

**EL DIABLO**

**An Original Screenplay**

**by**

**Tommy Lee Wallace,**

**John Carpenter**

**and**

**Bill Phillips**

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**SHOOTING DRAFT**

## 1 INT. BILLY'S ROOM - DAYBREAK

1

The frame is a drawing of the cowboy. Not one of the unshaven, dust covered, squinty-eyed souls who really populated the west, but a mythical cowboy. Dressed in shiny chaps, new boots and a white hat. CAMERA PULLS OUT further revealing the cover of a book with the title emblazoned above the picture in rope letters: KID DURANGO.

CAMERA MOVES slowly past the book to the face of BILLY RAY SMITH, 22, sleeping in his bed. As we HOLD ON Billy Ray a sliver of light falls across his face. As the light intensifies, we see an eye open, then an eye squint.

2 OMIT

OMIT 2 \*

3 OMIT

OMIT 3 \*

## 4 EXT. MAIN STREET (INDEPENDENCE, TEXAS) - DAY

4

A small, hopeful West Texas community. It stands beneath a cloudless blue sky. Merchants move along elevated sidewalks, opening up for the day.

Billy Ray, with his satchel, his center-parted hair, exits his rooming house, moves along the boardwalk, past the jail. He passes SHERIFF EPWORTH, who sits comfortably on a bench in front.

BILLY RAY  
Good morning, Sheriff Epworth.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

SHERIFF

'Morning, Billy Ray. Bet you never saw a day as pretty as this back east in ah...

BILLY RAY

Boston.

(beat)

Actually, Boston can be quite beautiful, Sheriff.

5 INT. TULEEN HOUSE

5

Looking through a second story window at Billy Ray walking up the street. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal a young girl watching him. She is NETTIE TULEEN, 16. A prairie beauty. Her eyes light up at the sight of Billy Ray. We are witnesses to a massive crush.

6 ANGLE ON STAIRWAY

6

Nettie plunges downstairs in a mad dash. MRS. TULEEN, her mother, is almost knocked down.

NETTIE

Sorry, Mama. Billy Ray's here.

MRS. TULEEN

(shaking her head)

I never would have known.

Nettie gathers up her books from a table in the front hall and stands at the door. Waiting for the knock. Her mother smiles as she steps next to the daughter.

MRS. TULEEN

No more Billy Ray. It's Mr. Smith.

\*

NETTIE

Okay.

Mrs. Tuleen kisses her on the cheek. A KNOCK. She opens the door. Billy Ray standing in front of them.

NETTIE

(continuing)

'Morning, Billy Ray!

7 EXT. BOARDWALK

7

Billy Ray and Nettie walk in silence down the boardwalk. Nettie stealing an occasional glance at him. Finally:

NETTIE

Do you ever think about me,  
Billy Ray?

BILLY RAY

Of course I do.

(beat)

I usually wonder whether you're  
doing your homework or not.

NETTIE

(disappointed)

But I mean... do you ever think  
of me... you know... as a woman?

BILLY RAY

Nettie, someday you will be a  
very beautiful woman.

NETTIE

In other words, you don't.

BILLY RAY

Let me tell you something,  
Nettie. When you're a little  
girl, all you want is to become  
a woman. But when you're a  
grown woman, you realize how  
important it is to be a little  
girl.

(beat)

For a man, it's different. When  
he's a boy, he's expected to  
behave and mind his folks. But  
when he becomes a man, he's  
gotta stand tall, speak the  
truth, make a honest day's  
living, and be able to look any  
other man straight in the eyes  
without flinching.

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7 \*

Billy Ray glances at Nettie. He can't help but notice her looks. At least imagine what just another year or two will add. At this moment they pass an old man on a rocking chair. The TOWN FOOL.

TOWN FOOL  
(tipping his hat)  
Mornin', Billy Ray.

BILLY RAY  
Mornin', Charlie.

TOWN FOOL  
Beautiful mornin' for  
procreation. Be fruitful and  
multiply, saith the Lord.

NETTIE  
Billy Ray...You know so much  
Billy  
Ray.

\*  
\*  
\*

BILLY RAY  
That comes from reading books.

\*  
\*

8 INT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY

8

School is in session. Billy Ray faces fourteen STUDENTS of all ages. One gangly, overgrown boy, LON, stands at the blackboard next to Billy Ray. In front of him is a subtraction problem ( $7-3 = ?$ ).

BILLY RAY  
Now think about this for a  
minute, Lon. If you had seven  
chickens... okay?  
(a nod of sorts  
from Lon)  
And your neighbor came over and  
took away three of them...?  
(another nod)  
What would you have left?

LON  
Well. I think we'd have seven,  
'cause mah daddy'd shoot him  
'fore he got out the hen house.

The class erupts in laughter. Lon isn't laughing. He doesn't get it.

BILLY RAY  
I think that's enough arithmetic  
for one day. Thank you, Lon.  
Now go sit down.

8 CONTINUED:

8

As Lon goes to his seat, Billy Ray reaches into his satchel and pulls out the Kid Durango edition. The class immediately comes alive. It's obvious they look forward to the stories, but not half as much as Billy Ray.

BILLY RAY  
(continuing)  
We're going to start a new Kid  
Durango book today.  
(as he opens it)  
And this is one of my personal  
favorites.

Nettie raises her hand. Getting Billy Ray's  
attention.

NETTIE  
Is there a girl in this one,  
Bill...I mean, Mr. Smith?

\*

BILLY RAY  
Yes there is, Nettie.

9 ANGLE ON THE GIRLS IN THE CLASS

9

Pleased expressions on their faces.

10 ANGLE ON THE BOYS

10

Groans.

BILLY RAY  
I think there's going to be  
something for everyone in this  
story. Of course, if you'd  
prefer to do arithmetic  
instead...

11 ANGLE ON THE CLASS

11

In synch on this one. A resounding no.

Billy Ray smiles and then look down at the book.  
Begins to read.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

BILLY RAY

"The layer of dew that covered the prairie disappeared quickly as the sun rose over the foothills. The moon hung around for a while and then sunk below the far ranges. The day began like a thousand other Texas days. That was, until the cloud came."

Billy hits the last line with added drama. He looks up at the kids. They're hooked.

BILLY RAY

(continuing)

"It began on the horizon. Shadows of dust moving at great speed. And then the pounding. Hooves on the hard ground."

12 INTERCUT

12

As Billy Ray reads the images he describes come alive. They will be INTERCUT with him reading and reaction of the kids listening. The visuals will have golden patina and be photographed in SLOW MOTION to give them a storybook/dreamlike quality.

BILLY RAY

"As the whirlwind got closer, you could see into the dust. The shapes of horses. And then the riders. Riders with guns on both hips and bandoliers across their chests. They rode hard. They rode with a purpose."

13 WE TRACK WITH BILLY RAY

13

as he moves up and down the aisles between the children. We FOCUS occasionally on enthralled faces.

BILLY RAY

"As they approached the town they reined back on their horses. The dust around them settled and you could see their faces. Faces weathered by the Mexican sun."

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

Faces marked by violence.  
 When the citizens of the town  
 saw the riders they  
 instinctively withdrew into the  
 shadows of the boardwalk. Many  
 of the merchants went inside  
 their shops and locked their  
 doors. Shades came down, closed  
 signs appeared as the town  
 prepared to look the other way."

14 SERIES OF SHOTS (WITHOUT V.O.)

14

The riders pulling up to a hitching post.

A PAN of the faces. Mexican. Mean. A fat, filthy  
 one. A one-eyed scar-face. A Mayan robed killer. A  
 breast plated pirate. And a fierce, dangerous  
 Castilian. The leader.

A boot hitting the dirt. Attached to the boot is a  
 huge spur, with a thirteen-pointed rowel. A small  
 insignia sparkles. It is a smiling skull under a  
 curved blade.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

... "It was pretty clear why  
 they were there. They had an  
 appointment at the bank. And it  
 wasn't to make a deposit..."

(IN THE FOLLOWING SEQUENCE THE VISUALS WILL BECOME  
 PROGRESSIVELY MORE REALISTIC IN TEXTURE. LESS SLOW  
 MOTION LESS SEPIA.)

15 INT. BANK

15

The door is kicked open. The five bandidos stand  
 silhouetted in front of us. Guns leveled in front of  
 them.

The sixty year old bank guard wakes up from his nap.  
 He makes the mistake of reaching for his gun.

One Eye shoots it out of his hand. The gun falls to  
 the  
 floor. El Diablo walks calmly over to it. Picks it up.  
 Cocks the trigger and hands it back to the guard. The  
 guard's hand shakes as he holds his gun on El Diablo.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

El Diablo just smiles, challenging him to shoot. A long beat and then El Diablo raises his gun, puts the barrel right on the guard's nose. His finger squeezing the trigger. Tighter. CLOSE on the guard's eyes. FILLING THE FRAME with terror. CLOSE on El Diablo's gun. It EXPLODES. The guard flies back in his chair. And then all hell breaks loose.

16 SERIES OF SHOTS

16

A teller opening a cash register.

A hand grabbing for bills.

A lady customer thrown violently onto the floor.

The bank president kneeling down next to the safe. Playing with the combination. Sweat on his brow.

Another customer inching toward the door. He makes a break. A gun whirls. FIRES. He is thrown through the glass onto the boardwalk outside.

The president fainting.

The filthy bandido levels a musket/shotgun at the lock and FIRES.

Hands reach in and pull out packets of cash.

CLOSE on a necklace ripped off an elderly woman.

A teller fumbling with his cash drawer. A bandido savagely brings his pistol across his face and then yanks out the entire drawer.

CLOSE on a pedestrian looking through the window into the bank. The first image he sees is a pistol pointed in his direction. Too late to react. He gets it between the eyes.

17 INT. SCHOOLHOUSE

17

Billy Ray reading.

BILLY RAY

"... They were a ruthless band of thieves and killers. With no regard for human life..."

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

A GUNSHOT? Billy Ray stops. Cocks his head.  
Dismisses it.

BILLY RAY

(continuing)

"... It was as if they were put  
on this earth by the devil to  
torment decent, godfearing folks  
who worked hard to make an  
honest liv..."

ANOTHER SHOT. Billy Ray reacts. Clears his throat.

18 ANGLE ON NETTIE

18

Momentarily pulled out of the story. She glances out  
the window to her right.

19 HER POV - EXT. BANK

19

Five men exiting the bank. One of the men FIRES his  
gun back into the building. A SCREAM. Nettie stands  
up. Crosses to the window.

20 INT. SCHOOLROOM

20

Billy Ray looks out.

21 HIS POV - EXT. SCHOOL - MAIN STREET

21

Five riders on horseback galloping down the main  
street toward the school.

22 INT. SCHOOLROOM

22

Nettie turns to Billy Ray. Her eyes wide with  
excitement.

NETTIE

Just like in the book, Billy  
Ray!

And with that she rushes outside.

BILLY RAY

Everyone stay in their seats!

He chases after her.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. SCHOOL

23

Nettie on the steps.

24 ANGLE ON THE LEADER OF THE BANDIDOS

24

He sees Nettie stepping out into the street. And then the young school teacher racing after her. He hands the bag of money he is carrying to one of his men and then kicks his horse violently with his spur. The horse breaks away from the pack. The leader leans down on his saddle and extends his arm. Nettie is frozen. Amazed. And before Billy Ray can reach her the leader sweeps her up.

Billy Ray lunges. Grabs hold of the bandido's boot. His spur. He is dragged 30-40 feet before the spur breaks off in his hand. He hits hard, his head bouncing off the road.

From a dazed, upside down perspective on the ground he watches the riders disappear into a cloud of dust across the prairie. And then the images of the Sheriff and various townfolk darting back and forth in front of him. A posse coming to life.

SPIVEY IRICK

Billy Ray, you alright? He's  
looking kinda peaked. Somebody  
better go get the Doc.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

MRS. TULEEN

They have my Nettie!

The last line is given a face as Mrs. Tuleen steps right into Billy Ray's POV. She is frantic. Turning this way and that. Trying to tell everyone what they already know.

25 ANGLE ON BILLY RAY

25

His eyes starting to glaze over. He looks up at the sky. At the sun. A white blanket of light envelops the screen. The SOUNDS of the posse racing out of town echoing in his ears.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

26 EXT. PRAIRIE LANDSCAPE - TOWN

26

A high noon prairie landscape. Shimmering on the horizon through a LONG LENS. Horses. Coming toward town.

27 ANGLE ON BILLY RAY

27

Looking through the window of his boarding house. He EXITS FRAME.

28 EXT. STREET - DAY

28

Billy Ray enters the street. Other members of the community begin to appear. The word spreads quickly. Mrs. Tuleen steps next to Billy Ray.

MRS. TULEEN

Is my daughter there? Does  
anyone see my Nettie there?

Billy Ray squints. Trying to make out the image. But the closer it gets the more nervous he becomes. Something is very wrong.

MRS. TULEEN

(continuing)

Can you see, Billy Ray? My eyes  
aren't what they used to be.

Billy Ray saves a response. It is the town blacksmith, SPIVEY IRICK, who echoes his worst fears.

SPIVEY

I don't think there's anyone on  
those horses.

An uneasiness spreads across the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

DEPUTY  
I see the Sheriff! I swear  
that's him!

But the relief is shortlived as it becomes apparent  
that Sheriff Epworth is alone. With eleven riderless  
horses in tow.

The closer he comes, the worse he looks.

Billy Ray feels a chill run through his body.

Sheriff Epworth pulls up, horror in his eyes. His  
hair has been shaved off, his scalp lacerated in the  
process. Dried blood from his mouth accents his  
ghostly pale skin.

The crowd gathers around him.

DEPUTY  
(continuing)  
Where are the others!

SPIVEY  
That's Jethro's horse! Where the  
hell is Jethro?!

Mrs. Tuleen starts to waver. Billy Ray sees this and  
puts his arm around her.

