

Isabelle aims the pistol.

Suddenly, with blood-curdling cries, Takoda and Chayton charge their horses at the wolf. It whimpers, runs off.

They chase the wolves from the...

Downed horse. Wide-eyed, it breathes hard. Blood gushes from a deep laceration in its throat. Takoda kneels at its side.

Pistol in hand, reins of her nervous horse in the other, with Jimmy and Molly astride, Isabelle joins Takoda.

He stands, exchanges a look of unease with...

Isabelle. She aims the gun at the dying horse, FIRES.

(Dialogue in this scene spoken in Kaw, subtitled in English.)

CHAYTON

(to Takoda)

*Can we go now? We should not be
this far from home. Your father
will be angry.*

ISABELLE

Thank you for helping us.

TAKODA

You speak Kaw! How is it you know our language?

ISABELLE

I know many of the true peoples' languages. I am the child of a Cherokee woman.

Chayton dismounts, goes to Isabelle, studies her.

CHAYTON

You are no boy!
 (glances at Molly)
Neither of you!
 (to Isabelle)
Why do you want to appear as a boy?

He looks to Takoda. They exchange a slight nod.

TAKODA

(to Isabelle)
Your people were killed. Where is it you're going?

ISABELLE

St. Joseph, for a train to St. Louis.

TAKODA

Your horse can not carry all of you that distance.

CHAYTON

What do you care if --

TAKODA

(looking at Isabelle)
 -- *We will go with them.*

CHAYTON

"Go with them"? Where?

TAKODA

The river.

ISABELLE

Thank you. My name is Isabelle. The Cherokee call me "Leotie." These are my cousins, Jimmy and Molly.

TAKODA

*I'm Takoda. Of the Kaw Nation. This
is Chayton.*

(End of Kaw dialogue/English subtitles.)

Isabelle studies the dead horse.

ISABELLE

We could use the meat.
(to Jimmy)
Let me have your knife.

She gives the reins of her horse to Takoda, gets the knife from Jimmy.

With a look of admiration, Takoda watches as...

Isabelle cuts into the carcass, expertly butchers it.

Jimmy and Molly seem about to vomit.

MONTAGE - JOURNEY TO ST. JOSEPH

-- Isabelle and Jimmy ride together, and Molly with Takoda. Chayton rides on his own.

-- Takoda teaches Jimmy how to shoot a bow and arrow.

-- Chayton shows Molly how to tell direction from the sun.

-- Gathering firewood, Isabelle hears/sees a coiled snake. She motions for Jimmy's knife. Slowly, repeatedly, she circles the snake. It relaxes, moves away. Isabelle's foot pins its head. She decapitates it with the knife.

-- The skinned snake roasts over a fire. Jimmy shakes the severed rattle. Chayton offers him and Molly some meat. They taste it, appear pleasantly surprised.

-- As their horses drink from a stream, Takoda removes the arrowhead necklace, slips it on Isabelle. Shyly, they gaze into each others eyes.

-- At night, around the campfire, Isabelle and the children laugh as Chayton pretends to be a buffalo, hunted by Takoda.

END MONTAGE/END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

BACK TO SCENE - HOTEL ROOM (PHILADELPHIA)- DAY

REFLECTION IN DRESSING TABLE MIRROR: Isabelle stares into the mirror, solemnly fingers the arrowhead necklace.

With a dress draped over her arm, Hattie enters.

HATTIE

It's time.

Broken from her reverie, Isabelle puts down the pen.

SERIES OF SHOTS - ISABELLE BECOMES "MARY LINCOLN"

A) Hattie helps Isabelle into layers of padding.

B) The dress is slipped over Isabelle's head.

C) Hattie applies prosthetics on Isabelle's face.

D) The wig is secured.

E) Isabelle studies the transformation in the mirror.

F) Hattie nods, smiles.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT - DAY

As "Mary," Isabelle enters, sits.

Hattie enters, takes a seat along with William Pinkerton, acting as Robert Lincoln; two midgets pretending to be Willie and Tad Lincoln; and Lincoln's secretary, JOHN HAY (23), dark hair, mustache.

The train begins to move. "Mary" gazes out the window.

VIEW THROUGH WINDOW: Children play tag beyond the station. One is a young, blonde-haired girl.

