

Rebel

By

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Based on a true story

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Fade In:

EXT. OUTSIDE TUFFY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

SUPER: Tuffy's Tavern, behind British lines, New York, September, 1776

Lieutenant NATHAN HALE, (21), of the Continental Army rides his grey horse, later known as REBEL, through town. He's dressed in civilian clothes, trying hard to blend in. He dismounts and ties Rebel to a hitching post. He gives him an affectionate scratch behind one ear.

NATHAN HALE

Don't worry, old friend, this won't take long. Maybe I can find you a treat. Would you like that?

Rebel fondly nickers back.

INT. TUFFY'S TAVERN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Dr. ICHABOD PROSSER, (30s), tall, thin, impeccably dressed and groomed, is daintily sipping a mug of ale. He speaks in low tones to the burly and disheveled looking ARNOLD TUFFY, (30s), who is tending bar. They look up when the amiable, naive looking Nathan Hale walks in.

ARNOLD TUFFY

(whispering to Prosser)
Is that him?

Prosser studies Hale from the corner of his eye as he crosses the room and sits at a table in the far corner.

ICHABOD PROSSER

Ya, that's him.

ARNOLD TUFFY

Bloody amateur. Might as well hang a sign around his neck.

ICHABOD PROSSER

He'll get one soon enough... just before they hang the traitor. One that says "rebel spy".

Nathan Hale holds up his hand and smiles to Tuffy for service.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)

(to Tuffy)

Arnold, better go see what the
rebel bastard wants.

Tuffy walks over to Hale as Prosser neatly arranges items on the bar in a precise row.

ROBERT ROGERS, (44), enters the tavern. Prosser makes eye contact with him, and with a slight nod, shifts his gaze to Nathan Hale and then back to Rogers.

Signal received, Rogers sees Hale in the corner and strides over. Rogers and Tuffy exchange glances as they cross paths.

ROBERT ROGERS

(with a disarming smile)

Hello.... Don't you look like a
bright, young fellow.

Nathan stands and offers his hand.

NATHAN HALE

Good day, sir. I'm Nathan Hale,
just come to town looking for work.

ROBERT ROGERS

I see. What kind of work, Mister
Hale?

NATHAN HALE

I'm a teacher. I'm meeting a
Mister...(fumbling for a note in
his pocket) Sumner.

ROBERT ROGERS

Well then, you're in luck. I'm
Sumner. How about you buy me a pint
and tell me about yourself.

Nathan smiles and gestures for Rogers to sit.

ROBERT ROGERS (CONT'D)

(to Tuffy at the bar)

Barkeep! Make it two.

Tuffy brings them two pints of ale and returns to the bar. Hale and Rogers appear to be having a friendly conversation.

ICHABOD PROSSER

(to Tuffy)

He thinks Rogers is his contact.

(MORE)

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)

It will be a short war indeed if
the rest of Washington's army is
this stupid.

Alarmed by loud neighing outside, Hale rises. Rogers stands
and blocks his path.

NATHAN HALE

Excuse me, Mister Sumner, I have to
check on my horse.

ROBERT ROGERS

(with a vicious grin)

Uh ah, the only place your going,
Mr. Hale, is to the gallows.... I'm
Major Robert Rogers of the Queen's
Rangers and you're under arrest for
espionage and treason against the
crown.

Hale's face turns white with fear.

Six British soldiers armed with rifles and bayonets burst
into the tavern. One of the soldiers shackles Hale's wrists.

Amused by Hale being manhandled toward the door, Prosser
gives Hale a sly wink and a wave.

ICHABOD PROSSER

(with contempt)

Trusting young fop-doodle.

Unseen in the dark corner, ENOCH CROSBY, (25), takes a puff
from his pipe. For a moment, the bright coals reveal intense,
angry eyes before his face is once again obscured by darkness
and smoke as he watches Hale being dragged outside.

EXT. OUTSIDE TUFFY'S TAVERN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Rebel watches Rogers throw Hale into a wagon. When their eyes
meet, Rebel sees fear and despair. Rebel struggles to break
free from the hitching post.

Prosser exits the tavern.

ROBERT ROGERS

The crown appreciates your loyalty,
Doctor Prosser.

ICHABOD PROSSER

It was my pleasure to do my duty,
Major Rogers.

Rogers looks toward the still struggling Rebel.

ROBERT ROGERS

That grey stallion over there
appears to be needing a new
owner.... Perhaps you can get it to
behave.

Prosser gives Rebel an evil smile.

ICHABOD PROSSER

They all submit when they're beat
hard enough.

ROBERT ROGERS

(snickering)

That they do, Doctor Prosser...
that they do.

Nathan Hale gives Rebel a final look of despair as the wagon
and the soldiers march off into the night.

EXT. NEW YORK - DAY

SUPER: Manhattan, New York, 1776

Nathan Hale stands with dignity upon a crudely built gallows
with a noose around his neck and a blindfold covering his
eyes. A BRITISH OFFICER, (40s), reads his death sentence.
Nearby stands Prosser holding Rebel by his bridle. Next to
him is Tuffy.

BRITISH OFFICER

Does the condemned have any final
words?

After a short pause.

NATHAN HALE

I am so satisfied with the cause
from which I have engaged, that my
only regret is I have but one life
to give for my country.

The British officer signals the soldier to pull the lever.
The trap door opens and Hale falls through, followed by an
audible crack as his neck snaps.

Rebel rears in anguish. Prosser savagely yanks him back down
with the reins. Rebel rears again and tries to strike
Prosser. Tuffy grabs the reins, too, and together they get
Rebel under control.

Reflected in Rebel's horrified eyes, Nathan Hale hangs grotesquely from the rope, his body still twitching.

EXT. ROPE FERRY - NIGHT

At the end of the road, Prosser, Tuffy, and Rebel come to a river with a small rope ferry resting at the riverbank. The ferry is little more than a crudely built raft with a rickety railing running along its sides and a rope that passes through two rings on posts before running to the other side of the river. The raft is just big enough for the three of them.

When all are on board, Prosser ties Rebel's reins to the railing. Tuffy pulls hard on the rope to begin their crossing.

Prosser looks to the moonlit opposite bank.

ICHABOD PROSSER

You suppose there's any cowboys or
skinners about?

ARNOLD TUFFY

No need to worry about that, Doctor
Prosser. Most of 'em are my best
customers.

ICHABOD PROSSER

You keep interesting company,
Arnold Tuffy.

Tuffy strains hard against the rope.

ARNOLD TUFFY

(breathing hard)

Oh, they can be quite handy to
handle certain... delicate
affairs... if you have the coin.

ICHABOD PROSSER

I'll keep that in mind.

Tuffy has pulled the ferry halfway across and stops to catch his breath.

ARNOLD TUFFY

Doc, can I ask you something?

ICHABOD PROSSER

Yes.

ARNOLD TUFFY
Do folks always twitch like that
when they're hung?

ICHABOD PROSSER
Oh yes.

Reflected in Rebel's eye, Tuffy laughs and imitates Hale twitching at the end of the noose. Rebel's eye hardens in anger.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
(laughing)
Perhaps traitors twitch more than
most... especially the young,
stupid ones.

Both men erupt in laughter.

ARNOLD TUFFY
That rebel was surely dumb.

Tuffy gestures to Rebel.

ARNOLD TUFFY (CONT'D)
His horse don't look so dumb but he
sure has defiance in his eyes. Best
keep an eye on him. He's a rebel
for sure.

ICHABOD PROSSER
A disease no doubt caught from his
former owner. Unfortunately a very
contagious disease... but don't
worry Arnold, he'll soon be set to
the plow, along with the rest of
the rebels... so to speak.

Prosser yanks on Rebel's bridle, with an evil smile.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
Oh you'll make a good plow horse.
Won't ya, boy?

Rebel, having had enough, snorts, steps on Prosser's foot and yanks back on his bridle, pulling Prosser off balance. Prosser shrieks in pain as he falls over, breaking his ankle and foot.

After a moment, Tuffy overcomes his surprise and rams his shoulder into Rebel's neck, shoving him back so the screaming Prosser can get his broken foot out from under Rebel's hoof.

With savage kicks from his hind legs, Rebel shatters the rickety railing and the posts attached to the rope.

Prosser screams in pain and fear as Tuffy drags him away from Rebel, who's trying to stomp on them with his front hooves. A broken section of railing hangs from his reins.

Free from the pull rope, the raft drifts downstream.

Prosser dodges a fierce blow from Rebel's hooves, reaches into his pocket for his pistol and fires at him.

The musket ball grazes Rebel's neck. He whinnies in pain, reels backwards and falls into the black water.

The raft drifts downstream.

 ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
 I'll find you!... God, I swear I'll
 find you! I'll catch you and drown
 you myself, you beast of the devil.

The raft fades into the darkness, carrying Prosser and Tuffy away.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Nostrils flared, eyes bugged out, Rebel struggles to swim. He snorts in fear when the piece of railing, still tied to his reins, bangs against his hind quarters like a riding crop, spurring him on toward the riverbank.

His breath wheezes and his neck stretches and strains to keep his nose above water. The piece of railing tied to his reins drags behind him like an anchor and he begins to tire. He breathes some water in and whinnies in panic, striving even harder toward shore.

Almost exhausted, Rebel's progress slows. He can see the riverbank just ahead. He kicks forward in one last desperate effort.

UNDERWATER

One of Rebel's front hooves touches the river bottom, then the other.

EXT. RIVERBANK - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Rebel wobbles as he pulls himself up the river bank and onto the edge of a road.

After a short distance the piece of railing still tied to his reins catches on a root. Too tired to break free, he collapses onto the ground, panting.

EXT. EDGE OF ROAD - DAY

Rebel is awake but exhausted, still laying down along the side of the road. Dried blood has clotted down his neck.

(OS) We hear the clip-clop of hooves and the sound of wagon wheels followed by a quiet, gentle voice.

MAN (OS)
Whoa, Punkin.

Rebel labors to get up but his reins are still jammed on the root. He snorts in frustration.

MAN (OS) (CONT'D)
Hold on now. I'm a coming.

Rebel finds himself looking up at CALEB, (50s) an elderly black man with a white beard and a kind face. Caleb sees the dried blood on Rebel's neck.

CALEB
Lookee here. Looks like we got ourselves a runaway.

He pets Rebel gently on the shoulder.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Let's get you unstuck.

Caleb frees Rebel's reins and tosses the remnants of the railing aside. He gently coaxes Rebel to stand.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Come on now, up, up. It's a lovely morning and you a wasting it.

Rebel, with great effort, manages to stand.

Caleb tentatively touches the wound on Rebel's neck and looks up and down the empty, quiet road.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Well boy, what a story you must have.... Me an Punkin will get you where you need to go. Don't you worry.

Caleb examines Rebel as he leads him to the back of his wagon. The wagon contains bushels of apples and is drawn by a small, chestnut colored pony named Pumpkin.

Caleb gives Rebel an apple, and Rebel greedily munches it down. Caleb gives him a second one.

CALEB (CONT'D)
 (smiling)
 From one runaway to another.... Oh,
 ya, I know what it's like. Believe
 you, me.

Caleb turns somber as he remembers the past.

CALEB (CONT'D)
 Believe you, me.

Caleb ties Rebel's reins to the back of the wagon and climbs onto the buckboard.

CALEB (CONT'D)
 Get up there, Punkin.

Pumpkin pulls the wagon slowly down the street, Rebel in tow.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

SYBIL LUDINGTON,(16), and her sister REBECCA LUDINGTON,(14), listen at the doorway to the dining room, crowding and elbowing each other for the best vantage point to spy on the men within.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

General GEORGE WASHINGTON,(40s), stands and raises his glass. The rest of the men follow suit. Among them is Sybil's father, Colonel HENRY LUDINGTON,(37), Enoch Crosby, and four lower ranking members of Washington's staff. All are in uniform except Crosby.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
 Gentlemen, a toast. To Nathan Hale,
 whose final words could not have
 come from a finer man... words that
 will inspire a new nation.

The men drink from their glasses.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil's mother, ABIGAIL LUDINGTON, (30s), heavily pregnant, straightens and stretches away from the dishes she's been washing.

She crosses the room, sidestepping around her hell raising sons, ARCHIE, (13), HENRY, (10), and RICKY, (9) and a crib containing her energetic two year old. She uses a kitchen rag to swat at her two spying daughters.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Ladies do not spy on people!

Sybil, flushed with excitement, clutches both fists to her chest and whispers.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Momma, I can hardly believe he's really here, General Washington! In our house!

REBECCA LUDINGTON
Momma, you been working all day. I'll get Caleb's supper so you can rest.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Why, thank you, Rebecca.

Sybil gives Rebecca a dirty look.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Goody little lick spittle.

Rebecca sticks out her tongue.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Sybil, how many times must I tell you, speak like a lady.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(excitedly)
I don't want to be a lady. I want to be like Papa.

Abigail whispers to herself.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Despite my best efforts.

Abigail sits and continues to dry her hands with the rag.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Fine, you want to be a soldier?
 Then obey orders and bring Caleb
 his supper. He's in the barn with
 some new... hay-burner.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 (excitedly)
 What? We got a new horse?

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 More like a new mouth to feed.

Sybil heads for the door, forgetting Caleb's supper.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Sybil, the plate!

Sybil grabs the plate from Rebecca and dashes out.

Abigail reels on Sybil's rough-housing younger brothers.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Enough!

The boys freeze in fear.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 Maybe I should be a soldier too...
 Lord knows I could use the rest.