SPIVEY  
(continuing)  
There's blood on his saddle!  
What the hell happened,  
Sheriff?!

As the Deputy helps the Sheriff off his horse he sees  
something else. He sees the reason the Sheriff isn't  
talking.

DEPUTY  
Oh, Lordy...! They've cut out  
his tongue!

Mrs. Tuleen faints dead away. The CAMERA MOVES IN on  
Billy Ray.

BILLY RAY  
Excuse me Deputy. Did you say that  
they cut his tongue...

Billy Ray faints.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

29 EXT. PRAIRIE - DAY

29

The image playing in his mind: The bandidos riding hard. Nettie tied to the saddle of the leader. Her face filled with fear.

30 EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

30

The Deputy stands before assembled townspeople. The CAMERA MOVES TOWARD the crowd as the Deputy speaks.

DEPUTY

... now every lawman in every telegraph message we get says the same thing. El Diablo. The devil from Mexico...

31 ANGLE ON BILLY RAY

31

walking toward the gathering.

MRS. TULEEN

Isn't anyone going after my daughter?

A WOMAN across from her speaks up.

WOMAN 1

Well, it sure ain't gonna be Fred here.

The man next to her sheepishly ducks his head.

WOMAN 1

(continuing)

I don't plan on joining the list of widows who are gonna have to live out the rest of their lives alone in this godforsaken town.

And with that another woman (WOMAN 2) begins to wail.

WOMAN 1

(continuing)

Oh, I'm sorry, Millie. I didn't mean to get you upset.

DEPUTY

Even if we could get another posse together, we wouldn't know where to look. The US gov'mint and the federales've been looking for him for years.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

Billy Ray stops just behind and apart from the townspeople.

SPIVEY

(speaking up)

I'll tell you something about El Diablo. They did find him once. Caught him down in Amos, little border town north o' Laredo. They caught him, tried him, and hanged him all in the same night. But he wouldn't die. Just hanged there by his neck, spittin' at the crowd like they disgusted him. Cursed 'em out so bad the women folk had to go home. I was there when they cut him down. I thank the Lord I left when I did, 'cause three days later, so the story goes,

El Diablo returned to Amos with his men and cut out the heart of every man, woman and child in the whole blessed town an' jes' left 'em there to bleach in the sun and pretty soon they started rotting and then the buzzards...

32 ANGLE ON THE DEPUTY

32

shaking his head.

DEPUTY

Now, Spivey. That's enough of that...

TOWN FOOL

(from his rocking  
chair)

Devil don't ever die. No, sir.

MRS. TULEEN

So no one is going to do anything about getting my Nettie back.

LOCAL

(piping up)

He's probably already cut out her heart and eaten it.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

MRS. TULEEN

Oh, my God.

SPIVEY

I didn't say anything about  
eating their hearts. He just  
cut them out and left...

DEPUTY

Spivey!

Spivey stops.

SPIVEY

Sorry, Deputy.

(pauses, a moment  
of realization)

Or are you the Sheriff now?  
Because if you are then it's  
your responsibility to go after  
El Diablo.

The Deputy doesn't like where this is going.

DEPUTY

Well, at last report the doc  
said that the sheriff was  
feelin' a lot better.

LOCAL 2

And I suppose he's been workin'  
on his sign language, too!

LOCAL 1

Spivey's right! You're the  
Sheriff now. And we pay your  
wages!

\*

The discussion quickly dissolves into townfolk against  
the Deputy. At this moment Billy Ray interrupts this  
"pass the buck" fervor.

BILLY RAY

I intend to bring Nettie back.

No reaction. The discussion continues.

BILLY RAY

(continuing)

I said I intend to bring Nettie  
back!

Faces turn to Billy Ray.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

LOCAL 1  
You and who else, school  
teacher?

BILLY RAY  
(takes a moment to  
think this one  
out)  
Well... me and Kid Durango,  
that's who.  
(correcting his  
grammar)  
I mean Kid Durango and I.

LOCAL 1  
(to the Town Fool)  
Hey, Charlie! You got some  
competition!

Only Mrs. Tuleen looks at him seriously. Obviously  
willing to hang her hopes on the thinnest of threads.  
And Billy Ray is a very thin thread indeed.

LOCAL 2  
You can't even shoot a gun,  
Billy Ray.

BILLY RAY  
I intend to learn... to shoot a  
gun.

LOCAL 1  
El Diablo's sure gonna drop a  
load of manure in his pants when  
he sees you comin' at him.

General laughter from the crowd which realizes that no  
solution is forthcoming. It starts to disperse. He  
exchanges a glance with Mrs. Tuleen who smiles  
sweetly.

She appreciates his gesture even though she knows  
nothing will probably come of it. He is left alone in  
the street.

TOWN FOOL  
(pats the chair  
next to him)  
Have a seat, Billy Ray.

33 EXT. PRAIRIE - DAY

33

Spivey Irick has set up a row of bottles and cans for Billy Ray to use as targets. Throughout the following dialogue, Billy Ray tries hard but misses every single one.

SPIVEY

Well, I do know one man. My second cousin, Maggie Sue's fourth. J.D. Shones. He's a lawman now. Texas Ranger. He used to ride with Kid Durango. I tell you the truth, we never had much to do with him. Kinda the disgrace of the family. He shot and killed my cousin Deke about eight years ago over in Sonoma. Also shot and killed my daddy's brother Edward.

BILLY RAY

Where is he now?

SPIVEY

Well, last time I heard, he was up in Millenium. Some kind of marshal or ranger up there. Hell, there ain't but a turd's difference between J.D. and the scum he hauls in. But if anybody can get to Kid Durango, it'd be him.

Billy Ray FIRES the last shot. A clear miss.

SPIVEY

(continuing)

You need bigger bottles.

34 EXT. THE GENERAL STORE - DAY

34

LOW ANGLE as a pair of new boots ENTER THE FRAME. We PULL BACK to reveal a transformed Billy Ray, wearing woolly chaps, a white hat, and his suit coat. He looks like he just stepped out of a Gary Larson cartoon.

\*  
\*  
\*

A small crowd is gathered around Billy Ray and his saddled horse. Including Mrs. Tuleen, Spivey, various other townfolk. The Town Fool sits in his chair observing the send off as well. Mrs. Tuleen approaches Billy Ray. She gives him a big hug.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

He mounts his horse. As he settles uncomfortably on the saddle the Deputy approaches. He has El Diablo's spur in his hand.

DEPUTY

You be darn careful who ya show  
this to.

\*

Billy Ray looks at the spur as the Deputy puts it in his saddlebag. The Deputy then digs out a piece of paper from his pocket.

BILLY RAY

Yes Sir.

\*

\*

DEPUTY

(continuing)

Sheriff Epworth wrote you this  
note:

\*

(uncrumpling the  
paper)

"Don't go."

BILLY RAY

You thank him for the advice.

DEPUTY

You're a damn fool, Billy Ray.

BILLY RAY

Yes Sir, I know. But somebody  
has to save Nettie and bring  
Diablo to justice.

\*

TOWN FOOL

Only God can kill the devil  
Billy Ray.

\*

Billy Ray glances at the Town Fool and then starts to coax his horse to move out.

Main Street is quiet, but not deserted, as Billy Ray doffs his hat and rides through. The sidewalks are dotted with townfolk who have stopped their work to watch. Heads turn and whisper, but Billy Ray rides slowly down the middle of the street, looking straight ahead.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
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\*  
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\*  
\*  
\*

Billy Ray tries to turn his horse. The horse is slow to respond and Billy Ray in frustration kicks hard with his heels. The horse rears back in protest, throwing Billy off. As he hits the ground his gun DISCHARGES, shooting the horse.

35 OMITTED

35

36 EXT. TEXAS LANDSCAPE - DAY

36

We HOLD on the panorama of desert and mountains for just a moment before a train shoots past in front of us.

37 EXT. MILLENIUM - ANGLE ON SIGN - DAY

37

We CRANE DOWN from the sign to a modest train station at the edge of town. The train comes to a halt. A single passenger exits. Billy Ray.

38 CLOSE ON BILLY RAY

38

Getting his bearings. He spots a cowboy sitting on a bench in the shade.

BILLY RAY  
Excuse me, sir. But could you  
tell me where I could find a  
Mister J.D. Shones?

The COWBOY studies this comic figure in front of him for before answering.

COWBOY  
What do you want with him,  
sonny?

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

BILLY RAY  
I need to ask him a very  
important question.

\*  
\*

COWBOY  
Then you should have asked him  
yesterday.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

39

On grave marker: J.D. SHONES  
R.I.P.

WIDER on a coffin being lowered into the ground in  
front of the marker.

As the coffin hits the ground with a dull THUD we PULL  
BACK to Billy Ray standing on the periphery of the  
meager ceremony which consists of a preacher and a  
handful of mourners.

Billy Ray notices a man observing from a distance.  
Then sees the glint of a badge on his vest. He  
approaches the man.

The man turns. He is DOC MURPHY, a handsome fellow,  
clean-shaven and tall.

BILLY RAY  
What happened?

Murphy looks Billy Ray over carefully.

MURPHY  
Friend of yours?

BILLY RAY  
Sort of.

MURPHY  
(with an odd smile)  
Same here, sort of...

Murphy pulls out a cheroot and lights up.

MURPHY  
(cont)  
You have business with J.D.?

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

BILLY RAY

Yeah.

MURPHY

Well, I'm the Sheriff now. Maybe  
I can be of assistance.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

40 BLAM! A RIFLE SHOT

40

Murphy's chest erupts. He stands for a second, then pitches headlong to the dust, revealing the approach on horseback of THOMAS VAN LEEK. The funeral and grave digger continue in the b.g.

Van Leek is a powerful, strong black man, of middle years. His presence is punctuated by the carbine he carries, and the two six shooters at his side. He points the carbine at Billy Ray.

VAN LEEK

You related to him?

BILLY RAY

(in shock)

No, sir.

VAN LEEK

Then I want to thank you for  
distracting him.

Van Leek dismounts. Billy Ray stares at Van Leek as he checks over Murphy's body, going through his pockets. Billy Ray begins backing up. This black man also has a horse that is the most ridiculous looking animal he has ever seen. It's back has shrunken considerably. Its hair is turning gray or falling out in spots. And it has the sorriest of faces.

Van Leek looks up at him.

VAN LEEK

(continuing)

What are you lookin' at?

BILLY RAY

You shot him in the back!

Van Leek spits a stream of tobacco juice in the street.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

VAN LEEK

(matter of factly)

His back was to me.

Help me out of here. Come on  
boy.Besides, he shot J.D. in the  
back. It just seemed right.\*  
\*

BILLY RAY

He killed J.D.?

VAN LEEK

He wanted to be Sheriff real  
bad. Now he's Sheriff. Real  
bad.

Van Leek walks over to his horse, pulls some rather  
large hunks of cotton out of its ears.

VAN LEEK

(continuing;

whispers to Billy  
Ray)Rio here hates gunfire. Hurts  
his ears.

He starts walking with Rio away from the cemetery.  
Billy Ray follows. In the b.g. the funeral service  
has ended and the mourners are discovering the body of  
the Sheriff. They start dividing up the spoils.

BILLY RAY

Do you think maybe you can tell  
me where I can find a man named  
Kid Durango.

\*

VAN LEEK

(unenthused)

Whattaya want him for?

BILLY RAY

They say he's the fastest gun in  
the west.

VAN LEEK

(stopping)

Oh, yeah?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

BILLY RAY  
I want to hire him for a job.

VAN LEEK  
You got any money?

BILLY RAY  
Maybe.

VAN LEEK  
Hire me. I ain't as fast as I  
used to be, but I cheat real  
good.

(moves closer to  
Billy Ray)  
Fast don't mean a lot these  
days. Us professional folks're  
tired of fightin' fair and dyin'  
for it.  
That gets old real fast.

BILLY RAY  
You know Kid Durango?

VAN LEEK  
Yeah. I know him.

BILLY RAY  
Can you take me to him?

VAN LEEK  
(beat)  
Where you from, boy?

BILLY RAY  
Originally, Boston,  
Massachusetts.

VAN LEEK  
Figures.  
(mounting his  
horse)  
I'm gettin' on Rio.  
(BEAT)

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

BILLY RAY

Do you think maybe you could point  
me in the right direction? Mr...ah...

\*  
\*

VAN LEEK

Van Leek. Thomas Van Leek.

(beat)

I'd love to sit down and draw a  
map for you, but somebody's  
gonna start asking questions  
about who put the Sheriff there  
out of office.

41 ON MOURNERS

41

picking over the body.

VAN LEEK

(cont)

So I best be gettin' me and Rio  
down to Mexico.

BILLY RAY

(quickly)

The man I wish to apprehend is  
in Mexico!

VAN LEEK

(beat)

Go ahead and mount up. Probably  
no harm in lettin' you tag along  
for a while.

Billy Ray stares at him.

BILLY RAY

Uh...

Van Leek again starts to pull away.

BILLY RAY

(continuing;  
shouting after  
him)

I don't have a horse.

Van Leek pulls up Rio. The smile on his face  
indicates that he can't believe this kid.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

He takes out his rifle. Rests the barrel on his forearm and aims.

The rifle's POV: a mourner removing the saddle from Murphy's horse.

Van Leek FIRES. The mourner's hat flies off.

VAN LEEK  
(to his horse)  
Sorry, Rio.  
(to the mourner  
with the saddle)  
If you'd be so kind as to leave  
that saddle right where it is,  
we'll be on our way.

42 EXT. PLAINS - DAY

42

Billy Ray follows Van Leek as they gallop across the plains. The ride looks exciting at a distance, but as we get CLOSER to Billy Ray we see he is hanging on for dear life.

The inevitable happens. He falls off. Van Leek just keeps riding as Billy Ray gets up and chases his horse.

DISSOLVE TO:

43 EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

43

The sun is setting. Ambers and pinks fill the sky. Van Leek is fixing a pot of coffee as Billy Ray settles down very gingerly on the ground. His backside raw from the day's travel. He takes out a pad of paper and rests it on his knee.

