

HALF-BROKE HORSES, SYNOPSIS

I	SALT DRAW	TOPICS
1	Flash flood, Lily in charge. Mom: <i>"God's will"</i> (1), Dad: <i>"Maybe the angel was you."</i>	the West , the environment
2	High Lonesome – hard place for hard creatures, Dad's money-making schemes, his childhood accident ⇒ impaired health	
3	Life in a "dugout", Dad convicted of murder, mosquitoes – yellow jack fever – foolish Mom	Life in the West
4	Parents' families, Dad's Irish background, live-in hands: Apache, Lupe	Irish immigration
5	Dugout flooded, Mom's <i>"God's will"</i> . (2) Scavenged timber: new house	
6	God's will (3), Dad believes in self-sufficiency, smart but challenged by speech impediment, Prohibitionist, home schooling	the American dream
7	Mom's airs and graces, close to dainty daughter, ambitious for son Buster, traditional ideas of gender roles	gender
8	Simple lifestyle, few amenities. Dad: "Think like a horse", <i>"Most important thing in life [...] learn how to fall"</i> . Brutal "training" for "Roosevelt", the horse – sold off <i>"If you can't stop a horse, sell him. If you can't sell him, shoot him."</i>	education
9	Lily selling eggs, learning about market laws. Ruptured appendix: <i>"If I risked my life, I should do it for a Purpose."</i> <i>"All I had to do was to figure out what my Purpose was"</i> .	the economy
10	Tornado: dealing with weather events, surviving them	the West (environment)
11	House and windmill wrecked: Life in west Texas too hard – quitting – God's will (4) ⇒ time to move on	the American dream , mobility
	II THE MIRACULOUS STAIRCASE	
1	Casey Ranch ⇒ KC Ranch, old Spanish orchards.– Eureka: <i>"You suddenly understood something that puzzled you. It made you think it might just be possible to get a handle on this world after all."</i>	
2	Dad's arguing for phonetic spelling and Billy the Kid's biography	the West , history
3	Buster's education more important than Lily's ⇒ "The Sisters of Loretto Academy of the Light in Santa Fe" – life there like "one long vacation". Lily's academic achievement. Careers for women: a nurse, a secretary, a teacher	gender roles
4	Funds dry up: <i>"my one shot at education blown"</i> but: <i>"When God closes a window, he opens a door. But it is up to you to find it."</i>	the American dream , a new start
5	Dad's arguments: 1) Great Danes instead of Lily's tuition 2) Buster's education secured 3) The family needs a farm worker.	gender roles
6	The Clemenses, Dorothy, blood feuds. Great Danes shot.	the West , justice
7	Neighbours: <i>"You never knew when you might need someone's help."</i> Old Man Pucket's half-broke horses	
8	Patches wins races. Teaching job available (WWI). Dad: <i>"Seems you been dealt a card [...] I guess you better go on and play it."</i>	education
9	Itinerant replacement teacher in Red Lake, Arizona, 500 west. Dad's pearl-handled six-shooter <i>"You had to do what you had to do."</i> <i>"Hope for the best and plan for the worst."</i>	the American dream , firearms
	III PROMISES	
1	Journey: <i>"greet but keep your distance"</i> . Shopkeeper: <i>"You're the first this week. But it's only Wednesday."</i> Job: <i>"I had made it through that darned door."</i>	Lily's trail
2	Red Lake: From grazing land to farmland ⇒ erosion. 15 students of all ages and abilities in one classroom reading "anything you can bring". Itinerant teacher Lily moved about for three years: <i>"I never met a kid I couldn't teach. Every kid was good at something and the trick was to find out what it was, then use it to teach them everything else."</i> MacInthosh: <i>"Your services are no longer required"</i> ⇒ <i>"Find yourself a husband"</i> .	West , Dust Bowl gender roles the economy
3	The airplane ⇒ Eureka	transportation
4	Back at KC: Dorothy runs the place, Helen's pipedreams. <i>"The future was</i>	transportation

	<i>coming and there was only one way to deal with it.</i> Choice: Stay or <i>“strike out on my own”</i> ?	
