

SIXES & SEVENS

1 INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- MORNING 1
Sunlight glistens off a watch on a bedside table. Morning rays touch items by the rising sun.

2 INT. MASTER BEDROOM/BATHROOM -- MORNING 2
Water swirls around a drain until dry.
A wrinkled foot steps onto linoleum tile as steam curls in the air.

3 INT. MASTER BEDROOM/BATHROOM -- MORNING 3
An elderly man, CONWAY MATHER, 88, faces large reflective glass, a towel around his waist. The old man combs his hair as fog retreats to the mirrors edge.

His body is well worn, wrinkled, mildly darkened by the sun. He stands at 6'0, age has shortened his stature. Relatively fit for an elderly man with a strong bone structure.

He rinses the comb under running water.

4 INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- MORNING 4
Conway slides a watch onto his wrist. A pressed white shirt shows gold lion cufflinks. Conway exits adorned in a brown suit.

5 INT. DINING HALL -- MORNING 5
Conway settles at a finely crafted dining table. A row of windows fill one wall, Conway leans towards the outside light. Shadows and reflections cross patterns over his face.

A PLATE HITS THE TABLE!

CONWAY MATHER
(panicked)
Holy Ghost! Chlo...!
(a long beat)
I was living in my own world.
(beat)
Outside seems similar to a day from
childhood. The way the shadows and the sun
wait together.

CHLOE MATHER
Childhood or adulthood savor the beautiful
air. What awaits you today Con?

CHLOE MATHER, 81, warm and soft on the eyes. She smiles as her palm gracefully settles on Conway's left shoulder. Chloe emits a glow as rare to the human soul as true love.

CONWAY MATHER

Bird-watch, write my findings, settle into
a cowboy film.

Conway touches Chloe's hand resting upon his shoulder. His thumb lightly rubs her cuticle. A plate of food waits.

6 EXT. DECK -- AFTERNOON

6

A leather bound notebook and pencil rest in Conway's hand. Pages folded back show inscribed notes.

Conway leans against a Vortex 20-60x80 spotting scope. He angles from the eyepiece, squints at his notes. He carefully drafts an image with a note, his hand shakes.

HIS INSCRIPTION READS: ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD, LIGHT BROWN, TEAL BLUE
LAYERS UPON THE BACK AND CREST OF SKULL.

Conway looks again through the glass. He see's nothing. An expression of joy livens his face as he glances to the sky.

HE SCRIBBLES ANOTHER NOTE: RARE, TO NEVER BE SEEN AGAIN.

Conway stands motionless on the large deck. Backside of an opulent estate.

7 INT. LARGE KITCHEN -- AFTERNOON

7

Chloe rinses a glass. A dirty plate sits on a countertop aside an answering machine. A red thirty-five pulses on the digital screen of the recorder.

She reaches for a dirty plate, notices the blinking number. With a moist finger Chloe presses the delete button. The number flashes to zero.

Through a window above the sink she observes Conway peering through his looking glass.

8 INT. TRAIN/CAR -- AFTERNOON

8

Brilliant colors, boots travel along thin wooden planks, spurs shine and chink with each step.

A cowboy wears a POTATO SACK over his head with eye holes cut out. He grips a six-shooter and paces the train.

POTATO SACK COWBOY
 Nobody do nothing, stay put! Don't get a
 beating!

SIX PASSENGERS lean away in fear, TWO HOODED MEN follow.

9 EXT. TRAIN/CABOOSE - AFTERNOON 9

A dapper SHERIFF, 24, wearing a white shirt, black scarf, and vest heaves himself onto the platform. He turns and extends an arm, a hand appears, grips the Sheriff's forearm.

The train hustles along as the Sheriff pulls his DEPUTY, 20, onto the caboose in skint attire capped with a Laredo hat.

10 INT. TRAIN/CABOOSE - AFTERNOON 10

The door swings open. The Sheriff stands in silhouette, revolver in hand as he enters.

11 INT. TRAIN/CAR - AFTERNOON 11

The two Hooded Men hold bags while aggressively aiming weapons. Passengers discard their valuables.

12 INT. TRAIN/LOCOMOTIVE ENGINE -- AFTERNOON 12

The Potato Sack Cowboy points his gun at the Fireman then Conductor.

POTATO SACK COWBOY
 Stop this train or I'll give ya a bullet in
 the gut and do it myself.

