

NEWS OF THE WORLD

Screenplay by
Paul Greengrass and Luke Davies

Based Upon the Novel by
Paulette Jiles

1 EXT. WICHITA FALLS - EVENING 1

An isolated cluster of distant shanties.

Caption: North Texas, February 1870

CUT TO:

2 EXT. WICHITA FALLS - CONTINUOUS 2

See the town closer now. In the shadow of a turning windmill.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. MAIN STREET. WICHITA FALLS - CONTINUOUS 3

A wind-beaten Main Street.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. BUILDING. WICHITA FALLS - CONTINUOUS 4

A wall of posters.

Faded lists of Civil War dead. Bodies still unaccounted for.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. LIVERY BARN - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 5

PEOPLE heading into the Livery Barn.

In the foreground, a printed sign on a wooden post:

*The Latest News and Articles.
From the Major Journals of the Civilised World.
A Compendium Read by:
Captain Jefferson Kyle Kidd*

Scribbled beneath:

*8PM. February 10
Livery Barn
Entry 10c.*

CUT INSIDE TO:

6 INT. LIVERY BARN - CONTINUOUS 6

A makeshift stage.

On it a table, a bull-lamp and a small tin pot.

PEOPLE throw coins into the pot as they pass.

CUT TO:

7 INT. BACKSTAGE. LIVERY BARN - CONTINUOUS 7

CAPTAIN JEFFERSON KYLE KIDD (63) dressing.

As he puts on his shirt and dress jacket, we glimpse several bullet scars.

He adjusts his neck-tie in front of a shard of mirror.

His is a face that's seen life. Death too. Three wars to be precise.

He takes a moment to gather himself.

A lonely storyteller, searching for peace.

Then picks up a leather portfolio.

Steps out onto stage.

CUT TO:

8 INT. LIVERY BARN - CONTINUOUS 8

Kidd lights the bull-lamp.

Unfastens the portfolio. Inside, newspapers.

He lays them out on the table.

We glimpse headlines:

Civil War over. End of Slavery.

He looks out at his audience.

Every face a story of hardscrabble life. Relentless struggle.

KIDD

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen!
My name is Captain Jefferson Kyle
Kidd and I'm here tonight to bring
y'all the news from across this
great world of ours...

(beat)

Now I know how life is in these
parts - working your trade, sun up
to sun down. No time for reading
newspapers, right?

A ripple of amusement. Most of these folks are illiterate.

KIDD (CONT'D)

So let me do that work for you. And
maybe just for tonight, we can
escape our troubles and hear of the
great changes a'happening out
there.

(adjusts his newspapers)

Now, for any virgin listeners,
here's how it's gonna go: We'll
start with a little local news.
That which affects you and yours
truly most direct. From there we'll
go on and take in the federal
picture...

GROANS from audience.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Oh I hear ya, you know I do, they
got us down and now they're keeping
us down... But lend me your ears
even still. Cos, after we've heard
what those wise, wise gentlemen up
in Washington have in store for us
next...

(laughter)

Well then we get to take wings and
escape...

(holding up The Bombay
Gazette)

We'll head to the crimson mountains
of India in pursuit of a marauding
beast that's claimed the lives of
thirty-one farming souls. And it's
still a-hunting...

(holds up another paper)

(MORE)

KIDD (CONT'D)

Then we'll sweep west into deepest Africa by way of the pages of Harpers Illustrated, and pick up the trail of a legendary British explorer, battling through the jungle for the source of the mighty River Nile...

(holds up a clutch of handwritten wire reports)

And running hot from the national wire service, is a breaking story of a miraculous return to life, that quite frankly, I'm gonna have a very hard time convincing y'all is true...

(pauses)

...But how's about y'all let me try.

(beat)

Cos, when the sun finally goes down at the end of our day, and darkness follows, y'all will have with you stories of men, women and families, who - though thousands of miles away, facing trials of their own - are in fact very much like you. All working, living, an' loving in whatever way they can. And all of them waiting... Waiting for better days to come.

And we see his audience hooked.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Starting local then: The Houston Telegraph reports, February 1st:

(begins to read)

"The Meningitis epidemic continues to spread without prejudice across the Panhandle and North Texas region. So far it has claimed ninety-seven souls, in a two-month period. However, this figure is likely higher, as families fail to report the deaths of..."

CUT TO:

9 INT. LIVERY BARN - NIGHT

9

KIDD

So we got our delegation from the state of Texas up there in Washington DC. Commencing those talks about rejoining the Union. And speaking of the Union, the Dallas Herald reports,

(starts reading)

"a Mr Charles Porter, Clerk to the House of Representatives" no less, has been caught with his paw in the cookie jar, "charged with embezzling six thousand dollars of public money..."

(stops reading)

The majority of which seems to have been spent wining and dining a Miss Dolores Flynn, at Washington DC's very fine Willard Hotel... Good to know those negotiations are well underway then...

Laughter.

CUT TO:

10 INT. LIVERY BARN - NIGHT

10

Kidd reaches the climax of his reading.

KIDD

...From inside the jaws of that tiger the young Alajar fought for his life! Man versus beast. A battle waged since the dawn of time itself!

(reading)

"And in those final moments, when all hope seemed lost, Alajar gained the upper hand. With his free arm he reached towards his fallen blade. The jaws of the monster began to close. But Alajar wrapped his fingers around the hilt and as they fell to the ground, plunged it deep into the animal's neck.

(beat)

Alajar rolled free. And at last, the mighty tiger fell silent."

Kidd sets the newspaper down.

10 CONTINUED: 6
10
The audience bursts into APPLAUSE.
CUT TO:

11 INT/EXT. LIVERY BARN - NIGHT 11
Kidd packing his newspapers back into the portfolio.
MALE SPECTATOR
Mighty fine reading, Captain.
KIDD
Thank you kindly, Sir.
FEMALE SPECTATOR
You come back soon.
Kidd walks away towards his boarding house.
CUT TO:

12 INT. KIDD'S ROOM. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT 12
Kidd at the window, undoing his collar.
Looking at the street below.
His newspapers on a table behind him.
And a locket. A faded photograph of a woman. Spanish-looking,
beautiful.
CUT TO:

13 EXT. WICHITA FALLS - SUNRISE 13
Wide shot of the town.
CUT TO:

14 EXT. LIVERY STABLES - EARLY MORNING 14
Kidd saddles his HORSES.
Takes the road out of town.
CUT TO:

15 EXT. ROAD TO RED RIVER - DAY 15

Kidd alone in the landscape. The grandeur of Texas.
Immense. Inhospitable.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. A SHALLOW VALLEY. RED RIVER ROAD - DAY 16

Kidd enters a shallow valley. The track narrower.
Flanked by trees and dense thicket.
The atmosphere shifts. A creeping sense of menace.
Kidd alert. Watching the shadows.
A curve in the track ahead...
Rounding it, he sees:
A Wagon. Badly damaged. An axle broken.
No sign of the horses.
Kidd dismounts.
The wagon is empty.
And a cluster of hoof marks in the dust. And blood.
The signs of someone having been dragged away.
Kidd takes out a BATTERED OLD SHOTGUN from behind his saddle.
He follows the trail...
And finds an African-America Man, strung up in a tree.
Pinned to his chest a newspaper:

TEXAS SAYS NO!

See Kidd.
Suddenly very alone.
The wind in the trees.
Then movement off to the side...
A GIRL.

KIDD

Hey!

She runs.

He goes after her. Crashing through the thicket.

Chase...

KIDD (CONT'D)

Stop!

He reaches her. She struggles furiously. Bites his arm.
Breaks free.

More chasing...

Until finally, he corners her.

KIDD (CONT'D)

I'm not gonna hurt you!

He slings his gun over his shoulder. Holds up his hands.

No reaction.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Can you speak English?

Nothing.

KIDD (CONT'D)

You know Plains sign?

(signing)

Friend.

(then in English)

You can't stay out here. Not safe.

Suddenly, the girl launches into Kiowa tongue:

JOHANNA

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Home.

KIDD

I don't speak Indian.

JOHANNA

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

I want to go home.

KIDD

I don't understand.

He holds out a hand.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Here...

She watches his hand all the way.

KIDD (CONT'D)
It's OK...

Before he can touch her, she moves past him.

CUT TO:

They move back through the trees...

Kidd putting himself between her and the body.

KIDD
Eyes forward. Don't look.

They reach the wagon.

Kidd rummages inside.

Finds the Girl's Indian Agency papers.

KIDD (CONT'D)
OK, got your papers... Says here
your name is Leonberger.
(looks at her)
Johanna Leonberger. That your name?
Johanna?

No reaction.

Suddenly, a NOISE down the track.

The thunder of approaching hooves...

Johanna terrified.

See Kidd. Readyng his gun...

The thunder reaches a climax...

Johanna darts under the wagon...

And a column of FEDERAL SOLDIERS round the bend ahead.

Kidd puts the shotgun back under his saddle...

The LIEUTENANT calls the column to halt and rides alongside.
Menace.

LIEUTENANT
Got your loyalty oath?

Kidd hands it over.

Soldiers begin searching Kidd's horses.

LIEUTENANT (CONT'D)
(studying his papers)
Where'd you serve, Captain?

KIDD
3rd Texas Infantry. Surrendered at
Galveston, May 26th, 1865.

LIEUTENANT
You carrying?

KIDD
Just an old twelve gauge. For
birds.

A Soldier holds up the twelve-gauge. Inspects the breach.

LIEUTENANT
No side arms?

KIDD
None.

The Soldier pulls out the wad. Pours birdshot into his palm.

SOLDIER
Just bird shot.

LIEUTENANT
Says you're from San Antonio.
What's your business up here?

KIDD
I read the news. Town to town. I
was headed down to the Red River
and... and I've seen him...

Kidd points to the body.

The Lieutenant looks over at the body and the girl.

17 CONTINUED: (2)

KIDD (CONT'D)
I think he was transporting this
little girl here for the Federal
authorities.

The Lieutenant reads.

LIEUTENANT
(hands papers back)
You're good.

He prepares to move the company out.

KIDD
What the hell do I do with her?

LIEUTENANT
Fetch her to Red River. The Command
Post will know.

And they ride off down the track.

On Kidd. Left alone.

Johanna staring at him from under the wagon.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. GRAVE. SHALLOW VALLEY. RED RIVER ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON 8

Kidd digging a grave.

Hard, physical work.

Johanna watching him.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. SHALLOW VALLEY. RED RIVER ROAD - LATER 19

Kidd prepares the horses.

KIDD
(to Johanna)
We need to go.

Johanna doesn't move.

Kidd mounts his horse. Gestures for her to climb up.

Still she doesn't move.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Suit yourself...

He walks his horses on...

On Johanna.

Kidd ahead of her.

The wrecked wagon and grave behind.

A beat,

And then she follows.

CUT TO:

As the sun gets low, they walk on.

It starts to rain.

CUT TO:

Kidd lights a sheet-iron stove.

Cuts a piece of bacon. Puts it on the heat.

Looks over at Johanna. Sees she's watching.

He holds out a piece.

KIDD
You gotta eat.

She takes it, and eats.

Kidd takes out the Indian Agency papers.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Says the Agent got you back when
Kiowa were cleared out of
Montague...
(keeps reading)
They took you way down in Hill
Country. Your parents and sister
were...
(the detail obviously
shocking)
(MORE)

21 CONTINUED:

KIDD (CONT'D)
Well they passed on... But you
still got an aunt and uncle down
there. Near Castroville.
(registers the name)
I know Castroville... Used to
travel that way before the war...
It's a German community. Farmers.
Hard working.

Johanna eating. Doesn't reply.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Six years, huh?

Kidd looks at her distant expression.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Kannst du Deutsch sprechen?

No reaction.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Kannst du... deine Familie...er..
remember?

He gives up. Lies back on his upturned saddle.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Well tomorrow we'll find someone to
take you home.

He signs 'Home'.

Johanna reads the sign but doesn't react.

He pulls his coat up around his neck.

And they both wait for the peace of sleep.

CUT TO:

22 EXT. TEXAN LANDSCAPE - DAY 22
The immense Red River Valley

CUT TO:

23 EXT. RED RIVER STATION - SUNSET 23
A cluster of buildings ahead. RED RIVER STATION.

23 CONTINUED:

And beyond it the great Red River, marking the border with Indian territory.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. MAIN STREET. RED RIVER STATION - CONTINUOUS 24

Kidd and Johanna down Main Street.

Chaos. HERDS OF LONG HORN and lines of loaded freight WAGONS jam the street.

The river crossing is closed. Tempers are rising.

Ahead: a military command post. Tents, FEDERAL SOLDIERS.

CUT TO:

25 INT. MILITARY COMMAND POST. RED RIVER - MOMENTS LATER 25

Kidd enters.

Menace.

It's five years since the Civil War. Federal Soldiers still view locals as rebels. And locals see Bluecoats as an occupying army.

Kidd approaches the OVERWORKED DUTY OFFICER. Shows his oath papers.

DUTY OFFICER
(as he reads)
What's your business?

KIDD
I need to speak with the Indian Agent.

DUTY OFFICER
He's up north of the Red. On the reservation.

KIDD
Well I found this child, see. Kiowa had her. The Agent was paying a freighter to take her back. But he didn't make it. The Lieutenant patrolling the road told me to bring her here.

DUTY OFFICER

What do you expect me to do?

KIDD

She needs taking home.

DUTY OFFICER

Well the Agent's not back for three months.

(hands papers back)

Looks like you'll have to take her.

KIDD

I can't take her. I gotta work. I move around... Sort'a thing y'all here for, ain't it?

DUTY OFFICER

Listen, friend. We got lost folks all over. Folks trying to find folks. Folks trying not to get found...

(beat)

So why don't you wait for the Agent. Or take her yourself.

