

CRY MACHO

By N. Richard Nash
Based on his novel "Cry Macho"

DRAFT: 5-4-11

FADE IN:

EXT. FREEWAY- LAREDO, TEXAS - DAY

Speeding traffic through desert country. A dented, rusty GREY PORSCHE races past a line of vehicles.

The beat sports car is a reflection of its driver, **MIKE MILO**.

A powerful man in his early fifties, who was a world renowned horsetrainer over a period of twenty years; saddled 112 winners, 14 in the Breeders Cup alone, and two second and third place finishers in The Kentucky Derby. The "Outstanding Trainer of the Year" awards in 1999, 2000 and 2002 were the pinnacle of a career that suddenly crashed: THE TRAGIC DEATH OF HIS WIFE AND INFANT SON BROUGHT RAGE, BOOZE, AND FINALLY INDIFFERENCE, AND WITH IT, THE EROSION OF HIS NATURAL TALENTS.

THE GLORY DAYS ARE PAST, LONG OVER.

ANGLE - LEXINGTON FARMS - DAY

Only two things are raised here: Stetsons and horses. Thoroughbreds, Arabs, racing stock.

The Porsche makes a sharp turn through the white gates and down the long driveway.

INT. THE TACK ROOM LOUNGE

A tiny lounge which leads to the stables. **HOWARD POLK**, MIKE'S BOSS, IS NOT AN OLD LINE HORSEMAN, BUT ONE OF THE NEW HEDGEFUNDERS, ARMANI, FASTIDIOUS, EFFETE.

Howard is in a rage at Andy, the elderly doorman.

HOWARD
He didn't even call?

ANDY
No, sir. But he should be here any minute, Mr. Polk.

HOWARD
(ignoring the point)
Did you call him?

ANDY
Oh yes, sir. Five-six times. His phone didn't answer.

HOWARD
The son of a bitch.

Andy's face brightens as MIKE ENTERS AND TOTALLY IGNORES POLK. He saunters around the counter to the mailboxes.

MIKE
Hi, Andy.

ANDY
(nervously)
Hello, Mike.

HOWARD
(looks at his watch)
It's ten thirty..you're over an
hour late!

Mike brings out his old Zippo, lights up the remnants of a cheap cigar, PUFFING SLOWLY. THERE'S AN ARROGANCE TO IT. He then turns his back to check his mail.

MIKE
Traffic...

HOWARD
We've got some Saudis coming out
here at noon, looking to buy some
of these God damned horses,
remember?

Mike nods, then heads for the far stable doors.

HOWARD
(pointing to the register)
You didn't sign in....

Mike doesn't stop. Howard is nettled, but only momentarily: he turns on the frightened old doorman.

HOWARD
You let people walk in and outta
here without signing in?!

Andy's mouth trembles. Polk's face is hard; the old man's going to get fired. Andy turns with beseeching eyes to Mike. His feeble hand shakes, handing Mike the pencil.

ANDY
Please, Mike.

Polk's eyes challenge: what are you going to do now, you son of a bitch? Sacrifice the old man? MIKE CAN'T. He takes the pencil, scribbles his name and starts away.

HOWARD LAUGHS, enjoying his victory. Suddenly Mike SPINS AROUND and lets out a stream of tobacco juice - a meticulously neat one - exactly ONTO THE PAGE WHERE HE HAS SIGNED HIS NAME!

INT. STABLE - STALLS - ETC.

Guys changing into work clothes. Most of the grooms and jockeys passing are not men, they're boys.

BILL/SAM/ROLFE/JONAH
Hi Mike...Hello, Mike, etc.

MIKE
Hi Bill...Jonah, hi, kid.

His greeting is not unfriendly, but it is distant. He goes into his office, closing the door.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

In an old chair, boots up on the desk, WE SEE THE DEPTH OF HIS MOOD: DEPRESSION, ANXIETY.

He slides a drawer open and finds a BOTTLE OF BOURBON AND TAKES A REAL SWIG.

INT. STABLE CORRIDOR - DAY

Mike comes out of his office carrying a CLIPBOARD AND STOPWATCH, and he's not hurrying; he's not the eager trainer any more. He crosses towards the stalls as SUDDENLY BEDLAM, RUNNING AND SCREAMING BEHIND HIM.

GROOMS/JOCKEYS
Mike! Tabasco's spooked! Angelo's hurt! He's trapped in the stall, Mike! he can't get out!

ANGLE

Mike at the stall, the frightening sounds of a wild horse NEIGHING SAVAGELY! He jerks people away.

MIKE
GOD DAMN IT, GET BACK! EVERYONE,
GET THE HELL BACK!!

INT. STALL - DAY

Dark, dusty, deadly. Two thousand pounds of stallion rearing out of control!

ANGLE

Mike wedges into the cubicle, the full weight of the horse PUSHING HIM VIOLENTLY, again and again, against dry splintered slats!

ANGLE - STALL

Paralysed with fear, crouched, pressed hard against the wall, ANGELO, blood streaming from his forehead.

ANGELO
(terrified)
Mike!

MIKE
Angelo! Don't move! Just stay
where you are...

Mike tries for the rope bridle, but the horse REARS, TWISTS, TURNS. Desperate, he LUNGES GRABBING THE STALLION'S MANE WITH BOTH HANDS, UNRELENTING, refusing to ease his grip.

Courage to hang on for another second, and at last it comes: VICTORY. The stillness of the beast. Mike pats the horse hard.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Alright Fat Ass...everything's
okay, O.K.?

He turns to Angelo.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Get up real slow kid and slide
around me...

Still shaking, Angelo crawls around Mike, and as he exits, **SUDDENLY, THE HORSE LETS OUT A ROAR, SPINS, KNOCKS MIKE DOWN, and before he can get up, Tabasco, berserk, comes TRAMPLING DOWN ON HIM.**

ANOTHER ANGLE - STALL

The stableboys and grooms rush in and finally bring the horse under control.

Now Mike rises, stumbling and nods to reassure everyone he is all right. The guys cheer...but only for an instant.

Mike falls...this time he doesn't get up...HE LIES VERY STILL.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO

INT. A CORRIDOR - DAY

A wide hallway in the stadium building. Andy is checking things out with MARGE, Howard's middle-aged secretary.

MARGE
Hi Mike. How's the leg?

MIKE
(grins)
Lets shake it...

He starts to grab her, she laughs as he walks briskly towards Howard's office.

INT. HOWARD'S OFFICE

Efficient, but with an almost imperceptibly flossy decorator's touch - consonant with a man who would rather be in Silicon Valley than a dusty horse ranch in San Bernadino.

HOWARD
Well! Michael! Hospital said
you're getting dizzy spells because
of the concussion...and the limp's
all gone?

MIKE
(flat)
Yeah. Howard, the bank called.

HOWARD
(nonchalant)
Mmmh...h...h...

MIKE
They said you wanted off the note.

HOWARD
True. I don't want to end up
owning that gulch you call a horse
ranch, not for fifty thousand
dollars I don't.

MIKE
Make the bank payments and I'll
work free till you're
covered...won't be no risk for you.

HOWARD
(shakes head)
...not as long as you were working
here...
(leans forward)
(MORE)

HOWARD (cont'd)
 You're through Michael. I don't
 want you hanging around.

A hard, naked silence. They respect their very dislike of
 each other.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
 When we had winners, I was afraid
 to lose you to the competition-
 Breeders Cup...Kentucky
 Derby..."Trainer of the Year" blah,
 blah, blah...but that was ten long
 years ago...before the accident-
 when your wife and kid were still
 around- before the pills and booze.
 Now every horse in my stable is
 second rate, just like my trainer.
 You're just a joke and a bad one at
 that. No, I won't lose you to
 anybody...
 (quietly, the coup de
 grace)
 You're a loss to nobody, Michael.

A long moment, then Mike starts for the door. Howard stops
 him - with more needle.

HOWARD
 You need a few bucks?

MIKE
 I'm wondering if I should rearrange
 your face or not.

Howard just smiles. Finally:

HOWARD
 Huh. Oh, by the way, empty your
 office on the way out, okay?

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S OFFICE DAY

Mike is cleaning out his locker, hiding even from himself how
 deeply moved he is. He pulls a garbage can over, picks up
 his hanging bag and dumps its contents in: clothes, boots,
 shirts countless pictures and posters of race tracks etc: -
 all into the trash. Odds and ends: A SPORTS ILLUSTRATED
 COVER PICTURE, "RACING NEWS MAN OF THE YEAR", INTO THE TRASH.

FINALLY HE DRINKS WHAT'S LEFT OF THE BOURBON AND THROWS THE BOTTLE INTO THE TRASH.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE FURLONG BAR - NIGHT

The bar is overrun with stable bums, track boys and their girlfriends, all cut to the same pattern - young, a little mean. The JUKEBOX PLAYS MUSIC deafeningly. Noise, smoke, the stench old beer and whiskey.

Mike ignores "hellos" and sits alone at the far end of the bar. Without being asked, the Bartender pours him a shot of whiskey. Mike, on the verge of dizziness, downs it.

He'd like to talk to somebody, he'd like to be alone, both. He nods to the Bartender, who refills, a double.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The Porsche parked in the driveway. His apartment on the second floor, above a small tacky real estate office, steps outside the building.

INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT

Rundown mementoes of success. Threadbare. Scotch tape holds old track posters; faded photos of Mike's life, more or less - candid shots of early triumphs, A POSED WEDDING PICTURE, SMILING FACES WITH WIFE AND SON SURFING IN HAWAII, more recent pictures showing Mike in his affluence - with cars that cost too much and women, ditto.

MIKE

(o.s.)

It's a pack of lies, I'm great
Eddie.

(beat)

That's Howard's bullshit. Hey, I'm
just looking for something to tide
me over for a while...

(beat)

Yeah, hey, I understand...I'd
appreciate it. Thanks Eddie.

ANGLE - MIKE

Disheveled, unshaven, hungover, sitting at the kitchen table staring at the telephone.

Sweating, he gets up and washes his face in the sink, brings out a bottle of bourbon. About to pour a drink, he steadies himself, fighting dizziness in his head.

Suddenly he doesn't know what to do - a man immobilized, directionless. He stands very still.

HOWARD (O.S.)

Can I come in?

Mike turns swiftly to see Howard standing in the doorway. Too puzzled to respond, Mike simply stares at him. Howard smiles, enters the room and shuts the door after him.

MIKE

What do you want?

Howard reaches into his pocket and extracts a snapshot. Warily Mike takes it.

CLOSE SHOT - THE SNAPSHOT

The photo is a shot of a handsome boy, dark, Latin.

ANGLE

Mike hands back the picture.

HOWARD

My son, Rafael. He was five when that picture was taken. He's almost ten now.

Mike barely nods.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

I miss him. I haven't seen him in five years.

MIKE

Cut the crap Howard...

(beat)

What do you want?

HOWARD

(a beat; then blandly)

I want you to get him for me.

MIKE

What?

HOWARD

Get him, from my ex-wife...

MIKE

What the hell are you talking about?

HOWARD

I met my wife when I worked in Mexico. I didn't pay U.S. taxes, and put everything in her name. Well, the marriage contract didn't last, and she owns it all...Real estate, cash, stocks...except one thing...we jammed eight million into a trust fund for Rafo before the Feds could grab it. It matures next year... Then, his guardian- whoever that happens to be- administers the money... in the boys best interest...of course.

MIKE

Yeah, I'm sure...

HOWARD

I've been trying to find a way to "reopen" negotiations with my wife...

MIKE

(smiles, he's enjoying this)
...and she can hardly wait...

HOWARD

Unfortunately, I don't have anything she wants...

MIKE

Gee, you're breaking my heart, Howard.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

But if I had Rafo, she'd run to her lawyer...and just split everything right down the middle.

(a beat to accent his next line)

It's worth four hundred thousand to me...twenty for you now, the rest C.O.D.

MIKE

Wait a second, you scumbag...you want me to go kidnap your son!?

HOWARD

There's nothing wrong with this - I don't even think it's illegal, he's MY son.

MIKE

(suddenly angry)

Course not...I just tell the Federales I'm taking some kid back to Texas for his ever loving dad, right?

HOWARD

Well, I'd have to stay out of it till he got here.

MIKE

(angrier)

He won't - not with me! Now get the hell out and don't ever come back Howard...! 'Cause next time you won't be walking down the stairs!

HOWARD

Four hundred thousand dollars! Are you really that stupid? It'll pay off the ranch - you'll own something! Take it, Michael! You're a broken down, over-the-hill, penniless bum for Christsakes, TAKE IT YOU GODDAMNED FOOL!

Mike wasn't going to do it: HE HITS HOWARD. The stun of it is over for Howard, who slowly gets up. He knows he's won. He smiles.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO

EXT. A BORDER STATION - EARLY MORNING

The entry point between Laredo and Nuevo Laredo. Mike pulls up in a new four door pick-up truck.

BORDER OFFICIAL

Your purpose in coming to Mexico?

MIKE

Vacation...

BORDER OFFICIAL
Have a good vacation.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - TRAVEL - MEXICO

Pick-up truck on modern highways - the central plains, the mountains, Monterrey, San Luis Potosi, Queretaro...and finally Mexico City jammed with traffic.

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - MORNING

The Lomas de Chaupultepec section. A neighborhood of luxurious homes among palms, eucalyptus, mammoth yuccas. Truck comes down the street and parks. Mike gets out and, with a camera slung on his shoulder, seems to be any tourist.

ANGLE

LEXA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Imposing, palatial in its grounds, old, meticulously tended, in the style of Maximilian. Mike approaches the gates looking toward the house.

As his hand goes up to the ironwork - seemingly out of nowhere - TWO RAGING DOGS APPEAR, snarling at his hands and face! He is saved by the gates themselves.

