

Mr. Goudy

Did you move the body after you shot him?

Cogburn

Why would I do that?

Mr. Goudy

You did not drag his body over to the fire? Fling his arm in?

Cogburn

No sir.

Mr. Goudy

Two witnesses who arrived on the scene will testify to the location of the body. You do not remember moving the body? So it was a bushwack, as he tended his campfire?

Mr. Barlow

Objection.

Cogburn

I, if that was where the body was I might have moved him. I do not remember.

Mr. Goudy

Why would you move the body, Mr. Cogburn?

Cogburn

Them hogs rooting around might have moved him. I do not remember.

## COURTHOUSE PORCH

Mattie waits as people file out. She pushes forward to meet Cogburn when he emerges, muttering.

Cogburn

Son of a goddamn bitch.

Mattie

Rooster Cogburn?

Cogburn

What is it.

He does not look up from the cigarette he is trying to roll. His hands are shaking.

Mattie

I would like to talk with you a minute.

Cogburn

What is it.

Mattie

They tell me you are a man with true grit.

Cogburn

What do you want, girl? Speak up. It is suppertime.

Mattie

Let me do that.

She takes the fixings and rolls, licks, and twists the cigarette.

. . . Your makings are too dry. I am looking for the man who shot and killed my father, Frank Ross, in front of the Monarch boarding house. The man's name is Tom Chaney. They say he is over in Indian Territory and I need somebody to go after him.

Cogburn

What is your name, girl?

Mattie

My name is Mattie Ross. We are located in Yell County. My mother is at home looking after my sister Victoria and my brother Little Frank.

Cogburn

You had best go home to them. They will need help with the churning.

Mattie

There is a fugitive warrant out for Chaney. The government will pay you two dollars for bringing him in plus ten cents a mile for each of you. On top of that I will pay you a fifty-dollar reward.

Cogburn gazes at her.

Cogburn

What are you? (*looks at the flour sack she holds*) What've you got there in your poke?

She opens it. Cogburn smiles.

. . . By God! A Colt's dragoon! Why, you're no bigger than a corn nubbin, what're you doing with a pistol like that?

Mattie

I intend to kill Tom Chaney with it if the law fails to do so.

Cogburn

Well, that piece will do the job—if you can find a high stump to rest it on and a wall to put behind you.

Mattie

Nobody here knew my father and I am afraid nothing much is going to be done about Chaney except I do it. My brother is a child and my mother is indecisive and hobbled by grief.

Cogburn

I don't believe you have fifty dollars.

Mattie

I will shortly. I have a contract with Colonel Stonehill which he will make payment on tomorrow or the next day, once a lawyer countersigns.

Cogburn

I don't believe fairy tales or sermons or stories about money, baby sister. But thank you for the cigarette.

#### EVENING—BOARDING HOUSE PORCH

Mattie climbs the few steps from the street. Her attention is drawn by:

A man sitting on a chair to one side enjoying the quiet of the evening. He is dressed for riding, with perhaps a bit too much panache. It is almost dark and he is hard to see but it seems he is watching Mattie, amused.

He raises a pipe to his mouth and pulls at it. The glow from the excited bowl kicks on his eyes, which are indeed tracking her.