

Breathing Space contains mature content such as substance abuse, sexual situations, and violence.

This episode contains gun violence and death.

Intro plays

I ain't got no home to go to
I ain't got nothing to sell
But my stars will never leave me
Even when I'm sold to hell
I was born under a blue sky
And I'll die out in the black
When I'm gone don't no one mourn
me
'cause my debts will drag me back

Intro fades out

INT. THE DUST DEVIL INN, RED RIVIERA, MARS

The bar is slow, sounds of the occasional clinking glass and light lounge music fill the room.

VIOLA (V.O.)

So, this all started when I met *her*.

Footsteps jangling with spurs approach, as AGATHA takes a seat at the bar.

AGATHA

Barkeep? Can I get a whiskey, on the rocks?

BARKEEP

You got it.

Ice clinks and liquid pours into a glass. It slides down the bartop to AGATHA, and the ice clinks again as she drinks.

VIOLA (V.O.)

She was the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen. Like she'd stepped out of one of those old adventure stories. Rugged. Sinewy. Eyes as green as gardens. And a smirk on her face that lit up her eyes, and

made your heart pound knowing it was you
that put it there.

AGATHA
You alright, darlin'?

VIOLA
Wh- Huh? Me?

AGATHA
You are the only other customer here.
You're staring.

VIOLA
Oh! Sorry, I'm sorry Miss. I just - I had
a rough day today.

AGATHA
Yeah?

AGATHA scoots closer.

AGATHA
Whatcha drinkin'?

VIOLA
Oh, this is, uh, just, uh...just water.

AGATHA
(clicks her tongue)
Rough day and you're only drinking water?

VIOLA
It's very important to stay hydrated!

AGATHA
The barkeep's gotta love that.

VIOLA
I guess the truth is I'm not sure what
people at - people here drink.

AGATHA
Yeah? Alright, well, can I help?

VIOLA
Uh, sure!

AGATHA

Alright. What sorta tastes do you like?
Dry? Or, sour? Or are you a sweet sorta
gal?

VIOLA

Uh, w-well, I don't mind sweet drinks. I
just don't want it to be *too* sweet. Or too
strong?

AGATHA

Huh, well, sounds like - I am sorry, I went
right into small talk and never even asked
your name.

VIOLA

Oh! Uh, Viola.

AGATHA

I'm Agatha. But uh, my friends call me
Aggie.

(beat)

Viola, huh? That is a real pretty name.

VIOLA (V.O.)

She winked at me and, stars... my heart was
doing backflips.

AGATHA

Hmm. I know just the thing for you, Miss
Viola. Barkeep, two Crab Nebulae, please.
My treat.

BARKEEP

Ah, Jesus, comin' right up.

Sounds of liquor being poured, ice dropped and cracked, then shaking
and pouring into glasses, before being slid to both women.

VIOLA

Oh, I understand why it's called that. It's
stunningly purple!

AGATHA

A stunningly purple drink to match that
pretty little name of yours. Hope it's

sweet enough for you.

VIOLA

Mhm, it is! It's a little floral too, which is nice.

AGATHA

Probably the violet liqueur. Either that or the gin.

VIOLA

Are you some sort of mixonomer, Aggie?

AGATHA

I think you mean mixologist, but, uh, yeah. Only as a hobby, and only when I've got the supplies. Been a pain in the ass trying to get anything new lately. Bettin' I couldn't get my hands on that crème de violette now, for example.

VIOLA

You know, it's funny that my name inspired you to order these because, did you know th--
Oh. Uh, would you like to know some plant facts?

AGATHA

Why are you asking me?

VIOLA

I've uh... found that people sometimes don't like to hear a bunch of stuff about plants.

AGATHA

Well, *I* do. Lay 'em on me, darlin'.

VIOLA

Okay! So, did you know that violets, and also pansies but that's not really very relevant right now, are actually from the genus *Viola*? That's why I think it's funny you picked it, it's so spot on! I almost wonder if you knew that and had a green thumb yourself!

AGATHA

Nope! I am a grade-A, certified plant killer. But Viola. Violette. Kinda, y'know, sound similar.

(beat)

So you're some sort of plantologist, darlin'?

VIOLA

I think you mean *botanist*, but yes! I work at the Bloom-O-Rama here in town! It's a little floral and medicinal shop. O-Oh, but you probably already know that, aren't you from here?

AGATHA

Not from *here*, no, but I am Martian. Think I saw the store front on my way into town though, and aside from the llama pettin' zoo, that's probably what anyone on Mars ever sees of this place. Everyone on this rock knows you don't stay in New Monaco for long.

VIOLA

You mean because it's small?

(beat)

Oh! No, that's not what you mean at all.

AGATHA

Yeah, I mean the reason why they've got all you townies holed up in this here fancy hotel for a few days. Uh, here -

AGATHA turns on the REDLINE. The broadcast crackles on, with music playing beneath the news bulletin.

BROADCAST

MPB: Bringer of news.

MARTIE ETTAL

(news broadcast)

This is Martie Ettal with Martian Public Broadcasting New Portland, celebrating fifty years of the *cornerstone* of Martian

peacekeeping and law: the Red Riviera
Bloodbath, held in scenic New Monaco. A
little piece of rustic history! Some of the
best gunfighters in the System have lived
new lives and died under the watchful eye of
the law, on these very streets.

Multiple clips of old gunfights play from the REDLINE broadcast.

AGATHA

Y'ain't never heard of the Bloodbath before
today, have you?

VIOLA

I hadn't. I sort of packed my stuff up in a
panic and came here as soon as I found out.

AGATHA

Mm. You must be new in town.

VIOLA

Yeah, I moved in about a year ago. It's
kind of been a big deal, moving out here on
my own, starting my big adventure. It's
been kind of scary, actually. This hasn't
really helped.

AGATHA

Ah, yeah that'd do it.

The ice in AGATHA'S glass rattles.

AGATHA

Welp, I'm sorry things have been a little
scary. But as far as big adventures go
though, you ain't gonna find one better than
this.

You get a chance to see it in all its glory
through them cute little spectacles.

MARTIE ETTAL

The Bloodbath is an exemplar of the
independent, individualistic character of
the Martian citizen. A place where
criminals and outlaws *choose* to redeem

themselves for a second chance at life or condemn themselves to death. The ultimate proving ground for those on the fringes of proper society. The various Martian governments thank the citizens of New Monaco for graciously allowing the competition to happen on their streets! As always, room and board is free to citizens planning to stay for its duration. To help us recap the past fifty years, we're on site here in New Monaco with the current event organizer, Marshall Captain Tatum Hadar.

TATUM HADAR

Thank you, it's a pleasure to be here.

VIOLA

I can't believe my life's being held up by a *quick draw* tournament. I picked this place to live in precisely because it was small and boring!

AGATHA

(chuckling)

New Monaco's definitely small, but it ain't borin' by a *longshot*.

MARTIE ETTAL

There really isn't anything else in the System like the Bloodbath is there, Marshall?

TATUM HADAR

Something as storied as *this*? Definitely not. Something like this could *only* exist here in New Monaco. In fact, it existed even *before* the New Monaco settlement, but we've kept it here for the historical significance. We also can't discount the battles fought in the area by the Martian Foreign Legion. This is an area *steeped* in history, and this year we're poised to make even more of it.

MARTIE ETTAL

Now, we tend to have viewers from all over

the System. For their sake, tell us a little more about the history of the tournament.