5	Chicago: Faces of city people <i>“shut off”</i> . Working as a housemaid with a trader, all the modern conveniences: <i>“A maid should keep her head down.”</i> <i>“Polishing silver for rich dunderheads was not my Purpose”</i> , studying for a diploma in the evenings. Feisty Minnie Hannagan	The big city the 20s (jazz)
6	Minnie’s accident – Lily trims her own hair: <i>“I looked the model of the Chicago flapper”</i> . Ted Conover, <i>“a bit of huckster”</i> , <i>“I fell hard for that fellow.”</i>	gender roles flappers
7	Ted courts her, swimming lesson, ring, marriage, short honeymoon	
8	Lily and Ted dream “big”: Save money, Lily’s high-school diploma. Car accident: Ted’s bigamy	crime in the big city (the 20s)
9	Savings gone, Lily rumbles Ted but spares his wife.	
10	Lily attacks and withdraws	
11	Marriage is annulled, the ring is a fake	
12	Chicago: After eight years of <i>“pointless drudgery”</i> , a 27-year-old now, disappointed of men, in need of a job, aiming for a college degree.	the American Dream , a new start
IV THE RED SILK SHIRT		
1	KC – aging but little change, mail order from “Sears and Roebuck”. Worries about Helen. Mom on Lily’s marriage prospects: <i>“A package that has been opened doesn’t have the same appeal.”</i> Lily’s ambition for College.	Hollywood: the film industry
2	3rd journey to Red Lake, a <i>“place for scoundrels and eccentrics”</i> . Topsoil erosion through overgrazing obvious now. Teaching 36 students <i>“of all ages, sizes and breeds”</i> . – Half-broke horse for the new schoolmarm.	Dust Bowl (environment)
3	Lily gains a reputation winning races on “Red Devil”. Her secret student Rooster. – Prohibition largely ignored.	prohibition
4	<i>“Crimson-coloured silk shirt”</i> is Lily’s trademark. “Big” Jim Smith impressed with Lily’s stamina after being thrown off	transportation (Henry Ford)
5	Learning to drive the “Flivver”, model T: <i>“Cars obeyed you”</i> at a breakneck speed of 25m/h. Jim’s CV: <i>“The man was no slouch.”</i>	religion
6	Helen becoming a “floozy”, pregnant, Lily invites her to Red Lake.	
8	Helen’s pregnancy. Father Cavanaugh: <i>“She’s with child and unmarried”</i> . Local women shun Helen, men disrespect her. <i>“Fish-faced pencil pusher”</i> MacIntosh giving Lily the sack once more.	gender roles religion
9	Lily still makes plans, Helen’s ultimate despair.	
10	Jim, Rooster and Lily bury Helen <i>“somewhere nice”</i> .	
V LAMBS		
1	<i>“When people kill themselves, they think they’re ending the pain but all they’re doing is passing it on to those they leave behind.”</i> Kids of Lily’s own: <i>“Jim Smith, do you want to marry me?”</i> – on two conditions, 1) as partners, 2) as his only wife. (Jim being <i>“a Jack Mormon”</i> cf. IV 5 .)	gender roles
2	Wedding, children at the age of 29? – Off to Ash Fork on route 66, new garage self-built, entrepreneurial spirit, proud of all the modern conveniences	the American dream , a new start
3	Baby Rosemary successfully delivered by wise Granny Combs.	
4	2nd baby, “Little Jim”. Bankruptcy looms. With Mr Lee’s homemade booze Lily, a “liquor lady”, runs a “speakeasy”: the profit of 20\$/month balances the books.	the economy the great Depression
5	Lambs saved by Jim’s bright idea – pet lamb for Rosemary.	
6	The police tipped off but bawled out. End of bootlegging ⇒ foreclosure	firearms
7	Plans to join Okies’ flight to California to escape Depression and Dust Bowl: Management of a farm is offered.	the economy
8	2-day journey to explore 160 miles. <i>“a big difference between needing things and wanting things”</i> . Self-sufficiency, self-reliance.	the American dream , transportation
9	Using a bulldozer to build “Big Jim” dam. Drought depresses cattle prices.	the environment
10	Cowboys <i>“mostly Mexican and Havasupai: misfits, runaways and boys who’d been whipped too hard, half-broke horses themselves”</i> . <i>“In this life [...] barely</i>	West , cowboys

	<i>anyone gets to do what they want to do.” Lily: “Animals act like they hate to be penned up but the fact is they don’t know what to do with freedom.”</i>	
11	Luxuries like cleaning given up. Lily’s cooking: <i>“no surprises but no disappointments either”</i> . Rosemary accident-prone, <i>“a little like a half broke horse”</i> .	
