

THE COMPETITORS

by

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FADE IN:

A vast landscape of open valley hemmed by grey mountains. Far away a storm is gathering. In the lost distance A LONE RIDER emerges from the deep range and moves slowly, surely towards us.

1

INT. THE BLACK HORSE. GRASSINGTON -- MORNING

1

A dark and low establishment. Early morning heat. Even the carpet sweats - decades of muck and stale booze.

Through the gloom we begin to make out men - maybe 15 - filling the shadowed corners. And each one is peering out at

- a table in the middle of the bar - with 5 more men seated around it. A high stakes card game.

CECIL SPRATT shows his hand. A flush. Like all the others he hasn't seen a bath or a razor in God knows how long - and by the look of him this game has been going all night. But the gleam in his eye tells us he's just laid out the winning cards.

Cecil moves his cribbage peg to the final place on the board.

Three of the other players push their pay-in to him - a belt, a knife, 3 hand-forged bullets.

But Cecil's not interested in these prizes. He's only got eyes for the man seated opposite him. He looks. We all look --

Even in this glut of alpha-males RED stands out. Flaming-haired but cold-blooded, he is unbalanced by repression so deep it has no end - a classic example of the abused becoming the abuser.

Red's colourless eyes move from Cecil's cards to his face.

Everyone's holding their breath -

Cecil's victorious glint falters -

And then Red smiles. And we can all breathe again. Except Red's eyes are mirthless.

Red stands. He's not tall, but compact - a powerful build.

Cecil gets up and follows Red out of the bar.

CUT TO:

The two men step out into blazing sunlight. It's just past dawn but they're both forced to shield their eyes from the glare.

A couple of horses are tied up in front of the pub. And beyond them is the market square - full of nothing but dust.

Red pulls something out of his pocket. Cecil's trying not to look too full of it as he moves to take his trophy. But as he reaches out Red snaps the object back up.

Cecil blinks, perturbed.

Red casually flings it out into the middle of the square -

We watch the thing land in a puff of dirt -

Cecil turns back to Red -

Red's mouth smiles. He gestures to the prize with his head, encouraging Cecil to go after it -

Cecil hesitates - but he sees no choice. He reluctantly trots out into the middle of the square.

Another man steps out of the pub. This is KID, his long-time nickname at odds to the ruin of his hard-aged face. And body - his right arm is roughly amputated at the elbow. Kid's eyes swim with dark-humour as he hangs casually behind Red.

A few less confident faces congregate at the grubby windows of the bar.

Cecil makes his way to the landing spot. He stoops and

-- BANG --

- a shot thuds into the ground by his hand. He starts back and turns to see -

Red holding a gun. Again Red gestures with his head for Cecil to pick up the object.

Cecil starts to shake. All that empty space around him and he's cornered. Tentatively he goes in again and

-- BAM --

- this time blood splatters into dirt as his right hand is severed. He SCREECHES and clutches at the place where his fingers once were.

Red remains unmoved.

Cecil looks back to him, his face distorted in surprise. He falls MUTE as he gives over to shock.

Red, again, gestures to the object at Cecil's feet.

Cecil - eyes glazing - robotically obeys and

-- BAM --

- his left hand shatters.

He slumps to the ground, staring at the bloody stumps at the ends of his arms.

Red strolls over to him.

Red's pale eyes rest on Cecil - no trace of a smile now. He nods to Cecil's winnings - the final offer.

Cecil sits watching the blood pulsing from what is left of his hands, unable to comprehend. Unable to act.

Red shrugs. He picks the object up out of the dust and turns to the horses. He looks down into his hand and we see -

a key fob.

He moves towards the horses and just beyond them we see -

a car - like some super-modern hybrid model. Except it's aged and rusting. Red slides into the driver's seat with Kid riding shotgun.

Red turns her over and they SCREAM out of town -

The ensuing cloud of dust settles on what we now recognise as a broken down Yorkshire village -

The dust settles in a thick, sticky layer over the blood-soaked form of Cecil as he lies on the ground, hugging his stumps, sobbing -

The dust settles as we realise our world is lost -

The dust settles on -

INSERT TITLE OVER IMAGE:

BRITAIN, 2053.

CUT TO:

3

INT. BEDROOM. THE WATER RATS -- APPLETREEWICK

3

A pair of dark eyes. They belong to DOLLY, who stands looking out of a window. She's undressed, wrapped in a ragged sheet, as she stares across the valley down to its dry river.

CUT TO:

4 INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

4

Red powering his car through Yorkshire country lanes. But now we see the green fields have been eroded by yellow, and brown - colours of burn and decay.

Red stares out at the deserted countryside - eyes fixed on something in his own head. His sought after prize.

CUT TO:

5 INT. BEDROOM. THE WATER RATS -- CONTINUOUS

5

Dolly, still watching, waiting.

And then a figure steps up behind her. A man, also undressed. PAW is in his 60s but his body is muscular and covered in a lifetime of scars. Given his appearance it's surprising how gently he slips his hands around Dolly's waist. He's about an inch shorter than her and he rests his unshaven cheek against her bare shoulder.

PAW
(softly, in a thick
Glaswegian accent)
Come on now, Doll.

Dolly does not respond but continues to gaze out the window.

PAW (CONT'D)
(encouraging)
Dolly.

Dolly's eyes focus, as if she's suddenly become aware of her surroundings, and of his presence.

PAW (CONT'D)
There's nothing you can do now. You
musnae dwell.

He soothingly strokes her belly. She glances down at where his hand lies - detached from his touch.

DOLLY
(trace of a South London
accent)
I'm not.

PAW
We'll keep trying.

DOLLY
I didn't realise that's wot we were
doin'.

Dolly pushes his hand away from her stomach. She continues to observe the desolate landscape.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
 You promised you'd take me away
 from this.

PAW
 Where do you want to go?

Dolly doesn't answer.

PAW (CONT'D)
 See. You dinnae know yourself.

DOLLY
 Maybe to London.

PAW
 Why?

DOLLY
 It's my home.

PAW
 There's nae such thing.

Dolly drops her gaze, rests her forehead against the pane. He draws her closer to him, a protective hold, and stares out of the window.

PAW (CONT'D)
 Look outside. This country is all
 there for the taking.

Dolly's eyes move over the empty view.

DOLLY
 Yeah. For you.

PAW
 That's right. For me.

He turns her and puts his rough hand softly on her cheek.

PAW (CONT'D)
 Stop looking for things that are
 lost.

He draws her mouth to his. She lets him take control.

CUT TO:

Red's car whining to a halt. We're in an old Yorkstone hamlet in the middle of nowhere. A pub, outhouses, and behind them stands a death-trap windmill fashioned from scrap car parts. Gear box mechanisms, an axle and even rusting panels for blades. It's stationary and silent in the dead heat.

Red gets out and surveys the wild valley down to the dry river - the same view that Dolly was just observing. Then he looks to the upstairs window of the pub.

A man appears from the stables. This is JORGE, the owner.

Red snaps away from the window. He throws the keys to Jorge and stalks inside. As he disappears -

RED
(wandering Glaswegian
accent)
Fill it and charge it.

CUT TO:

7

INT. STAIRWAY. THE WATER RATS -- MOMENTS LATER

7

Red comes through the doorway and moves quickly up the stairs. As he reaches the top landing

the door to the bedroom opens and Dolly appears. She sees him and stops dead.

He almost smiles.

They're within touching distance of one another and it seems that Red might actually reach out. But then Dolly steps away - as if she has remembered something. She glances back into the room.

Red's eyes go cold.

And now Paw's standing in the doorway behind her.

The two men face each other - Dolly stands in between. And we're seeing another side to Paw as he glares at the younger man. We wait for Red's monster to emerge -

And we wait.

Red drops his gaze to the floor and disappears down the stairs.

Silently Paw turns back into the room.

Dolly hesitates and then follows Paw.

CUT TO:

8

INT. BEDROOM. THE WATER RATS -- CONTINUOUS

8

Paw looking out the window. Dolly hovers on the far side of the small bedroom. Then -

DOLLY

Paw --

PAW

-- He'll no have my leftovers.

Dolly's face hardens.

DOLLY

Who says? It's not like you've
never paid or nothin'.

Paw turns around. His eyes have lost all trace of affection.
It's like looking at a different man.

And Dolly knows this Paw. She changes tack -

DOLLY (CONT'D)

I just wanna get out of here. No
more 'open for business'.

An impeccable example of pride swallowing, she walks over to
him and moves to put her arms around his neck.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

(softly)

I just wanna be with you.

But Paw's unmoved. He throws her away from him. She hits the
corner of the sideboard.

PAW

The reason that body of yours lost
the bairn is 'cause you're a whore.

Dolly's face burns red -

DOLLY

Maybe Red would be man enough to
take care of me.

Paw turns to Dolly - eyes cold.

PAW

You want a real man?

Dolly sees she's in trouble and again tries to backtrack as
she looks to Paw with a smile. Too late. The smile is smashed
from her face by a thumping right hook as it lands in her
turning jaw - her temple glances off the window and she's
strung out on the floor -

Paw stands over her and unsheathes a vicious bowie knife -

PAW (CONT'D)
 We'll see how much mae son will do
 for you.

CUT TO:

9 INT. BAR. THE WATER RATS -- CONTINUOUS 9

Jorge and Kid drinking ethanol. Red stares at
 - a jar on the bar - full of assorted gun cartridges -
 - A SCREAM echoes from upstairs -

Red reaches out towards the jar - but at the last moment he
 changes direction, grabs a half-drunk bottle and necks it.

KID
 (playful - in a scouse
 accent)
 Yer da never was one fer sharin'.

Red stays silent - his colourless eyes stare coldly ahead,
 his fist white with his strangle-hold on the bottle.

CUT TO:

10 INT. DOLLY'S BEDROOM. THE WATERING HOLE -- NIGHT 10

The sound of THUNDERING RAIN.

12 On the dresser lies a pot of rouge and a copy of Madame 12
 Bovary, open at the title page, with the name 'Dolores
 Lochlain' handwritten inside.

On the bed, a writhing tangle of sheets and blood -

Paw has Dolly pinned face-down and is raping her. She tries
 to fight his hold. He responds with a thick punch to the back
 of her head.

Dolly's hand searches for an anchor in the sheets. Her
 fingers find Paw's red-smeared bowie knife. She grasps it.

Paw sees - throws her onto her back --

PAW
 I'll gie you a fightin' chance,
 Doll.

Dolly hesitates. Paw punches her in the mouth. She crumples.
 He leans in. Desperate, roused - she lunges with the knife.
 Their bodies meet. Paw's face registers surprise as he loses
 his balance -

They topple from the bed onto the floor -

- Dolly strains to untangle herself - Paw traps her in his grasp. He LAUGHS as he watches her fear playing out. But moment by moment the smile disappears from his face -

Dolly, in panic, does not notice. Until she slips free. Too easy. She looks down to see -

Paw - naked - mouth and eyes wide -

His knife hangs from a dark hole in his inner thigh -

The discarded white quilt thirstily soaks up a gush of bright red arterial blood -

Dolly starts up and away from the dying man. She stands in the corner of her room clasping the reddening bed-cover to her chest.

