

# **Cowboys And Aliens**

Screenplay By

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CONFIDENTIAL

**THIS WATERMARKED SCRIPT HAS BEEN INTERNALLY CODED FOR  
IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES**



**FADE UP ON:**

SPACE. Infinite stars. A TITLE:

**1870. THE ARIZONA TERRITORY.**

We descend past DARK CLOUDS. Violent FLASHES ripple within. Thunder blends with DRUMS as we reach a BOX CANYON...

A BONFIRE -- SILHOUETTED BODIES -- APACHE WARRIORS

Whirling around the fire -- war paint -- masks and headdresses -- a RELIGIOUS RITE or CELEBRATION. On the periphery, we FIND...

A BEAUTIFUL APACHE WOMAN. Softly singing to the even more beautiful BABY in her arms as we FOLLOW THEM INTO --

A TEEPEE. The simple melody of the woman's song as she lays the baby on a blanket, gently swaddling it, LOVE in her eyes.

But.

The wind starts to HOWL. UNNATURAL. And then... a BURST OF LIGHT through the opening of the teepee -- intense ULTRAVIOLET:

**FWHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOSH!!!!**

THE ENTIRE TENT IS RIPPED UP INTO THE SKY, LEAVING THE WOMAN AND HER BABY EXPOSED!!!! She SCREAMS -- grabs her child and starts to RUN -- CHAOS EVERYWHERE as the tribe scatters in TERROR --

Suddenly -- Apaches are getting YANKED INTO THE AIR by some superior force -- PLUCKED savagely into the light, GONE -- as we WHIP AROUND the horror show of SCREAMING, DISAPPEARING INDIANS --

And now -- A DEAFENING SHRIEK AS STRANGE DOMED OBJECTS HURTLE DOWN, CRASHING LIKE COMETS TO THE CANYON FLOOR AND CRUSHING FLEEING PEOPLE.

Impossibly, the objects are STEEL MACHINES. BELLY VENTS snap open and DRILL CONES drop out -- jagged teeth CHURN TO LIFE -- faster -- FASTER -- as the drills begin CHEWING INTO THE GROUND.

THE WOMAN -- staggering back in SHOCK and AWE -- clings to her baby for one final SCREAM and -- BLACK. Over which we read:

C O W B O X S A N D A L I E N S

**EXT. ARIZONA DESERT - DAY**

Burning sun FLARES LENS, beating down on... A MAN.

Lying in the barren DESERT. Out cold. Handsome... but HARD. We'll call him THE MAN IN BLACK, the color of his dirty clothes.

A PINK TONGUE LICKS HIM. The man STARTS AWAKE -- to find a MONGREL DOG over him. Mangy. But sweet.

COUGHING, the man stumbles up. How'd he get here? And where the hell is here? And -- OWWW. A GASH in his side...

... part of the wound oddly SEARED. He winces. Trying to solve this painful puzzle. Something GLINTS on his wrist:

A STEEL BRACELET. No clasp to pull it off. He touches the surface -- TSSS -- SHIT -- It's HOT!

And there's a BLACK STETSON on the ground. The Man grabs it to shield his eyes... but STOPS:

A WORN PHOTOGRAPH in the inner brim. A WOMAN. Young, beautiful. SMILING.

The Man stares: does he KNOW this woman? Is this even HIS hat?

The dog BARKS ALERT. The man turns -- QUICK -- his hand reaches toward his hip on INSTINCT but there's no holster. NO GUNS.

THREE RIDERS ON HORSEBACK ARE COMING OVER THE RISE:

THE CLAIBORNE BROTHERS -- WES, MOSE and LUKE. Dusty and tough. Wes gallops right up to our Man, gives him the once over --

WES CLAIBORNE

Howdy.

(no response)

We're riding towards Absolution. You know how far west we are?

The Man's got NO IDEA what he's talking about.

LUKE CLAIBORNE

Maybe he's a dummy.

Wes hops off his horse, right in The Man's face now --

WES CLAIBORNE

There a reason you don't wanna answer my question, friend?

And now, Mose nods to the BRACELET on The Man's wrist --

MOSE CLAIBORNE

Wes, he's got iron on his wrist... and he's been shot.

LUKE CLAIBORNE

Bet he's a chain jumper.

Luke spurs his horse behind him -- The Man's SURROUNDED.

LUKE

If he escaped, there'll be a bounty.  
Let's bring him with us.

Wes nods as he slides a SAWED-OFF DOUBLE-BARREL from his back scabbard. COCKS both barrels. The dog GROWLS --

WES CLAIBORNE

Not your lucky day, Stranger -- turn  
round and start walking.

But The Man doesn't move. The Claibornes share glances. Wes  
steps forward -- RAISING HIS RIFLE --

WES CLAIBORNE (CONT'D)

Dead or alive, no difference. I said  
walk or--

THE MAN MOVES, A MECHANISM OF BRUTAL VIOLENCE -- YANKS the rifle  
forward as **BLAM!** -- shot goes WILD -- suddenly the gun's in THE  
MAN'S HANDS -- **BLAM!** Wes is BLOWN backwards, HOLE IN HIS CHEST!

As Mose draws his Enfield, The Man FLIPS the rifle again --  
**BLAM!** MOSE FLIES OFF HIS SADDLE as The Man rolls -- UNDER  
Luke's horse -- GRABBING Luke's ankle -- suddenly Luke's FLAT on  
his back -- BREATHLESS, staring UP at the double-barrel:

LUKE CLAIBORNE

-- P-please, God -- d-don't --

-- The Man PULLS the trigger but CLICK! The rifle's EMPTY.  
Luke's RELIEF is short as The Man SLAMS the gun-butt down,  
knocking him out cold. And ALL of this took about ten seconds.

This man is a cold-blooded KILLER. But somehow... he didn't  
seem to KNOW that. CONFUSION. Drops the rifle, looks down at  
his hands... covered in BLOOD. And the BODIES in his wake.

The WIND loosens a piece of PAPER from Wes's jacket. It DANCES  
on the breeze -- flattens against The Stranger's foot. He picks  
it up, BLOODY FINGERPRINTS on what we now see is a TELEGRAM --

"TO FORT STANTON -- STOP -- ABSOLUTION TOWNSHIP BESIEGED BY  
OUTLAWS -- STOP -- FIFTY DOLLARS FOR ANY MAN WITH A GUN -- STOP  
-- ABSOLUTION AWAITS -- STOP"

THE MAN IN BLACK

(a hoarse whisper)

... Absolution...

SLAM TO MOMENTS LATER:

With a HYA! The Man sends two horses GALLOPING, mounts the  
third, wincing at that gash in his side. Starts to trot off...  
sees the dog following...

THE MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)

Get outta here. Leave me alone.

But the dog keeps following. Like they're FRIENDS now. The man turns away dismissively as we BOOM UP to reveal the WIDE OPEN VALLEY below... and a SPECK within it that is:

EXT. TOWN - MAIN STREET - DAY

A CROOKED SIGN: "ABSOLUTION." The town is dismal and forgotten. Crumbling buildings blistered by sun. The Man rides in -- dehydrated, the wound DRAINING him.

His eyes fall on the first building he sees... A CHURCH.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

BAM! The door flies open and VOTIVE CANDLES FLICKER. The Man looks at the dog and says --

THE MAN IN BLACK

Stay.

The dog sits by the door as The Man enters -- EMPTY -- he's moving -- into a small kitchen area -- bottle of whiskey -- uncorks it with his teeth -- drinks -- pours some on the wound -- then A PISTOL COCKS behind him --

Meet MEACHAM, town preacher, a tough, wash-foot Baptist:

MEACHAM

Palms to heaven, Friend.

The Man freezes. Turns up his hands.

THE MAN IN BLACK

Been shot.

MEACHAM

Only two kinds of men get shot -- criminals and victims.

(steps forward; hard)

Which one're you?

THE MAN IN BLACK

... don't know.

Meacham hears the HONESTY in his voice. Knows a lost soul when he sees one. Lowers his gun, softening...

MEACHAM

Got a name, son?

THE MAN IN BLACK

Don't know that either.

MEACHAM  
What do you know?

THE MAN IN BLACK  
(a beat; then)  
... English.

Off Meacham, INTRIGUED -- we CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH RECTORY - LATER

A CANDLE FLAME -- a NEEDLE passing through it -- it's LATER and Meacham's studying The Man's wound:

MEACHAM  
Odd wound. Looks... cauterized.  
(off The Man's look)  
Means somethin' burned it half closed.

The Man just stares. News to him. And now, as Meacham leans over the wound, the METAL CROSS around his neck begins to twitch... lifting ever so SLIGHTLY off his chest -- towards the strange BRACELET on the Man's wrist. Meacham reacts --

MEACHAM (CONT'D)  
Nice trick. That some kinda... magnet?

The Man looks at him -- "What the hell is a 'magnet'?!"  
Meacham shrugs it off, readies the needle --

MEACHAM (CONT'D)  
Try'n hold still.

He pokes the hot needle through the wound -- The Man winces slightly, but bears the pain.

MEACHAM (CONT'D)  
Where'd you ride in from?

THE MAN IN BLACK  
... West. Woke up in the desert.  
Looking up at the sun like I'd been  
dropped outta the sky.

MEACHAM  
Seems I remember a story about that  
happening once... fella by the name of  
Lucifer.  
(grins)  
How 'bout I just call you "Luke," for  
short.

But The Man's distracted by his REFLECTION in a cracked mirror:  
his own face unfamiliar. Meacham nods towards The Man's HANDS --

MEACHAM (CONT'D)  
That blood yours or somebody else's?

THE MAN IN BLACK  
Three men rode up. Drew on me.  
(still confused)  
My hands... moved on their own.

MEACHAM  
(a beat)  
Anything else you wanna confess to while  
you got my attention?

And The Man senses somehow that, yes, there is... but:

THE MAN IN BLACK  
Everything that happened before I woke  
up...  
(shakes his head)  
It's gone.

MEACHAM  
Well. Too bad. Can't absolve you for  
your sins if you don't recall 'em. That  
bein' said...

Meacham looks up, eyes twinkling. This is not a fire n'  
brimstone preacher. This is a guy who GETS IT --

MEACHAM (CONT'D)  
I seen bad men do good things and good  
men do bad things. Whether you end up in  
heaven or hell... it's not God's plan...  
it's yours.  
(beat)  
You just got to remember what it was.

The Man considers. Darkly --

THE MAN IN BLACK  
What if I don't want to remember?

MEACHAM  
(beat; grins)  
Then you're probl'y goin' to hell.

On cue -- SMASH!!! The stained glass window EXPLODES as a  
MOLOTOV COCKTAIL hurtles into the church. FIRE spreads around  
the pews -- MEACHAM ACTIVATES -- tears curtains off the  
confessional and uses them to STAMP OUT the fire --

MEACHAM (CONT'D)  
Dammit -- it's Dolarhyde's men!

WHOOPS and HOLLERS and GUNSHOTS outside! The Man whirls to see  
A DOZEN MEN ON HORSEBACK, marauding through town --



**EXT. ABSOLUTION - MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS**

Their leader is PERCY DOLARHYDE, a cocky, hot-tempered bastard -- he ignites another Molotov, hurls it at the CLAIMS OFFICE --

PERCY  
THIS IS A MESSAGE FROM MY FATHER! ONLY  
CLAIM TO LAND AROUND HERE'S THE ONE WITH  
HIS NAME ON IT!

The gang rides down Main Street, HOOTING -- Percy cocks another Molotov, aiming for the SALOON -- .

But one of his men, half-Apache NAT COLORADO, shouts:

NAT COLORADO  
Percy! Not the saloon!

PERCY  
Why the goddamn hell not?!

NAT COLORADO  
Cause your daddy said so.

Something LOADED in the way he emphasizes "daddy." Percy GLARES -- strange RESENTMENT between them. With a growl, Percy GALLOPS OFF, chucks the flaming bottle onto the CHURCH STEPS:

**INT. MEACHAM'S CHURCH - CONTINUOUS**

Meacham finishes putting out the fire, grabbing a couple blankets as he moves past The Man --

MEACHAM  
You wanna help or are you just gonna  
stand there and burn?!

**EXT. CHURCH - PORCH - CONTINUOUS**

FRIGHTENED TOWNSPEOPLE run for the sanctuary of the church, Meacham SWATS OUT the fire on the steps --

MEACHAM  
All right, folks -- don't panic! Get  
inside and you'll be fine... C'mon...

Meacham tosses The Man one of the blankets, nods across the street to the GENERAL STORE which is just STARTING to burn --

MEACHAM (CONT'D)  
Put it out before it gets goin'!

ON THE MAN, not sure how he suddenly became the damn fire brigade, but HUSTLING across the street to --

**THE GENERAL STORE**

WHIPS open the blanket, beats at the flames advancing toward the roof -- PUTS THE FIRE OUT as the door FLIES OPEN and out steps:

A KID. 11. Rough n' tumble. And right now, mouth full of LICORICE. Two FULL JARS of CANDY in his hands. OOPS:

KID  
Just tryin' to save the candy.  
(SWALLOWS, worried now)  
You one of my Pa's hired guns?

Before he can answer, HOOFBEATS behind them -- and here's PERCY.  
He yanks the reins, pulls his REVOLVER on our Man --

PERCY  
Who the hell're you?

Whatever the opposite of Love At First Sight is, THIS is it:

THE MAN  
Nobody.

PERCY  
Nobody is right. You think you can just  
collect your fifty dollars and ride off?  
You signed up for the wrong side, boy.

The kid's scared. The Man ISN'T, despite the gun in his face:

PERCY (CONT'D)  
Tell you what. You get down on your  
knees and kiss my boot.

The Man's eyes narrow --

PERCY (CONT'D)  
You do that and I'll let you run back to  
wherever the hell you came from so you  
can tell whoever you see...  
(cocks his gun)  
Absolution belongs to the Dolarhydes.

THE MAN  
You want me to kiss your boot?

Percy extends his boot just INCHES from The Man's face:

PERCY  
Tongue's just fine if you're feelin'  
amorous. Don't hold ba --

THWIP! The Man YANKS Percy's boot off his foot in one quick  
move and KWHAM!!!! WINGS IT RIGHT INTO PERCY'S FACE!

Percy FLIES off the HORSE -- The Man grabbing his rifle -- the  
moment Percy lands, it's STICKING into his NECK:

THE MAN  
Kiss this, you sonofa --

NAT COLORADO (O.S.)  
-- PUT IT DOWN!

-- Nat Colorado gallops around the corner, SHOTGUN RAISED.

PERCY  
Goddamnit, Nat -- SHOOT HIM!!!

-- but The Man yanks Percy up by his collar, using him as a SHIELD between himself and Colorado. Eerily calm --

THE MAN  
Wherever you came from? Go back.

Colorado knows he's dealing with a PROFESSIONAL. MORE GANG MEMBERS ride up, surprised -- a dirty outlaw, GREAVEY, barks:

GREAVEY  
Sheriff's right behind us, Nat!

PERCY  
You goddamned shitheels! Don't you even THINK about leavin' me!!!!

Colorado -- DECISION -- doesn't take long -- glares at The Man --

NAT COLORADO  
Be seeing you.

THE MAN  
Look forward to it.

With that, Nat spurs his horse -- YA! The others follow him as he RIDES HARD out of town. Percy growls at The Man --

PERCY  
You are a dead man. You hear me? So help me God I will kill you my--

**BAM!** The Man's SMASHES Percy's skull with the gun, knocking him OUT COLD, as LAWMEN approach on horseback --

KID  
Pa! He caught Percy Dolarhyde!

SHERIFF KYLE TAGGART rears up on his horse. Tall, dark and handsome despite a SADNESS in his eyes, already dismounting:

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Emmett -- you all right?

The Kid (now EMMETT) strides towards his father excitedly:

EMMETT

You-shoulda-seen-it-he-tossed-Percy-like-a-flapjack-then-stared-down-Nat-Colorado-like-he-wasn't-even-scared!!!!

Taggart turns to The Man now, cautious, but grateful --

SHERIFF TAGGART

Pardon my boy, mister. He can be excitable.

(puts out his hand)

Kyle Taggart.

The Man shakes Taggart's hand. A beat. Then --

THE MAN IN BLACK

... Luke.

SHERIFF TAGGART

Well I'm in your debt, Luke. Tune of fifty dollars, actually.

(off The Man's look)

Our advert? The telegram?

The Man NODS -- Oh, RIGHT.

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)

Could use a man like you in case any of 'em come back...

THE MAN IN BLACK

-- I'm just passing through.

SHERIFF TAGGART

Fair enough. You don't mind spending the night, bank opens in the morning... I'll get you your money then.

(nods down the street)

Saloon's got rooms. You just tell Maria I sent you.

The Man tips his hat, nods to Emmett (still STARSTRUCK), turns to go. Taggart furrows his brow as the DOG scampers after him.

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)

You here with the prospector woman?

The Man stops. Intrigued. Turns back --

THE MAN IN BLACK

Woman?

SHERIFF TAGGART

Yup. Real looker. Came into town yesterday with that there dog. She a friend of yours?

ON THE MAN. His first real LEAD.

THE MAN IN BLACK

Maybe.

And as The Man heads off, we HOLD ON TAGGART, his spidey-sense tingling that all is not RIGHT with this...

DEPUTY WADE

Somethin' wrong, Kyle?

SHERIFF TAGGART

What's that French sayin' where you swear you seen someone before?

DEPUTY WADE

Don't speak French.

SHERIFF TAGGART

No... you sure's hell don't.

Taggart takes one last look at The Man departing as we CUT TO:

EXT. CATTLE RANGE - MAGIC HOUR

300 head of CATTLE under a blood red sky -- BOOM DOWN to THREE RANCH HANDS by a fire. One's drinking liberally from a BOTTLE; call him ROY CLANTON. The other two trade glances, nervous:

RANCH HAND #1

Should take it easy there, Pal --

RANCH HAND #2

Mr. Dolarhyde don't like it when we drink on the job.

ROY CLANTON

I don't give a damn what he don't like -- gotta sit here and babysit a damn herd of cattle. Dolarhyde ain't gonna do squat.

(rises; grabs his crotch)

Gotta see a man about a buffalo...

He lets out a big BURP and stumbles off behind a ridge. More THUNDER. Something doesn't feel right. A sudden WHOOSH and --

A COW'S PULLED INTO THE AIR BEHIND THEM BY SOME INVISIBLE FORCE, JUST LIKE THE APACHES IN OUR OPENING! Flies STRAIGHT UP, out of FRAME. Its PLAINTIVE MOO blending into all the others:

RANCH HAND #1

You hear that?

RANCH HAND #2

Hear what?

ANOTHER COW zips up from the herd behind them. And ANOTHER.  
MANY OF THE SWSSHS. The men slowly turn toward the sound as --

ALL AT ONCE, HUNDREDS OF COWS FLY OFF INTO THE SKY!

RANCH HAND #1  
SWEET JESUS!!!

THE DARKNESS EXPLODES WITH EERILY BRILLIANT BLUE LIGHT! THE MEN  
SCREAM AS THEY'RE ENGULFED IN IT AND --

ROY CLANTON -- comes RUNNING back up the hill, pulling up his  
pants as the light DISAPPEARS -- to find the men GONE. So are  
the COWS. PULL BACK... he's ALL THAT'S LEFT in the open range.

INT. GOLD LEAF SALOON - NIGHT

THE BATWING DOORS SWING OPEN: The Man In Black enters with the  
dog, tips his hat to a couple WHORES. They GRIN, liking what  
they see. RANCH HANDS drink their pay. Behind the bar, a MAN  
and WOMAN argue. DOC and MARIA; she's a buxom Mexican beauty;  
he's 300 roly-poly pounds of ANXIOUS CASTILIAN JEALOUSY:

DOC  
-- I know you are, don't lie to me!

MARIA  
How many times do we have to do this,  
Arturo? I love you.

DOC  
Really? Do you?!?  
(holds up a POCKETWATCH)  
I found this in our bed! And I don't  
have a watch, Maria. I can't afford a  
watch because you insisted we buy this  
saloon!

She looks at him SQUARELY -- yes, some SECRET withheld. As The  
Man In Black reaches the bar, he's Maria's EXCUSE to end this:

MARIA  
We have customers.

And MOVES off. Doc stomps toward the exit -- sees EMMETT at the  
back of the bar stealing sips of BEER from left-behind glasses:

DOC  
AFUERA! ADULTS ONLY!!!

Emmett RUNS OUT. The Man sits beside an old cuss named ATTICUS.  
The dog heels at The Man's feet, eyes a STEAK on Atticus' plate:

ATTICUS  
That mutt makes a move for my steak, I'll  
drill him down.

MARIA

Shut up, Atticus. This is the man who  
took out Percy Dolarhyde.

Atticus grumbles and goes back to eating, but not before  
sweeping his duster aside to show the GUN in his holster. Maria  
rolls her eyes, sets a GLASS in front of The Man, who nods:

THE MAN IN BLACK

I'm looking for a woman.

She gestures to the WHORES --

MARIA

What kind?

THE MAN IN BLACK

This kind.

He removes the PHOTO from inside his hat. The one of the WOMAN.

MARIA

Never seen her before. But she is  
beautiful.

(pours him whiskey; then  
one for herself)

Here's to you finding her, Señor.

ON THE MAN. Not exactly sure he WANTS to. But they CLINK  
glasses, knock 'em back. Maria pours him another:

MARIA (CONT'D)

You have any idea what kind of mess you  
just stepped into?

THE MAN IN BLACK

No. But I figured I'd be safe in here  
seein' as how that boy I tossed off his  
horse didn't wanna burn your saloon.

Maria's eyes go down. Somehow GUILTY. But then:

MARIA

It's not the boy you should worry about.  
(ominous)

It's his papa.

**EXT. RANCH - NIGHT**

POV: UPSIDE DOWN, A MAN, surrounded by his RANCH HANDS -- his  
FACE just out of the light, hat brim lowered under an oil lamp:

DOLARHYDE

Name's Woodrow Dolarhyde. I'm what you  
might call, the Tall Hog at the trough.

His face comes INTO light: 50's, tailored finery, patent leather Wellington boots that bespeak wealth. HARD. Exudes POWER:

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)  
You're Roy, right? Clanton, is it? Been working for me two weeks now, and I haven't had the pleasure.

Our POV belongs to ROY CLANTON, the ranch hand from the cow abductions. TERRIFIED -- his arms and legs TIED TO THE SADDLES OF TWO HORSES, kicking dirt in front of Dolarhyde's RANCH HOUSE:

CLANTON  
Mr. Dolarhyde, I... I swear I didn't steal your--

-- a VIOLENT "SSST" from Dolarhyde JOSTLES the horses -- STRETCHING Roy tight enough to SNAP -- he SCREAMS --

DOLARHYDE  
Best not to interrupt me, Roy, makes the horses skittish.  
(then)  
You partial to history? Here's a primer, listen close:

He pulls out a WHIP, gripping it by its STERLING SILVER HANDLE. Starts CIRCLING the horses as he lets the whip UNFURL:

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)  
Following the War Of Northern Aggression -- what some ironically refer to as the "Civil" War -- came a prodigious nationwide market for beef. Cowtowns sprang up all along these prairies, Roy; populated by enterprising young drovers -- among 'em, my daddy, Jeremiah Dolarhyde. Sold six of his gold teeth and a sword gifted to him by Robert E. Lee for twenty of the scrawniest Longhorns you ever saw -- then turned 'em into the fattest herd West of the Chisholm Trail.  
(stops: the WHIP)  
Watched him work this lash, driving those steer til his fingers bled... but what good's a whip without a herd, Roy?

