

Scene 13

Setting: Turner Hall in St. Joe. The back of a wagon with a barrel on it is stage left.

Cast: Charles, Zeke Smits, Mignon Dugard, Slim Jenkins, Blake, Dirk Dugard, and a crowd.

Slim Jenkins

You find him?

Blake

When I come around the corner, I seen him and another fellow slip through that door. I was hot on his tail.

(Slim beats on the door.)

Open up!

Blake

Wait. Somebody's comin'. Cain't see if he's packin' or not.

Slim Jenkins

(Drawing his gun)

Stand aside.

(Dirk Dugard enters stage left. Opens door and straddles it.)

Dirk Dugard

Well, hello Slim, what can I do for you fellas?

Slim Jenkins

You know darn well what we want, Dugard; we come for the nigger. And we ain't leavin' without him. You'n yer yankee scumbags done gone too far, harborin' a runaway.

Dirk Dugard

And who, may I ask, are you referring to?

(Crowd is gathering)

Slim Jenkins

None of yer stallin'. Ain't got time for games. Bring 'em out or we're comin' in.

(A few beats)

Well, what'cha gonna do, Dirk? You bringin' 'em out or we bustin' in?

Dirk Dugard

Hold on now fellas, there's no need for violence. I can assure you, no one's here but me and my staff. In fact, I'm more than willing to let you two come in and look around. But make it brief. I'm taking my wife to the theater for tonight's show and we need to be on our way.

(Mignon Dugard enters stage left)

Mignon Dugard

Dirk, if you're too busy I can take myself to the playhouse. They need that barrel for the performance tonight.

(Slim goes to wagon and examines barrel)

Slim Jenkins

What the hell is this? Blake, better take a look inside.

Mignon Dugard

But I'll be late for the show. There's nothing to be concerned about, it's just a barrel. It's for Mr. Bondini's act. Some staves came loose and he asked if one of our men could tighten them.

Slim Jenkins

Damn the show. You tellin' me this thing's empty? Well, if that's so, you won't mind me seein' for myself.

(He shoots two shots into the barrel. Not very low.)

Needed a little more light in there anyway. Blake, take a look inside; should be able to see better now. Let's see if that darkie can eat lead.