The Conductor pulls a lever, compressed air whistles and bellows as the train slows.

13 INT. TRAIN/CAR - AFTERNOON 13

The Sheriff and his Deputy close the gap quickly on the Two Hooded Men, their backs turned.

SHERIFF
 It's over! Or turn, try, and I'll kill ya.

Hooded Man #1 glances to his fellow posse member, he squints. In the distance the Potato Sack Cowboy enters the train car. The Sheriff pulls another gun, cocks the hammer, points to the outlaw at a distance.

POTATO SACK COWBOY
 Not today Sheriff!

The Potato Sack Cowboy discharges his revolver, the Hooded Men turn to fire, the Deputy shoots one, the Sheriff another.

14 INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATE AFTERNOON

14

A TELEVISION FILLS THE SCREEN. SLOWLY THE CURVE OF GLASS IS REVEALED AS THE TELEVISION'S EDGE. THE EDGE FADES TO A COOLER COLOR AS THE SCREEN GLOWS COLORFUL AGED VistaVision.

The Potato Sack Cowboy jumps from the train. The Sheriff fires a round too late.

DEPUTY

(twangy, old sounding)
Sheriff we need to catch his dust or we'll
never bring 'em in. I think it was "H".
There's a bounty on his head.

CONWAY MATHER (O.S.)

OOOOhhhh they'll get you "H". There's a
good sheriff in town.

SHERIFF

(twangy vocals)
Come now, we made a mess here. Let's help
these good people... can't leave them in
fear.

As our view continues we see Conway in reflection on a couch.

15 INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATE AFTERNOON

15

The aged room is full of family photos, images of friends, and cowboy paraphernalia. Chloe sits close to Conway.

CONWAY MATHER

I love this film...

CHLOE MATHER

I know.

She watches his expressions.

SHERIFF (O.S.)

(twangy vocals)
Miss, are you alright?

YOUNG WOMAN

(twangy vocals, on TV)
Sure am Sheriff, you entered at the right
time.

He's stimulated by every frame. Chloe lives for Conways love as her own happiness. A tear develops in her eye.

SHERIFF (O.S.)
(twangy vocals)
I'll always be there for people who need me
Miss. You're safe now.

Chloe wipes her tears.

CHLOE MATHER
I'll prep supper.

CONWAY MATHER
It gets better, they catch up with 'H'!

CHLOE MATHER
I know.

Chloe stands, she walks off concealing her tears.

16 INT. MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT 16

Conway lays comfortably, Chloe tucks him into bed. She lightly kisses his lips.

CHLOE MATHER
See you in the morning Con.

CONWAY MATHER
Rest well my love...

17 INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT 17

Chloe lays, eyes open, tears collect below her iris but don't run. She's tired and fading. She rolls over.

A LOUD NOISE IN THE HALLWAY!

Chloe sits up, listens.

THUMP!

Chloe leaps from her bed.

18 INT. LONG HALLWAY -- NIGHT 18

A door slowly opens. Chloe exits her bedroom. Moonlight gives just enough to see down the hall into sporadic darkness.

The silhouette of a man appears in a cowboy hat, his boots tread heel to toe thumping the hardwood floor.

A Colt Peacemaker shimmers under a sliver of moon.

CHLOE MATHER

Con? Love, what are you doing?

Chloe wanders towards the silhouette.

CONWAY MATHER

Hold it right there Miss. I know they're here, hiding out. Better speak in favor of my position otherwise, I assume you're with them.

Barely lit, Conway cocks back the hammer to his six-shooter.

CHLOE MATHER

Con, no one's here... Please, put that away. Everything's fine.

She inches closer.

CONWAY MATHER

If it's fine why are they using you as a decoy?

Chloe steps into the light of the moon, her face strained. Conway leans forward, eyes illuminated, he appears choleric.

CHLOE MATHER

Con please...

CONWAY MATHER

Who's Con?

His hand is strong, stiff, and still holding a revolver by his waist. Finger slowly squeezes the trigger, the hammer drops, click! He cocks the gun, pulls the trigger, click!

The two wait motionless under soft moonlight. Chloe eases towards Conway. Multiple phones ring from distant rooms.

19 INT. CHLOE BATHROOM -- MORNING

19

Chloe sits on the edge of her bed, in a morning gown, a phone to her ear.

