

RECTIFIED:  
AN APOCRYPHAL HISTORY OF BOURBON

BLIND

WGA Registration #: 2058316

INT. DOUGLAS DISTILLERY - DAY

Warm light glints off thin amber liquid as it churns and swirls, in slow motion, into a tiny snifter.

DANI (30s, Black, glasses, polo) studies the liquor and takes a careful sniff. She makes a note on a sheet of graph paper:

**INSERT: OATS, HAY, RESIN, WALNUT, PLUM**

She sets the glass in a line with four others and looks around the distillery's tasting room: it's a well-maintained antique wood hall, with newish bar-tops and faux-rustic light fixtures. It's empty. Deafeningly silent.

She squints out the window at the parking lot: a dusting of snow on the ground and exactly one car.

She sighs and takes a shot.

EXT. DOUGLAS DISTILLERY - SAME

A wide expanse of Kentucky farmland surrounds a recently refurbished old stone farmhouse beside the empty lot.

There's a red barn with huge additions extending off the back and giant water tanks and fermenting tanks nestled above. The trees are bare, the grass is dead. Everything is muted, gray.

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

A silver sports car barrels along the empty highway past a sign:

**Old Douglas Distillery, Est. 1833**

INT. DOUGLAS DISTILLERY - SAME

CRASH! Wind blows in the front door, startling Dani, who drops her glass, which, despite an attempted save, shatters.

She drops behind the counter for a brush and dustpan and looks back up to see, silhouetted in the doorway: AVERY HAMMOND (30s, white, blunt bob, swagger).

AVERY

You open?

DANI

Hours are on the door.

She closes the glass door and looks at them (backward from her perspective):

**M-Th 11-4, F-S 11-5**

She raises an eyebrow and finds a stool in front of Dani.

AVERY

I'd like a tour. Tasting. All that.  
I'm a journalist: *Urban Travel*.

She holds out her hand grandly for a shake. Dani ignores it, cleaning up papers and glassware.

DANI

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

Avery looks around the deserted distillery, flips open a tiny notebook, clicks her pen, and makes a note.

DANI (CONT'D)

Something noteworthy?

AVERY

Just trying to capture the...  
*experience*.

Dani chews the inside of her lip.

DANI

What's the angle?

AVERY

"Winter Bourbon Trail: A  
Personalized Hell."

DANI

Excuse me?

AVERY

Secrets of off-season. So far the  
big one is: tour guides are slow  
when there's no crowd. They want to  
tell "the *real* story." But it's  
always the same marketing BS.

DANI

We'll keep it brief and factual.

AVERY

You're the tour guide?

DANI

I'm the master distiller.

AVERY  
 Pretty young for a Master  
 Distiller.

DANI  
 Not really.

Avery tries again with the handshake. No dice.

AVERY  
 Avery. Hammond.

DANI  
 Call me Dani.

Dani hands her a paper place-mat with three circles printed on it. She sighs at the place-mat and closes her notebook.

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

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

Dani snatches the paper back and crumples it up.

DANI  
 If you won't want a tour why are  
 you here?

AVERY  
 I thought you might be different.  
 Not many distilleries can boast a  
 Black woman Master Distiller.

DANI  
 So you know who I am.

AVERY  
 I'm a journalist. Research is kind  
 of the whole deal.

They assess each other.

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

AVERY  
 Yes. I do.

DANI  
 Eighty bucks.

Dani slams a bottle of water on the counter and throws a bag of pretzels at Avery, who catches it.

DANI (CONT'D)  
You'll want to hydrate.

INT. GIBSON HOUSE SITTING ROOM - DAY

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

**SUPER: LOUISVILLE, 1832**

DANI (V.O.)  
Old Douglas Distillery was established on the Gibson farm, the former property of a historic Louisville family...

A PORTRAIT of a Southern Belle in hoop skirt and pearls hangs on the wall between built-in sideboards.

The only furniture is a single giant SETTEE with elaborate mahogany carved feet, brocade upholstery, and an oversized canvas sheet partially draped over it.

