

DUNN, SUMNER, POWELL

1.2 THE EMMA DEAN

John Wesley POWELL is our leader- a one-armed crazyface with a fiery temper and an excitable soul. Powell hates suits and loves adventures. William DUNN is a hunter with long black hair. Dunn wears beaverskin always. SUMNER is widely known to be the Bear Grylls of the 1860s. Sumner will just go snowshoeing through the Rocky Mountains in winter because "no one had done it yet."

Dunn and Powell sit on land next to the EMMA DEAN while Sumner ties it off. The rapids rush.

START

DUNN. So what should we name that mountain?

SUMNER. You have an idea?

DUNN. I have a few ideas!

POWELL. And I have a few ideas

DUNN. I just have a few ideas

POWELL. Sumner, do you have any ideas?

SUMNER. No

POWELL. So Sumner has no ideas and you have a few ideas and I have a few ideas.

DUNN. Should I do my ideas?

POWELL. Yeah let's hear your ideas

DUNN. Okay. Here they are!

- Dunn Mountain
- Mount Dunn
- Craggy Range
- Volcano Of Dunn

POWELL. So you want to name it after yourself?

DUNN. No, there's Craggy Range, that has nothing to do with me.

POWELL. Volcano of Dunn, huh?

DUNN. Yeah I was thinking, you know? If I'm gonna name something after myself, I want it to pop.

POWELL. You know the Unwritten Rules.

DUNN. Well, yeah, but they're Unwritten, we only follow them half the time.

POWELL. Let's go through em. Just to make sure we're covering some of the bases

DUNN. The Unwritten Rules for Getting Something Named After You ARE:

1. You are the sole discoverer of the thing
2. You Accomplished Something directly in relation to the thing
3. No one objects and everyone agrees

POWELL. Can you prove those points?

DUNN. Yup! 1. I remarked on the strange colors and jagged edges of that mountain before either of you

SUMNER. Wait no, that was me.

POWELL. What did you say, Sumner?

SUMNER. I said "Would ya Look at That"

DUNN. But yeah Sumner you just said Look at That then I said "hey wow. I've never seen a mountain with such jagged edges cutting up the sky like that!"

POWELL. I might have to steal that!

SUMNER. What about Rule 3? I object.

DUNN. To what?

SUMNER. It's not Dunn's mountain, it should be my mountain. But I don't want it.

POWELL. Dunn, we're the only three who can see this mountain. It's pretty, sure, but it was hard to place from any other vantage point. Do you really want a legacy like that?

DUNN. Hmm.

SUMNER. Boat's tied.

POWELL. You'll have your mountain, Dunn.

SUMNER. Let's call the mountain Knife's Peak. Cause it looks like a knife

POWELL. Or...Knife's Point. I like that better.

DUNN. That's super literal though

POWELL. "I hereby name this mountain Knife's Point."
There. Where's my journal?

SUMNER. There's your journal.

POWELL. Thank you, Sumner.

Powell writes. Quill. Awkward. One hand. Dunn watches this.

DUNN. I thought Flaming Gorge was our best name yet.

POWELL. That was good.

DUNN. I think we should all work as a team to find more poetry for these names.

POWELL. Yeah

DUNN. I'm going to work at that for the future. Sumner?

SUMNER. Sounds good.

DUNN. I just want to make sure we're doing the best we can.

Powell continues to write. Sumner unloads the necessary equipment. Dunn looks at the scenery, probably for other things to attempt to name.

STOP

Hawkins/Hall

1.3 THE MAID OF THE CANYON

Campfire, middle-morning. HAWKINS is cooking sausages and HALL is working on a map.

START

HAWKINS. Hall, get up! Dunn ain't fishin today, so this may be all you get

HALL. Hawkins, wait, why isn't Dunn fishin?

HAWKINS. You wanted Dunn on your map team today, so Powell is fishin.

HALL. Powell? Give me two sausages.

HAWKINS. Everybody only gets one sausage. I'd have to rat you out. Sorry about that, but I'm not that sorry. Sausage UP.

HALL. Why can't you fish today, Hawkins?

HAWKINS. I have to do inventory. And lemme tell ya. At supper, some heads are gonna roll.

HALL. Wait why? Wait whose heads?

