

The Guns of Shiloh

SCENE 1

TITLE CREDITS: Washington D.C. 1891.

We open on the parlour room of a large house.

MISS LOUISA: An attractive white woman in her 50s, immaculately and colourfully dressed in the latest fashions. Bright and energetic, she speaks with an almost-eradicated drawl.

POLLY: A plainer woman of around 30, also white. She wears darker colours and practical clothing, with a slight Western flair. She speaks slowly and deliberately, this matching her careful manners.

INT. MISS LOUISA'S PARLOUR. DAY.

Mid-afternoon light seeps in through partially opened shutters, bathing the lavishly decorated parlour in a warm glow. A grandfather clock chimes, breaking an awkward silence between two women, MISS LOUISA and POLLY. MISS LOUISA sits, relaxed, in a high-backed chair, POLLY faces her, perched on a chaise-longue.

LOUISA

It took some time to find you, Polly. Do I still call you 'Polly'?

POLLY

You may as well.

LOUISA

So many faces through the years, remind me again, when did we part ways?

POLLY

I climbed out of a second-story window, January 16th, 1872.

LOUISA

Mmm, the runners usually wait til Spring.

(The older woman pauses)

May I ask, what was it that had us lose you? I never was sure.

POLLY
Minuet in G.

LOUISA shrugs.

POLLY
I told the son of a congressman that I found Bach insipid and he smacked me across the face with a marble ashtray.

LOUISA
Ah yes, you always were a contrary little cow. Remarkable chest though...

POLLY
And see I always thought I'd be remembered for my wits.

LOUISA smiles.

LOUISA
Whisky?

POLLY
(With a sigh.)
Sure.