

"Doc Holliday's Gal"

Short film script by

Anikó J. Bartos & Alan C. Baird

The gunfight at the OK Corral has been done to death... but maybe you've never seen it from a woman's point of view.

Synopsis: Doc Holliday spends quality time in Tombstone with his Hungarian paramour, Mary Katherine Horony (a/k/a Katie Elder or Big Nose Kate), during the final hours before the gunfight that launched a passel o' movies (Wyatt Earp, etc.). Based on a true story.

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Alan C. Baird  
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FADE IN:

INT. BOARDINGHOUSE ROOM - AFTERNOON, 1881 ARIZONA

KATE, a handsome woman with a somewhat prominent nose, is sleeping. She's in her early thirties.

DOC, a thin, pale man who is also in his early thirties, sits on the other side of the bed, nearly dressed.

Doc is deep in thought, slowly turning the chamber of his nickel-plated revolver which makes a CLICK... CLICK... CLICK noise. The sound wakes Kate.

KATE

(sleepy, slight  
Hungarian accent)

Do you mind?

Doc smiles at her, and leans over for a kiss. She obliges and wraps him in a big hug.

DOC

(Georgia drawl)

Sair-et-lek, Kate, tel...

KATE

(teaching)

Tel-yes see-vem-bowl. I love you  
too, Doc. (pause) Is that so  
hard to say in English?

DOC

The words mean something to you,  
don't they?

KATE

Yes. But I always wonder if they  
mean anything to you.

She gets up and WALKS BEHIND a folding screen, to get dressed. Doc starts CLICKING his revolver again.

DOC

I just wanted to... (pause)  
We'll do something you like to do,  
when...

After a pause, Kate LEANS OUT from behind the screen, to finish his sentence:

KATE  
...this is all over? The worst  
part is the waiting.

DOC  
Yeah. The landlady said Ike  
Clanton was looking for me.

BEHIND THE SCREEN, Kate is shocked. But she composes herself before she STEPS OUT into the room, still only half dressed.

KATE  
Here?

DOC  
Downstairs. She wouldn't let him  
up. Said his head was bandaged.

KATE  
So he never went to sleep?

DOC  
Probably drank all night.

He COUGHS spasmodically, then sips from a silver flask. The COUGHING continues for a while, eventually calming down. Kate looks concerned, but tries to hide it.

KATE  
I wonder if that other cowboy is  
still mad about the last hand you  
won.

The both LAUGH loudly. Doc COUGHS a few more times.

DOC  
What did I bluff with?

KATE  
Not much. Two deuces and a  
one-eyed jack.

DOC  
He had me beat. Chickened out.

He drops a thick wad of bills on the nightstand.

KATE

He could afford it.

DOC

But can I?

Doc is distracted again. Kate strides over to him, and grabs his lapels. She lifts him nearly off the floor.

KATE

Why in tarnation did we come back to this shit-hole town?

DOC

Morgan asked me to. You were there.

KATE

You don't owe anything to those Earps.

DOC

Wyatt's my friend. My only friend. And now he needs me. (sighs) I warned you to stay in Tucson.

KATE

And wait for them to ship you back in a pine box?

DOC

There might be enough for oak.

He points at the wad of bills. Kate lets go of his lapels, smooths them down, and grins. Doc grins back.

KATE

Huh. You owe me that, for last night.

DOC

I still have to pay? I thought we had an understanding.

KATE

The understanding is this: I keep an eye on the other card players, laugh at your shitty jokes, and put up with your incredibly bony ass...

She slaps his butt.

KATE  
(continuing)  
...while you TRY to make it worth  
my while.

She picks up the pile of cash, tucks it into her  
cleavage, and sashays back BEHIND THE SCREEN.

DOC  
I wuz robbed.

KATE (O.S.)  
You just got the best deal of your  
life.

DOC  
(whispering to himself) She may  
be right. (louder, glancing out  
the window) I guess it's time to  
have a look around.

Kate COMES OUT again, still not fully dressed.

KATE  
(casually)  
Why not wait for Wyatt? Or Virgil?

DOC  
I'll be fine.

He picks up his walking stick and EXITS. Kate covers  
her face with her hands.

INT. SAME BOARDINGHOUSE ROOM - AN HOUR LATER

Kate is now dressed, and sitting by the window. She's  
looking outside, down at the street. She nervously  
glances from right to left, but everything seems to be  
quiet.

She hears FOOTSTEPS outside in the hall, and rushes  
over to the door. Doc ENTERS, chuckling to himself.  
Kate adjusts her mood to match his.

KATE  
Now what did you do?

DOC  
Nothin' much. Just teased the  
Clantons a little.

KATE

You're playing with fire.

DOC

It's fun. The Earps are riding roughshod over the Clantons. Beat the crap out of a couple of 'em.

KATE

Even if those Earps all had badges, that wouldn't make them into angels, you know.

DOC

I know.

KATE

They choose which laws to enforce, and when to enforce them.

DOC

I know!

KATE

They're able to grab big money with their grubby little hands only because Virgil's the marshal.