"Mary" appears thoughtful.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

EXT. FOREST (KANSAS TERRITORY) - DAY (ONE YEAR AGO)

Cautiously, Molly looks around a tree. Grabbed from behind, swept into the air by Chayton, she squeals with surprise.

JENSEN (O.S.)

Put him down!

Chayton almost drops Molly.

Operative Jensen aims his pistol at him.

JENSEN (CONT'D)
I said, put him down!

Chayton looks beyond...

Jensen. He turns.

Tomahawk raised, Takoda charges. A SHOT rings out. The bullet rips through his shoulder, knocks him off his feet.

Jensen turns back to Chayton.

With a dead branch, Isabelle WHACKS Jensen behind the knees. He crumbles.

Isabelle raises the branch above Jensen, hears a gun cock.

ROBERTS (O.S.)
Drop it, or I'll shoot!

Operative Roberts points his pistol at...

Isabelle. She turns, lowers the branch, lets it fall.

Furiously, Jensen gets up, limps toward Isabelle.

JENSEN
You little -- I'm gonna whip yer --

ROBERTS
-- Leave it.

Fuming, Jensen turns away from Isabelle, points his gun back at Chayton.

Isabelle hurries over to Takoda, presses on the bullet wound. Blood oozes between her fingers.

ISABELLE
(at Operatives)
You bastards!

Jimmy joins her.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)
Give me your shirt!

She wads, presses it on the wound.

In Chayton's grasp, Molly cries. She wraps her arms around his neck, buries her face under his chin. He gently puts her down. She clings to him, then runs to Isabelle.

Jensen and Roberts exchange looks of uncertainty.

Roberts approaches Isabelle. He has a calm, capable manner.

ROBERTS
Let me see what I can do.

ISABELLE
(to Takoda, in Kaw)
He wants to help.

Slowly, Takoda nods, lets Roberts examine the wound.

ROBERTS
Bullet went clean through.

ISABELLE
(to Jimmy)
Get the sewing kit.

ROBERTS
Stitching won't do. It needs to be
cauterized. That means --

ISABELLE
-- I know what cauterizing is!
(to Jimmy)
Help Chayton get a fire going.
(yells, in Kaw)
Chayton, we need a fire!

Jensen looks to...

Roberts. He motions for Jensen to lower the gun.

Quickly, Chayton gathers dried grass, removes flint from a pouch that hangs around his neck, strikes it on his knife.

Sparks ignite a fire. Jimmy adds twigs.

Roberts joins them, gestures to Chayton for his knife.
Chayton looks to...

Isabelle. She nods.

Roberts extends the knife over the flames. Soon the blade is red hot. He brings it to Takoda, pauses over him.

Takoda nods. Roberts presses the blade against the wound.

Silently, Takoda sharply inhales, loses consciousness. The tomahawk slips from his grasp.

Roberts returns the knife to the fire.

Jensen holds Takoda up for Roberts to cauterize the exit wound. He lays Takoda back on the ground.

ROBERTS
(to Isabelle)
Why are you children with these
Indians?

ISABELLE
(seethes)
They're helping us.

JENSEN
How the blazes can filthy Injuns be
of help? Where are your folks?

JIMMY
They're dead!

MOLLY
Bad men killed them.

ISABELLE
White men.

From his pocket, Jensen removes a wanted poster, unfolds, shows it to Isabelle.

JENSEN
This what they looked like?

POSTER: Sketches of the Outlaws' faces.

Isabelle nods.

ISABELLE
What are they wanted for?

ROBERTS
Murder and attempted robbery.

JIMMY
They're dead, too!

JENSEN
Yeah. We know. Looks like your
Injun friends killed 'em.

ISABELLE
They didn't.

JENSEN
The way they were --

ISABELLE

-- I did!

JENSEN

(scoffs)

That's unlikely!

ISABELLE

(to Roberts)

Who are you?

ROBERTS

Operatives for the Pinkerton
Detective Agency, in Chicago. I'm
Roberts. This is Jensen. You?

ISABELLE

(hesitates)

Isabelle East. And my cousins,
Jimmy and Molly. Their parents were
Daniel and Clara East.

JENSEN

(surprised)

You're girls?