Before Kidd can protest the Officer has already moved on to the NEXT PERSON.

CUT TO:

EXT. MILITARY COMMAND POST. RED RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

Back outside, Kidd looks at Johanna.

Now what?

He sees in the distance: A run-down church.

A REVEREND out front, clearing weeds.

KIDD

(pulling poster out of bag)

Well that bacon don't buy itself.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH. RED RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Kidd approaches.

27 CONTINUED:

KIDD
(calling over)
Obliged if I could take the church
tonight, Reverend?

AND WE CUT TO:

28 EXT. CHURCH. RED RIVER - CONTINUOUS 28

Kidd hammering up a poster, advertising a reading.

Writes underneath:

*Church hall
Feb 12. 8PM*

As the SOUND of A SOLITARY FIDDLE drifts down the street.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. GENERAL STORE - MOMENTS LATER 29

Kidd follows the sound of the fiddle.

Reaches a small store.

Outside, Long Horn cattle roam and cry.

Inside, a handful of LITTLE GIRLS practice ballet. Badly.

Taught by an IRISH WOMAN (late 40's), MRS BOUDLIN.

Accompanied by her husband MR BOUDLIN (late 40's) on the fiddle.

Kidd knocks on the window. Boudlin looks up.

Johanna watches the girls behind the glass, staring at her.

MR BOUDLIN
(comes to the door)
Hey Kidd, how you doing?

Sees Johanna.

MR BOUDLIN (CONT'D)
She yours?

CUT TO:

30

EXT. CAMP. EDGE OF RED RIVER STATION - EVENING

30

Kidd leads the horses and Johanna to a spot behind the church. The Boudlin's with them.

MR BOUDLIN
Three months, huh?

KIDD
That's what he said

MR BOUDLIN
Well shit Kidd, what you gonna do?

KIDD
I don't know. Wait for the Agent I guess.

Johanna sits in the dirt, as Kidd sets up camp.

MRS BOUDLIN
Look at them blue eyes
(kneeling down)
Hello child, I'm Mrs Boudlin...
You're safe now, the Good Lord has
seen to it. We just need to clean
you up a bit don't we?

Johanna looks at her with suspicion.

MR BOUDLIN
(also looking)
Sure got a strange look about her,
ain't she?

MRS BOUDLIN
Speak any English, child?

Kidd finishes the tarpaulin. Turns.

KIDD
I don't mean to bring you my
troubles, Mrs Boudlin. But can I
leave the girl with you? While I
read. Truth is I'm laid pretty low,
news business being what it is.

MRS BOUDLIN
(tries to stroke Johanna)
We can watch her, can't we Mr
Boudlin?

MR BOUDLIN
(not so sure)
Well, I guess

KIDD
I'm obliged, Mrs Boudlin.
(turns to Johanna)
See here child, I have to go to
work. These good people are going
to watch you.

He signs: 'Friend.'

She looks at Kidd blankly.

MR BOUDLIN
Well shit Kidd, she don't
understand a damn thing.

Kidd picks up his portfolio and heads into town.

CUT TO:

31 EXT. CHURCH. RED RIVER - NIGHT

31

Angle on the Church.

KIDD (OOV)
Good evening folks! Name's Captain
Kidd and I'm here with all your
news. But - unless y'all here for
the first time or just stone-cold
drunk - I'm thinking y'already knew
that...

CUT INSIDE TO:

32 INT. CHURCH. RED RIVER - CONTINUOUS

32

Kidd in front of a restive audience of CATTLE-MEN and
FREIGHTERS.

KIDD
Now... I see some fellow out-of-
towners before me. On the road to
getting some place else. Or wishing
you were at least...

FEDERAL SOLDIERS stand at the back, watching for trouble.

KIDD (CONT'D)

(sees them)

And I see you gentlemen at the back also. Far from home, minding we don't stir up trouble again...

(looks down at his newspapers)

Seems to me, what with the rains, everyone's a little out of sorts tonight.

(turns a page)

Well, the stories in these pages before me, they can't get us all home. They can't stop the rain. Or clear the roads... Damn, all they do is lie there and ask to be read.

(beat)

But then, maybe in reading them, we'll find ourselves traveling all the same. Maybe not for real, but in our imaginings. To some place else. Maybe some better place yet to come... Least ways, that's the hope.

(beat)

Ok, let's start local with the Carthage Banner, reporting page seven:

(reading)

"The Red River ferry is sunk near Cross Timbers, and waters still too high to cross there."

(stops reading)

Same here, of course. And as for the roads,

(reading)

"Routes in all directions are bad. Between Gainsville and Sherman; on the southeastern towards Weatherford; and parts down to Elm Creek, completely washed out."

HECKLER 1

Yanks sending soldiers too blue to muddy their boots, that's why.

Agreement in the crowd.

KIDD

Quit your airs now.

(picks up newspaper)

(MORE)

KIDD (CONT'D)

Because the Clifton Record, way up there in the north, is reporting big changes coming to these parts that'll have a bearing on these travel issues:

(reading)

"The Pacific Railroad Committee has today voted to consolidate the Missouri, Ft Scott, and Gulf railroads. This new line will run from the Kansas border, all the way south to Galveston, Texas...

(some interest)

...connecting up with the Dallas line, which officially opened last month. And will be the first railroad to cross the Indian reservation."

(looks up)

To us right here folks! And that'll be quite a change. Think y'all agree.

(picks up another newspaper)

A little federal news now. And it's change there too folks. The Philadelphia Inquirer is reporting on those important negotiations up there in Washington concerning the future of the state of Texas.

(reading)

"President Grant has ordered the Governor of Texas to accept Articles 13, 14 and 15, of the Constitution, before any return to the Union can be considered. Those articles cover the abolition of slavery; affording former slaves the vote; full repayment of war debts--"

HECKLER 1

Well I'm sayin' no! I say Texas first and damn them amendments! We let this stand, it ain't gonna stop there.

More agreement.

HECKLER 2

I ain't digging Texas soil to benefit some rich Yankee.

HECKLER 3

That's right.

The soldiers ready for trouble.

FEDERAL SOLDIER

(stepping in)

Suggest y'all watch yourself.

HECKLER 2

Suggest y'all the same! What you even doin' here? Y'all ain't dealin' with the Indians. Roads. River crossin'... Just beat up on Southern folks-

HECKLER 3

Told you. Shoulda' kept fightin. That's what I said.

For a moment it threatens to boil over.

KIDD

Alright now, I hear ya. North not helping us and asking a lot in return. But we got a part to play too. There's more than rain and Indians troublin' our roads. I seen it myself with my own eyes. Yesterday, coming outta Wichita. A freighter of colour hanging from a tree.

Kidd looks at the divided room.

KIDD (CONT'D)

I guess these are difficult times.

He turns the page over...

KIDD (CONT'D)

Let's find a different kind of story...

CUT TO:

The Boudlins running towards the church.

CUT BACK TO:

34 INT. CHURCH. RED RIVER 34

The reading over. Kidd shaking hands.

Mr Boudlin pushes through the crowd.

MR BOUDLIN
(reaching Kidd)
She's gone.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. CAMP. RED RIVER - NIGHT 35

Kidd and the Boudlins searching in the rain.

MRS BOUDLIN
(upset)
I was singing her a hymn. Turned my
back for a moment, she wasn't
there.

KIDD
She didn't take the horses?

MR BOUDLIN
Must have walked out on her own.

MRS BOUDLIN
(going into the woods)
Child?! Are you there?

Mr Bouldin stops Kidd.

MR BOUDLIN
(quietly)
Look if the kid wants to make her
own way so bad. Maybe you should
let her. An' go your way too.

On Kidd, as,

MRS BOUDLIN
Will you hurry, Mr Boudlin, please!

CUT TO:

36 EXT. THICKET IN RED RIVER VALLEY - CONTINUOUS 36

Kidd searches through dense woodland.

Eventually he reaches a gap in the trees.

Ahead: The Red River. Thundering torrents of water.

Kidd scans the area. Rain near blinding him.

Finally, he sees her.

A tiny figure perched high on a rocky outcrop.

He shouts. But his voice is drowned out by the water.

He moves towards her. A hard climb.

Getting closer, he sees:

She is shouting across the river.

Now she's waving her arms. Kidd follows her line of sight.

Sees across the river:

A large party of KIOWA INDIANS.

She is standing dangerously close to the edge of the outcrop.

JOHANNA

(in Kiowa - subtitled -
shouting)

Wait! Wait for me! Don't go. Don't
leave me. Come back!

The Kiowa keep moving.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

(in Kiowa - subtitled)
Don't leave me! Don't go!

Kidd moving towards her.

Johanna oblivious.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

(in Kiowa - subtitled)
It's me, daughter of Turning Water
and Three Spotted! Come back!

Kidd scrambling up the muddy bank towards her.

KIDD

Get down! Get down!

36 CONTINUED: (2)

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa - subtitled)
Don't leave me! Don't go!

Finally, Kidd reaches her.

Pushes her to the ground to stop her falling.

She struggles against him. Looking across the river.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)
(screaming in Kiowa,
subtitled)
Don't go! Don't leave me...

But the Kiowa begin to move on.

And as they disappear into the distance, she begins to sob desperately.

Suddenly just a little girl. Lost and abandoned.

Kidd beside her, powerless.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. GENERAL STORE. RED RIVER - NIGHT

37

Kidd carries a limp Johanna into the store. Puts her on the floor.

MRS BOUDLIN
She's soaked, poor mite!

Kidd watches as Mrs Boudlin wraps a blanket over her.

MRS BOUDLIN (CONT'D)
She's breathin' at least.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

38

Kidd walks out onto the porch, wiping mud from his show suit.

Mr Boudlin kicking it off his boots.

MR BOUDLIN
(takes off his jacket)
I mean shit. Will you look at that?
(looking at the mud)
(MORE)

MR BOUDLIN (CONT'D)

Sure as I live, that child is trouble. Runnin' like that. I said she had a funny look, didn't I say that?

Mrs Boudlin joins them.

MRS BOUDLIN

Mr Boudlin, please

MR BOUDLIN

Well it's the truth. They sure didn't want her back did they.

MRS BOUDLIN

They couldn't see she were one of their own.

MR BOUDLIN

Well she ain't one of their own! An' she ain't one of us, neither. Child got no clue who she is! Broken pieces is all she's got, and that's a makin' for trouble. No doubt about it.

Kidd looks back at Johanna. Asleep on the shop floor.

MR BOUDLIN (CONT'D)

I mean shit Kidd, what the hell you gonna do?

MRS BOUDLIN

We could take her. Raise her ourselves.

MR BOUDLIN

Like hell we could! She ain't right in the head! I'm telling you.

MRS BOUDLIN

We can fix her back. I know we can-

MR BOUDLIN

Doris. We can't go takin' in strange children and callin' them ours-

MRS BOUDLIN

Why not? You gave me none of my own.

This sits there.

38 CONTINUED: (2)

Mrs Boudlin starts to cry.

MR BOUDLIN
Compose yourself, Doris, please.

Mrs Boudlin sobbing now.

MR BOUDLIN (CONT'D)
We ain't doing it. The girl ain't
kin, and that's the last of it.

KIDD
(finally)
I'll take her.

They look at him.

KIDD (CONT'D)
I found her. I'll take her.

MR BOUDLIN
Sure about that, Kidd?
Castroville's damn near 400 miles.

KIDD
I've made the journey before.

MR BOUDLIN
Them roads have changed since you
rode them..

A beat and then,

KIDD
She's lost. She needs to go home.
Maybe find us all a little peace...

CUT TO:

39 EXT. RED RIVER - MORNING

39

Wide shot of Red River.

CUT TO:

40 INT. GENERAL STORE - MORNING

40

Johanna, under a blanket.

Watching Mrs Boudlin bearing down on her. With a petty-coat,
drawers, and a bright yellow dress.

MRS BOUDLIN
Here child, I got these pretty
things from one of my girls...

CUT TO:

Meanwhile, Kidd and Boudlin in the side alley hitching Kidd's
horses to an old wagon.

MR BOUDLIN
She ain't been used for a while,
but runs pretty good.

KIDD
Appreciate it.
(handing him coins)
Best I can do right now.

They finish loading stores into the back.

MR BOUDLIN
(quietly)
You carrying?

KIDD
(points)
Got my twelve-gauge and bird shot.

MR BOUDLIN
(pulls A REVOLVER from
under his jacket)
Well I kept this, after Palmito.
Figure you need it more than me.
(beat)
And there's 20 rounds.

Kidd takes the gun and ammo, conceals them in an old flour
keg.

KIDD
I'll fetch it back.

MR BOUDLIN
(beat and then)
Why you doing this Kidd? What's it
to you?

Se Kidd. Before he can answer:

SCREAMING.

41 CONTINUED:

Johanna bursts out the door. The yellow dress half-pulled over her head. Mrs Boudlin close behind.

Mrs Boudlin battles to get the dress on. Johanna screaming in Kiowa. Clawing at her violently.

Kidd gets up on the wagon. Watches.

As Mrs Boudlin finally gets the dress on.

MRS BOUDLIN
(looking her)
By the grace of God child. Don't
you look purty.

Johanna looks back at them. Rage inside the ill-fitting dress.

AND WE CUT TO:

42 EXT. WAGON. ROAD TO DALLAS - DAY

42

In open country.

The landscape dotted with a handful of OTHER TRAVELLERS.

The Red River to their right.

Behind them, Red River town in the distance.

He catches Johanna looking back across the river. Wiping away a tear.

She climbs into the back of the wagon.

KIDD
(pulling out map)
So we'll head to Dallas, that's
maybe a week. And then on through
the central plains. Cross that and
we get to Hill Country...

Hears a CLATTERING behind him.