INT. BARN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil walks into the barn and sees Caleb tending to Rebel's neck wound. Pumpkin is in a stall with her head stuck out, watching.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Caleb, I got your supper.

Caleb gestures to the table.

CALEB
 Thank ya kindly, Miss Sybil. Just
 set it right there.

Sybil sets the plate down, walks to the stall and drapes her arm across the stall door.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 He's beautiful.... General
 Washington has a grey horse.

CALEB

That he does, Miss Sybil.

She reaches to grab Rebel's halter, and he backs away, startled. Sybil grabs at the halter again, but can't reach.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(annoyed)

A fresh bugger, huh...? A real sassy chit, that one.

CALEB

He don't know you, Miss Sybil. You wouldn't want a stranger coming to you and grabbing your face, now would ya?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

No, I guess not.... But I'm a girl and he's a horse.

CALEB

(chuckling)

Let me introduce ya.

Caleb smiles and addresses Rebel.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Rebel, this here's Miss Sybil. She a friend of mine and this here is her home, so you be nice. Miss Sybil, this here is Rebel. He's done run away from his former masters... just like me.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Rebel? Why Rebel? Maybe call him something... more majestic. Something like... Prince Lion Heart Storm Chaser.

Sybil smiles at Caleb and Rebel for approval. Rebel and Caleb look at each other.

CALEB

Well... maybe best if we just stick to Rebel for now.

Rebel bobs his head as if nodding in agreement. Sybil frowns.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT - SAME TIME

The men in the room are standing and looking down at a map on the dining room table. General Washington points to an area on the map.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
(to Henry Ludington)
Tell me about this area, Colonel Ludington. Can we get our spies through there?

HENRY LUDINGTON
Not likely, General. That's Westchester County. The area is infested with cowboys and skimmers.

Washington interrupts, eyebrow raised.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
Cowboys and skimmers?

HENRY LUDINGTON
Ah, yes sir. That's what we locals call outlaws and bandits.

ENOCH CROSBY
That area is also Tory, General. Between them and the skimmers, we don't stand much chance of getting any spies through there.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
What can we do about that?

ENOCH CROSBY
Sir, I've been posing, for some weeks now, as a loyalist, here, (pointing to a spot on the map), at a tavern.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
Why there?

ENOCH CROSBY
Sir, it's where the Tory's leader, Doctor Ichabod Prosser holds his meetings. Its owner is a rascalion known by most as Scruffy Tuffy.

Washington interrupts.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
Scruffy Tuffy?

ENOCH CROSBY
Yes, sir, as I said, a real
scoundrel and a notorious Tory....
His tavern is where Lieutenant Hale
was captured.

Washington's face reddens.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)
Once I have infiltrated them, we'll
find out more about the British
positions.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
How long will it take to gain their
trust?

ENOCH CROSBY
(apologetically)
I'm afraid it may be some time,
General.

Frustrated, George Washington leans forward and supports
himself on clenched fists on the table and looks each man in
the eye.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
Gentleman, I must know what is
happening in New York. There has to
be a way to get our spies there.

Ludington tentatively speaks up.

HENRY LUDINGTON
There may be a way, General. We
could ferry them across the sound
in whaleboats at night. It would be
dangerous, but it could work.

Washington considers this a moment and then stands straight.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
(with urgency)
Very good, Colonel.

Washington turns to Crosby.

Mister Crosby, please make the
arrangements with utmost haste.

(MORE)

GEORGE WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
 Timely knowledge of the enemy's
 movements is crucial. Colonel
 Ludington will provide you with
 anything you need.

Washington turns to Ludington to confirm. Ludington nods.

HENRY LUDINGTON
 (to Crosby)
 I'll find you those whaleboats.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
 Good. Now just one more thing,
 Henry. Take your militia and bring
 these cowboys and skinnners to heel.

INT. BARN - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Caleb finishes eating as Abigail enters the barn. Sybil is
 feeding pieces of apple to Pumpkin and Rebel.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 Bedtime, Sybil.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Yes, Momma.

Sybil takes Caleb's empty plate and heads for the house.

CALEB
 Thank you for supper, Miss Abigail.

Abigail smiles at Caleb and looks at Rebel, noticing his
 wound.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 He gonna be alright?

CALEB
 Oh, he'll be just fine, Miss
 Abigail.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 Will anyone come looking for him?

CALEB
 I reckon not. His owner probably
 shot by the same hand that shot the
 horse.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 You're probably right. Good night
 Caleb.

Abigail turns to leave, then looks back.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
By the way, what did you name him.

CALEB
Rebel, Miss Abigail.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Rebel? Should have called him Hay-
Burning Money Muncher.

CALEB
(chuckling)
Good night, Miss Abigail.

EXT LUDINGTON HOUSE - DAWN

Henry, Abigail, and Crosby attend Washington and his staff as they prepare to depart. Washington hoists himself onto his grey horse. Caleb, Rebel, and Pumpkin watch from the barn.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
Mrs. Ludington, thank you for your gracious hospitality and especially the fine dinner last night. We are most grateful.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
It was my honor, General Washington.

Sybil eagerly runs up to them and stands next to her father.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
I do apologize for having to take your husband away from you, Mrs. Ludington, but these are perilous times and there is no one else.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
I understand, General. We are all ready to do our duty.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
Of that, Mrs. Ludington, I have no doubt.

Ludington salutes Washington, who returns the salute. Seeing this, Sybil also raises her arm in salute. Washington is amused when Ludington quickly pulls Sybil's arm down and gives Washington an apologetic smile.

Rebel neighs for attention. Washington turns to see Rebel pluck Caleb's hat off his head with his teeth and wave it around as he eyes Washington's grey horse. Washington's horse seems unimpressed. Caleb snatches his hat back.

GEORGE WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
 (chuckling)
 Greys, it's always the greys.

Washington and his entourage turn and trot away.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Henry and Rebecca stand behind Sybil as she rests the barrel of the musket on top of the fence, one eye open, concentrating as she takes aim.

HENRY LUDINGTON
 Now cock it all the way back.

Sybil cocks the flintlock all the way.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Remember, a musket is going to kick a whole lot more than the pistols you've been shooting, so be ready.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 I'm ready, Papa.

HENRY LUDINGTON
 Alright, focus your eye on the front sight and slowly squeeze the trigger.

Sybil fires. Smoke shoots out the barrel. She flinches from the recoil, rubbing her shoulder in pain.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Oow...! Ninny lobcock!

Rebecca laughs at her sister.

HENRY LUDINGTON
 Sybil, you alright?

Sybil nods.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Good, next time hold it tighter against your shoulder.... That's enough for now.

Henry takes the musket and leans it against the fence.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
Do you really have to go, Papa?

HENRY LUDINGTON
I'm afraid so, little angel.
There's very important work to be
done. Now, while I'm gone, I've got
some important work for you two as
well.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
What do you want us to do, Papa?

HENRY LUDINGTON
Sybil, you're the oldest so I want
you to take the new horse and check
on the land and the fences
everyday. We can't afford to lose
any livestock.

Sybil, pleased, puffs up. Henry turns to Rebecca.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Rebecca, I know your Mama counts on
you to help her with the household
chores and the sewing for the
homespun movement. That work means
a lot for the war effort. Keep up
the good work.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
Yes, Papa.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
What about Caleb, Papa? Won't he be
here to help?

HENRY LUDINGTON
Caleb will be running errands for
me on occasion. When he's gone,
I'll need both of you to work
together and pitch in for him.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
You gonna make him a spy, Papa?

HENRY LUDINGTON
You never mind that.

Henry looks at them both earnestly.

(MORE)

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 So my little soldiers, do you
 accept your assignments?

Sybil and Rebecca both nod gravely.

A moment later, they look toward the sound of hoof beats. MILES, (17), the local stable boy and member of the militia, gallops up to them and hops off his horse in a smooth, fluid motion.

MILES
 Colonel, an urgent message from
 Mister Crosby.

HENRY LUDINGTON
 Thank you, Miles.

As Henry reads the message, Miles smiles bashfully at Sybil.

MILES
 Hello, Sybil.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Hello, Miles.

The tone in their voices makes Henry stop his reading and eye both of them with mild curiosity.

Rebecca gives an exaggerated wave and clears her throat. Miles snaps to.

MILES
 Oh, hello, Rebecca.

Rebecca's face breaks into a mischievous grin as she studies Sybil and Miles. Henry goes back to reading his letter. When he's done he turns to Miles.

HENRY LUDINGTON
 Miles, head on back and tell Mister
 Crosby that I'll see him tonight.
 He'll know where.

MILES
 Yes, sir, Colonel.

Miles gives Sybil a cute smile, gets on his horse, and trots away.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 How long you gonna be gone, Papa?

HENRY LUDINGTON
 I'm not certain.

He looks at both girls.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
I may not be back for some time, so
remember what I told you.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
We will, Papa.

Henry gives both girls a big hug.

HENRY LUDINGTON
(to himself with worry)
Now to tell your mother.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Caleb has Rebel saddled with his own saddle that has his name embossed on it with ornate lettering. Sybil grabs the reins with one hand, her skirt with the other, and puts her left foot into the stirrup.

Before she can swing onto Rebel's back, Abigail yells from the house.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Side saddle, young lady! I won't
have my daughter riding like
some... courtesan tramp!

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(annoyed)
Yes, Momma.

Caleb puts his saddle back in its place and takes the sidesaddle perched next to it. He saddles Rebel once more and Sybil mounts up. Rebel shakes his head, seemingly as annoyed with the side saddle arrangement as Sybil is.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
I hate this saddle, Caleb. If I go
fast, I'll fall off.

CALEB
I know, Miss Sybil. He's probably
never had a side saddle on him
before... So don't let him break
into a run.

Sybil mutters.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

With all that's happening in the world, all Momma cares about is what side of the saddle my legs are on.

Caleb finishes inspecting the straps on the saddle.

CALEB

Remember, Miss Sybil, you two don't know each other yet, so take it slow. Coax him with respect and he'll get you where you need to go.

Sybil nods.

Sybil gives Rebel a little kick to get him going. Rebel refuses to move.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Let's go, Rebel.

Rebel again ignores her. Sybil kicks him a bit harder and slaps the reins down on his neck.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

Let's go, Rebel!

Rebel casually walks to a nearby tree and rubs his left side along it, scraping Sybil off the saddle and onto the ground. He walks a few feet away and starts to graze.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

(to Rebel)

Mutton headed twaddler!

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Sybil!

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Sorry, Momma.

Irritated, Sybil walks to Rebel, grabs his reins and mounts. Sybil slaps the reins down. This time Rebel crouches, lays down on his side, and rolls over, again forcing Sybil off the saddle.

Sybil pulls on Rebel's reins but he refuses to budge.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

(furious)

Get up, you... loitersack!

CALEB

Easy now, Miss Sybil. That ain't no way to persuade him.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

He's a horse, Caleb. He has to do what I say!

CALEB

Miss Sybil, best we try again tomorrow.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(under her breath)

Jolter-headed galumpus.

Frustrated, Sybil flings the reins away and storms back into the house. Rebel gets up and nuzzles Caleb. Caleb chuckles.

CALEB

That's it ol' Reb, you stick to your principles.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - NIGHT

Rebel is lying on his side in his dimly lit stall in a fitful sleep, twitching spasmodically from a nightmare.

BEGIN REBEL'S DREAM SEQUENCE:

-- Nathan Hale carted off into the night.

-- Nathan Hale hung on the rope, still twitching.

-- Prosser laughing as Tuffy imitates him.

-- The flash of Prosser's pistol.

-- Himself falling in the river, struggling toward shore, and nearly drowning.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

Rebel wakes with a jolt. He looks around, blinking his eyes, confused, not knowing where he is. He sticks his head out the half door of the stall and calms down.

He looks down, angling his head back and forth, quizzically studying the barrel bolt holding his door closed from the outside.

After a moment Rebel nuzzles the bolt up and slides it to the side. He gives the door a little shove and it swings open.

He finds Pumpkin fast asleep in the next stall. He looks around the barn as if looking for something to do. He wanders toward the back of the barn, exploring.

In a storage area he discovers a keg of ale. He sniffs around the tap for a moment and then twists open the handle with his mouth. Ale pours out and he greedily slurps it down. A large puddle forms beneath the barrel.

With the barrel now empty, Rebel explores the rear of the barn and finds a closed door. He pulls it open with his teeth. His eyes widen and his ears perk up when he sees the stacks of burlap bags filled with corn and oats.

INT. LUDINGTON - BARN - DAY

The door creaks open, letting the morning light flood into the barn. Sybil, silhouetted in the doorway, sees Rebel lying on the floor and rushes to him.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Rebel!

She kneels down beside him. Sniffing, she immediately smells the ale on his breath. She looks over to the empty barrel with the puddle underneath it.

Rebel opens his eyes, lifts his head a little, and squints at the incoming light. He snorts and puts his head back down.

Sybil stands when Caleb walks in. She's furious.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

Caleb, this... this...

lubberwort... is blinkered on ale!

Pumpkin sticks her head out of her stall, curious.

Caleb disappears into the grain room, returns and kneels beside Rebel to examine him. He puts his ear against Rebel's side.

CALEB

We gotta get him up, Miss Sybil, and right now. The ale is the least of it. He's gone and eaten near half the corn and a week's worth of oats.

With Sybil's help, Caleb coaxes Rebel onto his feet. Caleb puts a halter and lead on Rebel and hands the lead to Sybil.