ROBERTS

(slightly laughs)

Of course they're girls.

(to Isabelle)

Where you headed?

ISABELLE

We were on our way to Pikes Peak.
My uncle was going to start a
school there. But now... We're
turning back. Headed for the
station in St. Joe, to catch the
train to St. Louis.

ROBERTS

Family in St. Louis?

ISABELLE

My aunt's sister and brother-in-
law, Jedidiah and Sally Campbell.

ROBERTS

We'll see you get to the rail
station in St. Joe.

ISABELLE

Not until Takoda is better!

ROBERTS

(smiles)

Feisty little filly, aren't you?
And smart, trying to pass as boys.

(turns serious)

May interest you to know, we buried
your folks.

Slightly, Isabelle nods in appreciation.

JENSEN

(to Roberts)

"Feisty," maybe. But no way could
she be responsible for the deaths
of those men.

From the ground beside Takoda, Isabelle grabs the tomahawk.

Simultaneously, Jensen and Roberts aim their guns at her.

Single-handedly, Isabelle tosses the tomahawk.

It catapults through the air, deeply embeds in a tree trunk!

With looks of vindication, Jimmy and Molly nod.

Chayton seems impressed.

Roberts and Jensen lower the weapons. Brows raised, they
exchange looks of disbelief.

PRE-LAP - A train whistle blows.

END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

BACK TO SCENE - TRAIN COMPARTMENT - DAY

The whistle blows, brakes squeal as the train slows. "Mary"
continues to stare out the window.

EXT. RAILWAY STATION - SAME TIME

Thousands of people wait for the arrival of the train. Many
appear agitated, some armed with knives, bats, and bricks.

SUPER: "Baltimore, Maryland."

Scattered around are men from the Knights of the Golden
Circle (K.G.C.), including Ferrandini, Hillard, Timid Man,
Brooding Man, Sophisticated Man... and Operative Davies.

A RAILWAY OFFICIAL (40s) forges his way through the crowd.

On the station platform, MAYOR GEORGE BROWN (49), dark hair streaked with gray, waits with stern-faced, uniformed CITY POLICE CHIEF GEORGE KANE (44) and numerous officers.

RAILWAY OFFICIAL

Mayor Brown, Chief Kane. We've received word Mr. Lincoln is not onboard.

MAYOR BROWN

Then it appears we're not needed.

CHIEF KANE

(to officers)

Back to headquarters!

As they leave, they pass a...

Small contingent of military troops that appear nervous left on their own. Their leader is short, boyish-looking, mustached COLONEL ELMER ELLSWORTH (23).

ELLSWORTH

Hold steady, men! We're still needed.

Nearby, in tattered clothes and ratty cap, Eli blends in among other Negroes. His eyes dart about with uncertainty.

INTERCUT - INT. TRAIN COMPARTMENT/EXT. TRAIN STATION

From the compartment window, as the train nears the station, "Mary" appears frightened by the turbulent mob outside.

STATION

The train screeches to a stop. People clamor onto the roof. Some fall into the crowd, scream as they're trampled.

RIOTER (O.S.)

Come out, Old Abe!

OTHER RIOTER (O.S.)

We'll give you hell, you bloody black Republican!

TRAIN COMPARTMENT

From outside, angry men pound on the window. "Mary" and the others recoil, appear terrified.

The door to the compartment slides open. Ellsworth enters.

HAY
 (relieved)
 Colonel Ellsworth!

ELLSWORTH
 I'm to escort all of you to the
 home of Mr. Gittings, director of
 the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

"Mary" breathes a sigh of relief at the exit plan.

STATION

Four soldiers and two plain-clothed detectives help the "Lincolns" and entourage onto the platform. Rioters slam them against the train. Eggs and tomatoes splatter around them.

In the crowd, Hillard and Ferrandini, hands in pockets on partially seen pistols, look around, appear confused.

Elsewhere in the crowd, Sophisticated Man turns to Timid Man and Brooding Man, shakes his head. They leave.

A rioter grabs "Mary's" arm. She hikes her skirt, knees him between the legs. He crumbles.

With open-mouthed disbelief, William stares at "Mary." He attempts to fight off a rioter, but isn't as effective.