Kidd turns. Johanna reaches for her muddy buckskins.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Course we got readings to do. To
pay our way. And we need to keep
our eyes open for trouble... We got
settlers killing Indians for land.
Indians killing them for taking it.
Guess you know all about that...

42 CONTINUED:

Johanna returns to the front of the wagon.
Tries to put the muddy buckskins over the yellow dress.
He looks at her. She at him, daring him to challenge her.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Makes no difference to me what you
wear..

Kidd puts down the map. Looks at her.

KIDD (CONT'D)
I'm Captain Kidd by the way.
(pointing to himself)
Captain.

She stares at him blankly.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Okay...

He points at her - she flinches instinctively.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Johanna. You Johanna.

She glares at him.

Turns her back.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Mighty pleased to make your
acquaintance, and no mistake...

CUT TO:

43 EXT. CAMP. ROAD TO DALLAS - EVENING

43

A pocket of trees, just off the road.
Johanna rubbing down the horses. Singing softly.
Kidd eats, reading his newspapers. Marking up articles.

KIDD
Well who'd credit that, they've
managed to lay a telegraph line
from London, England, all the way
to India!

He looks up. Watches her at work.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(gestures to his head)
Gotta do the head first.

Johanna ignores him. She knows horses. Doesn't appreciate the direction.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Can you even imagine the labour of it? Crossin' oceans, mountains. A tiny little wire, bridging the world like that...

Johanna makes a clicking noise running her hand along the horse's back leg.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(looks up)
Happened at birth. Made him cheap.
No one wanted him.

She looks at him.

KIDD (CONT'D)
That's Pasha by the way. The other one's Fancy. Not me who named them...

Then starts to lay out a blanket.

KIDD (CONT'D)
You know horses?

Again, she looks at him.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(holds paper up)
I'd read you a story, if you could understand it...

She keeps looking. Then turns her back, lies down. Singing quietly.

Kidd carefully packs away his newspapers.

Checks the revolver.

Lies back on his upturned saddle, listening to her singing.

CUT TO:

44 EXT. ROAD TO DALLAS - PRE-DAWN

44

Kidd asleep by the wagon.

He wakes.

No sign of Johanna.

Kidd gets up. Looks for her. Starting to worry.

Then he sees her.

A little way away. Watching the horizon.

Waiting.

The first light of dawn appears above the plains.

Beat and then, she turns to him.

A moment.

CUT TO:

45 EXT. NORTH TEXAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

45

Majestic over the landscape.

A bird riding the thermals.

Johanna, on one of the horses, watches it. She motions to the bird, as though in the presence of the Divine.

KIDD
(looking up)
Chicken hawk. See the tail?

She ignores him. Climbs effortlessly onto a horse.

Whispers to it, as the bird wheels away.

KIDD (CONT'D)
And that's a horse.

She turns. Looks at him.

KIDD (CONT'D)
I said it's a horse.

JOHANNA
(beat and then)
Hors.

See Kidd, she speaks!

KIDD
Not to be mistaken! Horse.
(pats side of wagon)
And this is a wagon.

JOHANNA
Vagorn.

KIDD
Wagon. Well done.

They ride on a bit further.

Then out of the blue,

JOHANNA
...Kep-tan.

KIDD
(surprised)
Yes, that's me. Captain.
(pointing again)
And you're Johanna.

Johanna flinches again.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(still pointing)
Johanna.

Kidd puts his finger down.

KIDD (CONT'D)
That's your name. Johanna.

She frowns.

And turns away.

CUT TO:

They camp by a small river.

Kidd unloading supplies from the wagon.

Johanna crouched, eyeing them with curiosity.

We see the revolver, and the shotgun.

Kidd lights the stove.

Suddenly, the bacon lands next to him.

KIDD
A please would be nice.

She looks at him blankly.

KIDD (CONT'D)
You say please. I cook the bacon.
Then you say thank you. That's how
it's done.

She goes back to his bags.

Pulls out a pot of coffee.

Tastes it. Spits violently.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(laughing despite himself)
Coffee. Packs a punch don't it!

She glares at him, still spitting.

Opens a second jar.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Ah, now that's sugar...

She tastes it. Likes it.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Bit better, ain't it.

He hands her a piece of cooked bacon.

She shovels sugar on top.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Hey, that ain't cheap!

More and more...

KIDD (CONT'D)
(taking the sugar)
Yeah, reckon you've had enough of
that...

She moves onto Kidd's portfolio. Opens it.

KIDD (CONT'D)
 And those are my newspapers.
 (a little nervous, as she
 turns through them)
 Careful now...

She lingers on the printed words.

KIDD (CONT'D)
 Words. In a line.
 (beat)
 They make a story.

JOHANNA
 (whispers)
 Stor-ee.

KIDD
 That's right. Stories.

Johanna takes more newspapers out...

KIDD (CONT'D)
 Set down in print and built to
 last...

She finds the photograph of the dark-haired woman. Holds it
 up.

KIDD (CONT'D)
 (a beat and then)
 My wife.. Maria.

Kidd gently takes the photograph back.

A moment. Johanna looking at him.

KIDD (CONT'D)
 She's down in San Antonio...
 (beat)
 Think I'll get us some water.

He goes down to the river.

CUT TO:

As the sun gets low.

See DALLAS in the distance. A city being born.

CUT TO:

48 EXT. WAGON. MAIN STREET. DALLAS - AFTERNOON 48

They move down a busy street.

FEDERAL TROOPS on every corner.

Johanna hides under a blanket.

CUT TO:

49 EXT. DALLAS LIVERY STABLE - CONTINUOUS 49

They turn a corner, into a busy Livery Stables.

Past BLACKSMITHS and wagon shops. The hammering of metal, and billowing smoke.

Johanna watching CROWDS pour off STAGECOACHES and WAGONS.

Lines of MIGRANTS drawn by the promise of cheap Texan land.

HAWKERS and LAND AGENTS shouting out their rates.

More TROOPS watching.

Kidd hitches his horses.

KIDD
(to Johanna)
It's safe.

Kidd leads her across the crowded yard.

Towards a Telegraph Office.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(to NEWSPAPER SELLER)
I'll take Harpers, the Herald.. The
London Times if you have it. And
the wires.

Behind him, a COMMOTION.

Kidd turns. Sees a DEMONSTRATION. A YOUNG PROGRESSIVE SPEAKER on a soap box. Placards reading:

Yes to reunion!

A GROUP OF TEXAS NO SUPPORTERS jeering.

Kidd takes his newspapers and wires and steers Johanna across the yard, towards the rooming house.

49 CONTINUED:

A SINISTER MAN watches from the shadows.

As Kidd and Johanna approach MRS GANNETT (50), the overworked Livery Barn owner.

MRS GANNETT
Hey Kidd...
(sees Johanna)
She yours?

CUT TO:

50 INT. DALLAS LIVERY STABLE - CONTINUOUS

50

They move through the crowds.

MRS GANNETT
Stable rooms are full, but I got
beds inside. Dollar for the bath
and a pot to fill your belly.

KIDD
Meal and a hot bath sounds mighty
good. And I'll need a room for the
girl.

MRS GANNETT
That's a dollar a piece.

KIDD
(taking out coins)
I'm obliged, Mrs Gannett.

Mrs Gannett whistles to STABLE HAND.

MRS GANNETT
(to Stable Hand)
See to the horses and wagon here.
And side stables need clearing.
Don't make me wait on you, you
hear?

They start walking again.

MRS GANNETT (CONT'D)
(to Kidd)
So they paying you to take her
home? Or you just taking her out of
the goodness of your heart?

KIDD
They're not paying me. I just know
the roads.

They pass PEOPLE spilling out of another WAGON. Carrying tattered belongings.

MRS GANNETT

Look at them. All the way from Lord knows where... Hell-bent on digging up virgin dirt an' calling it home... An' all expecting me to lower my rates!

(to GERMAN WORKER)

Crates are in. Take 'em to the kitchen. Die Küche? Versteht?

GERMAN WORKER

Jetzt?

MRS GANNETT

Yeah now! Jetzt, Jetzt!

They enter the Rooming House...

Into a ramshackle dining area.

CROWDED tables. MIGRANTS huddled over maps and contracts. German VOICES, Irish VOICES... All searching for the brave new world of south Texas.

MRS GANNETT

(points to a table, then calls out to KITCHEN SERVER)

We got two more here.

(looks over)

Hey you! You gotta order something if you wanna keep the table.

Mrs Gannett moves off.

Kidd and Johanna sit down.

Kidd lays out his newspapers and the wire reports.

He scans the headlines. Strife and division.

Johanna takes in the room.

Sees a SOLDIER pass by the window.

KITCHEN SERVER puts down two plates of pot food.

KIDD
(as he reads newspapers)
So I reckon stay off federal news
tomorrow, what do you think?

Kidd beings eating. Sees Johanna eating with her hands.

KIDD (CONT'D)
We use a knife and fork like
this...

Johanna watches him. Then carries on using her hands.

Now she's singing.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(embarrassed)
And we don't sing. Not in public
anyway...

PEOPLE stare at Johanna. Food around her mouth. She stares
back at them.

Mrs Gannett comes back over. Sees Johanna. Everyone looking.

MRS GANNETT
What y'all looking at? Never seen a
child eat before?

Mrs Gannett sits.

MRS GANNETT (CONT'D)
(to Kidd)
What's her name?

KIDD
Johanna.

MRS GANNETT
Pleasure to meet you, Johanna.

KIDD
She don't speak English. Not a
word.

MRS GANNETT
So what does she speak?

KIDD
Kiowa.

MRS GANNETT
Kiowa, huh?
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
(MORE)

MRS GANNETT (CONT'D)

Welcome.

(indicates to herself)

I am friend.

Johanna stops eating. Looks at her, amazed. Kidd too.

KIDD

Now you know, that is impressive,
Mrs Gannett.

MRS GANNETT

Got a little Plains. German. Need
everything round here.

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

You are Johanna, yes?

JOHANNA

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

My name is Cicada. I do not know
Cho-hanna.

KIDD

What's she say?

MRS GANNETT

Says you've been calling her the
wrong name. Her name's Cicada.

Kidd looks at Johanna.

KIDD

Well, she's Johanna now.

A beat.

MRS GANNETT

(to Johanna, in English,
pointing with her little
finger)

This man.

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

He's taking you home.

JOHANNA

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

I have no home. It was burned by
soldiers when I was taken.

MRS GANNETT

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Your family?

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
All dead.

Outside THREE SOLDIERS walk past the window.

MRS GANNETT
(touches her hair, in
Kiowa, subtitled)
Because they died?

Johanna nods.

ANOTHER CUSTOMER
You got salt?

MRS GANNETT
Yeah, I got salt...
(to Kitchen Server)
Fetch salt out, Josephine.
(to Kidd)
She says she's got no home. No
Kiowa family neither. See the hair?
They cut it when they're mourning.
Child's an orphan. Twice over.

This lands. Kidd looks at Johanna. She back at him. As though meeting for the first time.

KIDD
Tell her I'm taking her back to
Castroville. To her Aunt and Uncle.

MRS GANNETT
Kidd, she don't have any idea what
that means.

KIDD
It's on her Agency papers. And
she's got nowhere else to go.

MRS GANNETT
(to Johanna, in Kiowa)
He's taking you to another home.

Johanna impassive. Starts eating again.

MRS GANNETT (CONT'D)
(to Kidd)
Hear them roads are bad down
Castroville way. Word is Billy
Yanks ain't patrolling them no
more.

51 CONTINUED: (4)

KIDD
That's what I hear...

MRS GANNETT
Mr Gannett used to travel that way.
Before he went to California.

Another group of MIGRANTS enter.

ANOTHER CUSTOMER
What about that salt?

MRS GANNETT
(to the Customer)
It's coming alright!

KIDD
How long's he been gone?

MRS GANNETT
Two years.
(beat)
Or maybe he just didn't wanna come
back.

And she leaves.

CUT TO:

52 INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

52

Mrs Gannett closes the door. They walk down the corridor.

KIDD
You know, I don't have the first
clue of caring for a child. Never
had the need. Or the patience
required.

MRS GANNETT
She's still alive ain't she? That's
not nothing.

Reach the room next door.

Kidd enters. Another lonely bedroom.

He turns to see Mrs Gannett at the door.

CUT TO:

53

INT. KIDD'S ROOM. DALLAS LIVERY STABLES - NIGHT

53

Kidd sat at the window. Studying his newspapers and wires.

Mrs Gannett behind him. In bed.

MRS GANNETT
Road taking its toll?

KIDD
Sleeping's not what it was.

MRS GANNETT
Stories only keep you company so long...

He watches steam rising up from the horses down in the Livery.

MRS GANNETT (CONT'D)
So what you gonna do? When you've taken her?

KIDD
Thinking I might keep going south.
Work a passage out of Galveston.
See one of those far off places I read about every night.

She gets up. Pulls on some clothes.

MRS GANNETT
This ain't where you're supposed to be, Kidd. Running, hiding.
(beat)
And Castroville's San Antonio way.

Kidd knows where this is going.

MRS GANNETT (CONT'D)
(beat)
How long's it been?

KIDD
Coming on five years.

MRS GANNETT
Reckon you need to go back. Make it right with her.

KIDD
Don't know if I can.

She goes to the door. Turns to Kidd.

53 CONTINUED:

MRS GANNETT
Road you're on, seems like you got
no choice.
(beat)
But I'm thinking you already knew
that.

Mrs Gannett leaves Kidd alone in the dark.

CUT TO:

54 EXT. STREET. NEAR MASONIC HALL. DALLAS - DAY 54

Kidd hammers up a poster outside the Masonic Hall.

He walks on.

Johanna follows. Aware he's not himself.

They reach a Dime Store. Johanna attracted to the window
display. Bric-a-brac, childish things.

Meanwhile across the street, another DEMONSTRATION.

Placards. Flags. More SCUFFLES.

