

RECTIFIED:
AN APOCRYPHAL HISTORY OF BOURBON
[Sample]

Written by

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INT. PRESENT DAY DOUGLAS DISTILLERY - DAY

Warm light glints off amber liquid as it streams out of a bottle in slow-motion, churning and swirling into a glass, like watching the sun rise over a waterfall of golden bliss.

DANI (30s, black, curvy, glasses, polo) peers at the glass. She takes a careful sniff. She makes a note on a sheet of graph paper. She surveys a row of tasting glasses.

Dani looks around the distillery tasting room: it's a well-maintained antique wood hall, with newish bar-tops and faux-rustic light fixtures. Also: it's empty. Deafeningly silent.

Dani sighs and looks out the window at the parking lot: a dusting of snow on the ground. The lot has exactly one car.

Dani makes a frustrated noise and shoots the whiskey.

EXT. PRESENT DAY DOUGLAS DISTILLERY - DAY

A wide expanse of Kentucky farmland surrounds an old stone farmhouse with freshly-painted shutters by the (nearly) empty lot. Nearby: a converted red barn with huge additions extending off the back and a giant water tank and fermenting tank above. It's winter. The trees are bare, the grass is dead. Everything is muted, gray, dusted with dirty snow.

Black-painted rickhouses line a distant ridge. In the other direction, just visible: the low flat city of Louisville.

A single silver sportscar rolls up along the empty highway past a sign that reads: "Old Douglas Distillery, Est. 1833."

INT. PRESENT DAY DOUGLAS DISTILLERY - DAY

CRASH! Wind blows in the door of the distillery.

Dani startles and drops a glass. It shatters.

She ducks behind the counter to clean it up and pokes her head back up to see, silhouetted in the doorway: ROBERT WEST (30s, white, sexy, disheveled, intellectually superior). He holds a tiny notebook and a pen.

ROB

You open?

He closes the door behind him.

DANI

Hours are on the door.

He looks at the door. Painted on them (backwards from his perspective) are times: "M-Th 11-4, F-S 11-5."

He raises and eyebrow and hops on the stool in front of Dani.

ROB

I'd like a tour. Tasting. Whatever.
I'm a journalist: *New York Travel*.

He holds out his hand grandly for a shake. Dani ignores it and starts cleaning up her graph paper and glassware.

DANI

Next tour's at 1:30. 18 bucks,
twenty-five minutes, three samples.

Rob looks around the completely empty distillery. He clicks his pen. He makes a note. Dani looks at him.

DANI (CONT'D)

Something noteworthy?

ROB

Just trying to capture the...
experience.

Dani chews the inside of her lip.

DANI

What's the angle?

ROB

"Winter Bourbon Trail: A
Personalized Hell."

DANI

Excuse me?

ROB

The difference between tourist season and off-season is that the tour guides don't have to stick to a schedule when there's no one waiting. They want to tell "the *real story*." Except the real story is always the same marketing BS.

DANI

I'll be sure to keep it brief and factual.

He assesses her.

ROB
You're the tour guide? Is this like
an after-school job?

DANI
I'm the master distiller.

He looks a little embarrassed. But just a little. He tries
again with the handshake. No dice.

ROB
Well nice to meet you, Ms...

DANI
Call me Dani.

She sets a little paper place-mat in front of him with three
circles printed on it. He sighs at the place-mat.

DANI (CONT'D)
What's the problem?

ROB
They have those at Barton, too. And
Forrester, and Williams, and Jim
Beam...

She snatches the paper back and crumples it up.

DANI
You want the *real* real story? No
marketing bullshit?

ROB
Yes. I do.

Extended eye contact.

DANI
Eighty bucks. You'll need some
time.

ROB
I have time.

Dani slams a bottle of water on the counter and throws a bag
of pretzles at him. He catches it.

DANI
You'll want to hydrate.

INT. WHARTON HOUSE SITTING ROOM - DAY

The sitting room of the Wharton House is the exact same room as the tasting room of the Douglas Distillery except that it's 150 years newer and six months dustier.

DANI (V.O.)

The Old Douglas Distillery is built on the property of an old Louisville family, the Wharton's.

There is a portrait of a brunette southern belle wearing a string of pearls on the wall. The only furniture is built-in sideboards and cupboards and a single giant sofa in the middle of the room that's got elaborate mahogany carved feet, brocade upholstery, and a giant canvas sheet partially draped over it.

DANI (V.O.)

...by a woman named Greer Douglas.

GREER DOUGLAS (28, white, analytic, gutsy) in a restrictive gray dress, peers into a cupboard that contains four or five mismatched glasses and a molding dead mouse.