A CHORUS OF SHOUTS arise from downstairs -

Dolly stays stock still. She stares at the door -

The SHOUTS are swallowed by LAUGHTER -

-- Unthinking, Dolly moves into action -- She throws on shirt and jeans, rams a fistful of clothes into a bundle. She stuffs in her rouge and book, a box of matches from inside a drawer. Now - slower - she turns back to the bed. Trembling, she approaches Paw. But, avoiding contact, she bypasses him and reaches under her mattress. She pulls out -

- a short tin chain with an old-fashioned TEA-DIFFUSER attached to one end -

This carefully joins the bundle. She meets -

- Paw's staring eyes -

She exhales and takes hold of the bowie-knife and, turning her face away, draws it out of his groin -

Blood pumps everywhere -

Paw GROANS as his eyes fix on their final end -

Dolly bears the weapon in front of her as if it were infectious as she makes for the door -

13

INT. LANDING. THE WATERING HOLE -- CONTINUOUS

13

Dolly looks down over the stairwell towards the bar -

The door is wide open. But the men are all facing away. Red is at the centre - surrounded by vicious mirth.

Dolly holds her breath and sneaks past the bar entrance to the back door. She silently frees herself into the night -

- 14 EXT. APPLETREEWICK -- CONTINUOUS 14
- and the downpour.
- A glow from the bar window is the only light. Not a soul is visible. Beyond the few empty houses glistening in the wet is blackness.
- A STRANGE NOISE cuts through the storm - a CREAKING, WHIRRING, METALLIC SOUND that issues from high beyond the barn. The windmill is in full motion.
- Dolly hurries inside the barn -
- 15 INT. BARN. APPLETREEWICK -- CONTINUOUS 15
- Dolly strikes a match to the candle by the door. Dim light bleeds into the barn to reveal -
- rows of kegs and bottles surrounding a great distilling machine. And next to it - the car.
- Dolly makes straight for the vehicle. Checks the ignition. Then all the usual hiding places for keys - sun shield - wheel arch - nothing. She moves to the front of the car.
- A lead runs from the engine to a large junction box.
- She yanks the plug out of the socket. Now, knife in hand, she crawls under the car -
- 16 EXT. APPLETREEWICK -- LATER 16
- Dolly lets herself out of the barn. Only to confront -
- The Lone Rider bearing down on her. Clad in a rain-darkened oilskin with a black hat that masks any features it's like a vision of the devil stalking towards her - and then past -
- Dolly remains suspended as she watches -
- the Rider pass by in a shadow of darkness, and draw up outside the pub -
- And that's enough to get Dolly going. She flees into the pitch night -
- The Rider looks through the window to the drunken crew of men inside, then spurs the horse on into the dark -

CUT TO:

17 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE -- CONTINUOUS

17

PANTING BREATH and DRUMMING RAIN sounding through the darkness. The SKID and SUCK OF RUNNING FEET -

An empty, reverberating space. Out of the black, a shadowed barrier - a wall - pale stone pitches in front and then under. And now beyond - a ghost-platoon of trees -

Below - a ROARING din -

Storm-wet wood - hands reaching - Dolly's hands. In one, her bundle.

Nails bite into the bloated bark.

And then the trees kick on their axis and blurred darkness rushes forwards - mud and filthy hair - and now only speed and chaos -

And we find ourselves at the bottom of an embankment - at the edge of a boiling-black river. And Dolly's on her knees in the shallows, the bundle behind her, as she scrubs at her body, her face, her hands.

And still her hands. Even in the pitch downpour the dark stain glistens. But her bundle comes floating past - until it gets trapped in the water by submerged jetsam an armstretch out of reach.

We're with Dolly, as she wades deeper into the swollen waters. Inches away from our goal - reaching stiff fingers - she hooks it towards us - and then it is in her arms. She turns to the bank and we're struck by a sudden surge in velocity. And we're dragged down under the black waves --

Nothing but the sound of WATER RATTLING into lungs. Until - a resurrecting GASP as air is reached -

Dolly clings to a rock as wave after wave slaps across us. Her grip is failing - her cold hands slipping. We turn away from the onslaught and in the final moments of consciousness we see -

The Lone Rider on the bank.

And now -- the dark figure is beside us in the water -- and Dolly's being drawn back to land. And to life. As all that is dark - falls into BLACK -

18 INT. BAR. THE WATERING HOLE -- DAY

18

The three men are passed out - in a chair, on the bar, Red slumped over a table.

He comes around and staggers to his feet. He listens - SILENCE.

Still half-drunk and fuelled by his own disorientation, he turns and stumbles through the sweltering room towards the stairs.

CUT TO:

19 INT. DOLLY'S ROOM. THE WATERING HOLE -- MOMENTS LATER 19

Red crashing into the room. He stops at the sight of -
the bloody sheets.

He moves slowly around the bed to discover -

Paw lying in twisted rigormortis.

Red drops to his knees over Paw. He tries to lift him - his body is already awkward and stiff. Red draws his father in and holds him, face buried in Paw's neck. His hands grasp Paw's cold, white arms. And then he starts to shake him. Like he's trying to wake him up. But as the father ignores his son's despair Red's grief turns, until, in a blind rage, he is dashing his lost father's unprotesting head against the bare wooden floor.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. APPLETREEWICK -- MOMENTS LATER 20

Red charges out of the bar, flanked by Kid, with Jorge in pursuit.

JORGE

Kid, if you kill her you're gonna
have to pay for her.

Kid turns on Jorge - threatening in his protectiveness of Red. Jorge hangs back. Kid goes to follow Red.

KID

How are we goin ter track her after
the fuckin rain?

Red does not respond as he heads for the barn.

21 INT. BARN -- CONTINUOUS 21

The men enter to see -

- the charging cable unplugged on the ground -

Kid picks it up and turns on Jorge -

KID
Yous wus supposed ter charge the
car while it wus stormin.

JORGE
(confused)
I did!

But Red has already changed his focus to the barn's floor.

RED
(a whisper to himself)
That fucking girl.

KID
Did yous fill up the ethanol or was
that a real challenge too?

JORGE
You haven't traded me anything. You
never trade me anything.

KID
Did yous fill her up?

JORGE
Yes. But I want payment. And for
the girl as well.

Kid turns his back on Jorge.

JORGE (CONT'D)
Hey, cripple, don't ignore me.

As if Jorge hasn't spoken, Kid looks to Red.

RED
The fuel line's been cut.

Kid sees Red's focus -

a large, dark patch in the dirt floor under the car.

KID
Wa' the fuck?

JORGE
No way.

KID
She'd have ter be pretty fuckin
quick ter pick up that much.
(BEAT)
Can yous fix it?

RED
...

JORGE

Paw could have fixed it.

Kid lunges at Jorge. But Red holds him back. Red's eyes are dead.

RED

Find her.

22

EXT. ROAD TO GRASSINGTON -- DAY

22

Dazzling sunlight rocking back and forth. It is joined by a blurring of road, trees, sky - hot-white and unsheltered.

Dolly's bruised face is a swollen reminder to us of the ordeal she has undergone. Her eyes open as she's brought around by her own shivering - even in the scorching heat she is feverish with cold. She becomes aware of another source of heat - the one that holds her. She studies a shirt of indistinguishable colour - so abused with dirt, sweat and blood. Underneath it the beat and breath of her saviour, in whose arms she lies. And then she takes in -

a bolt action rifle -

a heavy-looking hand gun -

a rope -

a slingshot -

a knife -

skins -

- a long, thick, brutal-looking stick -

Dolly starts to struggle -

-- only to fall backwards off the horse -- She lands on her arse with an unceremonious THUMP.

The glaring sun blazes a halo over the stranger's head obscuring the visage of the Lone Rider - who looms over Dolly in an extreme 'hero' silhouette - until the horse jogs a step forward and the BLACK HAT cuts across the sun to reveal the Rider's face -

- not a he, but a she.

NU is weatherworn, with hard features and grit-grey eyes: her gaze is disturbing; her physique is lean and powerful - a woman formed and fired by the landscape she inhabits. And just as forbidding.

DOLLY

Where are you taking me?

NU

The next settlement.

Nu's voice is HOARSE and GRAVELLY - as if from lack of use.

Dolly's panic is subsiding - until - she casts around -

DOLLY

My things. Where are my things?

Nu takes Dolly's bundle out of a saddle bag and throws it down to her. Dolly grabs it and draws out

- the Tea-Diffuser -

Nu leans down and stretches out a rough and callused hand. Dolly shakily reaches for it and in a flash she's pulled back up onto the horse, BEAU, behind its rider. Dolly puts her bundle into the open saddle bag. Inside she sees

a 2013 Road Atlas.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Are you stoppin' there too?

NU

No.

DOLLY

Where are you goin'?

No reply. Conversation over. The animal jogs on into the heat.

23

EXT. ROAD TO GRASSINGTON -- LATER

23

Dolly and Nu ride on in silence. Nu draws Beau off the road and over to a copse of trees.

NU

Get down.

Dolly does as she's told.

DOLLY

Why are we stoppin'?

Nu nods to the copse -

a small spring is welling up from the ground.

She leads Beau over to drink. She starts to take off Beau's saddle.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Can't we just water him and keep movin'?

Nu doesn't answer, but continues to untack.

Dolly glances over her shoulder along the road -

Empty -

She turns back to see -

Nu drinking beside her horse. Nu stops and pulls a piece of dried meat from her bag and her rifle from its sheath. She sits crossed-legged under a tree, rifle across her lap, eyes shut, sucking the meat.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
It's the middle of the day.

Nu's eyes stay shut.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
We need to keep goin'.

No reply.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
I don't have time to mess around
here.

Again - silence.

Dolly's temper rises - the same temper that got her in so much trouble with Paw. She storms over to where Nu sits.

From Nu's deepened breathing she appears to be asleep.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
I'm talkin' to you.

Dolly lifts her foot to kick Nu but before she can swing -

- Nu's hand holds Dolly's ankle like a clamp -

Then Nu opens her eyes.

NU
The animal needs water, food and
rest.

Nu drops Dolly's foot and closes her eyes.

Dolly is dumbfounded.

Then - eyes still shut -

NU (CONT'D)
Fill the flasks.

A collection of water carriers lie by Beau's tack; they're ancient, labels long disintegrated, definable only by shape and sun-bleached colours - coke, lucozade, lilt...

Dolly doesn't know what else to do except obey the command.

TIME CUT TO:

Dolly spark out on the ground. A shadow falls over her face. She wakes up - absolutely disorientated.

