

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. PARKED CONVERTIBLE - MORGANA, CORDOBA - NIGHT

19

The car drives into a relatively dark, secluded area of the ranch, not far from the house. Two figures relax on the front seat, sitting up, just far enough apart to be decisively not together.

CLOSER ANGLE - CORDOBA, MORGANA

20

Morgana and Cordoba have been out on a date, apparently. Morgana is on the driver's side, inferring a certain amount of leadership on her part in the situation. She reclines against the seat, languorously, obviously open to the overtures Cordoba doesn't seem to be making. Morgana escalates things a bit, reaching out for Cordoba's hand, holding it up to her lips and kissing it gently before looking at it in fascination.

Cordoba seems relaxed, almost detached - almost noncommittal.

MORGANA (long beat,
casual)
You seem tired. Feel okay?

CORDOBA
I am tired.
(beat)
Too long recuperating. I'm all healed now.

MORGANA (to his short
life expectancy)
I'm sure it's only temporary.

CORDOBA
I intend to retire and lead a life of luxury.
(beat)
Nothing less would be worth living for anyway, so why worry?

Soon Morgana unmistakably detects that fact. Her overture subsided to a simple holding of his hand. In a fit of exasperation, Morgana lays aside his hand and curls up

against the seat with her back to him, facing out the window. He looks at her.

20
CONT'D
(2)

CORDOBA

What did I say wrong?

She doesn't answer for a while, then turns to him again.

MORGANA

I'm not used to being ignored.

CORDOBA

I'm scarcely ignoring you.

MORGANA

SOMething's not happening.

CLOSER ANGLE - FEATURE CORDOBA

21

He looks for the gentle words, doesn't find them, and compromises on a direct statement, delivered as without malice as possible.

CORDOBA

Morgana...what is it you want from me?

(beat)

A conquest? A trophy?

MORGANA (suppressing

anger)

Are those my only choices?

Cordoba is making an honest attempt to communicate with her, from this point on, and she realizes it, being not insensitive. She accepts what he says without injury, subsiding in the long pause.

CORDOBA

If you didn't know who I was...if I were just a man and not a matador... would you have looked at me twice?

MORGANA

Of course!

CORDOBA (skeptical)

How sure you are!

(beat)

How often I have been disappointed.

MORGANA

Inheriting this ranch hasn't exactly
simplified MY love life, either.

(beat)

The poetic young lovers are crawling
out of the woodwork. All the poems
are the same. "Ode to Community
Property."

21

CONT'D

(2)

He smiles, and the tension is somewhat relieved, for he
senses she understands the insecurity of fame (and/or
wealth).

CORDOBA

It is the same with me.

(beat)

They all want to bear my child.

MORGANA (really wants
to know)

What do you do about it?

CORDOBA

Sometimes I choose to believe their
lies.

(beat)

Sometimes I choose to be alone.

MORGANA (trying to see
inside him)

What about here?

(beat)

And now?

(beat)

And me?

CORDOBA (subtle bypass)

After an injury is always the loneliest
time for me.

She realizes he isn't going to make love to her. A ques-
tion forms inside her based on bitter curiosity, but it
never emerges, for we -

CUT TO:

INT. RANCH HOUSE DEN - BRONSON, BELLA - NIGHT

22

Bronson and Bella are playing chess. End game. The clock over the mantel says eleven-thirty, which isn't really very late. Bella pretends not to notice as we HEAR the CAR DRIVE UP, DOOR OPEN and CLOSE and STEPS approach house, but Bella can't resist a glance at the clock.

Cordoba and Morgana enter. They AD-LIB casual greetings. Cordoba helps her off with her wrap. She moves to the chess table and looks down at it for a moment. Nobody seems up-tight.

MORGANA (to Bronson)

Bella has you in three moves.

BRONSON

You sure?

Morgana nods.

BELLA

I don't see it.

BRONSON

Neither do I.

Cordoba is yawning. He squeezes Morgana's hand and makes his bows to the others in the room.

CORDOBA (bored by chess)

I must bid you good night. I want to practice early tomorrow.

AD-LIB good nights. When he's gone --

ANGLE - BRONSON, MORGANA - BELLA IN B.G.

23

Morgana standing over the chess table. Bronson moves. Morgana winces.