QUICK DISSOLVE

ANGLE - LATER

Later, Mike in the pick-up truck across from the house, hat tipped over his face, watching, waiting for any sign of the boy.

QUICK DISSOLVE

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - NIGHT

The house is now barely visible, save some lights that punctuate its ornate windows. Mike sighs, tired and restless. Suddenly a **LOUD SOUND OF A SHOTGUN BEING COCKED!**

ANGLE - MIKE

Stares into a double barreled shotgun hanging through the window! Two faces glower at him: AURELIO, about 40, a bigger, uglier version of Julio Iglesias (with no voice), and PACAS, a very stocky, scarfaced Indian.

AURELIO
 (nodding)
 Out!

QUICK DISSOLVE

INT. LEXA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mike is seated on a huge stuffed sofa. Spread out on the coffee table in front of him, his jacket, hat, wallet, passport, money - AND THE SNAPSHOT OF RAFO. Pacas' shotgun, leveled at Mike while Aurelio peels an apple with a long pocket knife.

ALEXANDRA MUNOS DE SANTIS POLK enters, holding an almost empty snifter of mescal.

She is in her thirties, thin- almost gaunt, but handsome, educated and well spoken in English, with only the trace of accent. She has a sensual quality, lush, over -cultivated. There is something unidentifiable about her - unpredictably unstable - perhaps a little mad. But her besetting quality is distress - a woman trying to dissemble it away, to drink it away.

She looks at Mike, then eyes the coffee table.

Aurelio pours her some mescal. Then:

LEXA
 (indicating door; in
 Spanish)
 Leave me alone with him.

Aurelio starts to object, but Lexa explodes, angry.

LEXA (CONT'D)
 (continuing in Spanish)
 I said GO! GET OUT! Both of you!

Aurelio smolders, finally looks at Mike, raising his knife high.

AURELIO
 We are all here! Do not be stupid!

He motions to Pacas, and they both exit the room.

LEXA
 Would you like a drink?

MIKE
 Anything...

Lexa smiles, sits close to Mike on the couch, handing him his drink. He downs half of it. Lexa points offhandedly to the coffee table.

LEXA

Do you always carry cards when you go kidnapping, Mr. Milo?

MIKE

You're losing me....

LEXA

One of those cards say you work for my husband.

(holding up Rafo's
snapshot)

And why would you be carrying a picture of my son?

MIKE

(shakes his head)

I guess some people might think that...

LEXA

Like the police, you mean?

She takes another sip of mescal. She measures him, head to toe, and starts to laugh.

MIKE

When a woman laughs like that, a guy thinks his fly's open.

LEXA

That is the only thing that is not out on the table.

Mike grins. Things are loosening up. He polishes off the remaining Mescal.

LEXA

Suppose you do take my son. What good will he be to my husband?

MIKE

(carefully)

I don't know. I'm just supposed to get him.

She studies this. **Then laughs.**

LEXA

You're picturing a sweet little boy, aren't you? Like that snapshot. Ten years old, goes to school, wears clean clothes speaks respectfully to his elders?! No...no...my son spends his time gambling at the Calle Choca with his rooster cockfighting...he vanishes for days at a time...he..he..**Mr. Milo, my son Rafo is a monster!**

(trying not to cry)

You have made a long trip for nothing... and now, you waste your time. You will never find him, if you did he would only spit in your face. He hates his father, he hates me. So go home.

MIKE

(sorry for her)

When did you give up?

LEXA

Not soon enough...not the day he was born.

Her unhappiness is naked - he looks at her with sympathy, then puts the cards and wallet back into his pocket.

LEXA

Please have a drink?

MIKE

(with kindness)

Another time...perhaps.

He goes out. Quietly she continues drinking.

EXT. A STREET IN THE TEPITO SECTION - NIGHT

Deserted. Mike comes down an old cobblestone alley. Suddenly, out of nowhere, a man grabs him and shoves him against a wall.

Another man joins in, muttering in Spanish.

MIKE

No comprende! American!

MAN

(in broken English)

What you do here Gringo?

MIKE
Tourist. Look for cockfight.

A cigarette lighter flares closes to Mike's face. At last, satisfied Mike is telling the truth.

MAN
Give hundred pesos.

The Mexicans see Mike take out a role of bills peeling off a hundred peso note. Then:

MAN
You go there, to the end, then that way.

Mike starts to leave, a LONG BLADE flashes in his face!

MAN #2
You give more...Comprende..?

A scream; the blade vanishes from sight, the sickening sound of a bone CRACK! One man down.

THEN:

Mikes pile drives his fist DEEP into the others gut. The man fights to breathe, but can't. He COLLAPSES.

MIKE
Buenos Noches...

EXT. AN OPEN COURTYARD

Mike walks further down the alley and around a corner: A tiny filthy plaza. A guttering street light. Silence...nobody...no cockfight, nothing. He's been had! Then he hears the CROW OF A COCK, and sees a sliver of light from a warehouse.

ANGLE

Mike crosses, climbs up a platform and peers inside.

INT. THE STALL

A lot of men and boys, all Mexican. By the light of the smoking kerosene lamp, we can see clearly: ZAFIRO, a scarred Meztico whose gamecock is of rust color, gesturing to:

RAFO, A HANDSOME BOY, JUST PAST TEN, UNKEMPT HAIR, DIRTY CLOTHES who is mumbling in Spanish to his rooster, a beautiful white gamecock with an uncut comb.

Zafiro yells, "Eh! Rafo!" To indicate he's ready. Rafo gestures for the boys to step back from the betting. Now Rafo and Zafiro heighten the irritating sounds they make to their fighters - ready to let them go!

EXT. THE PLATFORM

Abruptly...POLICE WHISTLES and SIRENS. Suddenly the courtyard is ablaze with lights - police cars at both ends. Mike jumps down, dives under the platform.

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE RAID

Everyone bails out of the warehouse, cops swarming. Mike stays under the platform and SEES RAFO and his rooster dart past a policeman and vanish around the far corner. It ends as quickly as it started. Some men led off by the police and then, quiet.

After a moment, Mike crawls out, turns the corner into a courtyard. He walks to its center.

MIKE

Hey! Rafo...hey, kid, you can come out now. The cops have gone - it's all clear.

Silence. Nothing.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'm a friend of the family, kid...a friend...so come out now, it's okay.

(under his breath)

Little son of a bitch.

(then in a temper)

I know you're here. Come out, you little bastard.

Nothing. Abruptly, he hears a SOUND behind him. He whirls.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FEATURING MIKE AND HIS POV

RAFO'S GAMECOCK! The white rooster has come out from behind a mound of debris. It is now strutting - nonchalantly - across the courtyard. **Lightening fast, Mike is down to grab it; lightening fast the cock skitters away. Another innocent approach by Mike - again the rooster eludes him.**

Getting desperate, he goes after it with brute force and awkwardness, rushing and pouncing. All he gets are a couple of spills, a bruised hand. He sees a cardboard box, grabs and quickly tosses it over the cock.

MIKE
Ha! Gotcha!

The box is moving crazily, but Mike holds it down. Then he lifts up an edge and sticks his hand under.

He screams! The cock got a piece of him! Now he goes at it with a vengeance and - triumph Out it comes. He is holding it **upside down by the leg, as it SQUAWKS angrily.**

MIKE (CONT'D)
All right, kid. I got your rooster. You don't come out, I'm wringing its scrawny neck. I'm counting to five, so you better get your ass out here fast, okay!
One...two...three...four...

Suddenly out of an awning, Rafo drops to the ground.

RAFO
(accented speech, more gutter than Mexican)
Give him to me.

MIKE
After we talk...

A beat.

RAFO
Okay...talk.

MIKE
(Looks Around)
Not here.

RAFO
(an instant; he thinks it over)
I want an Orange Crush.

INT. CAFE - NIGHT

A crummy little cafe. Mike and Rafo are seated at an outdoors table. The cock is tied by strings to Mike's chair. Rafo takes one more sip of his soda, studies Mike carefully, then:

RAFO
You are making a joke, yes?

MIKE
No.

RAFO
(shaking his head)
My father...wants me?

MIKE
Sure. You're his only kid.

RAFO
And he send you for me?

MIKE
Yes.

RAFO
You're a liar! My father doesn't
see me for years. Why he want to
see me now?

MIKE
He misses you...

RAFO
(overlaps, laughing)
You are full of shit.

Mike opens his wallet, hands Rafo his snapshot. The boy
studies it for a beat.

RAFO (CONT'D)
Is me...when I was living in Texas.

MIKE
He wants you there again.

RAFO
(suspicious)
Why he not telephone? Why send
you?

MIKE
(quickly)
Because he trusts me. He figured
your mother wouldn't let you go
even if you wanted to.

RAFO
(laughs)
She pack my clothes if I go!
Aurelio and her, they will
celebrate and get drunk if I go.

MIKE

Well, he thought it'd be easier if I was here to help you, just in case, you know?

RAFO

...I don't need his help. Last year I go to Cuernavaca for one week by myself. Nobody stop me!

MIKE

Well, kid, that's the story. Now you heard it all...

RAFO

(curious)

You work for my father?

MIKE

Yes.

RAFO

What kind of work?

MIKE

Horse business.

RAFO

Stupido! Why would you waste time with stupido horses.

MIKE

Its just a job, kid...

RAFO

(with a bitter smile)

When I was little my father say he would give me a special horse...he never did...he is a liar.

MIKE

Well, he will now, he's a little late, but not a liar.

A shrewd point has been made. Rafo weighs it.

RAFO

My father, he still drive his red sports car?

Mike can see Rafo's genuine curiosity for the first time.

MIKE
The Jag? Yeah.
(then)
He just bought another one...a
Ferrari, now he has two sports
cars.

Rafo's hooked. Mike sees he's making headway and continues:

MIKE (CONT'D)
Both red...

Rafo's impressed.

MIKE
Who needs two red sports cars? You
can only drive one at a time,
right?

Rafo nods. A beat. Finally:

RAFO
Maybe I go just for the summer. If
I don't like, I will say the hell
with him and come back.

MIKE
Sure - if you want to come back,
the hell with him.

But the fine points of the deal have not yet been agreed to.

RAFO
I can take my rooster with me, yes?

MIKE
(a flash of doubt; but)
Sure, why not?

RAFO
Okay! Where is your truck?

MIKE
Near the Calle Cocha.

Already in action, Rafo gets the gamecock and starts away.

MIKE
Hey...where are you going?

RAFO
I will meet you near my house at
eleven o'clock.

MIKE

(wary of a trick)
...what do you mean, eleven
o'clock? That's two hours from
now!

RAFO

Tonight - in the cockfighting - I
put a thousand pesos on the floor.
That bastard Zafiro - he take
everything. I go get my pesos!

MIKE

No - I'll give you a thousand
pesos.

RAFO

Give is not take! You think I
going to let him cheat me? See you
at eleven o'clock.

And with the rooster under his arm, he rushes away. Mike
stands there, off-balance. Whether to rush after the boy or
to trust him? But he now has no alternative, for Rafo is out
of sight.

INT. LEXA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Lexa and Mike at the bar. He is sipping a mescal, Lexa's
face a mask of fury.

MIKE

We're leaving tonight...

LEXA

He wants to go to Texas?!

MIKE

(nods)
Uh-huh.

LEXA

You tell him the truth about his
father?!

MIKE

Yeah...that he really wants him.

LEXA

(starting to unravel)
Did you tell him why? Did you tell
him you were being paid to kidnap
him?

Mike puts his drink down, angry.

MIKE
Kidnapping?! Hey...you told me an
hour ago, you hated him, you gave
up, remember..!

She is rabid, hysterical, starts shouting.

LEXA
AURELIO! PACAS! AURELIO!

The door bursts open and Aurelio, Pacas and another man,
enter. In a spit of Spanish:

LEXA (CONT'D)
(continuing)
He insults me! He calls me a
whore!

**Aurelio swings first, but Mike ducks and smashes his
nose...CRUNCH...spinning around, another punch and a man
sails across the coffee table. A vicious uppercut and Pacas
gets a mouthful of broken teeth. A quiet moment- then Mike
straightens up, only to be staring at a beautiful chromed .22
pistol.**

LEXA (CONT'D)
(continuing)
I'm very good with this... I've
used it before...sit-down, Mr.
Milo...

She turns to Aurelio et al. And barks in Spanish:

LEXA
Out! Get out!

They would like to argue, but quickly exit.

LEXA
Finish your drink...

He does.

LEXA
I should kill you right now, but
that would be a waste...and I would
get blood all over my beautiful
Persian carpets...

MIKE
(nods agreement)
They are...and expensive too!

LEXA

Then listen to me. I hate my son--
but he's mine! You understand that?
He's my property, and nobody takes
my property!

MIKE

(nods again)

I have the same thing with my
horse...

LEXA

(Smiles)

There's one thing you don't
understand... you were going to
make a lot of money, right?

MIKE

Yes!

LEXA

(Laughs)

My husband is rich- yes, with a big
business- yes? Well, he hasn't got
the money to buy a cheap whore on a
Saturday night. He owes everybody
ten million pesos... if he even
shows his face in Mexico- he will
get a bullet in his belly! So who
could do the job for him? An idiot!
That's what you are Mister Milo- an
idiot!

She puts the gun down on the desk.

LEXA

This is no longer necessary...

She picks up the telephone.

LEXA

YOU have exactly five minutes to be
in your truck- leaving Mexico, or I
will call the Federales and have
you arrested for kidnapping- you
will spend ten years of your life
in jail! Do we understand each
other?

Mike finishes off the mescal, nods, gets to the door.