SUPER: LOUISVILLE, 1832

She reaches in and tries to pluck out the mouse by the tail, but the tail comes away in her hand, leaving most of the mouse behind. She is dismayed but un-flapped. She has a Scottish accent.

GREER

Right feckin' charming.

She wipes her fingers on her skirt.

ROB (V.O.)

Wait, why is she Scottish.

INT. PRESENT DAY DOUGLAS DISTILLERY - DAY

Dani is irritated to have her story interrupted.

DANI

She came over from Scotland.

ROB

When?

DANI

Her mother was a Kentucky society girl. Marianne Wharton.

(MORE)

DANI (CONT'D)
 Went abroad to get some culture,
 got a husband instead. Greer's from
 Glasgow.

EXT. DOUGLAS HOUSE - DAY

SUPER: GLASGOW, 1832

A brick rowhouse with a Christmas wreath on the door. A black ribbon added to the wreath. A horse-drawn carriage trots by.

INT. DOUGLAS HOUSE DINING ROOM - DAY

Fusty Victorian decor. Greer, in black, drinks whiskey like water and stares at her dead parents, displayed on the table with coins over their eyes. Curly handwriting labels them:

SUPER: PARENTS; DEAD.

DANI (V.O.)
 The parents died so Greer inherited-

ROB (V.O.)
 How did they die?

DANI (V.O.)
 I dunno, they got sick.

The curly handwriting draws "x"s over the dead, coin-ed eyes.

GREER
 (muttering to herself)
 Damned Typhus.

Greer drinks. RICH SCOTTISH PEOPLE IN BLACK mill around.

DANI (V.O.)
 Anyway, she's a single woman alone
 in the world. This is 1832, so
 that's a problem.

A MAID hands Greer a letter. Greer breaks the seal and reads.

DANI (V.O.)
 But it also turns out to be lucky,
 because at the time married women
 can't inherit but single women can.
 Mom's brother dies the same week
 and leaves her...the Wharton
 estate!

Greer reads the letter.

GREER
 ...Kentucky.

She grins.

DANI (V.O.)
 I mean she's still really sad.

Greer frowns.

DANI (V.O.)
 But she also has this idea.

Greer snatches from the table next to her dead parents: a sealed bottle of good dark Scottish Whiskey.

GREER
 Cheers, Mother and Da.

She stamps out of the room...then stamps back in, takes the coins from her parents' eyes, and pockets them.

DANI (V.O.)
 So she gets on a boat.

Jaunty rock/pop music. I'M JUST A GIRL by No Doubt.

MONTAGE:

-EXT. BOAT DECK - STORMY DAY: Greer clutches the railing of the ship as it tosses in twenty-foot-high wave and someone yells "get below, wench!"

-EXT. BOAT DECK - LESS STORMY DAY: Greer lays on the deck of the boat, pale and sick. She pukes over the side. Someone yells "get below, wench!" Greer flips the bird.

DANI (V.O.)
 And goes to Louisville.

-INT. DINGY CARRIAGE - CLOUDY DAY: Greer jolts by in a box-filled carriage. She peers through the window at dry early-spring Kentucky landscape. Snow melts in a roadside ditch.

END MONTAGE.

INT. HAYDEN'S GROCERY - DAY

Pale yellow liquid dribbles into a fancy glass flask. Clutching the flask is the gnarled crusty hand of HANK HAYDEN (60s, white, haggard). He wipes his nose on the back of his other hand and stares at Greer as the bottle fills.

Greer frowns at him across a worn wood counter. She taps her foot. She's surrounded by open barrels of grain, pickles, apples, bolts of calico...She tries not to touch anything.

A MUDDY CHILD (4, boy or girl? Couldn't say) in bare feet and a dirty dress sucks on molasses candy and stares at Greer.

The whiskey overfills the flask and drips down Hayden's hand as he continues to stare. Greer clears her throat.

GREER

That appears to be full.

Hayden looks down. Thinks. Closes the spigot.

HAYDEN

That all?

He speaks with a slow Kentucky drawl as he caps the flask and sets it on the counter next to dry goods wrapped in brown paper. He spits into a spittoon in the corner. Perfect aim.

GREER

Quite.

Greer drops a few coins on the counter.

HAYDEN

You ain't from around here.

GREER

...My Mother was. I've come back.

HAYDEN

...Well then welcome home.

Greer nods curtly and exits through a creaky door.

EXT. HAYDEN'S GROCERY - DAY

Greer's boots clack on the wooden stoop and the rickety door swings shut behind her. She pauses to look out onto the muddy main drag of 1832 Louisville.

ROB (V.O.)

So this was like the wild west?

A "western whistle" plays.

DANI (V.O.)

Not really.

The sound abruptly cuts out. The day is cloudy and grim.