CHLOE MATHER

I need to change my landline. We're getting calls.

Chloe tosses a collection of pills in her mouth, a weekly pill organizer in her lap, she sips water.

VOICE (V.O.)

No problem we can setup a new line. Your current one will be operational for a while longer to transfer.

A wicker basket overflows with mail in a corner of the room.

CHLOE MATHER

Very well.

20 INT. LARGE KITCHEN -- MORNING 20

Chloe unplugs a line to a kitchen phone. The voice message machine shows a blinking fourteen. She presses the delete button. She touches her hand to her heart, a deep breath.

21 INT. LARGE KITCHEN -- MORNING 21

Sunny side up eggs simmer in a skillet. Chloe maneuvers about the kitchen. A toaster jolts crisp bread into the air. Coffee drips, Chloe lays two clean plates onto an island. Everything seems chaotic as she moves rhythmically.

22 INT. LIBRARY -- DAY 22

Conway sits in a very large room filled with books, mounted animals, hanging long arms, and a desk.

Pages of bird images flip by, Conway stops on a page, his lips move as he reads to himself. Conway writes in a leather bound book. A typewriter sits within arms length loaded with a sheet of paper.

Conway slides close to the typewriter. His fingers touch keys as they dance across letters. Pounding the paper words assemble. Conway looks up for a moment of thought, his typing continues. He pauses to read.

A stack of books rest upon his desk. One on foxes another of horses, then dogs, rabbits, trees, top of the pile... birds.

23 INT. FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY -- AFTERNOON 23

Conway wanders down an elaborate stairway. Ahead an unseen door opens, light glows as a small person runs into view of great contrast. Almost a silhouette, the small figure races the hall, closer, closer.

LILLY

Great Grandpap!

LILLY, 12, blond hair and aquatic blue eyes, jumps into Conway's arms. He lifts her close.

LILLY (CONT'D)
I've been wanting to visit for weeks.
(beat)
We finally made it.

CONWAY MATHER
You chose the perfect hour. I was planning
on watching a cowboy film. Will you keep
me with good company?

Lilly smiles with a shrug.

LILLY
I'll watch any film with you Grandpap.

24 INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

24

Lilly and Conway rest on a couch. Conway leans in close.

CONWAY MATHER
(softly)
There's a lot to learn from cowboy films.
How to be strong, how to be honest, how to
live and treat others.

MISTER "H" (O.S.)
Thought you were leader of our gang Dugan?

A gunshot sounds from the television, Lilly jumps.

CONWAY MATHER
Or die quickly.

Conway leans against the cushion.

CONWAY MATHER (CONT'D)
The good guys are good and the bad are just
as they appear. Sometimes it's hard to
find heroes Lilly. I find them in these
old films.
(beat)
They make you want to live this life.

The screen fills our view, all four corners, the film is in black and white, it slowly shift into color.

25 INT. SALOON -- AFTERNOON

25

A familiar young man HAWKTHORN buffaloes another Cowboy with his pistol. He quickly whips out another gun from his holster, turns, cocks the hammer. Aims at a DIRTY COWBOY.

HAWKTHORN

Now there's one decision, the right one and I'm holding it in my hand. Though we're friends this trigger has a bad temper. You understand?

26 INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

26

Lilly smirks.

LILLY

I like him. Not a man you'd want to disappoint.

CONWAY MATHER

Not at all. Depending on the film he's 'The Gentle Gun', or the unflinching 'Hawthorn'. This one's Hawthorn.
(almost to himself)
He even holds doors for his enemies.

Lilly's eyes are wide glued to the television of a black and white picture. Conway studies her amusement.

27 EXT. COURTYARD -- DAY

27

Chloe walks with her son WILLIAM MATHER, 48, he resembles a college professor with tenure. Chloe carries a bucket of birdseed and a trowel.

WILLIAM MATHER

How's Dad?

CHLOE MATHER

He held a gun on me last night and pulled the trigger, but there's no worry. Not a bullet in the house. Everything's unloaded.

WILLIAM MATHER

There's cases of bullets in the basement Mom.

CHLOE MATHER

He doesn't know that, I wouldn't even know where to look. Everything's in the basement. It's just boxes of our life.

Chloe opens the lid to a bird feeder, she scoops seeds. William looks to the house, the land, his mother.