MIKE

Like I always say- when you're in a
hole, stop digging...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - PICK-UP TRUCK - NIGHT TO DAY

A SERIES OF DISSOLVES as the pick-up truck travels at speed -- Mexico City fades behind the mountainous roads and as the sun rises the PICK-UP TRUCK ROARS along an undulating highway somewhere in the foothills.

INT. TRUCK - DAWN

With the windows wide open and the clear air blowing in Mike's face, he is much revived. Suddenly as the rays of the sun light up the pick-up truck's interior, Mike hears a COCK CROWING...and in a beat...a white object lands on the seat right beside him. He is so startled that he jams on the brakes; the TRUCK SCREAMS to a halt. It's Rafo's white gamecock! Mike looks at it and turns to the rear of the truck. **He is confronting the devilish, smiling face of Rafo.**

RAFO

Hello, gringo. I guess I fall
asleep, yes?

MIKE

Get out!

RAFO

(puzzled)
What?

MIKE

Out....get out!

Mike rips open the door and jumps out of the pick-up truck.

EXT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAWN

He tears open the back doors!

MIKE

Get out, goddamn it!

RAFO

What's the matter? -- You crazy?

He grabs the kid and yanks him out of the truck! The violence spills the boy on the ground. Angry, astounded, Rafo pulls himself up and squares off.

RAFO (CONT'D)
(continuing)
You crazy, Goddamn Gringo, what's a
matter with you?

MIKE
You're not going!

RAFO
Who says?

MIKE
I says!
(pointing to his beaten
face)
Your mother says!

Rafo starts to get back into the truck. Mike grabs him and
pulls him down.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I said you're not going!

RAFO
(breaking away from Mike's
grip)
I said I am going... If you go
without me, you know what I will
do? I will go to the police --not
here, but in the next town where
they don't know me...I will go to
the Federales and tell them I was
raped -- by a gringo in a blue pick-
up truck from Texas!

Mike shakes his head. He can't believe what he's heard.

MIKE
Kid..you're sick. What happens
when they get a doctor and he gives
you one of those...
(poking around with his
finger)
...examinations?

Rafo thinks about that for a moment. The idea makes him
suddenly very uncomfortable. Undaunted, he tries a new tack.

RAFO
You are right - you are not as
stupid as I thought.
(beat)
(MORE)

RAFO (cont'd)
 Then I will walk like a cripple --
 like this!...and I will say your
 truck...you hit me and run away! I
 will tell them that this thing
 (slapping the truck)
 it is not yours -- it is stolen!

MIKE
 Now thats real stupid! I can--

He looks at Rafo, yanks his coat off the front seat. **He JAMS
 THROUGH THE POCKETS OF HIS COAT, suddenly aware.**

MIKE (cont'd)
 O.K., where is it?

RAFO
 Where is what?

MIKE
 My wallet... where is it?

RAFO
 We go, I tell you, okay?

MIKE
 I don't get my wallet real fast,
 the only place you go is to the
 hospital!

Rafo starts to get into the front seat.

RAFO
 You get too angry, is no good for
 you.

MIKE
 (pulling him away from the
 door)
 You little bastard, give it to me!

RAFO
 Eat shit!

**Mike hits him. The fight is on. Rafo, bent on murder, kicks
 Mike low. A battle now and no holds barred. Rafo is an
 experienced alley fighter.**

**Biting, scratching, kicking gouging, the boy is not quickly
 overpowered. But at last Mike has the boy's arms pinned to
 his side, girded by a vice-like grip. A beat as they both
 catch their breath.**

RAFO
 (in pain)
 You pretty strong for a man so old!

MIKE
 (tighter, still)
 You weasel, where is it!

RAFO
 (in agony)
 I make a deal with you

MIKE
No deals!

RAFO
 I give your wallet, you take me to
 the border. Only to the border. I
 will get across by myself.

MIKE
 No.

RAFO
 (an outcry)
 I want to go to my father!

Silence. The line was blurted out -- involuntary -- even a little desperate. The raw fact of the utterance shocks not only Mike but Rafo himself. He didn't intend such a heartfelt revelation, and now they have both realized he has confessed it. Again: **Mike's humanity. He lets the boy go.**

MIKE
 (muttering to himself)
 How'd I get into this crap -- okay,
 but just to the border. Now....my
 wallet!

He lets Rafo up, the boy goes to the truck and slides the wallet out from under the passenger seat. He gives it to Mike, who starts to put it in his back pocket, then stops and CAREFULLY CHECKS ITS CONTENTS.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 (explodes)
 Okay -- let's have it!

RAFO
 What you talk about?

MIKE
 The money...dee nero...from the
 wallet, remember?

RAFO
(still trying)
You think maybe I....

MIKE
(overlapping)
Look, kid, you want to get to the
border in one piece - or do you
want to end up a cripple? Now give
me the Goddamned money!

Even Rafo can sense Mike's anger. He sits down, takes off
his shoe.

RAFO
I was only hold it, so nobody steal
it from you...

MIKE
Yeah kid. Your'e a real Boy Scout.

Rafo puts on his shoe, scoops up the rooster, and starts
getting in the pick-up truck.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Hold it!

Mike opens the back door of the pick-up truck.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
He goes in back -- tie his leg to
the seat over there.

RAFO
No...he ride with me.

MIKE
I'm not driving with a crazy
Goddamned chicken flying around in
my truck!

RAFO
He is not a chicken! His name is
Macho!

MIKE
I don't care if his name is Colonel
Sanders...it's still chicken shit
on the seats!

RAFO
(in a towering rage)
He is not chicken shit!
(MORE)

RAFO (cont'd)
He is Macho! You know what this means, macho? It means strong...

MIKE
I'll tell you what it means - it means goodbye - see you around - adios!

Mike gets into the pick-up truck, starts the vehicle moving. Rafo has a bit to do to run after the pick-up truck. It is just picking up speed as he makes it. He and his rooster are inside now.

QUICK DISSOLVE
TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - PICK-UP TRUCK - NOON

No sign of the city anymore. The pick-up truck riding along a deserted stretch of countryside.

RAFO (V.O.)
Is bad to have a fighter, a champino - with his leg tied all day...

MIKE (V.O.)
Uh-huh...

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

Rafo up front with Mike, see/hear Macho secured in the back of the vehicle. The boy is animated. Mike disinterested, only occasionally nodding.

RAFO
Is no good for his spirit...

MIKE
(glances in mirror)
He'll get over it...

RAFO
He is strong now...when I first find him he lose every fight! He is on the ground - his leg is broke - so I take care of him! And I say to him, "Stand up, you bastard! Fight - He kill a big rooster! From that time he is Macho - Champino!

MIKE
I'm getting goosebumps, kid.

RAFO
Gringo, you look like a smart man
to me - I make you a deal.

MIKE
Not interested.

RAFO
Wait - is good - Macho, he sit with
us, I give you half the money when
he fight...

MIKE
You ever bring that chicken up
here, the only half I'll get's when
I barbecue him.

Rafo starts to get angry, then looks at Mike and starts laughing. The Gringo's not just tough but has a sense of humor. Finally, even Mike smiles.

EXT. HIGHWAY - PICK-UP TRUCK - DUSK

The pick-up truck pulls over on the side of the road, kicking up a cloud of dust.

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DUSK

As Mike turns the pick-up truck's lights, then ENGINE OFF.

RAFO
Why we stop?

MIKE
Time for a nap.

He starts to get out of the pick-up truck.

RAFO
Why you don't sleep in the truck?

Mike doesn't answer, Rafo looks puzzled. He hurries out of the pick-up truck, suspicious.

RAFO
Why we don't sleep in the truck?

MIKE
It smells better out here.

RAFO
I think something else, maybe...

MIKE

Like what?

RAFO

I think --when I sleep --you drive away without me.

MIKE

Jesus Christ, kid, don't you trust anybody?

And with that, Mike selects a spot at some considerable distance from the pick-up truck. He kicks a small hole in the sand for his posterior, lies down.

Rafo watches him and does the same. They both make themselves as comfortable as they can.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE SLEEPING GROUND - DAWN

It is barely sun-up. With utmost quiet, Mike gets up and makes his way toward the pick-up truck. He slowly opens the door and doesn't close it, for fear of making a noise. He puts the key in the ignition, turns it. NOTHING HAPPENS. He tries again. STILL NOTHING. He checks everything: key, gearshift, gas pedal. Tries again. Dead. He gets out, goes to the front of the pick-up truck and raises the hood, his face contorts.

MIKE

(screams)

You goddam thief!!!

He glares at Rafo, stretching and yawning.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You mothergrabbing little goddamn thief!!

RAFO

(innocently)

What's the matter, gringo?

MIKE

Where's the battery?

RAFO

Battery? What you mean battery?

MIKE

You know goddamn well what I mean!
What did you do with it?

RAFO

Me? I don't take nothing. Maybe
you don't have no battery!

MIKE

Maybe you won't have no teeth - now
where is it?!

RAFO

Why you look for a battery so early
in the morning?

(beat)

You don't go nowhere without me?
No...you wouldn't do that. We made
a deal. You are a man of your word
and you wouldn't do that, eh?

A moment, then:

MIKE

(shakes head no)

Naw, I was just checking everything
out.

RAFO

(suddenly the pretense is
off, angry)

Listen, no more of your tricks, you
bastard!

Mike, more embarrassed than frustrated, nods.

MIKE

All right! Now where is it?

RAFO

First we make a deal, okay?

MIKE

Christ, kid, you ever think of
selling used cars?! What?

RAFO

I show you the battery -- Macho, he
ride with us, in front.

Mike grits his teeth, nods.

MIKE

Deal...

(a quick afterthought)

...but on the floor...

RAFO
(smiles)
Deal...

Rafo moves to a bush and starts kicking in the sand. He unearths the battery.

RAFO (CONT'D)
(continuing)
There.

MIKE
O.K. - bring it back.

RAFO
Is too heavy for me.

MIKE
It was light when you stole it,
huh?

RAFO
Yes -- is a strange thing.

MIKE
(bitingly)
You bet it is! It's easier to get
something than to get rid of it.

Rafo smiles -- reluctantly -- not wanting Mike to see.

CUT TO:

EXT. A HIGHWAY - DAY

Not a wide highway any longer but still a good road, the sun high in the sky. The pick-up truck is making good time.

RAFO (V.O)
You worry too much, si...is no
problem - my mother not miss me.

MIKE (V.O.)
Great, whatever you say...

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

RAFO
She hates me...You want to know
why?

MIKE
No...

RAFO

I tell you anyway...she bring home
a strange man today, another
strange man tomorrow, and she says
I should call them "father!" I say
to her, how many men can I call
father? So she hates me!

Mike is trying to insulate himself from the boy's anger and
torment, but somewhere Rafo is starting to get to him.

RAFO (CONT'D)

(pointing to Mike's face)
And this one now, Aurelio, who do
that to your face, he does no work,
he gets drugs and pills for her--
then takes her money -- he is a
pimp! One time I spit on him, and
he hits me to teach me manners! I
say to him, you son of a bitch,
don't you teach me manners while
you are in bed with my mother!

Rafo says the following almost for/to himself.

RAFO (CONT'D)

(continuing)
So I say to hell with them --I make
a few pesos with Macho for myself --
and I do what I want!

A long silence. Rafo's vented his spleen and there is
nothing for Mike to say. Suddenly, something ahead brings
Mike to alert. He slows down.

INT. CAB - MIKE'S POV - DAY

A road block! Three or four cars in line. Mike brings the
pick-up truck to a quick stop.

MIKE

Get down and stay inside.

He gets out.

EXT. THE ROAD

**Mike nonchalantly walks ahead and sees a National patrol car
and national troopers searching all cars. He turns back to
the pick-up truck and gets in.**

MIKE

Trouble. Federales.

RAFO
(alarmed)
No! What they want?

MIKE
You, I think.

We hear a POLICE WHISTLE. Mike quickly TURNS ON THE ENGINE and puts the pick-up truck in gear.

EXT. THE ROAD - ANOTHER ANGLE - FEATURING THE PICK-UP TRUCK

Slowly pulls out of the line and backs up ten feet, makes a right turn onto a small dirt road, then digs out!

INT. THE CAB

RAFO
What do you do?

MIKE
Getting off the main road.

RAFO
Is no good ...bump-bump-bump.

MIKE
...better than jail-jail-jail.

RAFO
You worry I go to jail?!

MIKE
(shakes head)
No. I worry I go to jail.

RAFO
You? Que Paso?

MIKE
Oh -...nothing serious, just kidnapping.

Rafo understands Mike's plight. A Moment.

RAFO
(nodding)
Si - that is serious-o...What we do?

MIKE
We -- don't do anything - I'm dropping you off and getting the hell outta this country!

RAFO
(shakes head)
Gringo, we had a deal, no? I go to
Texas with you!

MIKE
Sorry, things have changed -

RAFO
You get too excited, makes - you
not think so good - My mother
already call the Federales, si?

MIKE
(laughs)
Right -- she misses you.

RAFO
She tell them lies, how you tie me
and beat me and make me go with
you...

The word "lies" definitely strikes a note. Mike lights up a
cigar.

MIKE
If you're not with me - I won't
have that problem...

RAFO
(overlapping)
You have a bigger problem - they
think maybe you kill me!

MIKE
(irritated)
Don't give me any ideas!

RAFO
I like you so I help you. I am
smart and you -- you don't put two
words of Spanish together.

MIKE
I won't be stopping to talk --

RAFO
You stop -- the Federales know you
and this Texas truck --
(shakes head)
You are in shit.

Mike puffs on the cigar knowing the kid's right.

RAFO (CONT'D)
(continuing; sadly)
You will be old when you come from
prison, so old nobody know you --

He's poked Mike's nerve.