44 CLOSE ON THE PAPER

44

(Billy Ray writing) -- MARCH 21, 1882.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

(as he writes)

"My quest to retrieve Nettie from the clutches of El Diablo began in a most unorthodox manner. My contact in Millenium, Mr. Shones, had been shot the previous day by a Mr. Murphy, who was in turn shot while I was conversing with him by a Mr. Van Leek. Coincidentally, Mr. Van Leek claimed he was a personal acquaintance of Kid Durango and after helping to arrange transportation for me I am presently accompanying him on his journey to Mexico. I am counting on him providing a formal introduction to Kid Durango when we reach his hideout."

VAN LEEK

(interrupting)

How much were you preparin' to pay Kid Durango for that job you had?

BILLY RAY

Whatever the going rate... ah... the fair rate happens to be.

Billy Ray goes back to his diary.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

(cont)

'Although this is only the beginning of my journey, I have already learned that in order to survive in the west, in the world outside of Independence, that is, one has to be prepared at all times. Therefore as a safety precaution, I have decided not to carry bullets in my gun.'

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

VAN LEEK  
(interrupting  
again)

You never did say precisely what  
it was you needed done. Hard to  
come up with a figure till you  
know that.

BILLY RAY  
(looking up)

I want to rescue a young girl  
who was kidnapped by a man  
presumed to be named El Diablo,  
and I want to bring him and his  
compatriots to justice.

Van Leek chokes, spitting out his coffee. Some of it  
covering Billy Ray's diary. Van Leek stands abruptly.

VAN LEEK  
Come on, Rio.

BILLY RAY  
What's the matter?

VAN LEEK  
You can't ride, can't shoot,  
can't even think. You're in the  
wrong territory, boy.

And with that, Van Leek disappears into a cloud of  
dust. Billy Ray just stares after him, listening to  
the hoof beats diminishing in the night. He turns to  
his writing once again.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)  
Additional details concerning my  
trip seemed to discourage Mr.  
Van Leek from continuing the  
journey together. I was once  
again alone but nevertheless  
still determined to pursue my  
goal.

The CAMERA MOVES from Billy Ray to the fire. His  
words fading into the CRACKLE of burning twigs.

DISSOLVE TO:

46 EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

46

The fire has burned down to only a few embers. We PAN  
to Billy Ray curled up in his blanket. Shivering.  
Having a fitful sleep at best. A coyote HOWLS in the  
distance.

47 CLOSE ON DIABLO'S SPUR

47

in his lap. Sliding and hitting the ground.

Billy Ray's eyes snap open. Scanning the area.  
Nothing. He starts fading again.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

48

A POV of Billy Ray from periphery of the campsite.  
MOVING. A twig SNAPS. The POV stops. Billy Ray  
looks up. Reacts as the POV MOVES TOWARD him. He  
fumbles for his pistol. Starts to aim then remembers  
his bullets. Tries to load one. Misses the chamber.  
It rolls into the fire and GOES OFF. We hear a coyote  
YELP.

49 ANGLE ON VAN LEEK

49

Standing at the edge of the firelight. Draped in a  
long cavalry duster. A carbine in one arm leveled at  
Billy Ray.

VAN LEEK

(shaking his head)

It ain't even loaded?

BILLY RAY

I don't want it going off by  
accident.

VAN LEEK

You ain't gonna last a week out  
here with that attitude.

BILLY RAY

You gonna shoot me?

VAN LEEK

If I was gonna shoot you, I  
would have done it while you  
were asleep.

(beat)

You sure are a nervous boy.

\*

BILLY RAY

You shot a man in the back, why  
shouldn't I be nervous?

\*

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED

49

VAN LEEK  
(indicating the  
spur)  
What do you got there?

BILLY RAY  
It belongs to El Diablo.

VAN LEEK  
Let's see it.

Billy Ray hesitates, but Van Leek raises the gun an  
inch. Billy Ray tosses it. Van Leek examines it.

BILLY RAY  
Those are real rubies. I'm  
hoping to trade it for the young  
girl's life.

VAN LEEK  
What makes you think she ain't  
dead already?

BILLY RAY  
(a solemn beat)  
Why'd you come back here?

VAN LEEK  
You never did say how much you  
were payin'.

BILLY RAY  
Seventy-five dollars.

Van Leek lowers his gun and kneels by the fire. Tries  
to catch some warmth for his hands.

VAN LEEK  
Tell you what. I'll help you  
find El Diablo, and if necessary  
I'll kill him for you. Rescuin'  
any girl is your problem.

There is a long silence as Billy Ray considers this  
proposition.

BILLY RAY  
Well... thank you very much, but  
I decline your offer. I intend  
to hire Kid Durango.  
(MORE)

\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED

BILLY RAY (CONT'D)

49

He's not afraid to stand tall  
and look any other man straight  
in the eye without flinching.

(with a burst of  
courage)

And he'd never shoot a man from  
behind!

Van Leek stands up. Looks down at Billy Ray.

VAN LEEK

You sure think you got this Kid  
Durango figured out, don't ya?

BILLY RAY

I feel like I know him. Read  
every one of his books half a  
dozen times.

VAN LEEK

(with disdain)  
Read his books, huh...  
(tips his hat)  
Adios again, boy.

And with that Van Leek melts away into the shadow.  
Billy Ray shoves the spur back into the flour bag.  
Then he grabs his pistol, loads a bullet, and sits  
bolt upright, wrapped in his blanket, ready, scared,  
waiting.

50 EXT. PLAINS - MORNING

50

The sun is rising over the far ranges. HOLD on the  
tableau until a lone rider moves INTO THE FRAME. It's  
Billy Ray. We FOLLOW him for a moment and then PAN IN  
THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. Five riders come up over a  
hill.

51 CLOSE ON JAKE

51

The leader of this posse from Millenium. Looking  
through binoculars.

CUT TO:

51A OMIT 51A \*

52 WIDE SHOT - PRAIRIE 52

Billy Ray hurtles along in the distance. Behind him, Jake and the posse in pursuit.

53 BILLY RAY 53

careens along on top of his horse, out of control, riding for his life.

54 THE POSSE 54

gaining ground.

55 BILLY RAY 55

steals a glance behind him. A couple of the members of the posse start SHOOTING at him. He is terrified. The situation is definitely serious. He lets go of the saddle horn with one hand and reaches for his gun. He gets it out just as his horse jumps a small ditch. As he comes down on the saddle his gun DISCHARGES and (you guessed it) he shoots his horse. The horse falls, throwing Billy Ray clear.

Billy Ray rolls away and jumps to his feet. He gets his saddlebag, then kneels down beside the horse. He doesn't know what to do.

BILLY RAY

Sorry.

The SOUND of hoof beats. Billy Ray takes off running. He pounds along, his breath exploding from his mouth. Behind him come the five riders.

56 EXT. ABANDONED SHED 56

And ahead of him is an old abandoned shed but nestled up against a hillside. It is dilapidated, broken, empty. Billy Ray runs up to the hut. Moves to the door. Dives inside.

57 INT. HUT 57

He slams the door and slides a huge wooden bolt into place. He slumps to the floor. Trying to catch his breath. Not a sound outside. He pulls out another bullet and loads it into the gun. He staggers to a window, peeks outside. Sees members of the posse getting into position. He raises the gun and FIRES. The blast knocks him off his feet.

Which is fortunate because at that moment the hut is riddled with a hundred BULLETS. Laser like shafts of light fill the hut.

CUT TO:

58 EXT. HUT - DAY

58

The members of the posse are scattered behind various rocks. Sitting tight. Waiting.

POSSE MEMBER 1  
Yeah, I think we got him.

\*

JAKE  
Yeah, why don't you go make  
sure?

POSSE MEMBER 1  
(after a pause)  
Why don't you? You're closer.

JAKE  
The hell I am.

\*

\*

POSSE #1 (O.S.)  
Dick is closest.

\*

\*

POSSE #3 (Dick)  
I went first last week

\*

\*

POSSE #1  
Horse shit. I did. I got shot  
remember?

\*

\*

\*

JAKE  
Shutup!

\*

\*

Behind Jake, Van Leek saunters up. His shotgun slung leisurely over his shoulder. He carries a box of shells in his left hand. He appears cheerful. He moves quietly up behind Jake and crouches behind him.

VAN LEEK  
'Afternoon.

Jake spins around. His gun pointed at Van Leek.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE  
Jesus H. Christ! Don't sneak up  
like that!

\*

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

Van Leek pushes the muzzle of Jake's gun away.

VAN LEEK

I wasn't sneakin'.

JAKE

(suspicious)

What do you want?

VAN LEEK

Just passin' through. You got  
somebody holdup in there?

\*

JAKE

We do. Snared up like a rabbit.

VAN LEEK

That boy who shot the Sheriff?

\*

JAKE

Yeah.

VAN LEEK

There a reward?

JAKE

(high sarcasm)

No, we're here because we want  
to see justice done.

VAN LEEK

How much?

JAKE

Fou... ah, two hundred dollars.

\*

VAN LEEK

Seems to be enough to go around.

JAKE

I ain't splittin' it more'n five  
ways. I was even kinda hopin'  
the boy would get lucky and  
shoot one of us. So why don't  
you just back off, Van Leek.

\*

\*

VAN LEEK

Well, good luck then.

Van Leek leads Rio away as Jake returns to his  
waiting.

- 59     ANGLE ON VAN LEEK     59
- He is calmly putting cotton in Rio's ears.
- VAN LEEK  
This won't take but a minute,  
Rio.
- 60     GROUP SHOT OF THE POSSE     60
- They are facing us... weapons trained on the hut. We can see Van Leek aiming his shotgun behind them.
- 61     ANGLE ON JAKE     61
- His chest EXPLODES TOWARDS CAMERA as Van Leek gives him both barrels. In the back.
- 62     THE POSSE MEMBERS     62
- turn in Van Leek's direction.
- 63     MOVING SHOT WITH VAN LEEK     63
- He is now on Rio, hanging off one side. He opens FIRE. Two of Jake's men are hit instantly.
- 64     INT. HUT     64
- Billy Ray stealing a look out the window. Van Leek charges by on Rio. He pulls out two six-guns and BLASTS away, first right, then left, his hands moving in a beautiful ballet.
- 65     VAN LEEK     65
- dismounts. Draws two more six-guns from inside his duster and starts unloading.
- 66     THE THREE REMAINING MEN     66
- run for their lives under a hail of GUNFIRE. One of them stationed on an outcropping above the hut is hit and falls.

67 INT. HUT

67

A body crashes through the tin roof and lands next to Billy. His eyes are still wide open and his hand still wrapped around his gun. A final death twitch and the gun GOES OFF.

68 ONE OF JAKE'S MAN

68

is hit in the back as he is mounting his horse.

69 VAN LEEK

69

turns to the hut.

VAN LEEK

Nice shot, kid.

Van Leek then addresses himself to the remaining bounty hunter who mounts his horse.. He just watches.

The rider makes fast tracks. He reaches the crest of a small hill, seemingly out of range.

Van Leek looks pensive... calculating distance and windage. He picks up a tuft of sage and tosses it in the air. A little right-left drift. He pulls out his Winchester. Takes a bead on the rider as he rests his elbows on Rio. FIRES.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

The rider stops, turns scornfully in Van Leek's direction... and then slowly slides off his saddle... dead.

70 VAN LEEK

70

picks up his shotgun, walks over to Rio, removes the cotton from his ears and jumps on.

He rides over to Jake's horse, takes the reins and brings it over to the hut.

VAN LEEK

Here's another horse.

Billy Ray stares dumbfoundedly out the window, then exits the hut. He scans the area, taking in the damage wreaked by Van Leek. A long pause and then...

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

BILLY RAY  
(very businesslike)  
Mr. Van Leek, I'd like to take  
you up on your offer to help me  
get El Diablo.

VAN LEEK  
(after a beat)  
I'll think about it.

71 EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

71

Billy Ray is in his bed roll. Reading from a Kid Durango book. He stares at the cover of the book, at the garish drawing of his cowboy-hero astride his horse.

Then he looks at Van Leek. Stripped down to the long johns. In front of him his entire arsenal of weaponry. He is performing his nightly ritual of maintenance. Oil, rags, makeshift tools, etc. spread around. He looks like a mess but it's obvious he knows what he's doing. His hands move like a Swiss clockmaker's.

Billy Ray watches Van Leek work for a moment.

BILLY RAY  
That was an impressive display  
of gunmanship today.

VAN LEEK  
(a laugh)  
Gunmanship?

BILLY RAY  
(forcing himself to  
continue)  
I was wondering if you... ah...  
would consider demonstrating  
some of your tricks of the  
trade.

VAN LEEK  
They ain't tricks, boy. They're  
as real as death.

Van Leek finishes reassembling a six-shooter. Puts a round in the chamber and tosses it to Billy Ray.

Billy Ray grips the gun. Inadvertantly aiming it at Van Leek.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

VAN LEEK  
(continuing)  
Don't point it at me, boy! I  
ain't a horse!

Billy Ray makes a rapid adjustment.

VAN LEEK  
(continuing)  
Pick out a star.

BILLY RAY  
What?

VAN LEEK  
Lay down on your back.

BILLY RAY  
What for?

VAN LEEK  
Just shut your goddamn hole and  
lay down on your back.

Billy Ray stretches out.

VAN LEEK  
(continuing)  
Now pick a star.

Billy Ray scans the heavens with the muzzle of the  
colt. He fixes his aim.

CLOSE on the gun poised. The stars sparking above.

BILLY RAY  
Got one.

Van Leek scrutinizes position of the gun, then the  
sky.

VAN LEEK  
Enif.

BILLY RAY  
Enif?

VAN LEEK  
That's the star you're fixin'  
on. It's the brightest star in  
Pegasus, the constellation of  
the Winged Horse.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

Billy Ray glances at Van Leek. Surprised at the source of information.