HAWKINS. The Howlands.

HALL. Wait what? Wait what about the Howlands?

HAWKINS. Okay so you know how Seneca starts in with a story EVERY night when we're all eating dinner, and then O.G. is always like "I gotta take a leak," right?

HALL. Yeah. Yeah like every night.

HAWKINS. O.G.'s not taking a leak. He's filching tobacco.

HALL. Wait what?? How do you know?

HAWKINS. I have my theories. He doesn't go where the rest of us go. I'm gonna bring it the FUCK up at dinner.

HALL. That SUCKS. The Howlands are like—

HAWKINS. Who was their mother? And why was she not a more discerning person?

HALL. How was she okay with raising total assholes?

HAWKINS. Missus Howland. "MEESSSUS HOWLANT, OH-LA-LAAAA I AM MEESSUS HOWLANT"

HALL. I mean I get it though. Their dad died like right in front of them.

HAWKINS. Yeah

HALL. And they have to like, put up with Goodman, who is

HAWKINS. *(British)* "I DO PROCLAIM." So British.

HALL. SO British.

HAWKINS. I feel like there is like one dud in every boat. Like Old Shady has to deal with Bradley who can't stop talking—

HALL. Who's the dud in our boat?

HAWKINS. Not me, I make sausage!

Hall looks offended

Nah, no I was, I was kidding. You're cool. You make maps. You pack light. You're not like...weirdly defensive or anything. No seriously seriously. We won the lottery with our boat. Party boat!

BOTH. PARTY BOOOOAT

HALL. Maid of the Canyon for the win! OK. I'm going for a bath in the river.

HAWKINS. There's a calm patch that way

HALL. Don't tell the map guy where the calm patches are.

HAWKINS. Awright awright awright

BOTH. Friendship!

HANDSHAKE. FRIENDSHIP.

STOP

BRADLEY / OLD SHADY

1.4 THE KITTY CLYDE'S SISTER

Old Shady and Bradley secure everything inside the Kitty Clyde's Sister to prevent spillage before a day of rapid-running. Old Shady does not like people. Bradley loves people and generally relating to them.

START

BRADLEY. So then my mother died so I went back to Wisconsin for awhile and took some time to get my shit together you know? It was rough because I really really loved my mother? She was totally my rock? But I know God's got her smiling down on me during this trip and it was always her dream to see the West. She only ever got as far as Wisconsin but that was a long ways, considering she was Maryland, born and raised. Wait, where's your family from again?

OLD SHADY. Wisconsin

BRADLEY. Wait no shit! Where in Wisconsin??

OLD SHADY. Boone

BRADLEY. Oh my god that's probably only two hundred miles from where my Ma lived. The world is a small small place sometimes.

OLD SHADY. Make sure it's tied tight

BRADLEY. I am. I am, no worries

OLD SHADY. The boat'll tip. Supplies will fall out.

BRADLEY. No I know, I know

OLD SHADY. Four boats 100 yards downstream.

BRADLEY. I got faith. I got faith, Shady.
When did they start calling you Shady?
When, in the War?

OLD SHADY. .

BRADLEY. Yeah I know. I was in it. I had a real rough time.
I mean, I was pretty young when I joined up so I actually didn't do any fighting so—
I guess I was just lucky with the timing.

OLD SHADY. .

BRADLEY. But I heard you were pretty instrumental in Grant's Army. You and Major Powell!

OLD SHADY. *(Inhales. Opens his mouth to say something. Decides against it. Closes his mouth. Exhales)*

BRADLEY. Was it crazy when Major Powell lost an arm? Were you sad? Or worried? I would feel crazy if my brother lost an arm.

OLD SHADY. I think we're ready to lift.

BRADLEY. Oh okay

STOP

Powell runs over to Bradley and Old Shady, covered in satchels, giggly.

POWELL. I did the satchels!

I've got maize in one satchel, and coffee in another, and all of the extra pairs of pants in the other one. And my personal satchel of journal and quill and miscellaneous papers.

OLD SHADY. We've got your beans in this boat John Wesley.

POWELL. You better keep those safe or
Or I'll decry you in my journal!

OLD SHADY. I know

BRADLEY. Old Shady and I were just talking about the war.

POWELL. Why would you ever do that?