MIKE
Kid, one more word out of you --
(pointing out of truck)
--and I won't even wait till I get
to the next town!

RAFO
You are mad with me because you are
in trouble? I am sorry...Mike...

**It is the first time Rafo has ever called him by his name,
and it takes the last of his starch out of Mike.**

MIKE
Hey, ki...
(stops)
Look Rafo -- I didn't mean it --
it's not your fault.

RAFO
So is okay? You and me? We go to
Texas?

Mike tosses out the cigar, nods.

MIKE
Well -- we'll go as far as we can.

Rafo's face lights up; he smiles.

RAFO
We go to Texas all the way! Mike --
you and me!

**SUDDENLY MIKE STARTS TO GET DIZZY. Precipitously, without
warning, he applies the brakes and the pick-up truck veers,
skidding.**

RAFO (CONT'D)
What happen? -- What happen?!

Mike sits absolutely still, holding his head in his hands.

RAFO (CONT'D)
What happen? You are sick?

MIKE
No -- it's nothing -- nothing.

RAFO
What? You are not well?

MIKE
(irritably; feeling
better)
I said it was nothing...I'm all
right.

RAFO
You want me to drive?

MIKE
You've got a license, of course.

RAFO
Who needs a license? I can drive!
Once I drive my mother's car all
over the city, but she sends the
police after me, so I stop. But I
can drive!

MIKE
I'm sure you can.

Mike starts the pick-up truck.

RAFO
No -- wait! I going to drive!

MIKE
You?! You think I'm crazy?!

The old battle starts again.

RAFO
No, I think you dizzy. I don't
ride with no dizzy gringo.

MIKE
Then start walking.

He leans over and pushes open the door. A Beat.

RAFO
Okay. I Make a deal with you...

MIKE
Christ - not again!

RAFO
 You tired -- you drive too long --
 We stop and rest -- if you still
 dizzy, I drive...Deal?

MIKE
 No, no -- you never drive. If you
 even touch this wheel -- you will
 have broken fingers, comprehende?

Rafo starts to protest but Mike continues.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 (continuing)
 But -- we will stop to rest -- and
 you can have an Orange Crush.
 Deal?

Rafo nods.

RAFO
 Deal.

Secretly, Mike is worried. The deal gives him an out, saving face. He gets the truck going. They have met on equal plane.

CUT TO:

INT. A CAFE - DAY

A cheap yet pleasant place with tin ornaments, some pretty, some hideous. Mike and Rafo sit on stools, the BARTENDER approaches.

MIKE
 Uno beer. Carta Blanco.

The Bartender nods, looks at Rafo.

RAFO
 Amarillo.

BARTENDER
 Armarillo?

Mike sees the Bartender's puzzlement and asks Rafo:

MIKE
 What's Amarillo?

RAFO
 (with elaborate innocence)
 Oh, something I drink.

The Bartender has turned and now turns back with a bottle of amarillo...YELLOW TEQUILA.

MIKE

No -- no Amarillo for him. Orange Crush.

RAFO

I don't want no Orange Crush. I want Amarillo.

MIKE

You don't drink hard liquor -- not with me!

RAFO

Cajones! I drink tequila once, I never get sick!

MIKE

No!--Once You get to the border you can drink whatever you want -- tequila, lighter fluid, or gasoline. But with me, you don't drink liquor, you got that?

Mike goes to the jukebox. As the Bartender returns with a beer for Mike and a bottle of Orange Crush with a glass. Rafo pours the Orange Crush in the glass and **SWITCHES DRINKS WITH MIKE**. Quickly, in one long draught, he downs Mike's beer and sits innocently awaiting Mike's return. But when the man returns he shows no sign whatever that he notices the switch. On the contrary, he BLOWS THE "HEAD" OFF THE ORANGE CRUSH and drinks it as if it were beer.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

I sure like Mexican beer.

The kid admires how the man has handled the moment; he'd like to smile, but keeps himself from doing it. **BEATRIZ approaches. She's in the business. She has two sets of enormities, BREASTS AND EARRINGS; ALL FOUR HANG LOW, sits next to Mike.** She says something enticing but he doesn't understand Spanish.

MIKE

Key passa?

She lets out an unbroken spiel of Spanish; animated, happy palaver.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What did she say?

RAFO

She is telling how clean she is.
She make a list of all the diseases
she never have. Smallpox, chicken
pox, malaria, scarlet fever,
sleeping sickness.

MIKE

How about the clap?

RAFO

I will ask her.

MIKE

(grabs him)

Never mind! Tell her I'm not
interested.

RAFO

(unbelieving)

What?

MIKE

Tell her no.

RAFO

You don't want this beautiful
woman?

MIKE

Uh-uh.

RAFO

(stunned)

Why not? She has very big
avocados.

MIKE

(getting irritated)

I said no!

RAFO

You will never find avocados like
this. You can go anywhere and
never find big ones like this.

As he reaches across Mike to indicate Beatriz' breasts. She
raises them, jiggling a little. Then she says something in
Spanish.

RAFO (CONT'D)

(continuing)

She says you can touch them.

MIKE
 (losing his temper)
 For Christ's sake, stop acting like
 a pimp!

RAFO
 (outraged)
 Don't you call me that! I am not a
 pimp! I don't get money from her --
 I am not a pimp!

**Furious, he slashes across at Mike's Orange Crush, SPILLING
 IT ALL OVER THE BAR AND OVER MIKE -- and runs over to one of
 the booths in the cafe. Mike is stunned at the size of the
 boy's outrage.**

The Bartender hands him a towel, which he carries across to
 the booth. He slides in and looks at the boy.
 Silence...Then:

MIKE
 What are you so angry bout?

RAFO
 Go to hell.

MIKE
 You know, you can say all the dirty
 things you want, and its okay, but
 the first thing I say -- you go
 crazy.

RAFO
 (flaring again)
 I am not a pimp! Aurelio is a pimp
 -- not me!

Now Mike understands. A moment.

MIKE
 Okay...I apologize...
 (a beat)
 I'm sorry. Alright?

A moment, then Rafo nods his acceptance. Mike stands up and
 wipes the Orange Crush off his pants.

RAFO
 Why you clean the clothes?

Mike looks up quizzically.

CUT TO:

EXT. SMALL TOWN SQUARE - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

A series of tiny shops, a fruit and vegetable stand, etc.

ANGLE - GENERAL STORE - DAY

As Rafo exits the store, followed by Mike -- now dressed as a Bracero: cotton shirt, loose pants and a straw hat.

RAFO
(beams)
Ole! Is good -- now you look like everyone.

MIKE
(not too happy)
Yeah...

ANGLE ACROSS THE STREET as Mike and Rafo walk toward us.
Mike stops, his face drops.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Jeezzzz--us!

HIS POV

Three Mexicans, early teens, Miguel, Ito and Carlos, with cans and brushes in their hands, **have just finished painting the pick-up truck a streaked bilious yellow!**

ANGLE

Mike and Rafo approaching pick-up truck as the three men are finishing up.

RAFO
(proudly)
Perfecto-mente, I pick the color myself...

MIKE
Stick to roosters kid...first cop spots us, we're in jail!

Rafo studies the pick-up truck, then nods.

RAFO
Ah, si.

He picks up an old brick and dents the side of the pick-up truck, then SMASHES one headlight before Mike can grab him.

MIKE
What the hell are you doing?!!

Rafo stands back, looks at the pick-up truck.

RAFO
Now we look like everyone, eh?

Mike looks at the pick-up truck (sans license plates) and the two other cars parked around it: both are dented, no headlights, one painted pink and the other green.

MIKE
(defeated)
Yeah, we sure do...

Rafo screams to the three Mexicans.

RAFO
(in Spanish)
That's enough...Good. Into the truck, we are going.

Carlos with a guitar, Miguel and Ito pile into the back of the pick-up truck and slide the door shut. Mike and Rafo climb into their side and slam the doors.

RAFO (CONT'D)
(continuing; smiling)
Vaminos, amigos!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERTED HIGHWAY - PICK-UP TRUCK - NIGHT TO DAY

As the vehicle passes we hear a GUITAR playing and three VOICES (Carlos, Miguel and Ito) singing horrendous Mariachi tunes.

RAFO (V.O.)
Is not bad music, eh?

MIKE (V.O.)
Yeah, they sing as good as they paint!

RAFO (V.O.)
They work free -- we take them to their city...it's on the way...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A GROVE OF TREES - DAY

Late afternoon: hot. The grove of trees is more accurately a patch of cactus close to where the pick-up truck is parked.

Mike, Rafo and our three painters have food spread out and are eating. Macho gets crumbs, but more often wanders away, foraging in the nit grass. Mike has finished eating and is wiping his mouth with a bandana.

RAFO
You want another tortilla?

MIKE
No more. I'm finished.

Rafo wipes his mouth with the tortilla, wipes his fingers with it, digs into the bean can, wiping it, then pops the tortilla into his mouth.

A moment. Mike's STOMACH IS GROWLING. **He grimaces and jumps up.**

RAFO
What's the matter?

MIKE
I don't know...the enchiladas...or maybe the water.

RAFO
(sudden laughter)
Oh! -- You got Turista! Turistas!

Carlos, Miguel and Ito join in the fun!

MIKE
Why do Mexicans laugh when we get sick drinking your dirty water?

RAFO
Is not the water that is dirty! --
Is you! We drink and we are healthy -- you drink and die on the toilet!

MIKE
(holding his stomach in pain)
Oh, Jesus!

Mike runs for some bushes. Seeing him in real distress, Rafo runs searching among the cactuses.

RAFO
Wait! I give you something make you feel better!

ANGLE - BUSHES

He finds the plant he wants. He tears off a leaf and offers it to Mike.

RAFO
Here -- chew it!

MIKE
Cactus?! Forget it!

RAFO
Chew! Chewy

MIKE
Owww!

RAFO
Chew, son-of-a-bitch! Here--I show
you -- I chew!
(as he chews a leaf)
See? I do not die! GO on -- chew!

Mike takes a cactus leaf and crunches it in his mouth. An instant and then! -- CATAclysm it is as if someone has poured boiling water into his mouth.

MIKE
Ow! Ow, Jesus! OW -- hot! --Fire!
Murder, hot, fire!

He runs berserk, yelling. Rafo, howls of laughter. The boy rolls on the ground, crowing like Macho -- for he has won a round. Precipitously, OVER SCENE, we hear MACHO SQUAKING in a roosterish outrage. Rafo wheels around to look toward the road.

Not far from the truck, Carlos is trying to capture Macho, joined by Ito. Both are falling all over themselves in their efforts to get the cock. Meanwhile, Miguel is in the pick-up truck, TRYING TO GET IT STARTED. Carlos and Ito, seeing they've been discovered, abandon their attempt to steal Macho and jump into the pick-up truck. Rafo and Mike after them.

The MOTOR TURNS OVER and the truck, with a lurch, starts down the road. Running at lung-bursting speed -- Mike and Rafo. But they are not fast enough. All that remains -- in a LONG SHOT -- is dust.

MIKE
Shit! We can't even call the cops.

RAFO
Dirty bastards.

Mike is abstractedly looking around.

MIKE
(suddenly, a yowl of pain)
My coat! -- My coat! My money's in
it!

RAFO
--All?

MIKE
All!...

RAFO
What we do?

MIKE
We walk. To the nearest town.

They look down the road. Both ways...nothing for miles.

RAFO
I wonder where is the nearest town?

MIKE
(irritably, his stomach
upset)
With our luck...Texas!..Oh
Christ..!

Starting to undo his trousers, he rushes to the bushes. This restores Rafo's good humor and he starts to laugh.

CUT TO:

LONG SHOT - THE ROAD - SUNSET

They are walking, dead tired. Suddenly Rafo sits down -- practically falls down in exhaustion -- in the middle of the road. Mike is about to say something but instead reaches down and **PICKS RAFO UP IN HIS ARMS**. He carries him to the side of the road and sets him down gently. Then he lies down next to the boy and closes his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT TO DAY

CAMERA on Mike: sleeping the sleep of the dead. Then with a groan, he turns over. As he does, he half opens his eyes and suddenly goes alert. No Rafo.

MIKE
Rafo! Rafo!

Silence. No sign or sound of the boy. His voice has the faintest touch of the anxious parent in it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Rafo! Rafo, where are you? Hey,
Kid!

Suddenly, a car is coming down the road -- broken headlights, one bright and the other almost blind. He rushes out into the road, starts waving.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Hey, stop! Help -- stop!

The car - a busted down Ford -- no fenders -- one door missing -- is going at a helluva clip -- fast! It goes right by him as he shouts at it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Hey -- stop!

A hundred feet ahead, the brakes of the car finally take hold and it SCREECHES to a halt. Mike races over to the doorless side of the car.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE CAR - FEATURING THE DRIVER

Rafo! Grinning. Snotty and happy:

RAFO
Allo Mike -- how you like my new
car?

MIKE
Where'd you get this?

RAFO
I find it!

MIKE
Bullshit!

RAFO
It sit on the road -- by itself --
nobody want it.

MIKE
You mean nobody was sitting in it,
so nobody wants it, right...?

RAFO
Si...We will leave it in the next
town. I only lend from somebody.
In Mexico we are friendly people.
We lend! You lend, I lend,
everybody lends.

Mike starts to laugh.

MIKE
Right kid, right...stealing a car?
Peanuts! I'm a kidnapper...what're
they going to do -- give me twenty
more years -- screw it!

He runs around to the driver's seat.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Kid, I take back everything I said
about you --

Rafo starts to object.

RAFO
Is my car, I drive.

Mike pushes him over, slides behind the wheel.

MIKE
Is not your car, so you don't
drive.