And slowly, torturously, SWEEPS the whip tip in the dirt...

ROY CLANTON  
Mr. Dolarhyde, Sir, you gotta believe me -- I went to take a piss and and -- saw a light in the sky -- blue -- and when I ran back the cows and fellas were gone!



DOLARHYDE

The sky. Opened up. And took my cows.

Incoming HOOFBEATS -- Dolarhyde looks up to see COLORADO and the rest of the GANG returning from Absolution.

A WOMAN emerges from the servant's quarters. APACHE. 50's. Beautiful. As the men REAR, Nat Colorado MEETS EYES with her. A relationship we don't understand yet as Dolar strides up --

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)

Where's Percy?

NAT COLORADO

Jail. Sheriff locked him up.

Dolar darkens. Unsheathes a KNIFE. Looks down at Roy:

DOLARHYDE

When're these people gonna learn?

He STABS the knife down... SLICING the rope tethered to Roy's FEET. His lower body SLUMPS to the ground, he breathes a SIGH:

ROY CLANTON

Thank y--

Dolar SLAPS the horse's rump, to which Roy's UPPER TORSO is tied; it GALLOPS off, dragging a SCREAMING ROY into the night.

DOLARHYDE

Everyone saddle up. Got us a sheriff to kill.

As he MOVES OFF, Dolarhyde's eyes go to the Apache Woman. Something passes between them. She seems CONCERNED.

NAT COLORADO

Wasn't the sheriff, got him caught. It was a stranger.

That STOPS Dolarhyde. He turns back, face dark:

DOLARHYDE

... What stranger?

NAT COLORADO

Usually a man gives off a scent. Where he's been. What he's done.

(still spooked)

He didn't have one.

OFF DOLARHYDE, EYES BURNING --

**INT. SHERIFF TAGGART'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

A BULLET, in close up, twirling between the thumb and forefinger of SHERIFF TAGGART. Boots up on his desk, TROUBLED.

Deputy Wade pours himself a cup from a TIN POT OF COFFEE:

DEPUTY CHARLIE WADE

Percy wouldn't've come in shooting without his daddy's say-so, Kyle. You best get ready for a war 'cause that's what's comin'.

SHERIFF TAGGART

Tomorrow we ride the little shit up Phoenix way, turn him over. Dolarhyde's got a beef, he can take it up with the 6th cavalry.

Taggart's on his feet, grabs his JACKET off the door --

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)

Goddamn tired of this... fatass rancher scaring good people off their lan--

He STOPS. Something catches his eye on the posting board. YANKS a piece of paper off, a mixture of CONFUSION and CONCERN --

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)

Sonofabitch.

WHAT DOES HE SEE? Before we get a chance to KNOW --

**EXT. SALOON - NIGHT**

EMMETT'S FACE rises into frame, peering into the saloon from below a windowsill. Sees THE MAN IN BLACK at the bar as --

**INT. SALOON - NIGHT**

-- he SLUGS back a shot, the dog at his feet, still eyeing that steak on Atticus' plate. The Man points to his GLASS:

THE MAN IN BLACK

Another.

MARIA

You drink like a man who wants to forget.

THE MAN IN BLACK

(haunted; the irony)

Other way round.

The dog WHINES AGAIN for the steak. Atticus SLAMS down his silverware. Draws his GUN --

ATTICUS

You got three seconds to get your dog  
outta here or I blow his balls off.

THE MAN IN BLACK

(without a blink)

Not my dog.

ATTICUS

One... two...

-- and just before "three"... CA-CLICK. Atticus FREEZES,  
because there's a RIFLE BARREL at the back of his head now:

VOICE (O.S.)

Give you odds you don't get to 'three.'

RACK TO FIND the person holding the rifle is A WOMAN.  
Beautiful. EXOTIC. Dressed in leather. Meet ELLA SWENSON.

ON THE MAN IN BLACK. Can't help himself. Immediate and  
undeniable CHEMISTRY. But she pays him no mind -- makes a PSST  
sound and the dog snaps to her side. Atticus uncocks his gun,  
slowly slides it back in the holster --

ATTICUS

I was just havin' some fun, Miss --

ELLA

Give him the steak.

Atticus HESITATES, angry at the humiliation. Ella PRESSES THE  
GUN HARDER against his neck, lowering him -- and his plate -- to  
the floor. Right in front of the dog, who GROWLS --

ELLA (CONT'D)

Now say you're sorry.

ATTICUS

(biting his tongue)

I'm-- sorry.

ELLA

His name's 'Happy.'

Happy BARES HIS TEETH. INCHES from Atticus' face --

ATTICUS

I'm sorry... 'Happy.'

ELLA

Alright then.

(lowers her rifle)

You're right. That was fun.

-- Atticus scrambles back to his feet and OUT the door, as Ella looks at the Man In Black:

ELLA (CONT'D)  
What're you doing with my dog?

THE MAN IN BLACK  
I was hoping you could tell me.

ELLA  
The hell're you talking ab--?

But the words get caught in her throat when she sees the Man's WRIST BRACELET. Surprise and REVELATION:

ELLA (CONT'D)  
Where... did you get that?

Before he can answer, SHERIFF TAGGART enters, along with DEPUTY WADE (carrying a SHOTGUN), and 5 other deputies. They move cautiously to THE MAN, like he's a powder keg about to go off...

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Hey there, "Luke." Mind following me down to the office so we can have us a chat...?

THE MAN IN BLACK  
(confused; ALERT)  
What for?

SHERIFF TAGGART  
All due respect, I'm the law, mister.  
That's what for.

The men LOCK EYES:

THE MAN IN BLACK  
Tell you what, Sheriff. How about you keep the fifty dollars you owe me and I just walk outta here like we never met?

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Because we did meet.

ON ELLA. For reasons we're not sure of, the idea of The Man leaving ALARMS her. All the Gunslingers' hands are POISED by holsters. The Man stays preternaturally COOL:

THE MAN IN BLACK  
I can't be accountable for what happens if they draw on me.

SHERIFF TAGGART  
And what's gonna happen?

THE MAN IN BLACK  
Best you don't find out.

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Now why'd you have to go and say that?

Taggart gives a nod and the men start to CONVERGE --

THE MAN IN BLACK  
(low; genuine plea)  
Don't.

But Charlie makes a MOVE and The Man SLAMS his head into a pole -- the NEXT GUNMAN reaches for his pistol -- The Man PUNCHES his THROAT -- SLAMS the third into a bench -- The FOURTH straight down on the Faro table --

TAGGART levels his REPEATER -- but The Man just GRABS the barrel as Taggart FIRES a ROUND into the ceiling -- now the rifle's in THE MAN'S HANDS and just before he PULLS THE TRIGGER on Taggart:

HE SEES EMMETT AT THE WINDOW. About to watch his father's MURDER... and The Man LOWERS the gun:

THE MAN IN BLACK (CONT'D)  
I told you, I don't wanna hurt anyb--

CRACK! The butt of a PISTOL WHIPS the side of his SKULL! The Man DROPS as we REVEAL who just knocked his ass OUT:

ELLA! Taggart draws a gun and pins The Man, whipping out that piece of paper he pulled from his office...

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Yup -- looks just like him.

NOW WE SEE IT'S A WANTED POSTER WITH THE MAN'S FACE ON IT:

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)  
"Jake Lonergan. Scourge a' The Territories. Wanted Dead or Alive."

And The Man... now forever known as JAKE... stares WOOZILY into his OVERTURNED HAT... the photo tucked inside of the BEAUTIFUL WOMAN... her image goes BLURRY... then BLACK:

AND WHAM:

**MEMORY FLASHCUTS! STROBELIKE IMAGES --**

1.) A tilted, handmade trail sign: "SAGUARO PASS."

2.) We're in a CABIN somewhere. BLINDING ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT EXPLODES INTO THE CABIN, against which a DEMONIC SILHOUETTE appears -- it looks like an INDIAN IN FULL-FEATHER HEADDRESS --

3.) A WOMAN'S FACE -- THE WOMAN FROM JAKE'S PHOTOGRAPH -- she looks at us and SCREAMS --

4.) Now we're someplace VERY DARK -- a cave? As some kind of TERRIFYING OCULAR PROBE lowers right in front of our eyes --

5.) Now we're RUNNING through the cave -- ESCAPE -- BREATHING HARD -- a LIGHT at the end of the tunnel -- BLINDING SUN hits us as we emerge -- our eyes ADJUST to see:

6.) A STRANGE ROCK FORMATION on the rim of a canyon -- like a STONE TOWER pointing to heaven as the SUN WHITEWASHES US TO:

**INT. JAIL CELL - PRE-DAWN**

JAKE'S EYES OPEN and he GASPS AIR! His POV: a FACE comes into FOCUS -- PERCY DOLARHYDE. GRINNING at him from the next cell:

PERCY  
You're a dead man.

Jake sits up. Woozy. Blinking back to reality.

PERCY (CONT'D)  
My daddy's comin' for me, Boy. You're gonna end up another dead shitheel under his spurs. I am gonna watch you suffer for a long, long --

Jake moves LIGHTNING QUICK -- reaching through the bars, GRABBING PERCY'S COLLAR, YANKING FORWARDS -- SLAMMING Percy's head into the bars, KNOCKING HIM OUT COLD AGAIN. Percy DROPS.

JAKE  
Shut up.

Jake sits back on his cot, rubbing his still-throbbing head.

**EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - JAIL - CONTINUOUS**

A PRISON WAGON pulls up in front of the Sheriff's office, along with Taggart's GUNMEN on horseback. ELLA takes frame as the men dismount and head into the office -- she pursues DEPUTY WADE with a real sense of PURPOSE:

ELLA  
I need to see Lonergan. It's important.

DEPUTY WADE  
'Fraid not, Miss -- we're preppin' him for transport.

And pushes PAST her, into the office with the men. HOLD on Ella -- dammit, she NEEDS to find a way in there.

**INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - JAIL CELL - CONTINUOUS**

A KEY in the LOCK as the cell door OPENS: Sheriff Taggart, Wade, the gunmen. GLARING at Jake, then noticing Percy --

SHERIFF TAGGART  
What happened to him?

JAKE  
(deadpan)  
Man walked into a bar.

Taggart shakes his head as Charlie and a deputy unlock Percy's cell, CUFF HIM, drag him out. Taggart points to Jake:

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Step back against the wall there. Move  
and I shoot you dead.

JAKE  
(as he does)  
You should've let me go.

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Yeah, I should've shot you in your knee.  
You put down six of my deputies.

JAKE  
Six was all you had.

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Hell, they're gonna love you in Phoenix.

JAKE  
Yeah? What's in Phoenix?

SHERIFF TAGGART  
What you got comin', Jake Lonergan.

Taggart reaches into his shirt, pulls out a pair of GLASSES. Slips them on his nose. Takes out that WANTED poster and reads:

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)  
Aggravated banditry, 17 counts, Forgery,  
Blackmail, Hijacking, Injurious use of a  
cattle prod, Arson, Incitement of  
Whorehouse Riot, and Trespassing with  
intent to deflower. You're also leader  
of a gang of outlaws includin' Creek  
Johnson and Bull McCade, which makes you  
accessory to every law they broke too.

JAKE  
(after a long BEAT:)  
That it?

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Saved the best for last... 'Murder.'

That LANDS on Jake. Wondering if this is TRUE. Evenly --

JAKE  
It say who I killed?

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Prostitute outta Mojave, name of Alice  
Wills.

Taggart rises, removes Jake's BLACK STETSON from a hook on the wall, pulls that PHOTOGRAPH OF THE WOMAN from the inner brim:

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)  
If I were a bettin' man, I'd say this  
would be Ms. Wills, would it not?

Jake just stares, CONFUSED. SHAKEN.

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)  
They found her dead in a cabin round  
Saguaro Pass, twenty miles west of here.

With that, a CLUE falls into place: SAGUARO PASS.

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)  
Deed was in your name.

He slips the photo back in the brim, tosses the hat to Jake:

SHERIFF TAGGART (CONT'D)  
Dead hooker with a hole in her chest, in  
your cabin, plus your sterling reputation  
equals guilty as goddamned sin.  
(draws his GUN)  
And you're gonna hang for it.

At gunpoint, Taggart PUSHES Jake out the door --

# **EXT. DESERT PLAINS - DAWN**

Against the RISING SUN, Dolarhyde and 15 GUNMEN ride hard, armed to the teeth. They REAR in the hills above Absolution. Dolar looks down through BINOCULARS as NAT COLORADO turns to...

... an incoming WIND. Across the valley, a massive BLACK CLOUD is starting to SWIRL. Violent BLUE FLASHES within. Eerie.

GREAVEY  
... blue light... Clanton said he saw  
blue light before the cows disappeared...

DOLARHYDE  
Just a storm.



## COLORADO

No storm I've ever seen... I say we wait  
'til it passes.

But Dolar isn't listening. THROUGH HIS BINOCULARS: he sees  
PERCY being carried into the prison wagon. Followed by Jake.

## DOLARHYDE

No time, they put him in an iron coach.

With a HYA! he's OFF, the others FOLLOWING with reluctant looks  
-- still SPOOKED by that incoming STORM:

## EXT. ABSOLUTION - MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

As Jake's loaded into the prison wagon after the still-  
unconscious Percy, he SEES MEACHAM through the barred window.  
The preacher flashes SYMPATHY as Wade takes out the cuff key:

## DEPUTY WADE

Gimme your wrist.

Jake holds out his hands. Wade unlocks one wrist, freeing a  
cuff... then takes that cuff and LOCKS IT to Percy's wrist.

## JAKE

What're you --?

## CHARLIE

Best way to make a man stay put: chain  
him to his enemy.

(a grin)

You lovebirds have a nice trip now.

SLAM: the door CLOSES and LOCKS. Jake SIGHS and tries to sit  
back, but it's hard tethered to Percy's slumped form. Shit.  
Then QWW -- something starts to STING and he looks down:

HIS BRACELET. Has started PULSING RED. And it's getting WARM.  
Jake stares -- ON EDGE -- what the hell's happening? As --

OUTSIDE, Taggart mounts the buckboard. EMMETT feeds the horses:

## EMMETT

You sure he's a bad guy, Pa? He did give  
Percy a lickin'.

## SHERIFF TAGGART

He's bad enough.

## EMMETT

(not so sure, but --)

... can I come with you?

## SHERIFF TAGGART

Too dangerous.

EMMETT

Dangerous to drive a damn coach? Why can't Charlie just take him?

SHERIFF TAGGART

Because it's my job, Emmett. That's what these people pay me to do. And your mother would kill me if I brought you.

Emmett looks off, half sad, half angry --

EMMETT

Good thing she's already dead then.

And turns without a goodbye. Taggart watches him leave, wishing he could connect. Takes the reins and looks up -- REACTS:

THAT MASSIVE, FRIGHTENING CLOUD IN THE SKY -- roiling faster toward town. The scary BLUE FLASHES within grow more INTENSE.

IN THE COACH -- WITH JAKE, looking at the BRACELET, the pulsing growing MORE FREQUENT -- and then, a VOICE:

ELLA (O.S.)

HEY!

Jake turns to see ELLA, pushed up against the coach window:

ELLA (CONT'D)

Tell me where you got that bracelet...

JAKE

Maybe you should'a asked before you knocked me out.

ELLA

Please... I need to know. Just tell me where you got it.

JAKE

I don't remember -- I don't remember my name or where I've been or any of the things they said I done, so leave me the hell alone.

And sits back as the coach starts to MOVE, leaving Ella in the dust. Some of the gunmen ride atop it; others on horseback cover the coach in a protective ring.

Wade sees something incoming from the NORTH:

DEPUTY WADE

KYLE!!!

Taggart looks up: Dolarhyde's gang racing down the mountain --

## SHERIFF TAGGART

Damnit --

He unslings his SHOTGUN as his men ready their weapons --

ON DOLARHYDE'S GANG, riding hard, guns ready too --

This is about to get UGLY. BUT... from the OTHER end of town, the WIND picks up --

As the massive storm cloud seems shockingly to have STOPPED AT A HOVER -- its EYE churning, ROARING and... TWO BOLTS OF BLUE LIGHTNING CRACK DOWN FROM IT! Happy starts BARKING MADLY. Ella sees the lightning and starts to BACK AWAY in fear:

ELLA

Nonono -- GET TO YOUR CELLARS! EVERYONE UNDERGROUND NOW!

But her cries are LOST as -- RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRR!!!!

A LONG, NARROW FUNNEL SHOOTS FROM THE CHURNING CLOUD: A TORNADO! BREAKING THE MOMENTUM OF THE SHOWDOWN --

The stagecoach UPENDS, FLIPPING SIDEWAYS as the animals try to break free -- Taggart and his men are THROWN --

Inside, Jake and Percy TUMBLE end-over-end -- SLAMMING into walls, LOCKED TOGETHER -- JARRING Percy back to consciousness --

Dolarhyde's men are THROWN from their horses too as the animals STAMPEDE OFF in different directions --

THE TORNADO ENGULFS THE TOWN! THE CONCUSSIVE BLAST BUCKLES BUILDINGS, PULLING WHOLE SECTIONS OF THEM INTO THE SKY!

THE TELEGRAPH OFFICE. SHERIFF'S STATION. BROTHEL. WOOD STRIPPED RIGHT OFF THEIR FALSE FRONTS LIKE PIANO KEYS!

Okay, wait. Just wait. Take a breath. 'Cause it's about..... to get..... MORE insane.....

TEN MANTA RAY-SHAPED HOVER-SPEEDERS BURST FROM THE CYCLONE! ROARING into the town, FLYING just above ground --

TOWNSPEOPLE'S FACES -- GOING DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE -- 19TH CENTURY BRAINS TRYING TO PROCESS THE IMPOSSIBLE --

MEACHAM

Jesus God!!

STRANGE STEEL RINGS fire from the speeders and mushroom out -- KA-CHING! -- SNAP OPEN and CLAMP around necks, arms, legs -- and from these steel collars, CABLES LASH OUT, whip-snapping back to the speeders and TETHERING MAGNETICALLY to them --

Yeah, these are HIGH-TECH LASSOS:

HELPLESS VICTIMS ARE YANKED OFF THE GROUND AND PULLED BEHIND THE SPEEDERS LIKE ROPED STEER! Two of TAGGART'S GUNMEN. Now some of DOLARYHYDE'S. Screaming, just gone. THIS IS A ROUND-UP.

EMMETT -- stunned -- as SHERIFF TAGGART runs for him --

SHERIFF TAGGART

EMMETT!

Emmett runs into his dad's embrace --

EMMETT

What's happening?!

SHERIFF TAGGART

-- Stay by my side!

A LIVERY STABLE -- the HORSES stamp in their stalls as Taggart tears the door open and rushes Emmett inside; as he's about to follow... A STEEL COLLAR CLAMPS AROUND THE SHERIFF'S NECK:

EMMETT

PA!!

-- a STEEL CABLE fires from the collar, SNAPS TAUT as it connects to a speeder and WHOOSH! Taggart's RIPPED off his feet, dragged away -- ELLA tackles the boy as ANOTHER RING zooms overhead, locks around a FLEEING WOMAN -- she's TAKEN --

EMMETT (CONT'D)

THEY TOOK HIM! LEMME GO!!!!

ELLA

HE'S GONE!

EMMETT

NO HE'S N--

ELLA

LISTEN TO ME! YOU WANNA LIVE?!! WHERE'S THERE A CELLAR?! TAKE ME TO IT!

-- HE'S COMING INTO FOCUS -- TEARS IN HIS EYES --

EMMETT

BIRDCAGE THEATER!

With a "C'MON!!!" she rushes him through the FRENZIED CROWD --

**INT. PRISON WAGON - CONTINUOUS**

JAKE AND PERCY -- TRAPPED IN THE UPSIDE-DOWN COACH -- Jake sees DEPUTY WADE on the ground just a few feet away, head bleeding --

JAKE

HEY!! LET US OUT!!!

-- but WHOOSH! A METAL COLLAR CLAMPS AROUND WADE AND YANKS HIM AWAY! Percy STRUGGLES wildly against Jake in a TUG-O'-WAR:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
STOP PULLING AND GIMME YOUR HAND--!

PERCY  
-- THE HELL FOR-- ?!

JAKE  
-- I CAN GET US FREE! GIMME  
YOUR DAMN HAND!!!

Percy RELENTS. Offers up his hand. Jake grabs all of Percy's FINGERS, TIGHTENS HIS FIST AROUND THEM -- CRRRRAAACK!

SNAPS THEM BACKWARDS!!!! Percy SHRIEKS as Jake KICKS him back against the wall, FORCING Percy's hand out of the cuff -- and now Jake's UNTETHERED too!

THROUGH THE CROWD -- DOLARHYDE hears his son SCREAM. SEES the overturned coach and TWO-FINGER WHISTLES to:

DOLARHYDE  
Colorado!

Nat Colorado RACES IN as Dolar draws his .45 -- BANG! -- shatters the coach lock -- they PULL Percy out:

PERCY  
MY FINGERS!! HE BROKE MY FINGERS!!!

DOLARHYDE  
QUIT WHININ' AND FIND A HORSE!

As Dolar runs for his horse, Percy sees a PISTOL left on the ground -- grabs it with his good hand and FIRES at Jake who JUKES behind the coach for cover, Percy SHOOTING in a FURY but:

-- KLINK! A collar CLAMPS around Percy's neck and he's YANKED OFF TOO! Dolarhyde turns and SEES HIS SON DISAPPEAR:

INT. MEACHAM'S CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Meacham ushers people into the church as WALLS SHAKE, PEWS JUMP:

INT. BLACKSMITH'S SHOP - CONTINUOUS

DOC AND MARIA burst in, huddle under a window. Across the room, a YOUNG MAN clamps a hand over his TERRIFIED WIFE's mouth --

CRAAASH! MORE RINGS SMASH THROUGH THE WALL, YANKING THE YOUNG COUPLE THROUGH IT! ANOTHER RING CLAMPS AROUND MARIA'S NECK!

MARIA  
AYUDAMEEEEEEE!

Doc LEAPS after her but her collar's LASSO CABLE whips out, TETHERING to a passing Speeder and she's RIPPED OUT THE DOOR --

DOC

MARIA!!!

**EXT. BIRDCAGE THEATER - CELLAR - CONTINUOUS**

ELLA -- hurrying Emmett toward the theater's CELLAR DOOR, but a SPEEDER circles around and ROARS toward them --

ON JAKE. He SEES this -- and suddenly, to HIS surprise as much as OURS... HIS BRACELET ACTIVATES! METAL COMING TO LIFE, coiling up around his arm -- WHAT? HOW? -- as it becomes...