FEDERAL SOLDIERS pull them apart.

Johanna's eyes settle on several CORN DOLLS.

See Johanna; this means something. A distant memory. But
unclear...

Kidd turns away from the demonstration. Sees her looking.

Across the street, that SINISTER MAN again.

They walk on.

CUT TO:

55 EXT. HALL. DALLAS - EVENING 55

Establisher.

CUT INSIDE TO:

56 INT. BACK STAGE AREA - MASONIC HALL - CONTINUOUS 56

Kidd putting on his show suit.

Next to him, his newspapers unread.

Johanna looks back at him, from the doorway. Knows he's troubled.

She watches the hall filling.

PEOPLE putting dimes into the tin pot.

TROOPS watching.

The Sinister Man enters. TWO OTHER MEN beside him. Throw their dimes in...

Meanwhile, Kidd stands alone, at a shard of mirror. Haunted by the past.

A tug at his side.

Johanna, holding out his portfolio. A wordless apology.

Kidd looks down at her.

And then he walks out onto the stage.

KIDD

(takes out his newspapers)

Good evening ladies and gentleman,
my name's Captain Kidd, and it's an
honour to be back in Dallas. Now
this is a busy town, and y'all are
busy folk so let's get right to
it...

(spreads the newspapers)

You know I got these papers this
morning. Been looking for readings
all day. Something to take us away
from our troubles.

(picks up a newspaper)

We got the Dallas Sentinel here
leading with news of a labour
strike turning violent.

(and another)

We got Harper's reporting the
latest on those important talks up
in Washington, regarding the terms
of Texas' return to the Union. A
lot of anger there.

(and a third)

And on the international stage we
got Europe in chaos. The London
Times covering the bloody Prussian
invasion of Paris.

He turns the pages. The room waits.

KIDD (CONT'D)

...But it's hard. War's over five years but you wouldn't know for the look of these pages.

(struggling now)

Makes me wonder what the point of even reading the news is...

See his audience. This isn't what they paid for.

The Sinister Man watching intently.

And Johanna too. Willing him to keep it together.

KIDD (CONT'D)

(at last)

Alright now. Here's one... Page three of the London Times, February 19th: 'Miracle on the High Seas'

(sumarising)

Now two months ago, our correspondent reported the polar exploration ship, the Hansa, sunk in unchartered waters, north of the Arctic Circle. Its crew of 39 souls lost forever...

(beat)

Well, I have news for y'all yet.

(begins reading)

"A Russian whaling ship, on course for St. Petersburg, claims to have spotted the Hansa afloat. The Captain..

(checks paper)

Name of Morozov... Sent word by telegraph that he had made contact with the crew who by the grace of God were still alive. But sadly, in the heavy seas and fog common to those parts, he lost sight of the Hansa in the night. And by dawn she was gone again.

See the audience. A story at last...

KIDD (CONT'D)

But wait on this... According to this latest report, a naval vessel has been dispatched from England. The HMS Warrior no less..

(MORE)

56 CONTINUED: (3)

KIDD (CONT'D)

And as we sit here tonight she is steaming hard for the Hansa's last reported position. While back home, the families of those lost boys wait and pray for salvation. For, in the words of the Warrior's commanding officer, one Captain Edward J. Thorogood:

(reading again)

"Those boys must be found," he signals, "Theirs is the worst fate a man can face. For to be lost, is to cease to exist at all..."

See Kidd. This lands with him.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

Is that it?

KIDD

That's all I have. The most recent report.

He turns to another story.

KIDD (CONT'D)

How about a little fashion news...

CUT TO:

57 EXT. STREET. DALLAS - NIGHT

57

Kidd and Johanna leave the Masonic Hall.

Johanna sees a detachment of FEDERAL SOLDIERS across the street. Moves a little closer to Kidd.

Suddenly, a VOICE in the dark.

SINISTER MAN

A word, Captain?

Kidd turns.

SINISTER MAN (CONT'D)

Name's Almay.

(holds out his left hand,
his right is lame)

And these are my associates.

Like Kidd, former confederate soldiers. But much younger.

KIDD
(keeps walking)
Mr Almay, Gentlemen...

Almay falls in step.

ALMAY
Enjoyed your reading, Captain. You
take us away from our hard
thoughts.
(beat)
And it's good to make acquaintance
of a fellow military man. Where'd
you serve, Captain?

KIDD
Galveston.

ALMAY
1st Texas Infantry. North Virginia.

KIDD
Well alright, an' how can I assist
you, Mr Almay?

ALMAY
I'll get to that, Cap... But let me
ask you this. Don't it just rile
you them callin' us defeated? It's
like you said, the war ain't over.
They might'av taken the good out my
slinging arm and half my men with
it, but that don't mean it's done.
Way I see it, we fought but ain't
no piece of this ours. No piece at
all. You know what I'm saying?

KIDD
It's late, Mr Almay, what's your
point?

ALMAY
The point is. Us old soldiers gotta
live, right? So I've a little
business proposition for you.
Seein' you travellin' alone like
you are with this young girl.

Kidd stops.

KIDD
What do you want?

ALMAY

How much? For the girl?

KIDD

She's not for sale.

Kidd starts walking again.

ALMAY

Word is she's that captive out of Wichita.

KIDD

You're well informed.

ALMAY

News of value travels.

(beat and then)

How about \$50? Save you the trip down to Castroville. You know Billy Yanks ain't patrolling southern roads no more... No place for an old man and a child.

Kidd takes Johanna by the hand.

ALMAY (CONT'D)

\$100 then. And you can rest easy knowing at least she'll get paid. I mean, look at that fair skin. Bet you were a lucky man out there in the desert...

Suddenly, Kidd grabs Almay. Pushes him hard against a wall.

ALMAY (CONT'D)

(cooly, to Kidd)

In the alternative. We could just take her...

A small patrol of FEDERAL SOLDIERS approach.

FEDERAL OFFICER

What's going on?

ALMAY

(to the Soldiers)

Thank the Lord. We're local traders, Sir. We became concerned for the welfare of this here child. In the clutches of a strange man such as this.

57 CONTINUED: (3)

KIDD
I'm transporting this child to her
relatives in the south. I have the
official documentation here.

He hands the Federal Officer the Indian Agency papers.

FEDERAL OFFICER
(to Almay)
You got your oath papers?

The soldiers search Almay and company. Find their guns.
Arrest them.

ALMAY
God damnit.

FEDERAL OFFICER
(to Kidd)
You get on your way.

A look between Almay and Kidd, as he's taken away.

CUT TO:

58 EXT/INT. LIVERY STABLES - NIGHT 58

Kidd and Johanna moving fast. They turn a corner into the
stables.

KIDD
(hitching the wagon)
We're leaving.

CUT TO:

59 EXT. WAGON. ROAD OUT OF DALLAS - NIGHT 59

Kidd steers the wagon down narrow streets.

CUT TO:

60 EXT. COMMAND POST. DALLAS - NIGHT 60

Almay and crew led to a Command Post.

CUT TO:

61 EXT. WAGON. ROAD OUT OF DALLAS - NIGHT 61

They turn onto a main road, heading out of town.
Kidd riding hard.

KIDD
Get on! Yah!

CUT TO:

62 EXT. COMMAND POST. DALLAS - NIGHT 62

Almay and his crew waiting.
A Federal Officer in no hurry to deal with them.

CUT TO:

63 EXT. WAGON. CENTRAL PLAINS - NIGHT 63

Kidd riding hard.
Sounds of wheel clicking.
Johanna looking nervously behind.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. COMMAND POST. DALLAS - NIGHT 64

Almay and his crew still waiting.

FEDERAL OFFICER
Next.

CUT TO:

65 EXT. COMMAND POST. DALLAS - NIGHT 65

Almay and his crew leaving the command post.
See Almay. Only one thing on his mind.

CUT TO:

66 EXT. LIVERY STABLES. NIGHT 66

Almay and men saddle up.

66 CONTINUED:

Almay opens his saddle pack. More GUNS.
They head out in pursuit.

CUT TO:

67 EXT. WAGON. CENTRAL PLAINS - NEAR DAWN

67

The first light of dawn.
Kidd sees ahead:
A ridge of hills in the distance.
Suddenly,

 JOHANNA
 Kep-tan!

Kidd turns.
And sees in the distance...

CUT TO:

68 EXT. ALMAY'S CREW. CENTRAL PLAINS - CONTINUOUS

68

Riders.

CUT BACK TO:

69 EXT. WAGON. CENTRAL PLAINS - CONTINUOUS

69

Kidd reaches behind for the shotgun.

 KIDD
 (points to flour keg)
 Johanna.

She passes him the flour keg.
Kidd pulls out the revolver and ammo.
Loads it.
Looks behind again.
Three horses. Definitely them.

CUT TO:

70 EXT. ALMAY'S CREW. CENTRAL PLAINS - CONTINUOUS 70

Almay whipping his horse.

His men too.

CUT BACK TO:

71 EXT. WAGON. CENTRAL PLAINS - CONTINUOUS 71

Kidd looking for cover.

Ahead: a left turn which runs into the hills.

KIDD

If we get in there before sun up we
can lose them.

He looks back...

CUT TO:

72 EXT. ALMAY'S CREW. CENTRAL PLAINS - CONTINUOUS 72

Almay and crew gaining ground...

CUT BACK TO:

73 EXT. WAGON. RAVINE - DAY 73

Kidd enters the hills.

Scans the slopes either side. Looking for a place to hide.

Sees another smaller track off to the left.

Takes it.

CUT TO:

74 EXT. WAGON. RAVINE TRACK - CONTINUOUS 74

Kidd drives the wagon up the small track.

The horses struggling.

Kidd wills them on. His shoulder an agony.

Horses exhausted.

74 CONTINUED:

Suddenly, a CRUNCH...

One of the wheels cracks.

Kidd leaps out and drags the horses forward.

Kidd straining every muscle.

Johanna, clinging to the side of the wagon.

Finally, the track levels out.

A place to hide.

Kidd quickly unharnesses the horses.

Crawls behind a low rock. Peers down at the road below.

His POV: Almay approaching the fork.

CUT TO:

75 EXT. CROSSROADS - CONTINUOUS 75

Almay and his crew reach the fork.

Almay looks up at the ridges, trying to work out which way...

CUT BACK TO:

76 EXT. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS 76

Kidd sees them take the left fork.

KIDD

Shit.

He signals to Johanna to stay down.

Moves to another position. To get a better view below.

Nothing.

Meanwhile, Johanna rips the bottom of her skirt. Ties the rag around her head.

Rummages in Kidd's bag. Finds his knife. Fixes it to her waist.

They wait.

Only the sound of wind.

76 CONTINUED:

Suddenly: a gun-shot slams into the side of the wagon.

The horses bolt.

Johanna slides to the ground.

Kidd fires back in the direction of the shot.

Then crawls to the wagon, as more shots slam into the dirt nearby.

KIDD (CONT'D)
We gotta move.

He leads Johanna to a new position.

Kidd stops. Looks. Nothing.

CUT TO:

77 EXT. ALMAY'S POSITION. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS 77

Almay looks up the ravine. Calculating Kidd's location.

He spots the abandoned wagon.

Signals wordlessly to his men.

They split up.

Advance up the ravine in a pincer attack...

CUT TO:

78 EXT. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS 78

Kidd sees one of Almay's men moving up the ravine from the left.

He fires.

But there's immediate return fire. Slamming into the rocks around them.

Kidd struck in the face with rock fragments.

KIDD
(to Johanna)
Go, go!

And they move.

78 CONTINUED:

Blood pouring down Kidd's face.

CUT TO:

79 EXT. ALMAY'S POSITION. HIGH BLUFF

79

Almay, still climbing.

CUT TO:

80 EXT. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS

80

As they scramble towards cover, Kidd sees another of Almay's men down to the right.

Aims. Fires...

But then has incoming from the left.

They make it to cover.

CUT TO:

81 EXT. ALMAY'S POSITION. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS

81

Almay looks up.

ALMAY
(calling out)
Hey Cap, you're good. For a man of
years.

He waves his men on.

CUT BACK TO:

82 EXT. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS

82

Kidd scans the ravine. Looking for a way out.

ALMAY (OOV)
But ain't ya just so god-damn tired
of all this?

Johanna sees a branch on the ground. A large rock.

ALMAY (OOV) (CONT'D)
I mean didn't we have our body and
soul broke out there?

She works it under the rock. Strains to lever it free.

ALMAY (OOV) (CONT'D)
Seems a shame for it to end like
this when you could just come down
an' join us and we take what we're
owed. Way I see it, the whole of
Texas is wide open... All them
people chasing hope and trustin'
quick. Easy pickings, right?

As suddenly, the rock tumbles down the slope...

Driving Almay's left flank man out into the open.

Kidd fires.

Brings him down.

Almay and right flank man fire back.

Kidd and Johanna forced to retreat again.

ALMAY (OOV) (CONT'D)
You're not thinkin' straight, Cap.
She ain't worth dyin' for.

They reach cover. Kidd looking for a way out.

Sees one of his horses, off to the side.

KIDD
(points)
Johanna. Horse.

Kidd fires off more rounds.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(urgently)
I shoot. Johanna go.

JOHANNA
Kep-tan.

KIDD
No. You go.

More shots incoming. They're getting closer now.

ALMAY (OOV)
What you say, Cap? Talk to me.

Kidd fires back.

KIDD
(insistent)
Go!

JOHANNA
(points at the shotgun)
Kep-tan.

KIDD
Useless. Only good for birds.

He rummages in his bag. Opens one of the shell casings to show her the bird shot.

KIDD (CONT'D)
See?! Useless. No good.
(points to horse)
You have to go!

More shots. They hug the rock.

Johanna looks at the casings.

Kidd reloads. Not many rounds left. Fires another brace.

