

THE MAN WITH THE IRON HAND

Written By

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1 EXT. MARTIN RESIDENCE - DAY**1**

Under a harsh morning sun, a pair of henchmen in western attire stand around outside of a country house. The two seem to be waiting impatiently.

One is JUDITH, who is filing her nails with an annoyed expression. She is wearing normal western attire, complete with a rough bandana.

The other is GABRIEL, who is pacing back and forth nervously. He sports the same attire but is lacking in more tough-looking attire like hats or bandanas. He is visibly weaker looking than his counterpart.

The two dart their heads toward the entrance of the house as COOPER emerges from the front door. He seems to be a mixture of the two attires: not as rough as Judith but not as scrawny as Gabriel.

Cooper comes out of the house stumbling. He grabs a hold of the house wall as he proceeds to vomit on the ground. Judith and Gabriel flinch from the sudden puke.

JUDITH
(blaringly)
Jee-sus Christ Cooper!

GABRIEL
What th' hell's the matter with
you?!

Cooper spits out the remaining stomach acid from the expulsion of his guts and turns to face his co-workers.

COOPER
Did you two see what he did to 'em?!

JUDITH
Yeah?! What about it?!

COOPER
He butchered 'em! I can barely
recognize 'em! How the hell does he
expect us to cover all that up?!

GABRIEL
We've done the job before, Cooper.
We brought the bags first-off, so
having them cut up won't be an
issue-

COOPER
(interrupting)
A bag?! Do you fuckin' hear yourself
talkin' right now?!

JUDITH
Cooper, relax.

Cooper turns back toward the wall as if ready to give the world his insides once more.

COOPER
(panicked)
Oh God. Oh Jesus merciful Christ.
Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ.

JUDITH
Cooper calm down. Look, we'll get
the bags, bury 'em, do a little
cleanin', and we can meet up with
the boss later alright?

Gabriel crosses his arms.

GABRIEL
What these poor saps do to him
anyway?

JUDITH
Same as everyone, probably. Owed him
money, they didn't pay up, and he
gave 'em the facial treatment.

GABRIEL
The boss got issues.

Cooper turns his head slightly in Gabriel's direction.

COOPER
YEAH, NO SHIT.

He turns back and spits on the ground.

JUDITH
Look, let's just get it over with,
yeah? We do this, meet the boss, and
we can get our damn pay already.

Cooper turns around from his queasy state.

COOPER
I can't. Nope. I can't do this. I
can't fucking do this.

He begins to pace nervously.

JUDITH
Cooper.

COOPER
(raising voice)
THAT WAS A FAMILY JUDITH! THEY HAD A
KID! HE JUST KILLED EM LIKE COYOTES!

JUDITH
COOPER. Relax goddammit!
Listen...come here.

Cooper walks over to Judith. She puts her hands on his shoulders.

JUDITH (CONT'D)
Listen. We gotta clean this up.
Ain't no way the boss is gonna let
us off easy if we don't at least get
the cleanin' job done. Once we get
the gold, you can walk away.
Alright?

Cooper looks down thinking about how everything has just
horribly gone wrong.

JUDITH (CONT'D)
(raising voice)
ALRIGHT?

COOPER
Alright! Alright.

Gabriel walks to the entrance of the house, but before
entering he looks to his co-workers.

GABRIEL
You two dipshits done jerkin' each
other off or are you gonna help me
out?!

JUDITH
IN A SECOND.

Gabriel waves his hand in an "Ah whatever" motion and enters
the house.

COOPER
Ok...ok I'm good. Let's get this
over with.

Judith and Cooper enter the dark household.

FADE TO:

2 EXT. RIDGE - DAY

2

Upon a forest grove drenched in harsh sunlight, a hound is laying before a pine tree with a figure kneeling over it. The dog is whining, and red, wet fur indicates an injury.

The figure kneeling over the canine is wearing dark western attire and has a rough complexion. This...is the STEELMONGER. He's stroking the dog while making a shushing noise to comfort the animal.

As the dog continues to whine, the Steelmonger slowly pulls out a steel dagger and lowers it towards the dog's throat. He looks down as a cutting noise is heard, and the dog's whining comes to a complete stop.

As the Steelmonger makes the final cut, his lip twitches with sadism. He slowly raises the knife, which is now drenched in blood. He slowly turns around and sees the gang of henchmen stand behind him.

He nonchalantly raises his knife-holding hand covered in blood.

STEELMONGER

...Well?