BRADLEY. Well we just don't talk much on our boat so I was—

Powell cuts Bradley off swiftly with one hand.

POWELL. Bradley, do you know why our Ma started calling Old Shady "Old Shady?" Because when we were kids we used to pretend to be trees, and I would get bored easy but Shady would stand in the field all day. Right, Shady?

OLD SHADY. A tree in the breeze.

POWELL. Alright boats! In the water! We've got a big, bright, sunny day ahead of us!

1.6 Carrying THE NO-NAME

GOODMAN is carrying the NO-NAME from the back, with SENECA and O.G. HOWLAND in the middle and lead, respectively. GOODMAN is a red-faced British man. The HOWLANDS are tobacco-addled brothers. They have ciggies in their mouths. They are pretty calm. Goodman is struggling a little.

START

GOODMAN. I say, how CAN you smoke AND hoist the boat at the same time?

SENECA. O.G. taught me how to roll a cigarette while riding a horse

O.G. Easy as guttin a fish.

SENECA. We did roll these before we left though

O.G. Wanted to keep things movin along.

GOODMAN. I haven't half a mind to smoke. It really funks up my complexion

SENECA. I was gonna offer you one, but it sounds like you don't want it.

GOODMAN. I say this boat IS heavy

O.G. Pretty light if you ask me

GOODMAN. But at least it shields us from the sun

O.G. Yeah sure

SENECA. It's shielding me, but O.G.'s getting it

O.G. A little sun never hurt nobody

GOODMAN. Well I DO burn easily, especially in these summer months. It's all part of my heritage, you see. The Yorkshire-born were never meant to be splayed out on some desert rock. We are used to the doom and gloom, the hurdy gurdy, the sturm and drang, you see. The howling gales and the lost winds.

O.G. Wuthering Heights.

GOODMAN. Oh the BRONTE sisters. That's right! You're in the printing business! I was wondering how you knew about-

O.G. I heard the Brontes were crazy.

GOODMAN. Oh yes. They were crazy!

O.G. Yeah I heard that book is all about people who drive their neighbors crazy.

O.G. and SENECA make strange eyes at Goodman

GOODMAN. I— *(panting)* Woo *(panting)* Ooh, I'm getting winded. Can we stop a bit?

SENECA. Let's stop a bit.

They stop for a bit, put the boat down. Grunts of "Heave!" and "Ho!" are heard from other groups.

SENECA. You know how hard it is going to be to pick the boat back up again, right?

O.G. Yeah I know. Goodman's the one who wanted to stop. Didn't you, Goodman?

They both look at Goodman. The Howlands have threatening eyeballs.

GOODMAN. Just for a moment. Just to catch my breath.
Oh! Oh say! Do you see on that rock? It looks like words

Goodman points to a nearby rock. They approach the nearby rock. They read:

O.G. "Ashley. One Eight"...I can't read the next one... three? or "Five"

GOODMAN. I think it's a three. 1835?

STOP

ALL. It could also be a 5. 1855? 1835? ASHLEY.

FULL CAST. *(considering this)* ASHLEY.

SENECA / O.G. / HAWKINS

START

SENECA. Once, when my brother and I were very young
We were out in front of our house playing in the snow
With a boy who lived one or two miles from us
When our mother rang the dinner bell
We asked if we could have our friend for dinner
But she said no, so
We ran back inside
And then four or five days later
They found our little neighbor friend on the side of the road
They say he froze to death while walking home

Silence. So weird.

O.G. I gotta take a leak.

Hawkins makes eyes to Hall like "I'ma bring the tobacco the fuck up right now!"

SENECA. OK. I'll finish your fish, O.G.

HAWKINS. Yeah, O.G. You TAKE that leak

O.G. What?

HAWKINS. Nothin

Hall laughs.

O.G. What?

HAWKINS. Nothing.

O.G. I gotta piss

HAWKINS. Yeah. You said.

O.G. So? So what are you talking at me for? Don't you ever have to piss?

HAWKINS. Just make sure it's behind a tree somewhere so we won't see the smoke

SENECA. You insinuating something about my brother?

HAWKINS. Oh, I'm insinuating alright. Your brother's been stealing tobacco.

DUNN, & BRADLEY. What?

O.G. That's a bold claim, my friend.