BELLA (to Morgana)

It's early. Have a nice time?

Morgana just grunts an affirmative gesture.

MORGANA (casual beat)

Queen to black bishop four.

Bronson looks at it, realizes she's right, and gives Bella a vague shrug.

23
CONT'D
(2)

BRONSON (in effect
resigning)
Yeah. Mate in three.

BELLA (gentle
consolation)
Spencer women are without mercy.
Always have been.

BRONSON (to Bella;
light, indicates Morgana)
They get that mean OFTEN?

Morgana is on her way to an exit.

BELLA
Depends how we're doing with our men.

Morgana exits, closing the door a little too hard.

CUT TO:

EXT. CORRAL - BRONSON, CORDOBA - DAY

24

Bronson is watching Cordoba practice his cape work, using the heavy cape and looking good as he simulates a series of passes.

BRONSON (finally)
How about it? Will you teach me?

Cordoba studies him very honestly, now. As deeply as he can. This is one of his more likable moments.

CORDOBA (negative)
It will prove nothing. It will be incomplete.

BRONSON
Looks interesting enough to me.

CORDOBA (involved)
Where will the trumpets be?! Where will you strut?! What crowd will scream at you and wish you dead for daring to be perfect?!

(Cont.)

CORDOBA (CONT'D)

24

(beat)

CONT'D

And how will you take your Moment of
Truth?! With a sword or a handful of
straw?!

(2)

BRONSON (long beat)

I'll teach YOU something in reTURN.

Cordoba registers a curious, but dubious look.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. RANGELAND - BRONSON, CORDOBA - DAY

25

Against a hill. Bronson is on the bike. He revs up the
hill. Cordoba watches him carefully. Bronson makes it,
then returns to Cordoba's location.

CORDOBA (shrugs)

It doesn't look that difficult.

(beat)

I am quite at home on a motorcycle.

BRONSON (patiently)

That's good. Don't start too fast.

Get the feel of it first.

Cordoba is already getting on. He revs up and races off,
not about to allow the concession of a single caution.
He charges up the hill and does a magnificent backward
half gainer. Bronson runs to help him up.

CLOSER ANGLE - CORDOBA, BRONSON

26

Bronson gets there. Cordoba is okay, just a little shaken.

BRONSON

You okay?

CORDOBA (indicates hill)

Interesting problem in coordination.

BRONSON

Certainly is.

(beat)

Stitches okay?

CORDOBA (rising)

26

Fine.

CONT'D

(beat)

(2)

You really want to cape a bull?

BRONSON

Certainly do.

(indicates bike)

This time lean more into the hill and
go slower.

Cordoba smiles faintly and nods, then goes to the bike.

ANGLES - FOLLOWING CORDOBA

27

He gives it a good try, but doesn't make it. He comes up
smiling, taken with the challenge of it.

CUT TO:

EXT. RANCH SWIMMING POOL - CORDOBA, MORGANA - DAY

28

Morgana, in a bikini, is giving him a back massage as he
lies draped, in a bathing suit, over the diving board.
The lowest one. He moans in mock agony - almost mock.

MORGANA (annoyed)

Do you have to do everything?!

CORDOBA (in pain)

Yes.

ANOTHER PART OF POOL - BRONSON, BELLA

29

We can see Morgana and Cordoba in the far B.G. at the
diving board. They are sunning on chaise lounges. Bella
looks great in a bikini.

BELLA (long beat)

I'm worried about your dignity.

His look says "oh?"

BELLA (continues)

On a bike you look okay, but getting
fork-lifted by a longhorn...I don't
know.

(beat)

It isn't "Bronson".

29
CONT'D
(2)

This look of "oh" is considerably less patient.

BELLA

I see a lot of one act plays not
make it around here, Bronson.

(beat)

Morgana gets her kicks casting
triangles. It's no accident that
you and Sancho are here at the same
time.

BRONSON

Can't you enjoy a person without a
big intrigue to hang them up in?

ANGLE - CORDOBA, MORGANA - BRONSON AND BELLA IN B.G.

30

Morgana glances at Bella and Bronson, wondering what
they're talking about.

MORGANA (indicates Bella)

She's never worn a bikini around here
before.

(beat)

I wonder who it's pointed at.

