

WHERE THE WILD ROSES GROW

Written by

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EXT. NORTH AMERICAN FOREST, DAY

Pull down on two men dressed in striped prisoner outfits, bound by chains on their wrists and ankles. The two men are chained together, struggling to walk barefoot through the forested floor. One of the men ZACHARY in front, short sided hair with a scraggly beard and oversized clothing filled with holes leads the other man, WILLIAM, a smaller and skinnier, with an equally scraggly beard and adorned with a flat cap.

ZACHARY

Come on!

Zachary pulls the chain with force as William almost falls over with a start.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)

Hurry up, will ya?

WILLIAM

Hmpf.

Zachary pulls the chain one more time, William stops dead.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Wait! Please!

William kneels down in front of Zachary, almost begging him.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Just let me catch my breath.

ZACHARY

They'll be on our trail soon. We don't have much time.

Zachary holds up the chains around his wrists.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)

We have to get rid of these chains first.

WILLIAM

With a rock?

Zachary bends down to pick up a large rock next to him.

ZACHARY

This is granite. It should do the trick.

Zachary holds the rock above his head.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)
Pull it taut!

William quickly pulls the chain over another rock. Zachary slams the granite down into the rock.

CLANG!

The chain buckles but does not break. Zachary holds the rock above his head again.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)
Again!

Zachary slams the granite down onto the chain.

CLANG! SNAP!

The chain snaps open as William jumps back, the chain binding the two men having been broken.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)
See? Told ya! Aint no chain's gonna stop me!

WILLIAM
Free at last!

As William attempts to free his wrists from the remaining handcuff, Zachary holds the rock above his head again.

ZACHARY
Now, as for that other thing that was holdin' me back.

CRACK!

CUT TO:

EXT. WIDE SHOT OF TOP OF TREES

Birds fly from the trees, startled from the sound of the crack.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELISA'S HOUSE

Tracking shot across the trees as we hear a song from an unknown female voice. This is ELISA.

ELISA
 ...When I strayed with my love to
 the pure crystal fountain...

Cut to Elisa, hanging up wet sheets on a washing line.

ELISA (CONT'D)
 ...She was lovely and fair as the
 rose of summer...

Elisa is cut off by her mother shouting from the porch of the house nearby. A horse is hitched on a makeshift post as her mother walks down the path to Elisa.

MOTHER
 Elisa?

Elisa turns.

ELISA
 Yes mother?

MOTHER
 I'll be heading off. Are you sure
 you won't join me this time?

ELISA
 Yes I'm sure. I'm staying at home.

Elisa turns fully as she puts down the sheets into a bucket.

ELISA (CONT'D)
 I can't stand seeing him in that
 dreary old place.

Elisa's mother starts putting on her riding gloves.

MOTHER
 He'll be very disappointed. After
 all, he's still your father.

She grabs the horses reign and climbs onto the saddle. Elisa remains silent.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
 Include him in your prayers then.

Elisa's mother sets off on horseback, she turns before exiting.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
 See you in a day or two, Wild Rose!

Elisa waves to her.

ELISA
Father used to call me that.

Close up of Elisa. She looks down.

ELISA (CONT'D)
Its just Elisa McDay now...

CUT TO ZACHARY CROUCHED BEHIND A TREE NEARBY.

Zachary watches as Elisa picks up her bucket and walks back into the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. NORTH AMERICAN FOREST

Cut to a shot of the trees. Pull down to see two rangers and a sheriff stood over the body of William. One of them turns.

RANGER
He can't have gotten very far.

The other ranger spits out chewing tobacco.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELISA'S HOUSE

Cut to Zachary creeping past the sheets that have been hung up by Elisa. Making sure he is not spotted. He ducks behind the side of the house before creeping into the main door. Pushing it open silently.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN

Zachary opens the door and sees the kitchen table. A few pieces of bread and a jug of milk sit on the table. He grabs the jug and begins to drink from it.

ELISA
(Off-screen)
Wouldn't you like a proper meal to go with that milk?

Zachary stops dead before putting the milk down and looking over to the voice. Elisa is stood in the doorway.

ZACHARY

I- Ehm...