The silhouette of the mounted rider looms above her.

24

EXT. ROAD TO GRASSINGTON -- AFTERNOON

24

Dolly and Nu ride along the road. Still in silence. Suddenly Nu's frame becomes erect. Dolly looks up ahead to see

a cloud of dust forming on the horizon.

CUT TO:

A DIRTY OLD MAN, in mind and matter, driving a cart up the road with a corral of horses lashed to the back.

CUT TO:

Nu minding him - alert but confident.

In contrast Dolly tries to keep her battered face hidden behind Nu.

As the Old Man approaches he gawks at the pair - obviously not what he's used to seeing on the road. Nu rides Beau into his path. He draws up the cart.

NU

Are these horses for trade?

He throws an eye over Nu and her get up.

OLD MAN

Not for hides.

Nu swings Beau around so Dolly can no longer remain hidden.

The Old Man ogles Dolly - and then a flash of recognition.

Dolly turns her face away.

NU

For her hair. The small one.

OLD MAN

She can have the small one. And then I'll throw in a horse and tack to boot.

He laughs raucously - obviously pleased by his own joke. And then he stops. It's plain he's serious.

Both women look at him. But with totally different reactions:

Nu is stoney -

Dolly straightens up and brushes her hair from her face -

Nu turns in her saddle and observes Dolly - bruised and pathetic.

Yet it's obviously good enough for the Old Man who clambers down from the cart.

Dolly moves to dismount but before she has a chance -

Nu spurs Beau on and away up the road -

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
(shouting after them)
Hey, come back! Hey!!

Dolly grasps hold of Nu to stop from falling as they speed away from him. Then, as the horse slows -

DOLLY
Wot did you do that for?!

Nu remains silent - but her face is fierce.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
(resentfully)
That was a good deal.

Nu gives no response as she drives Beau on up the road.

TIME CUT TO:

Dolly and Nu riding on. They round a bend in the road and come back against the river - already dry. Dolly looks up ahead -

A Victorian watermill and a disciplined line of newly crafted pylons carry an electricity cable into the waiting village of Grassington. And the view here is different - the abandoned fields are overtaken by a more ordered scene of recently harvested land, encircling the town.

NU
Get down.

Dolly slips down from Beau. Nu tosses Dolly's bundle to her.

DOLLY
Hey! You can't just leave me here.

NU

This is the next settlement.

DOLLY

I need a horse.

Nu starts to leave.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Please, not here. It's too close. I need to keep movin'.

Nu rides on, impassive.

Dolly makes a decision. She jogs alongside Nu -

DOLLY (CONT'D)

I killed a man. His son, Red, he'll know I done it by now and he'll be lookin' for me. I've gotta get away. The people in this town know me. That old man knows me. And they all know Red. I can't stay here. He'll find me. I don't know wot he's planning but I can't hang about to find out.

Without a flicker of concern Nu picks up the pace.

But Dolly throws herself in front of Nu and grabs hold of Beau's bridle. Nu looks down at her -

Dolly's beaten face is further disfigured by fear. She's the embodiment of something to be pitied.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Please.

As if Dolly wants to hide from her own turmoil she throws her arms around Nu's leg and buries her face.

Nu's brow furrows - like she cannot connect to these emotions. She frees her leg and kicks Dolly away.

Dolly stumbles to the ground, a defeated heap. But then -

NU

Get up.

Dolly opens her eyes -

Nu is still towering over her -

Dolly hesitates - unsure of what she's supposed to do.

NU (CONT'D)

You can ride with me until it is safe.

Nu reaches out her hand for the second time. Dolly tentatively takes it. But Nu does not lift her. First she's got rules -

NU (CONT'D)
We do things my way.

Dolly nods.

Nu draws Dolly up and hoists her back onto Beau. They move on in silence, skirting around the town of Grassington and onwards to the road north.

25 EXT. CAMP. ROAD TO SCOTCH CORNER -- EVENING

25

It's dusk as Nu turns Beau off the road and rides over an abandoned field. She directs him into a natural dip in the landscape. They dismount.

Nu takes off Beau's saddle. She draws out her rifle and a couple of snares. As she walks out of camp she orders back -

NU
Light a fire.

Dolly obediently starts to collect fuel.

TIME CUT TO:

Darkness. The SOUND of a STRIKING MATCH. Light reveals Dolly, a well set fire and no Nu. Dolly places the match to the tinder and the flames lick into life. She puts away her matches. As she blows the fire hotter Nu steps into its circle of light. She is carrying a snared rabbit.

Nu crouches over the flames and expertly skins the kill.

The SOUND of SKIN STRIPPING from flesh.

Dolly watches -

the hide peel away. Nu props up two sticks by the fire and lays the skin to smoke over them. Then she guts the rabbit, impales it on another stick and places it next to the heat of the fire. She separates the good offal from the entrails with her fingers and throws it into a tin from her pack. She places this on the fire underneath the rabbit.

Dolly looks like she doesn't know whether to be impressed or perturbed by this skilled butchery.

26 INT. BAR. THE WATERING HOLE -- NIGHT

26

Red and Kid sit at a table in electric silence. We know their search has been fruitless. Red grips a half-empty bottle.

Jorge appears at Red's side.

JORGE
(gesturing upstairs)
Girl or no girl, what are you going
to do about --

He doesn't get to finish the sentence. Like Red's been waiting all night, his chair crashes backwards as he throws himself at the landlord. Red is drunk, and inaccurate, but he gets his hands around Jorge's throat and the two men hit the ground.

Jorge's face goes beet as Red crushes his air supply.

Kid sniggers - finally a break in the tension.

But just as quickly as Red pounced on Jorge, he releases him.

Red climbs to his feet and sets his chair back in its place. He sits down and picks up his bottle.

Jorge scrambles out of the room, choking and spluttering all the way.

Kid looks at Red who sits just as he was before Jorge spoke.

KID
(grinning)
We'll find her.

Red doesn't look away from the space ahead of him. When he speaks it is through a closed mouth -

RED
Yes we will.

27 EXT. CAMP. ROAD TO SCOTCH CORNER -- DAWN

27

Dolly blearily comes round. And now she's aware that the camp is empty - Nu has gone. She casts about. Until her eyes settle on

-- a lone figure standing at a distance up the hill --

Nu holds her long, heavy stick in one hand - she has the other crossed over her chest - and she weaves the stick back and forth in front of her in a swift, sweeping motion. After a while she swaps hands.

Dolly watches, transfixed by the oddity of the scene and the hypnotic motion of the weapon. When she finally turns away she notices a tin in front of her - porridge. She sits up and starts to eat.

TIME CUT TO:

Dolly finishing off her breakfast as she studies Nu. Dolly looks down and spots

the Road Atlas protruding from Nu's bag -

Dolly glances up -

Nu has moved around so that her back is to Dolly -

Dolly takes out the Atlas and opens it. We see -

page after page shaded over with charcoal, roads struck through with black lines, and every so often a town encircled with a heavy black mark, and then crossed out.

Dolly leafs through the book -

about half of the pages are unmarked - those applying to the north of the country and to Scotland -

Dolly hits the back page and stops -

A blank leaf has been filled by a series of drawings - the rough art of a very young child. A house, green land, the figures of a girl and a woman, and - in the centre - a likeness of a red horse. Dolly moves her fingertips over the images - pictures that are somehow incongruent to the world we see. They come to rest on the horse.

Suddenly Dolly flicks away from the page, as if aware she has stumbled upon something private. The book falls open at another page and we see

an unshaded sheet but at its centre is the city of Newcastle, marked with the ominous black circle. And then a shadow falls.

Dolly looks up - and starts -

Nu is standing in front of her. Her arrival was absolutely silent. And as if Dolly's not freaked out enough, Nu's not wearing her neckscarf -

- An angry red scar stretches like a terrible smile over the skin of Nu's throat from one ear to the other -

DOLLY
(playing it cool)
So we're goin' to Newcastle?

Nu continues to glower at her.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
I just wanted to...

She trails off. She tries to hold Nu's gaze, but her eyes flit to -

- the scar -

Nu takes this in. Then -

NU
Treat me like one of your regulars -
do as I tell you. And I will keep
you alive.

Dolly's expression changes - the fear knocked aside by the greater force of her anger.

Nu snaps up the book and walks away.

Dolly watches her. Then she turns, spits into the dirt and starts to pack up.

28 EXT. THE WATERING HOLE. APPLETREEWICK -- MORNING 28

Red and Kid step out into the morning light - haggard with hangovers. Kid's playing with the bullet jar. Red looks up - in the distance the Old Man can be seen driving his cart and horses towards them from the road north.

TIME CUT TO:

Red and Kid on horse back. The Old Man standing at a safe distance - he looks none too happy as he ruefully eyes his two claimed horses.

KID
Who's the other bitch?

RED
I don't know. But you can have her.

Red spurs his horse and the two men ride out in a dust storm.

Jorge appears - he sees the jar in the dirt. He picks it up - empty - and smashes it back into the ground.

Jorge and the Old Man watch, impotent, as

Red and Kid disappear over the horizon.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. NORTH DALES -- DAY 29

Dolly and Nu ride in tense silence. As they approach a crossroads -

Nu draws up to full height. Every muscle is on alert.

We turn with Dolly to see her focus -

A young man, calls himself LUKE, approaches on a GREY horse.

Nu unsheathes her rifle and lays it across the brow of her saddle - directed at this unknown rider.

He tips his hat to the women. He looks strong and fit -

Now it's Dolly's turn to sit up straight -

Luke catches this and rides his horse up alongside Dolly.

LUKE

Hello ladies. We seem to be going
the same way. Do you mind if I join
you?

DOLLY

Help yourself.

Nu says nothing. The gun stays where it is.

But Dolly's already at work - she slips down from Beau and starts to walk between the two horses.

Luke looks surprised.

Nu looks suspicious.

As if to explain -

DOLLY (CONT'D)

This poor horse has been carryin'
us both for miles.

LUKE

My poor horse has just had me for
miles. I think he'd enjoy your
company.

Luke flashes a willing smile and holds out a willing hand.

Dolly climbs up behind him - she expected nothing less.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Name's Luke.

DOLLY

Dolly.

Nu stays silent. She drops in back of the two - still training her gun on the stranger -

The three riders - in the same formation - cross a narrow stone bridge.

The A Road returns to two lane black-top - though these days the tarmac is a cracked, disintegrating grey.

Nu rides someway behind the two with her gun still on Luke. There's the SOUND of LIVELY, INDISTINCT CONVERSATION. It's apparent from Dolly's stops-out energy that with this new arrival she's reassessing her options for a protector.

A huge square construction marked 'Scotch Corner Hotel' comes into view. In front of the building is, bizarrely, a makeshift sign: 'Food and Drink'.

LUKE

Fancy some refreshments?