A moment between them. And then Johanna runs.

Kidd watches her go.

Fires again to cover her.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(buying time)
Well you certainly got me in a
difficult situation, Mr Almay. So
tell me how it would work.

Almay signals his flanker to close in.

ALMAY (OOV)
I figure a share for each man and
an extra one for me...

Johanna running. Past the horse. To the wagon. Pulls out the bag of dimes.

Meanwhile, Kidd sees he only has one bullet left.

Knows they're closing in for the kill.

KIDD
(still playing for time)
That seems pretty fair to me. So
how we gonna do this?

Suddenly, Johanna appears. Throws down the bag of dimes.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(frustrated)
Damn it Johanna. Bribing's not gonna work.

ALMAY (OOV)
Just gotta hand over the girl.
That's all.

Johanna takes the empty shell casing.

Hurriedly loads it with dimes.

Hands it to Kidd.

Finally he understands.

A moment between them.

Kidd loads a useless bird shot shell.

KIDD
Stay down.

He crawls forward.

As Johanna starts filling another casing with dimes.

And Kidd takes a bead on Almay's position. Fires...

CUT TO:

...The shot sprays weakly against a rock.

ALMAY
Oh Cap, what you trying to do, now?
Tickle us to death?

CUT BACK TO:

Kidd loads another.

KIDD
(calling out)
We ain't got a deal yet.

84 CONTINUED:

Fires...

Another feeble bird shot scatters.

CUT TO:

85 EXT. ALMAY'S POSITION. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS

85

ALMAY

Well you're embarrassin' yourself.

(beat)

Then again, maybe you only had
twenty rounds for the handgun. And
all you got left is birdshot.

He waits.

Silence.

ALMAY (CONT'D)

Am I right, Cap?

Almay signs to his flanker and starts to advance...

CUT BACK TO:

86 EXT. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS

86

Kidd sees Almay and the flanker coming towards them. Less
concerned about cover.

JOHANNA

(confused)

Captain, boom?

He loads one of Johanna's shells.

Waits...

Almay and flanker nearly there... But still not close enough.

KIDD

OK, I thought about this situation
Mr Almay. And I think you got
yourself a deal.

He throws his revolver out into the dirt.

CUT TO:

87 EXT. ALMAY'S POSITION. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS

87

Almay sees Kidd's revolver out in the open.

He nods silently to his man, JONES.

ALMAY

OK then. Jones here is going to show himself. And then, how about you do the same?

KIDD

Good for me...

Almay motions to Jones to stand up. Smiling.

Jones stands.

CUT BACK TO:

88 EXT. HIGH BLUFF - CONTINUOUS

88

Kidd stands too.

But then Jones goes for his gun.

Suddenly, Kidd pulls out the shot-gun.

The gun roars. Sending Kidd violently backwards.

As the shell slams into the Jones' chest.

His body tumbles down.

See Almay. He wasn't expecting that.

ALMAY

(panting hard)

Well now you done gawn and spoiled it, Cap. Looks like we're back on opposite sides again.

KIDD

Looks like it.

ALMAY

Guess that damn war's keepin' time for us all the way. Got us partnered and we got no choice but to fall in step.

(beat)

No choice at all.

Almay quickly moves left to cut Kidd off.

Kidd sees the move.

Moves himself.

And now we're cat-and-mouse amongst the rocks. Mano e mano under a Texan sun.

Until...

Kidd behind a rock. Johanna beside him.

Hands him another loaded shell.

He inches around. Looking for Almay...

Everything suddenly quiet.

Just the body of Jones lying out in the open.

The other down the slope.

On Kidd. Did Almay run?

Suddenly,

Almay appears on Kidd's blind side...

He fires.

But Kidd goes low and fires too.

Hits Almay square in the chest.

And it's over.

A moment.

Kidd surveys the battle field, blood running from his wound.

The bodies lying there.

He retrieves his revolver.

Only one bullet left.

KIDD
(to Johanna)
We need to go.

CUT TO:

89 EXT. RAVINE ROAD - DAY 89

Kidd pulls them up another hill.
Wagon shot to pieces. The wheel clanking.
They reach a secluded spot.

CUT TO:

90 EXT. CAMP - NIGHT 90

Kidd patching his wound, watching the plain below.
Johanna tending the horses.
She spits into the red earth.
Puts her finger in the paste.
Starts painting shapes on the horse's flank, as she sings.
Kidd knows what this is. The story of the battle.
She looks back at him.
Trying to read his expression.

KIDD
You're right. We won.

CUT TO:

91 EXT. CAMP - LATER THAT NIGHT 91

Johanna asleep.
Kidd throws his coat over her.
Sits hunched against his saddle, the campfire throwing shadows
across his beaten-up face.
The longer the road, the harder it is.

CUT TO:

92 EXT. TEXAS PRAIRIE - DAWN 92

Sun up over the immense Texas prairie.

CUT TO:

93

EXT. WAGON. ON THE ROAD SOUTH - MORNING

93

They ride on.

In the distance: Buffalo. But noticeably thinner than before.

Joanna watching him.

She tentatively touches her face. Pointing with her lips and little finger.

Kidd realises. Touches the wound on his face.

KIDD
I've had worse.

Kidd stretches back. Easing the tension in his shoulder.

KIDD (CONT'D)
We're OK. Just keep to the road.
We'll get there.

Johanna leans down.

Picks up a dime piece from the floor of the wagon.

Turns it in her hand. Makes it reflect in the sun.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(seeing this)
That's a dime.

JOHANNA
Dime-ah...

KIDD
That's right. It's money.

JOHANNA
Boom!

KIDD
Yeah, I guess it can be both.

She takes a strip of leather from her buckskins. Fashions the dime into a necklace.

Puts it on.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(sees it)
Pretty...

He looks at her. She smiles.

93 CONTINUED:

Suddenly, the wagon lurches. Kidd almost comes out of his seat.

Johanna stifles a laugh.

Kidd notices.

A beat and then,

He lurches the cart the other way. Deliberately. Pretends to unseat.

And now she belly laughs.

Kidd lurches again. Nearly falling off for real this time. And now he's belly laughing too.

Both surprised at the other.

CUT TO:

94 EXT. WAGON. ON THE ROAD SOUTH - LATER THAT DAY

94

They ride on.

Johanna quietly singing a lullaby.

A loaded FREIGHT WAGON rolls past in the opposite direction.

Kidd listening.

She looks up. Birds dancing high above them.

KIDD

Bird. We call that a bird.

JOHANNA

Böd.

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Bird.

She looks at him.

Repeats. Expecting him to copy her.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Bird.

See Kidd. This is something new.

KIDD
(repeating her Kiowa)
Bird.

She mocks his pronunciation.

Kidd tries again.

Now she's laughing.

She points to a tree.

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Tree.

KIDD
(in Kiowa)
Tree.
(knows he's being mocked)
Alright, cos you're so smart...

He looks out. Sees a cactus.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Prickly pear.

Johanna tries. But it's too hard to say.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Exactly.
(beat)
Then we got Juniper out there.
Mesquite. It's got those little
thorns.
(points at Sage bushes)
And we got Sage.

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Sage!

She opens her talisman.

Breathes in.

KIDD
Smells good don't it. Especially
when you burn it.
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Sage.

JOHANNA
(in English)
Goot...

A moment of understand between them. They can communicate.

KIDD
Teach me something else.

She points out at the prairie with her lips.

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Earth.

KIDD
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Earth.
(in English)
What's that?

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa, her palm flat
as if stroking)
Earth.

KIDD
(trying to understand)
Flat? Dirt? Earth? Earth.
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Earth.
(in English)
The Earth, I get it.

Then she points up at the sky.

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Sky.

Kidd watching.

KIDD
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Sky...
(in English)
Clouds? Sky? Heaven? Sky...alright.

He watches as Johanna wraps her arms around herself.

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Earth. Sky. Tree. Birds. Daw.

KIDD

I don't understand. Daw. What's
Daw?

She motions again. And exhales gently.

JOHANNA

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Daw.

KIDD

Wind? Breath?

She brings her arms together again.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Together.

JOHANNA

Daw.

KIDD

Together? Connected?

She blows again. Her arms wrapped around her whole world.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Daw... Breath. Life
(beat)
Spirit.

Then she makes a sign. A circle.

KIDD (CONT'D)

A circle... All joined.
(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Daw.

(Looks at her)

I understand.

He draws a line with his finger.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Where I come from, it's more of a
line.

She watches him draw it.

KIDD (CONT'D)

A line.

JOHANNA

Li-an.

KIDD

Yeah, that's right. A line.

(beat)

We're all journeying out across the plains in a line. Looking for a place to be. And when we find it, we go straight out and plough. All in a line. Working, working. Never stopping. Never looking back.

Kidd makes the sign of the line again.

KIDD (CONT'D)

And that's how we live. Until, once in a while, when the sun gets low and the soft wind blows, we wonder how the hell we got here...

He trails off.

She makes the sign of a line.

KIDD (CONT'D)

That's right, a line. Very good.

JOHANNA

Velly goot.

Kidd laughs.

KIDD

Velly goot indeed!

JOHANNA

(laughing)

Velly good, Onkle!

See Kidd. He turns to face her.

KIDD

Onkle? Did you say Onkle?

JOHANNA

Onkle...

Kidd pulls the wagon to a stop.

KIDD

Onkle. That's German.

She looks over at him, as surprised as he is.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Can you remember anything else?

A moment as she thinks.

And then:

JOHANNA
Ist du meine Onkle?

KIDD
No, I'm not your uncle.

She frowns. Struggling with a new memory.

KIDD (CONT'D)
What? What is it?

She looks at him. As though for help.

Then slowly a look of horror crosses her face.

As if fearful memories lie deep inside. And are pushing up to the surface.

Kidd sees her struggling. Confusion. And rising terror.

KIDD (CONT'D)
(knows what this is)
Hey, leave it. Forget it. I shouldn't have asked.

And he rides on.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Let's do animals?

He looks out. Spots a jack-rabbit.

KIDD (CONT'D)
See? Jack-rabbit. What's rabbit?

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Rabbit.

KIDD
(in Kiowa)
Rabbit.
(in English)
Oh that's a tricky one. Say it again.

But Johanna has noticed something ahead.

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa, subtitled)
Buffalo...

A mutilated buffalo carcass. By the side of the track.

A bit further on:

More skinned carcasses lying out under the hot sun.

The sound of insects.

A baby buffalo standing helpless beside its dead mother.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)
(in Kiowa, angry)
How pitiable.. Terrible...

Kidd looks ahead: Forest.

CUT TO:

Kidd and Johanna, moving through the trees.

A sense of menace.

Ahead a bend...

They round it and see...

A GROUP OF MEN on the road.

Kidd slows the wagon.

OTHER ARMED MEN appear through the trees.

Guns. Knives. Confederate uniforms. Native American elements.

Menace.

KIDD
Gentlemen...

BAD ASS
Roads closed. Nobody unaccounted
for is getting into Erath County.

KIDD
That the law?

BAD ASS

It is now.

They start searching the wagon.

KIDD

Got nothing of great value back there.

MORE MEN appear. One with the look of THE LEADER. His name is FARLEY.

FARLEY

What's your name, sir?

KIDD

Captain Kidd.

FARLEY

An' your reason for travellin', Captain?

KIDD

I read the news.

One of the men finds Kidd's newspapers. Hands them to the Farley.

Meanwhile, Bad Ass begins slowly circling the wagon. Eyes the fresh bullet holes.

BAD ASS

Carrying some damage back here.

KIDD

Got the wagon cheap. She came with the holes.

FARLEY

(reading)

Well you sure got holes in your newspapers, Mister.

KIDD

Read just fine to me.

FARLEY

Well ain't nothing here about Erath County. Hell of a lot's been happening but I don't see it here...

BAD ASS

Yeah, we been busy, we dawn fixed them Mexicans. Indians too. Pushed them clean out. Way beyond Leon River...

THIRD MAN

Mr Farley, he killed a right smart of Indians. Scalped 'em good too.

FARLEY

We're building a whole new world of opportunity down in Erath County. But ain't none of it writ here, newsman.

KIDD

Guess that news didn't travel.

Beat and then,

Farley, gestures.

BAD ASS, lifts his gun.

BAD ASS

Move..

Kidd knows he has no choice.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF DURAND TOWN - AFTERNOON

Kidd and Johanna are led towards an abandoned military camp on the outskirts of a town.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED MILITARY CAMP. OUTSIDE DURAND TOWN - EVENING 97

To one side: CHINESE AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN LABOURERS huddle under rotting canvas. Smoke in the air.

To the other side: POOR WHITES.

Buffalo carcasses on frames.

ARMED MEN on horseback watching.

FARLEY leads them to an empty spot.

FARLEY
(to Bad Ass)
Ten minutes. Then bring 'em into town.

KIDD
What exactly do you have in mind, Mr Farley?

FARLEY
We're gonna have us a little reading.

He rides off, leaving two men guarding: BAD ASS. And a YOUTH by the name of JOHN CALLEY.

Kidd unhitches the horses.

KIDD
(to Bad Ass)
Just feeding the horses...

Johanna takes the horses, whispering to them.

JOHN CALLEY
She wrong in the head?

Kidd pulls his show suit down from the wagon.

JOHN CALLEY (CONT'D)
Cos our baby cousin gawn wrong in the head, said it cos her mama don drink, but I'm wonderin' some are jus born that way.

KIDD
That right...

JOHN CALLEY
That's right.

Kidd starts to dress.

JOHN CALLEY (CONT'D)
So they pay you to tell stories?

KIDD
I read the news.

JOHN CALLEY
That right?
(clearly an unfamiliar concept)
I don't read none, anyways.

KIDD

So what do you do?

JOHN CALLEY

Whatever Mr Farley be needing.

KIDD

And what business is Mr Farley in?