Gabriel scrambles to pull out a handkerchief and rushes over to the Steelmonger. He casually wipes the blood away as the group looks on with disturbed expressions.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)

I can assume the Martins have been swept up to sunshine, yes?

GABRIEL

Y-yes sir...

STEELMONGER

Mhm. Good.

Cooper and Judith are unable to avert their eyes from the deceased hound behind him.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)

Oh don't mind ol' Fido there. Got a broken leg while out huntin'. Safe to say if he ain't a huntin' dog no

more he ain't gonna be a DOG no
more.

The Steelmonger tosses the bloodstained handkerchief to the ground and stands up.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)
Now! I believe I owe you fine folks
your dues!

The Steelmonger reaches into his coat and pulls out three small sacks of change. He tosses the bags at his lackeys. Gabriel is caught off guard and has to pick it up from the ground. Judith catches it first try. Cooper scrambles a catch as it hits his chest.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)
Alright now, vamoose. I got some
figuring to do here.

Cooper looks sheepishly down at the ground. He clenches the bag of change in his hands. He walks forward and clears his throat.

COOPER
Um...boss. I wanted to um-

STEELMONGER
(interrupting)
Steelmonger. Y'all call me
Steelmonger. I got a reputation to
upkeep I ain't havin' that "boss"
crap.

COOPER
Steelmonger...I wanted to talk to
you about my uh...employment.

STEELMONGER
Spit it out I ain't got all day.

COOPER
I was...well what I've been meanin'
to say is...I don't think um...I
don't think I can continue working
under you...that is to say-

The Steelmonger darts his head up while his back is turned from Cooper.

COOPER (CONT'D)
It's nothing personal! Of course!
Just that I've been meaning to look
at-

STEELMONGER

Cooper.

Cooper goes completely silent. The Steelmonger slowly turns and proceeds to prowl towards him.

Every footstep echoes an audible clink. As the Steelmonger approaches his prey, Cooper becomes far more uneasy.

STEELMONGER

I got a ship I'm runnin' here. Say I'm the captain. And you yellow bellies be my crew. We're in the middle of the sea here...Cooper. Y'all can't go jumpin' ship on me NOW, can you?

COOPER

Um-

STEELMONGER

Say I WERE to let you loose. What would you go on and do? All them bodies I left for you to clean up, like uncleanable sins under your nails where you can never wash em out, they gonna start gettin' to you, aren't they?

COOPER

Uh...of course...they won't-

Steelmonger begins to laugh in an obvious feigned manner.

STEELMONGER

(slightly growling)

I don't need your sudden spur of moral conscience goin' to the sheriff or anythin' like that. Last thing I need is a former associate goin' to the law and makin' things FAR more difficult than they need to be. Do we...have an understanding, Cooper?

The Steelmonger's cleaned blade is now laying on Cooper's shoulder. He slowly scrapes the blade down his shirt. Cooper is visibly trembling.

COOPER

(terrified)

No...no sir. STEELMONGER! No sir, Steelmonger! In fact, forget I asked anything! No retirement for me!

The Steelmonger glares into Cooper for a moment. His serious expression suddenly shifts into a jolly one.

STEELMONGER

Ah. Well that's good. So long as we're clear.

He turns away and looks into the dagger he holds in his hands, as if thousands of thoughts are racing in his twisted mind. After a moment, his face conveys that he has come to a decision.

He turns toward Cooper...and jabs the knife directly into his heart.

Judith gasps in terror. Gabriel is frozen stiff in fear.

Cooper's air is completely taken out of him, and he begins to lean forward into the Steelmonger. He lets out a malicious chuckle before letting the impaled man fall into the ground.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)

(more crazed)

Any you bastards got something to confess, too?!

Judith looks around before looking at Gabriel. Gabriel furiously shakes his head "no."

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)

THEN GET THE HELL OUTTA HERE!

Gabriel rushes to Judith and begins pulling at her arm. For a moment, she's paralyzed with shock. Gabriel snaps her out of it, and the two run off in the direction they entered from.

The Steelmonger looks down at the corpse he had just created, with nothing but a look of minor annoyance.

CUT TO:

3 **EXT. FOREST - DAY**

3

Judith looks down contemplatively at a revolver. Gabriel is sitting down on the ground with his head in his hands.

GABRIEL

(stressed)

God Almighty, we're gonna die. We are going to die. Why did Cooper have to say that?! Why did he do that?!

Judith looks up.