Seneca and O.G. makes a move toward Hawkins

HAWKINS. I do the inventory, my friend. That's all. I do the inventory.

HALL. Fish down! Fish down!

SENECA. Hawkins, you shouldn't get into my brother's business.

O.G. I gotta take a leak, friend

HAWKINS. You just dropped several of my fish, friend

STOP → **O.G.** I'll eat fish off the fuckin floor because I can take a little grit in my dinner.

HALL. Was that a threat? Are you threatening my BOATMATE?

SUMNER. Hall, calm down, this has nothing to do with you.

HALL. Party Boat sticks together!

POWELL. Will you all step three paces away from each other?
That's an order.

Seneca and Hawkins step back from each other.

POWELL. O.G., I advise you to go over behind that tree and smoke your cigarette

O.G. Hey

POWELL. And come back, and thank Hawkins and Dunn for the fish we eat tonight.
Seneca, the bond you share with O.G. is very touching,
But you have to learn to hold your temper. No dessert for you

Hawkins laughs because there is never dessert.

POWELL. And Hawkins

HAWKINS. Yes sir

POWELL. If someone wants to filch tobacco on my watch, that should be on his
conscience, not yours. I say that as a nonsmoker though so I understand it may be
more frustrating for others.
Raise your hand if you smoke.

Shady

Seneca, O.G., Hawkins, Hall, and Old Shady raise their hands. Bradley sort of half raises his hand.

BRADLEY. I mean I smoke when I'm stressed but-

POWELL. Alright, so you guys should work out some sort of system with the tobacco, because I think it's stupid that I should be bothered with it.

SUMNER. Before we dig in tonight, to this feast, I would like to make a toast.

Dunn is pouring whiskey for people.

SUMNER. John Baker described Ashley as a good man.
I'm sure his crew were good men.
I'd like to raise my glass full of nothing—

DUNN. *(whisper)* I got the whiskey

SUMNER. *(picking up on that)* I'd like to raise my glass of future-whiskey
To Ashley and his crew.

SUMNER. Ashley was brave for attempting what he did.
And he was noble for leaving us a warning of what's to come.
To Ashley.

ALL. To Ashley.

A silence.

O.G. I gotta take a leak

O.G. leaves. They watch him go.

HAWKINS. Alright, let's dig in.

Tin plates passed around.

The sounds of forks on tin plates and fish-eating.

START

SHADY. *(a little song)* Tin fish tin fish tin fish dinner
What a dish for a pack of sinners
Tin fish tin fish on my plate
What a dish at any rate
Tin fish tin fish from the river
It took my heart so I took its liver

Tin fish tin fish in my belly
Fish on tin gets my tin smelly
Tin fish tin fish tin fish time
Tin fish tin fish, fish sublime.

O.G. returns. A slow clap from somewhere. Old Shady grins to himself.

STOP

DUNN. Why didn't we portage? Tell me, Powell.

POWELL. I didn't want to portage because it was impossible to portage that section of the river

DUNN. I say we could have tried it. You hardly entertained a very viable option that could have saved us a boat. We have a long way to go yet-

POWELL. We could not have portaged that part of the river

O.G. We found a bank eventually. We could have found other banks.

SENECA. Why didn't we try to portage again?

POWELL. Oh, you too now?

HAWKINS. Food's up

SENECA. We lost a bunch of shit in our boat. All I'm saying.

DUNN. You didn't want to portage because you're useless when we portage.

POWELL. And I'm not useless when we row, and when there's a man overboard, and when we have to grip walls? If I'm holding on to one thing, I can't hold on to anything else.

DUNN. So tell me, then, Powell, why you are the one in charge of the expedition when you can't execute your own orders?