BAD ASS

(interrupting)

Business of never mind your
business.

Johanna leads the horses back.

KIDD

So this Mr Farley he family to you?

JOHN CALLEY

Oh Mr Farley aint kin of mine, I
ain't got no kin now Tommy's gone,
but work for Mr Farley all same...
Like a family I guess, can't go
leaving, like a family... Thought
of it, after Tommy, but Mr Farley's
plained he didn't got no choice
what happened and Tommy seen it
coming and should have watched
himself, and I seen that, I seen
that.

Kidd putting his collar into place.

KIDD

And what happened to Tommy?

JOHN CALLEY

Mr Farley gawn shot him, for
hollarin, questionin... Got
thoughts of things in his head,
couldn't keep 'em in there.

Johanna hands Kidd his newspapers. Points at the flour keg
gun box...

JOHANNA

(quietly)

Dime-ah?

He shakes his head. No.

KIDD

Working for Farley can't be easy
then...

JOHN CALLEY

Don't know easy, but I'm sayin'
Tommy seen it coming, and he
weren't no easy guy that's the
truth, specially when he was in
drink. Mr Farley right about that.
Tommy only my brother but he gawn
near raised me... But Mr Farley is
knowing how things are, as they
needs to be, and he been real kind
to me, taken me in after Tommy and
he don't need to have done that,
and I'm grateful. I'm grateful...

(whistles)

Well I sure am waitin' on hearin'
them news readings Mister, we ain't
had no show round here for few
years now. Not since military folk
left... Say maybe you'll be doing
more than one reading...

KIDD

We're leaving in the morning.
Sadly. Other places to be.

See Calley. A flash of disappointment.

JOHN CALLEY

Road's calling, I seen that.

Bad Ass waves his gun.

BAD ASS

Time to go.

CUT TO:

Kidd and Johanna led towards town.

Past railroad box cars and freight wagons being stacked with
buffalo hides.

Nearby, more buffalo carcasses.

A mountain of buffalo heads.

98 CONTINUED:

To one side, a huge PYRE. Flames leaping into the air.

CUT TO:

99 INT. DURAND TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

99

Like a mining town, CROWDED, chaotic.

In one corner, a saloon.

Out front, Farley. Surrounded by his men.

FARLEY
(sees Kidd)
Well don't you look mighty fine,
Captain?

KIDD
Where do you want me?

FARLEY
(drinks)
Them's your audience...

Kidd looks at the crowd. Drunk. Oblivious.

He leads Johanna to an open barn.

Lays out his newspapers on a bench.

Johanna picks up the dime pot. Takes it defiantly out into
the crowd...

JOHANNA
DIME-AH!

Before Kidd can react, Bad Ass hands him a newspaper.

BAD ASS
Mr Farley says to read this.

Kidd looks at it: The Erath Journal.

On the front page, an etching of Farley, surrounded by
buffalo heads. A bunch of Native American scalps in his hand.

Meanwhile across the square, Johanna reaches Farley.

JOHANNA
(holds out the pot)
DIME-AH!

Farley looks right across at Kidd.

A moment between them.

He drops it in the pot.

KIDD

Good Evening, ladies and gentlemen,
my name...

(forced to shout over the
noise)

Ladies and gentlemen!

A few turned heads...

KIDD (CONT'D)

My name's Captain Kidd and, Mr
Farley has asked me to come here
tonight, to read y'all the news...

More interest.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Now I always start my readings with
something local. And Mr Farley has
kindly given me this copy of the
Erath Journal which I must confess
I'm not familiar with.

(he turns the pages. More
Farley etchings, more
scalps)

Sure looks like Mr Farley is a busy
man in these parts. A businessman.
A law giver. There's the buffalo, a
profitable business for sure... The
timber, the clearing of the
plains... And all of you fine folk
working for him at that. Sun-up to
sun-down.. The way I see it, none
of that is news. Isn't that right
Mr Farley?

He looks across at Farley.

KIDD (CONT'D)

So let me see if I can't tempt you
with something else. Harper's
Illustrated have a story..

(retrieves it)

Reporting from the lonely little
town of Keel Run, Pennsylvania. Now
Keel Run ain't known for much - I'm
counting none of y'all here has
heard of it. And why should you?
It's in the North for starters...

(few grins)

(MORE)

KIDD (CONT'D)

Just one of a thousand towns 'cross
our nation, birthed by the work of
many but enjoyed by the few...

See Farley. Where's this going?

KIDD (CONT'D)

Now Keel Run don't trade in
buffalo, but in coal. But just like
you, every morning, its men rise
early from their beds only to
descend into the great mine that
runs like a labyrinth beneath their
homes...

(more people listening)

"On the morning of February 11th,
thirty men of the Run" did just as
this and come noon, everything was
as it should be and always had
been... Hard, hard labouring... But
before the next hour was up, Keel
Run's wheel of fortune had turned.
For the mine... was on fire.

See his audience hooked. Farley watching intently.

Johanna too. Watching the impact of Kidd's story on the
crowd.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Now according to Harper's here,
"The fire started in the eastern
shaft and spread fast back through
the mine carried by the pull of air
working its way to the surface.
Building and building. Into a
raging inferno." A beast devouring
everything that dare stand in its
way.

(beat)

Now you and I can only imagine the
fear those thirty men felt. The
first dozen died within minutes.
Another seven not long after.

(beat)

But I'm not here to tell y'all the
story of those unfortunate souls.
Or of the mine owner who'd been so
lax about their safety. Sitting up
there in his fancy home... No I'm
here to tell you about the eleven
men who lived. The eleven men who
fought back to escape their fate.

FARLEY

Thought I told you to read from the Erath, Captain.

KIDD

Well see, I was wondering if folks might prefer some storytelling from places outside of Erath. Just for tonight.

FARLEY

Think you should read the Erath all the same, Captain. Sorta thing these people expect to hear.

KIDD

Sure seems a shame to miss the opportunity, Mr Farley...
(turns to the crowd)
How's about we vote on it? I can read this here Journal. Or I can keep on with the story of Keel Run.

A beat, then:

OLD MAN

I'd 'preciate hearin' about the men of that Run.

Agreement in the audience. Voices growing in confidence.

JOHANNA

Stor-ee! Stor-ee!

KIDD

Well all right then...
(sees Farley talking to Bad Ass)
That day those eleven men were facing a mortal enemy. Intent on destroying everything they ever cared about. Everything they'd built...
(sees Farley's men move into the crowd)
Every pillar of progress and civilization...

BAD ASS

(roughly pushing)
Show's over folks

KIDD
 (faster now)
 Well I'll tell ya, those men
 refused defeat. In the dark they
 kept their heads. Worked together.
 Fought back against the odds. For
 better lives. And for freedom.

PEOPLE begin to protest. Scuffles.

BAD ASS
 Get on out!

KIDD
 I'll keep reading folks. Long as
 you want me to.

And then it kicks off. Farley's men against townsfolk.
 Townsfolk against Farley's men.

Kidd sees Johanna out in the crowd. Kicking one of Farley's
 men.

Then she's knocked over. The dime pot spilling in the dust.

He pushes through towards her.

Grabs her hand just in time.

CUT TO:

100 EXT. DURAND STREET - NIGHT

100

Kidd and Johanna walking fast.

Behind them the sound of fighting. Gunshots.

Ahead, Farley GOONS coming back into town to quell the
 trouble, some on horse back.

Kidd avoids them.

CUT TO:

101 EXT. DURAND. NEAR THE RAILROAD CARS. NIGHT

101

Kidd and Johanna approach the railroad cars.

Kidd sees ahead; more Farley GOONS.

He pulls Johanna into a railroad car.

101 CONTINUED:

They press themselves into the shadows as the GOONS pass.

They stumble through the railroad car, buffalo carcasses either side.

Then climb down and make their way towards camp.

CUT TO:

102 EXT. DURAND CAMP - NIGHT

102

They reach the camp.

Johanna climbs into the wagon. As Kidd hitches the horses.

Kidd sees the damaged wheel. Looks bad. No time to fix it.

Suddenly, the sound of a gun being cocked.

Kidd turns to see Farley's gun trained on him.

Next to him, Bad Ass.

FARLEY

You shoulda just read, Captain.

KIDD

Just giving them a choice, Mr Farley.

Farley throws down the copy of the Erath Journal.

FARLEY

Well you can read now.

(beat)

Seems like you need the education.

KIDD

I travel plenty. Just figure this is my land too.

FARLEY

Then y'all know it's disputed. And this here is the frontline. We gotta deal with all what threatens us. Mexicans, Reds, Blacks, Yanks, don't matter, all the same.

Back in the wagon, Johanna opens the gun box.

KIDD

We gotta stop fighting some time.

FARLEY

We will. When it's ours alone.

Johanna carefully pulls out the revolver.

Farley motions to Bad Ass, who grabs Kidd.

And Farley punches him square in the guts.

As Johanna opens the ammo box.

One round left.

Farley punches Kidd again.

Kidd falls to the ground.

Farley kicks him.

Kidd on his knees.

FARLEY (CONT'D)

You ready to read, Captain?

KIDD

(spitting blood)

Killing me won't get you heard.

Farley lifts the gun.

Kidd stares Farley down.

He's about to pull the trigger, when...

BANG!

Farley staggers backwards.

Kidd looks over.

Johanna. Gun raised.

She turns the gun on Bad Ass.

CLICK.

Bad Ass realises. She's out.

Slowly pulls up his gun.

KIDD (CONT'D)

No!

When suddenly -

102 CONTINUED: (2)

BANG!

And Bad Ass drops too.

Kidd wheels around...

John Calley in the shadows. Gun in hand.

Watches Farley, coughing blood. Moving towards his gun...

BANG!

Calley shoots him dead.

JOHN CALLEY
(holds out Kidd's
newspapers)
I like your stories. You need keep
tellin' them.

See Kidd.

He goes to Johanna.

She's looking at the slumped bodies.

He carefully takes the gun.

KIDD
(then to Calley)
Get in!

A handful of LABOURERS in the shadows, watching them leave.

CUT TO:

103 EXT. WAGON - CONTINUOUS

103

Kidd driving fast.

Calley gun poised, watching the darkness behind.

Kidd looks back at Johanna.

She at him.

A moment.

Kidd knows he's brought killing back to her door.

CUT TO:

104 EXT. WAGON. CENTRAL PLAINS - DAY

104

Still on the move. Slower now.

Calley sits next to Kidd cleaning his gun.

The SOUND of that broken wheel.

Kidd glances back at Johanna.

She's looking out at the wide plains.

JOHN CALLEY

I ain't never heard of news reading
as a thing a man could do.

KIDD

It's no rich man's occupation
that's for sure. Not in Texas
anyways...

JOHN CALLEY

So why'd you bother?

KIDD

That's a long story.

JOHN CALLEY

Seems like we got all day.

KIDD

Well, I was a printer by trade.
Before. Had a works. Down in San
Antonio. Hot metal and black ink
it's a beautiful thing to see what
they can make.

Kidd pauses, his expression shifting.

KIDD (CONT'D)

One night this story came in for
printing. Saying a Virginian man -
a businessman of sorts - had
arrived in Mississippi, intent on
raising hell among the slaves down
there. Of arming them, no less.

JOHN CALLEY

Sounds 'bout right for them damn
Yankees.

KIDD

Yeah well, I printed it. And it
stirred up a hell of its own.

(MORE)

KIDD (CONT'D)

People up and raging about it.

(beat)

Couple of days later, more news came. This Virginian had been caught. Dragged from a coach.. And beaten to death.

(beat)

Only it turned out it wasn't true. He was just down there trying to sell some shoes. That's all. Just shoes.

(beat)

Well I saw them lies come thick and fast after that. From both sides. Printed more than my fair share. And War followed as I knew it would.

Kidd looks down at the wheel.

KIDD (CONT'D)

After the killing was over and I came home. There was no print works. I lost everything. Same as everyone.

(beat)

But print was in my blood I guess. Eventually I got to thinking... Maybe I should do my own readings. Maybe if we had the truth of things laid out clearly we'd be less inclined to pick up our guns again...

(beat)

That was the idea anyway.

JOHN CALLEY

Well, way I now it, don't look like that's been working so well.

KIDD

Guess not...

Kidd looks back at Johanna. She meets his look. Knows.

Calley sees. Puts down his gun.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Then again, maybe I just like stories.

JOHN CALLEY

(nodding to Johanna)

She kin?

KIDD

No. She was orphaned by the Kiowa down in Hill Country. They took her North. I'm taking her back to her living relatives.

JOHN CALLEY

So why you the one takin' her?

KIDD

Something I can do I guess.

See Calley, thinking on this.

JOHN CALLEY

I'm reckonin' we killed some Kiowa recent. All sorta look the same though. I'll tell ya they were mad as hell for us shootin' up them cows.

KIDD

They need the buffalo to survive.

JOHN CALLEY

Guessin' that's why Mr Farley liked killin' em. It's sure good business. Dollar for a head at least!

This sits there. Calley embarrassed.

KIDD

So what you gonna do now?

JOHN CALLEY

Find some place where there's work. Tommy always talked 'bout fixin' on the railroad...

KIDD

Well I'd say Tommy had it right. Gonna be a lot more railroads coming.

(beat)

You should go. Make something of your own.

See Calley, considering this new future.

JOHN CALLEY

Well how 'bout that?

Kidd looks down at that tapping wheel again.

JOHN CALLEY (CONT'D)
So how about you? What'u gonna do,
when you fetched her back?

KIDD
Oh I don't know.

JOHN CALLEY
You got family and all?

KIDD
I got a wife. Down in San Antonio.

JOHN CALLEY
(laughing)
Well she sure must be the merciful
type! I'm thinkin' you need to go
down there an show her a little
'ppreciation.

KIDD
Maybe I should at that.