CALEB (CONT'D)

We'll get some mineral oil in him, and you can walk him in the paddock. Don't let him lay down or he might twist a gut. You 'member when Pumpkin had colic?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(irritated)

Caleb, that took all day. We got chores to do.

CALEB

He can't help you today, Miss Sybil.

Caleb grabs a bottle from the storage area cabinet.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Don't you worry. I'll take care of them chores for ya. But first, let's get a dose of oil in him.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - NIGHT

Caleb walks into the barn and finds a tired Sybil sitting on a bench across from Rebel's stall. Caleb looks in the stall and sees a healthy and happy Rebel.

CALEB

See, Miss, I told you he'd be fine.

Sybil looks over at Rebel.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I think he hates me.

Caleb sits beside Sybil.

CALEB

He don't hate you, Miss Sybil. He just don't trust you yet. You see, Rebel here's been wounded.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

His wound didn't seem so bad.

CALEB

No, Miss. I mean he's been wounded in the mind.

(MORE)

CALEB (CONT'D)

Have you looked into his eyes, I mean taken a really good look? I suspect he's seen things that'd break your heart.... It may be some time before he's well.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I don't have time, Caleb. Papa is depending on me... and this sluggabed is supposed to help.

Sybil walks away a short distance and turns back to Caleb.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

Caleb, how come he trusts you?

Caleb chuckles while stroking his white beard.

CALEB

Cuz we're the same, Miss Sybil. We both have black skin under our grey fur.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I'm serious, Caleb. Why does he trust you?

Caleb ponders the question for a moment.

CALEB

Rebel senses the calmness in my heart... I'm at peace with my place in the world... horses can sense these things. And I understand and respect him.... The trust part comes after the respect part.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

How can I respect him, Caleb, when he's eaten and drank himself into a ditch?

Sybil turns and walks away.

INT. HEADQUARTERS - VAN WYCK HOUSE - HENRY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

SUPER: Van Wyck house, Headquarters for the Continental Army Supply Depot, Fishkill, New York

Henry Ludington is writing a letter at his desk when there is a knock.

HENRY LUDINGTON

Enter.

A CORPORAL, (20s), opens the door.

CORPORAL

Excuse me, Colonel. We captured some men. They say they were on their way to King's Bridge.

The corporal gives Henry a sly smile.

One of them, sir, is a particularly shady character.

Hearing the code phrase, Henry smiles in recognition.

HENRY LUDINGTON

Shady you say? Lets have a look.

The corporal leads the chained men into the office. The last prisoner in line is Enoch Crosby.

Henry gets up and walks slowly back and forth in front of the prisoners, pretending to inspect them. When he gets to Enoch they make subtle eye contact.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

A motley looking bunch, wouldn't you say, Corporal?

CORPORAL

I would indeed, Sir.

HENRY LUDINGTON

Well, they'll need to be interrogated.

Henry turns to Enoch again.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

This one in particular looks like a man of low cunning.

CORPORAL

(barely keeping a straight face)

That he does, Sir.

HENRY LUDINGTON

Very well. We'll start with him.

Henry motions to the other prisoners.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Take these men to the church. Lock
 them up with the other prisoners.

The corporal marches the other prisoners out and closes the door behind him. When they're out of ear shot, Henry and Enoch burst out laughing.

ENOCH CROSBY
 Man of low cunning?

HENRY LUDINGTON
 Well, I had to make it look good.

Henry takes a key from his desk and takes off Enoch's wrist shackles.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Pretty good haul this time.

ENOCH CROSBY
 Ya, no skimmers though. Just Tories
 looking to join the Red Coats.

Henry retrieves a packet of letters from his desk.

HENRY LUDINGTON
 Would you make sure my wife gets
 these?

ENOCH CROSBY
 Of course.

HENRY LUDINGTON
 Thank you. Well, you better be off
 before anyone sees ya. Caleb's
 waiting for you out back.

Henry removes a flintlock pistol from a cabinet and hands it to Enoch. He removes another one and keeps it himself. They both leave the room.

EXT. HEADQUARTERS - VAN WYCK HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

They enter the yard where Caleb and Pumpkin patiently wait with the wagon.

HENRY LUDINGTON
 You ready?

Enoch nods and they both cock their pistols and raise them into the air. Henry yells into the night.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Halt you scallywag, or we'll
 shoot...! Get him men! He's getting
 away!

They both quietly laugh and fire into the sky.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Six armed men guard the twenty prisoners in the makeshift
 jail in the church.

The prisoners look up in surprise when they hear the yelling
 and the gun shots. One of the prisoners whispers to the
 other.

PRISONER #1
 Enoch ran for it.

PRISONER #2
 (whispering back)
 Let's hope he made it.

EXT. HEADQUARTERS - VAN WYCK HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Enoch hops up onto the buckboard beside Caleb.

ENOCH CROSBY
 Hello Caleb. How are you?

CALEB
 I'm fine, Mister Crosby.... Mister
 Crosby, can I ask you a question?

ENOCH CROSBY
 Of course, Caleb.

CALEB
 How long do you think you can get
 away with this before them Tories
 get wise?

ENOCH CROSBY
 (chuckling)
 As long as I can, Caleb... as long
 as I can.

Caleb chuckles with him and slaps the reins down, and Pumpkin
 pulls the wagon down the street.

EXT. LUDINGTON BARN - DAY

Sybil walks toward the barn and is surprised to see the barn door wide open. She runs toward it.

INT. LUDINGTON BARN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Sybil rushes in and finds that once again Rebel has escaped his stall and is gone.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(angrily to herself)
Oh, you little... snollygoster!

EXT. LUDINGTON BARN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Sybil runs outside and scans the horizon in every direction. She calls out.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Rebel, where are you...? You
shabbaroon!

Behind Sybil, Rebel pokes his head out from behind a surprisingly small tree. When Sybil turns in his direction, he quickly ducks his head back behind it.

Sybil storms off to search for him.

LATER

Rebel studies the latch mechanism on the chicken coop as if it were a puzzle. The chickens within watch him, clucking nervously.

Rebel uses his teeth to pull out the pin and the door swings open. He stands back, but the chickens stay within the safety of the coop. After a moment he uses his front hoof to loudly rap on the side. The frightened chickens rush out the door, squawking loudly, and scatter.

Alarmed by the commotion, Abigail, Rebecca, and the boys burst out of the house and find Rebel amusing himself by chasing the chickens around the yard.

Caleb arrives in the wagon and steers Pumpkin to the front of the house. Sitting beside him is Enoch Crosby. Rebel stops chasing the chickens and looks up, curious.

ENOCH CROSBY
 (laughing)
 What happened here?

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 (annoyed)
 That wayward, hammer-headed horse
 got out again.

Abigail scans the yard, then turns to Caleb.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Caleb, where's Sybil?

Caleb looks around a moment, and nods at Rebel.

CALEB
 Well Ma'am, she probably out
 lookin' for him.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 (to herself)
 What am I going to do with that
 girl?

CALEB
 Don't worry, Miss Abigail. I'll go
 find her.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 Good. Thank you, Caleb.... Nice to
 see you Mister Crosby. I expect you
 have letters for me from my dear
 husband?

ENOCH CROSBY
 I do, Ma'am.

Abigail smiles and then turns to the boys.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 Boys, round up them chickens.

The boys run to coral the chickens, waving their arms,
 hooting and hollering like it's a game. Abigail turns to
 Rebel and points at him.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 You!

Rebel's ears swivel toward her.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Come here, you un-licked cub!

Abigail walks toward Rebel.

INT. LUDINGTON BARN - NIGHT

Tired and frustrated, Sybil enters the barn and finds Rebel and Pumpkin in their stalls. Rebel gives her an innocent look. Her frustration turns to surprise then relief and finally to anger.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Where have you been, Mister?

Caleb walks into the barn. She turns to him.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
I've been looking for him all day!

CALEB
I've been looking for you all day,
Miss Sybil. You sure had me
worried.

Sybil sits down on a bench. Caleb sits beside her.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Caleb, what am I to do with him?

Caleb chuckles.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
What's so funny?

CALEB
Your Momma asked me the same
question about you, Miss Sybil.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Well, what did you tell her?

CALEB
I didn't have an answer for her but
maybe I got one for you.

He ponders her question for a moment as he chews on a piece of timothy grass.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Ole Rebel here, he's not your
everyday horse. Naw this boy is
special. He deserves respect. Your
Pa, the good colonel, he taught me
that the word respect means to look
again, to look more carefully...

(MORE)

CALEB (CONT'D)

Miss Sybil, you need to look into his eyes. Take a really good look.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

What will I see?

CALEB

That he's a horse, Miss Sybil, with horse understandings and wants to do horse things. But people want something else for him. You a girl with girl understandings, who wants to do girl things... ok maybe soldier things.... You're both struggling between what you want to do and what this world will allow you to do.... You and Rebel have more in common than you think. Meet him there.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

How do I do that, Caleb?

Caleb considers for a moment.

CALEB

Keep him company tonight, Miss Sybil. Help him keep his nightmares away.... That will be a good beginning.

INT. LUDINGTON BARN - NIGHT

Later that night, Sybil sits in the stall across from Rebel, who lays on his hip with his front hooves tucked under him, his head up, sphinx like. They stare at each other.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Caleb seems to think we're the same kind of different. What do you think?

Rebel quietly regards her. After awhile Sybil shrugs.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

Betcha you fall asleep first.

Rebel blinks. Challenge accepted. Sybil smiles at him.

Soon both are fighting to keep their eyes open. Sybil loses and she lowers her head and falls asleep. Soon after, Rebel lays his head down and closes his eyes.

LATER

Sybil's eyes snap open in the dim lantern light. Rebel, his eyes scrunched closed, lies on his side, softly nickering in his sleep. His legs twitch as he runs in his nightmare.

Sybil goes to him and caresses his neck.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Shush, easy, boy. You're alright.

Sybil continues to shush him soothingly. Rebel starts to settle down.

Sybil gently touches the freshly healed wound from Prosser's bullet. Sybil suddenly looks up, realization dawning on her.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
(to herself)
It wasn't just you that got hurt.
You lost someone.

Sybil looks down at Rebel and sees that his eyes are open and looking at her.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
You lost someone you love, didn't
you, boy?

Sybil looks deeply into Rebel's eyes, just as Caleb wanted her to. She sees his torment and guilt. Looking vulnerable, he places his head on her lap. She strokes his neck.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
I understand now.

EXT. LUDINGTON BARN - DAY

The next morning, Caleb finds Sybil smiling while riding Rebel side saddle around the yard. Rebel obeys every command as she maneuvers him around trees and other obstacles.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Look, Caleb. We're doing it...! I
don't think he likes the side
saddle, though.

CALEB
I'm sure. Like you, he'll get used
to it.

Sybil brings Rebel to a stop in front of Caleb.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

You were right about him, Caleb.
You were right about everything.
Thank you.

CALEB

All I did was make the
introduction. You and ole Reb did
the work.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I'm going out to check the fences.
Come with us.

CALEB

Sorry, I can't. I'm afraid I have
some important things to do for
your father.

She hops down, eyes sparkling.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Oooh. Spy things? Can I come?

Caleb smiles and tips his hat.

CALEB

Goodbye, Miss Sybil. I'll see you
in a day or two.

Caleb heads for the barn.

EXT. PASTURE - DAY

The cattle move out of the way as Sybil and Rebel walk
alongside a wooden fence that contains the livestock. Sybil
carefully inspects the fence as they go.

At the cow's watering hole, no more than a small, muddy pond,
Rebel comes to an abrupt stop. Sybil gives him a little kick,
signaling him to go forward. Snorting, he backs up a few
steps instead.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(confused)

What's wrong, Rebel? You afraid of
a little water?

Sybil gives him another gentle kick.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

Come on, boy. Let's go.

Rebel refuses to budge. Sybil turns him around and walks forty feet away from the pond, which Rebel gladly does. She again turns him to face the water.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
You can make it boy.... Trust me.

She pets him on the neck, encouragingly.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Let's go, boy!

TIME SLOWS:

She spurs him to a run. She smiles as they gain speed.

Instead of leaping into the water, Rebel skids to a stop. Sybil's eyes widen. She flies over his head and lands face first into the muddy pond.

TIME BACK TO NORMAL

Sybil surfaces. The only parts of her not covered in mud are her eyes. When she opens them, they blaze in fury. Rebel gives her a silly look.

SMASH CUT:

EXT. PASTURE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Furious, covered in mud, Sybil chases Rebel, who keeps just out of reach. Gasping, Sybil stops and doubles over, hands on her knees, muddy hair covering her face, trying to catch her breath. Rebel runs for home.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Sybil walks down a dirt road, drying mud caked in her hair, face, and clothes. She turns to the sound of hooves coming toward her. Doctor Ichabod Prosser drives a small, horse drawn wagon. His broken right foot is in a heavy cast. Prosser stops the wagon and cocks his head, considering her.

ICHABOD PROSSER
Sybil Ludington, is that you? Are
you alright?

Sybil stiffens.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(warily)

Yes, Doctor Prosser. Just fell off
my horse, is all.

Prosser gives her a hard look and a creepy smile.

ICHABOD PROSSER

I see. Now that wouldn't be a grey
horse I saw in the distance a
moment ago... Running toward your
house?

Prosser's sinister smile puts her on guard.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Yes, sir.

Prosser's smile disappears. His eyes harden even more.