JUDITH

We can't keep workin' for him.

Gabriel darts his head up in perplexion of his co-goon.

GABRIEL

And do what?! Run?! He's got
benefactors from Yosemite to the
Mississippi! We'd be chopped liver
before we'd even make it to
Nebraska!!

JUDITH

No. Not run.

Judith looks down and grip the revolver tightly in her hand.
She looks toward Gabriel.

GABRIEL

Oh no. You can't be serious.

Judith glares at Gabriel. She is indeed very serious.

After a moment, Gabriel understands how lacking their options
are. He sighs.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Okay but...how? This man's a beast
from the depths of Hell. He'd have
led leakin' from our skulls before
we could even touch the peacemakers.

JUDITH

He's still just a man. We get the
jump on HIM...even he ain't walkin'
away.

Judith begins walking down the trail in a march of resolve.
She stops and turns around to face Gabriel.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

Well?!

Gabriel cringes and looks down. He pulls out his own
revolver.

GABRIEL

We are going to die.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. RIDGE - DAY**4**

Judith and Gabriel begin sneaking into the area with their guns in a ready-to-fire grasp. They look around and see no sign of their boss...or his victims.

GABRIEL
(whispering)
He was just here! It can't be-!

JUDITH
(whispering)
He's probably further ahead. Keep quiet, we still got the element of surprise.

The two slowly pace towards a ridge or large rocks. Behind them, the Steelmonger is lying in wait. He slowly cocks the revolver in his hand.

As the two stop to get a lay of the land, the Steelmonger slowly aims the revolver toward Gabriel. As Judith keeps looking around, she spots the dark figure lurking near.

JUDITH (CONT'D)
GABRIEL!!!

Steelmonger open fires. Gabriel stumbles back, and Judith begins returning fire. They scramble to get behind a rock for cover. A brief shootout ensues between the Steelmonger and his turncoat henchmen. After a while, the shooting stops.

Judith slowly peers over to see no sight of the Steelmonger. She grunts and grabs Gabriel by the arm.

JUDITH (CONT'D)
Come on!

The two scurry out of their hiding place to head for where the Steelmonger was.

When they arrive, they find no sign of him. However, a pistol cock freezes them dead in their tracks. The Steelmonger reveals himself behind a nearby tree.

Judith and Gabriel aim but they have yet to fire.

STEELMONGER
I think that's quite enough out of the two o' you.

They both remain silent.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)

I hope you know mutiny ain't
somethin' I take too easily. You
messed up something FIERCE.
So...drop 'em.

JUDITH

How about you first?

STEELMONGER

Judith, you think I was born
yesterday? I've known you long
enough to know you're a quick draw
but you can't aim for shit. I pull
the trigger, it's a guaranteed
bullet in your skull. You pull the
trigger, and you're trembling self
might make the tree bark.

Judith is shaking uncontrollably. She can barely keep a steady aim at the Steelmonger. Gabriel begins to slowly pace to the side.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)

So how about you stop kiddin'
yourself and drop it? Cooper was
easy pickings, but I know you. I can
reason with you. Go on.

Judith begins to lower her weapon.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)

That's it. Very good. Kick it
towards me.

Judith kicks the revolver towards him. He puts his heel on it and grins with triumph.

Suddenly, Gabriel charges at the Steelmonger while rapidly firing his rounds. The two are knocked to the ground. The Steelmonger loses his gun. No bullets have fatally injured the Steelmonger, but Gabriel now has him pinned with a barrel to his skull.

But as he pulls the trigger...CLICK! No round is fired.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)

Oooh...(clicks tongue) Looks like
countin' ain't your strong suit,
boy.

Steelmonger pulls out the dagger and jabs Gabriel in the stomach. As Gabriel looks in writhing pain at what he thought

was his victim, the Steelmonger looks back while he maniacally laughs.

As he begins to lean up however...BANG! Judith fires a bullet directly into the Steelmonger's torso. It wasn't her gun however...it was his. The Steelmonger goes dead silent as he feels the gunshot wound his his hand.

He looks at Judith with a grin of pure unhinged malice.

STEELMONGER (CONT'D)

Well played.

He slumps back onto the ground. Judith now stands above an injured Gabriel and a slain Steelmonger. She kneels down next to her comrade, to which Gabriel grabs her hand.

They look at their slaughtered boss. It was over. They both sat down on the soil completely exhausted. Backs to the ground, they both look up at the canopy.

THE END.