

DOLLS AND GUNS
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Draft 1

CHARACTERS:

- *MARION (early thirties, local mob boss and aunt of Violet)*
- *CHESTER (late twenties, Marion's right hand man)*
- *VIOLET (9 years old, Marion's niece)*

(LIGHTS UP)

(Loosely in the 1920s. MARION stands in the kitchen, holding a candlestick phone to her ear, already in conversation.)

MARION: –swear on my life, Chester, I haven't seen her since last night. No, not even a phone call. Well, of course it's unusual; you know how punctual she is. Where? She said she was just going out with her girlfriends for a few drinks, like she does every other Friday night, at that bar on the corner of Canary and West Eve. Chester, it's been almost a day since she left. Something's wrong. ...A letter? From who? Well, bring it here. And have the boys ask around the bar. Heaven forbid someone thinks messing with my baby sister will get them anything but a bullet in the brain.

(MARION hangs up the phone and opens a drawer, holding up a pistol. VIOLET enters STAGE LEFT, carrying a book and a doll.)

VIOLET: Auntie Marion?

(MARION shoves the pistol back in the drawer and leans against it.)

MARION: Hello, sugar! Isn't it past your bedtime?

VIOLET: But Momma's not home. She said she was gonna read me a story tonight.

MARION: Oh. Well, your momma's running a little late at the moment. But don't worry yourself, she'll be back soon.

VIOLET: Then can you read me the story?

MARION: Me? I'm not real well-versed in that sort of thing, Violet.

VIOLET: But she was just getting to the good part! The Queen and her knights are getting ready to fight the big, evil dragon and save the princess it took. See?

(VIOLET holds the book up for MARION to see.)

MARION: The Legends of King Arthur– Sweetheart, did you grab the right book?

VIOLET: I did. Momma made Clara the Queen instead of Arthur. I like it better that way.

MARION: Who's Clara?

VIOLET: My doll.

(VIOLET holds up the rag doll, which looks like it's seen better days.)

VIOLET (cont'd): Momma says she's had Clara before she had me. Clara's real old.

MARION: She sure is! I can't believe I forgot about Clara. Why, I remember your momma got that doll back when she was your age. She looked just like you.

VIOLET: Really? So I'll be tall like her too when I'm older?

MARION: Course you will, Sugar.

(The doorbell rings.)

MARION (cont'd): Why don't you sit tight and do some drawing at the table? I've got company.

(MARION opens the door. CHESTER enters STAGE RIGHT.)

CHESTER: Evenin', Boss.

MARION: Chester! It's so good to see you. Violet, this is Chester. He's a... friend from work.
Chester; my niece, Violet.

CHESTER: Evenin', Little Miss.

(VIOLET, already focused on drawing, gives a half-hearted wave. MARION and CHESTER start speaking in "hushed" voices so VIOLET can't hear.)

MARION: Well?

(CHESTER hands MARION the letter. MARION reads it.)

MARION: ...They took Charlotte.

CHESTER: The Walton gang?

MARION: They took her. They took my baby sister. Damn it, I knew I shouldn't have let them have that territory by Rivera. This is what I get for generosity. I'm getting too soft.

CHESTER: You're a great leader, Boss. It's the Walton gang's fault for disrespecting the mercy you gave them.

MARION: Disrespect or not, it's still my fault for not checking on Charlotte sooner. Chester, we need all hands on deck. Send Dorothy and Freddy out to go spy on the Walton gang's headquarters. I want to know how many men they have, and how many are guarding Charlotte and any other hostages if they're there.

(VIOLET puts down her drawing and grabs her doll, then heads into the kitchen to search through the lower drawers and cupboards.)

CHESTER: Will do. Are you stopping by to grab some extra bullets? Can't hurt to prepare.

MARION: Excellent idea, Chester. You really do notice the finer details when I forget. We'll load up on extra weapons, and— Violet!

(VIOLET starts to open the pistol drawer, but MARION rushes over and slams it shut, accidentally trapping the doll's arm.)

MARION *(cont'd)*: Sweetheart, what are you digging around in all my cupboards for? You need something?

VIOLET: I— I just want a cup of milk.

MARION: Oh! Well, why didn't you say so? Here you go.

(MARION pours a mug of milk for VIOLET, still trying to lean against the pistol drawer.)

VIOLET: Auntie? Auntie, you need to move.

MARION: Whatever for? You've got your milk now.

VIOLET: But Clara—

MARION: Violet, what are you—

(VIOLET yanks on the doll, and MARION'S weight against the drawer rips the doll's right arm off. VIOLET shrieks.)

VIOLET: Clara!

MARION: Oh, no— Violet, I'm so sorry—

VIOLET *(tearing up)*: Clara! Auntie, you hurt Clara!

MARION: Sugar, I'm sorry, I—

CHESTER: It's all right, Little Miss. I can stitch your doll back together for you.

VIOLET: Really? She'll be okay?

CHESTER: Right as rain, I promise. I'm a real expert with needle and thread.

(CHESTER opens the drawer, noticing the pistol, and picks the doll's arm up to give to VIOLET.)

CHESTER *(cont'd)*: Now you just wait at the table for a moment while your auntie and I finish our chat.

(VIOLET scrubs at her tears and goes to the table. CHESTER and MARION speak in "hushed" voices again.)

MARION: Thank you, Chester. I don't know what's come over me, I— I don't usually get this careless around her.

CHESTER: Don't worry about it, Boss. We'll go get Miss Charlotte, and everything'll be back to normal. We should probably bring your niece with us, though.

MARION: Right. Leaving her here alone is too dangerous.

(MARION tucks the pistol in her belt.)

MARION *(cont'd)*: Violet, honey? How would you like to go on a little adventure?

VIOLET: Like fighting dragons?

MARION: Yes, like fighting dragons! It'll be fun. Grab your book and your coat, and we'll head out now.

(VIOLET grabs her book and coat and rushes to the front door. CHESTER holds the door open, and VIOLET EXITS STAGE RIGHT. MARION puts on her coat.)

CHESTER: Ready to show the Walton gang who's top dog?

MARION: Those bastards won't know what hit them. Let's teach them what it means to mess with my sister.

(CHESTER and MARION EXIT STAGE RIGHT.)

(BLACKOUT.)