ANGLE - CAR

As Mike kicks it, the car flies down the road in a cloud of
dust.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF JANASCO - MID DAY

The battered vehicle bounces and GROANS up a hill.

INT. FORD - DAY

Mike is tired; he fights to keep his eyes opened.

RAFO
You sleeping?

Mike blinks, now fully awake. He's tired and irritated,
compounded by Macho's constant CROWING from the back.

MIKE
No! I'M driving.

RAFO
Oh...it looks like you sleep --

Suddenly Mike sees something.

MIKE
Hey!

EXT. JANASCO - STREET POV - DAY

A small town. It is dusty and hot, nestled on the side of a mountain surrounded by hills, mesa-topped. Modest stores -- a tobacco shop, a farmacia, a cantina.

Parked in the street is their pick-up truck!

ANGLE

The hulk pulls behind the pick-up truck, stops and in a flash THEY ARE BOTH OUT RUNNING TO THE YELLOW VEHICLE. It has been more abused: Tail lights hanging lose, the rear door missing.

MIKE
(disgusted)
Sons-of-bitches!

RAFO
Is not so bad -- a few scratches,
nothing.

Mike opens the pick-up trucks door, pops the hood release, then crosses to the front of the pick-up truck, muttering to himself.

MIKE
...See if the bastards left the
engine...

As he raises his hood, his eyes take him to:

HIS POV

A National Patrol car parked at the end of the street, two officers exiting the vehicle.

MIKE
(low)
Federales!

Rafo looks over and sees the patrolmen starting down the sidewalk.

Mike looks around, sees a cantina, indicates it to Rafo.

ANGLE

With the policemen coming down the street, Mike and Rafo amble slowly across to the cantina and enter.

INT. CANTINA - DAY

What we would expect in this small town: small, a few booths against the wall, a counter with eight stools.

What we would not expect in this small town is the owner:

MARTA PARTAS DE CARRERO. She is a widow, in her late thirties. She is a strong woman with a very beautiful face.

MARTA
Buenas dias...

Mike nods as Rafo smiles.

RAFO
Buenos dias...

Mike and Rafo go to the furthest booth and sit down as Marta approaches.

MIKE
Dos cafe, por favor...

MARTA
(nods)
Si...

She goes to the counter as Mike eyes the patrolmen outside, keeping his face hidden behind the louvered windows.

ANGLE - COUNTER - MARTA

As she pours the coffee, she can see Mike's caution AND the policemen across the street. She takes the two cups over to the booth and sets them down.

MARTA
(in Spanish)
Anything else?

Rafo jumps in.

RAFO
(in Spanish)
Nothing, thank you.

She nods, goes back to finish her cleaning.

ANGLE - MIKE AND RAFO

Ignoring the coffee, nervously looking out of their window as...

THEIR POV

The patrolmen cross the street coming toward the cantina!

ANGLE

Marta taking it all in. Suddenly she moves to the door just before the patrolmen get there, and flips the sign (in Spanish) from OPEN to SORRY CLOSED. She smiles at the patrolmen, who turn and move down the street.

ANGLE

Mike and Rafo are confused but relieved.

ANGLE

Marta goes from window to window closing the louvers shut. The cantina is suddenly darker.

Marta goes back behind the counter and continues her work.

ANGLE

Mike and Rafo cross and sit on the stools facing Marta.

A beat.

MIKE

Muchas gracias...

MARTA

De nada...

Rafo jumps in quickly. He and Marta have a short, rapid discussion. Then she goes to the grill and starts scrambling some eggs.

MIKE

Well...what did you tell her?

RAFO

She asked me why the Federales look for us, so I say you are my father -
- you were in a hospital for -- how
you say it -- people sick in the
head.

MIKE

What!?

RAFO

I explain you escape from Texas to
come see me because I am your only
son...and that you not really...

(twirls his finger around
his head)

...crazy.

Mike does a double take, still astonished by the boy's
imagination.

RAFO (CONT'D)

(continuing)

And she say, you don't look crazy
to her too....

Mike can't help but laugh. He looks over at Marta, who
barely smiles back at him. He watches her cook for an
instant, then to Rafo.

MIKE

You didn't order anything? We
ain't got a dime.

RAFO

She ask if we are hungry and I say
yes but we have no money now but
you have a big horse ranch in
Utah...that before you go to
hospital you very rich and we will
pay her later --

Mike is stunned again.

MIKE

And she believed you?

Rafo smiles, shakes head "no."

RAFO

No -- she say you don't look rich
to her either -- but she will feed
us anyhow...

Mike looks back at Marta, their eyes lock, holding a beat.
She is beautiful --and he likes her.

QUICK DISSOLVE
TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY - LATER

We can see the pick-up truck, with hood opened and ENGINE RUNNING, across the street from the cantina.

We can also see that the Federales have gone.

ANGLE

Mike climbs out of the cab and crosses to Rafo in front of the vehicle.

MIKE

Well -- at least it runs.

RAFO

Is good, eh?

MIKE

(scratches head)

It'd be better if we had more gas
or some money...

Mike closes the hood, takes a long beat as he looks around.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You better get used to this town,
amigo -- we're stuck here.

OVER SCENE, we hear a voice.

VOICES

You like to buy a horse?

They turn. We are now looking at an elderly man, about 70, PORFIRIO. He has a handsomely craggy Indian face and the horse he refers to he leads by reins. The animal is wild-eyed and wayward, a chestnut stallion, with a bloody gash on its flank. Porfirio speaks in accented English.

PORFIRIO

Eh, amigo! You speak English?

MIKE

(with a slight smile)

A little.

PORFIRIO

This horse for sell. You want buy?

MIKE

(shakes head)

No, gracias.

PORFIRIO
Much cheap...thousand pesos.

Mike looks at the animal, concerned.

MIKE
He's bleeding...

PORFIRIO
Si. When I catch him, he fall.

MIKE
You mean he's...wild?

RAFO
Si. Potro mesteno de Janasco.

MIKE
What's he saying?

RAFO
He say wild horse of Janasco.
Moostank.

MIKE
(excited)
Mustang? -- Wild?

PORFIRIO
Yes -- wild, wild! Si -- Si!

Mike's pulse is going faster. He tries to sound offhand.

MIKE
Ask him where he got them!

Mike's manner alerts Porfirio. Without a further word he leads his horse away. Watching him go, Mike smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. A MESA - LONG SHOT - DAY

A barren and beautiful tableland of nothing. Now against the sky, in the far distance, the truck races over the distant rise.

MIKE (V.O.)
Rafo -- I think our luck is
changing!

RAFO (V.O.)
Que paso?

MIKE (V.O.)
We catch a few mustangs, we have
enough money to be outta here!

RAFO (V.O.)
How we catch wild horses?

MIKE (V.O.)
We find 'em, and I'll show you!

We hear a loud ROOSTER CROW.

QUICK DISSOLVE
TO:

EXT. MESA - DAY - LATER

The truck moving slowly comes TOWARDS US and stops.

Mike and Rafo exit, look around in every direction. Barren.
They are tired, hot and discouraged. Even Macho, who we see
on the dashboard, is quiet.

MIKE
Nothing. Not a Goddamned thing...

RAFO
You think maybe he lie about
mustangs?

Mike shields his eyes from the sun, checking the horizon.

MIKE
If he didn't, they all went north
for the summer.
(beat, seeing something)
What's that?

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE CAR

In the far distance -- in the middle of this nowhere -- is a
small building.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHRINE HOUSE - DAY

A tiny one-roomed house, adobe and mud. The truck pulls up.
Mike Rafo and Macho get out. Mike knocks at the door. No
answer. He opens the door narrowly, then cautiously looks
inside.

INT. SHRINE HOUSE DAY

A roadside chapel. Mike and Rafo enter. The only light in the room is candlelight, a number of tallow lights before the icon of Mary. Rafo smiles, with a little relief and much awe.

RAFO
Is a shrine, Mike...

MIKE
Yes.

RAFO
To Santa Maria.

Mike has taken his coat off. Now he starts to pull off his boots.

RAFO (CONT'D)
What you do?

MIKE
We're going to spend the night here.

RAFO
(angry)
What the hell you think it is? -- A hotel? We cannot sleep in the shrine of Mother Mary!

MIKE
Take your shoes off -- Mother won't mind.

Again Mike's lightness has caught Rafo. He half smiles, goes to the icon of Mary, crosses himself.

RAFO
Perdoneme, Santa Maria.

And he starts to take his shoes off as Mike lies down on cool floor, puts his hat over his face.

MIKE
See you in a little while.

Rafo lies down close to Mike. Macho is in the corner. The door is open as the only means of getting air, and it reveals a rectangle of the purest blue sky. He lies very still, his attention on the candlelight icon. A long beat. Then:

RAFO

Mike...?

Mike mumbles something from under his hat.

RAFO (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Mike -- you believe in God?

A totally unexpected question. Mike tilts hat back and looks at Rafo.

MIKE

Yeah -- sure.

RAFO

You Cat'lic?

MIKE

No.

RAFO

You believe in God and you are not Cat'lic?

MIKE

Yes.

RAFO

Is too bad for you, Mike, even if you believe in God -- you are not Cat'lic, He don't believe in you.

MIKE

He plays favorites, huh?

RAFO

Yes...I not believe the horseshit we're all God's children. Do you?

MIKE

(shrugs)

Well, we're all somebody's children, right?

Rafo nods. A silent moment, then:

RAFO

You got any children?

MIKE

Me? No. Had...

RAFO

Had?

Another long moment.

MIKE

...killed in a car crash.

Rafo is taken aback. Then finally:

RAFO

You want another family again, yes?

MIKE

No...

RAFO

Why -- you no like children?

A simple question, but loaded.

MIKE

No, I don't.

That settles it. It warns children: stay away. The silence is deafening. A long beat, then --

SLOW DISSOLVE
TO:

EXT. THE MESA - DAWN

Against the morning's first light, three wild mustangs, two of them rearing.

INT. THE SHRINE

A WILD NEIGH -- THEN ANOTHER. They see the mustangs outside. In a frenzy of haste, Mike pulls on his boots, Rafo, his shoes.

EXT. THE MESA

The three wild mustangs have been joined by others. Now there is a herd of them, stampeding across the horizon.

EXT. THE HOSUE

Mike and Rafo come rushing out. Mike leads the way to the truck. AS he runs, he calls directions to Rafo.`

MIKE

Get in -- and drive! I'll get on top!

RAFO
(not understanding;
running after him)
What? -- What?

Mike gets into the pick-up truck as Macho CROWS good morning,
STARTS THE ENGINE and jumps out.

MIKE
Come on! Get in!

RAFO
What you going to do?! What?!

MIKE
Get behind the wheel and drive into
the herd. Let's go!

RAFO
(getting excited)
You want me to drive truck?!

MIKE
Right into the mustangs...I'll be
on top -- just be careful, Rafo!

Rafo is in the pick-up truck, adjusting the driver's seat.

RAFO
You be careful, Mike!
(then to Macho)
And you, too!

Mike jumps up on the hood, then onto the top of the pick-up
truck. He lies out flat.

MIKE
Okay. Hit it!

THE ENGINE ROARS.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
All right -- go!

The pick-up truck lurches out, streaking into the middle of
the mesa.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Of the pick-up truck forging into the midst of the herd of
mustangs.

As the vehicle bears in on them, they rear and WHINNY, they stampede, they go crazy and scatter in all directions. Only a few of them remain, one of which is pure white. Mike yells:

MIKE

The white one - follow the white one!

The pick-up truck veers, goes crazily in pursuit of the white mustang. As the vehicle is alongside, Mike stands up on the fast-moving truck. He gets ready. His arms are forward. Ready, ready. And - now!...**He's riding the mustang! Riding, bucking, rearing -- but Mike is riding! The pick-up truck veers away and stops. But the rider is riding! And at last, quietude...the mustang is still...Rafo and Macho come spilling out of the truck, running toward the horse and its rider. The boy is in ecstasy.**

RAFO

Ole! Ole, goddamn it -- ole!

ANOTHER ANGLE - MIKE AND THE MUSTANG

The horse is frothing at the mouth, restless, uncertain...but obedient to Mike's hand. Rafo comes rushing up. He is excited, exhilarated, out of breath.

RAFO

Fantastic-o -- you were fantastic-o!

MIKE

(with a smile)

You were pretty good yourself kid!

Rafo glows, he is speechless. Elated, full of animal spirits that must burst into physical expression, Rafo leaps, jumps, flies back toward the pick-up truck with Macho, gets in. CAMERA MOVES CLOSER on Mike. His eyes follow the boy. His respect for the boy -- and his affection -- are growing.

INT. THE CAB OF THE TRUCK

Rafo looking through the window at Mike and the mustang. Rafo is so thrilled that, without knowing the word will escape from his mouth, calls:

RAFO

Macho!

He has given the accolade to Mike without the man hearing it. Rafo smiles at himself for having said it, then says it again -- in an ecstatic whisper.

Rafo is glad Mike cannot hear him, for he is not entirely ready to be so deeply attached to the man...but he is.

CUT TO:

EXT. A SADDLERY - DAY

On a side street of Janasco, owned by Jimenez, a middle-aged, good natured man who fills the functions of saddler, blacksmith and horse trader. Mike and Rafo are trying to sell the freshly broken horse to Jimenez who expostulates in Spanish to Rafo. The deal is not going well.

RAFO

He say mustangs no good -- killers
they will murder their mother.
Also he buy two from Porfirio, and
is enough.

MIKE

Tell him we'll sell cheap.

Another conversation between Rafo and Jimenez.

RAFO

He say he give five hundred pesos.

MIKE

Five hundred? --That's just a few
bucks! Tell him to go shit in his
hat.

Rafo dutifully turns to Jimenez. He pauses, thinking; turns back to Mike.

