



TALL TALES FROM THE BADLANDS



Foreword by David Weddle

"Thicker Than Water"

Written by Sean Fahey

Art by Lisandro Estherren

"Abigail"

Written by Seamus Kevin Fahey

Art by Jose Holder

"The Runt"

Written by Sean Fahey

Art by J.C. Grande

"A Thousand Deaths"

Written by Seamus Kevin Fahey

Art by Juan Romera

"Easy Livin'"

Written by Sean Fahey

Art by Borja "Borch" Pena

Edited and lettered by Dave Davis

Title design by Adam Pruett

FOREWORD

by David Weddle

Readers might find it odd that my friend, Seamus Fahey (best known for his work on such science fiction television shows as *Battlestar Galactica* and *Kings*) has decided to write a collection traditional western stories in the graphic novel form. But I am not the least bit surprised and see no incongruity in his choice.

People often found it odd that after writing a biography of Sam Peckinpah, the last great director of Western movies, I became a science fiction writer. But again, I think this was a perfectly natural transition because the two genres have much more in common than might be apparent at first glance.

I grew up watching westerns with my father. When I lived in Louisville, Kentucky, on weekends my family would go downtown to the movies. My sister and mother would peel off to see a Julie Andrews picture – *Mary Poppins*, *The Sound of Music*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* – while Dad and I would make a beeline to the nearest Western. We saw them all – *The War Wagon*, *Hang Em High*, *True Grit*, *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*, *Big Jake*... and of course, the greatest Western of them all, *The Wild Bunch*, which my father took me to see when I was 13 as a kind of rite of passage. I was thoroughly steeped in the archetypes, conventions, and set pieces of the Western genre, which have deep roots reaching all the way back to Shakespeare, Homer and the first campfire tales told by cave dwelling human beings before the dawn of civilization.

The reason I think I had success in the science fiction genre is because it is so similar to the Western. Both forms feature characters crossing vast distances, far removed from the institutions of civilization, often thrust into primal moral dilemmas in which they cannot call on a higher authority for guidance. They must make existential choices to decide who they are, what they stand for, what their values are.

It was an ongoing joke in the writers room at *Battlestar* that I would inevitably draw upon a Western as a template for any story we were writing. Mr. Fahey was subjected to relentless assaults of dialogue from *The Wild Bunch*, *Major Dundee*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, and *Hombre*. I kept referring to these works because Westerns are often stripped-down narratives and it is easy to identify the character arcs, the structure, and the essential story being told.

As the frontier experience has receded from our living memory – we have moved from being primarily an agrarian society before World War II to an urban society that has gobbled up most of the open land we used to interact with on a daily basis – the Western has receded as a genre. It no longer occupies the center ring of American popular culture. But I am thrilled to see that my colleague has decided to breath new life into it because I passionately believe it is a form that can still speak to us. I take my hat off to him and hope you enjoy these tales of vengeance, betrayal, loss and redemption that he and his co-writer, Sean Fahey, have spun for us.

David Weddle is the author of "If They Move... Kill Em!" *The Life and Times of Sam Peckinpah*.
He was a Writer/Supervising Producer on *Battlestar Galactica*,
and is currently a Writer/Co-Executive Producer on *CSI*.

THICKER THAN WATER

JAIL

MISSOURI, 1878.

HELLO, HANK.


WELL, NOW.
LOOK WHO DECIDED
TO STOP BY.

IT'S FUNNY.
COUPLE OF GENTLEMEN
JOINED ME FOR SUPPER TODAY.
CAME ALL THE WAY FROM CHICAGO.
REAL CURIOUS FELLAS.

ASKED ME ABOUT
EVERY JOB I EVER PULLED.
WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT JACK AND COLE.
HIDEOUTS. STASHES. YOU NAME IT.
I TOLD THEM TO KISS MY ASS.

GAVE 'EM EVERY EXCUSE
TO KNOCK THE SHIT OUTTA ME.
BUT THEY JUST SAT THERE.
SMUG LITTLE SMILES ON THEIR FACES.
LIKE THEY KNEW SOMETHING I DIDN'T.
THEN IT CAME TO ME...

THEY AIN'T ASKED
ABOUT YOU.



HOW MUCH
THEY PAY YOU,
NATHAN?

AIN'T ABOUT
MONEY.

BULL.
EVEN JUDAS GOT HIS
THIRTY PIECES
OF SILVER.

IT'S BIGGER THAN THAT.
I JUST FIGURED YOU DESERVE
TO KNOW WHY I GAVE YOU UP.
STRAIGHT FROM ME, NOT THEM
PINKERTON BASTARDS.
I OWE YOU THAT.

YOU SEE A COLLAR
AROUND MY NECK?
SAVE IT FOR A PRIEST,
YOU BACKSTABBING
SON OF A BITCH.

LOOK, I DON'T WANT
TO SEE YOU HANG.
BUT I AIN'T HERE TO
ASK FOR FORGIVENESS.
I ALREADY COME TO TERMS
WITH WHAT I DONE.

THAT'S REAL
COMFORTING, NATHAN.
THANK YOU.

NOW, WHY DON'T
YOU JUST GET ON
OUT OF HERE.

THEY THREATENED
TO KILL MY BROTHER AND
HIS FAMILY, HANK.

BROTHER?
WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?

"THERE ARE SOME THINGS...
LIES... THAT I TOLD TO
PROTECT CERTAIN PEOPLE."

"TRUTH BE TOLD, HANK,
MY NAME'S NOT NATHAN DALTON.
IT'S MILLER, AND I AIN'T FROM MISSOURI.
I'M FROM WEST VIRGINIA.
LEAST, THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL IT NOW."

"I LEFT RIGHT BEFORE THE WAR.
FOLKS IN THAT AREA,
MY FAMILY INCLUDED,
SUPPORTED THE UNION..."

"...I SUPPORTED THE SOUTH,
AND JOINED UP WITH A UNIT
OF CONFEDERATE IRREGULARS
IN NASHVILLE."

"I TRIED GOING HOME AFTER THE WAR,
BUT MY FATHER WOULDN'T SPEAK TO ME.
HE'D LOST A SON AT ANTIETAM,
AND ANOTHER AT CHANCELLORSVILLE.
AND IN HIS WAY HELD ME
RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR DEATHS."

"I HEADED WEST."

"MET UP WITH SOME LIKE-MINDED
SONS OF THE CONFEDERACY, AND..."

"WELL, YOU KNOW
THE REST."



"WE HAD A GOOD
RUN, HANK."

"I WISH IT DIDN'T
HAVE TO END, BUT..."



"I DIDN'T HAVE A CHOICE, HANK.
AFTER THE SPRINGFIELD JOB,
I HEADED TO ST. LOUIS."

"COUPLE OF PINKERTONS
FOUND ME."

"THEY KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT ME,
AND THEY DIDN'T BEAT AROUND THE BUSH.
IF I DIDN'T GIVE YOU UP, THEY'D KILL
MY BROTHER JONAH AND HIS FAMILY."



"WRONG PLACE
TO LAY LOW, I KNOW."