TATUM HADAR

Sure. The Red Riviera Bloodbath is part of a System-wide crime reduction initiative led by the local Marshalls, with full cooperation from the various Martian governments. Fifty years ago we had very few active bounty hunters, but a hell of a lot of outlaws to bring to justice. Knowing we had the means to provide bounties for these crooks regardless of who did it, we came up with a plan to use the hubris of these folks against them.

MARTIE ETTAL

Now, do you call in the outlaws you want to see brought to justice, or...?

TATUM HADAR

It's *all* self selection. A lot of them think they're better shots than they actually are, and to them, money's louder than common sense. Speaking with the ones our local Marshalls capture on the off-season, they all know it's either a great way to get rich if you're a good shot, or it's a drastic, yet legitimate way out of the life.

AGATHA

Hah! Wish they *coulda* picked who came to this shindig. All the pirates in Tethys'd be a good place to start. Some of the worst vultures in the System'd be good. And maybe some of them mulch lovin', baby stealin' Grinners too, while they're at it.

VIOLA

(wincing)

I... suppose leaving it to self selection ensures they'll actually show up.

MARTIE ETTAL

And how often is it held?

TATUM HADAR

Oh, you know. Once in a blue noon.

VIOLA

(to the REDLINE)

What does that *mean*?!

AGATHA

Oh! It means -

MARTIE ETTAL

(laughing)

So, pretty often then.

AGATHA

Yeah, that.

VIOLA

(to REDLINE)

That makes no sense!

AGATHA

Aw, I think it makes *perfect* sense.

(beat, amused and curious)

You ain't from Mars either, are you darlin'?

VIOLA

(lying and trying not to sound
like it)

Oh, I am from Ganymede. I went to school
there and everything. Go Fighting
Cuttlefish!

AGATHA

Cuddlefish, huh. Yeah that tracks, you uh,
you strike me as one of them huggy-fished,
book-smart Gany types.

MARTIE ETTAL

Anything special about this year in
particular, Marshall?

AGATHA turns the REDLINE off.

AGATHA

That's about enough outta *those* talkin' heads.

(beat)

Anyway, you uh, y'got any more plant facts to share, darlin'?

VIOLA (V.O.)

We talked all night, and, no, it wasn't *all* about plants. We even talked the next *few* nights, meeting at the same time at that same bar. It wasn't until the night before the outlaws were due to arrive that she suddenly asked me -

AGATHA

You plannin' to watch the tournament by chance?

VIOLA

Me? Um...

AGATHA

You are, again, the only other customer in this room, darlin'. Yeah, you. You busy?

VIOLA

(eager)

No!

I mean, I'm not working. There's nothing else to do. What are you thinking?

AGATHA

Got a little job I need some help with. Thought maybe you'd be interested, considering we're brand new friends and all.

VIOLA

Sure! I like to be helpful.

AGATHA

Great! Just meet me here before the shindig starts. I uh, think we'll watch the start of it, then we can talk more about the job

after.

VIOLA

Okay! I'll be here.

SCENE BREAK

INT. THE ROYAL VERMILION CASINO, THE RED RIVIERA, MARS

A tinny country song plays over the outdated and ruined speakers in an attempt to pump up the competition. Sounds from the crowd slightly echo in the once abandoned casino. AGATHA and VIOLA make their way into the seats of the stage.

VIOLA (V.O.)

Aggie and I met back up in the Royal Vermilion Casino, sitting in the stands around the stage. Outlaws gathered here in the Red Riviera from all corners of the System. I had never in my life seen so many criminals in one place. Some of them fit that stereotype in my mind, the scraggly ragamuffin with twitchy hands and murderous intent in their eyes. And others looked, well, like some of the youngsters back home. Unassuming folk. I wondered what each of them had done to make coming here their best option. But I couldn't think on that too long, because Agatha clapped me on the shoulder.

AGATHA claps VIOLA on the shoulder.

VIOLA

Oof! Hi.

AGATHA

Mars to Viola. You out in space or are you still with us?

VIOLA

Y-yeah! Just nervous.

AGATHA

Ah, don't worry. They'll be shootin' at *each other*. Not you.

VIOLA

Well, that's good. I - I mean, it's not good, but...

AGATHA

Besides.

(flirty aside)

I wouldn't let 'em touch you.

VIOLA

Ah, thanks Aggie.

Footsteps approach.

GARRISON

Well, well, well. Agatha Howard, fancy seeing you here.

AGATHA

Garry Grainger, you big, beautiful bastard! C'mere! Have a seat. Oh! And meet my new friend, Viola...

(beat)

Y'know I never got your last name.

VIOLA

B-Barnsley. Viola Barnsley. Nice to meet you, Mr. Grainger.

GARRISON

(scoffs)

Mister. Just call me Garrison, it's alright. Just don't call me Garry.

VIOLA

She called you Garry, though.

GARRISON

She is also very rude, and I've never been able to stop her from doing whatever the hell she wants.

AGATHA

(smug chuckle)

Damn right, Garry.

GARRISON

Gremlin.

AGATHA

Love you too, buddy.

A microphone is tapped a few times.

TATUM HADAR

Excuse me. Excuse me, hello. Testing. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2. Uhh. Okay, if everyone would have a seat, we'll get started. Everyone brought a personal device, as stated in the informational packet, correct?

Some random jeers and yes/no's from the crowd.

TATUM HADAR

Okay, I'm going to take that as a yes. Before we get to sign-ups, there are a few introductory things to mention, as well as the rules. First off: hello! I'm Captain Tatum Hadar, head of the Martian Criminal Overwatch Division of the local Marshalls, and I will be your host, emcee, and point person for any questions or concerns during this competition. On behalf of all the Martian Government Agencies making this happen, I welcome all of you here to the Red Riviera Bloodbath!

The audience cheers obnoxiously.

TATUM HADAR

Alright, let's get to the rules next. The Red Riviera Bloodbath is, as you all know, a series of gunfights to the death. I will repeat for anyone not listening, this is to the *death*. If you are not willing to risk *death* for the prize, do not sign up.

Once we have all of our competitors signed up, you will be placed in the bracket based on your current bounty. The highest bounty in the group will equal the highest seed.

If there is a tie between bounties, the longest standing criminal record will receive the higher of the two seeds.

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON

Or we could just kill one 'a your fellas to raise our bounty! That way there ain't gotta be a tiebreaker, right?!

There are a couple guffaws from the audience of outlaws.

TATUM HADAR

Cute. Yeah, no, any killing of government officials here is grounds for immediate expulsion from the tournament and a one way ticket to Diatoma, so fuckin' try it, buddy.

Some oooo's and snarky laughing from the crowd.

TATUM HADAR

Anyway. We'll begin our competitions *today...* at high noon. We'll work our way through the bracket. Each competitor will receive the same model gun with one round in the cylinder, and a pouch with 5 spare rounds for draws. You get *one shot* to kill your competitor. If you do not kill them on the spot, the match will be repeated until one of the competitors dies. The overall winner will receive the sum of all the deceased bounties present at the tournament, as well as the erasure of their own bounty as their prize.

These are the broad stroke rules. Are there any questions?

There are no questions.

TATUM HADAR

Alright then. Let's get to sign-ups. Now, if you'd pull up the YuKle Form on your personal device and fill out the -

Someone says something in TATUM'S ear, partly picked up on the mic.

WHISPERER

Boss, boss, it's - it's down. It's down.

TATUM HADAR

It's down? That too!? Are you fucking kidd-

(takes a deep breath, then
addresses the crowd again)

Okay, fuck the form, we're doing this the old fashioned way. Who's signing up?

