

“It’s a right shame it had to come to this, but you’n I both know this one-horse town ain’t quite big enough for the two of us.”





Adding dramatic effect to the afternoon showdown, a stiff wind whistled across the prairie. It buffeted the whiskers of the doberman and the wolf as they faced off across twenty paces, the high noon sun beating down on a pair of nearly identical cowboy hats perched atop the heads of the two duelists.

“Good thing ain’t neither of us horses then...” The wolf teased in possibly the most atrocious accent known to man, curling his fingers above his sidearm and tipping the brim of his hat a little lower over his eyes; mostly because he thought it made him look cool.

“ROCKY, THIS IS SERIOUS!”

The pointy-eared dog fumed and stomped a spurred boot, briefly irritated by the wolf’s shenanigans – and also how cool Rocky looked with his hat pulled down like that. Dex took a moment to adjust his vest, clearing his throat and getting back into position, barely inches away from grabbing the gun holstered at his hip.

“Now when I say draw, we... you know, draw.”

“I know how it works, Dex.”

Rocky rolled his eyes, a little quicker than normal; last thing he wanted was for the wily dog to get the jump on him while he was distracted being dramatic.





“Draaaw-gon!”

“Drrrrrawww-ing!”

“Drrrr-“

“DEX, LET’S GO!”

“DRAW!!”

Both cowboys, intent on proving their supremacy over this one-critter town, made their moves, and when the echoing pop of bullets had faded and the dust of the duel had settled, the wolf and dog stood motionless, staring intently at each other. The ensuing silence, save for the distant jingle of a passing ice cream truck, stretched between them, almost tangible.







“Did we both m—”

Before Rocky could finish his question, the doberman dropped his gun to the ground and fell to his knees with an exaggerated groan, his hands moving to cover his chest.

“Ya got me, partner...” Mimicking the labored breathing common in old westerns, the dog wiggled forward on both knees, then, careful of the ant bed to his right, collapsed forward onto his hands. It was the performance of his lifetime when he looked up at the victorious wolf, beseeching him with one outstretched arm. “O, bury me not on the lone prairie...”

With his final word given, the unlucky dog voiced his loudest, most obnoxious death rattle before falling face-first into the dirt, his hat tumbling off of his head and his tongue lolling out of his mouth in an exaggerated imitation of cowboy death.

“Guess your goose is cooked, huh sheriff?” Rocky couldn’t help but cheapen the gravitas of the moment, though he did take his hat off and hold it over his heart to pay respect to his fallen adversary. To his credit, Dex did a good job of remaining dead, silent and motionless on the ground.



Rocky, silently impressed by his playmate's commitment to the role, blew the smoke off the muzzle of his six-shooter, twirled it clumsily around his index finger, and tucked it back into the holster at his side; that was a trick he'd been working on.

“Chow time, cowboys!”

The babysitter's voice coming from inside had both boys back on their horses in a matter of seconds, the duel temporarily forgotten in favor of a race to the lunch table.