ICHABOD PROSSER

You know them greys can be a real
handful. Why, my very own grey did
this to me just before he run off.
(pointing to his cast) Funny how
closely he resembles yours.

Prosser leans forward, his intense gaze drilling into Sybil's
eyes.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)

You wouldn't have happened to have
seen my grey runaway, would you,
Miss Ludington?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(smiling innocently)

No, Doctor Prosser. But you know
greys are quite common.... Did you
know the great patriot General,
George Washington himself rides
one?

Prosser's face reddens.

ICHABOD PROSSER

You let me know if you come across
my runaway now, would you, Miss
Ludington?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(smug)

Of course, Doctor Prosser.

(MORE)

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
I would be happy to help. What's
your horses' name?

Prosser's evil smile returns.

ICHABOD PROSSER
I don't know, Miss Ludington. The
rebel spy we took him from, just
before we hung him, neglected to
give me his name.

Sybil's smile disappears. Prosser's smile broadens.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
Give my regards to your father.
Good day... Miss Ludington.

Prosser tips his hat and drives away.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - DAY

Abigail and Rebecca sit on the front porch watching a mud
covered Sybil trudge toward them. Rebel follows a few strides
behind, his head down, sheepish.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Sybil, are you alright? What
happened?

Sybil stops, turns, and points to Rebel.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
That... that... Poltroon, is afraid
of water!

Sybil storms inside. Rebel looks apologetic.

MONTAGE: SYBIL HELPS REBEL OVERCOME FEAR OF WATER

-- Sybil strains to pull Rebel by his reins into a large
puddle. Rebel doesn't budge.

-- Sybil stands on the opposite bank of a small stream,
struggling to pull him across. Rebel, instead pulls her face
first into the stream.

-- Sybil, again, stands on the opposite side of the small
stream, this time holding out a carrot, enticing him to
cross. He refuses.

-- Sybil blindfolds him and tries leading him across the
stream. He feels the water on his hooves and reels back.

-- Rebel watches Sybil lead Pumpkin into the pond. He takes a few tentative steps in and stands there. She smiles at him.

END MONTAGE:

EXT. SMALL POND - DAY

Rebel watches curiously as Sybil leads Pumpkin into knee deep water. She pets and praises her and feeds her a piece of carrot. Sybil holds out a carrot for Rebel and he stretches for it. Sybil keeps it out of reach.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Come on, Rebel, it's easy. You saw
Pumpkin do it. Knee deep and you
get a carrot.

Rebel stretches his neck again, clapping his lips towards the carrot. Not able to reach it, he steps forward. One step, then another. Sybil backs up and he follows her into the water.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Knee deep. Good boy. I promised you
a carrot. See, my word is good.

Sybil gives him the carrot and hugs his neck, petting him. While Rebel chews, Pumpkin nudges Sybil for another carrot.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BACKYARD

Sybil ushers Rebel and Pumpkin into the paddock and closes the gate. She turns to see Caleb talking to Enoch, who is on horseback, next to the barn. Their conversation looks serious.

Enoch trots away. Caleb and Sybil exchange glances. Caleb takes a steadying breath and walks to her.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Is everything alright, Caleb?

CALEB
(reassuringly)
Everything is fine, Miss Sybil.
Just need to take care of some
things for your father, is all.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(concerned)
Dangerous things?

CALEB

Oh, I wouldn't think so.

Sybil is not convinced.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Miss Sybil, you remember how to shoot your papa's pistols?

Sybil nods nervously.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Good. When I'm away I want you to carry 'em when you go and check the fences. Keep a wary eye. Enoch tells me there're skinners about.... Promise?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I promise.

INT. TUFFY'S TAVERN - DAY

Prosser sits at a table in Tuffy's Tavern cursing under his breath as he tries to slide a wooden spoon under his cast to scratch the itch that's threatening to drive him insane. His efforts are interrupted when he hears the sounds of hooves against cobblestones.

He peers out the window and sees Caleb drive Pumpkin to the front of the livery stable across the street. Prosser, intrigued, watches as the stable boy, Miles, joins Caleb in friendly conversation.

Tuffy appears and places a mug of ale in front of Prosser, who doesn't notice, and joins him in looking out the window.

ARNOLD TUFFY

Who's that?

ICHABOD PROSSER

(not looking away)
He works for Ludington.

ARNOLD TUFFY

What's he doing in town?

ICHABOD PROSSER

That's what we're going to find out.

Caleb leaves Pumpkin and the wagon with Miles, waves, and walks away. Prosser straightens the mug so it is just so.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
Follow him, Arnold.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - PARLOR - DAY

Abigail, Sybil, and Rebecca are in the parlor sewing. Abigail looks at the ceiling, annoyed at the thumping sound from the boys rough-housing upstairs. The toddler, looking cute, is in his crib, watching.

Sybil accidentally pokes her finger with her needle.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Ow, you... slubberdegullion!

Rebecca laughs. Sybil gives her a dirty look as she sucks on her finger.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
That's not funny, Rebecca. Sybil,
how many times have I told you?
Talk like a lady... No gentleman
wants to marry a woman who talks
like a muck-spout!

The toddler jumps up and down in his crib, giggling.

TODDLER
Muck-spout! Muck-spout!

Abigail, hand on her pregnant belly, looks at her toddler and sighs. She glares at the ceiling after a particularly loud crash. She turns her attention back to Sybil.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Sybil, you're sixteen years old.
It's time you think about settling
down, marry, (CRASH)... and have
children of your own.

Rebecca snorts and whispers in a sing-song voice.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
Miles has smiles for Sy...bil.

Sybil pokes at Rebecca with her needle, but can't reach.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
I did not mean the local stable
boy.... You'll marry a gentleman...
from Yale perhaps.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Momma, I want to fight, like Papa
 does... for freedom.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 Freedom? Sybil, your father fights
 for the freedom of men... not
 women... women have never been
 free... and never will be.

Sybil looks at her mother, horrified.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Never?

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 It's not what God intended for
 us.... That's why you need to hitch
 your wagon to a good man, like your
 father.... Soon, too, or before you
 know it you'll be a spinster....
 You want children throwing rocks at
 you? Mocking you?

Sybil, crestfallen, resumes her sewing.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 No, Momma.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 You know I was fifteen when I had
 you.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 I know, Momma.

The boys stampede down the stairs, laughing. The oldest boy,
 Archie, chases Henry and Ricky with a wooden toy musket with
 a knife lashed to the end like a bayonet. They race by the
 parlor and out the front door. Through the window we see the
 boys playing soldier.

ARCHIE
 Die, Limey scum. Bang, bang!

The two younger boys pretend to be shot and comically fall
 down. Abigail sees the knife.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 Is that my kitchen knife?

Abigail storms out the door.

TODDLER
(laughing excitedly)
Limey scum!

Sybil and Rebecca watch their mother through the window. She shuffles to Archie while Henry and Ricky run off.

Snatching the toy from him, she smacks him in the behind. She goes for another swat but he twists away. She chases him offscreen and we hear her yelling at him unintelligibly while she smacks him.

The girls look at each other and laugh.

EXT. LONG ISLAND SOUND - DAY

The whaleboat crew of a dozen men, strain at their oars through the choppy sea, struggling to reach the Connecticut shore.

Marines in Continental blue uniforms and tri-corner hats fire their muskets at the pursuing British whaleboat about fifty yard astern.

The British Marines, dressed in red uniforms, and led by an effeminate, sword wielding officer at the bow, return a volley of musket fire.

Caleb, at the bow of the American boat, ducks down just in time and is showered with wooden splinters. The oarsman closest to Caleb cries out in pain from a musket ball hit to his shoulder. Caleb drags him off his seat and takes over for him.

The STEERSMAN, (20s), on Caleb's boat spurs his oarsmen on.

STEERSMAN
Faster men... Pull!

The oarsmen pull even faster.

A Continental Marine near the stern aims his small swivel cannon and fires, spraying the British boat with lead shot. Splashes erupt around the British boat. One British Marine is killed and falls overboard. A British oarsman slumps over.

The gap between the boats widen. The British officer screams commands at his crew, jabbing his sword in the air for emphasis. The Americans stop rowing and taunt them once they're out of range.

WHALEBOAT CREW
 (together)
 Huzzah.... Huzzah.... Huzzah!

The Americans once again start to pull on their oars.

STEERSMAN
 (laughing)
 Lucky for us that limey officer was
 such a milk-sop... If he'd have
 picked up an oar, they might have
 had us!

The crew laugh, even the wounded one.

EXT. CONNECTICUT SHORE - EVENING

The sun is setting when the whaleboat runs up onto the wooded shore of the Connecticut coast. Caleb jumps off and shoves the bow back out. He and the steersman wave goodbye as the whaleboat silently pulls away. Caleb stealthily enters the woods.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Caleb walks through the dark woods alone, using the stars as his guide. Coming to a dirt road, he peers into the darkness, straining to see. Satisfied he's alone, he takes a few tentative steps.

He freezes, eyes wide in horror, as torches are lit all around him. The skimmers stare at him in silence, looking menacing by torch light.

Arnold Tuffly steps through the line. He gives Caleb a heinous smile and slams the butt of his musket into his midsection. The air in Caleb's lungs explodes out of him and he goes down, gasping.

ARNOLD TUFFY
 Search him, boys.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - NIGHT

Just before dawn, Sybil quietly opens the barn door and sneaks inside.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - TACK ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil strides past the side saddle and takes Caleb's saddle.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil puts Caleb's saddle on Rebel's back and smiles mischievously at Rebel.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Rebel, you ready to do some real riding?

Rebel turns back and looks at her with a twinkle in his eye.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil leads Rebel out of the barn and mounts him astride. She glances back at the house to make sure they haven't been seen, and canters off toward the breaking dawn.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Rebecca reaches under one of the chickens in the coop, retrieves an egg, and puts it into the basket with the others.

Abigail calls out to her from the house.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Rebecca, where's your sister?

REBECCA LUDINGTON
I don't know, Momma.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Go see if she's in the barn. I need her.

Rebecca closes the chicken coop door and heads for the barn.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Rebecca places the egg basket on the table. She avoids making eye contact with her mother.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
Sybil and Rebel are not in the barn, Momma.

Abigail narrows her eyes in suspicion when Rebecca dashes away.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Abigail enters the barn and looks in Rebel's empty stall. She shrugs.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - TACK ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Abigail pokes her head into the tack room and sees Sybil's side saddle is still there and Caleb's is missing. Her eyes harden and her face turns red.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - DAY - SAME TIME

Sybil, her face beaming, is intoxicated by Rebel's speed as they run through the field at full gallop. She closes her eyes and tilts her head up to the sun.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY - LATER

Sybil rides down a quiet dirt road under a canopy of large oak trees that line both sides of the road. A five foot high stone wall runs along one side.

She comes to a gap in the wall from a long dirt driveway leading up to a small house. She stops Rebel when she sees Miles walking down the driveway.

Miles' face beams when he sees her.

MILES

Hello, Sybil. Now there's a handsome grey. Is he yours?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

He is... far as I'm concerned....
His name is Rebel.

Miles nods and grins in approval.

Miles sees that she's not riding sidesaddle. He gestures to it, chuckling, as he wags his finger back and forth.

MILES

(teasing)
Fitting name... for both of you.

Sybil pretends to be annoyed.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Now don't you be giving give me a hard time, Miles. I get enough of that from Momma.

MILES

(laughing)

And what would your papa say?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Well, he ain't gonna find out. Is he, Miles?

MILES

(teasing)

No, Ma'am. Not from me.... Not my place to say when I see a woman riding like a... like a...

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(acting indignant)

Miles, are you calling me a trollop?

Sybil's eyes flash, mischievously cautioning Miles to choose his words carefully.

MILES

Like an...

Sybil raises her eyebrows, waiting for him to finish his sentence.

MILES (CONT'D)

Like an... independent woman.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(amused)

Yes, that's right.... I'm independent....Isn't that what we're fighting for?

MILES

Well, we are. Us men I mean.... Women ain't supposed to fight.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

So, you don't think I can fight?

Sybil glares at him. He starts to squirm.

MILES

Hell, Sybil, I don't make the rules?

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Who does, Miles

MILES
(uncomfortable)
I don't know, Sybil? Look, I've seen you shoot. Heck, you're a better shot than most of the men in our company. I just mean it's not your place is all.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Oh, that's right. You men get to fight for a FREE NATION, and us good, little women get to sit at home sewing and cooking, without a single important thought in our pretty little heads.

MILES
You do have a pretty little head.

Sybil scowls at him.

MILES (CONT'D)
Um, I mean, well... not little... but not too big either... just right, really... anyways, I know you have thoughts too.

Sybil fights to keep a serious face, but breaks into giggles.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Are you done digging yet, Miles?

Miles face blushes. He smiles.

MILES
(muttering to himself)
God, I hope so.

Rebel nudges Miles closer, and Miles pets his neck. Serious now, he looks up at Sybil.

MILES (CONT'D)
Not all men want the same thing, Sybil.

Before she can answer, Rebel's ears perk up, his nostrils flaring, as he stares down the road. In a moment Sybil and Miles hear hoofbeats and a wagon.

They get glimpses through the trees of Prosser's horse pulling his wagon.

Suddenly nervous, Sybil hops off Rebel, grabs Miles hand and pulls him and Rebel behind the stone wall.

BEHIND THE WALL

MILES
(perplexed)
Sybil, it's just Doctor...

Frightened, Sybil puts her hand over his mouth.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(whispering)
Please, Miles. I can't let him take
Rebel.