The rioter is pulled off William by Eli, who then scoops "Willie" and "Tad" in his arms, rams through the mob.

EXT./INT. CARRIAGE - CONT.

Soldiers hold the crowd at bay as Ellsworth helps "Mary" into the carriage.

ELLSWORTH
 (whispers)
 Don't know who you are, but you're
 a very convincing Mrs. Lincoln.

He helps Hattie inside. William and Hay follow. Eli deposits the "boys" behind them.

INSIDE CARRIAGE

With a look of condemnation, William glares at Isabelle.

WILLIAM
 Wasn't very ladylike of you back
 there.

ISABELLE

Can't say your actions were very manly.

William fumes.

OUTSIDE CARRIAGE

On horseback, Ellsworth and the soldiers follow the carriage as it pulls away.

INSIDE CARRIAGE

Isabelle glances out the back window.

VIEW OUT WINDOW: The mob swarms Eli.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)

Wait! We have to go back for Eli!

WILLIAM

Absolutely not!

EXT. STATION - CONT.

Knife in hand, a rioter lunges at Eli.

Suddenly, a MAN with a hat pulled low, coat collar up to his nose, wrests the knife away, punches the rioter hard in the stomach, delivers a quick blow to the jaw.

The Man and Eli fight their way through the mob.

AROUND CORNER FROM STATION

Alone, breathing hard, the Man and Eli lean against the side of a building to catch their breath.

The Man lowers the coat collar, reveals it's Webster.

ELI

Much obliged.

Webster smiles, nods.

INT. HOTEL ROOM (WASHINGTON, D.C.) - DAY

VIEW THROUGH WINDOW: Capitol Building in the distance, partially surrounded by scaffolding.

The room is set up as an office. Pinkerton sits at a desk. Eli stands in front of him.

In a cap, dressed as a boy, Isabelle enters with William.

Relieved to see Eli is safe, Isabelle rushes past...

Webster, who leans against a desk, arms folded.

Isabelle throws herself into Eli's embrace.

ISABELLE

Thought I'd never see you again!

Pinkerton smiles.

Webster furrows his brow.

At Pinkerton's desk, William joins Isabelle and Eli.

PINKERTON

I want the three of you to assess
the crowd at the Willard Hotel,
where the Lincolns are staying
until the inauguration.

WILLIAM

I'll report any suspicious
activity.

PINKERTON

It's doubtful they'll venture out,
considering the incident in
Baltimore where, I must say Miss
East, you again proved your mettle.

With a look of disappointment, William's mouth drops.

PINKERTON (CONT'D)

In view of which, I have a few
things for you and Elijah.

From a drawer, he removes two switchblades and two single-shot Philadelphia Derringer pistols, one with a pearl handle. He places them on the desk.

PINKERTON (CONT'D)

Tools of the trade.

Webster's eyes narrow with concern.

William appears pissed at Isabelle being rewarded for her performance in Baltimore -- and with "tools" he didn't have.

Expertly, Isabelle flicks open and closes the blade of one of the knives, pockets it and the pearl-handled pistol.

Eli pockets the other knife and pistol.

PINKERTON (CONT'D)

From here on, Miss East, you'll receive my directives through Miss Lawton.

(includes Eli)

Any questions?

Isabelle and Eli shake their heads, follow William.

As they pass, Webster appears worried.

WEBSTER

(quietly, to Eli)

Keep an eye on her.

Isabelle stops, turns, addresses him softly.

ISABELLE

I appreciate your concern, Mr. Webster. But I'm not Sarah.

Webster looks as though he'd been gut punched.

Isabelle leaves, followed by Eli.

PINKERTON

She's right, Tim.

WEBSTER

(firm)

If she were my daughter, she wouldn't be here.

EXT. WILLARD HOTEL - LATER

Next door to the White House, hoping to get a glimpse of the Lincoln family, a crowd mills about in front of the hotel.

Across the street, William, Isabelle, and Eli weave around people. William stops, leans against a lamppost.

WILLIAM

(arrogantly)

My father should have sent one of his decoys, to draw this crowd away. He has half-a-dozen tall operatives to assume the role of Mr. Lincoln.