RAFO

He speak funny dialect...I don't
know how say shit in hat to him...

MIKE

(quickly)
Ask him for three thousand, and
settle for two.

Another colloquy between Rafo and Jimenez, filled with shouting, cursing, threatening --and sudden smiling. Jimenez gives Rafo some money.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)
How much did you get?

RAFO

Four thousand...

Mike grins. So does Rafo.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANTINA - NIGHT TO DAY

The pick-up truck is parked in front of the cantina. The sign on the door says SORRY, CLOSED, and the slats on the windows all down.

INT. MARTA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT TO DAY

Marta and her four children live in back of the restaurant: there are two bedrooms off the kitchen, and through the open kitchen door we can see the darkened cantina.

ANGLE

The four children are seated with Mike and Rafo as Marta crosses from the stove carrying a huge tray of food and sets it on the table. It looks good and Mike and Rafo are hungry.

MIKE

Man, I can eat a horse --

Rafo points to two steaks on the platter.

RAFO

You think maybe that is mustang?

They both laugh as Marta sits down.

Mike grabs a tortilla before he notices everyone, eyes down, hand clasped.

RAFO (CONT'D)

(continuing)

She say prayers...is thanks for food.

Mike, embarrassed, puts the tortilla down, lowers his eyes as Marta, in Spanish, says grace. It is over in a moment, and suddenly all the children start talking to Rafo in Spanish.

Marta takes one of the steaks, puts it on a plate, hands it to Mike. The other she gives to Rafo. She and the children have rice, beans and some kind of stew. The moment is not lost on Mike, who puts his steak back on the tray, cuts Rafo's in two and takes half. Marta smiles and cuts the steak for the children.

Rafo has been telling the children something in Spanish, acting out driving a car and roping a horse. They are all saying: Ole! Bravo

MIKE
What're you telling them?

RAFO
How you are a great cowboy --Masse
Grande! And I am your driver!
(steers and invisible
wheel)
Vroom -- vroom.

The children all applaud. So does Marta.

CUT TO:

INT. CANTINA - NIGHT - LATER

Everything is quiet, the children are asleep. Marta is putting a pillow and blanket on one of the booths for Mike. Rafo is already covered over and watching from the next one.

Finished, she turns to Mike.

MARTA
Buenos noches...

MIKE
(nods)
Buenos noches...

She starts to leave, he grabs her hands, stopping her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Uhm...pardone --

She stands close to him. He can almost feel her.

MARTA
Si --?

MIKE
Uhm - I just - uhm --I wanted to
thank you for everything you've
done for us...

MARTA
(smiles softly)
De nada...

Mike turns to Rafo lying on the next booth.

MIKE
Make sure she understands what I
just said, o.k...

Rafo sits up, sees Marta.

RAFO
She understands, believe me...

And he lies down again. Mike looks at Marta, squeezes her hand gently. She nods and leaves.

Mike falls onto the booth and pulls the blanket over him, tucks the pillow under his head.

RAFO
I think she like you...

MIKE
Mind your own business...

RAFO
And I think you like her...

Mike smiles. It's true.

DISSOLVE TO:

A SERIES OF SHOTS - ON THE MESA

-- of Mike and Rafo roping horses. This is an exhilarated time for both of them. Mike teaches him to "wall" a horse, to track, to lasso.

The boy is learning how to do everything except ride one of the mustangs -- and he is delirious with happiness; it is, likely, the most joyous time of his life.

The LAST SHOT is a moment when Rafo lassos a beautiful chestnut.

MIKE
Hold him! Run him tight! Hold him!

RAFO
I got him--I got him!

MIKE
Good! Good boy! -- Good

Rafo can't stand the happiness.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SHRINE HOUSE - DAY

The truck drives up. Two mustangs are tethered to a rear bumper. When the truck stops, Rafo goes inside the shrine house. Suddenly Rafo comes running out of the house carrying a pot almost as large as himself.

RAFO
Mike -- look ---look! Carne
manchamanteles!

MIKE (CONT'D)
(smelling it)
Wonder where it came from.

They both know where it came from and they start to laugh.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Well, we can't eat all this by
ourselves!

RAFO
No -- is enough for whole family!

MIKE
That's what I think --

CUT TO:

INT. MARTA'S HOUSE - DAY

Dinner at Marta's house. It's an especially joyous occasion. Five children and two adults, noisily speaking two languages, laughing in both tongues, eating ravenously and making a huge game of it.

CUT TO:

EXT. A WOODS - DUSK

Toward sundown. Marta has been giving Mike a tour of the beautiful countryside. In her happiness and high spirits she is talking as freely as if he understood every word of her Spanish. Suddenly, he stops her excitedly:

MIKE
Wait a minute! Stop! I don't get a
word you're saying! Not one! And
you want to know something? --It
doesn't matter! I don't understand
anything and I understand
everything! Ain't that strange,
Marta! I understand everything!

He kisses her, then again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS - JANASCO - DAY

The pick-up truck is coming into town from the mesa slowly, a beautiful sable mustang tied behind it.

RAFO (V.O.)
Her husband die from -- uh -- T.B.
two years ago -- he leave her the
cantina -- she says she do good
business...but I don't think so.

MIKE (V.O.)
You learned all this while she was
cooking eggs --?

RAFO (V.O.)
(laughing)
Huevos, Mike -- Huevos Rancheros.

EXT. THE SADDLERY - DAY

The sable mustang tied up to the back of the truck. Nearby, an angry altercation starts --in Spanish --between Rafo, Porfirio with two young vaqueros.

MIKE
Rafo, stop it! What the hell's the
problem?!

RAFO
He buy no more of our horses!

MIKE
He won't -- why not?

RAFO
The hell with him; the hell with
him!

Mike turns to Porfirio.

MIKE
Why not?

Porfirio strikes a match and lights his small cigar.

PORFIRIO
I tell you -- I buy seis.
(holds up; six fingers)
(MORE)

PORFIRIO (cont'd)
Is enough...you got seis horses
already...

MIKE
Too many!? Christ, there's a whole
herd out there --!

PORFIRIO
Not for long...every winter is
less. They have nothing to eat.
Or they will eat the black cactus
and die. Soon they will be all
gone.

MIKE
We'll all be gone one day, amigo.

PORFIRIO
You have taken enough -- you should
go -- now.

**He nods to the vacques- one opens the door of Mike's truck
and makes a grab for Rafo, who SCREAMS and starts punching;
Mike's furious, in a rage- attacking now a blur of arms,
fists, elbows. Then just as quickly, it is over; both
vacqueros bloody heaps on the dusty street.**

MIKE
(to Porfirio)
You stick to your own business,
I'll stick to mine!

PORFIRIO
(coldly)
We do not like strangers to take
our horses -- or our women.

**Mike grabs Porfirio by the collar. The old man looks at him
unafraid. Mike lets go, then climbs in the truck with Rafo.**

INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

Mike, stone-faced, STARTS the ENGINE.

RAFO
That bastard! Why you not hit him?

MIKE
What good would it do? It's a
small town...They'll be calling her
the local whore if we hang around.

The truth of it strikes home to Rafo.

RAFO
What we do?

Mike gets out of the pick-up truck.

MIKE
Let me think about it... -- see you
back at Marta's, okay?

He walks towards a small bar across from the saddlery as Rafo slides over and starts up the pick-up truck.

INT. BAR - NIGHT (LATER)

The bar is almost deserted. Mike sits at a small table listening to some bad Mexican ROCK 'N ROLL playing on the JUKEBOX. By the count of the glasses on the table, he is into his fourth tequila.

ANGLE - DOOR

As Rafo darts in and his eyes adjust to the dark.

RAFO
Mike! Mike!

Mike looks at him bleary-eyed.

RAFO
Mike --listen important Aurelio --
he was here with a friend! They
come to Marta's --

That gets Mike's attention.

MIKE
Huh?!

RAFO
Si! She say he scare her with a
knife if she not tell the truth!

MIKE
What happened?

RAFO
She tell him we stay in Locallo --
thirty kilometers away -- she say
we leave yesterday from Locallo to
Texas!

Mike stands up.

MIKE

C'mon...

He drops some pesos on the table.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

It's time to go...

EXT. MARTA'S CANTINA - DAY

The pick-up truck is parked in front. The sign says (in Spanish) SORRY, CLOSED.

INT. CANTINA - DAY

Mike sits in the farthest booth with Marta. Rafo alone on a far counter stool. HOLD For a long moment as we start to hear Mike's VOICE.

ANGLE - BOOTH

Marta's eyes are moist, she holds back the tears.

MIKE

You've been real great to Rafo 'n me-- I --I wish things could a worked out different -- better, you know what I mean?

Marta just nods.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

I know you don't comprende half of what I'm saying -- but I want you to do me a real favor, okay? I'm going to get up and walk out of here. Don't move, and don't say anything. All right?

She nods. He looks at her for the last time.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

Goodbye, Marta...

He quickly gets up, walks across and out of the cantina.

ANGLE

Rafo runs over to Marta, who stands up and hugs the boy.
(The following in Spanish)

MARTA
(sobbing)
Rafo!

RAFO
He is a good man, Marta --I know he
likes you...

MARTA
I know...Rafo, I know --take care
of him - he needs you.

RAFO
I will.

MARTA
You are a good boy, Rafo...I love
you - and I will miss both of
you...

Rafo's face is tearstained as she gives him a final hug. The
boy turns and runs out.

EXT. CANTINA - DAY

Mike sits in the pick-up truck, ENGINE IDLING. Rafo climbs
in and the pick-up truck takes off.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SHRINE HOUSE - DAY

The pick-up truck parked outside the shrine. Mike is loading
it for their departure from Janasco and trying to dull the
pain of departure by drinking the remains of a tequila
bottle. In a gesture of anger he smashes it, then kicks sand
over the splinters of glass. He is not drunk, but almost.
He checks the back of the truck, then calls to Rafo who is
inside the shrine house.

MIKE
We got everything?

No answer. Mike goes indoors.

INT. THE SHRINE HOUSE

It is, as usual, dark in here, save for the candles by the
icon. Mike enters and sees Rafo has put in front of the icon
a flower, a piece of cactus and a freshly lighted candle. He
turns to Mike and points to the icon.

RAFO
You want to...tell her something?

MIKE

No, I don't think so, kid.

RAFO

Then I tell her for both of us.

(to the icon)

We thank you for everything. For a place to sleep...and the horses. Especially the horses. Here is a candle and piece of cactus which is good for the stomach. And a peso which is good for the pocket. And a flower which is good for...the heart.

(a moment)

I ask you one more favor.

(indicating Mike)

He is not a Cat'lic. But don't mistake about him. He is a good man. So -- please -- you tell Your friend to be good to -- my friend.

He walks away from the icon and goes out. Mike remains absolutely still. **He would like to be more sober than he is, or drunker. He puts a hundred pesos next to the candle.**

EXT. THE MESA - LONG SHOT

Alone on the tableland, Rafo is a small figure against the sky. Mike doesn't intrude on Rafo's privacy, for the boy is getting his last view of the place he loves. At last Mike joins Rafo. They are silent. Then, quietly:

RAFO

I don't want to leave Janasco, Mike.

MIKE

I know.

RAFO

(uneven)

What happen if..I stay here, Mike?

MIKE

What about your father?

RAFO

(with difficulty)

I would like to go to him -- yes.

(inarticulate)

(MORE)

RAFO (cont'd)
But up there -- I do not know what
it is -- here in Janasco...I am
afraid of nothing. I be okay in
this town.

Mike rubs his head as though to clear it of the tequila.
Then quietly:

MIKE
Forget it, kid.

RAFO
Why, Mike -- why?

Unable to pull his fuddled wits together, Mike snatches at a
random straw:

MIKE
Because it's a poor town and you
live in a fancy house with maids in
Mexico City!

RAFO
This the only place I ever happy --
the first place I ever have a home!
Mike -- please!

MIKE
(getting angry)
I said forget it!

RAFO
Why can't we stay? -- Why? What's
the matter with you?! Why can't
you stay here too and be my
friend?!

MIKE
Me stay here?! And what, wait for
the federales to come back?

RAFO
(shakes head)
No, once they go, they no come back
-- is the best place to be!

MIKE
And then what do I do?! -- Sit
around and wait for the mustangs to
run out?!

RAFO
We find something else!

MIKE

Where!? In a dead-end town where I
don't belong and can't speak a
Goddamned word of the language!?

RAFO

(desperate now, and
weeping)

You will be happy here, Mike!
Please stay! We will both be
happy! Please stay...please!

MIKE

Stop it! Goddamn it, stop it!

Mike's anger helps pull Rafo together. The boy, too, is
angry now, through the heartache.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

I'm taking you to your father!

RAFO

(shakes)

But I want to be with you, Mike...

MIKE

I'm sorry, kid, it can't work out
that way...

RAFO

Why not? Because you don't like
children? Is a big lie, Mike! A
big lie!

MIKE

Okay, kid, so I like you -- so
what?! It still doesn't change
anything. Never count on anybody
just because they like you --

The reckless self-exposure -- of each of them -- is more than
they can stand. They quietly turn away from each other.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CAB OF THE TRUCK - DAY

Mike and Rafo are driving north, their trip resumed. They
are silent with each other now. The quietude is
desolate...Abruptly, Mike looks in the rearview mirror. Then
he quickly turns to look through the back of the truck where
the door is missing.

HIS POV - LONG SHOT - THE ROADWAY

Seen through the rear door. We get a view of a car, but at this distance we cannot distinguish it.

BACK TO SCENE

Rafo sees Mike's glance. He, too, looks through the rear door. They tense. The truck lurches forward as Mike pushes the accelerator to overdrive.