CUT TO:

Dolly and Luke riding into the car park, Nu following at a distance. JIM, the owner, comes out to meet them.

Nu watches what's going on but does not interject as

Dolly disappears inside -

Nu dismounts and approaches the building - rifle in hand. And she's thumping with energy - like her body is winding up.

JIM, large and stomach churning, blocks her way.

JIM

No weapons inside.

Jim holds out his hand and for the first time looks at -

Nu's face - and sees this is no man.

Jim drops his hand as if he's changed his mind but Nu, seemingly unbothered, throws him the gun and continues inside.

31 INT. RESTAURANT. SCOTCH CORNER HOTEL -- MOMENTS LATER 31

Nu enters the rank remnants of a dining room. She is followed by Jim carrying her rifle.

Dolly and Luke are already seated at a table -

Does Luke throw Jim a look?

Jim shrugs as if in response to something. Then -

JIM

(to Nu)

And the rest of it.

Nu pulls out and hands over her side arm like it's an outdoor coat and he's the waiter. She takes the seat along from Luke.

Jim looks impressed by the relative hoard as he disappears into another room with her weapons.

LUKE
(charm offensive)
It's unusual to meet women on the road. Unaccompanied. Where you ladies heading?

But Nu's on her own offensive - she marks him.

Dolly breaks the silence -

DOLLY
Don't bother - she's mute. I've got much more to say for myself.

Luke retracts his focus onto Dolly.

LUKE
I bet you do.

He studies Dolly.

Nu studies him.

32 INT. KITCHEN. SCOTCH CORNER HOTEL -- LATER 32

Jim stands over a blackened pan of porridge on an open fire. He holds Nu's rifle in his hands and strokes it lasciviously.

The porridge splurts in the pan -

33 INT. RESTAURANT. SCOTCH CORNER HOTEL -- CONTINUOUS 33

Luke is all over Dolly but she backs off - she wants something and she knows how to play this game.

Nu sits apart - assessing.

Jim enters with a pan in his left hand stacked with three bowls. In his right hand he carries Nu's rifle. He deals out the bowls. Then he pulls up a chair and sits too close to Nu -

Now even Dolly notices -

- dead-fish lust in Jim's eyes -

Jim pours the gluey slop into the bowls as he caresses Nu's gun. He hovers the pan over her bowl and then lowers the gun so that

the nozzle trails down Nu's chest and rests between her legs.

JIM

So what are you going to do for
your dinner?

Nu levels her gaze down to the nozzle and then back up to
Jim. Her face is impassive.

Dolly looks to Luke for assistance but he is watching Nu.

JIM (CONT'D)

I said what are you going to do for
your dinner?

Jim gives the gun a nudge so that it jolts Nu between her
legs. Again, she does not respond.

DOLLY

(imploring)

Luke?!

Again, Luke ignores Dolly.

JIM

(deadly aggressive)

I said what are you going to do for
your dinner, bitch!?!

Moving the gun backwards for a hard thrust Jim is not
prepared when -

Nu lifts her leg and flips the barrel away. And then -

a kick - precise, fast, hard - she shatters Jim's chair leg.

He lurches forward, off balance and -

Nu swipes the pan towards his right arm -

Napalm porridge coats his hand which shocks open -

A SCREAM! -

The gun falls - Nu's hand is already there, waiting. Grip.
Twist. The gun is under his jaw -

The CRACK of the rifle drowns the CRACK of a man's cranium.

Bone, blood, brains and a complete human consciousness exit
Jim's head -

But Nu's not done yet... She turns, she sees -

Dolly - in stasis. And -

Luke reaching for his own gun --

Dolly now sees this and by instinct moves into action. She
grabs hold of Luke's gun hand. He's offset.

And in the same moment Nu stands - pulls back the bolt action on her rifle - strides forward -

She walks directly over Luke. Crashes his chair over backwards - no finesse - just composed violence.

One foot on his neck as she crushes it to the floor -

She cracks the gun butt downwards - unforgiving - smashes his wrist.

His gun hand is lifeless.

Dolly's SCREAMING now, caught under him, as she draws her own hands away -

Nu moves swiftly down and unholsters his gun -

She stands with both weapons aimed directly at Luke's pretty little face...

DOLLY

No! NO!!

In the ensuing silence we hear a GURGLE, perhaps a plea, issue from the vicinity of Luke's trapped throat.

Nu considers his trembling features. She's made her choice.

She slowly lowers the weapons...

Luke breathes relief...

So does Dolly.

But - almost too fast to know - Nu shifts her position. She swivels the rifle. Another two full-weighted hits of the gun butt. But this time not the wrist. This time -

the skull - and then -

the brain -

And then it's all over. Except for -

Dolly, lying right beside his crushed head, gaping in horror.

Nu thrusts Luke's gun into her belt, collects the casing from her fired round and makes her way through into the back room after her own sidearm.

Dolly struggles out from under Luke and stares after Nu.

And then Nu's back - and her tempo's up another notch. She searches - a desk in the corner - drawers on the floor - nothing - Jim's body - all his pockets -

And from somewhere inside, Dolly starts to protest.

Nu makes for Luke. Dolly throws herself at Nu. Dolly's beyond speech - all we hear are a series of sounds emanating from a heady mix of shock and revulsion -

With a backhand Nu knocks Dolly away from her, off her feet.

Dolly clasps her face as she watches

Nu searching Luke's body. And then Nu's found it -

- a set of keys -

She strides from the room.

A moment and then Dolly chases after her -

CUT TO:

34 INT. KITCHEN. SCOTCH CORNER HOTEL -- CONTINUOUS

34

Nu enters followed by Dolly, her face blotched with fresh knuckle marks and anger -

Nu passes the fire and her weapon and to the other side of the room. We haven't seen this part before. Pantry shelves, practically bare. But more importantly - right by where Jim was rubbing himself - what looks like -

a cage.

Dolly sees it too. Immediately she stops - we can almost hear the HISS of her evaporating momentum - we know this is going to be nasty -

Nu takes Luke's keys and tries the lock - it clicks open. She moves in and over to something of indistinguishable form curled on the floor. She places a firm hand onto it and rolls it over into the firelight. And now we can just about make out -

the remains of a naked woman. Mutilated and emaciated she hardly seems real - but she is. Or was.

Or is. A shudder of movement - an attempt at a shallow breath.

Nu crouches down and puts her hand on the woman's throat. She waits. Another grating inhalation. Nu lifts the woman's eyelid with her thumb

- yellow pus glazes the unseeing eye.

Nu lowers the lid. She draws her knife and slits the woman's throat.

Nu stands up and sheaths her knife. She walks out of the cage towards the door. She picks up her handgun.

Dolly opens her mouth, as if to speak, but no sound comes out.

NU

-- Bring the foodstock.

Nu walks out.

Dolly tries not to look at the dead woman as she robotically follows Nu's orders and takes the small bag of oats from the shelf.

35 INT. RESTAURANT. SCOTCH CORNER HOTEL -- CONTINUOUS 35

Dolly passes through carrying the bag. At the spectacle of the two faceless men she cannot look away.

36 EXT. SCOTCH CORNER HOTEL -- MOMENTS LATER 36

Dolly exits to see -

Nu is already riding off the roundabout down the slip road to the A1.

Luke's horse is standing, riderless, in the car park.

With shaking hands Dolly fastens the sack to the Grey. She mounts and hastens after Nu.

As she catches up they hit the A1 -

- The rolling dales have abruptly disappeared and a flat, grey landscape only interrupted by the tree lines of long-gone roads stretches either side of the dual-carriageway. We're used to seeing riders crossing vast prairies, deserts, ranges, but this desolate motorway is something different - eerie. Dolly and Nu ride on - the only sound METAL STRIKING TARMAC - along the winding, empty expanse of asphalt as they pass a sign -

-- 'The North' --

37 EXT. FIELD -- NIGHT 37

Dolly and Nu ride across a dark field. There's a clear sky and pale moonlight reflects onto their faces. Nu pulls up by a covering of trees. The women dismount.

TIME CUT TO:

Dolly lying on her side - the embers of the fire reddening her face, half-hidden by her arm. But from under this protective posture we can see her eyes - watching -

Nu with the Atlas open in front of her. She has a tin box with an array of tools laid out on a strip of material: a few small, finely whittled bones, an old wooden ruler, a number of tiny pieces of rock - arranged in order of size - each carved with its own identifying mark.

The Atlas shows a page of handwritten chemical names next to marks that correspond to those on the rocks. There are instructions - neatly, precisely inscribed.

Nu takes the used casing from her rifle out of her pocket.

CUT TO:

Nu cleaning out the casing.

CUT TO:

Nu reshaping the casing with her bone tools. She pushes out the spent primer and with a needle-sized bone she takes out the anvil and cleans it.

CUT TO:

Nu tapping the contents of three little paper twists onto a page of the book. She mixes the fine, pale powder, meticulously fills the primer and replaces the anvil. She carefully presses the primer flush into the casing end with a smooth stone.

CUT TO:

The ruler - set up as a balance scale with a bottle lid on one end. Nu places one of the small rocks as a weight on the other. She takes a little plastic bottle and uses the tip of her knife to weigh out its black powder contents into the lid. Then she uses a loose page of her Atlas and funnels the powder into the casing.

Nu takes out a final piece of material. It holds a single handcast lead bullet. She pushes it into the top of the casing. She measures it against the ruler, pushes again, measures. She puts the reloaded cartridge into her rifle and bolts it home. She carefully repacks her tools.

Dolly stares out from under her arm - her eyes wide.

A RHYTHMICAL SCRAPING SOUND.

Nu methodically rotates the blade of her knife against a whetstone. She removes her hat - this is the first time we've seen her without it. Her hair is earth coloured and short. She takes her razor sharp knife and by touch she begins to shave her own head.

38 EXT. SCOTCH CORNER HOTEL -- DAY 38

Red hunkers down on his haunches in the car park as he reads tracks in the gravel.

Kid appears from inside the hotel.

KID

Red - yous need ter come and see
this.

39 INT. SCOTCH CORNER HOTEL -- MOMENTS LATER 39

The men stand over the ripe bodies of Luke and Jim. Kid pokes Jim with his toe.

KID

(smirking)

Who the fuck is this then? Yous
think he had a bad pint?

RED

I'd say one of them used tae own
that second horse.

KID

Wa' second horse?

RED

The one that's riding with Doll.
Two sets of tracks came in - one
straight, one heavy - overburdened.
Two left - both straight.

KID

This isn't the work of no women.

Kid inspects Luke's pulverized skull.

KID (CONT'D)

But they sure as fuck didn't do it
ter themselves.

Kid grins at his own joke. But Red's expression could not be more serious.

40 EXT. A1 -- AFTERNOON 40

Dolly and Nu ride along the motorway. Nu is looking at -

piles of dumped rubbish - mostly sewage - scattered along the road up ahead.