Impressed, Isabelle raises her brows.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Besides being a master of disguise, he's also well-versed in the science of phrenology... Which is --

ISABELLE

-- The belief that "a person's intelligence and character can be determined from the shape and size of the skull and body structure."

William shoots her a look of resentment.

Eli chuckles, knows how outmatched William is by her.

An energetic NEWSBOY (12) carries a stack of papers, waves one in the air.

NEWSBOY

Cowardly Mr. Lincoln slips into Washington, leaving his family to fend for themselves! Read all about it! Baltimore Sun!

WILLIAM

Over here, boy!

He pays for a paper. Infuriated, he reads front page aloud:

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

"Had we any respect for Mr. Lincoln... the final escapade by which he reached the Capitol would have utterly demolished it... We do not believe the presidency can ever be more degraded by any of his successors than it has by him, even before his inauguration..."

Angry, Isabelle narrows her eyes.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

"... The route was followed by Mrs. Lincoln, when no one knew Mr. Lincoln was not onboard; and she arrived safely in Baltimore and passed on to Washington. So there is some pluck in the White House, if it is under a bodice."

Isabelle snickers.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Bastards!

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVE - DAY

Troops block side streets for the Presidential Inauguration. On housetops, green-coated sharpshooters stand guard.

North and south of the Capitol, two batteries of light artillery are stationed.

Thousands of attendees wait to hear Lincoln's speech.

Webster, followed by Eli and Isabelle (as a boy), make their way through the crowd, look for any trouble.

SUPER: "March 4, 1861. Inauguration Day."

EXT. CAPITOL BUILDING - CONT.

A band plays martial music. From the central door, Senator John P. Hale (51) emerges with Judge David Davis (46).

Mary Lincoln follows, flanked by her sons ROBERT (19), WILLIE (11), and TAD (8); half-sisters, ELIZABETH (48), MARGARET (33), and MARTHA (28); and cousin, ELIZABETH GRIMSLEY (35).

Lincoln and former President Buchanan (70) enter. Cheers erupt from the crowd.

Diplomats, congressmen, judges, and high-ranking military officers fill the stands, take seats.

At the podium, stately SENATOR BAKER (50) introduces Lincoln.

SENATOR BAKER

Ladies and gentlemen, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, will now proceed to deliver his inaugural address.

Lincoln approaches the podium. Senator STEPHEN DOUGLAS (48), Lincoln's rival, steps forward.

DOUGLAS

(to Lincoln)
May I take your hat.

Lincoln smiles, hands it to him.

LINCOLN

Thank you, Stephen.
(louder, to Baker)
Thank you, Senator Baker.

Calm, serene, he puts on spectacles.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Fellow citizens of the United States: In compliance with a custom as old as the Government itself, I appear before you to take in your presence the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States to be taken by the President "before he enters on the execution of this office..."

Webster turns to Eli, slightly nods at a section of the crowd, where...

The Sophisticated Man stares intently toward Lincoln as he listens to the speech.

WEBSTER

(quietly, to Eli)

In Baltimore, I had a run-in with that man. He was with a group intending to kill Lincoln. Follow him. If he sees you, walk away. Isabelle, you continue the surveillance.

Eli and Isabelle leave.

LINCOLN (O.S.)

... I do not consider it necessary to discuss matters about which there is no special anxiety or excitement. However, apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States, that by the accession of a Republican Administration, their property, peace, and personal security are to be endangered...

Eli stops, looks at Lincoln.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

... There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. The most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed, and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you...

Alarmed, Isabelle studies Eli.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

... I quote from one of those speeches when I declare that...

(reads sheet of paper)

... "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right, nor inclination, to do so..."

Jaw clenched, Eli's eyes narrow with resentment at the president's unwillingness to abolish slavery. He glances at Isabelle. They share a look of disappointment.

Sophisticated Man disappears into the crowd.

INT. HATTIE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

On a chair, in the dress and wig, Isabelle sits opposite...

Hattie, who sits on the bed.

HATTIE

With the president being looked upon unfavorably for coming to Washington on his own, it's --

ISABELLE

-- Perhaps if I hadn't help convince...

HATTIE

Which is something that must be addressed. In the future, you need to contain your impulsiveness.

Isabelle appears dismayed.

