

Part Thirteen

In Part Thirteen of "Blood Meridian," the narrative unfolds with the arrival of ragged mercenaries amidst a crowd in a town, and their display of gruesome trophies from their recent exploits—scalps and heads prominently showcased. The group, led by their commander Glanton, is welcomed by the local authorities, including the governor's lieutenant, who promises them a banquet and payment in gold later that evening. The riders, marked by their violent past, are greeted by local citizens who express a mix of awe and horror.

The scene shifts to the public baths where the mercenaries cleanse themselves, revealing scars and tattoos that symbolize their brutal history. Among them is the judge, who, with a striking physique lacking any body hair, presents a stark image as he surveys the murky waters. The local merchants soon capitalize on the mercenaries' arrival, offering goods and services that reflect their newfound fortune after the violent bounty they have claimed.

As night falls, the atmosphere becomes celebratory yet grotesque, with the mercenaries adorned with scalps and headed toward a raucous banquet. The scene transitions to a lavish dinner full of food and drink, where the camaraderie is overshadowed by gluttony and wild revelry. Amidst the festivities, chaos erupts; fights break out, and the air thickens with violence. Glanton plays a pivotal role as he divides the spoils of gold among his men without ceremony.

The unruly atmosphere continues into the night, punctuated by gunfire and desperate struggles as the Americans sow destruction, leaving a trail of fear and bloodshed in their wake. They slaughter a peaceful band of Tigua Indians without remorse, an act reflecting their relentless pursuit of carnage. The brutality of their actions becomes evident, as glimpses of the aftermath reveal a village left devastated, with corpses strewn about like forgotten refuse.

Seeking respite, they move through the region with little regard for the lives of the natives they encounter, treating them as mere obstacles in their savage journey. Time passes, and their path leads them into further violence and chaos until ultimately they arrive at the city, where their reputation for savagery precedes them. Tension mounts as the governor's once-promised rewards turn sour, and their fate hangs precariously in the balance under the weight of their violent past .