

# A Man's Death: The Story of a Western Gunslinger

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A gunslinger named John has gone into hiding in a large town known as Blackmills. At first everything seems alright but he soon discovers there is a deeper and darker secret within Blackmills.



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## Chapter 1

### Chapter 1: Welcome to Blackmills

John

John knelt down and had cupped a small pool of water in his bare hands. He then splashed the water in his face and looked up into a dirty, broken mirror. He looked at himself and was convinced that he had changed greatly since he had last looked in a mirror. He did not change physically, except for the newly grown beard, but he did notice a difference in his eyes and in his opinion a difference in his expression. He slowly slipped his pants on one leg at a time. He then threw on a clean yet wrinkly shirt and tucked his shirt in. He frantically buttoned his pants due to the fact that he had noticed footsteps outside and did not recognize them. He threw on some boots and clipped his pistol belt. He then holstered his .32 caliber colt six shot. He continued towards his hotel room's door. Before he could open it there was a knock. He stopped for a second. There was then a second knock.

"John this is the sheriff. Now I don't want no trouble John. Just come out here peacefully and accept the terms of arrest!" yelled Sheriff Adams.

John then replied "I don't think it's gonna be that easy Sheriff."

John then reached for his double barrel shotgun pointed it at the door.

"I'm comin' in then!"

The door swung open and with it was Sheriff Adams. John did not hesitate and pulled the trigger. Adams was sent back about three feet from the shot. Blood had covered the room entrance and Adams Colt Peacemaker was bathing in a pool of blood. John then continued to Adams' body.

"You're gonna die John. Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but you will die of unnatural causes."

"You knew you weren't gonna walk outta here with your life, so why did you come here?"

"To alert the others."

"What others? Who are you talking about?"

"The horsemen."

Adams had then died from choking on his own blood. John stood up and created a confused expression on his face. He tried to make sense of what he had been told but he didn't have time to think. He grabbed his things and headed off to a new town to elude the law that dwelled within Maytown. After riding for four days he came upon a fairly large town. He rode up to what looked like the post office and tied up his horse. He entered and directed himself towards an employee.

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"Hi I've been riding for days on end and I really don't know anything about his place, would you care to familiarize me with this town?"

Ellis turned around and replied "Why hello! My name is Ellis Clayton and I would be happy to inform you on this here town. Welcome to Blackmills, Blackmills happens to be one of the most modern and industrialized towns located west the eastern sea board. The mayor, Franklin Hughes, has brought this town many jobs and money. However, the man can be a real stubborn old horse and does not really care for newcomers. But you must speak with him before you can stay here."

"Thanks, where's his office located?"

"It's right next to the barbershop on the left over there."

"Alright, thanks again."

"Don't mention it, I got nothing else to do with my time. It was a pleasure talkin with ya."

John then turned to the door and headed for the mayor's office. He opened the door surprised to see the mayor had been sleeping with his head on his desk. John closed the door trying to create some noise to wake the mayor up. After the loud thud of the door closing the mayor jumped up out of his chair.

"Who, what!?"

"Sorry for waking you."

"Oh no it's fine. So what can I help you with?"

"Well my name's John and I just rode in today, and was wondering if I could stay here for a while?"

"Well there should be a room available at the hotel across the street. But you must promise to, erm, keep your peace so to speak."

"I'll do my best sir."

"Well then I guess I'll be seeing you later. Goodbye John."

"Good bye."

John turned and walked out the door. He then continued to the saloon/hotel across the street and was disturbed by the man puking outside the side entrance. He then pushed open the double doors and stopped for a second. Everyone who resided in the saloon turned to look at the strange newcomer. John continued to the bar.

The bartender asked, "What'll it be?"

John replied slowly, "Whiskey and a room."

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The bartender stopped for a moment. He then pulled a drawer out from under the bar and picked out a key. He then handed the key to John. The bartender then continued to pour a glass of whiskey for John.

"Here you go. Your room number is 4. How long are you looking to stay?"

"About a week or two."

"Ok. Well when you check out bring the key and you will be asked to pay for the room and for your tab."

"Sounds good to me."

John picked up the glass of whiskey and guzzled the whiskey down. He then knocked on the bar signifying that he wanted another glass. The bartender then poured him some more whiskey and continued washing the glasses. John guzzled this one down too but instead of asking for another drink he stood up and walked upstairs to his room. He pulled out the key from his pocket and opened the door carefully. John then sat down on his bed and threw his hat onto the dresser. He then removed his coat and shirt and threw them on the cold, wood floor. He then kicked off his boots and lay down. He then took in a deep and calm breath and exhaled slowly. John turned on his side and began to fall asleep. John then fell into a deep, relaxing sleep. He had not had one of these in a long time, and he loved every second of it.

## Chapter 2: Corrupted Individuals

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John opened his eyes to find that the dark, cold ceiling he saw last night had changed into a painfully bright ceiling filled with small little holes so that pure sun light could creep in. He lay in his bed for a while, considering if he should get up out of bed or not. He looked at the night stand and noticed a letter had been left on the corner of the night stand. John had no choice but to sit up now. He rubbed his eyes slowly. He then reached for the letter cautiously, trying not to knock it over. He unfolded the yellowed, starchy paper. The letter read:

*I have received word that you are in fact a gunslinger and have an outstanding warrant. I do not want any trouble from you and would appreciate it if you would kindly finish your business here and then peacefully leave.*

*Sincerely,*

*Mayor Hughes*

John crumpled up the letter and threw it at the wall. He got dressed and headed downstairs to the saloon. However, he was stopped halfway down the staircase by the saloon/hotel's owner.

Greg asked, "So, how are you enjoying your stay here?"

John replied, "Well, it's somewhere to sleep."

Greg's face quickly turned from a smile to a smirk.

"Well are there any problems with your room?"

"Yeah, there's holes in the ceiling."

"Oh, I see my bartender gave you our, erm, ugly room."

"I guess you could call it ugly. I was wonderin' where can I get supplies from?"

Greg replied anxiously, "Well, there is McNeal's General Goods, but for lack of a better term he is quite a prick. Then there's Wash's trader, he doesn't have much for food or ammo but he does have a good amount of clothing and animal hides."

"I guess McNeal's it is then."

"A word of warning, he has a very high temper. Just go in buy what you need and get out. Don't talk about politics, women, cattle, guns, or anything for that matter."

"I'll try my best not to."

Greg then patted John on the back and continued upstairs. John headed for McNeal's. John had a feeling that his visit to the store would not be peaceful. John entered McNeal's casually, as to not disturb the quaint and peaceful environment. John walked up to the counter and waited. No one was around and it seemed no one

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was going to come help him. He looked down and saw a bell. There was a sign next to the bell and it read:

*Ring if no one is around to help. Please do not ring more than twice.*

John was hesitant for he did not want to intrude on the peace residing within the store. But he picked it up anyways and rang the bell twice. He then heard a loud collection of noise coming from the back of the store.

"Yeah I heard ya!"

John looked towards the back. He saw a man rushing to the counter. He assumed that it was McNeal.

"What's so important that you need to disturb my sleep?"

John replied slowly, "I need a few supplies."

McNeal's attitude suddenly changed.

"Oh, well why didn't you say? What ya need?"

"Well I need ammo for a .32 Colt and I need some food and water. I would also like to buy another .32 Colt six shot if you have one."

"Well I got two of em"

McNeal pulled out a .32 Colt six shot that looked identical to John's.

"That'll do. I then need forty rounds of .32 ammo and I guess throw in twelve rounds of 12 gauge ammo. Then I'll need three canteens filled with water and a bag of meat and veggies. Throw in some fruit too."

"Alright, that'll all come to oh, let's say a hundred dollars."

"Let's say fifty."

"Trying to bargain eh? Well it's now one fifty."

"You can't just raise the price like that!"

"I can and I will. Now either pay or fuck off!"

"Seventy five take it or leave it."

McNeal pulled a Colt Peacemaker out from under the counter and laid it on top.

"One fifty and you'll still have your life, whatever your name is."

"It's John. Come to think of it I don't know your name."

"It's Sloan McNeal."

"Sloan McNeal, has a nice ring to it."

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John picked up the bell and threw it at Sloan's face. Sloan's face clinched in surprise and slight pain. John then drew his revolver and shot Sloan right between the eyes. Sloan fell and fell hard. The vibration of his dead body hitting the floor caused an apple to fall off of a small table. John stood there for a moment. He then gathered himself and took everything he needed from the counter and stuffed it into a bag. He darted out the door and headed for the hotel. He stopped in front of the hotel and drew in a deep breath. John opened the double doors and casually walked to his room. Greg stopped him again halfway up the stairs.

"Did ya go over by McNeal's?"