Nu pulls up Beau and draws out the map.

DOLLY
There must be a settlement.

Nu doesn't answer. She closes the map and squeezes Beau into a canter. She points him at the central reservation. They fly across and disappear off the motorway into the trees beyond.

Dolly stares after her, then looks around -

No one in sight.

She contemplates the road to town. But in the end she kicks the Grey forward and manages an awkward jump of the barrier as she follows Nu off the motorway.

CUT TO:

Dolly weaving through trees - she hits the woods' edge -

The terrain opens up into a flat meadow. Nu is cutting across its centre. Dolly drives the Grey after her.

Dolly slows as she pulls level with Nu.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
There are people back there.

NU
Yes.

DOLLY
Well, where are we goin'?

NU
Around.

DOLLY
You said you'd take me somewhere safe.

NU
...

Dolly reins the Grey back and tucks in behind Nu - her exasperation too much to hide.

41 EXT. CAMP. COUNTY DURHAM -- EVENING

41

Dolly is collecting firewood. She looks up -

Nu is surveying a murky pond. Nu turns away from the water and takes out her knife. She selects and cuts a long, straight branch from a tree and then walks back to camp.

Dolly sets the fire.

Nu trims the branch into a pole. She peels thin, continuous strips of bark from it's surface.

Dolly pulls her matches out of her pocket.

Nu looks up at the box's RATTLE.

NU
Where did you get those?

Dolly smiles - she's finally gained some positive interest.

DOLLY
They were a gift.

NU
Can you light a fire without them?

DOLLY
No.

Nu puts her hand out and Dolly passes her the box.

Nu inspects it.

NU
Things like this make you forget
how to manage without.

She throws the box back to Dolly.

Dolly catches it, deflated. She goes to open it but -

NU (CONT'D)
No.

Nu gets up and pulls some of the wood from the set fire. She uses her knife to peel off tinder.

Dolly looks on - she couldn't feel any more helpless.

CUT TO:

Nu rubbing a stick between her palms, pushing it down into a groove in the prepared wood. A small spiral of smoke emerges from the tinder - Nu crouches down and blows into it.

A flame jumps out into the air -

Dolly smiles, until -

Nu stamps the fire out.

NU (CONT'D)
You do it.

Dolly goes to take Nu's tools but Nu's foot is in the way.

Nu gestures at two unformed pieces on the pile.

Dolly picks them up and puts her hand out for Nu's knife.

Nu stares back at her.

Dolly fetches Paw's bowie knife from her pack. She returns to the fire to find Nu using her bark strips to bind her knife to the end of her pole.

NU (CONT'D)
(without looking up)
Never leave it out of reach.

Dolly regards the knife, skeptical. Then she sits and starts to prepare her tinder.

TIME CUT TO:

Dusk. Dolly rubs her two pieces of wood together. She winces and drops the stick. She blows on her raw palms. Frustrated, she picks up her knife and throws it into the ground.

Nu appears over her. She is holding three fish. She reaches down and pulls Dolly's knife out of the rough earth.

NU (CONT'D)
Look after your blade.

Nu hands it back, sits down and starts to unbind her spear.

Dolly eyes her knife -

DOLLY
It belonged to the man I killed.

Nu starts to work descaling and gutting the fish.

NU
That is the story of most weapons.

Dolly takes in Nu's own expansive collection.

DOLLY
Ok. I get the idea. Lessons learnt.
Can I use my matches now?

Nu picks up a cleaned fish and starts to eat it raw.

Dolly flushes -

DOLLY (CONT'D)
That shit you put in your bullets
isn't growin out the ground.

Nu regards Dolly with a level gaze.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Handloaded bullets aren't any different from a scavenged box of bullets - or a box of matches. They're all gonna run out one day.

NU

My ammunition only has to last as long as Luke's, Red's...yours. That gives me a level playing field. But when your matches are gone, and there's no one to light your fire for you...

Nu throws one of the raw fish to Dolly's feet and turns away.

Dolly looks down at the fish, silenced.

TIME CUT TO:

Morning - Dolly is packing up. As she pulls on her boots she draws her knife from one of them. She weighs it in her hand.

Nu walks into camp, back from her training. She places her stick on the ground, close to Dolly and goes over to Beau. She tacks up with her back to Dolly.

With an eye on Nu, Dolly puts the knife into her belt and surreptitiously approaches the stick. She stoops to pick it up and her body jerks - surprised by the weight. She lifts the instrument with two hands and inspects it. As she scrutinizes its end she sees -

- strands of hair, matted into the fractured wood -

her hands spring open and she drops the stick.

Nu turns at the SOUND. She stalks towards Dolly, never taking her eyes from her. In this continuing movement Nu stoops and brings the stick up into her hand.

Dolly steps backwards.

DOLLY

I... I just wanted to look at it.

NU

So look at it.

Nu throws the stick and Dolly catches it.

DOLLY

I've seen it.

Dolly tries to hand it back to Nu. But Nu does not take it.

NU

And you have seen me use it?

Dolly nods.

NU (CONT'D)

Show me.

Dolly doesn't know what else to do. With both hands she tries to weave the stick in front of her.

NU (CONT'D)

Use one hand.

Dolly obeys but she can hardly manage the weight.

NU (CONT'D)

Do not carry the weight, use it.

Dolly's struggling. But her swing is becoming more fluent.

NU (CONT'D)

Now hit me.

Dolly stops.

DOLLY

No.

NU

I said hit me.

Dolly's trembling now, yet she still does not move.

Nu crouches like she's about to pounce -

Dolly starts to weave the stick again -

Nu stares her in the eyes -

Dolly stares back. She's gathering momentum. And then, all of a sudden, she lunges at Nu -

But, one-handed, Nu disarms her and with a wide sweep cracks Dolly in the leg with the stick -

Dolly falls to the ground. She puts her hand to her knee as she looks up at Nu, stunned.

NU (CONT'D)

Get up.

Dolly stays where she is.

NU (CONT'D)

I said, get up.

Dolly looks away. She cowers as she waits for the next hit.

Nu glares down at her. Then she turns and walks away to her horse. She rides off without a backwards glance.

Dolly shudders.

TIME CUT TO:

Nu regaining the motorway. Dolly follows back onto the tarmac. Nu slows, and Dolly finds herself riding ahead.

TIME CUT TO:

Dolly - still in the lead as they branch off on a slip road. From behind, Nu's eyes bore into the back of Dolly's head.

Dolly squeezes the reins to stop her hands from shaking.

CUT TO:

42 EXT. PUB. NEWCASTLE - EVENING

42

Dolly and Nu approaching the remnants of a derelict road side inn.

Nu scans the ground. Without warning she swings down from Beau, unsheathes her rifle and stalks straight into the abandoned building.

Dolly hesitates as she sits alone in the fading light. Then she jumps down and runs inside after her.

43 INT. PUB. NEWCASTLE -- CONTINUOUS

43

Dolly enters the internal gloom -

Through the dark we can make out that the place has been ransacked - even walls are missing -

Dolly stumbles over the rubble in search of Nu. She reaches the staircase - half intact.

- A CREAK SOUNDS from upstairs -

Dolly pauses - and then follows the noise -

She arrives at the top of the stairs and makes her way along the corridor. She stops in front of a door - ajar. She pushes it open to reveal

a small bedroom. This place is like a shadow of Dolly's last home in Yorkshire. Stripped bare.

Dolly steps inside and peers around. Someone enters the room behind her -

DOLLY

This place gives me the creeps.

She turns -

A small, filthy MAN stares at her - eyes shining through the dark.

- Dolly SCREAMS -

Not a moment passes before Nu's in the room - we didn't even hear her coming - and she's got her rifle wedged in between the Man's shoulder blades. He raises his hands - and his whole body quivers.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

No!

Nu doesn't look at her.

NU

(to the Man)

Turn around.

The man hobbles around. But he keeps his head lowered and without being asked clambers down onto his knees.

NU (CONT'D)

How long have you been here?

MAN

(hesitating)

Months... maybe more.

NU

Look at me.

The man raises his twitching features towards Nu.

Nu lowers her rifle.

Dolly takes a breath.

NU (CONT'D)

I am searching for someone who passed this way. A long time ago. Are there any trading posts for the main road?

MAN

(quietly)

You could try the collier. Most people travelling through trade with him.

NU

Where?

MAN

You can't miss him - if you know what you're looking for.

CUT TO:

44 EXT. NEWCASTLE SUBURBS -- LATER

44

Dolly and Nu ride in silence along a dark street. They enter a post-war estate. The place is dead - a prefab ghost town. They pass between two concrete council block towers.

Nu draws Beau to a halt. She scouts at something further up the road. Dolly follows her gaze. We see

- a black silhouette, like an abstract cut-out, framed against the night sky -

CUT TO:

45 INT. MINE ENTRANCE -- MOMENTS LATER

45

Dolly and Nu lead their horses through a dank tunnel. Nu is carrying her rifle in hand.

Through the gloom we make out an old-fashioned lift grate.

Nu stops and looks around -

to the side of the grate is a winch.

Nu wrenches open the gate and steps inside. She shuts herself into the lift. Through the grate -

NU

If you hear trouble go back down to the estate. To the north tower block. I will find you.

She nods to the winch.

Dolly looks at it - unsure what to do. She grasps it with both hands and tries to wind it. Nothing.

Nu watches in silence.

Dolly tries again, this time she puts her full weight into the task. There's a creaking sound and then - all of a sudden - the winch jerks forward -

The lift jolts down a foot.

Dolly - already sweating - starts the slow, hard job of winding Nu down the shaft --

CUT TO:

Nu descending the pitch shaft. A filtering light breaks through from below. And then an opening - but the view is obstructed -

- by two men.

And one is training a shotgun at Nu's head -

The lift jars to a stop. The unarmed man reaches forward and draws open the grate - the other keeps Nu in his sights. Nu advances -

The light falls on her face.

The armed man lowers his gun. And now we can see their faces. The one with the gun is just a boy. They're both Chinese. And their faces are both blackened with coal dust.

46 INT. MINE ENTRANCE -- CONTINUOUS

46

Dolly struggles with the winch. She tries with all her might but it won't budge. Then it jerks - in the wrong direction. Dolly pushes against it and all of a sudden she's flung backwards as the winch starts to move of its own accord.

There is a GRUMBLING SOUND approaching up the shaft.

Dolly picks herself up just as

the lift appears. The grate SCREECHES open and out steps the boy, GEORGE.

Dolly stays completely still.

George takes Beau's bridle and leads the horse into the lift. He turns back.

GEORGE
(thick Geordie accent)
Ye should have rung the bell.

Dolly looks up to where he points and we see -

a bell hanging from a rope in the roof of the lift.

47 INT. MAIN TUNNEL. MINE -- MOMENTS LATER

47

Dolly steps out of the lift to find

Nu and BARRY waiting for her.