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON

Aye! Put down "Scalawag" Ferguson, Terror of Tethys on your stupid little screen! Gonna be a top seed, this one!

AGATHA

Ferguson's one of the biggest crooks to come out of Tethys. Surprised he found time between the slavin' and killin' to come here for sport.

TATUM HADAR

Right. Next!

"BUZZARD" GABARA

Give ol' "Buzzard" Gabara a spot on y'all's bracket, then.

AGATHA

Now, Gabara's a vulture. I think he was on the verge of gettin' captured and they gave him a deal. May as well go out with a bang if you're gonna go out at all.

"SADDLE TRAMP" SATO

"Saddle Tramp" Sato here, ready to *shoot my shot*, if you catch my drift.

AGATHA

And speaking of bangs...

GARRISON

Oh god, *they're* here? Fuuuuuck. I broke up with them last month.

AGATHA

Oh. In person?

GARRISON

...No.

AGATHA

Ooooh.

GARRISON

Yeah, I just... I couldn't deal with all the late night calls anymore.

AGATHA

Huh. Got tired of them shootin' their shot, I see.

GARRISON

Ugh. Shut up, Agatha.

VIOLA

Wait, what does that mea-

GARRISON

Don't worry about it.

"COYOTE" OLIVEIRA

(howls like a coyote, *obnoxiously*)

IT'S YA BOY, COYOTE!

AGATHA

Oh, "Coyote" Oliveira. He's an assassin and a sharpshooter, and he is also a self-absorbed, shit-for-brains dumbass.

GARRISON

Tell us how you *really* feel, Agatha.

AGATHA

That stupid son of a bitch stole one of my cattleman hats and I'm *still* not over it!

VIOLA

(chuckles)

"BULLETHEAD" BENOIT

"Bullethead" Benoit.

AGATHA

Hm, Benoit? Benoit used to be a respectable Legionnaire, least till they got shot in the head. Kinda shudder to think of all the shit they done since...

TATUM HADAR

Benoit, how do you spell that?

"BULLETHEAD" BENOIT

The right way.

TATUM HADAR

(sighs, muttering)

Guess I'm *fuckin' guessing*.

"COWPOKE" PODLASKI

"Cowpoke" Podlaski here! Thanks for hosting this, Mister. I'm really looking forward to killing my peers!

TATUM HADAR

Wait, are you old enough to be here?

"COWPOKE" PODLASKI

Just turned 18 yesterday, sir! Don't worry, I'm gonna win it all, just you wait!

VIOLA

He's just a kid! He can't be any good at outlawing, can he?

AGATHA

Oh, au contraire, that kid stole enough spacecrafts to fit in this whole shitty Riviera before his 15th birthday. He's a real prodigy!

VIOLA

Huh.

TATUM HADAR

Great. Anyone else?

Someone BIG stands up.

(thoughtfully, carefully egging
on)

Hmm. Now, if *I'm* the top seed, then if you
want to be the first to come at me, you'd
need to be the lowest seed, right? The
worst outlaw here? Isn't that how brackets
work?

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON

Are you calling me the worst outlaw here?!
Ohoho, you *fuck*!

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON tries to get at ORAN across the chairs.

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON

I'm gonna shoot that stupid fucking grin off
of that stupid fucking face you absolute
fuckin -

A commotion of arguing and jostling kicks off amongst the
competitors.

TATUM HADAR

Hey, hey, hey! Knock it off! God *damn* it!
We're taking a break. Ferguson, go for a
walk. Baines, stop pissing people off!

AGATHA

I think that's our cue to get out of here.

VIOLA

Oh thank the stars, I was getting scared.

GARRISON

Just old outlaw bluster down there, you're
fine.

SCENE BREAK

EXT. MAIN STREET NEW MONACO, RED RIVIERA, MARS

Outdoor noise, such as footsteps, maybe some light music over the bad
loudspeaker, and crowd noise, are audible.

VIOLA (V.O.)

The stage was set for one of the bloodiest
few days the Red Riviera had seen since the
Foreign Legion days.

(beat)

Or at least since the *last* time they ran the Bloodbath, so like...two years ago.

The main street that every building in the little town clustered around, where neighbors, friends and loved ones would stroll and shop, was now the site of deadly competition. We hunkered down just before high noon in some of the pop-up bleachers they placed along the perimeter, waiting for the rest of the outlaws to arrive.

AGATHA

Alright. I promised I'd tell you a little more about what we're doing Viola. Because I am, of course, a woman of my word.

GARRISON

(scoff)

AGATHA

My friend Garry and I need to uh... *retrieve* something from someone here. We think it's in the Dust Devil Inn, but we don't know for sure.

GARRISON

I'm going to go scope out the place while these first fights happen.

VIOLA

What is this something?

AGATHA

It's an old memento. He told us, uh:

(clears throat, mimicking ORAN)

"I lost it in a game of five card drift twenty years ago that would've otherwise killed me and I want it back. Whatever building you find it in, bonus if you set fire to it. Twice the bonus if *he's* in it while it happens."

VIOLA

Wait, he who?

(beat, hushed)

AGATHA
(chuckles)

VIOLA
Wait, *him*?! The Marshall?! You're stealing
from the Marshall?!

AGATHA and VIOLA speak over each other in a fluster.

AGATHA
It's not stealin', it's not *stealin'*, our
friend *lost* this thing and, y'know, now
we're just gonna help him get it -

VIOLA
(gasps, still hushed)
It's still the Marshall!

AGATHA
Listen, listen, listen, darlin'. I...
(she stops herself)
I really need your help with it. Just,
think of it as a little adventure, yeah?

VIOLA
An adventure...

GARRISON
Marshall incoming.

Footsteps grow louder as TATUM and the MAYOR climb the steps of the
little stage overlooking the main drag.

MAYOR
Greetings, everyone, and welcome to New
Monaco! I hope everyone is enjoying the
amenities here thus far! We may not have
much in this little town, but we do have the
gift of such a well kept historical hotel
nearby that I hope has been comfortable for
all!
(chuckles awkwardly)

TATUM HADAR

And thank you, Mayor Thomas, for staying there while I enjoy the amenities of your home!

MAYOR

I, well it, that is to say, uh, that it really wasn't a choice.

TATUM continues to speak over the loudspeaker in the background, reiterating the rules of competition.

AGATHA

What?! No, no! They were supposed to be at the hotel!

GARRISON

Calm down, Agatha. Just a small kink in the plans, we can work with this, right? We've been dealt worse curveballs. He's going to be at the Mayor's house, right? That's not any different than that one job in New Philly.

AGATHA

Mm, yeah, you're right. Alright, probably easier this way, now there's - there's not a billion rooms to look at now.

(to VIOLA)

Oh, and, *this* is where you come in, darlin'. Where's the Mayor live 'round here?

VIOLA

Uh, well. No one here has a house, really. Most of us just live in the apartments, unless you own a business. Most of the businesses in this town have living spaces above them. So, I think the Mayor lives in Town Hall?

AGATHA

Alright, alright, real good first lead. Garry?

GARRISON

You got it. I'll go give it a look-see while no one's lookin' at me.

GARRISON walks off.

AGATHA

(quieter)

And now that *he's* gone, I've got a little more explainin' to do.