A SMART GUN BLASTER WEAPON! A HOLOGRAPHIC SCOPE MATERIALIZES, tracking that speeder as it DESCENDS on Ella and the mother and:

**BALLLLAMMM!** THE BLASTER FIRES A PULSE, VAPORIZING THE SPEEDER MID-AIR! THE RECOIL HURTLES JAKE BACK 15 FEET, INTO A WALL.

Ella reaches the CELLAR DOOR with Emmett. LOCKED. Sees a HATCHET in a stump -- rips it out and HAMMERS the lock to bits:

ELLA

Everyone inside! GO GO GO!!

Ushering Emmett and TOWNSFOLK underground, PULLS the door SHUT --

**EXT. ABSOLUTION - MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS**

JAKE stumbles up... as a speeder FIRES A RING AT HIM. But reflexively, his WRIST WEAPON FIRES ANOTHER BLAST, vaporizing it! He looks down at the blaster: "Hell yes."

Another speeder circles around -- **KABOOM!** The blaster's incredible firepower SPIRALS THE SPEEDER OUT OF CONTROL, it CRASHES into:

**INT. MEACHAM'S CHURCH - CONTINUOUS**

The speeder PLOWS through, parishioners flee -- the CHURCH BELL breaks from the BELL TOWER -- CRASHES DOWN ON THE SPEEDER --

**EXT. TOWN STREETS - CONTINUOUS**

As Jake keeps FIRING, the last speeders turn tail and RETREAT -- disappearing back INTO THE TORNADO as the cloud overhead OPENS UP and INHALES the swirling mass, which spirals to the heavens.

... GONE. The massive cloud seems to VAPORIZE and the DESERT SUN returns... debris flutters... smoke clears...

And all... is... STILL.

As our CAMERA RISES to reveal... HALF THE BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN SUCKED INTO THE SKY.

From the rubble, SURVIVORS EMERGE: EMMETT and ELLA from the cellar with inhabitants. DOLARHYDE. DOC. All in SHOCK:

DOC

Maria -- oh God-- they t-took her-- What just...?

MOANS, WAILS... desperate cries as people search for loved ones.

JAKE'S BLASTER -- RETRACTS, folding in on itself -- shrinks down to size, reverting back into a BRACELET. He's stunned. So are the remaining townsfolk. DOLARHYDE is first to speak:

DOLARHYDE

Who the hell're you?

NAT COLORADO

He's the one who caged Percy.

Dolarhyde starts MOVING toward Jake -- wild killer eyes --

DOLARHYDE

What were those things?

JAKE

-- why're you asking me?!

Dolarhyde GRIPS Jake's arm -- THE BRACELET:

DOLARHYDE

This! Where'd you get this?! It was shooting the same light beams they were --

JAKE

Let go of my wrist.

DOLARHYDE

-- I'm not lettin' go of nothin' til you tell me what the he--

KA-LLLANG!! Suddenly that CHURCH BELL comes HURTLING out of the church wreckage, PLOWS through debris. People scatter. And out of the church stumbles...

AN ALIEN. 8 FT. TALL. Standing upright, limbs inverted -- limbs that DRAG, wounded, as people SCREAM and RUN and Jake and Dolarhyde can only stare, jaws dropped, and the monster LUNGES:

WHUPWHUP -- something SPINNING through the air -- A HATCHET -- SCHLUCK!!!! -- EMBEDDING IN THE ALIEN'S HEAD! WHIP TO --

ELLA, having just hurled it. The alien lets out a DEATH RATTLE then FALLS FORWARD, the hatchet embedding deeper as it HITS THE DIRT. Holy SHIT.

Ella's adrenaline dynamo starts to die down, replaced now by SHOCK. And for what seems like the first time, FEAR. She EXHALES a crazy breath, stumbles back... as slowly... people converge around the corpse:

EMMETT

Is it... dead?

Jake KICKS the alien. It doesn't move. Happy BARKS --

DOLARHYDE

... The hell is it?

MEACHAM (O.S.)

A demon.

They all turn to see MEACHAM. TERRIFIED.

MEACHAM (CONT'D)

Revelations 16:14: "For there are spirits of demons, showing signs."  
(points to the alien)  
Escaped from hell itself.

EMMETT

Lookit its wrist! It's got one'a those bracelet things too!

Indeed, there on the creature's wrist is an IDENTICAL BRACELET.

ON JAKE. Mind tumbling. He meets eyes with ELLA. Her face as EAGER as his to understand this and now... BEEP. BEEP. BEEP.

What's that SOUND? Everyone looks at each other. Colorado bends closer to the corpse... SCARED...

NAT COLORADO

I think... it's comin' from somewhere inside it.

People look at each other: WHAT NOW? Trying to control the near-hysteria they all feel. Finally, Dolarhyde takes a BREATH -- more BRAVADO than actual courage:

DOLARHYDE

Only one way to find out. We need to cut it open.

(to Doc)

You're a doctor. Got a bone saw?

DOC snaps out of his stupor, looks up, FREAKED --

DOC

... Are you... serious?  
(looks to them all)  
WHAT THE HELL JUST HAPPENED?!?



DOLARHYDE

Wake up. Those things took your wife --

DOC

I KNOW THAT!!

DOLARHYDE

Well this one here's our only chance of  
findin' where they went.

That LANDS on all of them. A long beat. Doc looks down at the  
thing, ORANGE GOO dribbling around the AXE in its head...

DOLLARHYDE

So you got a bone saw or don't you?

**INT. GOLD LEAF SALOON - DAY**

THUD! The alien corpse is DROPPED onto the bar by Doc and  
Meacham. As Dolarhyde and Colorado follow through the batwings  
-- Doc WHIPS a SHOTGUN from under the bar:

DOC

Stay outside. You're not welcome in  
here!

Dolar brings up his COLT -- so does COLORADO --

DOLARHYDE

I own more of this town than any man in  
it so I'll go wherever the hell I damn  
please. And for the record? You ain't  
welcome in my country, Mexican.

Ella steps between them, BAD ASS --

ELLA

Whatever troubles you had don't mean a  
damn thing against the ones we got now.  
We wanna see our way through 'em, your  
guns better start pointing in the same  
direction, Goddammit.

Doc and Dolar never take eyes off each other. Or their GUNS.  
Finally... Dolar LOWERS his. So does Doc. People BREATHE.

Meacham slips on a pair of GLASSES, studying eerie veins and  
muscles through the creature's viscous outer layers. Doc turns  
his focus to the alien too. Picks up his PUMP-OPERATED BONE  
SAW. Presses his boot on the bellows, it turns with a WHIR...  
SHAKING as he brings the SPINNING BLADE to the alien's CHEST.  
Looks at Meacham, AFRAID --

DOC

If it is a demon, and I cut it open... am  
I going to burn for it?

Meacham hesitates a beat, then CROSSES the air in front of Doc --

MEACHAM

That should cover ya.

ON DOC. Little relief. BROW SWEATING, he brings the spinning blade down toward the disgusting ALIEN -- VRRRRRZZ -- HESITATES --

DOC

Excuse me.

BLILLLAAAAAAAAAAAAARGH! He PUKES on the ground.

EMMETT

Jesus, Doc!!!

Doc wipes his mouth with a handkerchief, slightly DEFIANT --

DOC

This is not normal. I'm entitled to vomit. We should all be vomiting.

DOLARHYDE

Just cut, Lardass.

Doc GLARES... with a still-shaking hand, gets back to business -- VRRRRRZ -- CUTS THROUGH THE STERNUM -- ORANGE BLOOD SPRAYING -- and... SHUNK! Doc looks up at Jake, gestures to the carcass:

DOC

Señor? A hand?  
(to Dolarhyde)  
You too, *maricon*.

The men all grip the chest plate and PULL -- A DISGUSTING CRACK. Everyone turns away, scowling, Emmett wafting the air:

EMMETT

Damn! Smells like a dead dog's ass.

MEACHAM

Emmett.

EMMETT

Sorry, Father.

Doc covers his face with his handkerchief as he explores...

DOC

Chest wall's partially collapsed... no familiar organs of any kind...

DOLARHYDE

'course they're not familiar. Just look at this th--

SUDDENLY THE ALIEN'S ARM LASHES OUT -- claws SNAP OPEN and PIN Dolarhyde against the wall! Everyone tries to PRY the claws from his neck -- but the second Doc withdraws his hands from the alien's chest, its arm goes LIMP. Dolarhyde drops, GASPING...

DOC

Spinal reflex.

And GRINS at Dolar's pain. But Meacham NOTICES something around Dolar's neck where the alien pinned him, like a ring of DUST:

MEACHAM

Something on your neck. Hold still.

Meacham sweeps a little off Dolar's neck, rubs it between thumb and forefinger. The dust GLINTS under the kerosene lamp:

MEACHAM (CONT'D)

I'll be damned... gold.

They check the creature's hand talons: GOLD FLAKES underneath 'em, and lots of it. Colorado checks its taloned feet:

NAT COLORADO

Down here too.

(looks to Dolar)

This much ore... could only have come from a digging in a mine.

That LANDS on everyone, but most especially ELLA. Who looks up to see Jake READING her in this moment.

EMMETT

WHOA!

In the ALIEN'S EYE is a SMALL FLASHING LIGHT. On/Off/On/Off in time with that BEEP BEEP BEEP.

DOC

Gimme my scalpel.

In MACRO CU, DOC CUTS INTO THE EYE, WET SQUISHY SOUNDS as he pulls it from its socket, attached to a STRINGY OPTIC NERVE dripping with juice. Clamped to the nerve is a METALLIC ORB:

-- he takes hold of the blinking orb. It FLARES to life, the light coalescing into a 3-D ARROW-LIKE HOLOGRAM. Confusion. Doc REMOVES it from the optic nerve and the hologram DISAPPEARS:

DOLARHYDE

Where'd it go? The hell'd you do?

DOC

Nothing, just pulled it off --

He reconnects it to the optic nerve, the hologram REAPPEARS:

DOC (CONT'D)  
Only works when it's touching the creature.

Colorado moves closer... rainbow light flickering across his face...

NAT COLORADO  
I think... it's a compass. Look:  
(fiddles with tweezers)  
No matter how you move it, it points in the same direction.

EMMETT  
Compasses point north. That's west.

MEACHAM  
(realizing; to Jake)  
West's where you came from.

ON JAKE. Another puzzle piece falling into place.

EMMETT  
If you're right, what's it pointing to?

ELLA  
The rest of 'em.  
(then)  
Be my guess.

DOLARHYDE  
Then that's where I'm goin'.

He SNAPS his PISTOL open, loading bullets:

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)  
One of my ranchers said my herd disappeared into the sky. 'Til about ten minutes ago, I figured him for a liar.  
(SNAPS barrel closed)  
Nobody takes my cattle.

MEACHAM  
Your boy was taken too.

A FLASH of something from Dolarhyde -- could that be EMOTION?  
But just as fast, it's GONE. Almost a THROWAWAY:

DOLARHYDE  
I noticed.

NAT COLORADO  
What if they're already dead?

EMMETT  
They're not dead.

ELLA

Kid's right. If all they wanted was to kill us, they would've.

DOLARHYDE

Looked to me like... they were ropin' people.

(then)

Means they need 'em for something. Whatever it is, we can either stand here guessin'... or go find out.

His eyes flash to Nat: "C'mon." And they EXIT. Everyone looks at each other, working up the courage to face what they know they must. Doc grabs his SHOTGUN, starts gathering shells:

DOC

If she's alive -- if there's even a chance --

MEACHAM

Lord hates a coward... but our bullets were useless against those things. Other than his wrist gizmo, we're outgunned and outnumbered.

As one by one, they turn... to JAKE. Who until this point has been mostly SILENT. Observing. But now -- he's gone from enemy to potential savior in a heartbeat.

JAKE

Whoa, I got nothing to do with this --

ELLA

You got everything to do with it. If you can remember where you got that thing --

JAKE

I remember you all wantin' me on the end of a damned rope. Whatever's happenin' here's got nothin' to do with me.

ELLA

You sure about that?

He LOOKS at her. No, he isn't. But he sure as hell won't stay to debate it -- turns to go --

EMMETT

Mr. Lonergan? Sir?

The EMOTION in the boy's voice STOPS Jake at the door.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

My mother died last year. My Paw... he's all I got.

And despite a fleeting moment of SYMPATHY, Jake darkens --

JAKE

Kid, I'm the last man you want anywhere  
near you, your Pa... or anyone else in  
this goddamned town.

OUT the door. Everyone trades looks, then Ella FOLLOWS:

EXT. SALOON - NIGHT

Jake moves FAST past blown-out STOREFRONTS as Ella PURSUES:

ELLA

That's it? You're just gonna run away?

JAKE

No, Sister. I'm walking away.

ELLA

Well stop.

As he keeps on walking, Ella picks up a ROCK, wings it at the  
back of his HEAD -- WHAM! Jake stumbles forward, TURNS AROUND --

JAKE

SONOVA--

ELLA

-- I told you to stop.

Ella strides forward, picking up another rock on the move --

JAKE

What's your damn problem?!

ELLA

You're comin' with us.

JAKE

I'm not coming anywhere. And you throw  
that rock I swear I'll--

WHAM! The rock glances off his shoulder -- .

ELLA

If you're walkin' away from here, what  
the hell're you walking to?

That PENETRATES as Jake realizes he doesn't really KNOW. And  
that's the last thing he's gonna admit --

JAKE

What the hell are you walkin' to, Lady?  
'Cause if I heard right, it sounds like  
suicide to me.

-- now it's her turn to pause. Cryptically:

ELLA  
I... just wanna help these people.

JAKE  
Bullshit. You wanna help yourself. Saw  
your face light up the minute you knew  
that thing might lead you to gold.

And the fact that he's BUSTED her gets Ella's hackles up --

ELLA  
It's not gold I want, you dumb  
sonofabitch, it's what it'll buy me.

JAKE  
And what's that?

ELLA  
Revenge.

Whatever that means, it's a deep, painful LONGING in her. She  
stares at him, DEAD ON:

ELLA (CONT'D)  
And lookin' at you? I'd bet a silver  
dollar... it's what you want, too.

With that, Ella turns and STRIDES OFF as we HOLD ON JAKE, face  
knotted in conflict. As her words RESONATE.

MEACHAM (V.O.)  
*Was the Devil come to Absolution... come  
to drag our town down to hell...*

SERIES OF SHOTS - AS DUSK TURNS TO NIGHT:

Though BURNING EMBERS, Emmett helps a LITTLE GIRL pull her half-  
burnt DOLL from the rubble...

MEACHAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
*... but our town's not just a buncha  
buildings, Brothers and Sisters --  
Nossir. Our town is people. Good, God-  
fearing souls. Pure and hopeful. And  
the devil can't never take that away...*

Ella and Doc tend to WOUNDED PEOPLE in a triage area as...  
Meacham finds his overturned PULPIT. Determination in his eyes,  
he pushes it UPRIGHT:

AND NOW WE CATCH UP TO WHERE MEACHAM'S VOICE IS COMING FROM:

He's standing on the pulpit in the rubble, his words a  
sermon/call-to-arms -- every survivor GATHERED AROUND:

MEACHAM (CONT'D)

In times of darkness, God asks that we come together so we may stand and fight. So we're goin' after our kin. Any of you aren't able or prepared, no shame in it. Head up to Fort Huachuca, join up with the garrison there and pray... Rest of us ride out at sun-up to recover that which we have lost.

SUNRISE: Pistol chambers SPINNNN -- rifles are COCKED --

MEACHAM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

*Thy will be done, Lord, and there's an amen behind it.*

Lo and behold, most of the town survivors are just too damn scared. They form an EXODUS LINE, heading off toward the fort.

Dolarhyde, Colorado and his REMAINING MEN (6) load the ALIEN CORPSE onto the back of a WAGON. Some of them trade glances -- DAMN WORRIED about staying. Dolarhyde sees it:

DOLARHYDE

Somebody got something to say?

His withering GLARE keeps them from speaking up. Doc and Meacham climb onto the wagon:

MEACHAM

(the alien)

Sure we need to bring that thing along?

Doc nods as he TWISTS the forceps in the Alien's eye, the COMPASS HOLOGRAM flickering to life before them:

DOC

If this arrow points me back to Maria?  
Yeah -- I'm sure.

Emmett appears leading a PONY, a BOW and quiver of ARROWS slung around his back:

MEACHAM

Can't come, Emmett, too dangerous.

EMMETT

I can protect myself -- shoot, I'm the only master bowman in my archery club. Won the county tournament by shootin' a flipped nickel at 50 paces.

MEACHAM

Somethin' tells me these things don't carry nickels, son. Answers's no.



EMMETT

You want me to ride off with the chickenshits, then double back, be happy to. But let's just skip that part and get to it, Padre.

And that's the truth. Meacham sighs, no choice... finally:

MEACHAM

Go fill your canteen, dammit.

He SLAPS the reins and the wagon rides off. Emmett GRINS and mounts the pony, then sees... JAKE riding past. ANGRY EYES from Ella as she heels her horse and TROTS OFF angrily:

ELLA

C'mon, Happy.

But HAPPY remains, torn between them, tail wagging and looking up at Jake as if to say: PLEASE COME?

JAKE

Oh shut up.

Suppressing GUILT, he rides on toward the hills -- as Dolarhyde VEERS his horse in front of Jake, cutting him off:

DOLARHYDE

I was ridin' into town to kill you for what you done to my son. You owe me your life, Boy.

(beat)

Ride with us, we'll call it square.

His hand rests on his nickel-plated .38. Eyes gleaming cruelly.

JAKE

You that fast?

DOLARHYDE

Fast enou--

-- WHOOSH: Jake's hand is already UP with his own PISTOL, having drawn before Dolarhyde can finish his sentence:

JAKE

Now you owe me your life. We're square.

In a DAZZLING TWIRL, Jake slaps it back in his holster. Point made, he RIDES ON. Dolarhyde, burning mad at having been out-drawn, turns to COLORADO -- speaks LOW:

DOLARHYDE

Follow him. Soon as he's got his back turned... kill him.

Shit. Colorado hesitates. Dolar GLARES: "Do it." Finally Colorado NODS acquiescence, moves off...

JAKE -- on the OUTSKIRTS of town now -- riding past Meacham and Doc on the WAGON:

MEACHAM

Figure out which way you're headed yet?

JAKE

West. Saguaro Pass.

MEACHAM

That's not what I meant.

The inference LANDS on Jake. But he's in no mood. GALLOPS off. Meacham watches Jake go... MUSIC RISES AS WE DISSOLVE THROUGH:

**EXT. DESERT PLAINS**

JAKE -- RIDING HARD THROUGH THE DESERT:

A man running from his demons, or maybe toward them... through plains and pasturage... until he sees the tilted ROAD SIGN:

"SAGUARO PASS." Up ahead, he sees DEBRIS...

Part of a ROOF, lying broken on the ground. Pieces of a STONE CHIMNEY. Jake comes over a rise... to REVEAL:

**EXT. ABANDONED CABIN - DAY**

A DESTROYED LOG CABIN. Walls partially TORN AWAY. Something in Jake is DEEPLY STIRRED. Dismounts, tentatively... walks up to the PORCH. Boots CRUNCH over broken window glass as they ENTER:

**INT. ABANDONED CABIN - CONTINUOUS**

LIGHT BEAMS stream in. Eerie quiet.

Jake takes it in, HAUNTED. Something CRUNCHES under his boot -- DRIED FLOWERS. Sticking out from an OVERTURNED CRACKED VASE. Jake BLINKS, affected -- Bends over, TOUCHES the VASE AS:

MEMORY FLASHCUT! FRESH FLOWERS in a woman's hand... THE WOMAN FROM JAKE'S PICTURE. She smiles at him --

THE WOMAN

You shouldn't have.

She turns, drops the flowers into the vase as we see she's talking to JAKE.

JAKE

Got you somethin' else.

CLINK -- He drops a LEATHER POUCH on the table next to the vase.  
A FEW GOLD COINS clink out. The woman turns to him, WORRIED:

THE WOMAN

Where'd you get this?

JAKE

Where do you think?

The woman looks to the pouch -- Picks up one of the coins.  
TORN. Jake moves behind her. Close. An INTIMACY here.

THE WOMAN

Your boys'll come after you.

ON JAKE. Dark. But DETERMINED:

JAKE

Let 'em come.

She turns to him, their eyes HOLD... and they KISS. Soft.  
Tender. Soulful.

But then -- a THUNDERCRACK turns their attention to the window:  
A STORM CLOUD on the horizon. Same kind that consumed the town.

The cabin starts to VIBRATE like a tuning fork. The pouch  
slides off the table... THE GOLD COINS SPILL OUT and --

BACK TO PRESENT - JAKE

REELING. What is this memory? Who the hell is the woman?

Something GLINTS in the far wall where the chimney used to be:

ONE OF THE GOLD COINS

EMBEDDED in the wood. Jake pulls it out of the wall, a thousand  
questions in his eyes. Sunlight SHIMMERS off it and --

MEMORY FLASHCUT! The spilled coins start SLIDING across the  
floor all by themselves, as if magnetically drawn to THE CHIMNEY  
-- WHOOSH! -- SUCKED right up into it by some VACUUM FORCE!

THE WOMAN

What's happening?!!!

WINDOWS EXPLODE! THE ROOF'S RIPPED AWAY BY SOME INSANE VACUUM  
FORCE AS ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT CRASHES IN! The Woman SCREAMS and --

KA-CHINNNING! A STEEL COLLAR SHOOTS DOWN FROM THE LIGHT, CLAMPING  
AROUND HER NECK! A CABLE SNAPS OUT FROM IT AND WHIPS UPWARD,  
PULLING HER INTO THE LIGHT --

She manages to GRAB a doorknob and DANGLES UPWARD, CHOKING as --

A DEMONIC SILHOUETTE drops in front of them!

JESUS!! Jake draws his pistol and FIRES!

The demon SHRIEKS IN RAGE as SPIKED PLUMES fan out from its huge, elongated skull... making it look like a SILHOUETTED INDIAN IN FEATHER HEADDRESS!

Its HIDEOUS FACE comes into the light -- AN ALIEN -- as it raises its arm, wearing a WRIST BRACELET that reshapes into a BLASTER --

JAKE DIVES AWAY but a searing pulse RIPS A WICKED GASH in his side (now we know how he woke up with it in the desert) --

THE PULSE PASSES THROUGH JAKE AND HITS THE WOMAN SQUARE IN THE CHEST. She's HURLED backward into the wall, Jake CRIES OUT:

JAKE

Alice!

As he RUSHES to her, her collar UNLOCKS... and FLIES AT JAKE, clamping HIM. HE'S PULLED INTO THE LIGHT, CHOKING, SCREAMING --

BACK TO PRESENT - JAKE

As he STUMBLES back -- GASPING -- touching his neck --

Catches his breath. ROCKED. Sees "Alice's" BLOOD STAIN on the wall. His shaking hand reaches out, brushes over it...

JAKE (CONT'D)

(trying out the name)

... "Alice"...