We look around the cave to see a contraption beside the lift that catches the ground water run-off. Underneath it a small coal fire is burning. Barry draws across a lever that diverts the water from over the coals to a large storage vat. The winch mechanism from down here is obviously steam powered.

BARRY
Ye can leave the horses here.
George will take care of them.

Dolly notices a hollow in the rock by the side of the lift. A goat stands watching the newcomers, chewing on a bundle of dry grass.

CUT TO:

Barry leading Nu and Dolly through the mine tunnel. They turn off into

a larger opening that forms into a dead-end, now a makeshift living room. There's a fireplace and kitchen area, a table, four chairs and a few accumulated odds and ends -

On a wall hangs a family heirloom - a bust old flatscreen.

And at the table are two more children: a boy, MARCUS, and a girl of around 8, MAISIE.

Dolly's taking this all in but Nu is preoccupied, even agitated. She focuses on Barry -

NU

I am searching for two men.

This statement hangs in the air - Nu's voice SOUNDS STRANGELY in the underground cavern.

Barry and Dolly turn to her.

NU (CONT'D)

I have information they passed through Newcastle. A few years ago.

There's SILENCE. Nu's odd appearance, the alien urgency in her speech -

NU (CONT'D)

They might have been travelling with a child.

Barry stares at Nu. Then, from the other side of the room -

MAISIE (O.S.)

Grace.

Nu's attention falls for the first time on -

Maisie - who steadily returns her gaze.

Dolly studies Nu -

Nu's face is impenetrable.

Barry sits at the table with Nu. Dolly stands to the side, an on-looker. The children have been sent elsewhere.

BARRY

I thought it was a big journey -
it's a long way te gan - two lads
with such a little lass.

NU

(intently)

You know where they were heading?

Barry stays silent, his eyes flit down to

- Nu's scarred, capable hands -

and then back to her face. Nu holds his silence and his gaze.

BARRY

They were good folk. Stayed awhile.
Don't remember the first lad's name
- he kept himself to himself. But
the other one, Will, he was
friendly, like. And he gave so much
attention te his lassie.

NU

He is not the father.

BARRY

What's this all about?

NU

It is important I find them.

There is an undefinable power to this statement. Barry
scrutinises Nu's face. Their eyes meet but Nu's are
impervious. Barry stays silent. A stand off. Then -

NU (CONT'D)

Those men stole that child.

Barry's face darkens.

BARRY

I know the name of their farm.

NU

(to Dolly)

Get the book.

49

INT. KITCHEN. PROSPECTOR'S HOUSE -- LATER

49

Nu sits at the table poring over her map. She's marking out a
route determined by the new information.

BARRY

(to Dolly)

Are you heading north with her?

Dolly doesn't answer.

BARRY (CONT'D)
You're from the City aren't ye?

DOLLY
Yeah. I used to be.

BARRY
(about Nu)
Where's she from?

Dolly shrugs, she doesn't know.

BARRY (CONT'D)
I've not been to London. I did
everything I could not te have te
gan there. Why live te someone
else's order, with curfews and
rations and the like, when ye can
fend for yerself?

As Barry speaks Maisie appears - she carries a mug of milk.
She passes Nu - glances at her - but keeps a wide berth.

Nu returns the look - she seems strangely uncomfortable under
the gaze of the child.

Maisie relaxes as she reaches Dolly. She carefully offers her
the mug with a proud smile.

MAISIE
It's goat's milk.

Dolly smiles back and warmly accepts it.

BARRY
What about our other guest?

Before he can get an answer, Maisie darts out of the room.

BARRY (CONT'D)
Every time we had another kid we
talked about gunna London. For
their sake. Te be safe. But we
always decided against it. Maybe
that was selfish.

DOLLY
Where's their mother?

Barry stays silent.

The awkwardness is cut short by a SHOUT from down the tunnel.
The SOUND of CHILDREN ARGUING, then someone CRYING. Barry
looks tired. He stands up and leaves.

Dolly sits for a moment, pensive. Then she takes the milk to Nu. She holds it out to her.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
It's goat's milk.

Nu doesn't look up.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
This seems like a safe place.
Unless you want me to come with
you?

NU
It makes no difference to me what
you do.

DOLLY
Right. Who cares what I do? Except
Red.

We can only see Nu's profile, her face downcast, but something in her manner has changed. And when she speaks we hear her voice crack -

NU
But what is it in him that makes
him want to find you?

Dolly looks confused by the strange question. Silence falls. The glass of milk stays on the table between them, untouched.

50 INT. MINE -- NIGHT

50

Nu checking on Beau. Then she heads back down the tunnel. As she passes the living area she pauses at the SOUND of VOICES -

CUT TO:

51 INT. LIVING AREA. MINE -- CONTINUOUS

51

Dolly and Barry in conversation.

DOLLY
Sorry to interrogate you before. I
didn't mean to bother you.

BARRY
Folk don't ask.
(pause)
I lost my wife. She was taken.

CUT TO:

Nu. As she listens she reaches under her neckscarf and scratches at her own scar.

CUT TO:

Barry and Dolly.

BARRY (CONT'D)

I came home. The place had been broken into. The kids were hiding in the store room - they said she'd locked them in there. I called for her doon the tunnels but she never answered. I went out looking. I suppose she must have tried to escape. Usually they keep lasses alive. I found her a few miles doon the road -

Barry falls into silence. Nothing is said for a while. Then -

DOLLY

I'm sorry --

BARRY

-- It was a long time ago.

Dolly nods. She contemplates the fire. Then -

DOLLY

I left London with my family for one of those communities of farms. We got jumped on the way. I dunno what happened to the others.

There's nothing more to say as they both ponder the fire.

CUT TO:

Nu listening outside. She lets go her scar and turns away from the room.

53 INT. BEDROOM. MINE -- LATER

53

Dolly enters the unlit space. Nu is already asleep on the floor. Dolly undresses and hangs her clothes on the dank wall. She lays down on the bed and stares into the dark.

54 EXT. BP STATION. A1 -- LATER

54

Red and Kid ride into a derelict BP station. Except it's buzzing. There must be 30 men in the forecourt - drinking, playing cards, fighting. Beyond there's a building, the gutted shell of a Little Chef, with more men inside.

Red jumps down from his ride and stalks through the crowd towards the entrance, Kid in tow.

55 INT. LITTLE CHEF -- CONTINUOUS

55

Red enters what was once the restaurant - now set up as a bar. Behind the counter is a BARMAN serving drinks. At the other end the room has been partitioned off with stacked boxes. Red moves straight into these private quarters.

CUT TO:

Red entering the darkened space -

In the bad light we can make out movement and we can hear the odd MOAN or SHOUT. A number of figures come into focus around the room.

Red approaches one and we see -

a woman, with a man on top of her.

Red scans over her face and then moves on to the next group -

a woman and three men.

He passes by to the last figure -

a woman lying alone on the ground. He lifts her dark hair to look at her face. A stranger. She's unconscious, or worse.

A PUNTER pushes in front of him.

PUNTER

Get in line.

Red moves aside. He doesn't even seem to register what would normally have been a mortal affront. He's distracted - in the corner we see -

a number of small children, huddled in a sleeping pile. A boy, not even five, is awake - staring at Red.

Red turns away.

Kid stands behind him - assessing the wares. Red leaves him to it.

CUT TO:

Red reentering the bar. He heads straight to the Barman.

RED

Gie me a bottle.

BARMAN

Is that old-timer with you?

RED
What of it?

BARMAN
I take ammo, weapons, horses, fuel,
food in that order.

RED
I'm looking for two women.

BARMAN
It'll cost you. The number's
normally the other way round.

RED
They passed through here a day or
two ago.

BARMAN
Not through here.

Red's eyes are burning cold.

RED
We tracked them here.

BARMAN
Well then you'd have found them in
that there room.

Red stares him down.

This customer's making the Barman nervous.

BARMAN (CONT'D)
Look. They probably cut around. If
they were heading for somewhere to
get supplies they might have passed
by the Angel. It's about the only
place to stop this far north. Now
what are you trading?

Red takes out a thin-bladed knife.

BARMAN (CONT'D)
(unimpressed)
What the fuck's that?

RED
It's a skinning knife. I could peel
you from head tae toe and still
keep you alive.

Red reaches over the bar and takes the bottle out of the
Barman's unresisting hand. As he leans forward he whispers -

RED (CONT'D)
 I'm trading you your hide. It's up
 tae you if you want tae wear it or
 hang it on your wall.

Red turns and walks outside -

The Barman puts his hand under the bar towards an old,
 battered cricket bat. But he doesn't bring it out. He rests
 on the bar to steady himself.

56

EXT. BP STATION -- LATER

56

Red sits alone at the edge of the forecourt. Half way through
 a bottle of ethanol, his back to the party, he stares out up
 the road ahead. Kid comes over and kicks back beside him.

KID
 Let's party, you and me, like the
 old days.

RED
 That was never my scene.

Kid laughs -

KID
 We'll do it in Paw's memory.

RED
 That's no how I'll remember him.

KID
 You mean you can remember him not
 hangin out of a whore? That's big
 talk...

Red gives Kid a look that the older man obviously recognises -
 Kid trails off mid-jibe. He looks down and his eyes fall on
 the stump of his arm.

KID (CONT'D)
 I wus left fer dead. I was just
 a... a kid. He brought me up ter
 yer ma's room. Yous wus there in
 the bed. Yous watched yer ma fix me
 up. He invited me into his family.
 He took charge of me.

RED
 We've all got our stories.

KID
 Yeah, but I tell mine best.

RED

What about her's? What was my ma's story?

KID

It's not good fer as many laughs.

(PAUSE)

She meant a lot ter him.

RED

I don't want tae hear it.

KID

Course not, that's why yous asked the fuckin question.

(PAUSE)

He wus bladdered. But he didn't have ter take yous with him. Yer not all that easy on the eye. He could have left yous there with the other whores. Whatever yous think - I'm not the only one who wanted ter have yous around. Yous can't judge a man by one act.

RED

What about the rest of it? What about Dolly?

KID

What about Dolly?

RED

(confused)

I don't know.

(BEAT)

Maybe I'm glad someone finally put him in his place.

KID

Bollocks. Just see him fe wa' he wus.

RED

And what was he?

KID

A leader. He understood. Life is about one thing. Pure and simple. Competition. If yous don't win, someone else will. So yous take what yous want. And yous fuck up anyone who gets in yer way.

Kid looks to Red but it's impossible to read his dark expression.

KID (CONT'D)

You're yer father's son. Now yous need to step up. Take charge. I'll do whatever yous want, any of these fuckers would, if yous provide. Just be like him.

Suddenly Kid grabs Red in a head lock and as he speaks he roughly knuckle-burns Red's scalp -

KID (CONT'D)

Let's get wasted.

Kid lets Red go. Red stays where he is - silent - his eyes shining.