(beat)

Um. Look. Listen, Viola. Jobs like this? This is *all* I do. All the time. All twenty something years of my life. And, hell, it's been a *hard* life. Livin' job to job. Person to person. Credit to credit. Feastin' one minute and starvin' the next. I've - I've had close friends turn to enemies, or corpses, or straight-up disappear. I've just...I've just been hangin' on for years. Just, exhausted, feeling like I'm gonna fall to my death any minute. Just waiting for my luck to change, for better or worse. And that's why I'm here.

(beat)

I want out. I want something *different* for myself, and *this* job? If it goes off without a hitch Viola, I could do *anything*. Whatever I wanted with my life, whatever my heart desired,

(laughs)

And that's - that's exciting and scary at the same time. You understand?

VIOLA

Oh, Aggie, I - yes! I do! And I - I appreciate knowing this, I really do. But you barely know me. Why are you telling me all of this?

AGATHA

Y'know, we - we talked for *hours* the past few nights, and, I mean, I loved every minute of it. I think I know more about you than you know about me, and that's - that's not really fair, is it? And besides, there is just - there's somethin' genuine about you, Viola. Somethin' about you just drew

me in. I don't - I don't trust easy but after talking all those nights with you? You are someone I *know* I can trust in a place that's so full of people I know that I *can't*. Innocence like yours is somethin' I wish I had more of in my life. Hang around long enough in the circles I do, and there's nothin' but cynics and sinners to be seen. So, thank you, I guess. For listening, and lettin' me drag you on this little *adventure*.

VIOLA

Aggie, I - you're welcome.

(aside)

Wow, *that's* sure different from the flirting.

AGATHA

You're welcome to flirt back, darlin'.

VIOLA

I...I don't know how.

AGATHA

(sympathetic cooing)

Alright, alright, I'll tell ya. Wanna know the secret to good flirting? It's just honesty, just, y'know, wrap it up in some fancy words and some doe eyes, y'know, that kind of thing. You just - you just be honest. Just ay whatever you're feeling.

VIOLA

I, uh, I'll keep that in mind for later, thanks.

AGATHA

(chuckles)

The loudspeaker squeaks on.

TATUM HADAR

(over the loudspeaker)

Alright, we're all set for our first match-up. To the south, we have our first

seed competitor: "Big Sky" Baines.

The audience boos and cheers in equal measure.

TATUM HADAR

And to the north, our 64th seed: "Jicama"
Horton.

The audience acts much the same. More jeers here.

TATUM HADAR

On go, you'll take your paces to your mark
and turn. Then you'll wait for the chime.
On the chime, kill your opponent. Any last
words?

"JICAMA" HORTON

Ohhhhh shit, I suddenly don't want to do
this anymore.

TATUM HADAR

Can't back out now, Horton.

ORAN

Sorry, kid. I'll make it quick, I promise.

"JICAMA" HORTON

(scared noises)

TATUM HADAR

And, go.

ORAN and HORTON pace to opposite sides of the main drag, then both
turn. It's quiet, save for some light wind and an almost inaudible
faint electronic hum - it is not drawn attention to. The noise
suddenly changes pitch and the CHIME rings. ORAN draws faster than
HORTON, but both shoot.

"JICAMA" HORTON

(screams)

HORTON falls over, dead. The audience ROARS!

AGATHA

Don't look, Viola!

VIOLA

Oh. Oh, stars...

TATUM HADAR

And with that, we have our first victory.
"Big Sky" Baines moves on to the second
round of fights. Medical team, please carry
Horton off. Armorer, please grab the guns
and prepare them for the next competitors.

SCENE BREAK

INT. THE DUST DEVIL INN, RED RIVIERA, MARS

Room noise. AGATHA is pacing the room. VIOLA is on a computer terminal.

VIOLA (V.O.)

After "Big Sky"'s fight, we went back to my
room at the Dust Devil to wait for Garrison.
Aggie couldn't stand still, she was so
nervous. And I couldn't blame her. After
what she'd told me at the fight, *everything*
was riding on this. Fortunately, we didn't
have to wait too long...

There's a knock on the door. AGATHA hurries over to open it, letting
two people enter.

AGATHA

Hey Garry.

GARRISON

Hi.

Took forever to find this room. They put
you townsfolk in the nosebleeds.

VIOLA

I don't think it's too bad. Less noise up
here.

GARRISON

I guess that means less people to listen in,
too. Here, I brought a friend.

ORAN

Howdy.

(beat)
Room's real small.

GARRISON
You're just really big, buddy. Oran, meet
Viola. Viola, Oran.

VIOLA
Hello Mr. Baines. Nice to meet you in
person.

ORAN
(smiling)
You must be their new friend. Pleasure to
meet you, Viola. Apologies for how we're
meetin', though. A bloodbath isn't any
place for a nice young lady like yourself.
(to AGATHA and GARRISON)
What's the news? Any progress?

GARRISON
We think Hadar's staying in Town Hall. I
scoped out the building and there doesn't
seem to be anyone making rounds.

ORAN
That makes sense. Nothin' extremely
valuable in there. I've been in there a
time or two on other hei -
(clears throat)
Other, uh, jobs. He wasn't wearin' the
thing, was he?

GARRISON
I didn't get a good enough look at him to
see.

AGATHA
He was wearin' a belt, but your thing
definitely wasn't on it. You sure it's even
here? He mighta left it at his fancy-ass
home in North Mars.

ORAN
Nah. That ol' galoot takes it with 'im
everywhere he goes. Last time I saw 'im -

nearly got arrested because of it - he was gloating about it, wagglin' it around. I know he's got other prized guns that he could be wearing instead but, hmm, well, regardless. Tomorrow, will one of you see if he's wearing it? Better not to disturb an actual government building if we can help it.

AGATHA

Yeah, can do. How're you, uh - how're you feelin' about the competition so far?

ORAN

(sighs)

There's a reason I've been *avoiding* doing this one for so long. I've only killed when I *had* to for survival or defense, I've never felt right about doin' it for sport.

AGATHA

Well, I mean you kinda *have to* here. If that helps.

ORAN

(smiling)

It doesn't. But thanks for trying to make me feel better.

GARRISON

You're a big target too with that bounty. Can't be comfy to be *under the gun*, if you'll excuse the pun.

ORAN

It's not. But if I win this - if we win this...

AGATHA

You're one step closer to *her*.

ORAN

(gives one of those 'dad' mmhmms)

Anyway. Get some rest and keep me posted on your progress, kiddos.

AGATHA

Will do. Give 'em hell, "Big Sky".

ORAN

Sure as heck will, Aggie. G'night.

ORAN leaves the room, the door opens and shuts and his footsteps fade.

AGATHA

Still real brave of him to do this.

GARRISON

And give us a cut. We're bound to make a small fortune from this.

AGATHA

Yeah, but only if we get him his gun back.

GARRISON

That's going to be the easy part. He's got to fulfill his end of the bargain.

AGATHA

Psh, you must not've seen him fight today. Pro level shit. It's not Oran I'm worried about, it's all the *other* crooks 'round here.

GARRISON

Yeah. We're little rattlesnakes in a den of vipers.

AGATHA

Y'know, we've gotta keep an eye on *him* too. You know how these folk are. Anyone could have designs on hurtin' him.

GARRISON

Yeah. Agreed. If you two would take that job, I'll continue to find a good way into Town Hall without being too destructive.

Sorry Viola, I'm sure you'd like to get some sleep. The two of us can get out of your hair.

AGATHA

You, uh, go on ahead, Garry. I've got a couple things to pick up here before I head over to my room. Y'know, don't want to leave Viola's room a mess or nothin'.

GARRISON

Okay. Sure. Good night, ladies.