VAN LEEK

(continuing)

Don't drop your look! You have to concentrate! Keep that star in your sights... real steady.

BILLY RAY

I got it.

VAN LEEK

Now just hold it there until I tell you to stop.

BILLY RAY

Yes, sir.

Van Leek now packs away his weaponry, prepares his bed roll and crawls in for the night. His back to Billy Ray.

Billy Ray steals a glance at him.

VAN LEEK

Don't drop your eyes from the target! If you do you're a dead man!

Billy Ray snaps back to Enif.

BILLY RAY

Yes, sir!

VAN LEEK

Patience, concentration. The first two things you gotta learn.

A moment passes as Billy Ray continues to hold the star at bay. And then Van Leek's eyes close.

72 EXT. PLAINS - DAWN

72

The ranges beginning to light up on the horizon. We PAN from the landscape to a WIDE SHOT of the campsite.

Van Leek still out. And Billy Ray's gun still fixed on the heavens. His eyes barely slits.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

The gun starts to waver. Finally it drops. Hits the ground and GOES OFF. A horse WHINNIES in agony and then is quiet.

Van Leek's eyes snap open.

VAN LEEK  
(without moving)  
Just start prayin' that wasn't  
Rio.

Billy Ray grimaces. Gets up and walks to the edge of the campsite where the horses are tied behind some scrub and cactus.

Jake's horse is on the ground. Dead. Rio takes one look at Billy Ray and rears back, disengaging the branch he's hitched to. He trots quickly over to Van Leek.

Van Leek gets up. Pets his horse. Shakes his head.

73 OMIT

OMIT

73 \*

74 EXT. HILLS - DAY

OMIT

74 \*

Billy Ray walks alongside Rio and Van Leek as they make their way up some foothills.

75 OMIT

75

76 EXT. BEBE'S RANCHO JUNK YARD - DAY

76

Billy Ray and Van Leek pull up to a spread of scrubby buildings out in the middle of nowhere. There are a few scrawny young trees around the buildings, as if someone were trying, out here in dirt country, to get a little shade.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

A couple of horses, some chickens and goats roam about. We hear the SOUND of rhythmic, metallic pounding coming from somewhere inside the compound.

\*  
\*  
\*

A Mexican woman, about thirty-five and plump, stands in a doorway, literally surrounded by her children, seven of them, all of whom stare out in wonder at the two men going by. Van Leek tips his hat.

\*  
\*  
\*\*  
\*  
\*

Beyond this point, the whole place is an incredible junk yard.

Everywhere you look, there are buggy parts, wheels, traces, horse collars, and wagon beds strewn about in no immediately discernible order; barrels of bolts and nails, boxes of cotterpins, some rusted together, some spilled out; vats of tar and grease, a winch, tables and chairs and broken pieces of furniture, rolls of corrugated tin, tools of all description, old stoves turned over and rusting, chains, farm tools in need of repair, and more barrels and boxes.

CUT TO:

77 INT. BARN - CLOSE ON ANVIL

77

The white hot blade of a large knife is being forged.

BEBE PATTERSON, tough-looking and well-muscled, raises a heavy hammer high, and brings it down with jarring force on the blade. WHANK!

Van Leek and Billy Ray stand in a doorway.

VAN LEEK

Bebe.

THUNK! The knife embeds itself into a beam inches from Billy Ray's face.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

VAN LEEK  
(continuing)  
You missed.

BILLY RAY  
He missed.

\*  
\*

BEBE  
The balance must not be right.

\*

Van Leek pulls the knife out of the wood and takes it over to Bebe who resumes his hammering.

\*  
\*

A peculiar expression comes over his face. His eyes look on the spur and stay there.

BEBE  
(continuing)  
Where'd you get that?

Van Leek continues spinning the spur, rhythmically, almost hypnotically.

VAN LEEK  
Right off the sumbitch's boot.

BEBE  
You got it?

VAN LEEK  
This boy here got it. Two months ago. They stole his girl.

\*  
\*  
\*

BILLY RAY  
(correcting Van Leek)  
Actually she was one of my students.

Bebe looks over at Billy Ray, scrutinizes him.

BEBE  
Prettiest one in the class, I'll bet.

BILLY RAY  
I make it a policy not to get involved with...

Van Leek interrupts.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

VAN LEEK  
(gesturing with  
spur)  
Will this get us in?

Bebe looks back at Van Leek, then at the spur.

BEBE  
Could be.

He takes the spur from Van Leek.

BEBE  
(continuing)  
El Diablo does favor his spurs.  
'Course, gettin' in's easy...

In a flash, he yanks the spur itself from the shank.  
It comes apart.

BEBE  
(continuing)  
If ya don't take the whole thing  
in with ya at one time... might  
even get out in one piece.

Bebe gets one foot under himself and rises unsteadily  
to his full height. We see, for the first time, that  
Bebe is missing a foot. In it's place is a homemade  
prosthetic device. The first of its kind. It is  
attached to the leg with a leather brace that fits  
around the calf. Lots of straps and metal pieces.  
The foot squeaks when Bebe moves around on it.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Billy Ray is shocked. Bebe picks up on his reaction.

BEBE  
(continuing;  
scowling)  
What are you lookin' at, boy?

BILLY RAY  
Ah... nothing.

BEBE  
(breaking into a  
grin)  
Damn right. Ain't nothin'  
there.

Bebe tosses the spur back to Van Leek. A big whoop.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

BEBE  
(continuing)  
Lordy, we're gonna pound sand up  
that turd's asshole!

CUT TO:

78 EXT. BEBE'S RANCHO JUNK YARD - DAY

78

Bebe races with his buckboard out of his barn. Billy Ray (on a new horse) and Van Leek follow.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)  
(letter writing  
voice)

Although Mr. Van Leek kept his intentions pretty much to himself, it appeared that the plan was to assemble a group of skilled professionals to help me in my endeavor. The first person selected was a Mr. Bebe Patterson who had been captured by El Diablo's men years ago. He followed them to Mexico only to have himself caught. He escaped but he returned minus one foot.

\*

79 MOVING SHOT - VAN LEEK, BILLY RAY AND BEBE

79

riding up the hill away from the ranch. Billy Ray bouncing up and down, trying to keep up. He falls off again. Another footrace with a horse.

80 EXT, BENDIX ROCK, TEXAS - DAY

80

CLOSE on a buxom woman, her chest heaving as she sings "Shall We Gather at the River." HOLD on her for a verse and then the CAMERA MOVES past her to her accompanist, a pianist sitting in front of his instrument in front of a building at the edge of town.

An usher walks in front of the pianist with an offering plate (actually a bucket) and we FOLLOW him through the crowd, a congregation made up of weather beaten cowhands and wives and their mostly sub-intelligent children.

(CONTINUED)

The usher eventually takes us to a pair of high black shiny boots perched on an elevated platform. The business end of a bullwhip CRACKS next to the boots. The usher jumps back and then quickly places the bucket (only partially filled) on the platform.

As the song comes to an end we CRANE UP from the boots revealing the PREACHER. A cross between John Brown and an evil Wizard of Oz. Garbed in a dark black suit, he carries a Bible in one hand and a bullwhip in the other.

As the song comes to an end the Preacher begins to address his congregation. As he speaks he snaps his whip for emphasis, and "his people" respond with "Amen."

#### PREACHER

Hear the word of the Lord, o  
people of... ah... Bendix Rock;

(whip, amen)

For the Lord has a controversy  
with the inhabitants of the  
land.

(whip, amen)

There is no faithfulness of God  
in the land.

(whip, amen)

There is swearing...

(whip, amen)

... lying...

(whip, amen)

... killing...

(whip, amen)

... stealing...

(whip, amen)

... and committing adultery.

Whip, amen.

During this litany the CAMERA MOVES PAST the Preacher and settles on ROBERTO ZAMUDIO and PITCHFORK NAPIER, sharing the platform with him. Except they have ropes around their necks and a trapdoor beneath their feet. Zamudio is a Mexican with aristocratic delusions. Pitchfork is white trash personified.

We are witness to a church service/hanging. The PREACHER paces back and forth on the gallows shared by his props.

\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

They are: a view camera on a tripod to document the event and a display of photos from his previous 'services'.

\*  
\*  
\*

PREACHER

(continuing)

Nothing escapes the power and the vision of the Lord. Those who have sinned will be punished. But we are here also to forgive. To ask the Lord for mercy so that the souls of Jonathan Napier and Bob Zamudio...

\*  
\*  
\*

CLOSE on Robert Zamudio.

ZAMUDIO

Roberto...

PREACHER

... so that their souls will be saved.

(beat as he checks the bucket)

Now saving souls is a costly enterprise. One that demands not only our time and unwavering devotion but a clear demonstration to the Almighty that we are ready to make a sacrifice. The Lord is always on the lookout for a gesture, a sign that we take him seriously.

At this point he kicks the bucket into the crowd.

81 ANGLE ON VAN LEEK, BEBE AND BILLY RAY

81

approaching the periphery of the proceedings. Van Leek and Bebe exchange a look as the Preacher continues his pitch.

PREACHER

If you do not take the Lord seriously, he will not take you seriously.

(a big crack of the whip)

Not only will the souls of these poor unfortunates be exiled for eternity in hell but so will yours as well.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

PREACHER (CONT)

You must share with the Lord  
the fruits of your labors for  
only then can he truly become  
your savior.

(gesturing to the  
usher)

Now I want that collection plate  
passed around once again and I  
want to see it overflow with  
evidence of your love for the  
Lord. Might I add that if I am  
disappointed there will be no  
show... ah... justice meted out  
today. But rather these men  
will be released back into your  
fold to continue robbing,  
killing and having their way  
with your wives and daughters,  
with the sheep and goats and  
turkeys of your flocks.

82 CLOSE ON PITCHFORK

82

Genuinely perplexed.

PITCHFORK

Turkeys?

83 BACK TO SCENE

83

The bucket is soon filled to the top. The usher shows  
it to the Preacher and then places it between  
Pitchfork and Robert.

PREACHER

May God bless you.

And with that he pulls a lever releasing a trapdoor  
under the feet of Pitchfork. He drops and then the  
rope catches. A sickening CRACK.

84 ANGLE ON VAN LEEK, BEBE AND BILLY RAY

84

Billy Ray is aghast. Van Leek and Bebe take it all in  
casually.

BEBE

You recognize 'em?

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

84

VAN LEEK

One of them is Bob Zamudio, a  
pretty good hand with the gun.  
The one danglin' I don't  
recognize.

BEBE

We could use some more help.

Van Leek draws out his rifle. Lines up a target on  
the platform.

85 ON PLATFORM

85

The Preacher pulls the second lever. Zamudio falls  
but before he catches Van Leek splits the rope with a  
SHOT. He hits the ground.

86 ON VAN LEEK

86

A second SHOT.

87 ON PLATFORM

87

Pitchfork's rope is severed. He falls a little  
heavier. But miraculously he's still alive. However,  
his neck is about forty degrees out of line.

VAN LEEK

Give me that spur.  
I'm sorry, Rio.

\*  
\*  
\*

88 ANGLE ON THE PREACHER

88

looking up. For the first time noticing our trio.

89 VAN LEEK

89

rides right up the center of the congregation. His  
rifle still cradled in his arms. He stops in front of  
the platform.

VAN LEEK

'Afternoon, Atallicus.

\*

The Preacher throws Van Leek a phony smile and then  
addresses the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

## PREACHER

Let us all join in and sing the  
hymn "What a Friend We Have in  
Jesus" while the Lord is  
determining the fate of our  
brethren here.

(starting the song)

"What a friend we have in Jesus,  
all our sins and grief to  
bear..."

\*  
\*

BACK to Van Leek as the song starts to gain momentum.

Van Leek reaches into his saddlebag, pulls out the  
spur and tosses it on the platform.

The Preacher reacts. It obviously has some  
significance to him.

## PREACHER

(continuing; a  
whisper)

Equal shares all around?

Van Leek nods.

## VAN LEEK

(indicating Roberto  
and Pitchfork)

We're gonna need your dead men  
there.

## PREACHER

(smiling)

I think that can be arranged.

Perhaps the slowest reacting one in history. Puzzled  
over this turn of events but still keeping a tune.

## CROWD

"What a friend we have in Jesus,  
oh, what needless pain we bear,  
all because we do not carry,  
everything to God in prayer,  
what a friend we have in..."

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

91 EXT. WESTERN VISTA - DAY

91

The buckboard and five riders  
thunder away across the plains.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)  
(writing voice)  
Today we went to church. It was  
very different from what I had  
imagined. I had the opportunity  
to witness my first hanging.

BILLY RAY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
In fact, one of the men that was  
hung, a Mr. Pitchfork Napier, has  
elected to join our outfit.

92 ON PITCHFORK

92

riding next to Billy Ray. His head parallel to the  
ground.

93 WATERHOLE - DUSK

93 \*

The five men and Billy Ray are gathered around a small  
fire nestled among some huge boulders. Billy Ray sits  
next to Van Leek who is cleaning his weapons.

Bebe is working on his foot. Tightening the straps,  
screws, etc. It squeaks like a nail across a  
blackboard. Van Leek tosses him an oil can. Bebe  
starts to lube the mteal joints.

Zamudio and Pitchfork (his neck still bent) are  
staring at the Preacher who is counting out the  
'church' money. Dividing it into two piles.

ZAMUDIO  
He was going to let us hang.

The Preacher puts on his most innocent face.

PREACHER  
That's simply not true, Bob.

ZAMUDIO  
Roberto...

PREACHER  
Roberto, Mr. Van Leek and I had  
prearranged the entire sequence  
of events.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

Billy Ray looks at Van Leek. Did he miss something?  
Van Leek just keeps busy. His eyes on his work.

Roberto and Pitchfork are understandably suspicious.

PITCHFORK  
(to Van Leek)  
Well, you were a little late  
makin' your move, boy.