WILLIAM MATHER

Be nice if Cole was around. To do this any longer... You need help Mom.

CHLOE MATHER

Your father's happy William, I can live with that.

WILLIAM MATHER

If anything were to happen to you he'd need constant monitoring in a home. It would kill him.

28 INT. LIVING ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

28

Chloe and William enter the room. Conway sleeps on the couch.

WILLIAM MATHER

Lilly...!? Lilly?

CHLOE MATHER

I'll find her.

Footsteps echo upon wood then a rug, closer. Lilly appears from the direction of Conway's office. Secretly she stuffs a piece of paper into her pocket.

LILLY

(out of breath)

Sorry, I was running around the house. Grandpap said a good cowboy can run down the trail of any man. So, I was running while he slept.

WILLIAM MATHER

We're gonna head home Lilly.

Lilly hustles to hug her Grandmother, Chloe delivers a kiss on Lilly's head. William glances to his father.

CHLOE MATHER

I'll tell him you say good by.

William nods. Lilly leans over the couch and kisses Conway on the cheek. They exit, the door closes, a phone rings.

29 INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

29

The room is mildly lit, corners fade off into darkness.

Chloe watches a cowboy film. She reaches for Conway's hand, her cheek settles into his shoulder. She's comfortable.

Conway shifts his weight, clears his throat, leans forward into dim light.

CONWAY MATHER

I remember shooting this.

Chloe studies Conway.

CHLOE MATHER

Con?

CONWAY MATHER

He's courageous isn't he.

(beat)

Jack broke his leg on the second take. He didn't even know it. Kept jumping on the damn thing till it snapped. Thankfully it was our last take. God I miss those guys.

(beat)

Why are we watching this Chlo?

Chloe eagerly awaits this moment, rarely it arrives.

CHLOE MATHER

It's what we watch Con. I've seen your films hundreds of times.

CONWAY MATHER

Why?

CHLOE MATHER

Con I know every line, I know every twitch, I feel your smile before it shows. I remember when you were away on set of each film. All of this weighs on me while you sit having no idea that man on the screen is you.

Conway's view wanders from the Television. He notices a hanging photo of his younger self aside a man familiar to us as his Deputy. Both men wear modern suits.

CONWAY MATHER

Why does my mind leaves me...?

Conway looks to Chloe.

CONWAY MATHER (CONT'D)

I was determined to do everything right in
this life with my window of time.

(eyes well up)

Anything for us. Anything for family.

CHLOE MATHER

You lead a great life, you should be a
proud man.

CONWAY MATHER

But it doesn't mean anything, my head's not
right. Who am I... when it's not me?

CHLOE MATHER

Still you. Kind, loving, happy. It's a
new you with a history only you know.
There are stories you tell that never
happened while you watch all your films as
a fan.

(beat)

Every day I delete messages from people who
love you as the great actor you became.
But I never see you. And at the same time
you're right there.

She points to the television.

CONWAY MATHER

Is there medicine?

CHLOE MATHER

We've tried analysts throughout the world.
Tested cognitive drugs.

(beat)

We sat around a whole month smoking joints.
You're a shadow walking into darkness Con.

Tears roll from her eyes. Conway breaths slower.

CONWAY MATHER

Kiss me.

They kiss, their hands tightly grip. They separate.

CONWAY MATHER (CONT'D)

(beat)
I'm thirsty.

CHLOE MATHER

Okay.

Chloe wanders off.

30 INT. LARGE KITCHEN -- NIGHT

30

Chloe pulls a glass from a cabinet. She rest the glass under a spout in the refrigerator, water runs.

CONWAY MATHER (O.S.)

Hey Chloe, it's over! Lets watch "Ride The Horses Dead". His best!

Chloe turns from the refrigerator, glass full. She takes a step, seeming faint she slams the glass onto an island. Leans her weight on the counter. She lifts a hand to her heart.

THE SCREEN GOES BLACK - SIX SECONDS PASS.

31 INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

31

A FLASH LIGHT clicks on. Lilly lays under bed sheets, a sheet of paper between her fingers.

LILLY

The feathered angel's flight of life in
colors under the wind, upon the chest to
the brimming eye. Float forward for behind
is the past. The birds of this book are
relative to those I have known in...

The flashlight looses power, Lilly smacks the shell, it fades into darkness.

THE END