GARRISON leaves the room, the door opens and shuts behind him, his footsteps fading off.

VIOLA

(obliviously)

You didn't leave anything here, Aggie.

AGATHA

(chuckles)

I know. I just, y'know, wanted to give you a little heads up before the sun rises. I'm gonna try to figure out what Hadar's wearin' tomorrow. While I do that, I've got a real important job for you. I need you to keep an eye on Oran.

VIOLA

Sure! I can do that. What am I looking for?

AGATHA

Ah, y'know, Folks lookin' to kill him out of sightlines. People druggin' him. Messin' with his competition gun. You know, look for shady folk - well, shady-er folk, anyway.

(beat)

I love that big teddy bear. He's like a father to me, so I worry about him. Oh, you know, you should hang out with him tomorrow. Maybe havin' someone like you around him will keep some of the more honorable of the crooks off of him.

VIOLA

Yeah, yeah! Oh, what about tonight? What

if someone breaks into his room and murders him then?

AGATHA

(short laugh)

He's sharin' a room with Garry, there's an ice hauler's chance on Mercury of that. You saw what Oran can do, right?

VIOLA

(shuddering revulsion)

Yeah, unfortunately.

AGATHA

Yeah, well, Garry is an even *quicker* shot. And he doesn't have the qualms that Oran does. So don't worry about him overnight, he's got Garry.

VIOLA

Okay.

AGATHA

(beat)

You feelin' a little in over your head?

VIOLA

A little. But I'm gonna ty! You need me to.

AGATHA

I - I really appreciate it. No way I could pull this off with just me and Garry. And darlin', I'm not gonna to let you get in too deep, or get hurt. You know that, I hope.

VIOLA

I know.

AGATHA

I *promise*. I won't. First sign of danger and I'm pullin' you out of it. I am not lettin' anything bad happen to you, okay? I *can't*.

VIOLA

Okay. I trust you.

(LONG beat)
Aggie? Can I tell you something?

AGATHA
Yeah, darlin'?

VIOLA
I...I hope you have a good night?

AGATHA
You too, Viola. G'night.

AGATHA leaves the room slowly, door opening and shutting behind her.
Her footsteps fade off.

EXT. MAIN STREET NEW MONACO, RED RIVIERA, MARS

Outdoor noise, such as footsteps, maybe some light music over the bad
loudspeaker, and crowd noise, are audible.

VIOLA (V.O.)
I couldn't tell Aggie what I needed to, and
it ate at me the whole night. I decided to
push it down as far as I could, though, so I
could focus on my new job: bodyguarding the
biggest and most wanted outlaw in the Red
Riviera. I was at his side as much as I
could, standing by when he was competing.
We'd gone through a round in the morning,
and then...

TATUM HADAR
We are ready for the first of our third
round match-ups. To the south, we have our
first seed competitor: "Big Sky" Baines.

The audience boos and cheers again.

TATUM HADAR
And to the north, our 16th seed: "Coyote"
Oliveira.

The audience boos and cheers again.

TATUM HADAR
Any last words before I say "go"?

"COYOTE" OLIVEIRA

(another obnoxious howl)

I might only be the 16th seed, but I'm not gonna hold back, "Big Sky"! You're not even gonna feel the bullet go straight through your old man heart!

ORAN

I hope it'll be as fun for you as it is for me.

TATUM HADAR

Go!

ORAN and OLIVEIRA pace to opposite sides of the main drag, then both turn. It's quiet, save for some light wind and an almost inaudible faint electronic hum. The noise suddenly changes pitch and the CHIME rings. ORAN draws faster than OLIVEIRA, but both shoot. OLIVEIRA collapses to the ground writhing.

"COYOTE" OLIVEIRA

(grunts in pain and coughs)

ORAN

Which is to say, not at all.

TATUM HADAR

"Big Sky" Baines is once again our victor. He moves on to the fourth round of fights. Medical team, armorer, please prepare for the next competitors. "Scalawag" Ferguson and "Buzzard" Gabara, you're on deck!

VIOLA (V.O.)

Oran and I found a spot in the stands, tucked in the corner of a building to protect him. He had the bright idea to get some Tetrafried Pies on a Deep Fried Stick. And we got some Cajun cricket poppers to snack on too while we waited for his next rounds.

ORAN

I'm really sorry you had to see all that, Viola.

VIOLA

Wanna know a secret?

ORAN

You betcha.

VIOLA

(proud of herself)

I was closing my eyes the whole time.

ORAN

(chuckles)

Smart plan.

(beat)

You know, Agatha was worried about you this morning.

VIOLA

R-Really? Did she say why?

ORAN

She said it looked like you had something on your mind.

VIOLA

Oh...

ORAN

I kind of noticed it earlier too, you were looking at the bleachers across the way very intently. You feelin' okay?

VIOLA

(beat)

You ever just want to tell someone something really important? But you're afraid to, because "what if they don't accept it"? "What if they don't accept you"?

ORAN

You wanna know a secret?

VIOLA

You betcha.

ORAN

That's the whole reason I'm here. Gun on my hip. Million credit bounty on my head about as dangerous as a samiel rollin' in. I don't know if you want to hear the ramblin's of an old man, but...

VIOLA

But I do! If you're willing to share.

ORAN

(remorsefully)

Well...once upon a time, in a little town on Luna, a scrawny, awkward beanpole of a boy fell madly in love with a force of a girl. A real spitfire. They fell too hard, too quickly. It could've all worked out if they'd been smart. But one day, out of the blue, she told him they were having a baby. And it was...it was a *shock*. He wasn't prepared, and all those feelings whirlin' around in his heart suddenly became very real. And very expensive. And you can't feed a family on a waste reclamation wage.

So, he gets to thinkin', "Gotta be other ways to make money, right?" But she gets suspicious when the credits come rollin' in like nothin'. And when the Rangers come knockin' on the apartment door, lookin' for *him*...it's enough to make her cut her losses and run. Takin' the baby with her.

All the while, leavin' that new wedding ring burnin' a hole in his pocket.

VIOLA

Oh no. Oran, I'm so sorry. Do you know where she went?

ORAN

Gaia was always a gearhead. Always fixin' up ships as a hobby. She thought she could make what she needed to support our kid alone, workin' at Delaney Station. 'Course that was all second-hand news to me. I never heard from her again after she left.

It was made all the worse when I heard *again*
from someone else that she'd...

(breathes out shakily)

She'd had an accident in the shipyard. It
took her life.

VIOLA

Oran...I'm so sorry for your loss. Do you
know anything about your child?

ORAN

She's, thankfully, still alive and a lot
like her mother it seems. Has shipbreaking
certifications up the wazoo, including some
really impressive weapons decommissioning
stuff. Owns a business with her wife now,
so I'd say she's doin' pretty well for
herself. And if I win this thing? I'm
gonna find her. I - I gotta know if she
remembers me, if she wants me in her life.
And she has every right not to want me
there, but...I've at least gotta try.

(beat, sniffs)

All that to say, I'm a shining example of
what happens when you don't say what you
feel. When you don't take those leaps or
take a chance on something close to your
heart. You gotta be *brave*. If you've got a
story to tell, Viola, you'd better tell it.

(beat)

I just don't want you to regret it all.
Y'understand?

VIOLA

I do...

(beat)

Thanks, Oran.

Some light bleacher noise, as if someone's approaching. After a few
lines, they sit.

ORAN

Hey, it's what I'm here for. Y'know, I've
known Agatha for a while. Her and Garrison
both, since they were knee-high to a moon
rabbit, so I care a great deal for both of

them. They're a little like my kids in that way.