This does get a glance from Van Leek.

PREACHER  
(jumping in)  
Apparently our timepieces were  
not properly synchronized.

PITCHFORK  
What a load of mule crap!

BILLY RAY  
(piping in)  
I really think we should put all  
this discussion behind us and  
concentrate on formulating a  
plan of attack. \*

This comment elicits a couple of disdainful glances.

PITCHFORK  
Who in the hell is this snot-  
nosed panty-waist?

VAN LEEK  
(matter of factly)  
He's with me.

Billy Ray looks at Van Leek. Another unexpected  
remark.

BEBE  
He's the one who stole this.

Bebe produces the spur from the bag. Tosses it  
across. Zamudio picks it up. Examines it.

PITCHFORK  
Is this all we got to go on?!

\*

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

BEBE

His spurs are like his fingers,  
his toes, part of his body.  
They're his daddy's spurs. And  
his daddy's daddy.

PITCHFORK

(mimicking)

"They're his daddy's spurs. And  
his daddy's daddy." What a  
sorry bunch of washed up has-  
beens.

ZAMUDIO

Is muy valuable.

PREACHER

The red ones are real rubies,  
Bob... Roberto.

VAN LEEK

El Diablo's treasure.

Eyes shift to Van Leek.

VAN LEEK

(continuing)

Indian gold. European gold.  
Just sitting there waiting for  
us to take it.

BEBE

He's right. I've seen it!

BILLY RAY

El Diablo has something more  
valuable than gold down there.  
There's a young girl...

\*

PITCHFORK

Fuck your little girl!

Billy Ray springs angrily toward Pitchfork. Van  
Leek's arm stops him in mid-stroke.

VAN LEEK

You don't want to do that.

Pitchfork pulls out a knife. Waves it through the air  
in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

PITCHFORK

Yes, he does, yes, he does!  
Come on, boy! Come on!

The Preacher snaps a photo of the confrontation.  
Takes out the plate and files it away in a pouch as  
Billy Ray settles back on the ground. Pitchfork  
snarls, replaces his knife.

PREACHER

We're gonna need dynamite and  
someone to handle it. How about  
it, Bob?

ZAMUDIO

I said I don't answer to that  
gringo name.

VAN LEEK

Look... "Roh-ber-toh"... we  
would very much appreciate you  
helpin' us with your special  
talents.

BILLY RAY

He's missing some fingers.

VAN LEEK

That's how you can tell he's  
experienced with explosives.

Zamudio smiles. That's better.

ZAMUDIO

Dynamite is like a woman... it  
takes the right man to make her  
explode.

Zamudio laughs, Preacher and Van Leek join in.  
Pitchfork hushes them up. Pulls out his gun.

PITCHFORK

(staring out into  
the night)

There's somebody out there.

BEBE

I don't hear nothin'.

PITCHFORK

Indians!

BEBE

Indians? There ain't no Indians  
around here.

**PITCHFORK**

**We're in Mexico, asshole. The  
Ponkachonks, asshole. I lived  
with them for a year.**

**(CONTINUED)**

93 CONTINUED:

93

PITCHFORK(CONT)

(beat)  
Don't ever rob no Indian.

ZAMUDIO

I rob an Indian, same as  
anybody.

PITCHFORK

Did you sleep with his wife,  
too?

Everyone looks at each other apprehensively, then  
pulls a little closer toward the fire. Pitchfork  
circles behind Van Leek. His gun panning back and  
forth in front of him.

VAN LEEK

What was it like sleepin' with  
an Indian?

PITCHFORK

Better than a nigger.

Van Leek's arms are a split-second blur. Pitchfork is  
suddenly down on the ground with a knife at his  
throat.

Van Leek holds it there, his arm wrapped around the  
white man's neck. The others sit back and observe.  
Not ready to get involved. Billy Ray is wide-eyed.

VAN LEEK

Now I genrully lets a man off,  
the first time he say that to  
me. That is, if the man say he  
sorry. How about you, Mistuh  
Napyuh? You sorry?

Van Leek tightens his hold. Blood begins to run in a  
tiny trickle down Pitchfork's neck. Pitchfork sets  
his jaw stubbornly.

VAN LEEK

(continuing)  
I ain't hearin' you, Mistuh  
Napyuh?

Van Leek squeezes tighter. As his eyes begin to bulge  
out in pain, Pitchfork opens his mouth, as if to  
speak. As everyone leans forward to hear his  
apology... FFFFFFFF! An arrow buries itself deep in  
Pitchfork's chest. The others spin around.

94 AN INDIAN

94

wearing a blanket, a bow slung over his shoulder, is standing on a rock ledge, staring down at our group.

Van Leek looks at Pitchfork. Pitchfork's eyes dance crazily for an instant as he looks down at the arrow, then up at Van Leek. As Pitchfork dies:

PITCHFORK  
(barely audible)  
'Bye, nigger...

The Indian climbs down from the rock. Van Leek lets Pitchfork slip slowly from his grasp.

The Indian enters the campsite and walks right up to Pitchfork. He kneels down, draws a knife and begins to scalp. Billy Ray starts to wobble, then faints.

The rest stand frozen. No one moves while the Indian works. It only takes a few seconds. The Indian raises the scalp to the moon and gives a blood-curdling cry, then tucks it into a pouch at his side.

BEBE  
I think someone should try to talk to him.

PITCHFORK  
Go on Bob, you speak em signs.

ZAMUDIO  
Roberto.

Zamudio gives two grunts accompanied by gestures.

VAN LEEK  
I don't think the chief understands.

The Indian looks over at Van Leek. He studies him for a moment, then turns back to the fire.

INDIAN  
(after a beat)  
You fulla shit, brown man.

Everyone stares at the Indian. Shocked. Van Leek tries to decide whether he's been insulted or not.

INDIAN  
(continuing)  
And name not chief. Name  
Dancing Bear.

(CONTINUED)

95 EXT. MEXICAN PLAINS - EARLY MORNING

95

Dancing Bear now rides with the others across the plains.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

(writing voice)

We added a new member to our group last night. An Indian who had been tracking Mr. Napier for some time. Apparently Mr. Napier had bedded down with his wife, a transgression which is not looked upon favorably by members of his particular tribe. Once the Indian started talking, he told us Maximilian had stolen the gold from his people, and El Diablo stole it from them... and El Diablo had turned the Indian's people into his slaves..."

96 EXT. MESA - DAY - CLOSE ON A PAIR OF BOOTS

96

pacing off a distance. They stop and the heel makes an X in the dirt.

ZAMUDIO

(in Spanish)

Here we are you sons of bitches.

\*  
\*  
\*

97 WIDE ON OUR GANG

97

putting shovels and picks to earth.

CUT TO:

Zamudio standing in a five foot hole. Gathered around the outside of the hole is our gang.

Zamudio carefully wipes dirt off the top of a crate, where we see the word "EXPLOSIVES."

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

ZAMUDIO  
(to Bebe)  
Give me your knife.

In an instant, Bebe hurls a large knife into the top of the box.

Zamudio freezes and looks to Bebe as if he's nuts.

Zamudio slowly pulls the knife out of the wood. He carefully inserts the blade under a slat on the box, twists with great strength but even greater control, eventually causing several nails to noisily SQUEAL out of the wood, loosening the slat, revealing old and dusty sticks of dynamite.

PREACHER  
I hope this stuff is still good.

ZAMUDIO  
It's good. Now, shut up. \*

Everyone freezes as Zamudio extracts a stick of dynamite from the box, peels back the paper of one, takes a portion off with his thumb. It crumbles. Tiny droplets of liquid explosive cover his hands.

PREACHER  
Yes, sir. This little cache here has enabled Roberto and I to open accounts at over 22 banks across the southwest!

ZAMUDIO  
Sshh!  
(whispering)  
You'd better get me out of here.  
(pause)  
Not fast.

Billy Ray, Van Leek and Dancing Bear help him out of the hole.

VAN LEEK  
What's the matter?

ZAMUDIO  
(in a cold sweat)  
Is decaying, I think.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

PREACHER

I told you we shouldn't ever  
have buried it here. No shade.

\*  
\*

ZAMUDIO

(quietly)

I don't think now is the time to  
make make angry.

\*  
\*

Zamudio takes great pains not to spill the drops of  
liquid from his hand.

He walks to the edge of the clearing, away from men  
and horses, and flicks the liquid from his hand onto  
the ground. Wherever a droplet hits, an EXPLOSION  
with the power of a hand grenade goes off. Rio  
WHINNIES a loud complaint.

\*  
\*  
\*

98 EXT. MEXICAN PLAINS - DAY

98

The buckboard moving slowly down a dirt path. The  
explosives have been covered in burlap and are not  
identifiable. It has been rigged with an elaborate  
suspension system to keep the dynamite from exploding.

99 PULL OUT TO A WIDE LANDSCAPE SHOT

99

before we discover the other members of our gang.  
Dispersed at great distance from Bebe and his "wares."

100 ON BILLY RAY

100

riding next to Van Leek.

BILLY RAY

We're a bit far apart. Don't  
you think that's bad for morale?

\*  
\*

VAN LEEK

Feel free to join him, boy. I'm  
sure he'd welcome the company.

Billy Ray looks at the buckboard. Decides against it.

101 EXT. SEAMY MEXICAN VILLAGE - DUSK

101

At the base of the rugged mountains is a small village.

There are only three buildings in the entire town; a stable, a cantina, and a hotel-brothel.

The riders and the buckboard move through the twilight and into the lights reflected from the cantina.

They stop in front of the cantina and secure their horses to the hitching post.

102 INT. CANTINA DUSK

102

Where fugitives from the ten most wanted list go for a cocktail. Ethnically mixed.

Mexicans, Anglos, Indians, Chinese. Opium is smoked freely, clouding the air with heady fumes.

At the bar, gunfighters crowd around for drinks laced with insects.

Three musicians play strange MUSIC in the corner.

Billy Ray and our heroes enter the scene.

We FOLLOW Billy Ray through this gauntlet of bizarre strangers. At one point a man falls in front of him. A large knife stuck in his back. No one seems to notice or care. He gingerly steps over the corpse.

103 ANGLE ON PREACHER

103

stepping up to the bar.

BARTENDER

What do ya want?

Preacher watches the man next to him pull a large centipede out of his drink, hold it by its tail over his head and then swallow it.

BILLY RAY

(indicating the  
man's drink)

I'll have whatever he's having.

\*

\*

104 VAN LEEK AND BILLY RAY

104

at the bar together. Van Leek gets the Bartender's attention.

VAN LEEK  
Two fingers of whiskey.

He throws a coin on the counter.

BILLY RAY  
Same for me.

TRUMAN  
Tomas is that you? Bartender,  
put their drinks on my bill,  
please.

\*  
\*  
\*

Van Leek and Billy turn to see a milk-white-complected, thinning-haired, slightly consumptive-looking MAN sitting by himself in the corner. In front of him is a typewriter and a sheaf of paper.

TRUMAN  
(signaling to them)  
Thomas you Devil, come and join  
me.

\*  
\*  
\*

Van Leek and Billy Ray pick up their glasses and cross over to the table and sit down. Van Leek takes a pull from his glass. Sets it down. A moment passes.

TRUMAN  
(continuing)  
Well, aren't you going to  
introduce me to your friend,  
Thomas?

\*

VAN LEEK  
Truman, this here is Billy Ray  
Smith. Boy, this here is Truman  
Feathers. Sometimes known as  
Kid Durango.

Truman shakes Billy Ray's hand.

BILLY RAY  
Kid Durango?

VAN LEEK  
(enjoying this)  
Yeah...Kid Durango.

Billy Ray just stares. His dreams both realized and crushed in the same instant.

(CONTINUED)

VAN LEEK

This boy's read every one of  
your books, Truman.

TRUMAN

Really?

BILLY RAY

(still fighting shock)  
Kid Durango...

\*  
\*

TRUMAN

Uh hum.

VAN LEEK

(continuing)  
What are you doin' in this hole?

TRUMAN

Researching our next adventure.  
Smoke signals indicated that you  
were headed in this direction.

(beat as he eyes  
Billy Ray)

I love your outfit.  
(pats his knee)  
Where are you from?

BILLY RAY

(wary)  
Originally... Boston.  
(to Van Leek)  
What does he mean, our next  
adventure?

\*  
\*

TRUMAN

It's a wonderful arrangement.  
Thomas runs around the west  
risking his silly neck and I  
incorporate his exploits into my  
little true stories.

BILLY RAY

(trying to absorb the un  
settling information)  
You mean...?

VAN LEEK

What he means is that there  
ain't no readers wantin' to read  
about no negro cowboy.

\*

TRUMAN

(shrugs)  
Dramatic license...a necessary  
evil in the literary world.

104 CONTINUED:

104

VAN LEEK

Dramatic license... hell.  
 Course I never got to see squat.  
 What really gets me is all that  
 crap about looking another man  
 straight in the eye. Hell, he  
 ain't gonna pull a gun with his  
 eyes. You watch his hands.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Truman smiles at Van Leek. He's heard this before.

TRUMAN

I'll make a note of that.  
 (turning to Billy  
 Ray)  
You have nice hands.

Suddenly the music stops. The room quiets. The crowd  
 around the door parts, creating a path. The SOUND of  
 horses and then footsteps from outside. All eyes go  
 to the door.

Pestoso, the fattest and ugliest of El Diablo's men  
 enter with Chak Mol, the one-eyed bandido.

Prostitutes flock to their sides to offer their  
 favors. Pestoso and Chak Mol dish out gold nuggets  
 like weird celebrities from hell as they make their  
 way to the bar.

105 ON BILLY RAY

105

BILLY RAY

They were with El Diablo. They  
 robbed the bank and...

VAN LEEK

Shhh...

TRUMAN

The unattractive one is Pestoso.

VAN LEEK

The other one ain't no lady  
 killer.

TRUMAN

That's Chak Mol.

\*

BILLY RAY

You know them?