HATTIE (CONT'D)

However, we personally witnessed the threat in Baltimore was legitimate, and it was verified by other sources. Unfortunately, Mr. Lincoln has chosen to listen to his advisors, who blame Mr. Pinkerton for being overly cautious and, as a result, it may be difficult to get you into the Executive Mansion.

Guiltily, Isabelle looks away.

HATTIE (CONT'D)

There is one avenue we'd like to pursue. How are your sewing skills?

ISABELLE

Passable. Why?

HATTIE

We've learned Mrs. Lincoln is interviewing seamstresses. Once that person is determined, we hope you can act as her assistant.

ISABELLE

I'll do anything! What about Eli?

HATTIE

We've secured a position for him in the Lincoln stable, as a groom.

EXT. DRESS SHOP - DAY

Wearing the dress and wig, Isabelle turns the knob on the...

Front door. It's locked, shade drawn over the window.

Isabelle knocks.

In his best clothes, Eli stands behind her.

The door opens. A tall, dignified, attractive "mulatto" woman, ELIZABETH (LIZZIE) KECKLEY (43), sizes them up.

LIZZIE

I'm sorry, we're closed.

ISABELLE

Are you Mrs. Elizabeth Keckley?

LIZZIE

Yes.

ISABELLE

We apologize for the intrusion, but it's urgent.

ELI

We just need a moment.

He and Lizzie lock eyes, seem to recognize a shared history.

She steps aside, motions for him and Isabelle to enter.

INT. DRESS SHOP - CONT.

Lizzie closes, locks the door behind them.

ISABELLE

We know you're extremely busy,
making the First Lady's gown for
the upcoming public reception.

LIZZIE

(concerned)
And time is running short.

ISABELLE

We'll be brief. I'm Isabelle East,
this is Elijah. We've been sent by
the detective, Mr. Allan Pinkerton.
Have you heard of him?

Fearfully, Lizzie nods.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)

He and the president have been on
friendly terms, for years.

LIZZIE

I don't know what that has to do
with me.

ELI

Because of their friendship, and as
a staunch advocate of abolition,
Mr. Pinkerton is greatly concerned
for the welfare of the president.

ISABELLE

And his family. He's aware of your
connection to Mrs. Lincoln, and
hopes you'd allow me to assist in
your duties to her -- so I may help
oversee her and the boys' safety.

LIZZIE

How do I know you're telling the
truth?

Isabelle looks to Eli, slightly nods.

Knowing what she's suggesting, he slowly removes his coat,
unbuttons, takes off his shirt, turns for Lizzie to see.

Lizzie gasps. Tears well in her eyes at sight of the...

Ugly pattern of scars that mar Eli's back.

INT. MARY LINCOLN'S BEDROOM (WHITE HOUSE) - NIGHT

In a robe, Mary paces, appears agitated.

Her half-sisters, Margaret and Martha, in evening gowns, are with her. They seem worried.

MARY

I was foolish to have trusted her!
I shouldn't have listened to --

One of the Lincolns' staff ushers Lizzie and Isabelle in. A rose-colored gown drapes over Lizzie's arm.

MARY (CONT'D)

Mrs. Keckley, you have deceived me!
Why do you bring my dress at this
late hour?

Isabelle and Lizzie exchange looks of concern.

LIZZIE

(hurt, to Mary)
I've just finished it. It was my
understanding I'd be in time.

MARY

But, you're not! You bitterly
disappoint me. I have no time to
dress and, what's more, I won't!

LIZZIE

I'm sorry if I have disappointed
you, Mrs. Lincoln, for I intended
to be in time. Will you let me
dress you? I can have you ready in
a few minutes.

MARY

(pouts)
No. I won't be dressed. I will stay
in my room. Mr. Lincoln can attend
the reception with my sisters.

ISABELLE

(gently)
But, Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Keckley has
worked diligently to finish the
gown. It'd be a shame to have it be
for naught.

Lizzie blinks with disbelief at Isabelle's gall.

Mary seems equally astonished.

Her sisters step in.

MARGARET

Mary, she's right. There's plenty
of time for you to dress.

MARTHA

(to Mary)

Please let Mrs. Keckley assist you,
and she'll soon have you ready.

MARY

(begrudgingly)

Oh... All right.

She allows Lizzie and Isabelle to dress her.