Seems like you've set a fire under Agatha in a big way.

VIOLA

Oh? Uh, how so?

ORAN

I think you know, even if you can't name it. But she's been talking more about starting over, and I'm whole-heartedly in favor of that for her. I just need to win this stupid tournament for her.

VIOLA

How are you so good?

ORAN

(snickers)

Viola, one thing you need to know about me is that I'm a *heist* guy. I love planning and scheming, figurin' out how stuff works. I'm not a sharpshooter.

VIOLA

Then...how?

ORAN

(quietly)

I've always been a little sensitive to electronic humming. The chime they're using? The hum starts low, and then it changes pitch. Split second after it does, the chime goes off. If I can hear the pitch change, I'm free to draw, and it's close enough to the chime that it looks legitimate.

VIOLA

Wow, that's...really observant.

ORAN

But that's our little secret, right?

VIOLA
My lips are sealed!

GARRISON stops beside VIOLA and ORAN.

GARRISON
Hey Oran. Viola.

ORAN
Afternoon, Garrison! Want some crickets?

GARRISON
I'll take a few.
(beat, takes a bite)
Town Hall looks pretty accessible if Hadar isn't wearing the piece. We should be able to get in tomorrow.

ORAN
All we need then is Agatha's intel, and then we'll be set.

GARRISON
Why do you even want this thing back anyway?

ORAN
Have you *seen* it?

GARRISON
Nope.

ORAN
All custom. Gold plated titanium-polymer with synthetic pearl inlays. It gleams like a gosh darn dream. Customized by a kind woman who was too good for this world.

(beat)
It's coming with me when I retire. It's the last piece of my old life - of *Gaia* - left out in the wild, and I want it back.

GARRISON
Fair enough. I guess I'd pull out all the stops for it too. Too bad you don't want us to just sell it. The money'd be nice. And it'd be *guaranteed* that way.

ORAN

(disapproving dad noise)

Jeez, kid, it's like you're salivatin'.
You'll get your money. Be patient.

GARRISON

I know. I trust you have your head in the
game. Just... be careful, yeah?

ORAN

Always. I gotta prepare for my next fight
though, so all the rest of those crickets
are all yours.

ORAN hands over the bag, giving GARRISON a fatherly
pat as he goes.

ORAN

Eat up, kid, you're lookin' a little thin.

VIOLA (V.O.)

Garrison's arrival meant I was off the hook.
Oran had suggested I go try to find Agatha
and talk to her. And after everything he
told me, I was anxious to. I tried to steel
my heart for whatever would come. It took
me what seemed like forever to find her.
And as I looked into the sky, dusty soil
crunching under my feet, the Martian sun was
setting.

(beat)

And it was *blue*.

VIOLA walks up, footsteps on crunchy Martian soil.

AGATHA

Hey darlin'! Oran's okay?

VIOLA

Yeah! He won his latest match. I think
that means he has two left tomorrow. Did
you find out about the Marshall?

AGATHA

He ain't wearing it, he's got another

fancy-ass gun with 'im. So it's gotta be in Town Hall.

VIOLA

Oh! Okay, then Garrison says we're all clear to go in tomorrow.

Two gunshots go off, and the crowd cheers distantly.

AGATHA

Oh, good, good. I think we'll just go in just before the first matches start in the morning. Just gotta wait for Hadar to skedaddle out to Main Street.

VIOLA

(beat)

A-Aggie?

AGATHA

Whatcha need, Viola?

VIOLA

I...I figured out why I can't flirt with you.

AGATHA

(with a little chuckle)

Oh? Is *this* what you were gonna tell me last night? Alright, well why's that?

VIOLA

You said flirting's about honesty. I can't be honest with you because I haven't been honest about *myself*. Can you - if I tell you, please...can you *please* have an open mind? Because I do lo-...I do care for you.

AGATHA

Okay. My mind is open and I'm all ears, darlin'. Just lay it on me.

VIOLA

My forename is Viola. I haven't concealed that, nor would I wish to. But my surname...my surname isn't Barnsley. I picked it to sound...*normal*.

(beat)

My name is Viola Fernsdottir, of the
Peregrination cartography ship, the *Wander
With Eyes Wide Open*. I'm...reluctantly on
my *Wander*, trying to learn more about the
world.

There is an uncomfortably long pause as it sinks in.

AGATHA

You're... you're a *Grinner*?!

VIOLA

Aggie, please understand -

AGATHA

(mirthless chuckle)

And here I thought I had to protect you from
me. Never thought those tables would get
turned. I thought you were *innocent* -

VIOLA

(desperately)

I *am*! We're not *like* her, that
reprehensible Blackliar! We don't kidnap
people and defile their bodies! Please,
please believe me, Aggie!

AGATHA

That's what y'all *want* us to think! Keep us
docile till the harvest, and we'll all just
be none the wiser!

VIOLA

(breaking into tears)

This is why I didn't want to tell you.
Everything would've been fine if I'd just -
kept my stupid mouth shut.

(beat)

I'm sorry that this has changed things...
but it doesn't change the fact that, in the
short time I've come to know you, I care
deeply for you, Agatha.

AGATHA

(beat, breathes in deeply)

I'm leavin'. I'm leavin'. Don't even think about followin' me.

AGATHA stalks off, leaving a tearful VIOLA in her wake. After a few moments heavier footsteps, ORAN'S, approach.

ORAN

Hey Viola. Did you talk to -

VIOLA

(full-on crying)

She hates me. She hates me, Oran!

VIOLA turns to cry into him.

ORAN

(fatherly soothing)

Whoa, hey... it'll be okay. It'll be okay, I promise.

Quietly, as ORAN is comforting VIOLA, somewhere in the distance GARRISON is speaking with "SCALAWAG" FERGUSON.

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON

An' yer *sure* that's how he's doin' it?
Sounds farfetched as hell.

GARRISON

Trust me. Don't tell anyone where you got it from, but keep that little birdie in mind when those credits roll in, yeah?

SCENE BREAK

INT. NEW MONACO TOWN HALL, RED RIVIERA, MARS

VIOLA (V.O.)

Aggie didn't join us for the nightly meeting in my room, but I filled everyone in on what Agatha saw on that belt. Garrison decided he would get an early start on the plan, waiting for Marshall Hadar to leave before working on the security systems. Oran still had to compete, so he wouldn't be joining us. Garrison said he and Aggie would complete the job in Town Hall and that I could sit this one out, but something felt

off about that.

(beat)

So I decided to be brave. I made my way over at the time he said Aggie would be there, when the sun was rising. It was just as blue as the night before, but there was no sign of Aggie.

Garrison specifically said that the back door would be the entrance we would use, so I snuck around back. The door was unlocked, so I waltzed right in.

VIOLA slowly walks in.

VIOLA (V.O.)

I knew the living spaces were upstairs, so I slowly made my way up the winding staircase.

VIOLA walks up the staircase. As she ascends, rummaging noises become clearer.

VIOLA (V.O.)

As soon as I made my way up there, I knew Garrison was already here, looking for the gun. And it sounded like he'd found it. So, mission accomplished, right?

Distant gun noises, and GARRISON is just as distant, his voice accompanied by the crackling of comms.

GARRISON

(muttering)

Just enough bullets in it.

(louder)

I know you're here. I figured you'd follow me up.

VIOLA (V.O.)

I froze in my tracks.

