

Selected Screenplay Excerpts

From

CROOKED RIVER

FRATERNITY

and

DUNSHINANE, MISSOURI

Written by

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CROOKED RIVER

EXT. SAND BAR - DAY

The boys emerge from the tent, squinting in the morning sun.

A woman with shoulder-length stringy brown hair sits on the rim of her canoe, wiring thread through plastic beads.

JULIA, 23, wears a red one-piece under a loose fitting dress. She is athletic with a pointy, chiseled face. Her accent is distinctly Missouran, lazy consonants and a subtle twang.

JULIA

You boys know there's no sense in
settin' up camp on a sand bar? The
water could rise and wash you away.

Abe and Elie are silent, wide eyed.

JULIA (CONT'D)

'Course, without a boat or anything
you might jus' be hopin' to catch a
wave in your tent. How've you two
been gettin' around?

ELIE

We've been hiking.

JULIA

From where?

ELIE
Osceola.

ABE
None of your business.

JULIA

Osceola's about 40 miles northwest
of here, so I do believe you're
lying or you came by boat. Or both.
You got anyone else with you?

The boys are silent.

JULIA (CONT'D)
You boy scouts?

ABE

Ma'am, we are doing just fine on
our own. I think all three of us
need to get on our ways.

JULIA

Ma'am? That's new.

ELIE

He's trying to be polite.

JULIA

Oh I don't doubt. But y'all don't have ownership of any sandbar. If we're all movin' along...and I reckon we're headin' the same way...what say we buddy up? I've got a canoe. I'm sure yer' legs are tired after 80 miles walkin'.

ABE

I think we'll be just fine, thanks.

ELIE

What's your name?

JULIA

I'm Queen witch of the Missourah rivers. You tell me yer name and I'll tell you yer fortune.

ELIE

How long have you been queen witch?

JULIA

Since I made that up jus' now. I'm Julia.

Julia tosses Elie the bracelet she has been putting together.

JULIA (CONT'D)

That's for your honesty. Or quick lying. Equally valuable I'd say.

Elie slips it around his wrist, blushing.

ELIE

I'm Elie.

JULIA

Good to meet you, Elie.

Elie elbows Abe. Julia holds out her hand as if to shake.

ABE

Abe.

CROOKED RIVER

JULIA
Come here, Abe.

Abe steps forward. Julia turns his wrist over and traces his palm with her eyes closed. She shudders and winces.

JULIA (CONT'D)
You have a dark future.

ABE
What?

JULIA
I'm messin' with you. Pick one.

Julia holds out her wrist, adorned with a row of diverse bracelets. Abe touches a one with charred wooden beads.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Not that one. Here.

From beneath her blouse, Julia unearths a rosary missing some of its wooden beads. Julia detaches a few more, then tugs off a strand of her own hair.

ABE
You been on the river long?

Julia threads her hair through the beads.

JULIA
How do you think my hair got this coarse?

ABE
How long?

JULIA
I'm a nomad. The river's my home now. Seems like you two know a bit about that.

Julia ties the knot and puts the bracelet in Abe's hand.

JULIA (CONT'D)
For you, dishonest Abe. You don't have to take everythin' so seriously.

CROOKED RIVER

FRATERNITY

INT. SORORITY HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A grand living area with white carpeting, white drapes, white everything except a black grand piano.

LUCY WESTENRA, 19 and full of life, is sprawled on a white sofa. Her dark auburn hair hangs freely over the couch arm.

Arthur lays on the floor beside Lucy, looking up at her. Lucy's maroon shawl and burnt orange pants mirror Arthur's color palette.

Lucy looks at her cell phone, then pockets it. She picks up a pen to attack the parchment in her lap.

LUCY

Mina asked about you. But I'll bet
John hasn't even called her.

ARTHUR

Are you writing her a letter?

LUCY

It's a lost art. She wrote me
first. Said her Jonathan is joining
Delta.

*

ARTHUR

Johnny boy. No way.

LUCY

I think she's lonely. But the way
she writes about John, he doesn't
sound much better than no company
at all.

*

ARTHUR

Because?

LUCY

He's just...I don't know. Doesn't
know who he is. Nor does she. Maybe
they're good for each other.

ARTHUR

We'll help him figure it out.

LUCY

What goes on during initiating?

ARTHUR
It's a secret.

Lucy leans over, touches Arthur's chest, kisses him. She pulls his Delta necklace out from under his shirt.

LUCY
In this sign, you will conquer.
What's the real reason you came
over so spontaneously? Did V kick
you out?

ARTHUR
I went a little too hard on Johnny.

LUCY
Archaic. Should I spell it out? *

ARTHUR
V kicked me out.

LUCY
Jealous?

ARTHUR
Of Johnny?

LUCY
Do you feel something for V?

ARTHUR
He's very magnetic.

LUCY
You know you can't lie to me.

ARTHUR
V's a stud. I'll admit that as
readily as the next guy. I'm happy
to say I admire him.

LUCY
See, this is a reason I like you.
Gal kisses a girlfriend at a party,
she's just having fun. Boy gets
with a boy, he's a fag. What's the
big deal? *

ARTHUR
You should switch to philosophy. *

LUCY

And why can't they let a girl be
with three men, or as many as she
wants?

ARTHUR

Because then she's a slut.

LUCY

But if you fuck around...

ARTHUR

I'm a hero among men. Why three?