ELISA

Couple of eggs maybe?

Zachary scratches his head.

ZACHARY

I would love some eggs.

ELISA

Have a seat.

She moves past him. Seemingly not alarmed in the slightest. Zachary hesitantly sits down.

ELISA (CONT'D)

I think there's a hacksaw in the tool shed.

She cracks two eggs into the frying pan over the stove.

ELISA (CONT'D)

If you want to get rid of those shackles that is.

Zachary sits speechless as she continues to cook. Before long she finishes frying the eggs and plates them. She moves over with the plate and places it down on the table in front of Zachary.

ELISA (CONT'D)

Here you go.

ZACHARY

Thank you...

Zachary gently grabs her hand as she moves it away from the plate.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)

...Wild Rose.

She gently moves her hand away and looks at Zachary.

ELISA

Why would you call me that?

ZACHARY

Hmm. Not too sure. But when I look at you, I see a wild rose. And since I don't know your name...

Elisa pauses for a moment.

CLOSE UP ON HER FACE

ELISA
You can't stay here long. You know
that, don't you?

Zachary turns and begins to eat the eggs.

ZACHARY
Do I scare you?

She smiles.

ELISA
Nothing scares me anymore. Least of
all your prison clothes.

Zachary puts his fork down.

ZACHARY
Thank you for the meal. Where can I
find that hacksaw?

He gets up and starts to walk towards her.

ELISA
You're welcome. I'll show you
where-

Before she can finish Zachary moves in and kisses Elisa. She
hesitates for just a moment before reciprocating.

CUT TO:

EXT. NORTH AMERICAN FOREST

The rangers on horseback make their way through a trail. We
hear the dogs with them barking and leading ahead.

RANGER
The dogs have definitely caught a
whiff of something. How far you
reckon he could have got?

SHERIFF
He can't be more than a couple of
hours ahead of us. We're closing
in.

They all look at each other and nod, before beginning to
follow the dogs just ahead of them.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ELISA'S HOUSE

Pull in from a wide of the house in the mid evening. The sun beginning to set.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM

Elisa and Zachary lie in bed. His shackles still around his wrists. He holds Elisa in the crook of his arm.

ELISA

You know, my father used to call me
wild rose all the time.

She sits up, her back to camera, and looks at Zachary.

ELISA (CONT'D)

He named me after the wild flowers
that grow out back, towards the
lake.

Zachary places his hand on her arm.

ELISA (CONT'D)

Let's get dressed and I'll show you
the spot, OK?

She moves his hand off as she moves away from the bed.

ELISA (CONT'D)

And then you must leave. Before my
mother returns.

She moves over to the dresser and takes out some old clothes
before looking at them for a moment.

ELISA (CONT'D)

You can take some of these clothes.
They were my fathers. Seems like
you're about the same size.

Zachary turns and sits on the edge of the bed.

ZACHARY

Thanks.

She hands him the clothes and moves back to the dresser.
Zachary turns around and begins to clothe himself.

Elisa looks at him for a moment before grabbing a revolver from the dresser.

ELISA
He won't be needing them any time soon.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELISA'S HOUSE

Elisa and Zachary make their way to the shed out back. She points inside.

CUT TO:

INT. SHED

Zachary walks across to a workbench and picks up the hacksaw.

ZACHARY
Ah, perfect.

He begins sawing at the shackles on his wrist.

ELISA
Need a hand with that?

ZACHARY
No, I'm fine.

Clunk.

The shackles fall from Zachary's wrists. He holds them up before rubbing each one.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)
Ahh! Feels good!

He walks over to Elisa, at the doorway.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)
Now, before I'm gone. How's about you show me those wild roses?

ELISA
Very well.

Elisa grabs Zachary by the hand and skips off with him towards the lake.

ELISA (CONT'D)

Come!

CUT TO:

EXT. ELISA'S HOUSE

The rangers make their way to the edge of Elisa's property. They come to a stop.

RANGER

The trail leads to that farmhouse.

SHERIFF

Wait just one minute!

The other rangers turn to him.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

This is old Jack McDay's farm!
That's his house over there!