DANI (V.O.)  
...by a woman named Greer Douglas.

GREER DOUGLAS (27, white, focused, wry) in a drab restrictive dress, peers into a cupboard that holds mismatched glassware and a rotting MOUSE CARCASS.

She reaches in to pluck out the rodent out by the tail... which comes away in her hand, leaving its body behind. She is dismayed but un-flapped, which comes with a Scottish accent.

GREER  
Right feckin' charming.

She wipes her fingers on her skirt.

AVERY (V.O.)  
Why is she Scottish.

INT. DOUGLAS DISTILLERY - DAY

Dani is irritated to have her story interrupted.

DANI  
She came from Scotland.

AVERY

But how-

DANI

Her mother was Marianne Gibson, a Kentucky society girl. Went abroad for some culture, got a husband instead.

EXT. DOUGLAS HOUSE - DAY

SUPER: **GLASGOW, 1832**

A brick rowhouse with a Christmas wreath on the door, adorned with a large BLACK RIBBON. A horse-drawn carriage trots by.

DANI (V.O.)

So, Greer grew up in Glasgow.

INT. DOUGLAS HOUSE DINING ROOM - DAY

Fusty Victorian décor. Greer, in black, chugs whiskey and stares at her DEAD PARENTS, displayed on a table with silver shillings over their eyes. Curly handwriting labels them:

SUPER: **PARENTS; DEAD.**

DANI (V.O.)

Marianne and Tavish croaked from disease, so Greer inherited-

AVERY (V.O.)

What disease?

DANI (V.O.)

I'm getting there.

The curly handwriting **draws Xs** over the dead, coin-ed eyes.

GREER

(muttering to herself)  
Damned Typhus.

Greer drinks as RICH SCOTTISH PEOPLE IN BLACK fade in and mill around.

DANI (V.O.)

Anyway, she's a single woman alone in the world. In 1832, that's generally a problem.

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

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

As Greer reads the letter.

GREER  
 ...Kentucky?

A bleary grin spreads across her inebriated face.

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

On cue, she frowns.

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

Greer snatches a sealed bottle of dark SCOTTISH WHISKEY from  
 the table next to her dead parents...

GREER  
 Cheers, Ma and Da.

...and stamps out of the room...then back in, to pocket the  
 shillings from their eyes.

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

Jaunty rock music: **I'M JUST A GIRL** by No Doubt.

MONTAGE:

-EXT. BOAT DECK - STORMY DAY: Greer, a maniacal glint in her  
 eye, clutches the ship railing as it tosses in twenty-foot  
 waves and someone offscreen yells "get below, wench!"

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

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

-INT. DINGY CARRIAGE - CLOUDY DAY: Greer bobble-heads in a  
 box-filled carriage. She peers through the window at gray  
 snow melting in an early-spring Kentucky ditch, then raps on  
 the roof. It shudders to a stop; she opens the door, leans  
 out, and vomits.

END MONTAGE.

INT. HAYDEN'S GROCERY - DAY

Pale-yellow liquid dribbles into an ornate glass flask, clutched in the crusty hand of HANK HAYDEN (60s, white, haggard). He wipes his nose on his sleeve and leers at Greer as the bottle fills.

She taps her foot at him across a worn wood counter. 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 her.

The whiskey overfills the flask and puddles on the floor as he stares at the foreigner, who clears her throat.

GREER

That appears to be full.

Hayden looks down, finally closes the spigot.

HAYDEN

That all?

He speaks with a slow Kentucky drawl, aiming a precise loogie at a spittoon as he caps the flask and sets it on the counter next to dry goods wrapped in brown paper.

GREER

Quite.

She 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 studies him for a moment, then nods curtly.

EXT. HAYDEN'S GROCERY - DAY

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



AVERY (V.O.)  
So this was like the wild west?

--A harmonica starts to play.

DANI (V.O.)  
Not really.

--The sound abruptly cuts out.

The day is cloudy and grim; Horse shit mixes with spilled beer from the next-door saloon where WHITE MEN loiter outside drinking and swaggering.