Whoever she was to him, he feels sledgehammered with GRIEF. All he knows is, it was THEM. The creatures killed her. And this revelation... well, it galvanizes him with RAGE.

Rage that gives him NEW PURPOSE... then--

SUDDENLY -- INSTINCT -- JAKE SENSING SOMETHING IS HERE -- GRABS A CHIMNEY STONE AND SPINS, HURLS IT...

AT COLORADO, IN THE DOORWAY BEHIND HIM AIMING A GUN:

The stone HITS Colorado as he FIRES, the bullet tears PAST Jake -- as Colorado recovers, Jake BODYSLAMs HIM -- the GUN goes flying, they go hurling THROUGH THE WALL -- LANDING HARD on the other side -- a balls-out, messy, close-quarter death match --

Jake takes a PUNCH -- Colorado LOOPS an arm around his throat, YANKS -- they TUMBLE/SLAM to the floor, Jake LANDING on top of Colorado who holds the arm lock, CHOKING THE LIFE OUT OF HIM --

Jake -- EYES POPPING -- SEES THE GUN just out of reach --  
fingers GRASP for it -- seconds before he PASSES OUT ---

He GRABS the gun and swings it back -- BLAMM!!! Colorado ROLLS  
aside as the WALL where his head just was BLOWS OPEN -- and  
Jake's ON HIM, PISTOL WHIPPING HIM MERCILESSLY until he SPINS  
the gun back around and POINTS IT between Colorado's eyes:

ON JAKE -- quaking with rage -- he wants to kill this guy so bad  
he can taste it... but something's HOLDING HIM BACK -- GRITS his  
teeth, COCKS the trigger and:

**EXT. ABANDONED CABIN - DAY**

-- we CUT WIDE on the cabin as a GUNSHOT CRACKS. A flock of  
BIRDS screech into the sky from the overgrown corn field...

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. DESERT PLAINS - DAY**

The rest of our people RIDE along, following the ever-tilting  
HOLOGRAPHIC ARROW, their COMPASS, floating from the dead alien's  
eye in the back of the wagon.

Greavey, Dolar's ranch hand, heels up to ELLA. COCKY SWAGGER:

GREAVEY

So... what's a pretty lady like y--

ELLA

-- you finish that sentence, I shoot you  
in your beef whistle.

Doc, sipping from his canteen, does a SPIT TAKE. Ella's eyes  
DRILL Greavey. Cut down a peg, he tips his hat, red-faced:

GREAVEY

Ma'am.

And rides past her, taking us to EMMETT and DOLARHYDE:

DOLARHYDE

Tell me somethin', Kid... why didn't your  
father just take my money?

EMMETT

(confused)

What money?

DOLARHYDE

Offered him a thousand dollars to leave  
town. He could'a taken you outta harm's  
way, relocated... found you a new momma.

And this just BURNS Emmett. A beat; then:

EMMETT

Is it true Percy's momma died givin'  
birth to him, Mister Dolarhyde?

Something FLASHES in Dolarhyde. But he's contained:

DOLARHYDE

Yeah.

EMMETT

Then maybe you should use that thousand  
dollars to buy yourself a new wife.

Emmett HOLDS his look against Dolarhyde's. Brave and  
UNFLINCHING. Doc can't help but grin at the kid's moxie... but  
it's short-lived as his face suddenly falls:

DOC

*Madre Dios...*

And we PAN AROUND, dropping over his shoulder to see what he's  
reacting to --

AN ENORMOUS CRATER. ACRES WIDE... TWENTY FEET DEEP. Even  
Dolarhyde looks nervous now:

DOLARYHYDE

What the... hell is it?

MEACHAM

It was Winfield's Landing.

They turn to see Meacham, brushing the DUST off a WOODEN SIGN:  
Holds it UP. "*Winfield's Landing... Population 133.*"

ON GREAVEY AND THE MEN. Shit. He doesn't mean...?

GREAVEY

You tryin' to tell me those... things  
pulled the whole damn town into the sky?

And suddenly a weird CRACK shakes the canyon -- like the SOUND  
BARRIER BREAKING -- everyone's look goes UP where:

SWIRLING, DARK CLOUDS LOOM. The same clouds that dropped the  
tornado on Absolution. And that appeared in Jake's MEMORIES at  
the cabin. But this time, something's SHOT OUT from them --

MEACHAM

That can't be good.

The plummeting object HITS a distant dune, kicking up a SAND  
PLUME -- ROLLING TOWARD THEM --

DOLARHYDE

Scatter.

-- everyone runs their horses aside as the object BOUNCES over rocks -- then SLOWS... to a STOP.

They STARE. Finally Dolarhyde kicks his horse forward slowly... DISMOUNTS, draws his GUN. What he sees is SHOCKING:

It's an OVAL CAPSULE OF BLUE GOO, the outer layer some kind of TRANSLUCENT COCOON. Suspended within the murky Jell-o is a LARGE, DARK SHAPE. Motionless. UH-OH.

The others draw guns too, converging around it in equal SHOCK and FEAR. But the thing doesn't MOVE.

DOC

Should we... open it?

DOLARHYDE

Should we open it? Hell NO we shouldn--

EMMETT

-- oops --

-- and now we find Emmett's already POKING it with a stick, a small TEAR in the cocoon's outer embryonic layer -- GOO leaks -- then it RUPTURES, EXPLODING as the horses REAR away, WHINNYING -- the goo spreads across the desert floor, thinning out.

BEAT. Everyone wipes blue shit off their clothes as they come FACE-TO-FACE with the object inside, lying there on the ground:

A COW. YES, A COW.

Motionless. DEAD, in fact. A METAL TUBE jammed in its mouth, connected to a VALVE in the now-flaccid bubble's outer shell.

Greavey notices a BRANDING on the cow's rump -- the letter "D":

GREAVEY

Boss... it's one'a yours.

Dolarhyde's eyes NARROW. Emmett looks at Doc, SCARED:

EMMETT

Is-- is this what happened to my Pa?

Doc dismounts. Moves to the cow's mouth and PULLS OUT THAT TUBE with a wet SQUISHING sound. Thinking it through:

DOC

This was stuck down its throat... to help it breathe. That means they wanted to keep it alive, Emmett.

(forces a small smile)

I'm sure your father is fine.

But Doc's eyes aren't sure. Meacham looks back to the sky:

MEACHAM

Why'd they dump it?

ELLA

Whatever they needed from it, they must've got.

(then)

Gonna get dark soon, need to keep moving.

She does. The others FOLLOW in a chilled daze. The last is DOLARHYDE, glancing back at his dead cow with angry eyes...

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. RIDGE ABOVE VALLEY - DUSK**

Now our people APPEAR riding up a ridge... Dolarhyde shoots up a HAND, bringing the caravan to a STOP. Once again, SHOCK:

EMMETT

Ho-ly shit.

BOOM UP to reveal a SURREAL SIGHT in the valley below:

A GAMBLING RIVERBOAT. Nose buried in the sand, paddlewheels facing the sky, as if it'd been dropped from the clouds into the desert. Just like that cow. Off their LOOKS --

**EXT. DESERT - THE PADDLEBOAT - MINUTES LATER**

TRACKING alongside of the TILTED PADDLEBOAT, our team rides around it. Trying to make SENSE. STENCILED on the stern is...

DOC

"Colorado Queen."

(then)

The river's two hundred miles from here.

But Ella doesn't seem as impressed as the rest of them. In fact, her attention is drawn BEHIND them, to something coming up over the DUNES... the barest flicker of a smile --

ELLA

Son of a bitch.

IT'S JAKE ON HORSEBACK. Followed by another horse, with COLORADO in the saddle. Wrists tied but ALIVE. As Jake rides to a stop, he PUSHES Colorado off the horse -- the indian HITS the ground with a THUD as Jake levels Dolarhyde with HARD EYES:

JAKE

Your man got it in his head that he was s'posed to kill me. I'm holding onto his ear 'til he says sorry.



As Colorado stumbles to his feet angrily, humiliated, Dolar notices his BLOODY EAR. The LOBE has been SHOT OFF. He looks up at Jake, half-angry, half-EMBARRASSED --

DOLARHYDE  
Why'd you let him live?

Jake's hard-as-nails. DRIVEN now --

JAKE  
Gonna need him.

He rides past Dolar to Ella. Stops. Says, simply:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Nice boat.  
(then... SNIFFS)  
What's that smell?

ELLA  
That'd be me.

He realizes her shirt's caked in the BLUE GOO from the cow.

JAKE  
Why're you blue?

ELLA  
(dryly)  
Cause I missed ya.

Their look HOLDS. A MOMENT. Something REAL between them.

DOLARHYDE  
We better keep movin'.

A THUNDERCRACK. On the horizon, sheets of RAIN.

JAKE  
Storm's comin'. I say we dig in here til  
it passes.  
(to Colorado; fucking  
with him)  
How's that sound, Nat?

Nat BURNS. Dolar feels his AUTHORITY being undermined:

DOLARHYDE  
Storm or no storm, I say we keep movin'.

Colorado finally turns to Dolarhyde. DEFIANT:

NAT COLORADO  
Too hard tracking anything in the rain.

Dolarhyde GLARES at Colorado, who GLARES BACK: his loyalty now in QUESTION. The tide IS turning against the rancher.

**EXT. UPENDED RIVERBOAT - NIGHT - LATER**

RAIN POURS on the overturned boat. Horses tethered. The ALIEN CORPSE has been moved onto a slanted deck, covered by a TARP...

WE TILT TO THE ALIEN'S HAND. Poking out. Motionless. HOLD on it, longer than we're comfortable.

**INT. UPENDED RIVERBOAT - LATER THAT NIGHT**

A RATTLESNAKE is coiled around a CHANDELIER... except the chandelier is on the floor and the floor is the CEILING. Upended gambling tables. WOODRATS scurry over FOOD. Every window's SMASHED... as if something just TOOK everyone.

Dolar sits by a FIRE made from furniture parts, drinking from a WHISKEY FLASK. Colorado opposite, rubbing his MANGLED EAR.

DOLARHYDE

You okay?

COLORADO

(low, eyes averted)

Yeah.

Dolar pours some whiskey on a BANDANA, leans towards Colorado --

DOLARHYDE

Lemme clean it for you or it'll get --

COLORADO

-- I'm fine.

Dolarhyde backs away. Colorado GLARES.

DOLARHYDE

Say it.

COLORADO

(after a beat)

Is Percy worth dyin' for?

Dolar's eyes flash. A mixture of anger and PAIN. Then --

DOLARHYDE

He's my son.

(pointed)

I take care of my kin, Nat.

ON COLORADO as that lands. Clearly, there's something here... a bond that seems to go deeper than just boss and employee. But WHAT? Finally Nat just gets up and LEAVES.

Dolar watches him go, takes a healthy SWIG. Hears a WHIMPER. Looks over and sees... EMMETT, huddled in a corner. CRYING.

ON DOLARHYDE. The kid's naked emotion AFFECTING him, but the fact Dolar might have a conscience makes him ANGRY too. Low:

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)

Hey. Kid.

Emmett looks up, SNIFFLES. Dolar tosses him the WHISKEY FLASK:

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)

Take a drink and shut up.

He gets up, walks off. Leaving the kid with the flask. As Emmett looks at it confusedly, stuffs it in his POCKET --

INT. UPENDED RIVERBOAT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Meacham has set out TIN PANS under holes to collect RAIN WATER. Dumps a pan into his CANTEEN as Doc enters with COFFEE for him:

DOC

(re: the tin plates)

We brought enough water.

MEACHAM

Not for drinkin', it's for blessin'.

Doc nods: ah. Turns to go... STOPS. Turns back. Intense eyes:

DOC

Padre... Maria came to see you in confession every Sunday. It seemed... she had a lot to talk about.

(beat, this is hard)

Was she having an affair?

Meacham removes his spectacles. Looks at Doc --

MEACHAM

You know I can't say.

And Doc DOES know. But there's a quiet DESPERATION here --

DOC

The last thing I said to her... I...

(shakes his head; then)

Please. If I'm wrong about my wife... I don't want to die angry.

Meacham sees the PAIN in his friend's eyes.

MEACHAM

You can ask Maria if she was cheatin' on you once we get her back. 'Til then?

(bit of a grin)

Don't die.

And OFF DOC, thunder CRACKS --

**INT. RIVERBOAT - COMMODORE'S QUARTERS - NIGHT**

RAIN pours down through an open gash in the roof, splashing the floor. Ella enters, glances back toward the door to make sure she's alone, then pulls off her shirt and folds it over a stool. Upper body NAKED in the moonlight. We catch only a FLASH of this, and for a moment it's PURE HOTNESS...

... until she turns and something ELSE is revealed: criss-crossed LASH MARKS on her back.

She turns away and starts to SPLASH herself with water, erasing the blue goo and dirt from her skin and face... then: A MATCH ignites behind her. She WHIRLS, startled, covering her breasts with her arms -- JAKE is sitting in a chair at the Commodore's desk, casually lighting a cheroot in his mouth:

JAKE  
You missed a spot.

ELLA  
The hell're you doing here?

JAKE  
Mindin' my own business.  
(snaps out the match)  
Then you decided to take a shower.

ELLA  
Why didn't you say anything?

JAKE  
Givin' you privacy.

She throws her shirt on, but her skin's wet and the shirt glues to her, celebrating her shape in a way that can't be ignored.

Jake tosses her his jacket. As she slips it on, she notices a bottle of WHISKEY on the table... and the PHOTOGRAPH OF ALICE.

ELLA  
... she's pretty.  
(Jake says NOTHING)  
Who was she?

Jake's quiet. DARK. Intense emotion, intensely suppressed:

JAKE  
Only thing I know's her name was Alice...  
(then; distant)  
And she's dead.

Ella looks up at him. INTO him --

ELLA  
Maybe you loved her.

Jake shakes his head, sort of mumble/chuckles in RESISTANCE:

JAKE  
All you women are the same -- Always  
wanna make it about Goddamn "love."

ELLA  
(a beat)  
Trust me, Loneran. I'm not the same.

There is a force -- a strength about this woman -- that he connects with. But remains, true to character, ALOOF:

JAKE  
Don't matter.

She takes a step closer. Soft. Intimate.

ELLA  
So what ~~does~~ matter?

Jake just looks at her. Then, lifts the cheroot to his lips, the FLARE of its tip casting him in a demonic light...

JAKE  
What matters is I find the thing that  
killed her.  
(dark as hell)  
And make it pay.

And now, he leans forward with a focused LOOK... holds up his BRACELET:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Where'd you see this before?

A beat. Ella -- somehow CONTAINED -- opens her mouth to lie. But he cuts her off --

JAKE (CONT'D)  
-- and don't lie to me. You wouldn't've  
asked me if you didn't recognize it.

Ella tightens. PAIN in her eyes. And Jake REALIZES:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Those things... they the ones who put  
those marks on your back?

She swallows: a mixture of SHAME that he's found her out... and ANGER at what was done to her.

ELLA

They took my people. Destroyed where I'm from.

JAKE

Where's that?

ELLA

North of here. Been trackin' 'em ever since, town to town. Best I figure, they're hidin' in a mine.

Jake CONSIDERS all this. Softens a little:

JAKE

Maybe if you'd told me the truth instead of throwin' rocks at me --

ELLA

-- what, you would've stuck around? Bullshit. I couldn't've turned you away from what you had to do, any more than I could've stopped these people from going after their kin.

(beat)

Truth ain't worth a damn, Jake... and we're gonna need all the guns we can get.

Their look HOLDS... until Jake SMIRKS. Likes her style:

JAKE

So that's the only reason you wanted me to come with you? Cause of my gun?

There's a pause... then Ella SMIRKS back:

ELLA

No, not your gun.

(beat)

What you do with it.

Among the many things these two are feeling -- both separately and together -- the one that pops right now is ATTRACTION. Confusing as it is for him. The pregnant moment LINGERS...

Until Happy suddenly starts to GROWWWWL, sensing something outside. ANOTHER CRACK OF THUNDER as:

**INT. STATEROOM - CONTINUOUS**

The horses STAMP NERVOUSLY out the window as Greavey and the rest of Dolarhyde's men (COBBETT and 4 others) HUDDLE in secret conference -- whispers that sound a lot like MUTINY --

GREAVEY  
What the hell're we doin' here? We  
should be ridin' in the opposite  
direction of those things --

COBBETT  
We do that, the old man's likely to shoot  
us himself. Only way outta this is --

And suddenly. Greavey SNIFFS the air, FROWNS:

GREAVEY  
... what's that smell?

-- as they TURN to the deck where the creature lays... ALL THEY  
FIND IS AN EMPTY TARP FLAPPING AIMLESSLY:

COBBETT  
Aw sh--

LIGHTNING FLASHES, illuminating the ship -- and also THE ALIEN  
behind them, a coiled mass clinging spiderlike to the ceiling!!!

Its arm WHIPS out, noosing around Cobbett -- LIFTS HIM off his  
feet -- SLAMS HIM into the ceiling -- TOSSES HIM like a ragdoll:

The men SHOUT -- a PAIR OF RAZOR SHARP CANINES extrude from the  
alien then it SPRINGS -- SLICING THROUGH TWO MEN AT ONCE --  
GREAVEY and 2 others manage to SCRAMBLE AWAY:

INT. RIVERBOAT - VARIOUS - CONTINUOUS

JAKE AND ELLA

HEAR the SCREAMS -- Happy takes off -- they RACE after him --

DOC AND MEACHAM

Hear them too -- grabs their PISTOLS -- and Doc, his CANTEEN --

DOLARHYDE AND COLORADO

Colorado snatches up a WINCHESTER, LOADS IT, throws another one  
to Dolar -- who's suddenly, surprisingly, PROTECTIVE of Emmett:

DOLARHYDE  
Get behind me, Boy --

THE ALIEN SPRINGS INTO THE ROOM -- landing upside down on the  
ceiling. Dolar FIRES at it --

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)  
RUN, KID! GIT!

Emmett SCRAMBLES down a FLOOR HATCH, disappears as Dolar keeps  
FIRING -- but the alien BATS the gun away and LIFTS Dolar UP --

Paralyzed with FEAR, he EXHALES a terrified GASP and --

THE CREATURE RECOILS FROM HIS BREATH! HURLS Dolar aside --  
THROUGH THE FIRE -- embers catch CURTAINS and FLAMES SPREAD --

COLORADO races in, throws a TOMAHAWK -- it PINS the alien's claw  
to the wall, the monster SHRIEKS as Nat draws a PISTOL but --

The alien SPITS A STICKY RESIN GOB -- it HARDENS, pinning NAT'S  
hand with the pistol to the wall in return. He STRUGGLES as the  
alien ADVANCES --

BOOM! The Alien's shoulder EXPLODES ORANGE FLUORESCENT BLOOD as  
a GUNSHOT rings out -- it's Dolarhyde, back on his feet and  
FIRING -- the monster SCREECHES and leaps down, DISAPPEARING  
through the hatch where Emmett fled --

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)  
GODDAMMITT!!!

And the fire's GROWING around the boat --

**INT. CRAWLSPACE - CONTINUOUS**

EMMETT moves FAST on hands-and-knees through a narrow CRAWLSPACE  
-- around a corner here -- another there -- a MAZE --

SOMEWHERE BEHIND HIM -- THE ALIEN -- CRAWLING FAST --

EMMETT -- reaches another HATCH -- pushes through and OUT:

**INT. RIVERBOAT BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS**

-- DROPPING onto the floor -- as we WHIP TO Jake racing in from  
around a corner -- but suddenly: THE ALIEN BURSTS FROM THE HATCH  
BEHIND EMMETT, SWEEPING HIM UP IN ITS CLUTCHES:

Jake's bracelet OPENS UP into that BLASTER and it's AIMED at The  
Alien but the creature CUPS a hand around Emmett and LIFTS HIM  
off the floor, a TALONED FINGER pressed to the boy's THROAT:

STANDOFF. ELLA rushes in. The creature sees her -- HISSES --

JAKE  
Don't know if you understand me... but  
you hurt that boy and I hurt you.

CLOSE, EMMETT -- MUFFLED, TEARS LEAKING FROM HIS TERRIFIED EYES:

MEACHAM (O.S.)  
HEY.

RACK FOCUS TO REVEAL MEACHAM BEHIND THE ALIEN:



MEACHAM (CONT'D)  
 BY THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD, GO BACK TO  
 HELL, DEMON!

Meacham brings his CANTEN down like a HATCHET, SPRAYING the alien with HOLY WATER... but NOTHING happens! And then --

The Alien STRIKES -- SLAMMING MEACHAM BACK INTO A JUTTING PIECE OF IRON, IMPALING HIM --

MEACHAM (CONT'D)  
 . GAAAAAAAAAAH!!!

The Alien SPRINGS through a doorway, TAKING EMMETT WITH IT. Ella RUSHES after it as Jake RUNS to Meacham, hanging impaled:

JAKE  
 Easy, now... Don't move, dammit --  
 (TURNS; SHOUTING)  
 DOC -- GET IN HERE NOW!

MEACHAM  
 Go after the boy... then you get our people back...

JAKE  
 Stop talking. DOC! GET YOUR ASS--

But Meacham GRABS Jake, EYE TO EYE. GASPING:

MEACHAM  
 Listen up... 'cause I'm not gonna be able to say it again --  
 (pulls Jake CLOSE)  
 God don't care who you were, Son... only who you are.

ON JAKE. AFFECTED. With a last RASP, Meacham DIES just as DOC races through the growing FLAMES -- REACTS -- no time to mourn --

DOC  
 JAKE -- WE GOTTA GO NOW!

But Jake can't let go -- FURY -- HEARTBREAK -- Doc PULLS HIM away -- Jake SNAGS THE CRUCIFIX off Meacham's neck as he's forced OUT, leaving Meacham's body to be CONSUMED BY FLAMES --

**EXT. UPENDED RIVERBOAT - DESERT - NIGHT**

The boat is a BALL OF FIRE in the pouring rain, as what remains of our heroes stumble out, COUGHING, devastated... Jake, Doc, Dolarhyde, Colorado, Greavey, 2 GUNMEN... and Ella and Happy atop a DUNE, following a TRAIL OF FLUORESCENT ORANGE BLOOD streaking into the desert. Happy BARKING MADLY. Ella drops to a knee, touches the orange blood as it WASHES AWAY in the rain:

ELLA  
RAIN'S GONNA COVER ITS TRACKS!

NAT COLORADO  
That thing... was dead... it was dead...

DOLARHYDE, RAIN pouring down his face... VULNERABLE and GUILTY:

DOLARHYDE  
I couldn't stop it -- It just... grabbed  
the kid.

ON JAKE. Rage-filled against the flames... Meacham's CRUCIFIX  
in his hand, as his FIST closes around it. Looks up, HARDCORE:

JAKE  
Then we'd better get him back.