RANGER

Jack McDay? You don't mean...

SHERIFF

Yes I do! Jack McDay and The Wild
Rose Gang! Infamous in over
seventeen counties! Robbed a fair
amount of banks before they caught
him.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Now they're all doing time in
federal prison. Well, most of his
gang anyway. They never got the
girl that the gang was named after.
She was the worst of em.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Never recovered half the money he
stole. According to Jack it was all
burned, but rumour has it he buried
it somewhere.

The ranger looks towards the house as the sheriff finishes.

RANGER

The place don't look deserted.

SHERIFF

No indeed. Let's proceed with
caution.

They cock their rifles and proceed on foot towards the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKESIDE

Cut to close up of wild flowers, pull out as we see Zachary looking at them. He picks up a rock out of sight whilst crouched down near the flowers. Elisa is stood not far behind him.

ZACHARY

Lovely flowers... Not nearly as pretty as you are though.

He pauses for a moment before slowly standing up.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)

Now. Tell me where it is.

ELISA

Where what is?

She places her hand on the revolver.

ZACHARY

Come on sweetheart. You and I both know why I'm here.

He turns his head slightly, covering the rock from her view.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)

Just hand over the money and I'll be on my way.

ELISA

You think you're the first to come here looking for it?

We hear the revolver click as she holds it, pointed at Zachary's head.

ELISA (CONT'D)

Jack didn't call me Wild Rose for nothing! He sure didn't raise no fool!

Zachary swings around swiftly, launching the rock at Elisa.

THWACK!

The rock hits her head. She drops the revolver and falls to the floor. Zachary slowly walks over and picks it up. He aims the gun at her.

ZACHARY
Where is it? Tell me you bitch!

ELISA
Go to hell!

She holds her forehead. Zachary moves in closer, placing the barrel on her temple.

ZACHARY
Last chance.

SLAM!

Elisa kicks upwards into Zachary's groin. The gun falls from his hand. Elisa runs towards the lake.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)
Nghf! God Damn!

Elisa wades quickly through the knee high water, making her escape. Zachary, not far behind catches up to her. He grabs her by the arm, pulling her back.

ELISA
Let go of me!

Suddenly a voice breaks through the panic.

SHERIFF
Zachary Smalls!

Both Zachary and Elisa turn.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
Unhand that girl right now!

The three rangers have their guns pointed directly at him.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
Dead or alive, you're coming back
with us!

Elisa drops down as Zachary still clutches to her arm.

ZACHARY
No! I ain't never going back! You
can't make me!

He turns to look at Elisa.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)
 Don't you know who this is? She's
 the Wil-

SHERIFF
 For the final time! Let the girl
 go! Put your hands in the air where
 I can see em!

ZACHARY
 But she pulled a gun-

BANG!

A shot rings out.

ZACHARY (CONT'D)
 (Quiet)
 ...On me...

Zachary falls, having been shot directly in the head. His
 body slumps into the lake. The rangers move out. They grab
 Elisa and bring her to the shore, covering her in one of
 their jackets.

RANGER
 It's all over. You're safe now,
 young lady. Did he hurt you.

ELISA
 No. Thank you.

CUT TO:

THE SUN SETS OVER THE LAKE

The rangers move in to Zachary's body as the sun sets.

FADE OUT.

EXT. ELISA'S HOUSE

We see Elisa hanging up washing on the line. She sings as she
 does.

ELISA
 ...The moon through the valley her
 pale rays was shedding...

She continues to dry the sheets.

ELISA (CONT'D)
...When I won the heart of the rose
of Tralee...

MOTHER
Elisa...

Elisa turns to see her mother arrive on horseback.

ELISA
Hello mother, did you have a good
trip?

MOTHER
Yes, my dear. Your father sends his
love.

Her mother gets down from the horse.

ELISA
How is he doing?

MOTHER
A lot better since they moved him
to a new wing. But you know, it's
still a prison, not the Ritz.

They both move towards the house.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
And how are things here? Nothing
untoward happen while I was away?

ELISA
I'm fine, mother. Nothing ever
happens here, you know that by now.

The two move into the house.

FADE TO BLACK.