Shouting BLACK MEN navigate wagons full of barrels and bundles past PEDESTRIANS, who step lightly through the filth.

Greer avoids the gaze of an intently staring DRUNK.

GREER  
(under her breath)  
Welcome home, indeed.

INT. DINGY CARRIAGE - LATER

Greer leans back in her carriage and peers out the window at:

EXT. SOUTH STREET COOPERAGE - SAME TIME

The sun seems to emerge just long enough to reflect off the manly blonde beard of JOSIAH(30s, white, muscles), sitting at a wooden workhorse with a stack of barrel staves to one side. He rapidly operates a two-handled drawknife.

He's in front of his Cooperage: an open-fronted lean-to filled with barrels, buckets, iron hoops, and so much wood.

He looks up to wipe his sweaty brow as the carriage bounces past. Extended eye contact. He's so hot it's uncomfortable.

Curly handwriting appears by his face:

**SUPER: SEXUALLY VIABLE SPECIMEN**

Greer's breath catches as she hurriedly shutters the blinds.

EXT. ROLLING KENTUCKY HILLS - DAY

The Carriage rolls across the vast expanse of rolling hills to a building that is recognizably the stone house at the DOUGLAS DISTILLERY.

But it's 1832, so instead of fresh paint and landscaping, it's a barely working farm: there's a barn that probably...used to be red? With peeling gray walls, and part of the roof caved in.

Nearby a few run down outbuildings, a mill, and water-wheel are parked next to a trickling stream.

INT. GIBSON HOUSE SITTING ROOM - DAY

Greer takes a tumbler from near the moldering mouse and wipes it with her skirt.

She pours herself a liberal dram of her new whiskey. It's pale yellow...almost clear.

She lifts it to the dingy light from the dirty window, and, as she turns, notices the portrait of the Southern Belle. ...Huh.

GREER  
...Slàinte mhòr, Mother.

She takes a swig and immediately spits it back into her glass.

GREER (CONT'D)  
Christ!  
(to portrait)  
Sorry.

She opens a trunk and finds: the whiskey from the funeral, still sealed with wax. She slices the wax and uncorks it.

QUICK SHOTS as: a precious wee splash tumbles into the glass and Greer, mouth slightly open, the rim a few inches ahead of her nose, closes her eyes and takes an expert whiff...

GREER (CONT'D)  
Home, sweet home.

As she takes a blessed sip, the painting falls from the wall.

EXT. GIBSON HOUSE DRIVE - DUSK

MYRA (20s, Black, careful, sharp) strolls along the dirt path with HENRY (15, Black, gangly, cheerful).

MYRA  
You just gotta keep that temper  
another year-

HENRY

What temper?

Myra shoves him playfully.

In the distance she notices: smoke rising from the house.

MYRA

What in the...

(urgent)

Go home. Right now.

INT. GIBSON HOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT

A flickering fire casts deep shadows into the corners of a wide wood-paneled room. The whiskey, noticeably depleted, sits on a counter that spans the wall under a dark window.

DANI (V.O.)

See, Greer's like a proto-feminist  
scientist genius.

Greer unpacks a trunk, making tidy rows of leather-bound books with titles like *Treatise on Alcohol* and *Tables on Spirit Gravities* and *The Elements of Chemistry*. She strokes their spines reverently.

She unearths a shining brass ACHROMATIC MICROSCOPE, and two small polished wood cases. Holding her breath, she opens the cases, and...sighs in relief to discover, intact, a glass THERMOMETER and brass SACCHAROMETER.

BANG: offscreen the front door slams.

Boots clatter across the foyer floor.

Greer hoists the flask of shitty whiskey like a club just as...Myra bursts in, then stops short at the sight of a stranger wielding a liquor bottle. The cork dislodges and whiskey GLUGs onto the floor.

Greer doesn't react.

MYRA

You're spilling.

GREER

Who're you?

MYRA

Myra. I...live here.

Greer tilts the bottle upright but leaves it aloft.