

An Old Shack - Preview

The title 'AN OLD SHACK' is rendered in a bold, black, distressed font. The letters have a jagged, dripping appearance. A silhouette of a crow is perched on the left side of the word 'SHACK', facing right. The word 'AN' is positioned above 'OLD', and 'SHACK' is on the bottom line.

Written by

Tony Del Degan

Copyright © 2021 Tony Del Degan, All Rights Reserved.

Copyright © 2021 Tony Del Degan, All Rights Reserved.

An Old Shack - Preview

Ronan	A dark outlaw - serious and grim.
Clayton	He carries a bindle over his shoulder and walks with a slouch. Very submissive.
Rufus	Young and arrogant. The violin slowly drives him mad.
Solomon	An old blind man.
The Violin Player	Something living in the shack.

Synopsis

Two travelers encounter a decrepit shack out in the plains, along with two strange men loitering outside it, waiting to see the entity they claim lives inside the structure.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Sometime after 1850. We fade in on a shot of a field, the long grass swaying in golden waves. RONAN (30-50) and CLAYTON (18-30) are trudging through it slowly.

Ronan is dressed in black - a long coat, a dark, wide-brimmed hat, and a belt strung across his torso, which holds his holster and the pistol inside. He's a grizzled man, very brooding, and his bright, calculating eyes scan the never-ending ocean of grass.

Clayton follows behind, hunched over with the weight of the large bindle balanced on his shoulder. A hat with an even wider brim than Ronan's shields his face from the dim sun. He's a very submissive, pack-mule kind of character.

Ronan stops and gazes out at the plains suddenly, and Clayton hobbles to a halt as well. There's a silhouette of a man in the distance, trudging along through the grass. Ronan watches in

An Old Shack - Preview

silence. A crow flies overhead, then lands on a splintered fence post. It squawks.

CLAYTON

Who's that?

RONAN

(Pause)

I don't know.

CLAYTON

What's he doing out in this shit?

Ronan doesn't answer. He continues walking. After a while of this, we see a decrepit old shack in the distance, smoke rising from an extinguished campfire a little ways away.

CLAYTON

Fire, mister Ronan.

RONAN

Yeah...

(Pause)

Follow me close.

EXT. SHACK - DAY

RUFUS (20-30), the silhouetted man, approaches the shack, and SOLOMON (40-60) looks up from where he sits on the ground. He's an old man, one of his eyes milky white, the other clearer, yet almost as faded. He grunts as he hears Rufus drawing closer.

Rufus is a younger man, carrying a bloody crow and a satchel over his shoulder. A large rifle is slung across his back - the one he shot the bird with. He approaches his half-blind partner and throws the bird corpse and the satchel onto the ground with a smack. They send dust into the air. Solomon doesn't look down at them. He's staring off into the distance, using his ears to follow where Rufus is walking.

An Old Shack - Preview

SOLOMON

(Growling)

Rufus? What is that?

RUFUS

Crow. I almost snapped my leg trying to aim at it.

Rufus walks over to a basin of dirty water, then rinses his hands in it, turning the liquid dark red. That done, he finds a cloth and wipes his hands, turning to look at the shack about twenty feet away.

SOLOMON

(Foreboding)

I heard it again.

Rufus glances over his shoulder at him, then looks back at the shack.

SOLOMON (CONT.)

The violin.

Rufus throws the cloth back onto the basin, then walks over to sit by the smoldering campfire.

RUFUS

Is that right?

SOLOMON

He played for three minutes.

RUFUS

Only three?

SOLOMON

(Irritated)

You watch your tongue, boy. He can hear ye, you know. Right as rain, boy, he can hear ye talking.

An Old Shack - Preview

Rufus harrumphs at that, then reaches over to grab the satchel he threw down. He produces a small bag and a can without a label.

RUFUS

Careful, Solomon. Your blind ass might be focusing too much on that damn noise, you won't hear him creepin' out to get ya.

He sets the can and bag down, then ties up his satchel, laying it down beside him. Solomon looks down at the objects, drawn to the sound of them being placed on the grass.

RUFUS

(Notices Solomon's interest
Beans and some coin.

SOLOMON

Where from?

RUFUS

(Pause)

Portland.

Solomon grunts again. Rufus continues to stare.

RUFUS

There were two bastards out there in the fields, walking along like some deer or something.

SOLOMON

(Pause)

Where were they heading?

RUFUS

You think I know? I could barely tell what was West when I was riding back here. Had to use the smoke from this here
(Point to campfire)
to know where I was going.

An Old Shack - Preview

SOLOMON

Then you saw the smoke?

RUFUS

Yes, I did.

SOLOMON

Then they saw the smoke.

Rufus looks at Solomon, realization slowly dawning on him. He gets up quickly.

RUFUS

Shit.