KID (CONT'D)

Then we'll get a posse together - go find that slut and rip her a few new holes. You're yer da's boy - a born fucked up murderous son of a bitch. Enjoy it.

But in the turn of an instant - Red's eyes are dead. He gets up and throws the bottle to Kid.

RED

He meant nothing. I dinnae want to hear his name again.

Red turns and paces away, to be gathered up by the night.

57 INT. BEDROOM. MINE -- MORNING

57

Dolly waking - panicked, disorientated. No idea what time it is. She looks to the floor -

It's bare.

CUT TO:

58 INT. LIVING AREA. MINE -- MOMENTS LATER

58

Dolly wanders into the living area. No one's about. She pulls her damp jacket around her and shivers. She sets the fire and draws her matches from her pocket. Dolly guiltily looks around, as if Nu might be watching. She strikes a match.

It crumbles in her hand.

Another - the same. She inspects the box - the cardboard is swollen with the damp of the mine - the matches are ruined.

Dolly stares impotently at the fire. Fear seeps into her face. A FOOTSTEP and she spins around, hurriedly hiding the matches behind her back -

Barry stands in the doorway -

DOLLY
Where is she?

CUT TO:

Dolly sprinting to the stable area -

The Grey and the goat stare at her. No sign of Beau.

CUT TO:

59 INT. MINE ENTRANCE -- MOMENTS LATER

59

Dolly racing the Grey along the tunnel towards growing daylight. Suddenly she's in the sunshine as she gallops up a steep slope, desperate for a vantage point. She's gasping - breathless with panic - as she draws up beside an iron structure. She spins her horse - scanning the countryside - and then -

SLAM CUT:

BLACKNESS. But this is not a black out. This is Dolly's POINT OF VIEW -- the city falls into great black holes that eat into the landscape - like some kind of deep, festering disease. The entire countryside is slashed wide with the plague of open face coal mines that stretch in scarred lines to the horizon --

- Dolly takes in the dark landscape -

Directly over her looms the abstract shape from last night. Except now we can identify our own British Ozymandias - the colossal wreck of what was once the Angel of the North.

60 EXT. NEWCASTLE SUBURBS -- CONTINUOUS

60

Nu rides up into the backstreet hills. She reaches a brow and stops. She looks around her to see

endless rows of empty houses, flanked by corner shops, cafes, chippers - all ravaged by looters.

She looks back in the direction of the mine and her face clouds. She turns away, continues forward, her expression darkening with each step.

61 INT. LIVING AREA. MINE -- LATER

61

Barry is cooking dinner. There's the NOISE of the lift. Then FOOTSTEPS in the tunnel. They come to a stop at the entrance to the living area.

BARRY
 She came back with ye then? I
 didn't hear the bell.

There's no reply. He turns around to see -
 Red.

62 EXT. OPEN FACE COAL MINES. NEWCASTLE SUBURBS -- LATER 62

From between the mounds of abused earth - the lone figure of
 Dolly rides - searching -

63 INT. LIVING AREA. MINE -- CONTINUOUS 63

Men fill the kitchen: Red, Kid and three new faces - GUT,
 MICK and BEAN. Barry sits at the table - Red occupies Nu's
 chair from last night.

BARRY
 I don't know what you're talking
 about.

RED
 That isnae the truth.

BARRY
 No one's been here.

RED
 You're a working man, aren't you?

Barry doesn't answer.

RED (CONT'D)
 Let me see your hands.

Barry puts his hands behind his back but Mick and Gut grab
 him and force them out, palms up. Red studies them.

RED (CONT'D)
 These are working hands. My father
 always said - a man isnae a man if
 he disnae have working hands.

Red draws his thin-bladed knife. He tests its edge. Then he
 places the blade at the heel of Barry's palm and with one
 small cut slices lightly through the skin -

Barry's face shouts pain but he keeps his mouth shut -

Red stares into his eyes -

Red holds the blade against the open cut and grasps the skin
 flap with his free hand. Slowly, skillfully, agonizingly, he
 lifts and cuts.

He peels away, in a single piece, the layer of skin - from the palm of Barry's hand - right to the fingers tips -

64 INT. TUNNEL. MINE -- LATER 64

Maisie wanders along in her own 8 year old world -

65 INT. LIVING AREA. MINE -- MOMENTS LATER 65

Maisie enters the kitchen to find -

a sea of threatening faces turned towards her. At the centre her father stares out at her. His hands are a mess of red pulp. He starts forward when he sees his daughter but is held down by Gut -

Mick collars Maisie -

Red smiles.

66 EXT. NEWCASTLE SUBURBS -- LATER 66

Dolly rides back towards the mine -

67 INT. MINE ENTRANCE -- MOMENTS LATER 67

Dolly leads her horse into the lift and drags the grate closed. She RINGS the bell.

Dolly travels down in darkness. The light from below starts to show. The opening appears. The lift jolts to a halt. Dolly steps to the grate only to see -

someone standing in the shadows. For a moment it looks like Nu. But then -

RED

Hey Doll.

Red steps into the light. Like a blood-baited dog he thrusts his hand through the grate and grabs her wrist -

By instinct she clasps hold of the handle and uses her full force to slide the grate open -

Red's arm is caught in the collapsing grid. He takes hold of the handle from his side and forces the grate shut. He draws out his arm and then starts to drag the grating open again -

Dolly strains against him but she's not strong enough - she has no choice but to dash through the opening and past him down the mine.

Red gives chase. He catches up to her and snatches her by the hair. He drags her into the living area.

68

INT. LIVING AREA. MINE -- CONTINUOUS

68

Red thrusts Dolly up against the wall.

He holds her there, pinned. She waits for his attack.

But for the second time we have seen, Red does not make his move. As the fire illuminates her face Red's eyes warm. He softens his grip.

DOLLY

I didn't mean to kill him.

Red lets her go and drops his eyes to the ground - utterly confused, ashamed.

RED

I'm not here for him.

DOLLY

What do you want?

RED

(a whisper)

I don't know.

DOLLY

Are you here to hurt me?

He looks up, urgent.

RED

I can't.

DOLLY

Wot?

RED

Why did you run?

DOLLY

I thought...

RED

...I'd want blood for what you did?

DOLLY

Don't you?

RED

No. I want you.

DOLLY

Why didn't you stop him?

RED
You should have chosen me.

DOLLY
I was scared.

RED
Of him?

DOLLY
And of you. I still am.

RED
You dinnae need to be scared. I
willnae let anyone hurt you again.
I want to look after you.

DOLLY
Where are the family?

RED
Who?

DOLLY
The people who live here.

RED
They're safe.

DOLLY
Is Kid with you?

RED
I sent him out looking for you.

DOLLY
He'll kill me when he gets back.

RED
No he willnae. I willnae let him.

DOLLY
Why? Why are you doing this?

RED
(a deep whisper)
I love you.

Dolly doesn't know how to react. Red tenderly reaches out and takes her in his arms. She allows him to.

RED (CONT'D)
None of this had to happen. I would
have killed him for you. I'd kill
anyone for you, Doll.

- This last statement hangs in the air -

RED (CONT'D)
Tell me this is what you want.

Dolly hesitates.

Red sees Dolly's uncertainty. He takes her face and kisses her. Dolly cannot help but pull back from him. His grip becomes desperate. He kisses her again, his finger tips imprinting red marks on her cheeks.

But something in Dolly has changed. Giving herself away to this man is somehow no longer simple. Dolly, unable to submit but too scared to stop him, looks down to see -

- blood stains on the floor -

Dolly GASPS. And then the BELL RINGS. Red lets go.

RED (CONT'D)
Wait here.

Red walks back towards the lift.

Dolly remains petrified: the blood, the situation - in this moment all her faculties have failed. There's the sound of VOICES. She looks up -

Red reappears followed by the gang. On sight of Dolly the men fall into silence. They face her as one - like a four-headed, hungry animal.

Red puts himself between the men and his woman.

RED (CONT'D)
She's mine.

He glares at them - ready to take on any challengers.

Bean looks like he might be prepared to have a go. And Gut and Mick are restless.

BEAN
We didn't come all this way just to look. There's enough to go round.

RED
She belongs tae me.

GUT
And what do we get?

RED
I'm no making deals. I'm telling you how it is.

GUT
Who decided you could do that?

KID
(to Gut)
Watch it you fat fuck! There's
enough of yous ter go around too.
(to Red)
Throw them a bone.

Red's outnumbered and the men look dangerous. But he stands his ground.

RED
Go and play with the family.

DOLLY
No!

RED
(to Dolly)
Shut up.

The men, disgruntled, look at one another. None of them are ready to make the first move. Kid encourages them away.

Dolly throws herself onto Red -

DOLLY
Don't. They can have me --

RED
I said shut up!

And now Dolly's temper has tipped.

DOLLY
Not makin' deals? You can't control
them.

He strikes her and she falls to the ground.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
Paw always said you were weak. Just
like a woman. You'll never live up
to him.

And she's done it again. She's pushed the button. And suddenly Red appears in front of her like an embodiment of his father.

He grabs Dolly by the hair and drags her up onto the table. He yanks at her belt. Dolly tries to fight back and Red punches her in the face. She falls limp, stunned by the blow. Red rips down her trousers. He unbuckles his own -

The men are all standing close now, enjoying the show.

RED
(to the gang)
Get out! Get the fuck out of here!

Moodily they acquiesce and move away down the tunnel.

Red opens his trousers as Dolly comes around -

She starts to struggle again and manages to pull herself free. She falls to the floor and attempts to crawl away -

Red grasps her by the ankle. He begins to draw her back towards him.

DOLLY

Please don't hurt them. I'll do anything. You win.

At this Red stops dead. He fixes on Dolly. She almost smiles in disbelief that she's controlled him -

But then Red's eyes move away from Dolly to a space just behind her - Dolly turns and sees -

Nu standing over her. She's glaring down the barrel of her rifle - eyes battleship-grey against her coal-blackened face -

Red's face is pallid in contrast -

Red relinquishes his hold on Dolly, who is in stasis -

Nu pulls her to her feet.

And now Red stands. He's got one hand holding up his trousers, the other raised in the air.

Nu steps towards him -

Red starts to back out of the room -

NU

Stay where you are.

RED

You shoot me and those men will be in here before you have a chance tae run.

Nu scans past him. She edges after him out of the room, leading Dolly behind her.

CUT TO:

Red backing down the tunnel to the other living spaces. Nu holds her rifle on him as she backs herself and Dolly in the opposite direction towards the lift.

RED (CONT'D)

I know where you're going.

Nu narrows her eyes.

RED (CONT'D)

The Chink was a wee bitch. He told me everything. And, Doll, there's nothing left of his family worth saving.

And then Red disappears from sight.

Dolly gapes into the space where he stood. But Nu thrusts her onwards. They reach the grate. Nu pushes Dolly inside.