SMASH TO:

**INT. STALACTITE CAVERN - NIGHT**

STALACTITES loom from the ceiling -- BAM! EMMETT is DROPPED on  
the floor of a sinister cave -- scrambles back from THE ALIEN:

EMMETT  
Damn. You are one ugly bastard--

PSST! The alien spits a RESIN GOB on Emmett's mouth -- PSST  
PSST! More gobs PIN his limbs to the wall. Emmett can't move --  
can't speak -- eyes WIDE and TERRIFIED --

The creature looks down at an ARMOR PLATE on its bicep. Touches  
a series of keys and the armor spits out what looks like...

... a small RUBIK'S CUBE made of some alien alloy.

The creature casually TOSSES IT in the air where it FLOATS and  
starts to SPIN -- as it does, its sides FLIP AND TURN (like a  
Rubik's Cube) -- emitting HIGH-PITCHED SONAR BEEPS:

This thing's some kind of HOMING BEACON.

Off Emmett's WIDE, GAPING EYES...

**EXT. DESERT PLAINS - SUNRISE**

Our people RIDE FAST against the rising sun, on the hunt for  
Emmett. Colorado REARS his horse, kneels by a trace of ORANGE  
BLOOD on some rocks.

NAT COLORADO  
(looks off --)  
West.

Greavey and the others share a LOOK. Enough. Turn to Dolar --

GREAVEY  
Boss, only took one of them things to  
kill four of us. We got no chance here.

Dolarhyde BURNS -- knowing he's being ABANDONED --

DOLARHYDE  
You're a goddamn coward.  
(to the others)  
You work for me, dammit. You're my  
employees.

And Greavey, finally FREE to speak his mind, says SPITEFULLY:

GREAVEY  
Fine line between a coward and a fool.

The men turn tail and RIDE AWAY. Dolarhyde SHOUTS after them --

DOLARHYDE  
You're all FIRED!

Doc takes the opportunity to TWIST the knife:

DOC  
Looks like they finally found something  
to be more scared of than you.

Dolarhyde feels his world CRUMBLING away man by man...

Ella trots alongside Jake, who's staring at that DARK CLOUD MASS  
overhead with a bad feeling:

JAKE  
Clouds've been moving east since sun-  
up... 'cept that one.

ON ELLA. We SENSE she knows something, something more she isn't  
saying. SNAPS her reins and they RIDE OFF:

**INT. BOX CANYON - CONTINUOUS**

As the group gallops into a BOX CANYON, Happy starts BARKING  
MADLY -- the horses SLOW --

ELLA  
Something's wron--

**BLAMBLAM!!!!** GUNSHOTS from above suddenly PEPPER the ground --  
the horses REAR and KICK UP, startled --

A DOZEN FIGURES ON THE CLIFFS ALL AROUND THEM. Badass OUTLAWS  
with RIFLES aimed at our heroes. One of them CALLS DOWN:

OUTLAW GUNMAN  
EVERYBODY DRAW YOUR GUNS SLOW AND TOSS  
'EM ON THE GODDAMNED GROUND!

SHIT.

SLOWLY, Jake draws his gun... tosses it. Now the rest of them.  
As they SEE -- TWO RIDERS -- incoming -- from the other end of  
the canyon. Rifles aimed and ready. Happy GROWLS...

One of the outlaws knocks back the hammer on his rifle --

OUTLAW  
I say we just shoot 'em and take their--  
But the words catch in his throat as his EYES WIDEN:

OUTLAW (CONT'D)  
... Boss?

Sure enough, they're looking right at JAKE. Both outlaws (BRONC  
and HUNT) lower their guns, hostility replaced by SURPRISE:

HUNT  
What the hell you doin' back here,  
Lonerган?

Oh, Christ. This is JAKE'S gang. ON DOLARHYDE. ELLA.  
COLORADO. All registering it. And JAKE, of course, doesn't  
REMEMBER these men as Bronc dismounts, NERVOUS:

BRONC  
Jesus, Boss... Creek's gonna shit when he  
sees you.  
(then; re: the others)  
And who the hell're they?

ON JAKE. How does he handle this? Hunt rides up next to him,  
SUSPICIOUS, and for reasons yet to be known, UNFRIENDLY --

HUNT  
What's the matter, Jake. Cat got your--?

SMACK! Jake moves LIGHTNING FAST, SLAPS Hunt across the face,  
stopping the question on his tongue -- CATCHES the gun as it  
drops and presses the barrel into Hunt's NECK:

JAKE  
Since when're you the one asking the  
goddamn'd questions!?!

Ella and our people REACT as Jake plays it up, best defense a  
good OFFENSE. The outlaws are SCARED: this is the Lonergan they  
know. Hunt holds his BLOODY MOUTH:

HUNT

Christ, Jake... You broke my tooth --

JAKE

Quit whining. Now bring me to the rest of the boys, if that meets with your goddamn approval.

Bronc and Hunt nod, mounting up, SHOUTING to the OUTLAWS above:

BRONC

LONERGAN'S BACK. MEET US AT THE CAMP!

As they RIDE OFF, Dolarhyde looks to Jake and mutters:

DOLARHYDE

Nice company you keep.

ELLA

What the hell're you doing? If we don't catch up to that kid, we're never gonna--

JAKE

They called me "Boss." You wanna go after these things with five or fifty?  
(off her look)  
Like you said: we can use every gun we can get.

Oh. That actually makes SENSE. But --

ELLA

What exactly're you gonna say to 'em?

JAKE

(a beat)

Tell you when I figure it out.

And he SPURS onward, leaving her to follow uneasily --

**INT. STALACTITE CAVERN - DAY**

CLOSE -- RUBIK'S CUBE -- STILL SPINNING MID-AIR AS:

OUR ALIEN HANGS UPSIDE DOWN from stalactites by four spindly limbs. Mid sleep cycle. And inches below its head...

EMMETT, still webbed to the wall. Unable to move or speak, TERRIFIED. As suddenly... the cube DEACTIVATES. And DROPS --

THE CREATURE'S EYES SNAP OPEN. It SPRINGS from the ceiling as FOUR DARK SHAPES blot out light, GLIDING IN...

MANTRA RAY HOVER SPEEDERS

A gang of FOUR MORE ALIENS dismounts. The biggest and STRONGEST -- their LEADER -- barks GUTTURAL CLICKS at the alien who kidnapped Emmett. Kidnapper explaining as it removes another STRANGE DEVICE. The device beams a HOLO-PROJECTION...

OF ELLA'S FACE! The aliens HISS in furious RECOGNITION. JESUS... is this some kind of otherworldly WANTED POSTER?

PLUMES fan out angrily from the Leader's HUGE, ELONGATED SKULL -- like an indian headdress! The creature TURNS to Emmett --

It's the alien who killed Jake's woman! We'll come to know it as... THE SLAVER.

It MOVES OMINOUSLY for Emmett, grasping the HANDLE of something that UNCOILS with fluid, frightening speed:

A WHITE-HOT LASER WHIP. This will be The Slaver's SIGNATURE WEAPON. It spirals to its full length, FLASHING out at --

EMMETT -- MUFFLED SCREAM! But... the whip DOESN'T cut him, instead it SLICES THROUGH THE WEBBING that pins the boy to the wall. As Emmett FALLS, The Slaver SWEEPS HIM UP -- Emmett FLAILS, punching, kicking to no avail -- but then:

DOLARHYDE'S FLASK

Tumbles from Emmett's pocket and SPLASHES WHISKEY on The Slaver -- IT SHRIEKS WILDLY AS THE BOOZE CONTACTS FLESH, SKIN SMOKING!

EMMETT -- tumbles away. Terror turns to REVELATION as he PULLS the webbing from his mouth:

EMMETT

Holy SHIT.

Another alien LUNGES for the kid but Emmett SPLASHES him with the flask -- the alien RECOILS, flesh BUBBLING --

Emmett whirls -- sees the HOVERBIKES -- JUMPS onto one, twisting desperately at the controls --- HOW DO I GET THIS THING TO WORK?!! Another Alien SCUTTLES in FAST -- Emmett's scrambling boots slide into the foot supports, which automatically WHIR CLOSED as the bike THROTTLES FORWARD... DECAPITATING THE ALIEN!

The bike SPINS UNCONTROLLABLY, plasma thrusters SCORCHING WALLS and setting two more aliens ABLAZE! The speeder KAMIKAZE BOUNCES out of the cavern at 90 MPH, Emmett screaming!

The Slaver SCREECHES FURIOUSLY as the remaining creatures LEAP back on their speeders and GIVE CHASE!

EXT. GANG ENCAMPMENT - DAY

A TARANTULA

Climbing onto an old desert stump -- **BLAM!** It's SHOT OFF by a couple DRUNK OUTLAWS, swigging booze from STOLEN WHISKEY CRATES piled on a WAGON. We're in an OUTLAW CAMP: roughly 40 fast guns and saddle tramps. Tents. Horses. Ample weapons. And right now, most of them are GEARING UP to ride out for some reason...

One of them, CREEK JOHNSON, with a chewed up face like swiss cheese, slides a RIFLE into his saddle and shouts to the drunks:

CREEK JOHNSON

Hey -- Idiots. Lay off that whiskey and saddle up. Flyer's on its way and we best damn be sober for it.

HUNT (O.S.)

CREEK!

Creek turns; sees HUNT and BRONC crest the hill with the other OUTLAWS from the cliffs. ANGRILY:

CREEK JOHNSON

'Bout time you got back.

(re: Hunt's bloody nose)

What the hell happened to you?!?

Hunt nods over his shoulder --

HUNT

He did.

The outlaws part to reveal JAKE, riding in with Ella and the rest of our people. Creek's eyes NARROW, NOT happy to see him:

CREEK JOHNSON

Well, shit.

It gets very, VERY QUIET. Our people tread warily, knowing whatever reaction Jake's eliciting, it AIN'T GOOD. He runs the gaunt of ACCUSING GLARES. Smart enough to know that CREEK is the man in charge. Dismounts:

JAKE

You don't look happy to see me, Creek.

Creek eyes him. TOUGH. Clearly, HISTORY here:

CREEK JOHNSON

We're fixin' to rob us a train in about twenty minutes and you come ridin' in like nothin' ever happened?

(fuck you)

No, Lonergan. I ain't happy to see you.

ON JAKE. How to navigate bad blood that he doesn't REMEMBER?

JAKE

Well I'm sure you'll get over it.

Then, pretty much DISMISSING Creek, Jake turns, addresses the rest of the men. If he's their boss? He's gonna ACT LIKE IT.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Nice to see you, Boys, but we're not going after a train -- We're going after something else.

The men seem.... CONFUSED. Not sure what the hell is GOING ON.

BRONC

But Jake... you-- you said you didn't wanna be in charge no more.

And this is a REVELATION. Jake glances at ELLA -- has to keep IMPROVISING to hold his ground:

JAKE

Well, I-- changed my mind. So saddle the hell up.

CREEK JOHNSON

They're not going anywhere with you.

Creek's heard enough. Strides forward, a direct CHALLENGE:

CREEK JOHNSON (CONT'D)

You got some balls on you -- walkin' outta here a week ago sayin' what you said and doin' what you did and then ridin' back in here and givin' orders. Just who the hell do you think you are?

The IRONY of the question isn't lost on Jake, as Creek walks right up to Ella. CLOSE. Violates her space: studies her with a mixture of curiosity and CONTEMPT.

CREEK JOHNSON (CONT'D)

So. Are you her?

ELLA

Am I who?

CREEK JOHNSON

The whore Jake quit this gang for.

OH. Another piece of the puzzle falls into place -- Jake's eyes SNAP to Ella as they both REALIZE... the men think she's "Alice." Jake does his best to stay cool, meets Creek's stare:

JAKE

Watch your mouth, Creek.



CREEK JOHNSON  
Or what? These boys are with me now.  
I'm in charge. You may be fast, but you  
are goddamned outgunned.

ON JAKE. OUR HEROES. Shit. Jake turns to the men --

JAKE  
That a fact, Boys?

But Creek doesn't wait for them to respond:

CREEK JOHNSON  
Put your guns on the whore. He so much  
as twitches, blow her brains out her ear.

AT ONCE, 10 GUNS ARE LEVELED AT ELLA'S HEAD. No doubt as to who  
the men are LOYAL to. But Jake locks into Creek, UNFLINCHING:

JAKE  
Call her a whore again, that'll be the  
last word you ever say.

CREEK JOHNSON  
You ain't in no position to make threats,  
asshole. Hunt: take his gun.

Hunt reluctantly scrambles over to Jake, oh-so-carefully pulls  
the PISTOL from Jake's holster:

HUNT  
Sorry, Boss... nothin' personal.

Creek now turns to BULL MCCAIDE, roughly the size of a BARN.

CREEK JOHNSON  
Put him down, Bull.

And Jake barely has time to react as Bull lets fly with a  
JAWBREAKING HAYMAKER that about knocks Jake out of his BOOTS!

Dolarhyde and Colorado WINCE as Jake hits the dirt with a THUD --  
Creek striding over, cock of the walk, LEANS over him:

CREEK JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
Where the hell's our gold, Jake?

"Gold?" Jake SPITS BLOOD, defiant:

JAKE  
Don't remember.

Creek NODS to Bull: SMASH! Another devastating BLOW. ON ELLA --  
at GUNPOINT. Wishing she could intervene. DOC too.

CREEK JOHNSON

Well I do remember you tellin' us you was leavin' us high and dry because you were in love... You just left out the part about taking half our goddamned haul from the Yuma Bank. So I'm gonna ask you one last time -- Where. Is. Our. Gold?

-- WHAM! Bull PUNCHES Jake so hard he FLIES OFF HIS FEET:

CREEK JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Man can't run away from who he is, Lonergan... you really think you could go straight just cause you were fool enough to fall in love with some woman?

WHAM! Bull PUNCHES Jake back into oblivion, and on the HIT we:

**MEMORY FLASHCUT! PEACEFUL SILENCE** -- two **FACES** staring at each other across a pillow -- Jake and ALICE, naked, in a **WHOREHOUSE BEDROOM** somewhere:

ALICE

You sure you wanna give it all up?

ON JAKE. Clearly TORN. But just as clearly, in LOVE.

JAKE

What about you? Once we're gone, you ain't ever comin' back.

She touches his face so gently. And whispers:

ALICE

You're the first person ever believed I was better than this place... so I gotta believe in you.

(and she KISSES him)

You're a good man, Jake Lonergan.

**PRESENT:** as the words "Good Man" ECHO back to Jake. Stirring him as Creek GRABS Jake's hair and YANKS BACK, rears up a fist:

CREEK JOHNSON

You figgered you could steal from us? All that gold was yours to take so you could go off and start a new life?

Creek's next PUNCH takes us to another:

**MEMORY FLASHCUT! REPLAY** -- Jake and Alice in the cabin -- he drops the SADDLEBAG -- it CLINKS to the floor. She's worried:

ALICE

Your boys'll come after you.

JAKE  
(dark, determined)  
Let 'em come.

BACK TO PRESENT -- as now Jake UNDERSTANDS the context of this moment -- what they were saying to each other -- He looks up at Creek, BEATEN AND BUSTED UP:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Okay... okay, I remember now...  
("fuck you" grin)  
Demons stole your gold, Creek. But when  
you get to hell, you can ask for it back.

CREEK JOHNSON  
(tsk's)  
Okay then. That's the way you wanna do  
this...  
(turns)  
Kill the whore.

ON THE GANG. As they all cock their guns -- Aimed at Ella --  
This is IT --

JAKE -- slowly lifts his head, suddenly RAGE-FILLED as --

HIS WRIST BRACELET ACTIVATES! BLAMMM!!! A SEARING PULSE BLAST FIRES, VAPORIZING CREEK JUST BEFORE HE PULLS THE TRIGGER!

EVERYONE'S FACES. Holy shit. Jake spits on the ground between the SMOKING BOOTS that formerly belonged to Creek:

JAKE  
Told you not to call her that.

ON JAKE. Pure KILLER. As he turns his weapon on the rest of the (awestruck) gang -- through BLOODY TEETH:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
You're all riding with me. Any one of  
you decides otherwise? So help me God,  
I'll kill you where you stand.  
(and then)  
I'm back and I'm in goddamned charge.

The gang quickly flips: "Absolutely, Jake/ Whatever you say, Boss..." Jake turns to the speechless Bull McCade and KICKS HIM IN THE BALLS as hard as he can, doubling him over.

Now he meets eyes with ELLA. She can't help SMIRKING, grateful.

DOC. Is the only one NOT looking at Jake. His attention drawn toward a SOUND coming from the distant DUNES --

DOC  
Dios mio.

A SPEEDER IS ROARING TOWARD THEM, BOUNCING OVER DESERT:

DOLARHYDE  
(squints, realizing...)  
Jesus... it's the kid.

As Emmett ROARS IN, the shocked outlaws SCATTER:

EMMETT  
THEY'RE COMING!!!! THEY'RE COMING!!!

The kid TUMBLES off the speeder as it PLOWS RIGHT THROUGH CAMP, kicking up DIRT and UPENDING SUPPLIES. As Emmett scrambles up --

VROOOM! FOUR MORE SPEEDERS ROAR OVER THE CREST IN PURSUIT OF EMMETT! THE ALIENS FROM THE CAVE!

JAKE  
EVERYBODY MOOOOVE!!!

STEEL COLLARS START FLYING, ATTACHED TO ROPING CABLES -- BEFORE THE GANG KNOWS WHAT'S HAPPENING, THEY'RE BEING GRABBED AND DRAGGED AWAY!

Those who have their wits about them FIRE BACK, trying to hit the flying machines. CROSSFIRE. CONFUSION.

THE SLAVER

His speeder GROWLS to a halt. Dismounting like a killer biker.

ON JAKE. As he SEES that horrible alien face across the crowd:

*QUICK HIT: Alice dying in his arms. And this same damn THING is the one responsible for it. And we're:*

BACK TO PRESENT. Jake's eyes LOCKED on the SLAVER as he says:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
You.

BUT THE ACTION COMES ROARING BACK AS:

Outlaws start FIRING at the Slaver, who REACTS in mere annoyance. Flicks open a POUCH on his bandolier for what look like THUMB TACKS -- throws them and they fan out, PIERCING THE NECKS of the outlaws, activating "Blue":

THE MEN INSTANTLY FREEZE, TURNING A PETRIFIED GRAY.

The Slaver draws a ROD that TELESCOPES into a SIX FOOT LANCE -- KA-TCHING! BARBED ENDS snap out and the alien runs on two limbs, then FOUR -- LEOPARD-LIKE for speed -- rises back up and SMASH! SHATTERS each man into a million pieces. Now he uses the bladed-ends to SKEWER five more outlaws and turns --

MEETING JAKE'S EYES IN MUTUAL RECOGNITION -- SCREECHES:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
(to Dolarhyde)  
Find cover!!!

Jake FIRES his pulse blaster, providing cover as DOLAR, DOC, EMMETT, and ELLA rush to hide behind the WAGON. The Aliens FIRE BACK as LASER CROSSFIRE shreds the camp -- EXPLOSIONS and CHAOS:

THREE OUTLAWS scramble to form a GATLING CREW. It SPINS to life, MOWING DOWN tents as they try to hit the aliens --

ANOTHER ALIEN

Hurls a boomerang-like "SMART WEAPON." It circles past the GATLING COWBOYS, BACK into the alien's hand as:

THE TOP HALVES OF THE COWBOYS SLIDE OFF, SEVERED AT THE WAIST.

An EXPLOSION blows one of whiskey crates open on the wagon:

EMMETT  
USE THE WHISKEY! IT BURNS EM!

ELLA  
-- WHAT?!

EMMETT  
LIKE ACID ON THEIR SKIN!!!

Ella REACTS -- WHAT? As an alien SKITTERS toward her, she grabs a bottle and HURLS IT -- it EXPLODES all over the creature! A HORRIBLE SCREECH as its skin smokes, thrashing epileptically --

ELLA  
(REVELATION)  
Oh my GOD --

DOLARHYDE  
LET'S GO!!!

Our people ESCAPE for the horses. Doc climbs up on the WAGON buckboard and pulls EMMETT in the seat beside him --

As ELLA leaps on a horse --

THE SLAVER

Climbs back on his speeder and GUNS FOR HER, firing a STEEL COLLAR -- Jake turns -- SEES THIS. Starts RUNNING MADLY:

JAKE  
ELLA!!

Too late: KA-CHANK! The collar CLAMPS her neck, RIPPING ELLA OFF HER HORSE! The CABLE snaps back and attaches to the hovercraft as it ZIPS by, DRAGGING ELLA BACKWARD LIKE A WATER SKIER BEHIND A SPEEDBOAT!

ON JAKE -- FURY -- HIS BRACELET ACTIVATES! And there's a LOGIC here we'll come to realize, as he KICKS his horse into a gallop:

JAKE (CONT'D)

HYAA!

**EXT. DESERT - CONTINUOUS**

ELLA'S DRAGGED BEHIND THE SPEEDER. Hands GRASPING at the magnetic collar as it HALF-CHOKES HER, yet keeps her upper body SUSPENDED just off the ground while her heels BOUNCE HARSHLY --

JAKE ON THE HORSE

Riding hard -- aims his BLASTER, trying to get a TARGET on the CABLE linking Ella's collar to the speeder -- fires -- MISSES!

The Slaver TILTS VERTICAL to fly through a narrow CANYON ENTRANCE as Ella's fingers reach wildly for THE BOWIE KNIFE on her belt. She starts CUTTING THE CABLE, trying to FREE HERSELF:

WHOOSH! The speeder BLASTS out the other side of the canyon, Jake still in pursuit but suddenly...

THE UNION PACIFIC LOCOMOTIVE IS CURVING AROUND A CORNER, RACING RIGHT FOR THEM! This is the train Jake's gang was gonna rob!

**INT. UNION PACIFIC EXPRESS CAR - CONTINUOUS**

Two PINKERTONS sit by a SAFE. LOOK UP at an unidentified ROAR --

PINKERTON #1

You hear that?

PINKERTON #2

How many times I gotta tell you, Leonard.  
No one'd be stupid enough to rob this tr--

ZWWWWW. IN THE WINDOW BEHIND THEM... THE SPEEDER BLASTS BY, GOING AGAINST THE TRAIN, ELLA BOUNCING BEHIND IT.

When the Pinkertons SNAP around, Ella's GONE... but now they SEE JAKE -- ON HORSEBACK -- FLASHING PAST in pursuit!

PINKERTON #2 (CONT'D)

I stand corrected.

They DRAW GUNS, running to see what's happening and --

**EXT. UNION PACIFIC TRAIN - MID AIR AT 80 MPH - CONTINUOUS**

As the speeder SKIMS alongside the train, ELLA keeps struggling painfully to CUT HER COLLAR CABLE. Jake FIRES again, MISSES the cable but DETONATES THE SIDE OF A TRAIN CAR:

**INT. UNION PACIFIC - TRAIN CAR - CONTINUOUS**

The wall EXPLODES INWARD on the Pinkertons -- hurt, but ALIVE --

**EXT. UNION PACIFIC TRAIN - CONTINUOUS**

The speeder's SHAKEN. The Slaver GROWLS as he fights for balance. Reaches the TRAIN'S END, skims past the caboose and --

DAMNIT, THE SLAVER ARCS BACK AROUND IN A WIDE U-TURN, SLOTTING IN FOR COVER BEHIND THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRAIN... TRAVELLING IN THE SAME DIRECTION NOW!