12	Weather report on the radio more urgent than Hitler. Jim: <i>“Never take water for granted. [...] Always cherish it. Always beware of it.”</i>	
13	Torrential rain after long drought: Big Jim’s dam saved just in time.	West , environment
14	The rain damages other places but creates a wildflower paradise.	
VI TEACHER LADY		
1	Drought and poverty creates a buyers’ market for land, adding Hackberry (all-year well): together 180.000 acres – 10.000 cattle sold. Jim buys lead pipe in LA ⇒ constant supply of water. <i>“Additional ways to save money”</i>	the economy
2	Flying lessons: Lily, 39 years of age, 10 of them with Jim, gets flying lessons: an investment in “me” – at long last.	Amelia Earhart, Eleanor Roosevelt
3	Teaching post in “Main Street” with Mormons, overgrazing ⇒ poverty. <i>“America is a free country. [...] And that means people are free to believe whatever cockamamie thing they want to believe.”</i> <i>“The choice was a free one only if you know what your alternatives were.”</i>	American dream , freedom of religion the economy the “New Deal”
4	Lily fires a warning shot at Uncle Eli, aiming to miss.“ – Lily sacked.	
5	New job in Peach Springs, teaching plus extra jobs 80\$ a month, the hearse – Lily’s harsh lesson about playing “hooky” for her children.	
6	Taxi for three dainty ladies from Brooklyn: breaking problems	
7	Electric lights on Christmas: a new “magic” experience.	
8	2nd year at Peach Springs: 25 students. <i>“Johnny Johnson needed to learn a lesson you couldn’t spell out on the blackboard, you had to beat it into him.”</i>	gender issues
9	Johnny’s father retaliates. Jim: <i>“This is getting almost predictable.”</i>	
10	“Gone with the Wind” – Lily’s asserts herself with show-off dress.	Civil Rights
VII THE GARDEN OF EDEN		
1	Children’s pastimes, racing Santa Fe train, “tough it out”, catching a wild horse	
2	Kids farmed out to boarding school, Lily in Phoenix taking diploma in half the time with double the workload. Children’s conduct is “wild” and disruptive. Lily gets her degree and takes her half-broke kids home.	WWII
3	Teaching job at “Big Sandy” but still nursing Dad in his dying hours. American optimism: <i>“If you are down, all you need to do is act like you’re feeling good and the next thing you know, you are.”</i> Getting petrol for free, confronted with clichés: saint or whore?	the American dream : optimism gender roles
4	Old folk’s home. <i>“Life’s too short to worry what other people think of you.”</i> Taking the corpse back home.	
5	Dad’s life: <i>“He hadn’t drawn the best cards but he played his hand darned well, so what was there to grief for?”</i> (cf. I 6) Choices: Selling land to pay outstanding tax or keep and use savings? “The Madonna of the Trail”, bonnet, baby and rifle: <i>“That’s art.”</i>	West homesteaders
6	Roundup of cattle at Xmas owing to the war. Fidel Hanna close to Rosemary.	West cattle
7	Inspection of the Havasupai children’s living conditions by “The Arizona Department of Education” and the “Bureau of Indian Affairs”. Inspectors: <i>“They always had very high standards and they let you know that you didn’t quite measure up to them.”</i> Havasupai children forcibly taken to boarding school. Fidel: schooling makes unfit for both the valley and the outside world: <i>“What turns to stone is inside you.”</i> Rosemary’s unwise night out.	American Indians
8	Rosemary: <i>“When I have children, I’m never going to whip them.”</i> Fidel Hanna’s fate: fugitive, war hero, shell-shocked, ostracised, <i>“turned to stone”</i> . “Suit”, “Gaiters” and “Boots” come to inspect, their film-clouded imagination, they fire staff, including Jim ⇒ leaving the Garden of Eden for good	American Indians West : Western films the global economy
VIII GUMSHOES		
1	A new start in Phoenix ⇒ new “choppers” (dentures) are a status symbol:	detective stories life in the city

	<i>"They're not teeth. They're real dentures."</i>	