GARRISON

Listen. We can work this out. You don't have to give it all up for some girl you just met. You're a friend, and you're useful to me still. You've still got a

lotta years in you, just like me. We don't have to give up on a partnership that's firing on all thrusters.

(beat)

Is it *really* worth it? To throw it all away chasing some hokey life as a bartender in some backwater 2VAC town?

(beat, voice getting louder, but still behind some walls)

There's *riches* to be had, and damn it all, I'm not about to scrap everything and run! I'm not about to settle for what "*Big Sky*" can get us! I want *more*!

GARRISON unfolds from an adjacent room, training his gun on VIOLA.

VIOLA (V.O.)

He popped out from a room with his gun - no, *Oran's* gun, aimed right at me. That special metal and pearl inlay glistened in the blue sunrise from the window, and it sang in my mind like death. I put my hands up.

VIOLA

It's just me!

GARRISON

Just you. Just the fucking *skinsack* homewrecker ruining a beautiful partnership.
(beat)

VIOLA

(whimpers fearfully)

GARRISON

Yeah. Yeah, I'm talking about you. As soon as she met you, that stupid brain of hers started flitting back to domesticity and running away and, *fuck*! I'm *not* about to lose the best damn partner I've ever had to some bland and boring life!

GARRISON chambers a round. Someone clambers up the stairs.

GARRISON

I'm not gonna give her a choice!

GARRISON fires at VIOLA, but AGATHA, completely up the stairs, takes the bullet in the shoulder.

VIOLA
(screams in terror)

AGATHA
(pained yelp)

AGATHA stumbles into the nearby wall.

VIOLA
(mortified)
AGATHA! NO!

VIOLA rushes to AGATHA'S side.

AGATHA
(pained)
I'm a woman of my word, darlin'. I promised
I wouldn't let anything happen to you. And
I meant it.

AGATHA pulls a gun too. The two of them start circling each other.

GARRISON
You brought heat too. Intending to kill.
So, this is how it goes down, huh? All
those years, down the drain.
(sneering)
For *her*.

AGATHA
(with a growl)
For *me*.
(beat)
Oran's a real perceptive bastard, y'know.
He sniffed you out. Thought somethin' was
weird. And then he heard you talkin' to
"Scalawag" fuckin' Ferguson of all people.
Should've been a little bit more discreet,
buddy.

GARRISON
You can't tell me you wouldn't love a cut of
a million more credits, Agatha.

AGATHA

Not at Oran's expense! Christ, Garry, the man's like a father to us and you go fuckin' double crossin' him! For *money*! I knew you had no qualms about killin', but I thought you had at least had a *shred* of honor in you!

GARRISON

Honor? Honor means *nothing* in the face of a haul like this!

Both stop.

GARRISON

(sighs)

And if you're not gonna see reason, then I'm gonna make you see nothing at all!

VIOLA

(shrieks)

Both shoot. A gun drops out of a hand, and a body falls to the floor.

GARRISON

(death rattle)

AGATHA slowly falls to the floor too. VIOLA moves to kneel next to her and hold her.

VIOLA

Agatha! I've got you, I've got you...

AGATHA

Fuck, that hurts!

VIOLA

Aye-ya...Are you okay?! Did he get you again?

AGATHA

Just - just grazed me, not like the first one. I think that one just went, uh...right on through.

VIOLA

Funnily enough, that's actually a good thing!

AGATHA

Whatever you say, darlin'!

(pained breath)

Darlin', my head's *spinnin'*, I...

VIOLA

I can help!

VIOLA starts ripping her dress to make bandages. AGATHA is pained throughout.

AGATHA

Oh. Oh, no, your dress...

VIOLA begins tying the fabric around AGATHA'S wound. AGATHA winces in pain when the wound is pressed on.

VIOLA

I'm just going to tie this really tight and press down. We'll stop the bleeding for now.

AGATHA

Fuckin' huckleberry...

VIOLA

We learn basic first aid on our ships. So we can help others like this.

AGATHA

"Be they Family, friend, or none:
If greenline calls, rescue's begun."

VIOLA

(confused)

That's a cute quote. What's it from?

AGATHA

That - that's you guys. Right? It's a Perrie quote?

VIOLA

(chuckles)

That's not *our* quote, but we *do* do that.
It's our first law. Who'd you learn it
from?

AGATHA

Oran.

VIOLA

Oh...

AGATHA

I - I talked to him last night. About you.
And...about *that*.

VIOLA

And?

AGATHA

Told me I was puttin' too much stock into
Garrison's words. And overreactin'.

(beat)

Like I always do.

VIOLA

(soft chuckle)

So you saved me only because you promised
to?

AGATHA

No. Not only that.

(beat)

But because, in the real short time I've
come to know you, I - I care deeply for you
too, Viola.

VIOLA

(shocked inhale)

Well, uh, now that I've got the bleeding
stopped, would kissing you make it feel
better?

AGATHA

(pained chuckle)

Only every blue noon.

VIOLA

(beat)

I'm so sorry, I don't remember what that means.

AGATHA

(warmly)

It means *always*, darlin'.

Fabric rustles.

VIOLA (V.O.)

And then I kissed her. It felt like the room was spinning - with the blood loss it probably spun more for *her* than it did for me. But the more the sun rose in those moments she was in my arms, the warmer the light became, until the blue was washed away by that same old Martian pink.

When she was ready to move, we grabbed the gun and stuffed it into Aggie's vest for safe keeping. I pulled her good arm around my shoulder and helped her walk down the stairs and out of Town Hall.

Spurs jingle as VIOLA and AGATHA walk out unevenly.

VIOLA (V.O.)

Thankfully, the building was so out of the way that no one paid the gunshots any mind. But it also meant Aggie was quite out of it by the time we got her to the medical tent.

VIOLA

Hang on, Aggie. Don't worry, we're almost there. Just a few more steps and then we'll be -

AGATHA

I will keep on hangin' onto you baby, that ain't a problem, I gotchu.

VIOLA

I mean, as flattering as that is, that is probably the best course of action right now, because you're not really doing so well

at staying upright -

AGATHA

Nahh, I'm doin' - my heart is beatin' for -
for you, um, and...uh, skippin' a beeeat.
My heart is not skippin' a beat, it's
metaphorically.

VIOLA

Are you sure it's not arrhythmia?

AGATHA

I don't know what that is, darlin'. Nah,
it's just the stars in my eyes from you, and
the blood loss also not helpin' that one
much, but I think primarily the stars...

VIOLA

(affectionately)

Aggie...

AGATHA

I still - I still - I still got it! I am
down five pints of blood or however much -

VIOLA

Five pints?!

AGATHA

I don't know, however much blood is a body?

VIOLA

Not much more than that!

AGATHA

Uhh, four pints?

VIOLA

That's still bad!

AGATHA

Okay, three?! Shit!

VIOLA

Mediiic!

SCENE BREAK

EXT. MAIN STREET NEW MONACO, RED RIVIERA, MARS

Outdoor noise, such as footsteps, maybe some light music over the bad loudspeaker, and crowd noise, are audible.

VIOLA (V.O.)

There was still one fight left to be had by the time we made it down to the main drag: "Big Sky" vs. "Scalawag".

TATUM HADAR

And here we are, folks! The championship gunfight of this year's Red Riviera Bloodbath! To the south, your first seed gunslinger: "Big Sky" Baines.

The audience cheers!

TATUM HADAR

And to the north, your *second* seed gunslinger: "Scalawag" Ferguson.

The audience cheers again!

TATUM HADAR

Any last words before one of you dies?

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON

Nah. I think I got this one in the bag. Nice knowin' ya, "Big Sky".