ELLA'S FLUNG WILDLY BY THE HAIRPIN TURN! SHE DROPS THE KNIFE, IT CLATTERS AWAY! HER ONLY MEANS OF ESCAPE GONE!

**JAKE'S POV:**

Through a slot between boxcars, the speeder BLURS in the opposite direction. Up ahead comes the CABOOSE. No more TRAIN:

Thinking FAST, Jake LEAPS off his horse -- CATCHES A LADDER RUNG ON THE CABOOSE! Teeth gritted, starts to CLIMB up onto:

**EXT. TOP OF UNION PACIFIC TRAIN CAR - CONTINUOUS**

Jake JUMPS from car to car -- over LOGS in a TENDER CAR --

BLAM BLAM!!! The PINKERTONS are climbing to the roof, WEAPONS FIRING -- Jake loses footing, ROLLING off the side --

**EXT. SIDE OF TRAIN - CONTINUOUS**

-- but CATCHES another ladder rung and he DANGLES, looks DOWN:

ELLA IS RIGHT UNDER HIM, DRAGGING BEHIND THE SPEEDER! HE REACHES OUT --

JAKE

TAKE MY HAND!

She GRUNTS WITH EXERTION as their fingers GRAZE each other and --

The Slaver SNAPS AROUND. Hurls a SMART DISC at Jake -- no choice, he LETS GO of the LADDER -- HITS the ground PAINFULLY --

THE PINKERTONS RUSH TO THE ROOF EDGE

-- SKLSKSLISH! The disc VIVISECTS THEM THEN CIRCLES BACK AROUND, cutting the IRON STRAPS that secure the logs in the tender car --

THE LOGS START ROLLING OFF THE TOP, CRASHING DOWN ON THE SPEEDER. It SPIRALS end-over-end, CRASHING into the desert!

ON JAKE. He picks himself up, WINCING. Sees the SMOKING WRECK in the distance. Starts to limp, then RUN --

**EXT. CRASHED SPEEDER - CONTINUOUS**

Jake APPEARS through the smoke. No sign of The Slaver. Then --

FALLING ROCKS turns his look upward. Though WOUNDED, the alien is SCALING a rock-face. Turns... a look that says "Next time."

Then in a BLUR, it's GONE. Jake's blaster REVERTS into a bracelet. When the smoke clears:

ELLA is revealed on the ground, thrown from the speeder. Jake REACTS -- NO -- takes her in his arms.

She desperately tries to SAY SOMETHING... but goes LIMP.

JAKE

Ella...?

Her head just falls back. Yeah. Hard to swallow, but it's true. ELLA'S DEAD. And if this moment ECHOES Jake holding his dead wife, well that's just fine. He stares beseechingly as...

HOOFBEATS. The rest of our people gallop in: Colorado, Dolarhyde, Doc and Emmett in the wagon:

EMMETT

Aw no... is she --?

Jake looks up -- unhinged --

NAT COLORADO

We need to get out of here NOW.

JAKE

Not gonna leave her here --  
-- I'M NOT LEAVIN' HER!

NAT COLORADO

Loneragan --  
-- This is Apache territory!  
They catch us, they'll kill u--

THHHHHHUNK! The air SCREAMS as an ARROW pierces the ground inches from Jake's hand! Suddenly THIRTY MORE -- ALL AROUND THEM -- forming an instant circle perimeter as --

APACHE WARRIORS FLASH DOWNHILL. Dolar dismounts, swings Emmett to the ground --

NAT COLORADO (CONT'D)

Nobody move.

Jake and Emmett freeze. The Apaches are ALL AROUND THEM. Fierce. BOWS and TOMAHAWKS drawn -- OFF THIS:



**EXT. ARIZONA MOUNTAINS - TWILIGHT**

The sun DIPS behind the mountains... NIGHT FALLS...

**INT. TEEPEE - NIGHT**

CLOSE ON ELLA'S DEAD FACE. Still. Beautiful. FIND JAKE, on his knees beside her, hands bound in front of him. An INDIAN WOMAN finishes wrapping the body in a shroud and LEAVES.

Jake is alone. Overwhelmed. Raw. Something rising in him. Something he COULDN'T FACE... until this moment:

JAKE  
I remember now.  
(then; softly)  
I-- I did love her.

And just saying it, saying those words, brings a swell of EMOTION to the surface... but he FIGHTS it. A losing battle, as his eyes WELL:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
She was like you. Seemed to think I was  
a good man.  
(finally, voice almost  
cracks)  
But I couldn't save either of you.

A beat... his bound hands gently touch her face...

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Where's the good in that?

His eyes CLOSE. Too much.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, Ella.

And that sits... then suddenly -- JARRINGLY -- THREE MORE BRAVES roughly enter, pull Jake up, FORCE HIM out:

**EXT. APACHE ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT**

BAM! Our people are THROWN TO THEIR KNEES in a large CIRCLE OF APACHES. GUARDED by warriors with tomahawks and -- WHOOSH! A PYRE is ignited and if we ever had any doubt about Ella being dead, the BRAVES carry her roughly past --

JAKE  
HEY! GODDAMMIT DON'T YOU TOUCH--

-- he's YANKED BACK and held in place as... ELLA'S BODY IS THROWN RIGHT INTO THE FLAMES. Jake helplessly watches her BURN.

EMMETT  
 Wasn't your fault, Mr. Lonergan.  
 Those things... were lookin' for her.  
 Had a picture and everything.

That breaks the spell. Jake looks over --

JAKE  
 What d'you mean... 'a picture'?

EMMETT  
 Floatin', like that arrow thing we found  
 in its eye.

Before Jake can make sense of this, a teepee smoke flap OPENS and out steps the tribe's SACHEM. This is GREY WOLF -- dark, wrinkled face enhanced by TATTOOS. He takes one look at his prisoners and SPEAKS A FEW WORDS OF APACHE.

DOC  
 What'd he say?

COLORADO  
 "Kill them. And make it quick."

Doc is amply freaked. Turns to Jake as FIVE OF THE BRAVES move for them, MENACING --

DOC  
 Now'd be a good time to use your gun  
 bracelet, my friend.

But Jake is VACANT. BROKEN. All the fight seems GONE from him. His bracelet DOESN'T MOVE.

Dolarhyde's grabbed first... PULLED FORWARD by one of the braves, raising his TOMAHAWK -- they're really gonna KILL HIM --

DOLARHYDE  
 (subtitled)  
 STOP. DON'T DO THIS.

SURPRISED looks from just about everyone in the camp (besides Colorado) as we realize Dolarhyde just spoke APACHE.

ON GREY WOLF -- INTRIGUED as he approaches Dolarhyde:

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
*How is it that you speak our language?*

DOLARHYDE (SUBTITLE)  
*Because I'm a damn genius.*

Grey Wolf's fascinated this man has the audacity to be a WISEASS given his circumstances. Turns to the Brave with the tomahawk --

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
*Forget about quick. Make him feel it.*

The Brave NODS, RAISES the Tomahawk again, but Dolar interrupts:

DOLARHYDE (SUBTITLE)  
*Two hundred head of cattle!*

Grey Wolf holds up his hand, halting the Brave's death blow --

DOLARHYDE (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)  
*I'll have two hundred head of cattle up  
 here in a day's time if you let me go.*

ON GREY WOLF. Considering this.

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
*And how do I know you'll come back?*

Dolarhyde nods to Colorado --

DOLARHYDE (SUBTITLE)  
*You can keep my associate here. If I  
 don't come back, you can kill him.*

Colorado REACTS. He's the only one here who knows what the hell these two are saying to each other as Grey Wolf approaches Dolar, looks right INTO HIM --

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
*Why should I believe that you even care  
 about this man?*

Dolarhyde's eyes flash EMOTION. Quickly bottled. Then:

DOLARHYDE (SUBTITLE)  
*Because he's my son.*

Wow. Didn't see that one coming. Grey Wolf levels Colorado with those unyielding eyes --

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
*Is this true?*

And Colorado answers in ENGLISH, for the benefit of the others:

COLORADO  
*Yeah... he's my father.*

REACTIONS. JAKE. EMMETT. DOC. Stunned silence. And so:

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
*Three hundred head.*

Dolar looks to Colorado, who won't meet his eyes. His FATHER's eyes. Turns back to Grey Wolf, HARD --

DOLARHYDE (SUBTITLE)

*Two fifty.*

HOLD ON GREY WOLF for a beat. Then --

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)

*Cut him loose.*

The Brave does exactly that. Dolar's FREE to go...

EMMETT

Hey! What about us?!?

ON DOLAR. A FLASH of regret. But it's gone fast.

DOLARHYDE

What about you, kid?

And he just walks out of the camp, leaving his son behind...

GONE. And now, it's back to business --

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)

*Kill all of them except the half-breed.*

Our people are GRABBED. Jake's yanked forward, PINNED DOWN -- a Brave raises a HATCHET to kill Jake, who glares back with lunatic eyes. Ready to die. Almost wanting it:

JAKE

What're you waiting for, asshole? DO IT.

And as Jake's about to MEET HIS DEATH:

FWOOM! THE PYRE SUDDENLY BILLOWS, TURNING FROM ORANGE TO GREEN TO WHITE -- EVERYONE BACKS AWAY AS --

ELLA EMERGES FROM THE PYRE, WRAPPED IN A CAUL OF FIRE AND LIGHT!

Except she isn't exactly Ella. She's a HUMANOID, incredibly close to us in physical appearance, her features acutely feminine, yet... ALIEN.

PANDEMONIUM. The Apache kneel in prostration, DROPPING weapons as flames DISSIPATE off Ella's backlit form. Her skin RETURNS to human flesh-tone. Hair too. When she finally STOPS, she looks like the ELLA we've come to know and love. STANDS there:

ELLA

... what... happened?

ON JAKE. Holy. SHIT. Everyone else equally STUNNED.

EMMETT

You... died.

Ella looks around. Fifty dumbstruck faces staring at her.

ELLA  
(quietly; caught)  
... oh.

OFF ELLA, who's got a helluva lot to explain --

INT. TEEPEE - NIGHT

A deerskin shirt slips down over Ella's naked body. A dark breechcloth is tied. She TURNS to us: beautiful as ever.

EXT. TEEPEE - NIGHT

Ella emerges to find... JAKE. Standing outside the teepee. HARD. And for a long moment, nothing is said. Until she takes a step TOWARD him:

ELLA  
If I'd told you on the boat, you never  
would'a trusted me --

-- but he takes a step BACK. If he's relieved she's alive, he isn't showing it:

JAKE  
Did you hear what I said?

ELLA  
... What?

JAKE  
When you were playin' possum. Did you  
hear what I said?

He's angry. Yes, even embarrassed. And because of it, something has SHUT DOWN in him again. That killer look is back.

ELLA  
No. I was mendin'.  
(beat)  
It's like sleep.

His eyes narrow, trying to understand:

JAKE  
How's it you look like one of us?

ELLA  
I can look like whatever I want to.

JAKE  
So you can't die?

ELLA  
Sure I can. If my heart stops beating...  
just like you.

JAKE  
You're nothin' like me, Ella. You're  
one'a them.

We can see that hurt her. But she deserved it, too. So  
desperately wants to reach him...

ELLA  
I'm not, Jake. I'm from a different  
place.

He isn't sure what that means. Can he even trust her? Either  
way, she has ANSWERS. Darkly:

JAKE  
The one that took you.  
(beat)  
It killed her.

That LANDS on her. Knowing and painful.

ELLA  
They call him The Slaver. He's the one,  
gave me the scars. Broke me. And made  
me watch... while he killed my family  
too.

Even with his guard up... Jake can't help but be STRUCK. As the  
sound of HOWLING WIND takes us to:

**EXT. BOX CANYON - RIM - NIGHT**

A SANDSTORM... through which a GHOSTLY FIGURE materializes...  
THE SLAVER. Moving with angry purpose toward the CANYON BLUFF.  
As he looks down into it, we hear the SOUNDS of MACHINERY below.

But we DO NOT YET REVEAL what it is he sees.

He stalks down, LEAVING FRAME -- as we HOLD on the field of  
TWINKLING STARS --

ELLA (V.O.)  
For every drop of light in the sky,  
there's another world. Filled with  
life...

**EXT. APACHE CAMP - MINUTES LATER - NIGHT**

Ella's in front of the campfire, surrounded by EVERYONE --

ELLA

Our race was first to map the stars...  
that's why they came for us. Took our  
planet, piece by piece. Slaughtered  
anyone who fought back. Ones who  
survived were turned into slaves.  
Trackers.

She says this meeting the eyes of GREY WOLF. There's immediate  
SIMPATICO here: a story the indians could be telling.

ELLA (CONT'D)

They brought me aboard one of their scout  
ships -- a ship with only one purpose: to  
find other planets like mine. Planets  
they can take... people they can enslave.

As the terrible gravity of all this HITS everyone, JAKE is first  
to understand...

JAKE

You lead 'em here.

Ella swallows. Wracked with GUILT.

EMMETT

Well damn, lady, thanks a lot.

ELLA

I never wanted this.

(an EMOTIONAL beat)

But they got... ways. Of making you do  
things.

Her eyes are HAUNTED with memory. The inference is some kind of  
TORTURE. She pushes it away -- staying strong:

ELLA (CONT'D)

Been tryin' to make it right... tried to  
blow the ship to hell by burnin' up all  
their fuel, then escaped down here.

(beat)

'Cept it didn't work... damn thing  
survived.

JAKE

Where is it.

Jake's determined -- he's got his OWN agenda. Ella looks up to  
that OMINOUS CLOUD. Those BLUE LIGHT FLASHES ripple within:

ELLA

Hiding in that cloud. Way I figure,  
they'll find enough fuel to leave by  
tomorrow, midday. Then they'll bring  
back the others.

DOC  
... "others"?

ELLA  
The whole fleet. They'll take what they need. Everyone on this planet. Anything too weak to survive... they'll toss. Like that cow.

Tomorrow. Midday. High noon. This is bad, bad news.

NAT COLORADO  
What'd you mean, they're looking for "fuel"...?

And before Ella can answer, Jake already GETS IT:

JAKE  
Gold. That's why they're in a mine.

ELLA  
(NODS, solemn)  
... wherever it is, that's where you escaped from -- and it's the only way back up to the ship.  
(steps CLOSER)  
Even with your memory wiped, your instincts kicked in --  
(his bracelet:)  
That's how it works, Jake, the bracelet reads your impulse -- you wanna fight, it reacts. Somehow you took it off one of 'em... don't you remember any of it?

ON JAKE. Deeply STIRRED. As he looks down at the BRACELET and:

*MEMORY FLASHCUTS! REPLAY POV as we're HELD DOWN in that CAVE -- the TERRIFYING OCULAR PROBE lowers right in front of our eyes --*

*One of the ALIENS starts to activate the probe -- it begins to FLASH STEADILY -- HYPNOTICALLY -- WIPING OUR MIND --*

*But our arm manages to BREAK FREE -- a BLADE hidden in our sleeve -- WE SLASH OFF THE ALIEN'S HAND -- GRAB THE BRACELET off its severed limb -- it COILS around our wrist and ACTIVATES:*

*BLAM BLAM! We BLAST the creature to oblivion -- we're FREE!*

JAKE IN PRESENT -- Eyes ALIVE with MEMORY:

JAKE  
I-- I blasted my way out...

*MEMORY FLASHCUT! REPLAY POV as we RUN through the cavern -- ESCAPE -- a LIGHT at the end of the tunnel -- BLINDING SUN hits us as we emerge -- our eyes ADJUST to see:*



That STRANGE ROCK FORMATION HIGH ABOVE on the edge of a CANYON --  
the STONE TOWER pointing to heaven --

JAKE IN PRESENT: The sequencing is COMPLETE for him now:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
I remember seeing a tower... made of  
stone... on the rim of a canyon...

Upon hearing that, Grey Wolf suddenly speaks in animated  
gestures, pointing North. Colorado REACTS:

ELLA  
What? What's he sayin'?!?

Colorado turns to Jake, a flicker of HOPE:

COLORADO  
That rock you're talkin' about... he  
knows where it is.

#### INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - NIGHT

The Slaver ENTERS the gloom of an UNDERGROUND CAVERN. Two  
ALIENS melt from the dark to greet him with frightening HISSES.  
SENTRIES. We HOLD on the walls as something GLITTERS: GOLD.

#### INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERN - SOMEWHERE

CLOSE ON SHERIFF TAGGART'S REFLECTION IN MURKY WATER. As we  
TILT UP to reveal him hanging UPSIDE DOWN. Eyes flutter open.  
He's seen better days. Dazed. Turns his head slightly...

SHERIFF TAGGART  
You... all right...?

DRIFTING over to see MARIA. Gravity PULLING her hair downward.  
Groggy. Mostly SCARED:

MARIA  
(brave face)  
... Fantastic. You?

CAMERA SLOWLY TURNS, ROTATING 180 DEGREES, TO REVEAL THEY'RE  
STUCK TO THE CEILING OVER A WATER GROTTO. The whole town of  
Absolution is here... a hundred others from the now-cratered  
town of Winfield's Landing, feet embedded in the ORANGE RESIN.

Suddenly, PERCY DOLARHYDE sees a TERRIFYING SHADOW spread across  
the wall -- what looks like a HUGE, COILING SNAKE:

PERCY DOLARHYDE  
H-- HEY!!! THE HELL'S THA--?!

-- but what comes around the corner is a LONG METAL TENTACLE:

A SCANNING MECHANISM on its tip shoots out a blue triangular beam -- itemizing specimens -- SELECTING ONE: SHERIFF TAGGART.

Mechanized TALONS open up -- Taggart SCREAMS as he's PLUCKED from the ceiling like an apple from a TREE:

DEPUTY CHARLIE WADE

KYLE!!!!

ANOTHER METAL TENTACLE slithers in and GRABS WADE -- swinging our men across the cavern where we reveal...

... the tentacles are attached to a TERRIFYING ALIEN MACHINE. Taggart and Wade are PINNED DOWN on what looks like an operating table. As they thrash, RESTRAINING CLAMPS enfold their skulls.

An OCULAR PROBE looms over them. This is the image Jake's been seeing! This is what happened to him before he escaped!

WORKER-BEE ALIENS adjusts the device over their eyes -- INSTANT X-RAYS read their retinas -- HYPNOTIC -- as the men grow DOCILE and LIMP despite their fight and -- **FLASHFLASHFLASH!**

The probe has ERASED THEIR MINDS. Catatonic stares.

Now the machine arms slip the men into separate TRANSLUCENT CAPSULES. METAL BREATHING TUBES are implanted down their throats as the capsules begin to fill with a THICK, BLUE LIQUID. This is the same blue goo -- a protective gel -- that housed the COW in that jettisoned cocoon in the desert.

More Worker Bees load the cocoons into TRANSPORT SHUTTLECRAFTS.

We see containment holds filled with BLEATING COWS and REARING HORSES... all going through a similar cocooning process.

All of this is overseen by THE SLAVER, who stalks up a ramp behind the cocoons. The craft HUMS to life, undergear retracting as it ROARS OFF down the tunnel...

**EXT. CANYON RIM - DAWN**

Our people ride up a rocky slope with a few Apaches. Grey Wolf looks around and SPEAKS, Colorado translates:

NAT COLORADO

This is Kiowa land, their sister tribe.

As they near the bluff, Jake sees the STONE TOWER. Dismounts:

JAKE

That's it.

As they near the bluff, they hear the growing sound of that MACHINERY. Everyone dips low, peering over to see...

What looks a whole lot like a CAVALRY FORT in the canyon below, amid a network of trenches and underground tunnels. Except this fortress is made of some kind of ALIEN ALLOY, glowing impossibly bright as its steel surface reflects the rising sun.

DRILLING MACHINES are chewing deep into the earth, mining for GOLD -- THESE ARE THE SAME DRILLS THAT LANDED IN OUR OPENING. Massive receptacles are FILLED with HUGE CHUNKS.

ALIENS move in and out, working, as if from an ant hive.

DOC

Holy Jesus. Like a damn fort.

Grey Wolf looks to his men, GRAVE, CRESTFALLEN as he realizes:

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)

The Kiowa... they were taken too.

Suddenly, the ROOF of the steel structure blossoms open like a CHROME LOTUS... and WHOOSH! The SHUTTLE TRANSPORT flies out of the canyon, RISING into the dawn sky...

ELLA

Transports. Way they get people and gold back and forth to the ship.

DOC

Place is crawling with those things. We'll never even get close.

Grey Wolf SPEAKS --

NAT COLORADO

He says there's a back way in... The Twin Rivers run underneath this whole canyon. Limestone tunnels up by the falls, couple miles East. Lead right down there.

Jake looks to the SKY. DARK. DETERMINED.

JAKE

The Slaver... he's up in that big cloud?

Ella nods, HARD. Off their SHARED DETERMINATION, our SCORE rises. A DRUM CADENCE that suggests a MISSION starting to form:

**EXT. APACHE CAMP - DAY**

DOC. Skeptical, eyes narrow -- staring at Jake and Ella -- surrounded by our team and the Apaches back at the APACHE CAMP:

DOC  
 Just so I got this straight... three of  
 those things just kicked the shit out of  
 your entire gang, took our whole town,  
 and now you two're gonna ride right into  
 that fort, try to hijack one'a those--

He pauses on the word --

ELLA  
 "Transports."

DOC  
 -- ride it up to that space boat --

ELLA  
 Spaceship.

DOC  
 Then bring it down here and get everybody  
 off alive? That's your big plan?

Jake and Ella share a LOOK. Simply:

JAKE  
 Yup.

DOC  
 And just how do you figure on getting in  
 there in the first place?

JAKE  
 Poke a hornet's nest... they swarm  
 at'cha.

ELLA  
 You gotta draw 'em out. Buy us a  
 distraction.

A long beat of incredulous, do-you-believe-this-shit STARES:

DOC  
 You want us to storm that fort? Against  
those things? With less than fifty men?  
 It's suicide.

EMMETT  
 It ain't, it's been done! I read at  
 school how Ethan Allen and his Green  
 Mountain Boys took Fort Ticonderoga, they  
 weren't but a small garrison and they  
 were outgunned --

ELLA  
 We need all of you to make a stand.  
 Together. It's the only way.

NAT COLORADO  
Make a stand with what?

Jake turns to the WAGON they rode from Jake's gang camp -- the WHISKEY CRATES. Sweeps up a bottle:

JAKE  
This.

An impossible mission. Sure death. Yet for the first time... they have an ADVANTAGE. Emmett cuts the moment with a BIG GRIN:

EMMETT  
Hell, yeah. Let's squish some bugs.

Grey Wolf CHUCKLES, murmurs. Jake looks to Nat for translation:

JAKE  
Somethin' funny?

NAT COLORADO  
Yeah... that you whites finally know what it feels like to face extinction. Now that we're on the same side, he says we can all die together.  
(then)  
They're with us.

The LOOK holds between them --

JAKE  
Guess that means you're not waitin' for your dad to come back.

