

THE EDWARDS FORTUNE

Written by

Brijit Reed

Inspired by family legend

[brijit.reed.writing@gmail.com](mailto:brijit.reed.writing@gmail.com)

FADE IN

EXT. FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY - DEVIL'S HOLLOW ROAD - 1927 -  
MORNING

A CLOUD OF DUST billows over a narrow, winding road that snakes through lush green Kentucky countryside. Birds and small animals scatter at the sound of THUNDERING HOOVES.

Suddenly, a HORSE-DRAWN BUGGY barrels into view, careening wildly.

At the reins is the gigantic mountain of a man, LITTLE RODDY HAWKINS, red-faced, sweating bullets, muscles bulging, and fighting for control.

Next to him is MABEL HAWKINS, his foul-tempered, slightly smaller wife, clutching her hat with one hand and the buggy frame for dear life with the other.

The horse-- a mare with a mind of her own (*also* named MABEL HAWKINS)-- snorts and veers sharply around a regretful raccoon, wheels of one side of the buggy lifting off the ground.

Mabel's furious SHRIEKS continue to trail them as they rocket into the distance.

INT. BANK - SAME

CHARLIE CRUTCHER, arm in a cast, and his wife, SARAH JANE, sit across from the diminutive bank manager, HUCK HAWKINS, who's dwarfed by his enormous desk.

CHARLIE

*Thirty days? You're only givin' us  
thirty days before you repossess  
our farm-- our home?!*

HUCK HAWKINS

I tried to warn you. You were never  
'round when I came callin'.

SARAH JANE

Why didn't you just tell *me*, Huck?

Huck grits his teeth.

HUCK HAWKINS

Because, clearly, you are not the  
man of the house, Sarah Jane.

CHARLIE

From now on, Huck, anything you have to say to me can be said to Sarah Jane. She's the *lady* of the house.

Sarah Jane nods imperiously in vigorous agreement.

HUCK HAWKINS

(scowling)

Fine.

Huck turns his full attention to Sarah Jane.

HUCK HAWKINS (CONT'D)

You have thirty days to pay or vacate the farm, at which point, the bank will come into possess--

SARAH JANE

How can you do this, Huck? We got mouths to feed, and you're our kin!

HUCK HAWKINS

(exasperated outburst)

For the last time, it's 'Huxley!'

(beat)

And the bank has no partiality for kin. You have to pay your mortgage just like anyone else, otherwise it's well within its rights to--

Charlie holds up a finger, SHUSHING him.

CHARLIE

Hang on.

He and Sarah Jane turn their backs on Huck. Charlie anxiously opens his billfold and looks inside.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Sixty-four dollars and six cents.

(beat)

How much you got?

Sarah Jane counts the cash in her pocketbook.

SARAH JANE

(whispering)

Thirty-one dollars.

HUCK HAWKINS  
 (impatiently)  
 Well?

CHARLIE  
 Let's say we give you forty-five  
 now, but--

HUCK HAWKINS  
 And when will you be payin' the  
 balance?

Charlie scrubs his free hand through his hair in frustration.

CHARLIE  
 I don't know. I made that bad  
 investment in--

HUCK HAWKINS  
 Vita-Tonic-- yes, yes, I know.  
 Green teeth, and whatnot.

CHARLIE  
 Yes, but then my arm done broke and  
 I ain't been able to find work  
 since.

SARAH JANE  
 Please, Huck-- Doc said Charlie's  
 cast can come off in a couple of  
 weeks. If you could just stall a  
 little bit--

HUCK HAWKINS  
 I'm sorry. It's out of my hands.

Sarah Jane suddenly leans over the desk and SMACKS Huck over  
 the top of his head with her pocketbook.

HUCK HAWKINS (CONT'D)  
 Ow!

SARAH JANE  
 Shame on you, Huckleberry Hawkins!  
 You undersized, flea-bitten,  
 parasite! You just wait 'til I tell  
 your mama! She's gonna tan your  
 little hide!

Charlie grins in approval, but notices that the bank has  
 fallen silent and ALL EYES are on them, so he loses the  
 smile. He CLEARS HIS THROAT, nodding to their audience, and  
 Sarah Jane tries to calm down.

He stands up.

CHARLIE  
(calmly)  
C'mon, Sarah Jane. Let's talk 'bout  
this at home.

Sarah Jane stands up too.

SARAH JANE  
Fine!

Unable to hold her temper, she grabs a sharp pencil and rapidly STABS it several times into Huck's ink blotter.

CHARLIE  
(grinning)  
Feel better now?

SARAH JANE  
Yep.