LUCY

Jack and Quincy are fine boys.

Hand around his neck again, Lucy removes the Delta necklace,
holds it to her own neck.

ARTHUR

Oh?

LUCY

And I want to get to know V better.

Arthur puts his hand to his mouth in mild distress.

ARTHUR

Ow!

LUCY

We had an agreement, Arthur. Don't
turn green on me.

ARTHUR

No, it's not that. There's an ache
in my tooth.

LUCY

Oh really?

ARTHUR

Yes. Ow. Can you take a look?

Lucy leans down as Arthur sits up. He kisses her.

FRATERNITY

DUNSHINANE, MO

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL STADIUM - NIGHT

Max and Banquo reach the stadium fence. Max pulls out the cigarette pack and they each light one.

BANQUO

So who in their right mind handed us the crowns?

Girls' laughter off screen.

BANQUO (CONT'D)

Someone getting it on under the bleachers, probably.

MAX

You're disgusting.

Max leans against the fence, facing the parking lot, and gently adjusts Duncan's crown.

Banquo scopes the stadium, fingers wrapped around the fence.

BANQUO

Think we can see them from here?

MAX

Knock it off.

Banquo turns and leans on the fence beside Max. THREE GIRLS can be seen far in the background, approaching the fence.

BANQUO

How far is it to Lady's?

MAX

Just outside town. Dunsinane Hill.

BANQUO

Umm...she can't afford that.

MAX

Excuse me?

BANQUO

I'm not prying', it's just...whose house...

MAX

Are you shitting me?

The Girls are close.

BANQUO

Fine. Whatever. It's secluded. I like that. Good place to put it in Duffy.

THREE GIRLS

(intentionally startling)

Boo!

Max and Banquo jump out of their skins as they turn around. Banquo's cigarette drops. Max keeps ahold of his.

On the other side of the fence stand the three Witches, barefoot and clad in torn formal gowns. Their done-up hairstyles are incomplete, strands coming out of pins and knotty tangles marring otherwise straight locks.

FIRST WITCH

Nice crowns. Get them at the dollar store?

SECOND WITCH

At your highest heights, climb higher or fall hard.

FIRST WITCH

(snide)

What does "put it in" mean?

BANQUO

Oh, honey, it's like --

Banquo is pulled to the fence as Second Witch reaches through to grab his tie and tug him in. The mesh digs into his cheek.

Banquo does not notice First Witch tying his tie to the fence as Second Witch speaks to him...

SECOND WITCH

All hail, Banquo. Not so happy as Max, but much happier.

FIRST WITCH

A friend to kings --

SECOND WITCH

A lover of kings. Though not one.

FIRST WITCH

So all hail, Max and Banquo.

DUNSINANE, MO

BANQUO

Oh, and me too?

Third Witch holds Max captive by a piercing stare and reaches through the fence to pull the cigarette from his mouth.

First Witch moves away from Banquo along the fence. He tries to follow but his tie jerks him back. He's stuck to the fence. The witches crack up.

BANQUO (CONT'D)

What's your deal, girls?

FIRST WITCH

Oh, so that's how you see us?

SECOND WITCH

(snappy)

Shh.

MAX

So if you're not girls...

FIRST WITCH

You don't even know who you are.

MAX

And you do?

FIRST WITCH

Or who you're going to be, we
should say.

Second Witch glares at First Witch.

FIRST WITCH (CONT'D)

What?

MAX

What?

SECOND WITCH

Duncan holds you in high favor.

FIRST WITCH

It's a weakness.

Second Witch pokes the crown on Max's head. His hands quickly clasp it, not wanting to let go.

DUNSHANE, MO

FIRST WITCH (CONT'D)
He already handed it over. He's
asking to be relieved.

MAX
I don't feel any different.

SECOND WITCH
Because you have yet to truly earn
your crown.

Max watches Third Witch take a drag from his cigarette.

FIRST WITCH
You've got him in between your
teeth, Maxie. You just have to --

Third Witch bites her teeth down, hard.

Lady approaches from the parking lot.

FIRST WITCH (CONT'D)
Oh look, your lady is on her way.
Don't climb too high too fast,
Dearie Max. It'll make the fall
that much harder.

Lady approaches. The Witches skip away.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL STADIUM FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Skipping through the field, the Witches laugh with pleasure.

SECOND WITCH
"So that's how you see us?"

Second Witch high-fives First Witch.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - SAME

Still tied to the fence, Banquo watches the girls skip away.

BANQUO
We've munched the insane root that
takes the reason prisoner.

Lady approaches. Max's cigarette is somehow in his mouth again, which he doesn't realize.

LADY
What are you goons staring at?

Banquo points as the girls skip around the bleachers, gone.

BANQUO
Do you not --

LADY
What? Someone getting it on under
the bleachers?

Lady's face darkens as she notices Max's cigarette. She pulls it out of his mouth and tosses it through the fence.

Banquo lights a new cigarette and blows smoke toward Lady.

MAX
Lady, it's okay.

Max puts the crown on her head and leans in to kiss her.

LADY
No. You.

Lady sets the crown into Max's hands. While clasping his hands, she guides the crown onto his head.

BANQUO
You're a sly charmer, Lady.

LADY
And you're tied to a fence. What's
in these smokes?

Banquo tosses his cig at Lady. She catches it, unflinchingly.

LADY (CONT'D)
Let's not trade barbs tonight,
Banquo.