Colorado's face CLOUDS. Years of ANGER and RESENTMENT:

NAT COLORADO  
Been Woodrow Dolarhyde's son my whole life... first time he ever copped to it was to save his own ass.  
(not without emotion)  
He's not comin' back.

And as Colorado TURNS away, the PERCUSSION finds another GEAR --

**MONTAGE -- OUR CLAN PREPARES FOR BATTLE:**

Pieces of CLOTH are RIPPED, stuffed inside the WHISKEY BOTTLES.  
MOLOTOV COCKTAILS...

Emmett works with Apaches and their KIDS, roping WOOD together to build LADDERS and CATAPULTS...

WAR PAINT is applied to faces in DARK STREAKS...

Jake slips on his coat. Sees Emmett lead a horse to mount up with his BOW and ARROW QUIVER:

JAKE

Not you, Kid.

EMMETT

Aw, hell, we been through this. Ya can't stop me.

Jake draws his gun, SPINS it in his palm, aims at Emmett's FOOT:

JAKE

I can shoot you in the foot.

EMMETT

BulllllllSHIT.

Jake SIGHS -- bluff called. Holsters the gun and takes a knee... but just when we think this is gonna be a tender moment, he GRABS Emmett by the collar, pulls him CLOSE:

JAKE

You told me your daddy's all you got left. Want me to save his ass? Then park yours right there on the ground, you little shit. Got me?

Emmett's nailed. ANGRY, but knows he's gotta stay.

EMMETT

Yeah. I gotcha.

Jake releases him. Happy moves to Ella but she TSKS:

ELLA

Stay with the kid, Happy.

The dog WHINES but complies, moving next to Emmett. Jake climbs on his horse. Looks back to the boy -- now he is tender:

JAKE

I'll get your father back. Bastard still owes me fifty dollars.

The hint of a SMIRK... long enough for Emmett to SMIRK BACK. Ella, Doc, and Colorado mount up too, along with a 10-MAN APACHE WAR PARTY. Jake meets eyes with GREY WOLF:

JAKE (CONT'D)

You'll be ready?

Grey Wolf NODS. Some part of the PLAN we have yet to learn.

And now Jake starts to trot off, Ella beside him. This plays just between the two of them:

ELLA

That's a nice thing... what you said to the boy. I didn't know better, I'd say you got yourself a sweet side.

She smiles. But Jake turns to her -- deadly serious:

JAKE

There's nothin' sweet about me. I told that kid what he needed to hear so he wouldn't get in my damn way. All I care about is killin' that thing.

And Ella reacts to the DARKNESS in his voice. Shakes her head:

ELLA

I don't believe that.

JAKE

Well believe it. I was playing a part.  
(straight at her)  
Just like you were.

He CRACKS the reins, riding ahead. HOLD ON ELLA... who finally follows as they all ride out and MUSIC SOARS:

**EXT. DESERT PLAINS - CONTINUOUS**

JAKE, ELLA, COLORADO, DOC AND THE APACHE WARRIORS RIDE LIKE HELL TOWARD THEIR FATE, SLAMMING RIGHT INTO LENS -- AND WE MATCH TO:

**EXT. DOLARHYDE'S RANCH - DAY**

THUNDERING HOOVES -- but it's DOLARHYDE on his horse. REARS near the SERVANTS QUARTERS -- moving FAST toward a small hut:

A HATCHET is embedded in a wood pile. Dolarhyde YANKS it out.

**INT. SERVANTS' QUARTERS - DAY**

The APACHE WOMAN we saw in the drawn-and-quartered scene earlier is washing clothes on a basin board. She turns as --

Dolarhyde ENTERS. A menacing figure with a blade in the doorway. She stands, ALERT -- in SUBTITLED APACHE:

THE WOMAN (SUBTITLE)

*What are you doing?*

Without response, he levels the axe and SLAMS it down on the FLOORBOARDS. Wood chips SPKAY until a GASH is opened. Dolar REACHES in... pulling out a CANVAS BAG. A few COINS spill out... GOLD. He picks them up -- looks at the woman:

DOLARHYDE (SUBTITLE)

*Need it to save Nat.*

And now her worry becomes FEAR; English now:

THE WOMAN

Is he okay?

DOLARHYDE

He's gonna be.

A storm of mixed emotions in his eyes. That stoic Dolarhyde veneer starts to CRACK... just a hint... as the woman MOVES to him... and TOUCHES his face.

And he lets her. WHOA. We realize: this woman is COLORADO'S MOTHER. Dolarhyde, for all his wicked bluster, LOVES AN APACHE.

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)

I won't let anything happen to him,  
Jenny.

THE WOMAN

(softly)

Come back to me.

With that, he's GONE with the gold. Leaving her full of DREAD.

**EXT. TWIN RIVER FALLS - CAVERN ENTRANCE - DAY**

A CASCADING WATERFALL flows over rock face into the TWIN RIVERS. The water curtain covers a CAVERN ENTRANCE. The back way in.

Jake, Ella, Doc, Colorado and the Apaches cross slippery rocks and push through the water...

**INT. LIMESTONE CAVERN - CONTINUOUS**

Behind the curtain, they shake off the wet and remove TORCHES from waterproof buffalo-hide pouches. FIRELIGHT as our team creeps along in a column. TENSE. Jake glances at Colorado:

JAKE

You and Percy're brothers, huh?

NAT COLORADO

... half.

JAKE

So... your momma and Dolarhyde--

NAT COLORADO

We friends now? Last I checked, you shot my ear off.

JAKE

(a beat; then)

Want it back?



Colorado GRUMBLES, pushes ahead of Jake...

**EXT. FORT HUACHUCA - MORNING**

A BUZZARD picks at the EAR of a DEAD GANG MEMBER. More birds scavenge the dismembered remains of JAKE'S CREW as the rest of its LIVING MEMBERS -- roughly 30 -- tend wounds and get ready to move on. One of them looks up...

... and sees an INCOMING RIDER on the horizon:

OUTLAW

BRONC!

BRONC and HUNT look up. Draws their GUNS. So does the rest of the gang... until they see the rider's waving a WHITE FLAG. As he comes closer -- they realize it's DOLARHYDE:

HUNT

One of them fellas Jake was ridin' with!

Dolarhyde rides into camp, REARING in front of 30 guns --

BRONC

The hell you want?

DOLARHYDE

It's about what you want.

He reaches into his pocket and tosses Bronc a GOLD COIN:

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)

Lonergan stole your gold. That's a taste of what I got -- more'n you've ever seen. It's all yours if you help me get my boy back.

The men trade LOOKS. Bronc eyes the coin. Alight with greed:

BRONC

Who's got your boy?

DOLARHYDE

Well, there's the rub.

(beat)

I got two.

Off that --

**INT. DEEPER IN THE LIMESTONE CAVERN - CONTINUOUS**

Our team has travelled far into the bowels of the cavern. Jake STOPS, torchlight reflecting the GOLD in the cavern walls.

Doc cracks off a piece. POCKETS it. Shrugs:

DOC

In case we live through this.

They SNEAK on down the narrow shaft til they're funneled into...

### THE WATER GROTTO

Where our TOWNSPEOPLE were hanging. Now, GONE. Around the corner, the sound of ENGINES POWERING UP...

A TRANSPORT. A dozen WORKER-BEE ALIENS try to corral the HORSES from the pen -- cruelly jabbing the animals with ALIEN CATTLE PRODS. The mares REAR and WHINNY.

JAKE

We're never gonna get close to that ship.

Silently, a DRIPPING, GLISTENING SHAPE rises up from the WATER behind them. Swaying like a COBRA ready to strike:

Our people TURN... the TUBE ALIEN snatches one of the Apaches, SWALLOWING HIM in its thorny snout! The indian SCREAMS --

JAKE

Lights a WHISKEY MOLOTOV, hurls it at the CREATURE: BOOM! It KEENS, BURNING, SPITTING OUT the Apache. ALERTED, the dozen aliens by the transport SWARM at our heroes!

NAT COLORADO

Get to that shuttle.

Colorado readies his TOMAHAWK -- Jake meets his eyes:

JAKE

Knew there was a good reason I didn't kill you.

NAT COLORADO

Just thinkin' the same thing.

The men trade FATEFUL LOOKS... then the indians HURL MOLOTOVS at the charging horde: KAAA-BOOM! Aliens TWIST and SCREAM --

The Apaches STRIKE FEARLESSLY -- but the aliens quickly RECOVER and SHAKE THEM OFF, tearing most of them to SHREDS.

The horses BREAK FREE and crash madly through the cavern --

And this is the DISTRACTION Jake and Ella need to make their run for the transport -- up the loading ramp:

INT. TRANSPORT SHUTTLE - MINI CARGO BAY - CONTINUOUS

Ella SLAMS a switch and the ramp DRAWS UP. Jake FREEZES: COCOONS hang all around, filled with motionless HUMAN BEINGS.

ELLA

Jake --

(he can only stare)

JAKE.

She slaps open an ENGINEERING HATCH, drops down a LADDER. He takes a last awful look and SLIDES down after her --

**INT. TRANSPORT SHUTTLE COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS**

-- the ladder funnels into the COCKPIT. Ella starts TAPPING the console and HOLO-DISPLAYS appear. Alien text, rotating graphics. She slides into a SEAT --

ELLA

Strap in, dammit!!!

JAKE

Into what?!?

Ella JAMS a lever forward and the shuttle RISES. JAKE grabs WEBBING that must be some type of SEATBELT, feeling the sensation of FLIGHT as:

**INT. CAVERN TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS**

Ella pilots the ship UPWARD, thrusters belching a WAKE OF FIRE that SCORCHES cavern walls and INCINERATES 6 ALIENS!

As a HORSE streaks by, Colorado grabs a hunk of mane, LEAPS ON --

NAT COLORADO (SUBTITLE)

LET'S GO!!!

DOC comes RUNNING frantically:

DOC

DON'T LEAVE ME!!!

Colorado PULLS Doc up onto the horse's bare back -- no easy task with Doc's 300 POUNDS. The remaining Apaches (5) commandeer horses and GALLOP HARD down the tunnel --

Two aliens jump on MANTA-SPEEDERS in pursuit!

**INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - DAY**

THE TRANSPORT SHUTTLE KAMIKAZES THROUGH BI-SECTING TUNNELS:

Jake has NEVER moved this fast, BARELY avoiding walls as Ella expertly pilots the ship. LEFT -- RIGHT -- SIDEWAYS -- up ahead, DIM LIGHT spills from a FISSURE leading above ground:

ELLA

Hold on.

She cranks back and the ship PITCHES upward --

**INT. TRANSPORT SHUTTLE - OVER THE CANYON - CONTINUOUS**

The shuttle BURSTS OUT into the canyon and skates the rim. Jake fights the G-FORCES and teeth-rattling TURBULENCE as --

The craft keeps spiralling UP UP toward... THE OMINOUS CLOUD. As we come closer, an IMPOSSIBLY BLUE GLOW blinds us:

**EXT. UPPER CLOUD LAYER - CONTINUOUS**

The shuttle BLASTS through the upper cloud layer, to reveal...

THE ALIEN SCOUT SHIP. ENORMOUS AND THREATENING, like a BLACK METAL CLAW. Cloud banks encircle the ship as if it were the eye of a hurricane.

ON ELLA. Like ice down her spine... as we drift back to JAKE. Trying to find a word to DESCRIBE this thing. Finally:

JAKE

Sheee-it.

**INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS**

The rest of our heroes GALLOP FAST out the criss-crossing tunnels -- KA-CHINNNG! Apaches are CLAMPED WITH STEEL COLLARS and YANKED off their horses as the SPEEDERS roar in from behind!

Colorado VEERS toward a LIGHT as Doc ignites a molotov and they:

**INT. ALIEN FORT - CANYON - CONTINUOUS**

GALLOP out into daylight, right through the CENTER of the fort -- Doc THROWS his molotov and BOOM!!! Aliens go FLYING, on fire!

Doc throws another MOLOTOV, clearing a path for Colorado to RIDE HARD for the fort's 30 FT. STEEL ENTRY GATES... which start SWINGING CLOSED to trap them!

But at the LAST SECOND, the horse SLIPS THROUGH the narrow opening as it THUNDERS CLOSED. Now the aliens are pissed off:

**EXT. ALIEN FORT - CONTINUOUS**

They start spilling over the fort walls in pursuit. A few mount SPEEDERS and launch as our guys ride DOWN THE CANYON TRENCH:

**INT. CANYON TRENCH - CONTINUOUS**

Colorado and Doc ZIG-ZAG around CURVES -- like mice navigating a maze, so the speeders can't get a clear shot:

DOC

They're gaining on us!

NAT COLORADO  
That's the point!

And just when it looks like Doc and Colorado are GONERS...

BOOM! An EXPLOSION rocks the canyon as something HURTLES DOWN from above -- WHISKEY MOLOTOVS fired from the handmade CATAPULTS. BOOM! BOOM! Aliens are VAPORIZED, SHRIEKING!

A cloudburst of FLAMING ARROWS brightens the sky as 20 APACHES RISE UP along the canyon rims: AN AMBUSH!

An ASSEMBLY LINE OF SQUAWS works like a drill team, soaking WHISKEY RAGS and wrapping arrows. Among them, EMMETT and HAPPY!

The kid nocks an arrow like a damn EXPERT -- IGNITES it -- lets it FLY -- WHOOSH! It SKEWERS a speeder pilot who BURSTS INTO FLAMES, the speeder CORKSCREWS into another one, both EXPLODING:

EMMETT  
YEAHHHHH!!!

THE ALIENS

Caught OFF-GUARD with NO WAY TO TURN AROUND as from the OPPOSITE END of the canyon, a BELLOWING WAR WHOOP:

GREY WOLF AND HIS 40 APACHES CHARGE IN, A MOVING HUMAN WALL

CRASH! The Apaches HURTLE into the flank of aliens. LASERS are met with the CRACK of RIFLES and hatchets --

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
TAKE THE FORT!!!

The Apache leader spurs his horse onward, leading men toward the alien bunker. An EXPLOSION CONSUMES FRAME, becoming the:

**EXT. ALIEN SCOUT SHIP - ABOVE THE CLOUDS - CONTINUOUS**

-- PLASMA FIRE of the shuttle's burners as it ROARS toward the ALIEN SHIP... a SPECK against the BEHEMOTH:

**INT. ALIEN SCOUT SHIP - COMMAND CENTER - CONTINUOUS**

The shuttle sweeps past the command center's polarized window, where... THE SLAVER watches with EVIL EYES.

He's on the UPPER LEVEL of a TWO-TIER COMMAND CENTER. A DOZEN ALIENS operate holo-consoles. Readyng the ship to leave.

**INT. TRANSPORT SHUTTLE - SAME**

Ella settles down on a GLOWING DOCKING COLLAR. With the two ships CONNECTED, the DISPLAY flashes a DEPARTURE ALERT:

ELLA JAKE  
 -- Dammit -- -- what--?  
 -- UP -- -- WHAT'S WRONG?

-- she's CLIMBING back up the ladder, he FOLLOWS:

INT. SHUTTLE - LADDER TUBE - CONTINUOUS

They quickly CLIMB up the LADDER TUBE --

ELLA  
 Engines are warming up -- got eight  
 minutes til the ship leaves, and about  
 one til automated retrieval --

JAKE  
 -- autojamated what --?

INT. SHUTTLE - LOADING BAY - CONTINUOUS

As they spill into the LOADING BAY, a CLANG reverberates:

THE AIRLOCK DOOR -- AT THEIR FEET

The first EXPLOSIVE BOLT shoots off. Ella jams her SHOTGUN into a sheath on her back, presses herself flat:

ELLA  
Hug the wall.

Jake does that beside her as the next bolt PINGS out --

ELLA (CONT'D)  
 When they come at us, aim for their  
 heads. Only way to kill 'em for sure.

He looks at his bracelet; adrenaline SURGING -- it ACTIVATES:

JAKE  
 I'll aim just fine.

THE LAST BOLT FIRES and the airlock door SHOOTs OFF:

A MULTI-ARMED HYDRAULIC "GRABBER" RISES INTO THE BAY, MECHANICAL LIMBS SWINGING AROUND INCHES FROM THEIR FACES!

JAKE (CONT'D)  
 SonofaBITCH!

The manipulator arms SCOOP UP COCOONS, pulling them DOWN the airlock:

ELLA  
 C'MON!

She JUMPS through the airlock -- Jake has no time to think:

JAKE

DAMMIT --

And JUMPS after her --

INT. SCOUT SHIP - "THE FARM" - CONTINUOUS

-- LANDING beside Ella. Starts to pick himself up... but what he sees ASSAULTS HIS MIND. We RISE UP UP UP, Ella and Jake growing SMALLER in what we now reveal is a MASSIVE HANGAR where:

AUTOMATED ARMS PLANT RECENT ARRIVALS INTO A VERITABLE FOREST of PEOPLE AND ANIMALS. Level after level, THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF COCOONS are suspended from branch-like limbs.

Jake picks himself up, looking around the massive hangar in AWE.

ELLA

GET DOWN!

-- she PULLS HIM into an alcove as a machine arm SWINGS overhead, flashing a WIDE CONICAL LASER that inventories cocoons like the machine in the underground cave. As they CROUCH:

ELLA (CONT'D)

We can't let that thing see us or they'll know we're here.

She turns -- hits buttons on a console -- a door SLIDES UP leading to a series of CORRIDORS. She starts to MOVE --

ELLA (CONT'D)

This'll take us to the bridge --

But Jake doesn't follow. STARES at her --

JAKE

Slaver's up there--?

ELLA

I sure as hell hope not.

JAKE

Then I'm not goin' with you.

And now she HARDENS --

ELLA

You got any idea how big this ship is?  
No way you'll ever find him alone. Be  
like findin' a needle in a--

-- BLAM!! Jake interrupts her by aiming at the LASER SCANNER and FIRING HIS BLASTER, blowing it apart. The scanner eye CRASHES to the floor, flaming. A KLAXON rings --

JAKE  
I ain't gonna find him. He's gonna find me.

Ella's FURIOUS:

ELLA  
Thanks for the head start.

She turns and RUNS. Jake moves to that scanner eye on the floor, walks right up to it and STARES into the shattered IRIS:

JAKE  
Alright, you sonofabitch... come and get me.

INT. ALIEN SCOUT SHIP - COMMAND CENTER - CONTINUOUS

JAKE'S FACE APPEARS AS A THERMAL HEAT SOURCE -- fritzing as he stares into the scanner. ALARMS scream.

THE SLAVER fills with RAGE. And RECOGNITION.

Aliens begin grabbing WEAPONS but The Slaver SHRIEKS for them to STOP. We don't need to speak alien to understand:

"He's mine."

INT. SCOUT SHIP - CORRIDORS - CONTINUOUS

Jake has moved out into the corridors -- blaster ready -- eyes darting -- suddenly -- WHAM:

A STEEL BARRICADE SLAMS DOWN BEHIND HIM. WHAM! Another in front -- WHAM! He's TRAPPED, shut off from the passageways...

... except ONE. A long, dark tunnel. A DOOR at the far end HISSES open: THE TURBOLIFT ELEVATOR.

ON JAKE. Understanding... his call is being answered.

JAKE  
(quietly; HARD)  
Okay.

And starts walking to the elevator... as a SCREAM takes us to:

INT. CANYON - DAY

Handmade LADDERS are SWUNG FORWARD onto the fort as Apaches try to SCALE the wall, but are BLOWN BACK by ALIEN PARAPET SENTRIES.

ON DOC -- running TRIAGE on wounded warriors:



DOC

I need more bandages now!/ You: lint and  
splint that leg!

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)

*We're losing ranks!!!*

And then, out of nowhere... the BANG BANG BANG of 30 pistols  
fills the air as --

DOLARHYDE RIDES IN WITH JAKE'S GANG! A renewed SURGE of energy  
as cowboys join indians to fortify their ranks:

NAT COLORADO

You came back!

DOLARHYDE

Told you: I take care of my kin.

Colorado knows that's as close to "I love you" as he'll ever  
get. But the UPSWING is short-lived as:

A speeder WHIZZES past, dropping a METALLIC BUNDLE. It splits  
open right in front of the fort's STEEL GATES -- pieces  
hydraulically ASSEMBLING THEMSELVES in seconds, becoming:

THE MOTHERFUCKING SUPERGUN OF DEATH. TWO LETHAL BARRELS spin to  
life, firing STRANGE STEEL BALL BEARINGS in every direction.

CLAW HOOKS snap out of the balls, EMBEDDING in soldiers! One  
LODGES in a GANG MEMBER beside DOC -- he FLAILS:

GANG MEMBER

HELP ME!!! GET IT OFF!

A RED SPRING-LOADED PIN depresses in the ball's center: KA-BOOM!  
SEARING WHITE LIGHT TURNS THE OFFICER TO ASH -- AN ALIEN  
GRENADE! Doc goes FLYING from the kickback, landing near:

GREY WOLF -- FWWWWTWHCK!!! Another claw-ball CLAMPS into the  
Apache's SHOULDER -- he SHOUTS, struggles to pull it out --

DOC

DON'T. STOP, DAMMIT!!!!

The RED PIN starts to depress -- DOC LUNGES, JAMS HIS FINGER  
BETWEEN THE PIN AND BLASTING CAP. Now he's stopped it from  
exploding, but if he pulls his finger out... HE DIES TOO.

DOC and GREY WOLF lock eyes. Their fates suddenly ENTWINED as --

INT. SCOUT SHIP - TURBOLIFT - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Bars of light move rhythmically across Jake's face -- BURNING  
with determination -- as he travels up in the turbolift. It  
slows to a STOP. The door cycles open and --

-- the STRANGEST THING happens. DESERT SAND billows in a gust of ventilated air. SAND?! Jake emerges, blocking his eyes:

INT. SCOUT SHIP - JUNKPILE CARGO HANGAR - CONTINUOUS

-- the sand swirls and eddies. Visibility reduced to ZERO. As Jake pushes through, the air clears a little...

His eyes WIDEN. Trying to make SENSE of what he sees:

Remember all those BUILDINGS that were pulled up into the tornado when Absolution was attacked? And that CRATER they found that used to be "Winfield's Landing"? It's all HERE...

... in a junkpile hangar. Building pieces. False front facades. Debris piled on top of each other, TILTED AND TWISTED AT FUNHOUSE ANGLES. And the desert sand that was sucked up along with it all.

A GLOWING REACTOR casts hellish light on the dormant wreckage.

Weapon ready, Jake moves past part of A BROTHEL. Jutting fragments of a HORSE CORRAL. A CREAKING SALOON SIGN swings like a pendulum, CLANKS EERILY.

A STEAM PIPE EXPLODES STEAM. Jake WHIRLS -- and like demons... 5 ALIENS emerge. Slowly. Fanning out, taking positions as...

THE SLAVER steps out of the smoke, squarely facing Jake. And he is holding ELLA hostage. WRIST BLASTER pressed to her throat.

Jake and Ella LOCK EYES. She's terrified, but staying STRONG. His hand LINGERS at his hip, blaster ready.