CUT TO:

A hard wind.

A cluster of WAGONS camped.

Calley by the fire.

Johanna lying under a blanket.

Kidd kneeling beside the wagon. Fixing the damaged wheel.

Kidd straightens up. Looks across the dark plains...

A distant flash of lightning.

He looks over at Johanna.

She's looking over at a line of large white Conestoga wagons.
Their canvases moving in the wind.

Slap, slap, slap...

Kidd sees those distant memories cross her face again, like
clouds on the plain, turning the prairie grass black.

105 CONTINUED:

KIDD
You want some water?
(beat)
Johanna?

She turns away from him.

JOHN CALLEY
You sure she ain't gone in the
head?

CUT TO:

106 EXT. PLAINS - DAY

106

They approach a fork in the road.

One road points north.

A LINE OF WAGONS preparing to take it.

The other points south. To Hill Country, visible in the far
distance.

KIDD
(pulling up)
This is you, Calley.

Calley gets out.

Lingers.

JOHN CALLEY
I could come with. I seen what it's
like, Hill Country... An you've
seen me shoot.

KIDD
Railroads due north.

JOHN CALLEY
I guess...

Johanna looks across at the wagons. The canvas flapping in
the wind.

Sees the faces in the back: WOMEN, CHILDREN.

Faces of hardship. Wonder. Fear.

Again, we see something stirring in her.

JOHN CALLEY (CONT'D)
Least ways you could wait on a
wagon train - stead of ridin'
alone?

KIDD
Don't seem to be many heading that
way.

Calley takes out his gun. Empties the bullets into his palm.
Holds them out.

JOHN CALLEY
Take 'em for her, at least.

A beat. Kidd takes the bullets.

JOHN CALLEY (CONT'D)
(beat)
Say Cap, those men, holed up in
that mine. They really beat that
fire and get home?

KIDD
They really did, Calley.
(leans down, hands him the
copy of Harper's
Illustrated)
See, it's printed right there in
black and white.

JOHN CALLEY
(looks down at it)
Well Goddamn, ain't that something.

And he walks away. To the wagons taking the road North.

Kidd turns back.

The looming hills ahead.

And Johanna, waiting for him.

On Kidd.

JOHANNA
Dime'ah?

KIDD
No, dime'ah.

And they move off.

CUT TO:

107 EXT. WAGON. HILL COUNTRY - DAY

107

Mythic.

Steep valleys. High plateaus. Sharp ravines. Markedly different from any place they've been.

Kidd alert to danger.

Sees a string of caves in the bluffs high above.

Is there movement up there?

Johanna sees the caves too. She knows what they are...

Kidd pulls the gun towards him.

KIDD

Let's practice that song, shall we?

She looks over at him.

KIDD (CONT'D)

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

The song?

(in English)

Can you teach me?

(starts to sing)

Wa ho wa ho wa ho...

She joins in. Helps him.

The damaged wheel groans under the strain.

KIDD (CONT'D)

What does it mean then?

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Rabbit...

JOHANNA

(in English)

Rabbit.

She starts to sing again as he cracks the reins.

AND WE CUT TO:

108 EXT. BLUFF. HILL COUNTRY - SAME TIME

108

High POV, looking down at the lonely wagon below, as if observed.

CUT TO:

109 EXT. CAMP. HILL COUNTRY - NIGHT 109

They camp.

Kidd watching the shadows.

A coyote CRIES.

Something disturbs the horses. Their ears up.

Kidd pushes dirt over the flames. The gun close.

JOHANNA

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

The land is angry.

KIDD

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

We'll start early.

CUT TO:

110 EXT. ROAD. HILL COUNTRY - DAY 110

Back on the road.

Johanna looking up at a huge rock formation to her right.
Something familiar about the shape of it as they pass.

KIDD

(sees her looking)

What? What is it? You've seen this
before?

She doesn't answer.

He drives the horses on.

Out in the plains, Kidd sees a reflection.

CUT TO:

111 EXT. ROAD. HILL COUNTRY - DUSK 111

Kidd still riding. Up hill now.

Beside him, Johanna watching the valley below. Familiar.

Kidd, scans the horizon.

Dust clouds.

112 EXT. WOODLAND. HILL COUNTRY - DAY 112

They enter woodland. Ancient, distinctive trees.

Dense shadows.

They turn a corner.

A tree lying across the track.

Kidd slows. Scans the area. It could be a trap...

He parks up.

Climbs out the wagon. Revolver out.

Walks over to the tree.

Back in the wagon, Johanna takes out Kidd's knife.

Watches Kidd as he begins moving the trunk.

She gets out to help.

KIDD

Get back!

Beat on Johanna. She looks down the road ahead of them...

Then to the left at the distinctive shapes of the ancient oaks...

KIDD (CONT'D)

(in Kiowa)

Wagon! Now!!

Finally, she complies.

Kidd clears a path.

Gets back in the wagon.

Drives the horses on, anxious to get to a safer place.

Johanna, still watching those trees as they pass...

CUT TO:

113 EXT. PLATEAU. HILL COUNTRY - AFTERNOON 113

Now they're out in the endless, windswept plateau again.

A blasted earth as far as the eye can see.

Kidd working hard to keep the horses moving.

That damaged wheel groaning...

Then a CLUNK.

KIDD
(looking down at the
wheel)
Damn fixing's...

He stops the wagon. Gets out. Starts to work on the bolts.

Johanna sits, wind in her face.

Then gets out the wagon.

Kidd watches as she walks ahead.

A tiny figure under a big sky.

KIDD (CONT'D)
Not too far.

See Johanna, looking intently around.

She begins singing quietly.

Keeps walking. As though retracing old steps.

KIDD (CONT'D)
We have to go...
(in Kiowa)
Getting dark soon.

She ignores him.

Eventually she reaches a track, leading away to the left.

Kidd gets back in the wagon. Starts after her.

Sees the track too.

Johanna still singing.

KIDD (CONT'D)
We're just gonna stay on the main
road now, you hear?

She looks at him. Stops singing.

He makes the sign of the straight line.

113 CONTINUED: (2)

KIDD (CONT'D)
(in Kiowa)
Not safe. Here.

She shakes her head. And points down the track.

JOHANNA
(in Kiowa)
This way.

KIDD
We haven't got time for this.

She looks at him. Points again.

JOHANNA
(in English)
We go.

Kidd knows what this is. He's been dreading it for days.

She walks off down the track.

CUT TO:

114 EXT. APPROACH TO SEARCHERS CABIN - AFTERNOON

114

Kidd out in the vast open space.

Johanna walking ahead.

Down a small incline, which reveals in the distance:

An abandoned wooden shack.

CUT TO:

115 EXT. SEARCHERS CABIN - AFTERNOON

115

Close on the shack as they approach.

Everything about this - the wide open space, the sky -
reminds us of something. Something deeply rooted in our
imagination.

The opening of The Searchers.

CUT TO:

116 EXT. SEARCHERS CABIN - CONTINUOUS 116

Kidd watches as ahead.

Johanna stops.

The wind buffeting her.

The shack ahead.

Ruined.

To one side. The skeleton of a wagon.

She looks at the door, flapping in the wind.

KIDD

You don't have to go in there. We
can still leave.

Beat on Johanna.

JOHANNA

(in English)

No.

She enters.

CUT TO:

117 INT. SEARCHERS CABIN - CONTINUOUS 117

Johanna enters the shack.

Kidd after her.

A plain living area.

Broken furniture. Broken windows.

Blackened by fire.

And everywhere the signs of savage violence.

Bullet marks.

Arrows.

And dark blood stains.

Johanna moves through it. Kidd behind her.

She goes to the end of the room.

117 CONTINUED:

A door.

Through it a small room.

Shutters long since fallen from their hinges.

The sounds of wind outside.

Johanna looks around.

Three beds: A double. A child's bed. A cot.

She goes to the child's bed.

Reaches down.

Finds under an upturned drawer, the remains of a corn doll.

CUT TO:

118 EXT. SEARCHERS CABIN - CONTINUOUS

118

Johanna, holding the doll, walks outside again.

Looks around.

Her eyes tell the story.

This is where they ran, where they hid, where she was taken.

Kidd looking at Johanna. Watching her remember it all.

She turns to Kidd. As if she has found everything she needed.

JOHANNA
(bravely)
Mama... Papa... tot?

KIDD
Yes. They're dead.

See Johanna. Taking it in. A small nod.

She walks up to Kidd. Takes his arm. Holds it close.

On Kidd. Doesn't know what to say.

CUT TO:

119 EXT. WAGON. PLATEAU - DUSK

119

Back in the wagon. Light fading fast.

They start to climb.

Johanna quiet.

KIDD

You need to get away from all this.
While you're young, and you still
got time. All this pain an'
killin'. You gotta get clear of it.
Make a new start.

(pointing back)

It's not good. Going back.

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Not good.

(then in English)

Past is the past. You just gotta
put it behind you. That's what I
want. For you. That's why I'm doing
this... So you're free of it.

He makes the sign of the line.

KIDD (CONT'D)

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Forward.

(in English)

Don't look back. You hear me?

JOHANNA

Li-an.

KIDD

Yeah. Gotta stick to that line.

(beat and then)

That's how we deal with it.

She shakes her head.

JOHANNA

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

No.

(in English)

Johanna. No run.

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

I always remember. It is in front
and behind.

(in German, subtitled)

I live.

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Unbroken.

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

We are together.

(in English)

Always.

119 CONTINUED: (2)

He looks at her certainty. Her bravery.

As they reach the top of the slope and start to go down...

KIDD

Well I only know the straight
line... That's the only way I know.

Suddenly, a CRACK!

The wagon lurches violently, as the wheel finally gives way.

Kidd tries to control the horses.

But they panic as the wagon tips...

Kidd can't hold it.

KIDD (CONT'D)

Johanna jump... Jump!

She does. And at the last minute so does he.

As the cart tumbles forty feet into a hidden canyon. Smashing
into the rocks below.

CUT TO:

120 EXT. CANYON FLOOR - NIGHT

120

Kidd and Johanna scramble down the rocks.

They reach the wreckage of the wagon.

ONE HORSE DEAD. THE OTHER INJURED and in distress.

Kidd has no choice.

He shoots it.

The canyon falls quiet.

Kidd goes to the wagon.

Salvages what he can.

Food. Water.

And last his wife's photo. Damaged but still intact.

He turns back.

120 CONTINUED: 99
120

Sees Johanna crouching over the dead horses. Marking their passing with a Kiowa ritual.

CUT TO:

121 EXT. SOUTHERN PLAINS - NIGHT 121

They walk on, wrapped up against the bitter cold of the desert night.

CUT TO:

122 EXT. SOUTHERN PLAINS - DAY 122

Under a desert sun, still they walk.
An endless hard road.

CUT TO:

123 EXT. SOUTHERN PLAINS - NIGHT 123

They shelter under a rock. Johanna sleeping.
Kidd wakes her.

KIDD
(gently)
Gotta move again.

He lifts her on to her exhausted feet.
Gives her the last biscuit.

CUT TO:

124 EXT. SOUTHERN PLAINS - NIGHT 124

That never ceasing wind.
Kidd leading her. Johanna tucked behind his body for shelter.
They stumble forward. Exhausted.

CUT TO:

125 EXT. SOUTHERN PLAINS - MIDDAY SUN 125

They lie in a tiny pool of shade. Utterly spent.

125 CONTINUED:

The last of the water gone.
Kidd looks over at Johanna.
Trying to find the words to prepare her.
He stands.
Lifts her into his arms.
And keeps walking.

CUT TO:

126 EXT. SOUTHERN PLAINS - LATE AFTERNOON

126

Still that wind.
Kidd carrying Johanna now. Her eyes closed.
Kidd reaching the edge of exhaustion.
One small step after another...
Suddenly, he sees something on the horizon.
He tries to focus.
Is that a horse?
It looks like a horse.
He takes a few steps towards it, but carrying Johanna is
slowing him down.
He gently lowers her to the ground.

KIDD
(voice hoarse)
Horse...

He stumbles forwards.
Towards the shape...
Johanna opens her eyes.

JOHANNA
(voice hoarse)
Kep-tan?!

Kidd is twenty yards ahead now.

126 CONTINUED:

The shape ahead of him dancing up a ridge...

Kidd follows.

Further and further from Johanna.

Ahead: A LOW RUMBLING SOUND.

Getting louder with every step.

As it reaches the top of the ridge, the horse shape disperses. Just a DUST DEVIL.

Kidd walks a few paces on.

Still that building sound.

He reaches the crest of the ridge.

To reveal:

A MASSIVE SANDSTORM.

Roaring towards them through the gloom.

Kidd turns back to Johanna.

Sees her standing there alone.

KIDD
(gasping)
Johanna!

He starts to run back to her...

As the sandstorm engulfs them both.

CUT TO:

127 EXT. SOUTHERN PLAINS - CONTINUOUS

127

A deafening tsunami of dust.

Hammering into Kidd.

He tries to shout but his voice is drowned out.

He struggles back to where he left her...

Near blind. Barely able to see two feet ahead.

Throat filling with dust. Lungs suffocated.

He searches. Desperate.
Occasionally glimpsing the landscape ahead.
Then he's in darkness.
A phantom in the dust.
He stumbles...
Gets up, stumbles again...
We watch him struggle to his feet.
Desperate to find her.
Then he starts to slow.
Losing strength with every step.
He falls to his knees.
See despair in his eyes.
Momentarily the dust clears a few yards ahead.
He sees a rise in the ground.
He crawls forward...
Drives his hands into the dust. Heaving it away. Digging like
an animal. With his last strength.
And then he finds her.
Curled up for protection.
He drags her up.
Frantically wipes her face.
Pulls her into his chest.

KIDD
Thank God. Thank God.