2	<i>"Phoenix was square, straight, boxy and boxed in, and above all, fake." You can't see the ground.</i> Driving cars is not freedom but <i>"sitting in cages"</i> . Depressed house prices make for a buyer's market. <i>"We're not bringing misfortune on these people, we're just taking advantage of it."</i> Jim is a warehouse manager, Lily a teacher, armed: <i>"no worries about the weather and the cattle and the horses"</i> like on a farm but <i>"in Phoenix people worried about themselves all the time."</i>	transportation in the city
3	Rosemary shocked by the death of hundreds of thousands of people and "mice and birds", afraid of her own government. Lily: <i>"That's what happens when you go around starting wars."</i>	Hiroshima
4	Rosemary's painting: <i>"If there's something about the world that you don't like, you can paint a painting that makes it the way you want it to be"</i> . Lily: <i>"[...] most women still had to choose between being a nurse, a secretary, and a teacher."</i> But: <i>"There were more rules for teachers than for students."</i> No guns.	firearms frowned upon
5	<i>"Jim wasn't a deskman."</i> Cutting down trees to make room for parking: <i>"Seems to me you lose more than you gain."</i> Jim is called to help to cope with the hard winter: <i>"He was Big Jim again."</i> Gaiter's offer refused: <i>"I'd been a servant before, and once was enough."</i>	
6	Jim's fame makes him attractive to women. Rosemary is to spy on Jim like a "gumshoe". ⇒ <i>"Maybe we should leave."</i>	
IX THE FLYBOY		
1	Horse Mesa – "a glorified camp" for workers at the "Horse Mesa Dam". Trip: Apache Junction ⇒ Tortilla Flats ⇒ the Apache Trail ⇒ Superstition Mountains ⇒ Agnes Weeps ⇒ Lily Sings. Jim working as a road builder for the "Bureau of Land Reclamation"; Lily: <i>"teaching my students what I thought they needed to know."</i>	Depression FDR's New Deal, public work projects
2	Rosemary farmed out to a small fancy school in Tucson. Pearls fake or genuine: <i>"If you hold your head up high, no one will ever know."</i> Domestic life of "Tranquil routine". Lily practises grassroots democracy, registering voters: <i>"Anyone who thinks he's too small to make a difference has never been bitten by a mosquito."</i> 100% turnout in Horse Mesa. Prospecting for uranium, fallout. Little Jim married to daughter of "big cheese" ⇒ police officer. Rosemary has plenty of suitors. Lily: <i>"I knew I could find her the right one."</i>	the American Dream the environment
3	Rex Walls proposes, head-diving after Rosemary. Hangs her "masterpieces". – Lily impressed with Rex's gumption.	
4	Rex and Rosemary dating regularly, enthusiastic about renewable energy. Jim sceptical: <i>"If we could harness the hot air out that gas bag [...] we could power the whole of Phoenix."</i> Rex insults Lily.	
5	<i>"Life came with as much adventure and danger as any one body needed. You didn't have to go chasing after them."</i> To Rosemary: <i>"I don't know what I did wrong raising you [...]"</i> – Rex apologises.	
6	Offer to fly: <i>"Amelia Earhart [...] you're alive after all."</i> Rex shows contempt for regulation and danger, rounding off a herd of cattle.	gender
7	Rosemary: <i>"What you thought you were teaching me was one thing, and what I was learning was something else."</i> Lily: <i>"I always liked to think I'd never met a kid I couldn't teach. Turns out, I was wrong. That kid is you."</i> Jim: <i>"Our daughter has found something she likes, this painting, and someone who she wants to be with, this Rex fellow, so she's ahead of a lot of folks."</i> Wedding a little wild but good-humoured ⇒ off to honeymoon, heading out into the open like a couple of half-broke horses.	education
8	Rosemary <i>"started dropping babies right and left."</i> The third baby, Jeannette: <i>"I felt a powerful connection to the kid." They were in for wild times but they'd be able to play the cards they'd been dealt.</i> <i>"Plus [...] I had a few things to teach those kids, and there wasn't a soul alive who could stop me."</i>	