SNEAKY ANGLE FROM CORDOBA IN F.G. - BELLA

31

We see Cordoba sneak a look at Bella. A long one. If
she's aware of it, we can't tell from here.

CUT TO:

EXT. CORRAL - CORDOBA, BRONSON, YOUNG RANCH HAND - DAY

32

Bronson is arriving for his lesson. He sees the young
RANCH HAND being shown by Cordoba how to handle a fake
bull - a stuffed bull head mounted on a wheelbarrow-like
arrangement controlled by handlebars. It simulates a
bull's charge on a minimal level.

BRONSON (disappointed;
indicates contraption)
What's this?

32
CONT'D
(2)

INSERT - FAKE BULL ON WHEELS

33

a pathetic artifact. Not at all threatening. In fact,
almost ludicrous.

ANGLE - CORDOBA, BRONSON, RANCH HAND, FAKE BULL

34

Cordoba and Bronson see Bella and Morgana approaching.

BRONSON (indicates fake
bull to Cordoba)
Feels silly.

CORDOBA
Decidedly.
(beat)
But first you must learn to simply
hold the cape properly or you will
lose it on the first charge.

Cordoba shows him. He demonstrates several naturales,
and then Bronson tries a few dry runs until Cordoba is
satisfied he has the basic move in his head, if not yet
in his body.

CORDOBA
The bull will attack movement. Keep
your feet and body still. Let the
cape tell him where you want him to
go. You must control every movement
of the cape.
(beat)
In a strong wind it is more difficult.

Bronson, taking it seriously, practices a few times, with
Cordoba making minor adjustments.

CORDOBA (indicates to
ranch hand with bull head,
but speaks to Bronson)
Get the feel of horn clearance and
timing. This is an exercise in
mechanics. Nothing more.

Bronson nods he's ready. Cordoba moves to where the ranch hand is getting ready to man the bull, so to speak.

34
CONT'D
(2)

CORDOBA

And don't forget to keep the feet still.

ANGLE - RANCH HAND, CORDOBA

35

CORDOBA (sotto voce)

The first few, charge straight.
After that, watch him carefully. Aim
for any part of him that moves.

RANCH HAND (dubious,

nervous)

You sure?

CORDOBA

He will be fine.

Cordoba heads for the fence. Morgana and Bella come up to watch.

FULL SHOT - BRONSON AND FAKE BULL

36

The ranch hand winds up and steers the fake bull at the cape. Bronson plays it to the hilt and passes the thing.

The girls AD-LIB mock "ole's".

Again.

Again.

CORDOBA (calls to ranch
hand)

Wait.

We FOLLOW him to the fake bull, where he relieves the ranch hand and takes the handlebars himself. The ranch hand gets out of the way.

CORDOBA (calls to Bronson)

I will be the bull, now.

Bronson nods and wets his lips in anticipation.

CORDOBA'S ANGLE - BRONSON

37

as Cordoba awaits Bronson's urgings to charge. Bronson jerks the cape at him, goading. Cordoba charges.

QUICK INSERT - CLOSE SHOT - BRONSON

38

His feet certainly did move, albeit slightly. With Cordoba doing it, it's more disconcerting.

ANGLE - CORDOBA, BRONSON

39

Cordoba rams him hard midsection with the fake bull, sending Bronson sprawling. With Bronson lying there, stunned, Cordoba charges him again and again, doing no damage with the horns, but making life unpleasant.

INSERT - CLOSE TWO SHOT - BELLA, MORGANA

40

They look at each other with a real or implied wince.

ANGLE - CORDOBA, BRONSON

41

Cordoba lets up now and helps Bronson up.

CORDOBA

The real bull won't wait until you are ready.

Bronson nods through a sore shoulder. Yeah, says his face, almost comically, it's something to think about, all right.

CORDOBA

Sick in the stomach?

BRONSON (nods)

Why'm I sitting here in the dust nursing bent ribs...making faces at a toy bull?!

CORDOBA

Because there are pretty women to come and be excited watching us die.

BRONSON

I wouldn't know about that.

41

CONT'D

(2)

CORDOBA

How could you? For you, death is a
lifetime away.

(beat)

I have a week to week contract.

They rise, both quite tired, and walk toward the fake bull
lying in the corral not far from them.

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO