

**PEGGY:** I hope the dining room is open. I could eat a mule.

**IMOGENE:** With or without gravy.

**MELODY:** (Curtsies.) Welcome to Melody Hotel. I'm Melody. This is Sheriff Billy Bold.

**BILLY:** How do, ladies.

**MELODY:** Are you with the Medicine Show?

**PEGGY:** What Medicine Show?

**IMOGENE:** No, we're Harvey Girls. We're heading west by southwest.

**MELODY:** What are Harvey Girls?

**IMOGENE:** Mr. Fred Harvey is opening railway restaurants all along the tracks.

**PEGGY:** To be a Fred Harvey waitress, you must have a good character, be attractive and intelligent. Like us... (she giggles)

**BILLY:** Shucks, I've heard about you ladies and them good depot restaurants, too. They make you put on a coat and eat with your hat off, but the grub is strictly A-Number-One.

**MELODY:** Did you ladies arrive on the noon train?

**PEGGY:** No, we rode with Mr. Clang. In his wagon.

**IMOGENE:** Mr. Clang is our chaperone.

**RUFUS:** Chaperone and Pinkerton agent. My game is law and order. Woe to the criminal element.

**BILLY:** I have great respect for Pinkerton men. They're helping to tame the West. (Holds out his hand for a shake.) Put it there, Mr. Clang.

**RUFUS:** (Shakes hands.) Call me Rufus.

**BILLY:** I'm Sheriff Billy Bold. This here is my gal, Dakota Melody, cornflower of Buffalo Bend.

**RUFUS:** A pleasure, Miss.

**MELODY:** (Curtsies.) I'm always happy to meet a civilizing influence. One day the Dakota Territory will be as civilized as Mud City.

**RUFUS:** Well, yes, if you say so.

**ROSE:** You boys know what you're going to do?

**JOHNNY:** Yeah. We know. We been over it enough.

**ROSE:** I want to hear it again, Johnny!

**JOHNNY:** (Holds up dynamite.) I toss this here stick of dynamite on the tracks.

**CLINT:** When the engine stops, cover the engineer.

**JOHNNY:** Toss another stick at the baggage car.

**RAWHIDE:** When the door blows off, we jump in the baggage car and grab the payroll sacks.

**ROSE:** As soon as we've got those sacks we ride.

**JOHNNY:** Ain't we going to rob no passengers?

**CLINT:** No way! Too risky.

**ROSE:** Clint's right. The sooner we get away from the train, the better.

**RAWHIDE:** (disappointed) Ah, gee, I like to rob passengers.

**JOHNNY:** We never get to have no fun.

**RAWHIDE:** (Tenses.) Quiet! I hear something.

**CLINT:** Someone's coming this way.

**BILLY:** (looking around) I know you outlaws are here. Show yourselves or suffer the consequences. (His fists go up for battle.)

**CLINT:** It's him, Billy Bold. The sheriff.

**ROSE:** Billy, how'd you get away from that Pinkerton man?

**BILLY:** Never mind about that! I'm here to stop this robbery in the name of the law!

**RAWHIDE:** Hey, he wasn't throwing in with us.

**CLINT:** He was only pretending!

**RAWHIDE:** He was trying to trick you, Wild Prairie Rose!

**ROSE:** No one tricks Wild Prairie Rose. it's not healthy. (Draws her pistol) In fact, it's very *unhealthy*.

**BILLY:** You know I never carry a weapon.

**ROSE:** Good. The less noise the better.

**BILLY:** Uh, that's not what I meant... But have it your way!

**BILLY & MELODY**

(BILLY stares at MELODY. MELODY Stares at BILLY. Pause. Impulsively, they rush to one another.)

**MELODY:** Billy!

**BILLY:** Melody! ....I knew you didn't believe those lies about me.

**MELODY:** I went mad, Billy. Forgive me. You're too good to betray, too good to deceive, to scheme. I know you don't love Wild Prairie Rose.

**BILLY:** There's only one gal for Billy Bold and I reckon you know who she be.

**MELODY:** I can guess...

**BILLY:** Melody, you'll always be the sweetest cornflower in the west!

**MELODY:** Billy, you'll always be... MY HERO!!

### **MELODY & SILIAS**

**MELODY:** Would you and your troupe care for some mock rabbit stew, Professor Scavenger?

**SILIAS:** (To himself) This is no time to think about indigestion. (Changing the subject) What a surprise to discover the daughter of my former commanding officer in this backwater town.

**MELODY:** You served with Daddy?

**SILIAS:** Did I serve with Daddy?

**MELODY:** Did you?

**SILIAS:** Did I. (pause) Read that... (passes phony discharge papers to Melody).

**MELODY:** (Reads, amazed.) Why, you were a Captain in Daddy's regiment!

**SILIAS:** (smiles) I had that honor. (Takes back paper, pockets it)

**MELODY:** An officer in Daddy's command is more than welcome to my hospitality and friendship. I'm afraid I've misjudged you, Captain Scavenger.

**SILIAS:** Not to fret.

**MELODY:** But why didn't you speak up before?

**SILIAS:** Your father made me promise I would look after you. Circumstances have delayed our meeting, but I fully intend to honor your father's request.

**MELODY:** Goodness, Captain Scavenger, what are you talking about? I'm more than capable of caring for myself.

**SILIAS:** (drops to one knee, puts his hand over his heart, exclaims) Marry me, Dakota Melody!