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

105

TRUMAN

They come here to unwind after  
their forays of raping and  
pillaging. I've interviewed  
both of them. Pestoso is  
surprisingly verbal.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

106 CLOSE ON VAN LEEK

106

Looking from Billy Ray to Pestoso. Thinking.

VAN LEEK

(to Billy Ray)

How do you feel about being the  
fastest gun in the west?

BILLY RAY

Huh?

107 EXT. CANTINA - DUSK

107

We are CLOSE on Billy Ray as he steps out of the  
cantina. The street is deserted. He walks slowly,  
absolute terror in his eyes.

FOOTFALLS behind him. He turns. Pestoso is standing  
there, arms at his side, a grin on his face.

PESTOSO

So you're the fastest gun in  
the west.

Billy Ray tries his best to quell the terror rising  
inside of him. He carefully reaches into his pocket  
and brings out the spur. He holds it up.

BILLY RAY

You know the man who this  
belongs to?

Pestoso reacts to the sight of the spur.

PESTOSO

Where did you get it, gringo?

BILLY RAY

Take me to him.

Pestoso unhooks the leather straps that cover the  
hammers of his two six-shooters.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED:

107

PESTOSO  
Take you to who?

BILLY RAY  
El Diablo.

Pestoso laughs. Billy Ray puts the spur back into his pocket, starts to back up.

PESTOSO  
Where are you going, gringo?

Pestoso's hands move out, over his guns.

107A ANGLE ON TRUMAN

107A

His head peeking through the doorway.

107B RETURN TO BILLY RAY

107B

Still moving backwards. Pestoso's eyes narrowing, confident. Billy Ray blinks. A bead of sweat rolls down his forehead.

Pestoso goes for his gun. Billy Ray instinctively shuts his eyes as he reaches for his weapon. A SHOT RINGS OUT. THEN A SECOND SHOT.

Billy Ray waits for the bullet, for the sharp flash of pain. But it doesn't come. He opens his eyes. Sees Pestoso standing in front of him. Wavering back and forth. A bullet hole in his forehead. He holds his gun up in front of his face. It's smoking.

108 ANGLE ON VAN LEEK

108

Above the street in a bell tower. He lowers his rifle and exits.

Billy Ray looks down at his gun. Back up at Pestoso who is still on his feet. Behind him the FOOTFALLS of Van Leek.

108A ANGLE ON TRUMAN

108A

His eyes moving from Billy Ray to Pestoso, back to Billy Ray. Disbelief on his face.

108B ANGLE ON VAN LEEK

108B

As he walks down the street toward Billy Ray.

VAN LEEK  
(as he passes Billy  
Ray)  
Good shot, boy.

\*

Van Leek stops in front of Pestoso. Blood pouring from the hole in his head. Van Leek smiles and then puts the muzzle of his gun right on his nose. He makes a clicking sound with his tongue and pushes gently. Pestoso collapses to the ground.

109 ON THE CANTINA

109

Chak Mol exits. Sees Pestoso on the ground. Van Leek standing over him.

CHAK MOL  
(calm and deadly)  
You?

Van Leek stares at Chak Mol a beat and then shakes his head. Nods toward BILLY Ray standing with his gun at his side.

Chak Mol takes a step toward Billy Ray. Billy Ray looks to Van Leek for help. Van Leek taps the heel of his boot.

Billy Ray produces the spur again. Chak Mol considers the spur, then Pestoso, dead in the middle of the street.

CHAK MOL  
(continuing)  
I meet you in the morning. Just  
outside of town. At the Tree of  
Death. Come alone.

\*  
\*

BILLY RAY  
Tree of Death?

CUT TO:

110 EXT. CANTINA - MORNING

110

Van Leek, Billy Ray, Dancing Bear and Preacher are mounting up. Zamudio and Bebe head for the buckboard.

ZAMUDIO  
Cuidado, Bebe.

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED:

110

Zamudio takes a stick, extends it carefully to the buckboard. He raises the tarp, causing a menacing RATTLE.

A huge rattlesnake emerges. In a reflex Bebe draws his knife.

ZAMUDIO  
(continuing)  
No. Don't hurt her.  
(to the snake)  
Easy, Rosita. Solamente mio.

BEBE  
(angrily)  
You never said anything about a snake! You been lettin' me ride next to that thing?

ZAMUDIO  
She doesn't bite unless she is mad.

He gets out a purple, velvet sack, holds it open for the snake.

ZAMUDIO  
(continuing)  
Ven aca, mi novia.  
(to Bebe)  
She is like a woman. Dress her in velvet and she will come crawling to you.

The snake winds its way obediently into the sack, and Zamudio ties it to the side of the buckboard.

CUT TO:

111 VAN LEEK

111

his eyes shifting from the snake sack to a rider coming down the street.

112 ON RIDER

112

It's Truman. White hat, pearl handled guns at his hips and astride a white horse. A light blue silk scarf is tied round his neck and behind him is a PACK MULE. Loaded down with Truman's gear for the trail.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

His typewriter, cooking supplies, food, blankets, and pillow, etc.

\*  
\*

BILLY RAY

It's Truman.

\*  
\*

The horse and rider approach and stop.

VAN LEEK

What the hell do you think you're doin', Feathers?

\*

TRUMAN

I've decided to join the expedition.

VAN LEEK

I ain't taking you out there with me.

TRUMAN

You won't have to worry about me.

VAN LEEK

I ain't worried about about you. I'm worried about us...with you out there.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

TRUMAN

I won't be a burden. And I'm sure I can perform some useful functions on the trail. I'm an excellent cook.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

BEBE

Can you make coffee?

TRUMAN

(patting his  
saddlebag)

I brought fresh Colombian beans. And I make a great omelette.

DANCING BEAR

What is omelette, Limp Wrist?

TRUMAN

Cheese, peppers, diced ham folded into three eggs in an iron skillet slightly oiled...

\*

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

DANCING BEAR  
Mushrooms, snake meat, squash  
okay?

TRUMAN  
I wouldn't recommend the squash  
but it's really up to...

VAN LEEK  
(exasperated)  
For Christ Sakes! Just move  
out!

113 EXT. MEXICAN PLAINS - WIDE ON - DAY

113

the group riding across the plains.

114 CLOSER ON

114

DANCING BEAR  
Deadmen.

\*  
\*

PREACHER  
Yes, well I enjoy photographing  
live subjects, but I find photographs  
of dead men sell much better.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Billy Ray riding next to Truman. Truman's mule tags  
along behind them.

BILLY RAY  
You stole, I mean, used Kid from  
Billy the Kid. Where did you get  
Durango from?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

TRUMAN  
We were in Durango at the time  
when we struck up the arrangement.

\*  
\*  
\*

TRUMAN  
... as long as I didn't mention  
his name, he didn't mind. I  
believe his precise comment was,  
"A gunfighter don't need no  
publicity." Or something  
equally as eloquent.

BILLY RAY  
I still don't get why you're  
coming with us.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

TRUMAN

112

It was really your example. You see I'm always writing about someone else. I'd like to think that before I pass on I can include an adventure of my very own.

(beat)

That was such a timeless moment in the street with you and Pestoso. It will virtually write itself.

BILLY RAY

You mean you're going to put me in one of your books?

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: 114

TRUMAN

Of course.

(off Billy Ray's pleased  
reaction)

Every story needs a hero. \*

115 ON VAN LEEK 115

riding up next to them. They stop.

VAN LEEK

Let me see that spur.

Billy Ray hands it to him. Van Leek breaks it in two,  
hands the shank back to Billy and pockets the pointed  
wheel.

VAN LEEK

(continuing)

You keep that half. It's your  
calling card. Go on, boy.  
We'll be right behind you. \*

TRUMAN

Good luck, Billy Ray.

116 EXT. TREE OF DEATH - CLOSE ON - DAY 116

a skull. A hideous, death's head FILLING THE FRAME.  
Then another. And another. The CAMERA CONTINUES its  
arc until we SETTLE on the face of Chak Mol.

117 WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL 117

Chak Mol sitting on his horse under the Tree of Death.

The Tree of Death stands in the middle of a wide  
expanse of land. Several skulls, animal and human,  
hang from its branches on small pieces of wire that  
glisten in the dawn sunlight.

Slowly, Billy Ray ENTERS THE FRAME. He rides up to  
the tree. Chak Mol looks at him with disdain and then  
rides off. Billy Ray pauses. Looks at the tree.

BILLY RAY

Excuse me...could you tell me  
precisely why this is called the  
Tree of Death? Excuse me...

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED: 117

But Chak Mol just keeps riding. Billy Ray reluctantly kicks his horse and follows.

118 EXT. CANYON - WIDE ANGLE - DAY 118

A wide and nearly impenetrable canyon. The wind whips around Billy Ray and his escort as they wind further and further into the canyon.

119 EXT. CANYON - ANOTHER AREA - ON A SENTRY 119

Sitting motionless on horseback upon an outcrop above the canyon floor. He is protected with a medieval breast plate.

The sentry looks to his right and we PAN to find a second SENTRY, then a third, a fourth, a fifth. They all watch Chak Mol and the stranger.

Chak Mol looks up and signals to the Sentries, who allow them to pass.

120 OMIT 120 \*

OMIT

121 EXT. TUNNEL 121

An old and gnarled MEXICAN WOMAN sits at the entrance to a tunnel cut into the side of a mountain. As Chak Mol and Billy Ray approach she works her way to her feet and hobbles toward their horses.

OLD WOMAN  
(grabbing Billy  
Ray's leg)  
Peso! Peso, por favor. Peso,  
para la buena suerte.

Billy Ray glances toward Chak Mol, who grins back at him. Trying not to betray his nerves, Billy Ray slips a coin from his pocket and hands it to the Woman.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

121

The Old Woman releases her grip. Billy Ray enters the tunnel.

122 EXT. CANYON (SAME LOCATION AS 119)

122

SHOT from the top of the cliffs looking down into the canyon and at the Sentries stationed in various areas.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL Van Leek, the Preacher, Dancing Bear and Truman scouting.

VAN LEEK

They're too spread out for us to take all at once.

123 ON PREACHER

123

thinking.

PREACHER

I think, there just might be a solution to that problem forthcoming .

\*  
\*  
\*

CUT TO:

124 THE CANYON FLOOR

124

as the Preacher enters alone. He is carrying his camera and a tripod which he plants in the ground and starts adjusting. The Sentries take immediate notice.

PREACHER

Buenos dias. Buenos dias.

\*  
\*

SENTRY 1

Hey, hombre. Que quieres?

The Preacher throws a friendly wave.

The Sentry is naturally suspicious. He quickly works his way down the side of the cliff and approaches the Preacher.

PREACHER

(continuing)

Hola, amigo! This is so beautiful... so dramatic.

\*  
\*

The Sentry ignores the Preacher's extended hand. Checks him for weapons and then examines the camera. Not sure what to make of it.

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

124

The Preacher dips into his pack and pulls out several photos and shows them to the Sentry.

125 CLOSE ON PHOTOS

125

PREACHER

Quiero un photo ustedes sus  
amigos? Una photo para historia?

SENTRY 1

Muchachos. Photographias de  
baditos. Uno photographia te  
mi?

PREACHER

(as the Sentry  
studies the photo,  
fascinated)

Si prego.

SENTRY 1

(a big grin)

Si. con pistoles?

PREACHER

Pistoles com sa. Bueno. Muy,  
muy bueno. Y sus amigos?

SENTRY 1

Todas muentos.

CUT TO:

126 THE POSSE

126

The Preacher moves behind the camera. Ducks under the  
black cloth and holds up a hand.

PREACHER

(continuing)

Uno... dos...tres.

And a volley of BULLETS tear into our unsuspecting  
subjects. Only Sentry 1 is still standing. But only  
for a beat before an arrow pierces his chest.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

126

\*  
\*  
\*

PREACHER  
(continuing)  
Thank you, gentlemen.

Sentry 1 looks down at the arrow in his chest. Takes both hands and grips the shaft. Pulls. His face an agonized grimace. The arrow comes out slowly, painfully. Sweat rolls down his face. One final yank. The bloody tip emerges. He throws the arrow down on the ground and looks at the Preacher. Defiantly...

But only for a beat because then another arrow imbeds itself in precisely the same spot. Sentry 1 looks down again. Shakes his head in resignation and falls over.

CUT TO:

127 OUR GANG

127

Van Leek, Dancing Bear, Truman and Preacher stepping INTO THE FRAME. Looking down at the CAMERA.

128 THEIR POV - THE SENTRIES

128

Dancing Bear bends down and removes his arrow.

129 ON TRUMAN

129

turning away.

TRUMAN  
All of those bullets, Thomas.  
Dancing Bear was much more  
effective.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

VAN LEEK  
Every little bit helps, Truman.  
Every little bit helps.

\*  
\*  
\*

130 ON DANCING BEAR

130

wiping the arrow off and replacing it in his quiver.

131 EXT. CANYON (SAME AS 126) - LATER 131

Bebe and Zamudio on the buckboard. They exchange a glance as they pass the dead sentries.

132 EXT. DIABLO'S VILLAGE 132

Billy Ray and Chak Mol emerge from the tunnel. In front of them is a Mexican village with a huge hacienda overlooking it.

Armed guards supervise young Indian men and women in various forms of manual labor.

Billy Ray and Chak Mol enter the compound through the main gate. They approach and pass a wooden guard tower with an armed sentry on top.

133 OMITTED 133  
thru thru  
137 137

138 EXT. ENTRANCE TO CAVE 138

The Old Beggar Woman at her station as the buckboard approaches.

OLD WOMAN

Peso! Peso, por favor. Peso  
para la suerte.

\*  
\*  
\*

BEBE

Get the hell away from me,  
woman!

OLD WOMAN

(her voice suddenly  
dropping two  
octaves)

May this mountain fall in on  
your head, you cheap son of a  
bitch!

\*  
\*

She removes the shawl. It's the Preacher.