ORAN

Confidence doesn't look good on you, Ferguson. Should try somethin' else. Like slack-jawed vacancy. You know. Like normal.

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON

(cackle)

Just you wait. This prize is *mine*.

TATUM HADAR

Go!

ORAN and FERGUSON pace to opposite sides of the main drag, then both turn.

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON
(purposely being loud and obnoxious)
Hey "Big Sky"! Ya think you get yer name from bein' broader'n the broad side of a barn?

ORAN
(growls under his breath)
Shut up. Shut up, I can't hear.

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON
Kinda funny then that ya ain't got a scratch on ya! Rest'a these *dead* fuckers couldn't even hit you! *An' yer gonna fuckin' join 'em!*
(mad cackling)

ORAN
(exasperated exhale)
Dang it!

Under the banter, there's some light wind and an almost inaudible faint electronic hum. The noise suddenly changes pitch and the CHIME rings. ORAN and FERGUSON draw at the same time but FERGUSON *clearly* shoots first, grazing ORAN.
ORAN shoots... and misses! The bullet hits the dirt.

ORAN
(pained effort)
Ergh! Got me in the leg.

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON
I know your trick, Baines! Y'all ain't safe now!

TATUM HADAR
Fighters, reach for the auxiliary ammo in your pouch, and do not shoot until the chime rings again.

Sounds of guns reloading and going back into holsters.

TATUM HADAR

Reminder. To the *death*. Make it count.
All ready. Wait for the chime.

ORAN

(quietly muttering)
Block him out. Block him out.

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON

(sing-shouting, badly)
I was born under a BIG SKYYYYY, and I'll die
out in the BLAAAACK! When I'm gone, don't
no one MOURN MEEEE, 'cause my DEBTS! WILL!
DRAG! ME!

Under the banter, there's some light wind and an almost inaudible faint electronic hum. The noise suddenly changes pitch and the CHIME rings. Guns go off in time with when FERGUSON would've sung "back". ORAN and FERGUSON shoot at about the same time.

"SCALAWAG" FERGUSON

(croaked out)
...Back.

FERGUSON falls over, dead.

ORAN

(breathes a sigh of relief)
Holy heck... it's over.

The crowd hoots and hollers in celebration.

TATUM HADAR

And we have our champion! Oran "Big Sky" Baines wins the Red Riviera Bloodbath, and all the prizes associated! Congratulations on winning a combined total of a little over five-hundred-fifty-thousand credits, *and* the forgiveness of your own bounty, totaled at just over one million credits!

(slowly fading out)
Medical team, please cart Ferguson off and go tend to Mr. Baines's wound. Thank you one and all for attending this year's Bloodbath! We'll be here in another two

years. Same time. Same place. New outlaws.

VIOLA (V.O.)

We celebrated in the medical tent with some really cheap beers just after Oran won, and we made sure to let him know that the gun was in our rightful possession. We mourned what happened to Garrison, too. Tempted so much by the biggest prize, when what truly mattered were the people next to him all along. It made *me* realize that even people that aren't your blood, that maybe you've only known for a short time, can feel an awful lot like they are.

Once he was patched up, Oran made sure Garrison's body was properly laid to rest. That night, Oran and Aggie were going to leave Mars and...I really didn't want to be there *without* them, so I let my boss know I'd be leaving. He understood. It's like Aggie said, a lot of people pass through New Monaco and he half-expected it anyway. So, I gathered up all my things and hopped onto the *Secondhand News* with Aggie...

PHANTOM SCENE BREAK

INT. THE PEREGRINATION CARTOGRAPHY SHIP *WANDER WITH EYES WIDE OPEN*

The gunfight ambiance fades into the ambiance of the Peregrination ship. CAPTAIN FERN ASTERSKIN speaks with her daughter over the ship's comms.

CAPTAIN FERN ASTERSKIN

Sounds like quite the adventure you've had.
I'm impressed!

VIOLA

(over comms)

It's much less scary when you have friends along. It's been a month since we left Mars. We hit Delaney Station, for Oran's sake, and now we're en route to...somewhere. Aggie told me, but I don't remember. Oh!

(to AGATHA)
Mitthjärta! Aggie, come meet my mom!

AGATHA slowly makes her way over on the video.

AGATHA
(over comms)
Pleasure to meet you, ma'am. Ma'am?
Captain? Captain Ma'am.

VIOLA
(over comms)
(snickers)

CAPTAIN FERN ASTERSKIN
(amused)
Pleasure to meet you as well, Agatha.
Perhaps this outlaw will someday turn into
an *in-law*.

AGATHA
(over comms)
Ohhhh. She's got *Mom* jokes.

VIOLA
(over comms, groans)
Mom, we've only been together a month, we're
still testing the waters! I think we'll be
alright, but still! Don't count your
crickets before they hatch!

CAPTAIN FERN ASTERSKIN
(laugh)
Sincerely, I hope your recovery has been
going well Agatha, and that the rest of your
travels on the *Secondhand News* are safe.
And please, either of you, let us know how
the *Wander* can assist you while you're out
there.

VIOLA
(over comms)
Thanks Mom. I know one day I'd like to come
home again. For now, though...
(beat)
I think I have everything I need right here

next to me.

End credit music rises on VIOLA'S final line.

Thank you for joining us for this episode of Breathing Space.

Blue Noon on the Red Riviera, was written, directed and edited by Amy Young.

[VA credits]

Our theme, Blues for the Black, was composed by Michael Freitag with vocals by Jeremiah and lyrics by Scott Paladin.

You can find links to learn more about our cast and crew in the show notes and all about our show at our website, breathingspace.lawofnames.com.

Breathing Space is a Law of Names Production

INT. THE SPACESHIP *THE SECONDHAND NEWS*, EN ROUTE

Atmospheric noises happen under the dialogue.

TATUM HADAR

(over comms)

Well, Baines. That was a pretty impressive showing. One I wasn't expecting from a common thief like you, but first place is first place. What does the future hold for you now?

ORAN

Y'know, it might be weird to say, but, I'm thinkin' noodles sound good.

TATUM HADAR

(over comms)

Yeah, that *is* a little weird to say.

ORAN

What I mean is, I'm thinkin' I'll see what still exists of my past. See if she wants

me around. And even if not, well...I got the two girls here to take care of. We'll go wherever they wanna go.

TATUM HADAR

(over comms)

Fair enough.

(beat)

So is it true? You're done with the life?

ORAN

Hundred percent. I've left too much behind, and I don't think I've truly *lived*, y'know? I've got so many stories to tell, none of 'em anything good. But I've got some years still left in me. I feel like I could put 'em to good use.

TATUM HADAR

(over comms)

Good to hear. You're one I wasn't sure I'd ever bring to justice, but...kinda glad you did it to yourself.

ORAN

There were some close calls, though.

TATUM HADAR

(over comms)

I know. Like after that five card drift game. No hard feelings still?

ORAN

Nah. Here, take a look.

ORAN takes the gun out of his belt, spinning it in front of TATUM on the video call.

ORAN

I got what's mine! S'what you get for playin' cards with a thief! Eat it, Hadar!

TATUM HADAR

(over comms)

WHAT?! That's my *gun*! I won it fair and square! BAINES! Fuckin' turn your ship

around and give it back RIGHT NOW! You
BASTARD! You no-good, thieving sack of
HORSESH-

ORAN turns off the comms, it beeps.

ORAN
Borin' conversation anyway...

END POST CREDITS SCENE