The hoof beats get louder. Miles, looking confused, nods.

Sybil and Miles crouch behind the wall. Sybil pulls down on Rebel's reins and he settles down between them.

Sybil's fear grows as the hoofbeats get louder. When just opposite the wall, they stop.

Sybil and Miles look at each other, wide eyed.

WALL - STREET SIDE

Irritated, Prosser stops the wagon and lifts his leg that's in a cast. He grabs a wooden stick and jams it into the cast, frantically scratching an itch.

ICHABOD PROSSER
(muttering to himself)
Wait 'til I get a hold of that flea
bitten grey.

BEHIND THE WALL

As if hearing him, Rebel gives a snort. Sybil and Miles tense up.

WALL - STREET SIDE

Hearing the sound, Prosser freezes. He narrows his eyes as he looks around, sniffing the air.

Prosser sniffs the air again and waits. He looks around once more. After several moments he tidies his coat and cravat, and gets his wagon going.

BEHIND THE WALL

The sound of the hoofbeats fade. Sybil and Miles look at each other and giggle in relief.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - DUSK

The last rays of the sun are fading as Sybil hops off of Rebel. She casts a sneaky glance toward the house and slinks into the barn.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - TACK ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil, her eyes wide, swallows hard when she enters the tack room, carrying Caleb's saddle, and finds Abigail glaring at her.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Abigail's loud voice is unintelligible through the kitchen window as we see Sybil sitting in a chair, looking down with her hands folded in front of her. She occasionally winces when Abigail's wagging finger comes into view as she gets scolded.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil sits at the kitchen table, eyes cast down, while Abigail paces, lecturing her.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

I won't have it, Sybil. I will not have a liar under my roof! And sneaking is lying...! It's bad enough you talk like a sewer digger, and prefer the barn to a kitchen.... Why can't you be more like Rebecca?

Comparing her to her younger sister makes Sybil's eyes harden in defiance.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I'm not like Rebecca... or you! I don't want to slave away in a kitchen for the rest of my life, chasing dirty, snot-nosed little brats around the house all day...! I want to make a difference!

Abigail's face reddens. Her jaw clenches in rage. She slaps Sybil across her face.

Sybil, holding her face, stares back at her in shock and surprise.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Don't you dare get sniffy with me!
My dreams may have not been as
lofty as yours. Maybe I didn't
dream of saving the world, but I'll
tell you something. I had
dreams.... Dreams close to my
heart!

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Momma, I didn't...

Abigail raises her hand to silence her.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

I put my dreams away to raise my
family. That's what women do. We
give up our dreams, stuff them down
deep and move on.... We grow up,
marry, have children. Our children
then become our dreams.

Abigail takes a moment to calm herself.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

You're sixteen now.... It's time
you gave up yours.

Sybil's eyes well up in tears and she storms out.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Rebel, lying down in his stall, wakes up in surprise when Sybil swings open the stall door, falls down next to him, and bursts into tears.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(while sobbing)

Rebel, I don't understand. Why is
the world so unjust?

Rebel bends his neck toward her in sympathy and she hugs him.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - DAY

Rebel, grazing in the paddock next to the fence, turns his head toward the familiar sound of Pumpkin pulling the wagon down the road. Sybil joins him, emptying a bucket into a nearby trough. They look at each other in confusion when they see it's not Caleb driving the wagon, but Miles.

Abigail and Rebecca exit the house and all three converge on the wagon.

Miles stops the wagon and tips his hat to Sybil, giving her a bashful smile.

MILES
Hello, Sybil.

Abigail interrupts before she can reply.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
What happened to Caleb?

Miles jumps off the wagon and respectfully takes his hat off.

MILES
I'm not sure, ma'am. He just said I ought to bring back your wagon if after three days I didn't hear from him... Said you'd probably be needing it... I do apologize.

Miles looks furtively between the three women, hesitant to say what's on his mind.

The women exchange worried glances.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
(to Miles)
You said... you're not sure.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(anxious)
What did you see?

MILES
It's just that I think Scruffy Tuffy was... maybe following him.

Sybil's eyes widen in fear.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Oh, no.

Sybil turns to Abigail.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 Momma, we gotta...

Abigail silences her by holding up her hand.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 (to Miles)
 Would you please let us know if you
 learn anything more?

Abigail gives him a few coins. Miles puts his hat back on,
 gives a slight bow to Abigail, and smiles bashfully to Sybil.

MILES
 Yes, ma'am, I will.

Sybil impatiently waits until Miles is out of earshot.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Momma, we have to find out what
 happened! Maybe I can snoop around
 that...

Abigail reels on Sybil.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 You are not to go near that tavern!
 Do you understand me?

Sybil hesitates and Abigail grabs her by both shoulders.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 (urgently)
 Do you understand?

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Yes, Momma.

Sybil's eyes turn rebellious as her mother walks back into
 the house.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - GIRL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sybil, fully dressed, pulls back her bed covers. She looks at
 Rebecca to make sure she's asleep. She gets up and sneaks out
 of the room.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil tip-toes down the hall. A floor board creaks loudly
 under her weight when she passes by her mother's room.

She freezes in fear, listening intently. After a moment she continues on.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil exits the barn with Rebel, tacked with Caleb's saddle. Careful not to make any noise, she mounts him and they sneak off into the night.

INT. LIVERY STABLE - NIGHT

Enoch Crosby opens the barn door and walks his horse in. He hands the reins to Miles, who leads it into a stall. Crosby freezes when he hears Sybil's soft whisper from the next stall over.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Mr. Crosby... it's me, Sybil.

He peers in and is surprised and upset to see both Sybil and Rebel. He looks at Miles, who shrugs.

ENOCH CROSBY
Sybil, dammit! You shouldn't be here.... Do you have any idea what the Tories will do to you if you get caught!

SYBIL LUDINGTON
I'm sorry, Mr. Crosby, but Caleb is missing.

ENOCH CROSBY
He's not missing, Prosser's got him.

Sybil flinches.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(tentatively)
Is he alive?

ENOCH CROSBY
For now. But Prosser will kill him once he learns what he knows about Washington's spy ring.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Then we need to rescue him!

ENOCH CROSBY

Or kill him, before they torture it out of him... Either way, you're not coming.

Sybil's eyes flash in defiance.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I am going, Mr. Crosby. With or without you.

Sybil pushes open the stall door to walk out but Crosby pushes it back closed.

ENOCH CROSBY

You don't understand, Sybil. Your father is a Colonel. The crown is offering a three hundred guinea reward for his capture.

Sybil looks at him, surprised.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)

If you're captured, they'll use you to get to him... Three hundred guineas is a lot of money.

Sybil considers for a moment.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I won't get caught.

MILES

Sybil, this is dangerous. Please just listen to Mister Crosby and go home.

Sybil purses her lips, shakes her head and again pushes the stall door open, and once again Crosby closes it. He stares at her, furiously thinking.

ENOCH CROSBY

(exasperated)

Alright... but we do this my way.... Agreed?

Sybil eagerly nods.

Crosby turns to Miles.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)

You know she's stubborn as a mule, right?

Miles blushes and quickly retreats.

 ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)
 Hide in the alley next to Tuffy's.
 Once he leaves, I'll meet you there
 and we'll follow him to
 Prosser's.... Until then, do
 nothing.... Understand?

Sybil halfheartedly shrugs.

 ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)
 (annoyed)
 Do you understand, Sybil.

 SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Yes... I understand.

I/E. STABLE / TUFFY'S TAVERN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

A frustrated looking Crosby walks out of the barn. Through a window, Sybil watches him cross the street and enter Tuffy's.

EXT. TUFFY'S TAVERN - ALLEY - NIGHT

Sybil crouches deep within the dark shadows in the alley next to Tuffy's, watching the tavern's regular riffraff leave for the night. Standing behind her is Rebel.

Sybil watches the tavern darken as Tuffy blows out the lanterns. A moment later he's at the door and she hears him lock it. She backs further into the shadows when he walks past the ally's entrance.

Sybil tip toes as she leads Rebel toward the entrance. She gasps when Tuffy suddenly steps into view, flanked by two skimmers.

 ARNOLD TUFFY
 Going somewhere, Missy?

Sybil tries to back away. She freezes when she feels the cold metal of a pistol barrel being pressed against her neck from behind. Slowly glancing back, she sees that it's Enoch Crosby. He cocks the hammer back.

 ENOCH CROSBY
 I told you, Miss Ludington, three
 hundred guineas is a lot of money.

Wide eyed, she stares at him, speechless.

Tuffy and the two skinners look at each other and laugh.

INT. PROSSER'S BARN - NIGHT

Prosser sits outside a stall with his broken foot resting on the seat of a chair. Inside the stall a skinner whips Caleb, who is shirtless and unconscious. He hangs suspended by his wrists from a hook chained to the ceiling. Ugly red welts stripe his back, overlapping much older scars from Caleb's past.

SKINNER

He passed out again, Doctor Prosser.

ICHABOD PROSSER

(irritated)

Well, throw some more water on him.

Before the skinner can obey, the barn door opens. Tuffy's thugs enter and step aside. Tuffy stands there grinning like a malevolent idiot gripping Sybil's arm. Behind them Enoch holds Rebel and his own horse by their reins.

Tuffy grabs Sybil by the back of the neck and roughly shoves her forward. She stumbles and almost falls in front of Prosser.

Sybil whirls on Tuffy, her eyes on fire, tied fists clenched together in front of her.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

You corn-faced, pot-bellied bag of imbecility! Wait till my father gets hold of you!

Tuffy scowls as the others chuckle.

ICHABOD PROSSER

(condescending)

Now, now, Miss Ludington, such language. You'll never find a husband with that sort of talk.... Uncouth behavior like that is the very reason why our British cousins hold us Colonials in such contempt.

Rebel neighs and tries to back away when he hears Prosser's voice, but Crosby pulls him back.

Prosser looks at Rebel and smiles his characteristic evil smile.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
(sarcastically)
But I must thank you for your
kindness in bringing me back my
horse.... I did miss him so.

Prosser gestures to an empty stall.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
If you wouldn't mind Mr. Crosby.
I'll take great pleasure in dealing
with him later.

Crosby leads Rebel into the stall and closes the door. Rebel spins around, reaches his head out, and pushes against the door trying to get to Sybil.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(defiant)
Where's Caleb?

Prosser steps closer to Sybil. His face somber, earnest.

ICHABOD PROSSER
I'm sorry to have to tell you this,
Miss Ludington...

Sybil's eyes widen.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
That your dear friend, Caleb...

Prosser lets her hang for a moment, relishing her sense of dread.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
Is alive.

Sybil shudders in relief.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(less defiantly)
Where is he?

Prosser gestures toward the stall with Caleb.

ICHABOD PROSSER
He's there, Miss Ludington.

Sybil stifles a gasp when she sees Caleb hanging, his back torn to bloody shreds. She tries to go to him but Tuffy grabs her. She struggles but can't break free.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 (to Prosser)
 Let him down, you... foul wretch!

ICHABOD PROSSER
 (amused)
 You do have a singular way with
 words, Miss Ludington.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 I'll get you for this. You vile
 scallywag... I'll...

Before she can finish, Prosser backhands her hard across her face. She staggers from the blow but Tuffy holds her up. Blood trickles from the corner of her mouth.

She looks up at him in shock and dismay.

ICHABOD PROSSER
 That, my dear, is what your father
 should have done long ago.... After
 all, a woman needs to know her
 place.

Tuffy and the skimmers chuckle.

Crosby distracts Prosser.

ENOCH CROSBY
 Has he said anything useful yet?

ICHABOD PROSSER
 Not yet, Mr. Crosby. Unfortunately,
 so far our conversation has been a
 bit... one-sided.

Prosser looks at Sybil. Sinister inspiration dawns on his face.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
 Perhaps now we can change that.

Prosser grabs his crutch and hobbles over to the unconscious Caleb and spins him around to face Sybil. His mischievous smile unnerves her.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
 He may not speak to save
 himself.... But, perhaps he'll
 speak to save you.

Prosser sadistically spins Caleb on his chain and leaves the stall. Using his cane, he hobbles over to her.

He grabs her by the chin, forcing her to look at him. She recoils from the malice in his eyes.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
Tell me, Miss Ludington. How much pain do you think you can endure?

Frightened, she tries to look away. He wrenches her face back. She looks at him, terrified.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
How much pain, Miss Ludington...?
How long will your friend let you scream as I pull out your finger nails... one... by... one?

Sybil grows more terrified. Still holding her by the chin, Prosser moves behind her, forcing her to look at Caleb. He whispers venom into her ear.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
How loud must you scream before he breaks?

Tuffy laughs.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
Do you think his loyalty toward your pathetic cause will outweigh his loyalty to you...? I wonder.

Prosser sees Tuffy smiling in anticipation.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
I think Mister Tuffy maybe looking forward to spending some time with you and your friend, Caleb, as well. And don't you worry. If he causes too much damage, I'll fix you up. After all, I am a doctor.

Sybil looks at Tuffy with dread. Amused, Prosser shoves her to him.

ICHABOD PROSSER (CONT'D)
Lock her in the next stall, Arnold.... We'll start first thing in the morning.

Tuffy manhandles Sybil past Rebel's stall. Rebel tries to bite him but misses. Tuffy glares at him. In the next stall, Sybil struggles against him, kicking and biting as he ties her hands to a post and closes the stall door.

ARNOLD TUFFY
See ya bright and early.

He looks at Rebel and smirks.