DOC

DAMMIT WOMAN, I KNOW!!

KATE

Meanwhile, the Clantons are actually good for business in this godforsaken town.

DOC

You're siding with the Clantons?!

KATE

No. But it's not very easy to tell the good guys from the bad guys.

DOC

It's simple: my friends are the good guys and their enemies are the bad guys.

KATE

Simple as that, eh?

DOC  
(lying brazenly)  
Simple as that.

KATE  
(smiling, calling  
his bluff)  
You're full of shit.

DOC  
That's what I like about you,  
Miss Katie Elder. You're almost  
as astute as me.

KATE  
(fawning)  
Ooo, Doctor Holliday, you have  
such a high-falutin' vocabulary.  
Please use smaller words, so that  
a simple, uncultured girl from a  
hick little town like Bu-da-pesht  
can understand you!

She simpers and bats her eyelashes at him. Doc is amused, but then something outside the window alarms him.

DOC  
I'll teach you a few things, if we  
get back to Tucson. But right  
now, I've got to step outside for  
a minute.

Doc RUNS OUT. Kate is stunned, and quietly repeats his words.

KATE  
"IF we get back to Tucson"?

INT. SAME BOARDINGHOUSE ROOM - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Kate is again sitting nervously at the window. An old footlocker is open on the bed. She's holding a couple of photographs, but the main object of her attention is outside, down on the street.

She again hears FOOTSTEPS outside in the hall, and rushes over to the door. Doc ENTERS. He's nervous, too, but his anxiety is now in sharp contrast to the calm demeanor that has suddenly come over Kate.

KATE  
(nonchalant)  
Anything happening?

DOC  
Not much.

He strides over to the window, and peers outside. Kate is no longer interested in the street scene and quietly EXHALES a sigh of relief, behind Doc's back.

KATE  
It's cold out there. Close the window.

DOC  
Okey-doke.

Doc does nothing except study the street. Kate notices the shotgun he's now carrying beneath his long coat.

KATE  
What happened to your walking stick?

DOC  
Virgil traded me for this. He doesn't want to spook the townsfolk, or the Clantons.

KATE  
You can't...

DOC  
(suddenly yelling)  
Kate, the Wild West is dying.  
Just like me.

Doc continues to look out the window. Kate's eyes open wide, behind his back.

KATE  
You're not dead yet, you old fool.

Doc turns around and smiles at her.

DOC  
Ten years ago, the Georgia doctors gave me three months to live.



KATE

You know you can't trust those  
medical quacks, DOCTOR Holliday.

DOC

(pleading)

Katie, I can't stand the idea of  
wasting away in some hospital. I  
want to die with a smoking gun in  
my hand.

KATE

And I want to die in my lover's  
arms.

Doc sizes her up, and a new understanding dawns on his  
face. This is a formidable woman.

DOC

You think you can manage that?

KATE

Sure as hell gonna try.

She's on the verge of tears. Doc avoids her fierce  
stare, and turns away, to look out the window.

DOC

A hundred years from now, what  
will they think of this time, this  
place? Or will they remember it  
at all?

Kate walks up to him, and hugs him from behind.

KATE

They will wish they could live  
with such passion, such an  
appetite for life.

DOC

Appetite for death, you mean.

KATE

They will remember your friendship  
with Wyatt, and they'll  
conveniently forget the bad  
things, the petty things. They  
will see you two as gods.

DOC

Gods? Ha!

Doc's LAUGHTER stops suddenly, when he notices that Kate is silent. She is still behind him, and now rests her head lightly upon his shoulder.

KATE

And if they remember me, it will  
be only because you loved me for a  
little while.

Doc's attention is drawn outside the window again. He sees something down in the street, and turns to leave. But Kate's arms are still around him, so he stops, and speaks gently:

DOC

It's time, Kate. I have to go.

KATE

I know. I know.

She finally lets him go. After a quick kiss, he's OUT THE DOOR. Kate WEEPS briefly, then walks to the window. After a DEEP BREATH, she leans out.

Within the space of thirty seconds, thirty SHOTS ring out, unevenly spaced. After the first SHOT, Kate ducks back inside the window, and drops to the floor. She quickly crawls halfway under the bed and covers her ears with her hands.

At each successive SHOT, she becomes more and more distraught. At the end of the VOLLEY, she's WAILING. Tears run freely down her face.

After a long pause, she hears FOOTSTEPS coming up the stairs. She wipes her eyes, and stands up, as if to face a firing squad.

KATE

(continuing)

Who will they send? Wyatt?  
Virgil? The barkeep?

She puts on a brave face, as the door OPENS.

It's DOC.

Kate's face blossoms into supreme happiness. Then she becomes concerned, as he limps over to sit on the bed.

KATE

(continuing)

Are you wounded?

DOC

Just a bruise. Damn holster saved  
me.

Doc puts his face in his hands, and his shoulders  
begin to shake.

KATE

What's wrong?

DOC

That was awful. Just awful.

Kate kneels at his feet, caressing and hugging him.

THE END