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED:

138

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Dancing Bear and Truman emerge with their horses from behind large boulders. They huddle next to the buckboard.

VAN LEEK

We split up here.

(to the buckboard)

The east tunnel will bring you out above the village. Wait for my signal. Good luck.

\*

PREACHER

I think a little prayer is in order before we embark upon this perilous ordeal. If you will join me in reciting the...Lord's Prayer. Our Father...

\*  
\*

Bebe snaps the reins. The buckboard takes off leaving the Preacher in mid-sentence.

Van Leek and the others watch them enter the tunnel and then disappear around a bend.

DANCING BEAR

This is very sorry war party we have, brown man.

VAN LEEK

Best I could do, Red Man.

DANCING BEAR

(deadly serious)

I am here to free my people. Do not get in my way.

VAN LEEK

Wouldn't think of it.

And with that Dancing Bear enters the cave leaving Van Leek and Truman. Van Leek gets on his horse.

TRUMAN

Thomas?

Van Leek turns.

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED:

138

TRUMAN  
(continuing)  
Do you mind if I make a comment?

VAN LEEK  
If it's short.

TRUMAN  
I think your behavior in this  
endeavor is questionable.

Van Leek just looks at him. A bored expression on his  
face.

TRUMAN  
(continuing)  
It's perfectly obvious what  
you're up to. You're using the  
boy as a diversion so that you  
can steal as much gold as you  
can get. You're all a bunch of  
mercenaries. Only Dancing Bear  
is motivated by honorable  
intentions.

VAN LEEK  
You through?

TRUMAN  
Yes. I just had to get it off  
my chest.

VAN LEEK  
I hope you feel better. Come on  
Rio.

\*

Van Leek kicks his horse and enters the cave. Truman  
watches him. Obviously nervous about entering.  
Finally he taps his horse and cautiously moves  
forward.

VAN LEEK  
(continuing)  
Diablo won't touch the kid without  
his spur.

\*

\*

CUT TO:

---

EXT. HACIENDA

138A

Billy Ray at the stake. Shackled. El Diablo enters the compound on his horse. He rides up to Billy Ray. Observes him for a moment. As if trying to place him in his mind. He dismounts. Hands the reins to Chak Mool and approaches Billy Ray. He faces Billy Ray. Only inches apart.

EL DIABLO

So you are the boy who  
killed Pestoso? What is your  
name, little boy?

BILLY RAY

William Raymond Smith. Mr. ah...  
Devil, is it?

EL DIABLO

...and I understand, Mr. William  
Raymond Smith, that you have brought  
something for me.

BILLY RAY

Yes, sir.

\*

El Diablo snaps his fingers. Chak Mool toses him the spur.  
El Diablo examines it. Begins to circe Billy Ray.

EL DIABLO

This is my spur, I believe.

BILLY RAY

That is correct.

EL DIABLO

But I see that something is missing.

BILLY RAY

That is also correct.

EL DIABLO

And where is the missing piece?

BILLY RAY

That's for me to know and you to  
find out.

EL DIABLO

Oh...

BILLY RAY

I want to exchange it, the missing  
piece that is, for the girl.

EL DIABLO

And what girl is that?

BILLY RAY

Miss Nettie Tuleen.

El Diablo's expression is vague.

BILLY RAY

(cont.)

You kidnapped her in front of my  
school about 5 weeks ago.

EL DIABLO

(smiling)

So many towns, so many girls.

\*  
\*

\*  
\*

BILLY RAY  
Well, she's about this

...about five  
foot four,... blond  
and quite attractive...and a good  
student.

EL DIABLO  
Does she look like...(he claps his  
hands)....

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

B ANGLE ON NETTIE

1385

escorted out onto the balcony on the hacienda by El Triste.

\*  
\*

BILLY RAY sees Nettie. Reacts to Nettie. And her new 'look'.

BILLY RAY  
Yes, she does. (squinting)  
Although I don't recall the outfit.

El Diablo looks at Nettie for the first time.

EL DIABLO  
Yes, she is

\*

El Triste begins to walk Nettie down the steps. Billy Ray's eyes  
shift back and forth between her and El Diablo.

EL DIABLO (CONT'D)  
...and she is a very good student.

\*  
\*

EL DIABLO (CONT'D)  
I like my spurs very much, Mr. Smith.  
They belong to my father and his  
father's father's father.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

BILLY RAY  
Now technically, it wasn't stolen...

\*  
\*

75D.

Nettie stops next to El Diablo. She sits down on his lap. El Diablo strokes her hair.

\*  
\*

She just looks through him.

EL DIABLO

(his eyes shift to Nettie)

...but Rosita...

BILLY RAY

Rosita?

EL DIABLO

...but Rosita means more to me than  
a few stones....(he scatters a handful  
of rubies across the ground)...and a  
piece of metal.

And with that he tosses the spur to the ground and puts legs up on a barrel in front of his chair.

Two identical 'El Diablo' trade mark spurs on his boots.  
He turns to Billy Ray and laughs. Billy Ray gulps.

CUT TO:

139 OMITTED

139

139A OMIT

OMIT 139A\*

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

134B EXT. HILLSIDE - ABOVE THE HACIENDA

139B

BINOCULAR MATTE on Diablo's spurs.

139C ON VAN LEEK

139C

passing the binoculars to Truman.

TRUMAN

Your play seems to have taken  
an unexpected turn for the worse,  
Thomas.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

VAN LEEK

Spare spurs.

Truman looks.

TRUMAN

Spoiled by spare spurs.

(beat)

Try saying it three times...  
fast. Spoiled by spare spurs...  
spoiled by...

\*  
  
\*

VAN LEEK

Shut up.

\*

TRUMAN

I'm sorry. It's just that I'm  
nervous about the boy. Do you  
think they'll hurt him?

\*  
\*  
\*

VAN LEEK

I'm going to hurt you if you  
don't shut up.

\*  
\*  
\*

CUT TO:

139D EXT. HACIENDA

139D

CAMERA PULLS OUT to FULL SHOT of El Diablo. Chak Mol stands next to him. He hands El Diablo a gun.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)  
Our plan had proven ineffectual.  
I was left at the mercy of El  
Diablo and his companions. My  
prospects were not hopeful.

El Diablo aims and FIRES. The bullet imbeds itself in the wood stake just above Billy Ray's head. Another SHOT. Between his legs. Target practice.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)  
(continuing)  
Frantic though I was my eyes  
searched for signs of Nettie as  
El Diablo amused himself.

139E BILLY RAY'S POV OF NETTIE

139E

Appearing on the balcony of the hacienda. Dressed in a thin white gown. A crown of gold pieces on her head.

El Diablo motions to her. She waves back and hurries down the steps toward him.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)  
Finally I saw her. Although it  
was from a distance I could tell  
she had changed.

Nettie approaches. Billy Ray strains at his irons.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)  
Nettie...Nettie.

But she just looks blankly at him. Instead she puts an arm around El Diablo. He squeezes her around the waist and kisses her on the neck. He puts her on his lap and then hands her the gun. She points it at Billy Ray.

El Diablo braces her arms. Steadying her aim.

BILLY RAY  
She was not the same Nettie who  
was in my classroom five weeks  
ago. It was El Diablo's work I  
was sure.

(CONTINUED)

139E CONTINUED:

139E

And she fires. The bullet rips through the stake just above Billy Ray's head. Nettie smiles. Draws another bead.

139F OMIT

139F

140 EXT. JUST BEYOND VILLAGE - DAY

140

Bebe, Preacher and Zamudio make their way toward the backside of the village. Bebe has the reins and the Preacher is sitting next to him. Zamudio is in the back.

ZAMUDIO

I am sick and tired of sitting  
in the back. My people always  
in the back.

\*  
\*  
\*

PREACHER

Alright, you can sit in the  
front on the way home.

\*

ZAMUDIO

No, not on way home. Now It's  
your turn Atalicus.

\*  
\*

PREACHER

I'm not getting back there with  
your godforsaken pet.

\*

ZAMUDIO

Who you calling godforsaken?  
Don't push.

\*  
\*  
\*

Suddenly, THREE BANDIDOS appear, interrupting the argument. Bebe stops the buckboard as they level their rifles.

BEBE

Afternoon, fellas. Are we on  
the right road for the Diablo  
residence?

The Bandidos just stare. More than casually  
suspicious.

ZAMUDIO

(Silence) I'll handle this.  
These are my people. Buenos  
dias amigos. Non estamos, todo  
bien. (Silence) These are not  
my people.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED

140

BEBE  
(continuing;  
starting a mock  
argument)

Dammit, I knew we should have  
turned right back at the fork.

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED:

140

PREACHER

I told you you should have let  
me drive.

BANDIT 1

Throw down your weapons!

BEBE

Whoa, settle down, boys. We got  
no quarrel with you. We're just  
here to deliver supplies.

PREACHER

(jumping in)  
Collin's catering. These are my  
associates; Bob...

ZAMUDIO

Roberto

PREACHER

... and Bebe our new chief.  
Fine wines and imported  
delicacies. Silken robes and...

Bandit 1 FIRES. Too close. Bebe, Zamudio and the  
preacher don't hesitate. They toss their weapons.

BANDIT 1

What's in the bag?

He is referring to Zamudio's velvet sack, which rides  
suspended on the post midway down the wagon bed.

ZAMUDIO

(feigned  
desperation)

It's nothing. You can have  
anything else you want in the  
wagon, but don't touch the bag.  
OK?

The Bandit brings his gun to Zamudio's nostril, pushes  
it wide with the barrel.

BANDIT 1

I will decide what I want.

ZAMUDIO

(still bluffing)

I'd rather die than let you have  
that bag.

The Bandit pulls his trigger, BLASTING Zamudio in the  
face. The Preacher and Bebe stare in horror.

140 CONTINUED

BANDIT 1  
Any other requests?

140

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED:

140

He gestures for the Preacher to hand him the sack.  
The Preacher obeys. Very willingly.

The second Bandit keeps his gun trained on them as  
Bandit 1 glances into the velvet sack. He is  
instantly bitten in the face by the rattlesnake.

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED: (2)

140

The Preacher flicks his wrist and a derringer slides  
into his hand. He finishes off Bandit then swings his  
pistol and SHOTS Bandit 2.

Unfortunately, Bandit 3 has had time to get his act  
together. He FIRES. The Preacher is thrown out of the  
buckboard.

But before Bandit 3 can take out Bebe a large Bowie  
knife is airborne, imbedding itself in Bandit 3's throat.  
He rocks in his saddle a moment and then slides off.

Bebe assesses the carnage.

Zamudio is laying in the back. His feet propped up  
over the sides.

The Preacher is flat on the ground facing the sky.  
Mortally wounded.

PREACHER  
(the words escaping  
with his last  
breath)  
'What a friend we have in Jesus,  
all our sins and grief to  
bear...

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

141 WE HEAR A RATTLE

141

Bebe's eyes move off the Preacher. They search the  
landscape.

\*

HIS POV of Rosita slithering off into the desert.

CUT TO:

142 OMITTED

142

142A EXT. HACIENDA - CLOSE ON

142A

a large, sacrificial knife gleaming in the sunlight. El Diablo picks up the knife and walks over to Billy Ray at the stake. Chak Mol stands in the background with Nettie while El Diablo paces back and forth in front of him.

EL DIABLO

When my people came to this country they encountered both incredible intelligence and incredible savagery. The Mayas built pyramids, charted the heavens and gave us our calendar, while the Aztecs brought the art of human sacrifice to a new height. My people conquered both civilizations but we learned something from each.

He places the knife on Billy Ray's neck and runs it down his chest (pressing only lightly), to his stomach, to his crotch.

EL DIABLO

(continuing)

One must be both cultivated and treacherous. One must be both philosophical and...

(beat)

... protective.

He applies pressure to the knife. Billy Ray winces.

143 EXT. ROCKY HILLTOP - OVERLOOKING VILLAGE

143

The horses have been unhitched and the buckboard has been transformed into a four-wheeled bomb. Fuses dangle on all sides.

Bebe looks down on the village, then at the hillside beyond. A flash of light from a mirror. His signal.

He lights the fuses and then jumps on the buckboard. He releases the wood brake and the wheels start moving. He positions the buckboard on a line with the village with a steering lever. Once he is satisfied that it's heading in the right direction he slides over to jump off.

(CONTINUED)

143 CONTINUED:

143

But at that moment his wooden foot gets stuck in a floorboard. He pulls with his body, with his arms. He tries to unstrap the leg but it's fastened too tight, with too many straps.

He looks up. The village rapidly approaching. Time has run out. A look of resignation on his face.

BEBE

Ah, what the hell.

He takes off his hat and waves it like a bronco rider riding to his death.

BEBE

(continuing)

Yiiiiiaaaaaaa! El Diablo,  
company is coming.  
Yiiiiiaaaaa!

\*  
\*  
\*

144 OMITTED

144

144A EXT. HACIENDA

144A

The knife is poised in El Diablo's hand. Ready to strike.

Billy Ray's face is drenched with sweat. He catches a last glance at Nettie. Her face a cipher. Back to El Diablo and the knife.

145 EXT. VILLAGE

145

The buckboard shoots through the main arch into the village square.

Heads turn.

Including El Diablo and Chak Mol's. Reacting at this runaway vehicle with the crazy man riding it. Waving his hat, laughing and screaming.

The buckboard rams into a sculpture of a crucifix in the center of the compound. And... doesn't explode.

Bebe looks around. All eyes focused on him. He waves his hat again. Another yell, but much quieter. A nervous smile as...