ARNOLD TUFFY (CONT'D)
Both of you.... Teach you some
manners.

He winks at her and gives her a malignant grin.

Prosser throws his arm affectionately around Crosby's
shoulder.

ICHABOD PROSSER
I want to thank you, Mr. Crosby.
You've proven yourself to be a true
and loyal friend. I have no doubt
your actions will help bring a
stunning defeat to these so called
patriots.

Crosby locks eyes with Sybil as they walk past. Sybil glares
at him.

LATER

A glimmer of moonlight shines through the windows, barely
illuminating Sybil, sitting alone in the squalid stall.

Her eyes widen in surprise when she hears the barn door open.
A faint light accompanies the sound. She crouches in the
corner of the stall, but there's nowhere to hide.

The light grows, then the metallic clank of the stall bolt
being thrown back. She braces herself, squinting against the
lantern light flooding in.

She gasps in terror when she sees the silhouetted figure pull
out a large knife and advance toward her. Before she can
scream, Crosby holds his hand over her mouth to silence her.

ENOCH CROSBY
(whispering)
We must be very quiet, Sybil.

Sybil stares at Crosby in confusion as he uses the knife to
cut her free.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)
Come, help me get Caleb down.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
This was all a ruse?

ENOCH CROSBY
Of course it was.

She glares at him while rubbing her chafed wrists.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
I thought you were Scruffy
Tuffy.... You should have told me.

Crosby sees that she is furious.

ENOCH CROSBY
Look, I knew you wouldn't let it
go. And I needed a reason to be
here.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(angrily whispers)
You still could have told me.

ENOCH CROSBY
(urgently)
You needed to be convincing.... Now
come on.

They unhook Caleb and lower him gently to the ground. Crosby holds Caleb's head in his arms and gently slaps him in the face to revive him. Sybil stares at the pool of Caleb's blood on the floor.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)
Sybil, find some water.

Snapped from her stupor, she finds a cup and brings the water from a nearby bucket.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)
Come on, old friend wake up. We
need you.

Crosby smiles when Caleb cracks his eyes open. He tries to speak but can't. Sybil tips the cup of water into Caleb's mouth. He coughs and sputters. He recognizes Sybil and becomes more alert.

CALEB
(weakly)
Sybil... you can't be here.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

It's alright, Caleb. We're here to rescue you.

Caleb gives Crosby an incriminating look.

ENOCH CROSBY

Don't blame me. You know better than I how stubborn she is.

Caleb nods.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)

Caleb, did you bring back any intelligence? What are the British up to?

Caleb squeezes Crosby's hand and tries to get up, but is too weak.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)

It's alright, Caleb. Tell me.

CALEB

They're coming.... The British are coming!

ENOCH CROSBY

Coming where, Caleb?

CALEB

(weakly)

Near here.... Attacking... the... supply depot...

He starts to cough again and Sybil gives him more water.

ENOCH CROSBY

(urgently)

Where, Caleb? Where are they attacking?

CALEB

Danbury... the supplies at Danbury.... Two thousand soldiers.

Sybil, shocked, looks at Crosby.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

That close...? Danbury?

ENOCH CROSBY

I have to warn your father and you
two need to get home... Quick, get
the horses.

Crosby takes off his coat and helps Caleb put it on.

Sybil returns astride Rebel and leading Crosby's horse.
Crosby helps Caleb get onto Rebel's back behind Sybil.

Crosby opens the barn door wide and gets on his horse.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)

Be careful, Sybil. Watch out for
them skinnners. They'll be coming
after you.

Crosby reaches out and grabs Caleb's shoulder.

ENOCH CROSBY (CONT'D)

Thank you, old friend. We're all in
your debt... I'll see you soon.

Sybil and Crosby leave the barn and trot off in different
directions into the night.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - DAWN

Caleb, nearly unconscious, weakly rests his head on Sybil's
back as Rebel carries them down a dark path. Sybil smiles
when she sees her house up ahead, brightened by the first,
pre-dawn rays of the sun.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

We're almost home, Caleb, just a
little farther.

Caleb looks up and points to a large, ancient oak tree near
the front of the house.

CALEB

Sybil, take me there.

Sybil, puzzled, looks back at him.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Please, Sybil.

Sybil does as he asks and helps him down off of Rebel. Blood
has soaked the back of the borrowed coat. Caleb winces when
she sits him down at the base of the tree.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Caleb, why are we here? We need to get you into the house.

CALEB

Sorry, Miss Sybil. I'm afraid I can go no farther.

Caleb sees that she is confused. He kindly smiles at her.

CALEB (CONT'D)

My journey is at an end, Miss Sybil.... Time to start another one.

She flinches when she realizes what he's saying. She starts to tear up.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

No, no, no, no, no, I'll get Mama, you'll be alright, you'll see.

CALEB

Sybil... don't make a fuss. Now you be brave. You and Rebel.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Caleb, please don't go! I need you.

Rebel nuzzles Caleb. Caleb smiles weakly at him.

CALEB

You hold onto them principles, Reb.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(tearfully beseeching)
We need you!

Caleb's eyes crinkle into a smile when the brilliant reds and oranges of the sunrise bask the landscape of the valley below in beautiful, warm light.

CALEB

Look, Miss Sybil... look at all that heavenly splendor.

Sybil looks at the beautiful sunrise and takes Caleb's hand. Tears stream down her cheeks.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I'll meet you there. I promise.

Caleb smiles at her, bows his head and dies. Silhouetted in front of the rising sun, Rebel rears, tossing his head, mane flowing. Sybil rests her head on Caleb's shoulder and cries. Rebel lowers his head over both of them.

They are soon joined by Abigail and Rebecca.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - LARGE TREE - DUSK

Rebel stands in the rain a few steps away as Abigail reads from her bible. Her children listen while gathered around the fresh mound of dirt covering Caleb's grave.

Rebel looks down and sees his reflection in a puddle. He stares at it, contemplating his image being distorted by the rain which makes him appear that he's crying.

Abigail closes the Bible.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Amen.

Sybil is softly weeping. Rebel walks to her and nuzzles her face. She nestles her face in his neck and hugs him.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Let's get you out of the rain.

Sybil leads Rebel back to the barn.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BARN - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Sybil dries Rebel's coat while he eats.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

It's just me and you now, Rebel. We have to do something. We can't let Caleb die for nothing. You with me?

Rebel stops eating to nuzzle her, forehead to forehead.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

The next day, Sybil, seething, stares off into space as she rocks back and forth in a rocking chair on the front porch. She has a musket resting across her lap. Rebecca sits sadly beside her holding a pistol.

They exchange looks of alarm when they hear the sound of hooves approaching from down the road.

Sybil cocks back the hammer and rests the musket on the railing. Steely eyed and steady, she takes aim in the direction of the sound. Rebecca takes cover behind a large barrel and cocks her pistol.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 (whispering to herself)
 Come on, you skinner bastards. Come
 and get it.

The clip clop of hooves becomes louder. Sybil takes a slow deep breath.

She catches glimpses of the horse and rider through the trees.

Sybil exhales half her breath and holds the rest. She focuses her eye on the front sight as she tracks the blurry image of the horse and rider with the front of the barrel.

She puts her finger on the trigger.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 For Caleb.

The horse and rider come into view.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
 Sybil, don't shoot! It's Miles...!
 It's just Miles.

Surprised, Sybil raises up her musket. Both girls carefully release their flintlocks into the safe position.

Miles trots up to them.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 Dammit, Miles. I almost shot you.

Miles shyly flashes a grin at her.

MILES
 I'm sure glad you didn't. Sybil.

Abigail joins them and he tips his hat to her.

MILES (CONT'D)
 Hello, Missus Ludington.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
 Hello, Miles.... You surely have
 chosen a poor time to ask if you
 can court my daughter.

Sybil's jaw drops.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Momma!

Rebecca giggles. Miles' face turns red.

MILES

(nonplussed)

No, ah, that's not why I'm here,
Missus Ludington.

He looks awkwardly at Sybil.

MILES (CONT'D)

(to Abigail)

Mister Crosby said that Doctor
Prosser and them skimmers would be
coming after you and that you could
use a man... that is, until your
husband gets here, to help out.

Abigail raises an eyebrow.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Are you a man, Miles?

MILES

(indignant)

Yes, Ma'am. I'm a private in your
husband's militia company... and a
Minuteman.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

(feigning skepticism)

Alright, Miles. I'll go find you a
gun.

MILES

No need, Missus Ludington.

Miles turns to Sybil and proudly smiles at her.

MILES (CONT'D)

I brought my own.

Sybil smiles back at him.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Sybil and Miles stand watch on the porch, surrounded by
loaded muskets and flintlock pistols. Rebecca sleeps in a
chair a few feet away.

Sybil brooding, slowly rocks in her rocking chair, lost in thought. Miles fidgets, occasionally sneaking glances toward her. He works up the courage to speak to her.

Quietly as to not wake up Rebecca.

MILES

You thinking about Caleb?

Sybil stops her brooding and sadly nods.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

I already miss him.

MILES

How long did he work for your family?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

He didn't just work for us, he's been part of the family since I was a babe.

MILES

Oh, that long?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Ever since Papa found him hiding in the barn, half starved, freezing, barely clothed.

MILES

He was a runaway?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

He was.... He was a slave on some plantation in Virginia until his owner sold off his wife and child. So he escaped to go look for them.... He searched for years.... He never did find them.

Sybil, with a forced smile and a heavy sigh.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

He found us instead.

After a moment of awkward silence.

MILES

Is it a bad time?

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Bad time for what?

MILES

To ask permission to court you.

Sybil smirks with mischief.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

You want to court me, Miles?

MILES

(with apprehension)

Would it be futile?

Sybil smiles kindly to him.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

No, it would not be futile. I warn you though, I would not make it easy.

Miles smiles in relief.

MILES

Of that, I have no doubt.

Sybil playfully teases him.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Go ahead, Miles, woo me. Read me poetry. Play the lute.... Make me swoon!

MILES

(laughing)

I don't know how to play the lute.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Can you shoot that musket?

MILES

Yes, Ma'am, I sure can.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(smiling)

Good.... I much prefer the sound of musket fire.

LATER

Sybil sleeps in the rocker with her face in her hand. Rebecca shakes her.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
 (whispering)
 Sybil, wake up.

Sybil wakes, instantly alert. Miles is pointing his musket toward the woods. Sybil whispers back.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
 What is it?

Rebecca, afraid, stares into the darkness.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
 (whispering)
 I think there's someone out there.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - WOODS - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Arnold Tuffy and three skimmers wait among the trees near the Ludington house. All have muskets or pistols.

A SKINNER SCOUT, (30s), sneaks over to them from the direction of the house. Tuffy whispers to him.

ARNOLD TUFFY
 You see any militia?

SKINNER SCOUT
 No. Just the two daughters and the stable boy from the livery. They're keeping lookout on the porch.

ARNOLD TUFFY
 Could be militia inside.

SKINNER SCOUT
 Maybe.

Tuffy thinks for a moment and then whispers to all of them.

ARNOLD TUFFY
 Prosser ain't paying us enough to take on militia, so if you see any, be sure to call out.

Tuffy turns to the skinner scout.

ARNOLD TUFFY (CONT'D)
 When the shooting starts, head over to the barn. Prosser wants that damn grey horse brought back.

Tuffy signals them forward and they slink toward the house.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil and Miles rest their muskets on the porch railing, aiming them into the night. Rebecca, with her pistol, takes cover behind the large wooden barrel. They wait in silence, peering into the darkness.

Sybil wipes away a bead of sweat from her brow as she aims along the long barrel of her musket.

She hears the dry snap of a twig being stepped on. She fires.

The woods in front of her light up from the muzzle flash. Tuffy and the skimmers are illuminated about thirty yards away from them,

REBECCA LUDINGTON

Skimmers!

Sybil and Miles fire, narrowly missing Tuffy and the skimmers as they run back to the nearby trees, firing back as they go.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

(as she reloads)

I see you, Scruffy Tuffy!

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - WOODS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Tuffy scrambles behind a tree.

ARNOLD TUFFY

(to himself)

I really hate that name.

Peeking around it, he sees lanterns being lit from behind the curtains from the upstairs windows.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BOYS ROOM - SAME TIME

Abigail, carrying a pistol, turns up the lanterns in the upstairs hall then runs into the boys room. She shakes them awake.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Wake up, boys! Hurry...! It's
reveille, soldiers! Time to get up!

The boys groggily sit up. They hear the shooting from outside.

ARCHIE

What's that, Mama?

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
That's Miles and your sisters
shooting at the bad guys. Now
hurry, get dressed!

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Sybil and Miles alternate shooting and taking cover as they reload. Incoming musket fire from the skimmers splinter the wood around them.

Sybil sees Rebecca cowering behind the water barrel, frozen in fear.

Sybil scoots over to her.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Rebecca, are you hurt?

Terrified, Rebecca can't speak. She just shakes her head.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Stay down, Rebecca. Don't worry,
we'll keep them away.

Sybil pops up and fires.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BOYS ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Abigail frantically helps the boys get dressed.

HANK
How come they get to play soldier
with real guns, Mama?

RICKY
(rubbing his eyes)
Ya, Mama!

An idea dawns on Abigail. She scans the room and finds what she's looking for.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
(to herself)
That's it.

Abigail grabs the wooden toy muskets and hats leaning in the corner.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Here boys, come get your guns.
Hurry!

Abigail hands out the toy guns to her still half asleep boys.

RICKY

Mama, I wanna go back to bed.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Son, don't be a gnashgab. You're a soldier.