CUT TO:

EXT. A ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

Not yet sundown. The road is tougher, twisting upward in the hills. It is the middle of a wind storm and the truck is beginning to slow, leaving a long stream of dust behind it.

INT. THE CAB OF THE TRUCK

Sometimes **the sand smashes** against the windshield sounding like HAIL. Mike is having a tough time maneuvering the vehicle at the speed.

MIKE

We're thirty kilometers to the border...

RAFO

How I get across?

MIKE

You'll walk down into a ravine, and when you come up, you'll be in Texas. It's easy.

RAFO

No, I think it's trouble.

He has been looking back and what he is now referring to is a PATROL CAR, gaining on them. Now his foot again on the accelerator, Mike is pushing the pick-up truck as much as it'll take.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - SERIES OF SHOTS - THE CHASE

A dangerous chase of two cars on a precipitous mountainside wracked by wind and dust. We get SHOTS of the road, the vehicles in pursuit, Mike and Rafo in silent tension -- and SHOTS of the national patrol SERGEANT and his DRIVER. Now finally, the truck comes to a fork. There is no way of deciding which road to take. Then the truck VEERS TO THE RIGHT.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE FORK IN THE ROAD

The dust from the truck's tail takes over as the patrol car comes INTO THE SHOT and stops at a battered dusty sign: (in Spanish) "CLOSED. ROAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION." The Sergeant laughs, so does his driver. They are going to sit here...and wait.

EXT. THE RIGHT ROAD

The truck, bouncing across deep ruts, stops -- the road is blocked by a landslide. The boulders that obstruct the roadway are impassable.

INT. THE CAB OF THE TRUCK

MIKE

Well, I finally made it...the end
of the road...

(to prepare Rafo)

Get ready for the cops, kid.

RAFO

(with some excitement)

But they are not coming!

MIKE

(turning quickly)

What?

RAFO

No! Look, Mike -- look!

MIKE

They must have taken the other
road!

Excited, he jumps out of the cab. Rafo, too.

EXT. HILLSIDE

Mike and Rafo rush to the rear of the truck. Squinting against the wind, they look back in the direction from which they came. They see nothing. **Suddenly, from the side of the road, they hear a terrible SOUND -- guttural and ugly.**

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE CAR

A pack of COYOTES scurrying in an undergrowth of mesquite, ominous, their throats giving forth a hoarse and repulsive sound, like a VOMITING NOISE.

BACK TO MIKE AND RAFO

Reflexively, Rafo is frightened by the coyotes.

RAFO
Coyotes.

MIKE
They won't bother us. Come on --
get in.

As they start back toward the truck, Rafo looks in through the back door.

RAFO
Macho! Where's Macho?!

Mike races up front, thinking to find the rooster there. He tears open the door. The instant he slams the door closed again, Rafo sees Macho.

EXT. THE GROUND

Macho, having heard Rafo and Mike get out of the truck, has followed them. He is now being buffeted by wind, trying to walk, trying to fly.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FEATURING MIKE AND RAFO

Rafo starts to run towards the rooster.

Suddenly, the SOUND OF THE COYOTES is louder. Then, terrifying, it happens: A coyote curves across the road and snatches Macho by its neck, never breaking its stride as it speeds away. Rafo lets out a scream!

RAFO
No! Macho NO -- NO!!!...Macho!

Berserk, the boy runs in the direction of the coyotes' trail. Shrieking Macho's name, yelling "no! NO!" The boy runs, falls, runs, a demented child screaming "No!" Meanwhile Mike runs after him.

MIKE
Rafo! Come back! Rafo --- Rafo!

Distraught, Rafo runs wildly after a phantom, the coyote has vanished down a far gulley. But he cannot see, tears fill his eyes. Finally, he trips over a rock and his head smashes into a boulder.

Mike runs, screaming.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 (continuing)
 Rafo!

He reaches the unconscious form, leans down and takes Rafo into his arms. And now for the first time, all controls give way and Mike gives vent to his love of the boy -- and his despair.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 (continuing)
 No! No, Rafo! Rafo!

INT. THE REAR OF THE TRUCK - NIGHT TO DAY

The wind has stopped. The single remaining back door of the truck is open. Rafo is asleep on the floor of the truck, breathing regularly. Mike gets in, his back against the side of the truck, keeping vigil over the boy. But he is forcing himself to stay awake. He nods, pulls himself alert, nods again. At last, still sitting up, he falls asleep.

CLOSE SHOT - MIKE

Still asleep in the seated position, his head falls to one side and half-awakens him. In this semi-stuporous state, he becomes subliminally aware of something. Fully awake, he looks:

ANOTHER ANGLE - TO INCLUDE RAFO

The boy is sitting up, with his back against the other side of the truck. Mike is amazed at the sight.

MIKE
 You OK?

RAFO
 (Nods)
 I couldn't sleep.

MIKE
 (agog with relief)
 How long have you been up? -- Do you hurt anywhere?

RAFO
 My head hurts.

MIKE
 (quickly)
 It's just bruised. It'll go away when you're able to walk around.

RAFO

I walk.

MIKE

What?

RAFO

While you sleep, I take a piss.

MIKE

Yeah -- you're okay!

Rafo's hand touches something in the dark. He holds it up. It is one of Macho's white feathers. He looks at it. Silently, the boy lies down. So does Mike. **Suddenly the shock! A Light. A Powerful flashlight. Holding it -- SERGEANT RIBAS -- of the national patrol. He smiles a little. Behind him, LUIS, the corporal, with gun drawn. Ribas issues a command in Spanish. Mike is stunned.**

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

What?

RIBAS

Ah, Step out, please. Him also.

Mike and Rafo clamber out of the truck.

EXT. THE HILLSIDE

As Mike and Rafo get out, Ribas gestures for the corporal to search Mike and Rafo. Reholstering his gun, Luis goes quickly through Mike's clothes, then Rafo's. Discovering nothing, the corporal pulls out his own flashlight, jumps into the rear of the truck. WE see his light moving about and hear him THROWING THINGS AROUND. The corporal comes out and hurries up front. The light goes on in the cab and we hear him OPENING THE GLOVE COMPARTMENT, SEARCHING under the seat. He comes out of the cab and, lighted flashlight in hand, opens the hood. Mike addresses the sergeant:

MIKE

What are you searching for?

RIBAS

Stand against the truck, please.

The corporal opens the cab door and pulls out the upholstered seat. Throwing the seat on the ground, he starts to slash it with his pocket knife.

MIKE
Hey! What's he doing? What the
hell are you looking for?

The sergeant does not direct his attention to Mike but to Rafo. He says something to the boy -- and the only words Mike can distinguish are the words "opiato, narcotico." An outburst from Mike:

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Narcotics?! That what you're
looking for -- narcotics?

At this point, Luis appears and, shrugging, says one word:

LUIS
Nada.

Silence. Ribas looks Mike and Rafo over again. He is bewildered.

RIBAS
Where you have them?

MIKE
What? We don't have any narcotics!

RIBAS
Mescalina...heroína...

MIKE
Nothing! Did you find anything?

RIBAS
...this boy is with you all the
day?

MIKE
Yes -- all day.

RIBAS
You did not have another man in the
truck?

MIKE
No -- nobody.

RIBAS
When did you leave Veracruz?

MIKE
I've never been to Veracruz in my
life!

The sergeant mutters to Luis, who goes to put the seat back in the cab. Ribas turns a sheepish smile to Mike.

RIBAS
Perhaps we make a mistake.

MIKE
(pointing to the ripped
upholstery)
That's a big mistake!

RIBAS
Yes. Very sorry. Personeme.
Ess-cuse.

He gestures for the corporal to come away, when suddenly...the sergeant stops. He turns back once more.

RIBAS (CONT'D)
(continuing)
I do not understand. If you do not
have narcotics, what do you have?

MIKE
What do you mean?

RIBAS
If you do nothing bad, why you run
away?

MIKE
We weren't running anywhere!

RIBAS
Oh, yes. You run, we follow -- you
run, we follow. Why? From what
crime do you run?

Rafo speaks up angrily in Spanish. The sergeant exchanges a glance with Luis. Now, his suspicions fully aroused, he turns to Mike.

RIBAS (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Let me see your tourist card,
please.

Mike goes through the glove compartment, finally finds the card and hands it over.

RIBAS (CONT'D)
(continuing)
The boy has a pass-a-port--an
identification -- something?

Again Rafo talks to him in Spanish. Again the sergeant is still. Slowly to Mike:

RIBAS (CONT'D)
(continuing)
The boy say his father will meet
him with all his papers -- at the
border...I correct?

An instant. The boy has committed a blunder. He and Mike exchange a glance that is filled with confusion. At last Mike turns to Ribas.

MIKE
...yes.

RIBAS
Then perhaps is good if we call his
father to the telephone. Or his
mother. Or somebody. We will make
an assurance, yes?

He smiles to show how civil he is.

INT. LOBBY - ROADSIDE INN -- NIGHT TO DAY

It is two hours later and a number of phone calls have been made. The NIGHT CLERK is only half awake behind the front desk. The sergeant is on the telephone.

Luis sits in a hard chair, his gun drawn, eyes on Rafo and Mike. The sergeant, on the phone, is getting exasperated with Howard.

RIBAS
Mr. Polk, I did not call you to
make a quarrel with you. I call
only for information. What do you
want to do about your son?
(a moment)
That is all I want to know. Good
night, Mr. Polk.

He hangs up and turns toward the others. The TELEPHONE RINGS. The Night Clerk reaches for it but the sergeant gets there first. He speaks in Spanish. He doesn't say much but listens. He hangs up. Again, he turns to the others.

RIBAS (CONT'D)
(continuing)
I will say in English, so you will
both understand...I have called
many people. The National Police.
Your mother. And your father.
(MORE)

RIBAS (CONT'D)

(an instant; to Rafo)

First, the police. They look for you in the District Federal. To arrest you. For the truancy. Also, petty theft. And resisting the arrest.

(a moment)

Now. Your mother. She say she do not know how to defend you. She say maybe you must learn that the law is the law.

(another pause)

About your father--I do not know what to tell you. He say he does not know anything about this.

RAFO

(unsteadily)

But he...sent for me.

RIBAS

He say no.

RAFO

But he did! Ask him!

He points to Mike. Silence. Mike doesn't say a word. Rafo turns away.

RIBAS

(to Mike)

He is under arrest -- and so are you. For kidnapping. We will take you both back to the Districto Federal in the morning. Now you go with him.

He gestures them to go upstairs with Luis. Rafo goes first, then Mike, then the corporal.

INT. THE INN CORRIDOR

They come to the top of the stairs, Luis opens the bedroom door. They enter. The corporal sits on a bench near the door, guarding.

INT. THE BEDROOM

A dreary, twin-bedded room with a naked light bulb hanging from the middle of the ceiling. Rafo and Mike enter. Mike goes to the window and looks out. Rafo quietly sits on the edge of the nearest bed. The silence is a palpable weight. Finally:

RAFO
...You tell me lies, yes?

MIKE
...Yes.

RAFO
My father did not want me?

MIKE
...Not in the way I told it...no.

RAFO
What did he want, Mike?
(silence)

MIKE
(finally)
Money...from your mother.

RAFO
Is a joke. I thought she was
sending the police...for me.
Because she wants me.
(laughs)
A big joke. And a big lie.
(a moment, then)
And my father -- he has two red
sports cars?

MIKE
(shakes his head no)
A Buick.

RAFO
Another lie.

He starts to laugh but stops himself for fear he will cry.

RAFO (CONT'D)
(continuing)
And you?...you come to kidnap me?

MIKE
(painfully)
It started that way, yes.

RAFO
To bring me to someone who pays you
money?

MIKE
(nods)
Only at the beginning...

RAFO
(an outburst)
You are a pimp!

MIKE
(gritting his teeth)
I had to...I was gonna lose
something that was important to
me...

RAFO
You lost something important when
you take the job. You are a Pimp,
Gringo...a Pimp!

Mike doesn't have any answers, and would just as soon cut it off.

MIKE
(nods)
Yeah, I guess it does look that
way...

RAFO
(shakes)
No its...what it is...I thought --
when I saw you-- riding the wild
horses -- I thought you were a
great man! Macho, Macho! And I
thought you were my friend! But
you are not Macho and you are not
my friend! You are a weak man --
and you are nothing to me...you are
nothing, you are nothing, you are
nothing.

Repeating and repeating that Mike is nothing, the boy's tears streaming down his face, hits him with all his strength and Mike is taking it. Unlike their first fight together, Mike does not fight back, just stands there and suffers it. He wraps his massive arms around the boy, stopping Rafo completely. A long moment. Mike turns away and falls onto the bed burying his face in the pillow.

SLOW DISSOLVE
TO:

INT. THE BEDROOM - DAWN

The first rays of sunrise come through the window. Mike is lying on one bed and Rafo on the other. Neither is asleep. Abruptly Mike, whose eyes have been on the ceiling, goes on the alert at what he sees there.

ANOTHER ANGLE - FEATURING THE CEILING

Between the rafters there is a square of slatting on the ceiling. Not well fitted, it is bordered by a perimeter of light -- the early morning sunlight.

INT. THE BEDROOM

Mike sits up, then moves under the slatting square and looks up to it. Rafo pays no attention to him.

MIKE

Rafo.

No answer.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

Rafo?

Again, no answer. Mike moves around to Rafo's bed, sees the boy with eyes wide, staring blankly ahead.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

I'm leaving Rafo. I'm not going to prison. We're a coupla miles from the border...I think I can make it across...

(then quietly)

You want to come with me?

Rafo just stares, no answer.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

We can go to Utah, start over again, with no lies. Promise.

Rafo sits up, looks at Mike.