JAKE

Drop the woman. We both know this ain't about her.

But The Slaver only presses his blaster HARDER into Ella's neck. Almost GRINNING. And Jake MEETS the look --

JAKE (CONT'D)

She says you're as bad as they come.

Jake curls back the fingers on both hands, CRACKING knuckles:

JAKE (CONT'D)

Well, you ugly sonofabitch... they say the same about me.

A pipe SPEWS STEAM -- UNNERVINGLY LOUD. Then STOPS.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Could'a had your boys kill me five times over, instead you rolled out the red carpet... so let's get it over with.

The Slaver HISSES ANGRILY at the challenge. PUSHES Ella roughly off to one of his GANG, who keeps a blaster pressed to her side.

Now it's ONE-ON-ONE right in the center of the "town" junkpile.

THE SLAVER -- his hand at his side, twitching.

JAKE -- his hand is still.

A PIPE SPRAYS STEAM AGAIN, SCREAMINGLY LOUD AND --

Everyone DRAWS! But Jake's INSANELY FAST as he drops to a knee and FIRES gunsmoke-style -- BLAM BLAM! The Slaver's HIT and --

ELLA -- WRENCHES her captor's arm backward and he fires USELESS ROUNDS into the air -- she takes a HIT in the leg as Jake SHOOTs the captor with a SHOT to the temple --

Jake GRABS and PULLS Ella to safety behind a SHREDDED STORE FRONT, taking cover -- lasers PUNCHING through the building walls -- Ella spots an ALIEN lunging around a corner:

ELLA  
BEHIND YOU!!!

Jake WHIRLS, BLAM!!! The creature FLIES off its feet.

JAKE  
Stay down.

Ella does, and here come the rest of the aliens as Jake GUNS THEM ALL DOWN WITH PERFECT AIM.

The REACTOR is hit in the crossfire and the ship RESPONDS with a turbine HOWL.

Corpses litter the floor... all except for The Slaver. A trail of FLUORESCENT BLOOD leads around the corner...

Jake WHIRLS to Ella -- her leg wounded --

JAKE (CONT'D)  
-- you alright?

In PAIN, she snatches one of those SMART DISCS off a dead alien:

ELLA  
Reactor's hit. If I don't get this ship  
on the ground soon, we're all dead...  
(tries to STAND, WINCES)  
Get me over to that turbolift.

He slings an arm around her shoulder and LIFTS her, helping her to the elevator --

ELLA (CONT'D)  
Put me inside.

He does. She sees his eyes go back to The Slaver's BLOOD TRAIL:

ELLA (CONT'D)  
I can manage the rest without you.  
(tough... but with  
COMPASSION)  
Go do what you came up here to do.

He looks at her. At the blood. At the unstable REACTOR.

And Jake Lonergan makes a CHOICE:

JAKE  
Goddamnit.

-- he gets INTO THE ELEVATOR with her. She SLAMS the control pad, doors CLOSE -- they start rocketing upward. She half-grins as her eyes hold on him. And within them... trust. AND FAITH.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Stop smiling.

**EXT. THE BATTLEFIELD - OUTSIDE ALIEN FORT - CONTINUOUS**

As the FORT SIEGE continues, DOLARHYDE and COLORADO gallop back and forth between their men:

DOLARHYDE  
DON'T BREAK RANKS! HOLD YOUR LINES  
GODDAMIT! WE CAN TAKE THIS FOR--

-- KATHWAM! An EXPLOSION throws them off their horses. Colorado picks up his father and they start RUNNING LOW under stray beams of PLASMA FIRE, reaching Doc and Grey Wolf:

THE FOUR MEN -- PINNED BEHIND THE ROCK EMBANKMENT:

Doc's finger is still STUCK in that ALIEN GRENADE, clamped to the bleeding Apache's shoulder:

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)  
The hell is that?

Grey Wolf MOANS in pain. Doc SHOUTS to Dolar:

DOC  
Tell him to hold still! If I have this thing figured right, long as I keep my finger under the red pin we won't blow up!

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
What's he saying?!

DOLARHYDE (SUBTITLE)  
*He says we're all gonna die.*

COLORADO  
 We need to pull it out of his shoulder!

DOLARHYDE  
 I'm not pullin' anything!  
 (re: Doc)  
 He's the damn doctor!

ZZZZZZAM! MORE people are CUT DOWN by the Alien GRENADE CANNON .  
 -- the BLOWBACK nearly KNOCKS the grenade out of Doc's hand --

DOC  
 SHIT!

Dolarhyde gets an IDEA. HARDENS. Looks Doc right in the eye:

DOLARHYDE  
 Alright, listen -- you slide your finger  
 from under that pin, I'll slip mine in  
 and hold it in place. Then you pull it  
 out and I'll throw it.

Doc NODS fearfully. Dolar carefully SLIPS his finger under the  
 pin as Doc SLIPS it out. PHEW. Now Doc takes hold of the  
 grenade itself, nods "ready" to pull it out. Grey Wolf braces  
 for PAIN:

DOC  
 On three...  
 (Dolar NODS)  
 One... two--

DOLARHYDE  
 -- Wait.

Everyone LURCHES from the tension interrupt:

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)  
 Tell your wife we're clear.

DOC  
 What?

DOLARHYDE  
 -- your wife. Maria. We had an  
 arrangement. I left your saloon alone  
 and she paid me off.

ON DOC. Reeling, now REALLY confused --

DOC  
 We're broke. Paid you off with what?

DOLARHYDE  
She stole from the people in your morgue.  
Gold teeth, trinkets, pocket watches --

It LANDS on Doc: that's why he found the watch under their bed.

DOC  
I thought she was cheating!

DOLARHYDE  
Just robbin' corpses.

DOC  
Thank God!  
(and then -- )  
Wait. You hate me. Why're you telling  
me this?

With GENUINE REMORSE:

DOLARHYDE  
May not get another chance --  
(then)  
-- and I still hate ya.

A MOMENT. Forgiveness and atonement.

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
WILL YOU GET ON WITH IT?!!!

DOC AND DOLARHYDE  
One... two... three!

And Doc RIPS the grenade from Grey Wolf's shoulder -- he HOWLS,  
CLAMPS tearing out of his flesh. But they did it!

As more EXPLOSIONS decimate men, Dolarhyde PULLS the grenade out  
of Doc's hands, still holding his finger under the FIRING PIN --

DOC  
What're you--

Dolarhyde looks at Colorado:

DOLARHYDE  
Tell your mother I love her.

With that, he CHARGES into the swirling chaos --

NAT COLORADO  
WAIT!

-- but BOOM! Colorado's FORCED BACK by an explosion -- through  
the debris, he sees his father running toward...

THE SUPERCANNON

Dolarhyde HURLS the grenade -- BOOM!!! IT DETONATES IN A MILLION PIECES! DOLARHYDE DISAPPEARS IN THE BLAST!

COLORADO

NO!!!!!!

But his sacrifice TURNS THE TIDE! THE EXPLOSION BLOWS THE FORT'S FRONT GATES OFF! THEY TOPPLE ON A WHOLE BUNCH OF ALIENS!

A CRY OF VICTORY as the humans STORM THROUGH! Aliens hurtle back in DISORDER --

INT. SCOUT SHIP - COMMAND CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The small ALIEN BRIDGE CREW scrambles to control the damaged ship. The WHIR of the lift arriving, doors OPEN and --

WHOOSH! The SMART WEAPON blurs out of the elevator, SLICING HALF A DOZEN ALIENS IN HALF -- circles back around to ELLA, who skillfully catches it as she RUN/LIMPS from the lift with JAKE --

LASER FIRE IGNITES THE BRIDGE as he makes QUICK WORK of the rest and Ella mans a console, getting to work --

ELLA

We're going down fast.

She calls up telemetry on a HOLO-WINDOW: EARTH TERRAIN -- The BATTLEFIELD. Sets coordinates, vectoring the ship that way:

A WHIR as a SECOND TURBOLIFT arrives... AND THE SLAVER STEPS OUT. Wounded, and very PISSED OFF. Jake says to Ella:

JAKE

Keep her flyin'. No matter what.

Jake and The Slaver HURTLE into each other, TUMBLE off a catwalk, CRASHING into conduits and GUNKY WATER below.

Jake staggers up but The Slaver is HUGE -- SLAMS Jake back into the water. PINS A FOOT on his blaster arm -- CRUSHING IT.

Jake HOWLS as The Slaver presses a series of those HIEROGLYPH MARKINGS on Jake's BRACELET -- the symbols LIGHT UP in an UNLOCK CODE -- and KA-CHING! The bracelet POPS OFF.

The Slaver TOSSES IT into the gunky water. Draws his LASER WHIP -- WHUP-SNAP! The white-hot tip LASHES JAKE'S BACK, ripping his shirt and BURN-SCARRING HIS BACK!

Jake SCREAMS in agony as The Slaver WHIPS HIM MERCILESSLY --

EXT. SKIES ABOVE DESERT - CONTINUOUS

The Scout Ship SCREAMS down out of the cloud, toward the CANYON:

**EXT. CANYON BATTLEFIELD - CONTINUOUS**

Outlaws and Apaches finish off the wounded, TOMAHAWKS RIPPING AWAY TENTACLED SCALPS! Carnage and joy -- but then:

A MONSTROUS SHADOW spreads over the battlefield. Everyone looks up to see the SCOUT SHIP PLUMMETING DOWN --

GREY WOLF (SUBTITLE)  
Fall back!!! NOW!! NOW!!

**INT. SCOUT SHIP - COMMAND CENTER - LOWER LEVEL - CONTINUOUS**

Another LASER WHIP SNAP and Jake seems DONE. Now The Slaver LIFTS Jake from the water, CRUSHING his wind-pipe.

Jake FLAILS, REACHING for something BELOW FRAME... finally GRABS and STABS it into The Slaver's side. The Alien ROARS in pain and looks down to see --

ONE OF HIS OWN "ICE TACKS" FROM HIS BANDOLIER EMBEDDED IN HIS SIDE. IT STARTS TO GLOW BLUE WITH A HIGH-PITCH WHINE:

JAKE  
Go to hell.

THE SLAVER'S ROAR OF DEFEAT IS CUT SHORT AS THE MOTHERFUCKER FREEZES TO GREY STONE, EXPLODING IN A MILLION PIECES!!!

Jake DROPS, GASPING. Revenge fulfilled. Painfully starts CLIMBING a ladder back to the upper deck --

**EXT. CANYON - BATTLEFIELD - CONTINUOUS**

As the humans FLEE from the fort, the remaining aliens RETREAT to the last shuttles for ESCAPE... start to LIFT OFF...

But find themselves SMASHING into the ENORMOUS HULL of the ship as it crashes down!

**INT. SCOUT SHIP - COMMAND CENTER - CONTINUOUS**

Jake FALLS into the seat beside Ella, straps in. Fighting the controls, she SEES THE WHIP MARKS on his back. It TEARS her heart open. And because this might be the end... she ADMITS:

ELLA  
I lied.

JAKE  
... I know.

ELLA  
No, I heard what you said when I was layin' there...



JAKE. Taken aback. LAID BARE. As she says:

ELLA (CONT'D)  
You are a good man. At least... to me.

The ground GROWS BIGGER out the window. Her HAND reaches over for his. JAKE'S HAND clasps hers and --

**EXT. BADLANDS - THE BATTLEFIELD - CONTINUOUS**

THE SHIP PLUNGES INTO THE CANYON AND CLEAR THROUGH THE ALIEN FORT, RIPPING IT INTO TIDAL-WAVE MOUNDS OF SHRAPNEL... CHEWS UP A HALF-MILE BEFORE SLOWLY COMING TO A FINAL, WRENCHING... STOP.

The frame is WHITE with dust and SUNSHINE. As from the ether comes...

EMMETT, HAPPY, and DOC, with GREY WOLF's arm slung over his shoulder. Among other faces, White and Apache... all of them PROUD WARRIORS. Staring in awe at:

THE CRASHED ALIEN SHIP. DUG DEEP INTO THE CANYON FLOOR.

Something starts to rain down. Looks at first like glitter... until we realize it's GOLD DUST.

From an OPENING in the Scout Ship, the sound of THUNDERING HOOVES as... ALL THE ANIMALS STAMPEDE OUT. Then, slowly...

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE emerge, dazed -- their minds slowly WAKING UP. White and Kiowa-Apache ABDUCTEES.

DOC RUSHES IN, searching faces -- no -- no -- no -- n--

THERE she is, his BELOVED MARIA, stumbling weakly toward him as tears run down her cheek. He EMBRACES her madly, kissing every inch of her face as...

EMMETT pushes through the crowd, sees SHERIFF TAGGART --

EMMETT  
PAW!!!! PAW!!!!

The kid GRABS his father and holds him for dear life, as Taggart stares back in a daze --

EMMETT (CONT'D)  
It's me -- it's Emmett.

And somewhere in there, RECOGNITION comes to the Sheriff's eyes... Emmett SMILES and throws his arms around his father again as --

THE TOWNSFOLK OF ABSOLUTION AND THE APACHES FIND EACH OTHER. Families, lovers, friends... reunited.

COLORADO

Moving through the FALLEN BODIES toward the lifeless form of Dolarhyde, his FATHER. Eyes welling, he drops to his knees...

A VOICE (O.S.)

Nat?

Colorado turns -- it's PERCY. Confused. Like waking from a dream. Sees his father on the ground...

PERCY

What... happened?

And all Colorado can say is...

NAT COLORADO

He's dead.

That HANGS there. Percy blinks. And then --

PERCY

Who's gettin' the ranch?

ON COLORADO. At first, words that don't compute. Then PURE BLIND RAGE takes hold and his FISTS FLY, PUNCHING PERCY:

NAT COLORADO

YOU SONOFABITCH! HE JUST  
SAVED YOUR WORTHLESS LITTLE  
LIFE!

PERCY

STOP! NAT, STOP!!!

DOLARHYDE (O.S.)

HEY!

Colorado WHIRLS -- DOLARHYDE IS STAGGERING TO HIS FEET, ALIVE!

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)

No one's gettin' my ranch.

Stunned, Colorado GRINS. Percy spits blood, points accusingly --

PERCY

Paw, he--

Dolarhyde SMACKS Percy across the face:

PERCY (CONT'D)

OW!!! What'd you do that for?

DOLARHYDE

For being an ungrateful little bastard.  
Now shake your brother's hand and thank  
him for saving your ass, cause it's more  
than you ever would'a done for him.

Chastened, Percy glowers at Colorado. Grudgingly reaches out a hand. So does Nat. As they SHAKE --

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)  
That's better.

JAKE

Staggers through the crowd. And sees ELLA. They did it. But she still looks TROUBLED. Staring out at the vast desert...

JAKE  
... what is it?

ELLA  
We didn't get all of 'em. Some ran off.

That LANDS on Jake, as he too looks toward the endless horizon. HOLD on them, together, a VICTORIOUS but UNRESOLVED note...

We RISE UP over the sea of bodies and the CRASHED SHIP, until Jake and Ella are just two small figures in the crowd...

FADE TO:

EXT. TOWN OF ABSOLUTION - DAY

A glorious sight: Absolution in REBIRTH -- FLUSH from all that GOLD. Storefronts brightly painted, the streets ALIVE.

We PICK UP EMMETT running through the hustle and bustle with two APACHE KIDS. Suddenly, DOLARHYDE, COLORADO and their gang ride in. SHERIFF TAGGART emerges from his office with DEPUTY WADE:

SHERIFF TAGGART  
EMMETT! GET OVER HERE!!!

EMMETT  
-- what? What'd I do?

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Get outta the road before  
you're run down! If your  
momma saw y--

EMMETT  
  
(overlapping)  
-- "saw me playin' in the  
street she'd roll over in her  
grave and shoot lightnin'  
bolts outta her eyes," I know,  
I know!

He runs off. Taggart SMIRKS:

SHERIFF TAGGART  
Kid's got a mouth on him.

DEPUTY WADE

Well, Kyle, considering he saved your life, guess you'll just have to grin'n bear it.

Dolar moves up to Taggart, tough as ever. The men HOLD looks:

SHERIFF TAGGART

Woodrow.

DOLARHYDE

Kyle.

Percy STEWS about something. Dolar WHACKS him upside the head:

DOLARHYDE (CONT'D)

Go on.

Grudgingly, Percy hands Taggart a SHEAF OF PAPER --

SHERIFF TAGGART

What's this?

DOLARHYDE

Claims to the land 50 miles west of here. I've signed it over to the township of Absolution.

(off Taggart's LOOK)

Considering I'm a businessman, I figure expansion's in both our interests. Needs the Sheriff's signature to be official.

SHERIFF TAGGART

Fifty miles west of here is where the goldmine is, Woodrow.

DOLARHYDE

(a beat)

That so.

With surprise, Taggart studies the paper. SMILES:

SHERIFF TAGGART

What's this about twenty percent going to the Apaches?

Dolarhyde glances at Colorado. A moment. But the hardened rancher maintains his rock-solid facade:

DOLARHYDE

Figure the only way not to piss 'em off is to buy 'em.

SHERIFF TAGGART

Since when'd you worry about pissin' anyone off?

DOLARHYDE  
Just sign it, Goddamnit.

With a grin, Taggart gestures for Deputy Wade to turn around and flattens the paper on his BACK, using it as a surface to SIGN:

SHERIFF TAGGART  
I'd say you were being generous, Woodrow,  
but I know you'd just be insulted.

DOLARHYDE  
Damn right.

Dolar gives his hat a TIP, then mounts up to go -- and we RISE UP to the UPPER FLOOR of the GOLD LEAF SALOON, in the process of being rebuilt in grand style -- and MOVE IN on a WINDOW where:

**INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

DOC AND MARIA burst through a door, tearing passionately at each other's CLOTHES -- Maria MOANS as Doc kisses her neck:

DOC  
SHH! The workers will hear  
us!!!

MARIA  
Let them hear!

\*

As they TUMBLE back onto the bed, Doc LURCHES. Reaches under his back to find... a GOLD POCKETWATCH.

DOC  
What is this?

MARIA  
Look at the inscription.

He flips it open to find an ENGRAVING: "MI CORAZON... POR SIEMPRE." Doc looks up at her, MOVED. Then -- PLAYFULLY:

DOC  
This looks like Aldo Mayberry's watch...

MARIA  
Shut up and kiss me.

She pulls him down, OUT OF FRAME --

**EXT. EDGE OF TOWN - DAY**

A hand unties a HORSE from its tether bar -- it's JAKE. Saddle bags packed. A BARK turns him around... HAPPY. Yipping for Jake to FOLLOW. He GRINS. As MUSIC begins to RISE -- HOPEFUL:

**EXT. ARIZONA DESERT - DAY**

In a LONG SHOT -- the distant SILHOUETTES of Happy BOUNDING through the shallow TWIN RIVERS, Jake following on horseback...

**EXT. RIM OF CANYON - DAY**

As Jake approaches, APACHE SENTRIES emerge from rocks to keep outsiders away. Jake TIPS his hat and they nod, let him pass.

He nears the bluff where ELLA, GREY WOLF, and the rest of the Apaches finish laying DYNAMITE DET CORD that trails down into the canyon. Ella hears Happy BARKING -- turns to see her dog with Jake. She smiles as he rides up, dismounts:

ELLA

Second damn time that dog ran off on me.

JAKE

Second time he brought me to you.

Happy's tail wags. The look between Jake and Ella HOLDS. And it seems freighted with everything. Finally, he breaks it -- glancing at the Apaches finishing their work with the dynamite, and the remnants of the ALIEN SHIP and FORTRESS below.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Looks like you got everything set.

Ella eyes Jake's horse, loaded with GEAR. Looks up, clearly disappointed:

ELLA

Where you headed?

JAKE

(a beat)

Got some messes to clean up.

But she looks at him. READING him. Wryly:

ELLA

Messes.

JAKE

... Yep.

(then; off her look)

What.

She walks right up to his horse. Right up to HIM:

ELLA

I think you're ridin' off cause you're just scared of what'll happen if you stay.

An INFERENCE here. Ella's going BOLD. Jake swings off his horse, lands beside her. Now. Almost CURIOUS:

JAKE

And what's gonna happen?

She steps CLOSER to him... INTIMATE:

ELLA

You know.

A CHARGE between them. All they wanna do is KISS...

But that'd be too easy. And those wounds of his, they haven't quite healed. He drops his eyes; SOFTLY NOW:

JAKE

If I stay... it's not gonna be good for anybody, Ella.

A beat. She looks off. Nods. They say nothing. And now he slowly climbs back on his horse. Ella TOUGHENS:

ELLA

Heard some rumors outta Abilene. Weird noises at night. Cattle mutilations. Weather phenomena. Figured I'd ride down there. Give it a look-see.

JAKE

(his eyes narrow)  
What's 'phenomena'?

ELLA

Big storms in places that don't get big storms.

ON JAKE. Every fighting instinct in him suddenly IGNITED, though he plays it down:

JAKE

You goin' down there yourself?

ELLA

Why? You worried about me?

You bet your ass he is. But, he shakes his head--

JAKE

No, ma'am. You can take care of yourself just fine.

(then; tips his hat)  
Be seein' you around.

ELLA

... goodbye, Jake.

He gets back on his horse. Starts to ride off. Happy BARKS and trots alongside him. BARK BARK BARK. In dog that means "Don't be an idiot." Jake glances over --

JAKE  
Get the hell away from me, you damn mutt.  
(BARK, BARK)  
Go on, GET.

He heels his horse, leaving Happy behind to WHINE.

Jake rides off into the sunset. But his heart's KICKING in his chest. And this is pretty much where things usually end...

But. Jake pulls the REINS as he SIGHS. Turns the horse around. TROTS back to Ella, whose smile WIDENS as he closes the gap between them.

Finally STOPS right in front of her. And despite his best effort to stay TOUGH... he just plain likes her:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Abilene happens to be on my way.

He reaches out a hand... she takes it... as he PULLS HER UP INTO THE SADDLE. Ella grinning ear-to-ear as she folds her arms around his waist. Jake -- ever the outlaw -- grumbles:

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Stop smiling, Goddammit.

He KICKS the horse and Happy follows. Ella shoots a goodbye look to Grey Wolf, who NODS. Signals his men and FUSES ARE LIT:

The DYNAMITE FUSES ssssssnake down the mountain -- reaching the canyon floor -- INTO those limestone tunnels where CLUSTERS OF DYNAMITE have been placed... and as FUSE MEETS EXPLOSIVE:

ANGLE - JAKE AND ELLA CRESTING A HILL -- BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM! The THUNDER of EXPLOSIONS makes them rear. They turn back to see...

THE TWIN RIVERS GEYSERING UP INTO THE CANYON. COVERING ALL EVIDENCE OF THE ALIEN SHIP AND FORT.

Ella folds her arms TIGHTER around Jake, her heart full. With a nod of private affirmation, he spurs the horse with a HYA!

As the canyon behind them fills with rushing water, Jake and Ella ride hard into the fiery sunset...

Away from the past, toward a future full of promise.

FADE OUT.

T H E E N D