She mashes on his hat.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Abigail leads them into the hall and lines them up.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Right shoulder arms, boys. Quickly now.

The two older boys rest their toy guns on their right shoulders, they laugh when Ricky puts it on his left.

ARCHIE

(laughing)

Right shoulder, idiot.

Abigail flinches from the sound of more musket fire from the porch.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Forward march, boys! Forward march.

The boys laugh as they comically march down the hallway trying to keep in step with each other.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - WOODS - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Tuffy watches the upstairs windows and sees the silhouettes of the boys behind the curtains as they march with their toy muskets.

ARNOLD TUFFY

(still looking up at the windows)

Stop shooting, boys. They got militia.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil and Miles pause their shooting and laugh when the skinner scout bolts out of the barn, screaming, with Rebel hot on his heels, snapping at his backside.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - WOODS - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Tuffy watches his skinner scout being chased out of the barn by Rebel. He shakes his head in disgust.

ARNOLD TUFFY

Back to the tavern, boys. That's enough for one night.

Tuffy scowls when he hears the laughter from the porch. He yells back.

ARNOLD TUFFY (CONT'D)

See you soon, Sybil Ludington! You foul mouthed little strumpet! We'll be back...! For you and that damn horse!

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Rebel joins them at the front porch. Sybil coaxes a frightened Rebecca out from behind the barrel. Rebecca offers a small smile of relief.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

We'll be waiting, Scruffy Tuffy, you lily-livered, prigger!

Rebel whinnies in what sounds like laughter. They all join in.

Sybil looks affectionately at Miles, impressed by his bravery.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Abigail holds her belly, anxiously peering out the window.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

(with relief)

Alright boys, back to bed, playtime is over.

ARCHIE

But Mama, we want to shoot the guns
too!

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Now!

HANK

(pouting to himself)
Not fair.

The boys file their way back into the room and Abigail closes the door.

Abigail doubles over in pain as her water breaks. She calls out.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Girls, get up here!

She looks wobbly as she puts her pistol down and holds her pregnant belly. Sybil and Rebecca rush upstairs and help her sit down in a chair.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Are you alright, Momma?

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Baby's coming, girls.... Help me to
my bed.

Sybil and Rebecca look at each other in surprise then help Abigail up and to her bed.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

In the dim candlelight, Abigail lies in bed, in labor, groaning in pain. She breathes through another strong contraction. The toddler sleeps in the nearby crib soundly.

It's now Sybil's turn to be afraid as she sits on the bed and wipes the damp hair from her mother's sweaty brow. She looks questioningly at Rebecca, but she's intent on their mother and doesn't look Sybil's way.

Abigail, huffing and puffing.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON

Rebecca... something... doesn't
feel right.

Rebecca feels her mother's abdomen. Her eyes widen.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
Momma, I think the baby is
breeched.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(to Rebecca, terrified)
Oh no! What do we do?

REBECCA LUDINGTON
We have to try to turn the baby.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Hurry, girls! Rebecca, show Sybil
what to do. And hurry, this baby
doesn't want to wait.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
Sybil, put your hands opposite of
mine. Firm pressure, but not too
hard. Do what I do, alright?

Sybil swallows hard, nods and gets into position.

Rebecca pushes Abigail's belly away from her pelvis and a bit
to the side while Sybil presses the top of her belly, gently
massaging the baby over to the head down position.

Abigail groans loudly in pain, trying to breathe through it.
The toddler wakes from the commotion and begins to wail.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
It's not working, Rebecca. Oh, it's
too early. Damn them Tories to hell
if my baby dies!

REBECCA LUDINGTON
Let's try again. Sybil, nice and
slow.

Sybil looks for guidance from Rebecca as they work on
massaging Abigail's belly again.

After a moment, Abigail nods to her girls.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
You did it, girls. Good job.

Sybil and Rebecca look at each other in relief.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
You ready, Momma?

Abigail nods.

REBECCA LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Come on, Momma... push!

Abigail pushes hard, giving it everything she's got. She stops. She starts panting, gathering strength for the next push.

Abigail sees the boys in the doorway, watching.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Boys, what did I tell you! Back to bed...! Now!

The boys back away from the door.

REBECCA LUDINGTON
(gesturing to the toddler)
Wait! Take him with you.

Archie lifts the crying toddler from the crib and strides away. Abigail calls out after him.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
And don't you boys dare teach him any more curse words!

Abigail, panting hard, gets ready for the next push.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Please God, let it be a girl.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Miles stands watch on the front porch with his musket. He cringes when Abigail cries out in pain. He and Rebel exchange concerned glances.

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAWN

REBECCA LUDINGTON
Almost there, Momma!

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Wait 'till I get hold of your father, that pillock!

Abigail screams again as she pushes hard. Sybil cringes.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Runs off to war like some gillie-wet-foot!

REBECCA LUDINGTON
I can see the head, Momma. Come on,
one more push!

Sybil's hand crunches when Abigail squeezes hard. Sybil clenches her teeth, trying not to show her pain.

Abigail screams as she gives one last momentous push.

Sybil watches, wide eyed and shaken as Rebecca helps free the baby.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAWN

SLAP, BABY CRYING, Miles and Rebel look at each other. Miles smiles in relief.

EXT LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Sybil steps out onto the porch at midday, looking drained.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
A night to remember eh, Miles?

MILES
One I won't soon forget.... How's
your Mama?

SYBIL LUDINGTON
She's alright.... And I have a new
baby sister.

MILES
Thank the Lord.

Sybil looks rattled. Miles looks at her, concerned.

MILES (CONT'D)
Are you alright?

SYBIL LUDINGTON
I'm not sure.... What I saw Momma
go through, the pain.... I don't
think I want children, Miles. I
don't have Mama's strength.... or
her courage.

Sybil looks vulnerable, there's a slight sound of dread in her voice when she says.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
I would understand if you don't
want to court me anymore.

Miles looks at her, mildly surprised.

MILES
Don't be silly. You do have
courage, Sybil. You're just like
your Mama.

Miles tries to lighten Sybil's mood.

MILES (CONT'D)
'cept you curse a lot more.

Sybil chuckles in relief.

MILES (CONT'D)
Go on, get some sleep. Me and 'ole
Reb here will keep an eye out for
Scruffy Tuffy and them skimmers.

Rebel looks at him as if agreeing.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Thank you, Miles... for everything.

Sybil collapses into the rocking chair and immediately falls
asleep.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - EVENING

Miles shakes Sybil in her rocking chair.

MILES
Sybil, wake up. Someone's coming.

Sybil becomes alert when she hears the sound of hooves
running towards them. She and Miles point their muskets
toward the sound.

Sybil puts her musket down when Henry Ludington gallops into
view.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Papa!

Sybil runs toward her father as he skids his horse to a stop.
He jumps off and he gives her a hug.

HENRY LUDINGTON
Thank God you're alright.

He releases his tight embrace and Sybil can breathe once more.

HENRY LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Is everyone else alright? How's
your mother?

Sybil smiles at him.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Momma had a girl last night, Papa.

Henry's face breaks into a grin.

HENRY LUDINGTON
A girl...? Thank the Lord.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Me and Rebecca helped.... Well,
mostly Rebecca.

Henry fondly looks at his daughter.

HENRY LUDINGTON
Mister Crosby told me what you did
for Caleb. Is he alright?

Sybil turns sad.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
I'm sorry, Papa. I couldn't save
him.

Henry staggers from the news, his eyes welling.

After a moment, he recovers enough and grabs Sybil's shoulder.

HENRY LUDINGTON
We'll talk about Caleb later. Right
now, show me your new sister.

Sybil grabs his hand and pulls him toward the house. Miles, still on the porch, gives Henry a salute as he passes.

EXT. CONNECTICUT SHORE - SAME TIME

Scores of small boats ferry hundreds of British soldiers ashore from the dozen large, three-masted, British transport ships anchored offshore.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Henry sits on the bed next to Abigail, who looks tired but content. Surrounded by her family, she looks down at her newborn daughter sleeping snugly in her arms.

Abigail looks up fondly at her husband.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
I forgive you.

HENRY LUDINGTON
Forgive me? Forgive me for what?

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
For being a pillock.... How long
can you stay?

Henry's face turns sour.

HENRY LUDINGTON
We march for Danbury tomorrow. As
soon as the company gets here.

Abigail becomes alarmed.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
A company? What about the rest of
the regiment?

HENRY LUDINGTON
There is no one to ride out and
raise the alarm.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Send Miles.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Momma, Miles hasn't slept for days.

Sybil looks intensely into her father's eyes.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Papa, Send me.

Henry and Sybil look to Abigail.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Momma, we can do it. Rebel and me,
we're fast. And I know these roads
better than anyone... Please...

Abigail smiles at Sybil.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Ride Sybil.... Ride like a
rebel.... Ride like an American.

GONG!

Sybil's face cracks into a wide grin. Her eyes excited,
determined, aggressive.

MONTAGE: SYBIL AND REBEL PREPARE

-- Sybil lifts Caleb's saddle from the rack. She runs her
thumb across his engraved name.

-- Sybil tucks a loaded pistol into her belt and another one
into her leather bag.

-- Sybil slings the bag over her shoulder.

-- Sybil grabs a 3 foot long stick leaning against the wall.

-- Sybil and Rebel's eyes meet. Rebel snorts and tosses his
head, champing at the bit. Sybil smiles.

-- Sybil mounts Rebel astride and they speed off into the
rainy night.

END MONTAGE

EXT. FIRST HOUSE - NIGHT

Sybil and Rebel come to a small house. She raps hard on the
door with her stick, yelling.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
The British are coming! Open up!

The door swings open revealing a young scared couple. The
mother holds an infant in her arms.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
All militia to muster at Colonel
Ludington's! Spread the word...!
Raise the alarm!

The young man nods to her. Sybil and Rebel gallop away.

The couple's eyes meet in fear.

EXT. SECOND HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil and Rebel come to another house. She again beats on the front door. An older man, (40s) angrily swings open the door. His wife and four children stand behind him. Sybil interrupts him before he can speak.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
The British are coming! The militia
are ordered to muster.

OLDER MAN
Where?

Sybil wheels Rebel around.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
At the Colonel's house!

He watches Sybil spur Rebel to a run. They gallop off into the night.

OLDER MAN
(to himself)
That's no way for a woman to ride a
horse.

MONTAGE: SYBIL'S RIDE

-- In the rain, Sybil gallops down the dark road. Lightning cracks.

-- Rebel splashes through mud puddles. His coat becomes dirty.

Rebel huffs and puffs as he runs.

END MONTAGE

EXT. DARK ROAD - NIGHT

Rebel and Sybil, barely able to see, run through the rain and darkness. Lightning bolts light up the road.

Rebel stumbles and falls when he steps into a rain filled pothole. Sybil loses her grip and flies off of him, lands hard, and tumbles down the road, finally rolling onto her back.

Rebel gets up and hurries over to her. He nuzzles her rain pelted, unconscious face.

Sybil groans when she comes to. When she tries to get up, she gasps in pain and lies back down, coughing.

Rebel lays down beside her. After a moment, Sybil grabs the saddle's horn. Rebel stands up, helping her to her feet.

Shivering from the cold and covered in dirt, she gets back on him and they continue on.

EXT. FORK IN THE ROAD - NIGHT

Rebel skids to a stop when they reach a fork in the road. Sybil, unsure, looks down both roads. Rebel looks back at her.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

This doesn't look at all familiar.... What's your nose tell you?

He looks at her, unsure.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

Go on Rebel. I trust you.

Rebel looks down both roads. After a moment he nickers at the right hand fork.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

The road to the right it is. Let's go, Rebel.

They gallop down the right hand road.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Sybil and Rebel gallop past a sign that reads Carmel, Putnam Co.

EXT. TAVERN - TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sybil slams her stick against a tavern door. It's opened by a drunk, JOVIAL MAN, (30s), with a pint of ale in his hand. The tavern is crowded with laughing and boisterous men.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

The British are coming! The Regiment is ordered to muster! Spread the word.... Meet at the Ludington's!

JOVIAL MAN

Oh, is that so little girl?

He looks back towards his friends and laughs.

JOVIAL MAN (CONT'D)

(slurring his words)

Did ya hear boys? The British are coming.

The other patrons laugh.

JOVIAL MAN (CONT'D)

Go home now, little girl, go home, where ya belong.

He closes the door. Sybil and Rebel, drenched from the rain, stare at it for a moment.

INT. TAVERN - TOWN SQUARE- NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Mugs of ale fly and patrons fall over when Rebel kicks open the front door, smashing it inward. The patrons quickly scatter out of the way when Sybil rides in.

The patrons stare at them in surprise.

The jovial man staggers toward them.

JOVIAL MAN

Look here, little girl, you can't bring that...

Rebel turns his head to face him, his angry snort quickly shuts the man up.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Listen to me...! All of you! The British are marching on Danbury! All Minutemen and militia are to muster at Colonel Ludington's...! Spread the word!

Sybil turns Rebel around.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)

And do your duty!

Rebel sees a basket of apples on the bar. Glaring at the bartender, he defiantly takes one and chews it down, never taking his eyes off him, daring him to object.

The bartender holds up his hands in submission.

The patrons, frozen in astonishment, watch Sybil and Rebel leave the tavern. The patrons hear hoofbeats as they gallop off into the night.

The spell is broken when a BAR MAID, (40s), at the back calls out.

BAR MAID
You heard her, boys! Get off your
asses!