RAFO

I do not want to be with you, Mike...ever.

Mike is visibly hurt but understands, nods.

MIKE

You'll go back home to Mexico City?

RAFO

(shakes his head, no)

That is not home...

Another beat, finally.

MIKE
Where?...To Janasco?

Rafo nods.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
By yourself?

The boy nods again. Then.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Okay. I'll help you.

RAFO
(cautious)
How?

Mike points to the slatting square on the ceiling.

MIKE
If we can get up on the roof, I can
get across and make it to the pick-
up truck...

He silently lifts the small bureau from against the wall and quietly sets it down directly under the slatting square.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
When I pull outta here, I'll kick
up enough dirt 'n sand it'll look
like a twister hit town. They'll
figure you're with me. You stay on
the roof -- and don't move 'til
they've all gone...then you're on
your own.

For the first time, Rafo, this boy-man, looks frightened.

RAFO
You think this will work?

MIKE
I dunno. Scared?

Rafo, embarrassed, half smiles, nods.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(continuing)
Yeah, me too.
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

(beat)

C'mon.

Mike jumps up onto the bureau and quietly works at a turn-buckle, not knowing what he will find.

The turn-buckle gives. The slatting square on hinges, hangs loose and reveals a glass skylight. Gently Mike pushes and it gives. Mike cautiously pushes it back. It SQUEAKS and stops. Another push quicker, harder --and it's down. He takes one look at Rafo, nods and hoists himself up through the skylight opening. He's through. Now, reaching his arms down he beckons for Rafo.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing; whispering)

Hand me that pillow...

Rafo is about to ask why, but Mike puts his finger over his lips. Rafo grabs the pillow, jumps up on the bureau, passes it up to Mike. **Now, hands free, Mike reaches down for Rafo, but he's too short...can't make it. Mike reaches both arms down, his entire torso, grabs both arms of the boy and bracing his feet against the roof boards, pulls. Rafo, whose hands are free, grabs hold of the framework of the skylight. Now he pulls himself up and he too is through.**

EXT. ROOF - DAWN

They crouch low on the roof, catching their breath as they look down at the parking lot.

THEIR POV - LONG SHOT

The truck is parked between two patrol cars. Several other vehicles, one with a horse trailer, block any view from the Inn. Suddenly a Mercedes, one we have seen before, barrels into the lot and SCREECHES to a dusty halt. The driver exits.

BACK TO SCENE

RAFO

(frightened)

Aurelio!

MIKE

Yeah.

A beat as Mike studies the situation.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

Look, when I leave, I'm going down that dirt road til they're all behind me, then I'll four wheel it across that open piece a desert and try to catch the highway...it'll give you time to get out of here.

RAFO

Maybe you get stuck in the sand?

Which is a real possibility, but Mike doesn't show it.

MIKE

With that modified one hundred percent blue blooded Mexican tank? No way.

Rafo smiles, recalling their previous adventure.

RAFO

It is a very special pick-up truck.

A beat. Mike pulls out a wad of bills, palms them into Rafo's hand.

MIKE

When you get out of town, stay on the back roads 'till you can get a bus...just don't go stealing any cars, got it?

Rafo looks at the money, then at Mike.

RAFO

You give me all your money?

MIKE

(smiles)

I won't be stopping for lunch...

He takes the hat from Rafo's head.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

Gimme this.

RAFO

Why?

Mike sits it on top of the pillow.

MIKE

This goes on the top of the
passenger seat - looks just like
you, huh?

Rafo grins, nods. An awkward moment. Words are hard to come by.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(continuing)

Don't do anything crazy, kid...and
don't get lost...

Rafo nods. Holding back the tears. Finally:

RAFO

You too, Gringo.

MIKE

(grins)

Goodbye, Rafo...

RAFO

'Bye, Mike.

A pause. So much to be said...and no way to say it. Mike carrying the pillow and Rafo's hat, scurries low and crosses the roof. Rafo lies flat on his stomach, in a valley of the roof.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE ROOF

Mike crosses to the eave that overhangs the parking lot. The distance to the street is too high to jump. He looks to the left and sees a lean-to, part of the structure. He runs, jumps down on it, runs along the edge, reaches the lowest eave and jumps to the ground.

EXT. THE STREET - DAWN

Mike is in an alcove between the main building and the lean-to. Now he takes the chance -- and springs, crouches, moving swiftly for the pick-up truck. He makes it, gets in.

INT. THE CAB OF THE TRUCK

He puts the pillow on the passenger's seat, tops it with a hat. Then he reaches to the steering column where the key should be. It isn't there. He roots in his pockets. No key. Of course, the police have taken it. Panic. He opens the glove compartment door, pulls out pliers and screwdriver. He jumps out of the truck.

EXT. THE PICK-UP TRUCK - DAWN

Rushing to the front, he yanks open the hood. With the pliers he smashes at something plastic. We hear it CRACK. He is working at wires with the pliers and screwdriver. We hear a WHIRR. Then ANOTHER. Now it is CONTINUOUS. He slams the hood shut, rushes back into the cab. He puts his foot on the gas.

The Inn door bursts open as Mike guns the truck kicking up a huge roostertail of dirt, dust and stones as he ROARS out of the parking lot and heads south down the old highway.

Ribas and Luis run for their patrol car, followed by two other policemen who bail into the other. Aurelio rushes out, shouting.

AURELIO
Rafo! Rafo!

Aurelio jumps into the Mercedes, and follows the two patrol cars, SIRENS BLARING, down the road in hot pursuit of the pick-up truck.

HIGH ANGLE - UTILITY ROAD

Mike is half mile ahead of the screaming procession as they race TOWARD CAMERA. Off to the left, in the distance, we can see a parallel road: the modern north/south freeway that leads to the border.

EXT. INN - THE ROOF

Rafo cautiously looks down at the suddenly quiet parking lot. Feeling this is his chance, he runs along the roof towards the lean-to, jumps down.

ANOTHER ANGLE - PARKING LOT

As Rafo crouches behind one of the cars. Nobody around. He moves quickly across towards the street past **a parked Cadillac Escalade towing a horse trailer. A white MARE'S WHINNEY catches his attention and he studies it for a beat.**

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

The pick-up truck races TOWARDS CAMERA, the two police cars and the Mercedes have closed the distance uncomfortably.

Suddenly, Mike hangs a hard right, almost rolling the pick-up truck and churns across the barren bouldered sand flat towards the distant freeway.

The first patrol car turns abruptly and tries following the pick-up truck only to have its wheels become instantly buried in the sand. The two Federales bolt out disgustedly and start FIRING after the pick-up truck.

ANOTHER ANGLE - DIRT ROAD

Ribas, Luis and Aurelio watch from the road as the pick-up truck is halfway to the highway. Suddenly realizing Mike's plan, they run for their vehicles.

RIBAS
(screaming in Spanish)
He is going to the highway! To go
north!

The patrol car and the Mercedes U-turn and race north to the dirt road hoping to get to the crossover onto the freeway before Mike can pass by them.

ANOTHER ANGLE - PICK-UP TRUCK

Mike has made it to the freeway -- hangs right and speeds north towards the border leaving behind a trail of sand, dust and tumbleweeds.

ANGLE - PATROL CAR AND MERCEDES

As they make it to the crossover road, SKIDDING, ROARING AND SCREECHING west towards the freeway.

INTERCUT VARIOUS ANGLES

The pick-up truck racing north, Mike seeing the police car and the Mercedes racing across the road towards the freeway. He pushes the pedal as hard as he can.

The police car and Mercedes turn onto the northbound just as the pick-up truck blurs by them.

Now the chase is brief as a sign flashes by: Etad Unitas - 2 km.

As the patrol car follows the pick-up truck around a tight curve, Ribas hangs out of the window and starts SHOOTING: One shot -- two -- three. The last catches Mike's shoulder. The next BLOWS THE REAR TIRE, sending the pick-up truck weaving out of control, its rear end fishtailing dangerously. Finally, it veers off the highway, CRASHING through the low steel barrier into a ravine.

ANGLE - RAVINE - DAY

The pick-up truck hurtles down the long but shallow ravine into the brush at the edge of a scrubby woodland and comes to a SMASHING HALT.

A beat. We can see each of the front doors open. First the right door where Rafo was presumed to be, then the left door as Mike painfully climbs out. Blood stains the left shoulder of his shirt, his breathing forced.

ANGLE - HIGHWAY

As the patrol car and the Mercedes smoke to a stop, the policeman and Aurelio race over to the sheared retainer and look down the ravine.

THEIR POV - LONG SHOT

Mike staggering as quickly as he can through some shallow scrub trying to make it into the woodland.

PREVIOUS ANGLE - THE CAR

RIBAS
(shouting)
Halto! Halto!

And suddenly he and Luis have their guns out and are FIRING.

ANGLE - MIKE

Darting side to side, the BULLETS kicking up geysers of sand too dangerously close. Finally he makes it into the woodland, falling forward, finally protected by the high, dense bushes/trees.

ANGLE - HIGHWAY

Ribas and Luis have stopped firing, and they holster their guns. (The following exchange in Spanish).

AURELIO
(enraged)
Why do you stop shooting?

RIBAS
They are now on the American side...

AURELIO
(screaming)
How do you know --? There are no fences...nobody is around.

RIBAS
 (shakes head)
 They are out of our
 jurisdiction...I will call the
 border patrol in El Paso..they will
 watch for them...

And with that Ribas walks back to the patrol car and pulls out the hand mike.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE CAR

Luis shrugs at Aurelio, goes to join Ribas at the car.

Aurelio looks back at the ravine and in a flash is through the barrier and going down the slope.

ANGLE

Ribas on mike as Luis joins him.

RIBAS
 (now in English)
 No -- they are on your side --the
 man and the boy. The boy is
 Mexican...I think the man - he is
 wounded -
 (exasperated)
 No -- not here -- on your side - in
 Texas. Si -- yes! De nada, de
 nada.

He opens the car door, gets in as he hangs up the mike.

Luis quickly enters from the other side and notices Aurelio is gone.

LUIS
 (in Spanish)
 He went after them...what should we
 do?

Ribas turns on the ignition, the CAR ROARS TO LIFE.

RIBAS
 (in Spanish)
 Nothing...Good riddance.

ANGLE - PATROL CAR

ROARING OUT OF SHOT...It is suddenly quiet. Deadly quiet.

ANGLE - AURELIO

Knife drawn, moving cautiously through the dense bushes.
Suddenly.

MIKE (O.S.)
Looking for someone?

Aurelio spins to see Mike step out from behind a tree.

AURELIO
Rafo...where is he?!

MIKE
(indicating knife)
You gonna talk him into going back
"home" with you?

AURELIO
(rage building)
Where is he?! Where is the little
bastard?

MIKE
He's on the other side of the
hill... Over the border. Gone.

AURELIO
You're a God damned liar,
Gringo...!

MIKE
(John Wayne)
Smile when you say that, pardner.

And Aurelio explodes toward Mike, knife flashing in the sunlight. Mike sidesteps his lunge, trips HIM and is on top of him.

Summoning his strength, Mike forces the knife from Aurelio's hand and the remaining fight is short and brutal as Mike totally pounds Aurelio into unconsciousness. But it has taken its toll on him also.

He tries to stand slowly, but he is dizzy and steadies himself against a tree. His wound is now bleeding profusely and he is short of breath.

Finally he moves away from the tree and starts across the ravine, but collapses onto the dusty gorge floor. He tries to get up, but cannot. He lies burning under the brutal sun, sensing the reality that he is not going to make it. The SOUND OF HIS HEART THROBS in his head LOUDER AND LOUDER...or is it?

Mike raises his head and looks at the long gorge floor. A moment. His eyes squint. Harder and harder. **What the hell is it?**

HIS POV - LONG SHOT

A swirl of dust, growing larger and larger, coming towards him. Through the heat waves and the cloud we can finally see: in the distance, at full gallop, a horse and rider!

ANGLE - MIKE

He tries pulling himself up, cannot, rests on his arms. Who is it? The Border Patrol? The Federales? Who? His eyes strain against the sun.

ANGLE - POV

Rafo flying across the sand on the white mare. We see and hear him.

RAFO
Mike! Mike!

ANGLE - MIKE AND RAFO

The sight of the boy, the shock of it, the implausibility of it, the joy and excitement of it -- infuse Mike with a final surge of strength, and he is up and stumbling towards the rapidly approaching Rafo.

MIKE
Rafo! God damned! Rafo!

ANGLE

As they move towards each other.

Closer, closer and finally Rafo reins in the galloping steed. Mike grabs onto the horse's neck and looks up at Rafo, trying to catch his breath, shaking his head.

ANGLE - CLOSE-UP - RAFO

Looking down at Mike, a huge grin makes his teeth seem iridescently white against his sunburned face. Finally:

RAFO
'Allo mister...how you like my new horse?

MIKE
Where the hell'd you get it?!

RAFO
I find it on the road, all alone by
itself. I think someone lose it.

MIKE
Yeah...Lucky you came along to save
it.

RAFO
I tell you what Mike...I make you a
deal...come to Janesco with me
(indicating in back of
him)
And I give you half of this
beautiful horse. What you say?
Deal?

A huge grin, Mike's eyes are moist.

MIKE
So, now I'm a Horse thief too!? So
what are they going to do? Give me
another twenty years?

RAFO
Deal?

He stands up.

MIKE
O.K.! Deal.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE CAR

Mike moves to the rear of the horse, Rafo reaches down and
helps him up, behind him.

**Securely on, Mike puts his arms around Rafo's shoulders. THE
HORSE MOVES AWAY, GETTING SMALLER IN THE DISTANCE AS THE HUGE
FIREBALL SUN SETS IN THE HORIZON.**

FADE OUT.

THE END