Chak Mol, El Triste and El Matador approach him. With weapons drawn.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: 145  
\*  
\*

146 CLOSE ON 146  
a fuse burning down.

147 WIDE ON 147  
The buckboard and Bebe BLOWING UP. Chak Mol, El Triste and El Matador go with him.

148 CLOSE ON 148  
the blade of El Diablo's knife thrust into the stake right between Billy Ray's legs.

149 WIDE ON 149  
the compound. Covered with smoke.

150 THE FOLLOWING SHOTS FROM BILLY RAY'S POV 150  
Dancing Bear entering the compound. Killing a sentry. He takes his gun and uses it to break the chains of an Indian slave.  
El Diablo grabbing Nettie and fleeing through an archway.  
Van Leek appearing out of the smoke. He FIRES at a sentry.  
Truman spinning around in the battle. Scared to death. He races to a corner and sits down. His hands braced around his knees. He catches Billy Ray's eyes and looks away.

151 VAN LEEK 151  
sees Truman huddled against the wall.

VAN LEEK  
It's a whole lot different then  
writing about it, ain't it  
Truman.

He spots Billy Ray. Hurries over to him. He removes the knife from the stake and uses it to cut the ropes.

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED:

151

BILLY RAY  
 (frantic)  
 El Diablo took Nettie with him!  
 We have to catch them!

But Van Leek has something else on his mind. He crosses over to the site where the buckboard exploded. There is a huge hole in the ground. And the hole is filled with gold.

152 ON VAN LEEK

152

staring.

Billy Ray walks over and peers down into the hole. He looks at Van Leek. A smile on his face.

VAN LEEK  
 Good ol' Bebe.

BILLY RAY  
 This is why you're here... for the gold. It's more important to you than getting the girl back.

VAN LEEK  
 The little girl ain't my problem, boy.

Billy Ray stares hard at him. Trying to see something behind his eyes. But Van Leek isn't showing him anything.

Another beat and then Billy Ray takes off. Leaving Van Leek in front of the treasure. A shaft of light breaks through the smoke, bounces off the gold and plays across his face.

153 OMITTED  
 thru  
 157

153  
 thru  
 157

158 EXT. CAVE - DAY

158

CLOSE ON a torn piece of clothing. White, silk.

Billy Ray picks it up. Examines it. The dress Nettie was wearing.

(CONTINUED)

158 CONTINUED:

158

He looks up. In front of him is the entrance to the cave. He picks up a heavy stick of wood and enters. Torches and the blue light from the multiple exits in the distance marking his path.

159 INT. CAVE

159

He walks slowly. His expectation and fear palpable. No sound other than the WIND WHISTLING through the tunnels. A rock loosens from the wall and lands in front of him. He jumps. Catches his breath. He continues moving.

Suddenly a shape races past an exit. Dressed in white. A flash of blonde hair? Nettie? He gathers his courage.

BILLY RAY

Nettie?

But all he hears is the ECHO of his own voice. He moves forward. Faster. She appears again. She faces him. Silhouetted in the light. Almost an apparition.

BILLY RAY

(continuing)

Nettie!

But then she is gone. Billy Ray starts running. Toward the light. Toward Nettie. He runs until...

Another silhouette appears. This one is tall, dark. El Diablo. Billy Ray stops. Squeezes the stick in his hand. El Diablo's laughter reverberates through the tunnel.

EL DIABLO

Hello, little boy. Looking for something

BILLY RAY

I want the girl.

EL DIABLO

And how are you going to get her back? With that stick?

Another laugh.

(CONTINUED)

159 CONTINUED:

159

EL DIABLO

(continuing)

I think you have made a very big  
mistake walking into this cave  
with your little stick.

FOOTFALLS are heard over El Diablo's laughter. Billy  
Ray reacts as Truman walks around a corner and steps  
in front of him. Faces El Diablo.

TRUMAN

Give up the girl, Diablo.

El Diablo takes a beat to consider this sight in front  
of him. His amusement rises to new heights.

EL DIABLO

Now who is this, little boy?

TRUMAN

(answering for  
himself)

Kid Durango.

EL DIABLO

Oh, Kid Durango. And I am to be  
frightened by this name?

Bill Ray watches as Truman's hands hover over his  
guns. Shaking violently.

BILLY RAY

You don't have to do this,  
Truman.

TRUMAN

Yes I do. I don't want you to  
get hurt.

\*

\*

BILLY RAY

Truman...

EL DIABLO

Since you are the guest, Mr. Kid  
Durango, I will wait for you to  
make the first move.

160 ON TRUMAN

160

trembling. His hands moving slowly to his guns.

161 ON EL DIABLO 161

calmly waiting. His hands hanging loosely at his side.

162 ON TRUMAN 162

he can't make the move. He's petrified.

163 EL DIABLO 163

draws. The gun is out in a split second and he FIRES.

Truman falls back into Billy Ray's arms, knocking them both to the ground.

El Diablo replaces his gun as he holds his position.

Billy Ray cradles Truman in his arms. He is fading quickly.

BILLY RAY

Oh, Truman. You didn't have to.  
Truman...

Truman shakes his head. Silences him.

TRUMAN

I did Billy Ray, I did. Oh it hurts. I never thought about the pain. I assumed it would be over quickly. You're just ruining a perfectly good scarf.

BILLY RAY

Oh, sorry.

TRUMAN

It's too late.

BILLY RAY

No it isn't Truman.

TRUMAN

I want you to do something for me. Two things.

BILLY RAY

Anything.

TRUMAN

Give my omelette pans to Dancing Bear.

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED:

TRUMAN (CONT'D)  
(fighting for  
breath)  
nd eh...I want you to...

163

BILLY RAY  
Your coffee grinder?

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED:

163

TRUMAN

No. Kill him. Kill El Diablo.  
Finish the story.

\*

BILLY RAY

You're not going to die, Truman.  
You're going to be okay.

TRUMAN

You're right. I've never felt  
so alive.

And on that cue he dies in Billy Ray's arms.

EL DIABLO (O.S.)

In whose arms are you going to  
die, little boy?

Billy Ray stands up. Faces El Diablo.

BILLY RAY

He didn't even go for his guns.

EL DIABLO

I was getting bored. I am a  
busy man.

He takes out his gun. Points it at Billy Ray.

EL DIABLO

(continuing)

Now where would you like me to  
shoot you? I will give you the  
choice.

Billy Ray looks down once more at Truman. Blood  
covering his lifeless body. Back at El Diablo. His  
gun trained on him.

He doesn't want to die. Doesn't want to join Truman.

BILLY RAY

Where?... ah...

EL DIABLO

(pointing to  
himself)

La cabeza...

(head)

La corazon...

(heart)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED:

163

EL DIABLO  
(CONT)  
El estomago.  
(stomach)

\*  
\*

EL DIABLO (CONT'D)  
I would not recommend the  
stomach. it is very painful and  
takes a long time to die.  
(he cocks his gun)  
But please make your decision...  
quickly. You have seen that I  
am an impatient man.

BILLY RAY  
How about if you just wing me in  
the shoulder?  
(indicating)  
Right about here.

EL DIABLO  
You are very funny, little boy.  
(he levels the gun,  
squints through  
the sights)  
I think maybe la cabeza.

164 ANOTHER GUN BEING COCKED

164

He opens his eyes. At the end of another opening, a  
pair of boots. The muzzle of a rifle visible.

El Diablo also hears the SOUND. He turns from Billy  
Ray...

165 EXT. CAVE

165

... and sees Van Leek standing forty feet away. A  
long silence as they size each other up.

EL DIABLO  
Finally, someone who is worthy  
of the challenge.

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED:

165

VAN LEEK  
Cut the bullshit, Diablo, and  
make your move.

They square off. Eyes riveted. Hands coiled.

166 INT. CAVE

166

Billy Ray kneels down and removes a gun from Truman's  
holster. He moves forward.

167 EXT. CAVE

167

Van Leek and El Diablo share that eternal second  
before...

168 EL DIABLO DRAWS

168

Van Leek's hands move. A split second reaction. But  
it's not fast enough. Diablo FIRES and Van Leek goes  
down. Diablo smiles as he levels his gun at Van Leek  
on the ground. He pulls back the hammer. His finger  
touching the trigger, squeezing slowly.

Then a BLAST and an ECHO from inside the cave. El  
Diablo pitches forward. Lands face first in the dirt.

Billy Ray emerges from the cave. Approaches El  
Diablo. Both hands still on the gun. El Diablo is  
motionless, dead. He races over to Van Leek and  
kneels down. Van Leek is bleeding from his shoulder.  
Billy Ray props his head up on his lap and puts his  
bandana over the wound.

VAN LEEK  
(looking up)  
You shot him in the back.

BILLY RAY  
His back was to me.

A beat and then he smiles.

169 EXT. MEXICAN PLAINS - DAY

169

CLOSE ON the charred remains of Bebe's wooden leg  
being pounded into the ground. A makeshift cross.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED:

169

CAMERA PANS from Bebe's marker to a cross with Zamudio's sombrero resting on top... to a cross fashioned from the Preacher's tripod... to a cross with Truman's silk scarf waving in the breeze.

170 WIDE

170

Billy Ray, Van Leek (his arm in a sling), Dancing Bear, Nettie and the graves only small figures in a western panorama.

VAN LEEK

I don't have much more to say.  
I don't plan to join you any time soon.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

We buried Truman, the Preacher, Roberto and what we could find of Bebe in the high plains. Dancing Bear picked out the spot saying that the ground was rich in his ancestors' blood and would nourish our compatriots souls. Mr. Van Leek said a few words and then Dancing Bear did a little burial dance. He said it was one that he originated and was now used by many tribes. Nettie was still not herself. She was obviously confused and still in turmoil over the entire event.

During this VOICE OVER parallel images play on the screen. All SHOT from the WIDE MASTER.

Van Leek speaking (his voice barely audible in the distance).

Dancing Bear doing his jig.

Nettie breaking away from the group and running and Billy Ray chasing after her.

171 EXT. PLAINS - MORNING

171

Dancing Bear riding across the plains. Towing Truman's mule behind him.

(CONTINUED)

171 CONTINUED:

171

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

Dancing Bear parted with us after the funeral. He said he was going to visit some mineral springs in the mountains of New Mexico. He said it was a good place to relax after a battle and find a new squaw. Although I didn't get to know him very well, I was sorry to see him go. He was an honorable man.

CUT TO:

171A BILLY RAY AND VAN LEEK

riding side by side. Billy Ray is on Truman's horse. His typewriter strapped on back. Nettie is walking along side. Billy Ray tries to entice her to ride with him. She starts running again. Billy Ray gives chase.

VAN LEEK

Hurry up.

\*  
\*

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

Just a minute. The experience had a profound effect on Nettie. The smile had faded and sparkle in her eyes was missing. But Nettie was still young and she was strong.

CUT TO:

171B NETTIE

riding with Billy Ray leading the horse.

CUT TO:

171C NETTIE

doubled up with Billy Ray. She slowly extends her arms and then wraps them around his waist. She rests her head against his back and the tears start to flow.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

As we travelled I felt her pulling away less and less. When I felt her arms tighten around me and her warm tears on my back I knew she was not lost.

\*

172 EXT. INDEPENDENCE - CLOSE ON - DUSK 172

Mrs. Tuleen's face. Washed with disbelief and joy.

173 HER POV 173

Van Leek, Billy Ray and Nettie approaching town.

174 EXT. STREET 174

She runs to meet them as other town folk gather on the street to witness Nettie's return. The Deputy and Spivey stare in shock at this unlikely event. The Town Fool stops rocking for the first time in ten years.

Billy Ray climbs off his saddle and helps Nettie down as Mrs. Tuleen rushes toward them. She embraces her daughter.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

We returned Nettie to her mother who was understandably beside herself with joy. She had prepared herself to live with the life-long pain of having lost an only child. She held her daughter as if she were a gift from the heavens.

Billy Ray watches only a moment before he climbs back on his saddle and prods his horse forward. He looks back and catches a glance from Nettie. A smile and a silent (mouthing the words) "bye, Billy Ray."

He and Van Leek ride through town. People stare at them in wonderment. A few wave. Charlie, the Town Fool, sits on his rocker at the edge of town.

TOWN FOOL

Did you kill El Diablo, Billy Ray?

BILLY RAY

(as they pass)

Only God can kill the devil, Charlie.

TOWN FOOL

(with haunting laughter)

That's right Billy Ray...that's right.

175 EXT. PLAINS - SETTING SUN

175

Billy Ray and Van Leek riding side by side across the landscape. Van Leek is talking a mile a minute.

BILLY RAY (V.O.)

When I told Mr. Van Leek that I was going to write an account of our adventure his ears pricked up. Suddenly he was a fountain of information. Or I should say fabrication. He really got rolling when I mentioned that I intended to pen a whole series of books.

VAN LEEK

... and you should have been down there in Laredo with us. El Diablo was a pussycat compared to that son of a bitch. Used to tie his prisoners up by their thumbs and then...

BILLY RAY

(completing the sentence)

... brand them on the stomach with a hot iron...

VAN LEEK

No, right on the butt.

(beat)

You know Van Leek is spelled with two words. I saw it written down once.

BILLY RAY

Where... on a poster in a sheriff's office?

VAN LEEK

(just keeps going)

... and I don't wanna read about no white boy with a fancy shirt and hat. I wanna read about the way it really is. About squarin' off with another man and lookin' him right in...

BILLY RAY

(jumping in)

... in the back.

A beat and then a laugh from Van Leek.

(CONTINUED)

175 CONTINUED:

175

VAN LEEK

Right. About looking a man  
right in the back and shooting  
him before he...

VAN LEEK AND BILLY RAY

(in unison)

... before he knows what hit  
him.

Billy Ray and Van Leek's laughter carries across the  
plains while they ride into the sun as it falls below  
the hills.

A long beat and then...

VAN LEEK

If you're gonna ride with me,  
boy, there's one thing...

BILLY RAY

Yeah, what's that?

\*  
\*  
\*  
  
\*  
\*

CUT TO:

175A TIGHT ON

175A \*

their horses passing in front of us. As they exit  
frame we HOLD ON A PAIR OF WOOLY CHAPS HANGING FROM  
THE BRANCH OF A SAGUARO CACTUS. CREDITS ROLL.

\*  
\*  
\*