And we see what this means to him.
Then he looks up
And sees to his horror,
Through the gloom ahead...

They're not alone.

Ghostly shapes are moving towards them.

Slowly they become clear.

A BAND OF KIOWA INDIANS.

Some on HORSEBACK and others on foot.

Kidd pulls out his gun.

But as they come closer he sees,

They're not warriors. They're refugees.

Looking for survival, just like them.

Kidd lets the gun drop to the ground.

Johanna walks forward towards them.

Through the eddies of dust, Kidd watches as she talks with a
GROUP OF KIOWA WOMEN.

SEVERAL MEN join the group.

Then an OLD MAN. THE CHIEF.

Kidd sees Johanna climbs onto a horse.

The Chief turns to look at him.

Kidd watches as Johanna talks to the Chief.

And then she turns, and rides back towards Kidd.

She reaches him. Hands him water.

As the tribe prepares to move on.

As they leave, Kidd comes face-to-face with The Chief.

A moment between them.

A look of shared history. Of what might have been.

And then the Kiowa disappear into the haze.

Kidd climbs onto the horse.

And they ride on.

127 CONTINUED: (3)

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE UP FROM
BLACK:

128 EXT. PRAIRIE. NEAR CASTROVILLE - DAWN 128

Dawn breaks on a new day.

Time has passed.

CUT TO:

129 EXT. PRAIRIE. NEAR CASTROVILLE - DAY 129

The plateaus and cliffs of Hill Country have gone.

They're in farm country now.

DISTANT FIGURES toil in the fields. Backs bent to the ground.

The people who built America.

They approach a sign:

Castroville. 5 miles.

See Kidd. He knows their journey is almost done.

CUT TO:

130 EXT. WAGON. CROSSROADS. APPROACH TO CASTROVILLE - DAY 130

Castroville comes into view.

KIDD

(to a passing rider)

Sir, do you know the Leonberger
Farm?

RIDER

(looks at Johanna)

Ja.. Straight.

They ride on.

See Johanna sensing a change.

JOHANNA

(pointing ahead)

We read story? Dime-ah?

KIDD

No. No more stories..

See Johanna, frowning.

JOHANNA

No dime-ah?

KIDD

No dime-ah.

Johanna sees Castroville in the distance, slowly realising the truth...

JOHANNA

No. Kep-tan. We go. Dime-ah! We go.

KIDD

We can't go dime-ah Johanna. This is your home.

(in Kiowa)

Your family.

JOHANNA

No. No!

KIDD

It's where you belong.

She tries to get off the horse. Kidd holds her.

KIDD (CONT'D)

(beat and then)

It's going to be alright.

They turn right, past a tumble-down shack.

In the distance: a sparse farm house.

"Leonberger", daubed onto a simple white sign.

Johanna sees the farm. PEOPLE working the fields.

JOHANNA

(as they near)

Kep-tan, stay?

KIDD

I can't. I can't stay with you.

JOHANNA

(looking up at him)

Kep-tan, go?

130 CONTINUED: (2)

KIDD

Yes.

JOHANNA

Where?

(in Kiowa, subtitled)

Where Kep-tan go?

(in English)

Tell me.

They stop outside the house.

Knows he has to tell her.

KIDD

This is what we're meant to do. You
have to go home.

(beat)

And so do I.

Johanna's AUNT comes out of the door. Looks at them from
afar.

AUNT AGNA

(call out)

Wilhelm!

CUT TO:

131 INT. LEONBERGER HOUSE - DAY

131

Kidd sat at a bare table.

Johanna crouched in the corner of the room.

Her UNCLE WILMHELM and AUNT AGNA sat across the table from
Kidd.

AUNT AGNA

She is like her mother. The hair.
The same.

UNCLE WILMHELM

(in German, subtitled)

Was?

AUNT AGNA

(to her husband, in
German, subtitled)

Das Kind sieht wie Anna aus.

(in English)

My sister... she always went her
own way.

(MORE)

131 CONTINUED:

AUNT AGNA (CONT'D)

We said stay in Castroville. But she and her husband Wolf, they wanted to be out in the valley. Where the land is cheaper.

She looks across at her husband.

AUNT AGNA (CONT'D)

(in German, subtitled)

Wolf. Er hört einfach nicht zu.

The Uncle nods.

AUNT AGNA (CONT'D)

So she thinks she is Indian now?

KIDD

Caught between perhaps. She needs time to adjust.

UNCLE WILMHELM

She must work.

KIDD

(hating every moment)

No doubt.

UNCLE WILMHELM

She must learn.

(in German, subtitled)

Wie wir zu leben.

AUNT AGNA

(in English)

The proper ways.

UNCLE WILMHELM

Ja...

Kidd looks over at Johanna. Her back is turned.

AUNT AGNA

You know my sister, when we found her in the bedroom, they cut the throat.

(makes gesture)

The baby sister, they bash the brain out. My husband chased them down Bandera Pass. Cut two in pieces.

(points to Johanna)

But they escaped. With the child.

KIDD

Best she forgets all that now. She needs better memories.

AUNT AGNA

Who knows what kinds of things they taught her...

(beat)

But we must try to see her as a blessing.

The husband nods.

UNCLE WILMHELM

You want money? For bring her?

KIDD

No. I don't want your money. Buy her books.

AUNT AGNA

Books?

KIDD

She needs to read, she likes stories.

UNCLE WILMHELM

(German, subtitled)

Was ist das?

AUNT AGNA

(German, subtitled)

Bücher... Geschichten...

Uncle Wilhelm unimpressed.

UNCLE WILMHELM

(in German, subtitled)

Es gibt keine zeit für geschichten.

Kidd stands. Being here is a torture. Looking at Johanna's back.

KIDD

I should go.

AUNT AGNA

You want food? For the journey perhaps?

KIDD

No. Thank you.

131 CONTINUED: (3)

He looks over at Johanna.

AUNT AGNA
(to Johanna)
He's leaving, child.

Johanna refuses to turn.

AUNT AGNA (CONT'D)
You are ungrateful, girl. This man
brought you on home.

KIDD
No. It's OK. Maybe she doesn't
understand.

He leaves.

CUT TO:

132 INT. STABLES. LEONBERGER FARM - SOON AFTER

132

Kidd fetches his horse.

CUT TO:

133 EXT. LEONBERGER FARM - SOON AFTER

133

As he leads the horse out, he sees Johanna in the distance,
being led out into the fields.

He gets up in the saddle.

Starts to ride away.

Looks across at her.

Sees her turn, look right at him.

A look of utter betrayal.

CUT TO:

134 EXT. CAMP - NIGHT

134

A campfire.

Kidd hunched at the flame.

134 CONTINUED:

The loneliest we have seen him.

CUT TO:

135 EXT. ROAD TO SAN ANTONIO - DAWN

135

Kidd riding alone.

Ahead, San Antonio.

CUT TO:

136 EXT. SAN ANTONIO STREET - DAY

136

Kidd enters San Antonio's beautiful square.

STREET MERCHANTS selling exotic fruits and colorful spices.
Mounds of chillis.

Spanish guitar MUSIC

DARK HAIREED WOMEN carrying laundry baskets on their heads.

See Kidd taking it all in.

CUT TO:

137 EXT. SAN ANTONIO SIDE STREET - DAY

137

Kidd turns off into a handsome side street.

Approaches an elegant Spanish style house.

Wrought iron railings.

Kidd stops. Looks up at it.

CUT TO:

138 EXT. BETANCOURT HOUSE - DAY

138

Kidd peers through a window.

An empty hallway.

He runs his hand behind a rock... Finds a key.

Inserts it into the lock.

CUT TO:

139 INT. BETANCOURT HOUSE - DAY 139

Kidd moves through the silent house.

Shutters closed.

Walls bare.

He goes up the stairs...

CUT TO:

140 INT. BETANCOURT HOUSE. UPSTAIRS - DAY 140

Down a hallway...

And then a turn...

Ahead...

...A door.

Kidd waits outside. As if unable to...

Then opens it.

Goes in...

Just a bed. Their bed...

And a window. Looking onto a small garden.

No life.

Just memories.

CUT TO:

141 EXT. BRANHOLME LAW OFFICE - DAY 141

A building in the centre of town.

CUT TO:

142 INT. STAIRS UP TO BRANHOLME'S LAW OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 142

Kidd climbs stairs. Through a door...

142 CONTINUED:

112
142

BRANHOLME
(sees him)
Jeffrey... My God.

CUT TO:

143 INT. BRANHOLME'S LAW OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

143

BRANHOLME
She's at the church. In the garden.
I lay those scented lilies for you.
Every year. So she knows you're
thinking of her.

KIDD
I owe you a debt of friendship,
William. I should not have left you
with...all of this.

BRANHOLME
You don't owe me anything.

This sits there...

BRANHOLME (CONT'D)
It was Cholera, there was nothing
you could have done. The doctor
said.

KIDD
Cholera alone can't explain it.
Four years of war and killing.
Every day waiting to come home. And
when I got back to her, six days.
Just six days to talk and dream of
family. And then I woke and she was
gone.

BRANHOLME
It was sickness, man. Just
sickness.

KIDD
That wasn't sickness. It was
judgement. For what I'd seen and
what I'd done. I saw her cold in
the bed and I knew. God's curse on
me had killed her.
(beat)
So I left her and ran.

His shame laid bare.

112

BRANHOLME

I've known you 50 years. Since we were boys. We didn't ask for any of it. But when division came it fell to us to do the fighting. I try not to look back at any of it, but when I do, I'm lying out there bleeding in the smoke. I was dying. And I remember thinking if I ever get through this. If the cards fall that way, whatever happens I will make sure I make life worth the living. And then I saw you coming. You picked me up and got me to shelter.

(beat)

You're no coward Jeffrey. You saved me. I lived. She died. That's not Judgement. That's not Providence. It's just what we have to face and carry the rest of our days.

KIDD

I'm not sure I can.

BRANHOLME

Go and see Marie. She's there waiting for you. Been waiting for five years. To tell you to forgive yourself.

On Kidd.

CUT TO:

The beautiful San Fernando church. Bathed in warm evening sun.

Its bells calling out across the town. To the faithful, the foolhardy, the lost and the old reaching their time.

Kidd, standing in its shadows. Summoning courage.

He enters the cemetery.

A lone figure amongst the headstones.

Finally, he stops at a grave:

144 CONTINUED:

Maria Luisa Betancort Kidd

1819-1864

And a flurry of birds.
Kidd takes his wedding ring off.
Puts it in a small leather pouch.
Buries it. Draws a circle in the dirt.
Looks at it a moment.
And stands.
Takes one last look at her name.
And leaves.

CUT TO:

145 EXT. SAN ANTONIO SQUARE - DAWN 145

Kidd gets up into the saddle. We see him make a decision...

CUT TO:

146 EXT. ROAD TO CASTROVILLE - DUSK 146

Kidd riding hard.

CUT TO:

147 EXT. LEONBERGER FARM - DAY 147

In the distance...
The Leonberger farm.

CUT TO:

148 EXT. LEONBERGER FARM - DAY 148

Kidd galloping...
The farmhouse ahead.
He sees Johanna in the fields. Sat in the dust.

She sees him coming.

He climbs down from his horse.

She backs away...

Then Kidd sees... a rope around her ankle.

She's tied to a post. Like an animal.

Kidd untying the rope.

KIDD

Ok, it's OK...

Looks to Aunt Anna and Uncle Wilhelm.

AUNT AGNA

We had to tie her. She runs away.

KIDD

She's a child.

UNCLE WILMHELM

She won't work.

KIDD

My mistake. She doesn't belong here.

And now she's free.

Kidd stands. Gives her space.

KIDD (CONT'D)

You belong with me.

(in Kiowa)

I'll look after you.

(in English)

As long as you need, I'll look after you.

She looks at him. Back at the Leonbergers.

Then at the open woodland beyond the farm.

JOHANNA

Keptan, Johhanna, go?

KIDD

If it's what you want.

The longest of moments.

And now we see Johanna. Sat on the edge of stage, grinning.

KIDD (CONT'D)

(reading)

"Three days ago. In Baton Rouge, Louisiana. A Mr Alfred Blackstone, of 47 years, fell into a stupor. His wife called a physician but, there being no pulse, it was determined that Mr Blackstone was, most unfortunately, dead... And buried swiftly that very evening, in the grounds of the local church."

(looks up)

Where - as divine providence would have it - a wedding, was due to take place the following day.

(reading)

"A little after noon, the expectant bride made her way through the grounds. As inside, her groom, waited... But nearing the church doors, the bride.. Abruptly... Stopped."

(looks up)

Reconsidering, perhaps?... Perhaps not...

(continues reading)

"For in the cemetery beyond, she had heard an inexplicable sound."

JOHANNA

(banging)

BANG! BANG! BANG!

KIDD

The desperate, unmistakable, hammering of life!

(reading again)

"In a state of frantic excitement, she ran to a nearby grave and within moments, the entire wedding congregation was digging!"

Laughter at the absurdity.

KIDD (CONT'D)

"The bride in all her splendor, thigh deep in mud. The Reverend beside her, crying to God Almighty for Mr Blackstone's salvation. And the grieving Mrs Blackstone also. For she had been summoned.

(MORE)

KIDD (CONT'D)

All digging! As finally!... Poor Alfred Blackstone was pulled from the earth! Confused by the sight before him, but very much alive! And from Mrs Blackstone's embrace Alfred turned to the groom and said:

"Feller, when you get in that church, and she says 'Til Death us do part'..."

(beat)

"Don't you believe a word of it!!"

Everyone laughing.

KIDD (CONT'D)

(then to the room)

Well, I'd say we've kept y'all long enough.. My name is Captain Kidd, and this here is Miss Johanna Kidd, and that was all the news of the world.. I thank you and Goodnight!

Kidd and Johanna take in the applause.

END.