(Dialogue in this scene is in French, subtitled in English.)

REFLECTION IN FULL-LENGTH MIRROR: Mary admires the dress.

MARY (CONT'D)

(quietly)

C'est très belle.

ISABELLE

C'est vous qui es très belle.

Mary shoots her a look of surprise.

MARY

*You speak French! Are you from
France?*

ISABELLE

Indian Territory.

MARY

Indian Territory? And, you are?

(End of French dialogue/English subtitles.)

ISABELLE

(curtsies)

Isabelle East.

MARY

(to sisters)

Miss East is from Indian Territory!

Margaret and Martha appear impressed.

Lincoln enters with Willie and Tad. Cheerfully, he throws his
formally attired body onto a sofa, pulls on white gloves.

Fearful he might recognize her from when she impersonated Mary, Isabelle steps behind Lizzie.

MARY (CONT'D)

(to Lincoln)

You seem in a rather pleased mood tonight, Father.

No one but Isabelle notices as...

Tad takes, hides his mother's handkerchief behind the sofa.

LINCOLN

Yes, Mother. These are rather pleasing times. I declare, you look charming. Mrs. Keckley has met with great success.

(to Mary's sisters)

Margaret, Martha, you ladies look quite charming, as well.

They curtsy, return his smile.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

(looks around Lizzie)

Mrs. Keckley, who's the young lady who helped in your success?

Due to Isabelle's brashness, Lizzie hesitates.

MARY

Father, she's Miss Isabelle East. From Indian Territory.

Lizzie steps aside. Tentatively, Isabelle smiles, curtsies.

LINCOLN

A pleasure to meet you, Miss East. Indian Territory? You're a long way from home.

He shows no sign of recognizing Isabelle.

MARY

Not only is she Mrs. Keckley's very accomplished helper, but she speaks beautiful French.

(to Isabelle)

Perhaps we could employ you to teach the boys?

In unison, Willie and Tad groan.

As she addresses them, Isabelle lowers her voice.

ISABELLE
C'est sera amusant. It'll be fun.

The boys roll their eyes.

MARY
 (looks around)
 Where'd my handkerchief go?

Isabelle glances at...

Tad. He attempts to suppress a giggle.

ISABELLE
 (lower voice)
 If I may...
 (eerily, at Tad)
 ... I have the ability to see all
 things.

She closes her eyes, theatrically rests the back of her hand on her forehead, feigns clairvoyance.

Frightened, Tad swallows hard.

Willie's eyes widen with apprehension.

Mary appears mesmerized by Isabelle's routine.

With a tilt of the head, Lizzie seems curious.

Smiling, Lincoln knows Isabelle is putting on a performance.

She opens her eyes, retrieves the handkerchief from behind the sofa, holds it up.

ISABELLE (CONT'D)
C'est voila!

Everyone claps. Except the boys, transfixed with fear at their new French tutor's seemingly supernatural powers.

EXT. ENTRANCE TO WHITE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Orchestra music plays as formally attired guests arrive, Sophisticated Man among them. He glances around, appears nervous as he climbs the front steps.

Arm-in-arm, Lizzie and Isabelle smile as they pass him on the way out.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - CONT.

Sophisticated Man joins a receiving line where...

Lincoln and Mary greet guests at the first public affair held in their honor since the inauguration.

As he approaches, Sophisticated Man reaches into his pocket, starts to remove a...

Derringer pistol.

He sees...

Tad worm his way in front of Lincoln, lean against him.

Lincoln smiles, places his hands on his son's shoulders.

Sophisticated Man looks from Tad to Lincoln, seems conflicted. He removes his empty hand. In place of the gun, he takes a calling card from his breast pocket.

With an arrogant flip of the wrist, he holds the card out to Lincoln's dignified Negro valet, WILLIAM JOHNSON (28).

SOPHISTICATED MAN

Here, boy.

With a glimmer of offense, Johnson takes the card, reads the name out loud.

JOHNSON

Mr. John Wilkes Booth.

Impressed, Lincoln turns to face Sophisticated Man/Booth.

LINCOLN

The acclaimed actor?

Booth smiles, gives the Lincolns an exaggerated bow.

BOOTH

(studied charm)

Precisely.

THE END