POWELL. Well. Some of you are here for sport and some of you are here for skill and some of you are here because you get a kick out of killing bears and some of you are here because it got your ass out of the army on a good note and some of you are here because you have nowhere else to go. You know why I'm here? I'm here because my friend, the fucking PRESIDENT of the UNITED STATES, needed a better knowledge of the arid lands of this nation. I am here because I was given a job. And in case you didn't know, it's hard for gimps to get jobs around these parts, so I am going to do this job to the best of my ability. And it just so happens that I've run more rivers than any of you all put together—I did the fuckin Mississippi up and down when I was 17 years old and I've done more tributaries than you can name on BOTH of your sorry hands. If you want to go over what we could have done to save the No-Name, then be my guest. But, instead of that, I am going to focus on the marvelous forethought we put into divvying up most of our supplies between each boat. And I'm going to thank God that none of us perished today, and that none of us broke any crucial bones. All of that is a win, in my book. We won't make it to the end of this expedition if we focus on anything

START

other than wins. So, if you don't want to go down to the wreckage tomorrow, then I'm sure I can rely on one of your fellow crew members to be a good sport. You got your fucking cliff, Dunn. Now how about a nice fucking rabbit dinner.

◀ — STOP

Hawkins plates up a fine plate and gives it to Powell. Powell passes it to Dunn.

POWELL. Who's next?

Slow clap from Old Shady.
END OF ACT ONE

DUNN/SUMNER

ACT TWO

2.1 THE NEXT DAY

Bradley and Powell climb a jagged cliff to get a better view of the river's course down below. Sumner and Dunn board the Maid of the Canyon and make their way toward the wreckage of the No-Name. A split scene—one on boat navigating a little rapid, one on canyon wall.

START

MAID OF THE CANYON

SUMNER. I was surprised you decided to come along.

DUNN. There's no good hunting around this part of the river. Too cliffy.

SUMNER. You really don't think we'll find anything?

DUNN. Maybe. A bunch of broken glass. Ope! Ope! Steady!

SUMNER. I don't like having this mood around. Stern. Stern. Steady. You and Powell, you guys should talk

DUNN. The last time we talked, I offered my opinion, he ignored it. And now we've gone and lost a boat.

SUMNER. We're gonna lose a boat now and again. We're on a river. Whoa-

DUNN. Bounce your oar. Balance. We're only still in Utah. We can't sustain-

SUMNER. Steady as she goes. Rocks all over

DUNN. we can't sustain this all the way to the Big Canyon. Not if we're all making it through. Powell just loves the sound of his own ideas.

SUMNER. You two are a match made.

DUNN. What? Oh hey watch the.

SUMNER. Watchin. Watchin. You both just think you're always right.

Most of the time one of you is. Sometimes both of you are

You're both smart people but hey whoa okay this crest is foamy

DUNN. It's gonna pool in a few yards. It's gonna pool. That's why there's all this foam. If I was leading this expedition/

SUMNER. Nope, you're not leading this expedition. You're here to row and hunt. I'm here to row, help navigate near-impossible situations, and survive this so I get to go to Alaska next year.

DUNN. Well yeah but

SUMNER. After that beef last night I'm starting to think there are two sides. Why are there two sides?

DUNN. Whoa Hey Pooling Pooling

SUMNER. There she is!

DUNN. Hole up! Dock it, dock it. Tie off

SUMNER. Okay easy now easy watch that Easy Steady Hey now

ALL. Heyyyyyyy No-Name. Heyyyy there.

DUNN. She's in pieces. I'll jump in and take a look.

SUMNER. Hey Dunn. There doesn't need to be two sides.

DUNN. Keep that oar near in case I need to grab it..

STOP

Dunn jumps into the water and wades toward the wreckage.

Goodman

START

GOODMAN. Oh Hallo! A little fish!
Oh hello fish!
A lovely day...
TO BE EATEN! HA!
Hello SCHOOL of fish
I am going to CATCH YOU IN THIS SACK!
HA HA!!!
LITTLE FISHIES
In my sack
Burlap is a lovely color on you, fishies
And soon you'll all live in my stomach
MMmmm
mmMMMMMmm
I will eat you
If only I had a crisp Muscadet
And I was sunning myself in Marseille
The summers there, you know
They are absolutely divine
Everyone walks around in swimming trunks
And their skin is crispy with sunning
And they drink Muscadet and they eat oysters
And it's all very civilized
And there are finer things
That people wear, and celebrate
It's different there, than here
Isn't it, fishies?
People don't risk death
In Provence
Other than trying a strange bouillabase
My brother hates the French
But I love them
I think I would like to go back
I don't think my life should end
Without another walk on the beaches of Marseille
What do you think, Fishy?
Think, fishy. Think!
Into my sack you go.

STOP