John casually yet cautiously replied, "Yeah, turns out he's got quite a temper."

"Told ya. Everyone in this town who owns a business is either controlled by him or the mayor. I tell ya, they are some corrupted individuals."

"You can say that again."

John walked to his room and dropped his bag on the room floor. He stared at the bright ceiling once more but was then caught off guard by a scream that seemed to have come from outside. He knew what it was for.



## Chapter 3: I Walk Through the Valley

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"John, poor John, you walk without reason. You kill without purpose. Yet you seem to find comfort in the darkest of slums and bask in the glory of rum and sweat."

John opened his eyes to a blurry image of a dark figure. The blurriness went away as soon as he heard the click of a pistol's hammer being cocked. He froze; John had never been in this situation before, well at least not like this. Usually when this happened to him it was because he didn't pay a whore. Well this was a man, and was not a bartender, nor a lawmen. It was the local preacher.

"You seem confused John. Why?"

John answered back, "Because why is a fucking preacher holding a gun to my head?"

"Ah. You have been misled to think that all of us preachers are just peace loving, annoying maniacs standing in front of saloons preaching the lord's word. You think the lawmen know of your outstanding warrants? They're too busy with the whores of this town to even care about a murderous gunslinger on the loose in the community. That's where I come in. Sometimes the lord asks of us preachers to do the work of men who cannot. I ask of you John, why her?"

John reached for his Colt on his night stand, but all he could find was the splintery, unfinished wood grain.

"John do you think that I would really have your gun laying around for you to grab? What do you think of me, an idiot?"

John smirked, "Yeah."

John reached around his back and pulled out his Deringer. The pop from the pistol had alerted the preacher, but it was too late. The round had gone through his throat and he quickly lost aim. But that didn't stop him from firing off a couple of rounds into the bed frame and the floor boards. The preacher fell to his knees, he signaled John to come near him. John pulled his Colt out of the preacher's jacket and pressed it to his chest.

The preacher smiled and whispered softly, "We travel in packs."

John shot one round through his chest which sent the preacher onto his back. He dressed quickly and grabbed his double barrel. He swung his door open and raised his gun, only to find that no one was outside his door. Slowly stepping out he could already tell he was not alone.

A soft voice spoke, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

John threw his eyes everywhere, searching for the source of the eerie voice.

"We travel in packs; we look out for each other. You have killed for the last time John. You will no longer die peacefully, but you will die like a dog."

John looked over the railing into the saloon. He saw three men, standing in the middle of the saloon. Nobody else was around; it was silent, so silent that John could hear their steady breathing. And they could hear his

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rapid breathing. John had no choice, if he walked down the stairs they would gun him down. But if he jumped the railing he would have a chance. There was enough space for him to jump down behind the bar and have enough cover to not get blown to bits. John leapt over the railing and landed behind the bar. He cocked the hammers back on his double barrel and fired and the first guy he saw.

The shot had taken one of the preacher's heads clean off and sent his body into a table. He took another shot and got another one in his knee. The mixture of rock salt and lead pellets ripped the preacher's leg off. The preacher fell on his side, screaming. John hid behind the bar. He could hear the heavy thumping of feet. They stopped for a split second and then a large thud followed the pause. John peeked over to find that one of the preachers had flipped a table to use as cover. These tables were thin but sturdy. John figured that two 12 gauge shells should do the trick.

"John, you may kill all of us, but that will not stop people from coming for you. If you should have a change of heart, it will not matter. You killed her John. Her family as well, you will never be forgiven, not even by the lord for what you have done.

John rose from his cover. "I haven't done shit!"

Two rapid and booming shots filled the saloon with a thunderous noise. Blood began to pour from behind the table. Yet the poor, legless bastard was still screaming from losing his leg. John hopped over the bar and walked over to screaming legless man.

"Why do you guys keep talking about a girl?" John asked.

"You don't remember?!" The man asked in pain. "You killed a very important woman you son of a bitch!"

"Who?"

"A half-breed, she was a key!"

"I never killed a woman. You must have the wrong guy."

"She disappeared last monthâ !.. We figured you killed herâ !"

"How? I can't even remember last month!"

"Youâ ! You escorted her to another town."

"Which town?"

"Frankstonâ !. We never heard from the mayor there. You killed herâ !"

The man had bled out. John still had not gotten a straight answer, but it was enough to lead him in a direction. John knew he couldn't remember the past couple of months but he figured it was due to constant drunkenness. Maybe it was something more.

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