The patron scramble into action.

MONTAGE: SYBIL'S RIDE

-- Sybil leans forward into Rebel's neck, fistfuls of mane and rein. Her hair whips behind her.

-- Sybil pounding on another door.

-- Sybil pounding on a different door. Thunder peals.

-- Sybil galloping full speed toward another small town.

-- (TIME SLOWS), Sybil holds up her stick as Rebel rears. Lightning cracks across the sky.

END MONTAGE

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAWN

Sybil and Rebel look tired, dirty, and proud as they walk down the dirt road toward home. The rain has stopped and the first rays of the sun are breaking over the distant hills.

Sybil looks at her stick and tosses it away with satisfaction.

MONTAGE - THE MILITIA GATHERS - DAWN

-- A squad of militia armed with muskets march down the road in formation to the beat of a young drummer.

-- A different, larger group march down a different road to the beat of a drummer and a fife. One carries a "Don't tread on me" flag.

-- A group of militia on horseback trot down a road.

-- Three platoons, equally spaced apart, march down the road.

-- Henry Ludington and Miles watch as the regiment, four hundred strong, musters in formation by company, in front of the house.

END MONTAGE

EXT. NORTH ROAD TO DANBURY - DAY

Civilians scatter as British soldiers march in neat formation toward Danbury, seen in the distance.

EXT. ROAD HOME - DAY

Sybil and Rebel falter and freeze when they come to a fork in the road. Doctor Prosser blocks the road with his wagon. Tuffy and a dozen armed, menacing skinnners on horseback are behind him.

Prosser's look of surprise turns to fear when Sybil takes her flintlock pistol from her belt, cocks the hammer back, and points it at his head.

She pulls the trigger, the hammer comes down. Prosser flinches but the pistol doesn't fire.

Sybil looks down at the pistol, confused then frustrated.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(referring to the gun)
Oh, you... skelpie-limmer!

Sybil's and Prosser's eyes meet. The corners of Prosser's mouth curl into an ugly smile.

ICHABOD PROSSER
(to Tuffy)
Get her, Arnold.

Sybil's eyes widen.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
(to herself)
Uh, oh.

Sybil tosses the pistol away and spurs Rebel into a run. Some of the skinnners fire their pistols at her but miss.

Tuffy and the skinnners tear off after her, leaving Prosser behind.

MONTAGE - DANBURY - DAY

SUPER: Danbury, Connecticut

-- British soldiers run down cobblestone streets, breaking windows with their muskets while others throw in lit torches.

-- Other soldiers kick open doors to buildings before rushing in. (OS) Sounds of screaming.

-- British soldiers take cover around a corner from a building that has militia firing on them from the upper windows. They return fire as another group of soldiers storm the building.

-- Civilians flee down the road as pillars of black smoke rise into the sky.

END MONTAGE

EXT. WEST ROAD TO DANBURY - DAY

Henry Ludington on horseback leads the marching, rag-tag militia which stretches off behind him. Miles marches in the first rank right behind him. They march in perfect step to the sound of the regiment's fife and drummers.

They march toward ominous columns of black smoke rising high into the sky, coming from Danbury, on fire.

EXT. ROAD HOME - DAY

MONTAGE: SYBIL'S CHASE

-- Sybil leans forward, standing slightly in the saddle like a race horse jockey. Rebel, his mane flowing, opens his stride. The trees along the road race by in a blur.

-- Sybil pops into view, cresting a small hill. She takes a quick glance back toward her pursuers. Rebel is flat out. Following a bend in the road, they peel off to their right, out of view. An instant later, Tuffy and the skimmers come into view in hot pursuit. They, peel off to their right.

-- AERIAL SHOT: Sybil and Rebel fly down the road, full out. The skimmers race after them about fifty yards behind.

END MONTAGE

INT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - PARLOR

Abigail and Rebecca are sitting in the parlor, sewing. They look at each other with worry when they hear the distant sound of battle. Abigail looks down at her newborn baby sleeping in her cradle.

EXT. FAIRFIELD - DAY

SUPER: Fairfield, Connecticut, just outside Danbury

Henry Ludington, armed with a pistol and sword, motions his men down the street.

Miles runs forward and ducks for cover behind a large, wooden cask as musket balls whizz by. The cask is soon riddled by musket balls. Water streams from the holes.

The line of British soldiers who shot at him retreat behind a second line of soldiers.

Miles pops up and fires his musket. A British soldier gets hit and goes down.

His fellow militia join him a moment later, firing their muskets. A few get hit and fall.

EXT. ROAD HOME - DAY - SAME TIME

MONTAGE: SYBIL'S CHASE - CONTINUED

-- Hooves pound the road.

-- Sybil and Rebel thunder past. Then Tuffy, leading the skimmers.

-- Tuffy's face is stretched into a snarl of utter hate as he flies past with the skimmers.

-- Rebel's ears are flat back. His eyes hard as nails and determined.

-- Sybil looks fierce, stubborn.

-- AERIAL SHOT: Sybil and Rebel reach a long, shallow bend in the road.

-- Tuffy sees the bend up ahead and motions for some of the skimmers to peel away and go off the road to cut Sybil and Rebel off.

END MONTAGE

EXT. FAIRFIELD - DAY - CONTINUED

The running battle down the street continues. The retreat of the British soldiers is organized and methodical. One line of soldiers fires while the line behind them reload, then they alternate, making slow but steady progress.

The militia advance, taking cover behind anything they can along the street, keeping pressure on the retreating British.

Some in the British line fall. Their comrades leave them behind.

A militia man tries to cross the road and is shot and wounded. In agony, he cries out for help.

Miles sprints toward him. Musket balls ricochet off the street. He reaches him unscathed and drags him to safety.

EXT. ROAD HOME - DAY - SAME TIME

Sybil and Rebel skid to a stop. She sees up ahead that she's about to be cut off by some of Tuffy's skimmers.

She looks back. Tuffy and his group are almost upon her.

Tuffy charges at her, grinning, thinking he has them.

She and Rebel jump off the road into an open field with tall grass. They sprint toward the tree line.

They leave a wake of trampled grass behind them.

MONTAGE: SYBIL'S CHASE - CONTINUED

-- AERIAL: Tuffy and his skimmers jump off the road after them. Tuffy beats his horse's hindquarters hard with a stick.

-- Sybil reaches the tree line and she and Rebel run nimbly through the brush.

-- Tuffy charges into the brush after them. Small tree branches slap at his face.

-- Rebel jumps over a small stream, followed by Tuffy and the skimmers.

-- One of the skimmers takes the lead from Tuffy and speeds ahead. Rebel's hooves kick up dirt and mud into his face and eyes. His horse refuses to have it and abruptly stops. The skimmer flies over the horse and into the brush.

-- A low tree branch swipes a skinner off his horse.

-- Another skinner falls off his horse and gets dragged when his foot gets caught in the stirrup.

-- Rebel jumps over a large, fallen tree. The skinner follow. The last skinner flies over his horse's neck when his horse skids to a stop.

-- Tuffy beats his horse harder.

END MONTAGE

EXT. FAIRFIELD - DAY - SAME TIME

The organized retreat of the British has fallen apart and the battle has turned into a brawl. Dead from both sides litter the street.

Henry urges his men forward. He and Miles scramble after the British who now run down the street in chaos.

Some British turn to shoot. Others help carry the wounded.

Henry stops the militia at the edge of town.

HENRY LUDINGTON

(out of breath)

That's it, boys.... We've driven them off!

The militia cheer.

MILITIA

Huzzah... Huzzah... Huzzah!

Henry, tired and dirty, walks among his men, slapping them on their backs, giving them praise and congratulations. He stops in his tracks when he sees Miles, lying still on the ground, a pool of blood around his head.

EXT. SWOLLEN RIVER - DAY - SAME TIME

Sybil nearly falls off, when Rebel, his coat covered in mud and lather, locks up all four legs, coming to a abrupt stop.

In front of them is a wide, swiftly running river. Rebel chuffs in fear and backs away.

Sybil turns him around and they retreat back into the woods a short way. They see Tuffy and the skinner charging toward them.

Sybil looks left then right. There's no escape.

She turns Rebel around once again toward the river. She pets him encouragingly on the neck. He looks back at her.

SYBIL LUDINGTON

Rebel, we can make it.... Trust me.

MONTAGE: SYBIL AND REBEL'S ESCAPE

TIME SLOWS:

-- Sybil holds on tight as Rebel launches forward.

-- They gain speed.

-- Sybil reaches into her leather bag and pulls out her other pistol with one hand while holding onto the reins with the other.

-- She cocks the hammer back.

-- They reach the river's edge. Rebel leaps.

-- In mid jump, Sybil twists back and fires, CRACK.

-- They plunge into the river and are engulfed by the huge fountain of water.

-- They burst through the sheet of water from the splash.

-- Rebel is cleansed as the dirt and grime are washed away as he plows through the waist deep water, turning his coat dove grey once again.

TIME BACK TO NORMAL

-- They climb up onto the opposite shore and disappear into the woods.

Tuffy and his horse jump into the river after them. The skimmers lose their nerve and refuse to follow.

Tuffy loses his balance and falls off. His horse climbs back onto shore. Standing in the river, he pounds the water with his fists in frustration.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - DAY

SUPER: Two days later

Sybil enters the parlor. Abigail is gently rocking her new baby to sleep in her cradle. Sybil awkwardly runs her finger along its edge.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
How about some needle point?

Abigail looks at her in surprise.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
That would be lovely.... Wouldn't you rather do your barn chores?

SYBIL LUDINGTON
I can do both. I'd like to do both.

They smile at each other. Abigail fondly straightens out Sybil's hair ribbon.

Sybil looks into the cradle at her cute baby sister.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
I bet you hope she doesn't grow up to be like me.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Nothing would make me prouder if she did.

Sybil's face beams.

They both look out the window when they hear the sound of hoof beats and see Henry and Miles, his head wrapped in a bandage, trotting toward them.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
Henry!

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Miles...! Oh my God. He's been hurt!

They both rush out to meet them.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Henry and Miles get off their horses. Miles looks a bit shaky.

Sybil charges forward. Henry holds out his arms. She rushes past and smothers a surprised Miles in a crushing bear hug.

Henry, amused, shrugs and embraces Abigail, and they kiss.

Henry and Abigail smile at each other, watching Sybil gently touches Miles' bandage.

The boys, excited to see their father, soon join them, followed by Rebecca, holding the toddler's hand.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Sybil is bent over, trying to file one of Rebel's front hooves while a mischievous Rebel amuses himself by trying to untie Sybil's hair ribbon with his teeth. Sybil playfully swats at his nose.

Sybil hears a familiar, commanding voice.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
(chuckling)
(OS) It's always the greys.

Sybil, surprised, quickly stands. Her father and George Washington walk over to her. Behind them are Abigail and Rebecca. Abigail has her newborn in her arms.

Sybil self consciously tries to tidy her hair with her dirt caked hands.

Washington comes to attention in front of her.

GEORGE WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
Sybil Ludington, for your heroic deeds in mustering the seventh regiment of the Duchess County militia, it is my honor to present to you the badge of military merit.

Washington pins a small, purple, heart shaped badge made of cloth with the word merit stitched in white to her lapel.

GEORGE WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
It is through your actions that...

Rebel snorts. Washington smiles.

GEORGE WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
(he looks at Rebel)
And through the actions of your gallant horse... that we were able to repel the British, preventing even further damage from that which had already been done.

Washington takes a step back and gives Sybil a crisp salute.

Sybil looks to her father for permission. He smiles and gives her a slight nod.

Sybil bashfully returns the salute.

SYBIL LUDINGTON
Thank you, General Washington.

One of Washington's aids walks his grey horse over to him and he mounts up.

Sybil takes a step forward.

SYBIL LUDINGTON (CONT'D)
General Washington?

GEORGE WASHINGTON
Yes, Miss Ludington?

SYBIL LUDINGTON
I'm sorry General, but strictly speaking, Rebel is not my horse.... Doctor Prosser has laid claim to him.

Washington looks at Rebel and then back to Sybil. He smiles.

GEORGE WASHINGTON
I wouldn't worry about that, Miss Ludington. Where he's going he won't be needing a horse.

Henry and Washington salute each other and Washington trots away.

Henry stands next to Abigail and asks her.

HENRY LUDINGTON
Where are the boys?

Abigail looks down at her daughter and smiles.

ABIGAIL LUDINGTON
Who the hell knows.

I/E. PROSSERS'S HOUSE - DAY

A fist pounds on Prosser's front door. Prosser opens it. Tuffy is standing behind him. Prosser's jaw drops when he sees who's knocking.

Enoch Crosby stands on his porch with a dozen uniformed soldiers standing behind him.

Enoch smiles at him and gives him a sly wink and a wave, like Prosser did to Hale.

Prosser's face turns white with fear.

EXT. LUDINGTON HOUSE - LARGE TREE - DAY

It's a beautiful, warm spring day. Sybil and Miles sit on a blanket having a picnic while enjoying the view. Rebel and Pumpkin are happily grazing near them. Near the tree stands Caleb's gravestone.

INSERT - CALEB'S GRAVESTONE, which reads:

"Caleb Tubbs"

"Born a slave, died a free man"

"Died April, 1777"

"I'll meet you there"

FADE OUT

BLACK SCREEN

SUPER: To muster the militia that stormy night, sixteen year old Sybil Ludington rode over forty miles.

SUPER: Paul Revere's famous ride was twelve.

THE END