NU

How many are there?

DOLLY

Five, I think.

Nu hands Dolly her gun.

NU

Beau is out top. Go to the tower block. If I am not there by dawn then leave. The map is in the saddle bag. If you fire the gun, collect the casing and reload it. Use the instructions. Be precise.

Dolly stares at her, unspeaking.

NU (CONT'D)

Find the child and take her away from those men.

But Dolly still doesn't respond.

NU (CONT'D)

Did you hear me?

DOLLY

You came back for me.

NU

Did you hear what I said?

DOLLY

Yeah. But how? I can't.

NU

Yes you can.

Nu draws the grate shut between them.

DOLLY

What are you doin'?

NU

Someone has to operate this.

DOLLY
But you got down.

NU
I climbed the shaft.

DOLLY
How will you get back up?

Nu doesn't respond.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
How are you goin' to get out?

Again Nu is silent. And before Dolly can remonstrate the
THUNDER of FOOTSTEPS DRUMS down the tunnel -

Nu throws the lever to activate the winch -

Dolly is consumed by blackness as she flies up the lift
shaft.

CUT TO:

Nu covering the lever with her rifle. The NOISE of the lift
moving up and away -

The first of the men comes into view - Gut is bearing down on
her. He raises his gun -

-- They FIRE simultaneously --

CUT TO:

Dolly. The ECHO of the SHOTS and then the Grey's SCREAMS from
below. The NOISES reverberate into an eerie silence. No more
footsteps. Just the SOUND of the LIFT.

CUT TO:

Red and the men flattening themselves against the wall.

CUT TO:

Gut lying dead in the tunnel.

Nu crouches by the lever. She looks up to the lift shaft -
willing the thing to arrive. She ejects her spent casing and
pockets it. Then she checks her ammo -

Only two rounds for Luke's handgun and one for the rifle -

She crawls up to Gut's prostrate form. She takes his gun.
Someone again scopes from up the tunnel. Nu fires the last
rifle shell at them as cover. She checks Gut's chamber -

- empty -

And then a CLANG as the lift stops. The SCREECH of the grate from above - OPEN and then SHUT.

Nu steps back to the lift and throws off the lever -

The water diverts to the tank -

She ejects her final rifle casing and pockets it -

CUT TO:

Red and his men. TWO SHOTS SOUND. Nu's last. Then a long silence. The men look at each other - what's going on?

KID

Let's just go fe it.

Red nods. They all raise their weapons. As one they round the corner to find -

Nu standing in the middle of the tunnel, Luke's handgun lying spent at her feet, her rifle pointed to the ground. She raises her hands above her head.

Kid looks to Red, confused. The men approach. As they bypass Gut's bulk they slow - they look down at their feet -

swimming in water. And we see -

the destination of Nu's final two shots - the base of the water tank, the last dregs draining out into the tunnel. The lift's disabled from below.

Red snatches the rifle from Nu's raised hand and in one swoop he cracks the gun butt into the back of her head. Nu slumps to the floor.

69 INT. LIVING AREA. MINE -- LATER

69

A blur of colours slowly takes shape to reveal - Red, Mick and Bean towering over -

Nu, as she starts to come round, seated on a chair. Her weapons have been taken away. She tries to move but her hands are trussed behind her back and her ankles are tied onto the chair. She eyeballs the men.

Kid enters.

KID

(to Red)

I've sealed the holes. But it's gonna take a couple of hours fe the ground water ter build up. Until then that lift's about as useful as a light switch.

Red turns to Nu.

RED

Well that gives us time tae get acquainted.

(to the men)

Who wants tae go first?

Bean steps forward and eagerly positions himself over Nu. He unbuckles his trousers but as he moves towards her he can't get into place.

BEAN

Get her out the chair. I can't do it like this.

Red nods assent. Mick takes out his knife and cuts Nu's feet loose -

- The last strand of the tie breaks and Nu's already buried her foot deep in Bean's groin -

Bean doubles over in pain.

Mick, a near-giant of a man, answers with a crunching punch to Nu's jaw - the chair flies backwards and she's left sprawled out on the floor.

MICK

(derisively)

You want to keep her hands tied?

Bean's not recovered but anger dims the pain.

BEAN

You fucking bitch.

He grabs the knife from Mick and staggers towards Nu.

Nu watches him approach. Body taut. Eyes focused.

As Bean nears her he moves to the side, out of the reach of her legs. Now he's over her and he pins her lower half with his body weight as he starts to cut at her clothes. But he's not watching her face, and so he's not prepared as - she thrusts forward, head first, and bursts his nose against her forehead.

The force of the blow tips him backwards off her as he raises his hands to his broken face - big mistake -

Nu recoils one of her freed legs to her chest and with lethal power and accuracy she drives her boot into Bean's hands -

Her kick forces the knife he holds upwards - it grinds through the cartilage of Bean's nose cavity into the soft cushion of his brain. He drops to the floor.

A moment as the men take this in -

The only SOUND the BUBBLING of BLOOD.

Nu looks up at the others, her face dark as hell. Her eyes are dancing, her scalp is a naked mess of scars. And then, for the first time, she smiles - a vicious painted grimace - her teeth glistening with her own blood.

The men stare at her - stalled.

She scouts behind them to -

her weapons in the corner. But there's no reaching them.

And now the men advance, and then they're on her - their feet and fists pound into her body and face.

70 INT. TOWER BLOCK. NEWCASTLE -- CONTINUOUS

70

Dolly hides in a stairwell. She holds Nu's gun in her shaking hands. She looks up to Beau -

the horse stands over her - pacing with nervous excitement.

The gun falls with a CLATTER to the ground and disappears into the shadows.

Completely silent, Dolly's body jerks as she weeps out her own impotence.

71 INT. STOREROOM. MINE -- LATER

71

A dark space - a door opens and light floods in. It's an old kit room - the only enclosed area - and now it's stacked with coal and wood. Nu's dead-weight body lands with a THUMP on the floor. The door slams shut - darkness. And SILENCE. And then a shallow, rattling breath.

CUT TO:

72 INT. MAIN TUNNEL. MINE -- CONTINUOUS

72

The men look knackered but high after their violent frenzy.

KID

(to Mick)

She's no fucking fun unconscious.

RED

It disnae matter now. We should have enough water tae fire the lift.

He hands Nu's rifle to Kid.

RED (CONT'D)
 I've got a couple of rounds for
 this rifle.
 (to Mick)
 Stay here and watch her. We'll find
 Doll.

MICK
 (smirking)
 I'll watch her all right.

RED
 That door stays bolted. She's still
 got value.

CUT TO:

73 INT. STOREROOM. MINE -- CONTINUOUS 73

Darkness. We're becoming accustomed to it. And through it we
 can make out the shape of Nu, lying on the floor. From
 outside there is the SOUND of the MEN LEAVING. Then a shimmer
 as Nu's eyes flick open. Awake. At work.

74 EXT. NEWCASTLE -- DAWN 74

Red and Kid riding slowly through the suburban estate. Red
 looks for tracks but the tarmac gives nothing away.

RED
 You search these houses - room by
 room. I'll look through the mines.
 He peels off and rides out of the estate.

CUT TO:

75 INT. STOREROOM. MINE -- CONTINUOUS 75

A weak light filtering through the gaps in the door -

Nu is propped up in the corner - her blackened face is
 swollen and streaked with blood. With slow, painful movements
 she works, winds and knots a long strip torn from her
 tattered shirt. She stops and inspects it. Nu drags herself
 along the floor, feeling as she goes. Just as she reaches the
 fuel pile her hand stops -

a loose piece of rock on the ground. She digs out the flint
 with her fingers and holds it in her open palm.

CUT TO:

76

INT. LIVING AREA. MINE -- MOMENTS LATER

76

The goat carcass roasting in the fire place. Strips of meat smoke overhead.

Mick sits at the table gnawing at a goat rib - Bean's body still a heap on the floor. Mick looks up from his breakfast -

A trail of smoke is floating in through the doorway -

He stands, grasping the goat rib, and walks out into the tunnel. He sees -

smoke filtering through the storeroom door. Flames already lick up underneath the wooden barrier. He throws the bolt. The hot metal scorches his hand and he jumps back -

- the rib falls to the floor -

the door swings open and smoke billows into the tunnel - a strange WHIRRING SOUND - And through the smoke Nu appears. She's propped against the doorway winding her wrist just over her head - a two foot stretch of material forms a blurred, dynamic halo in the air above her. She releases her fingers. The material whips out into a long strip, and from it's centre - almost too fast to see - a black object zips across the tunnel and -

smashes into Mick's open mouth. Tooth and coal shards fly. Mick staggers to the ground before the remnants of the rock have hit the floor -

And now Nu's pulling herself out of the doorway and along the tunnel wall. As she crosses the tunnel in pursuit of her weapons she falls to the floor. But she keeps going, dragging her trammelled self over the cut rock. And then - a BONE-CRUNCHING CRACK - literally. Nu looks up to see -

- the goat rib - snapped under Mick's boot as he looms overhead -

He moves heavily forward, picks Nu up by her neck and throws her across the tunnel -

She crashes into the rock wall and slumps to the ground. She tries to crawl away but he's on top of her again and again she's hurled into the air and dashes against the floor -

Nu opens her bloody eyes to see

- the broken rib just in front of her -

Gasping for air she draws herself forward but as she reaches it she collapses to the ground. And now Mick's on top of her as he lifts her again. But this time she's dead weight. With both hands he victoriously holds her limp body out like a trophy.

And then Nu opens her eyes -

And in the same breath her right hand appears in a blur as it moves forward and up into the side of Mick's gullet. And before we really know what's happened, she draws away -

Nu hangs, observing the surprised Mick, the jagged half of the goat rib in her hand. Mick doesn't even have time to drop her before a stream of bright carotid blood spurts from his throat. He attempts to step forward and his heavy form crashes to the floor.

Nu drags herself out from under Mick's hulk and over to the living area. She eventually makes her belongings and reequips herself. Her progress is slow and laboured as she pulls herself up to some kind of standing against the wall. On a shelf she finds -

- a tin with a couple of lead weights inside -

She pockets them. Next she fists the smoking meat over the fire into a sack hanging from the hearth. Then she starts to push her way down the tunnel in the opposite direction from the lift - the direction of the family.

From behind her the Grey's SCREAMS reverberate through the mine - now thick with smoke -

CUT TO:

Nu reaching the sleeping area. She hangs onto the entrance wall and stares inside. Her face does not tell what she sees but her stillness does. She turns and begins her arduous journey to the exit -

CUT TO:

Nu passing the body of Gut. She arrives at the grate -

The Grey is going crazy in all the smoke -

Nu throws the lever and the shaft ECHOES the lift's approach. The lift arrives and Nu uses her last surge of strength to drag the grate open. She hangs from it, staring at -

the hatch in the top of the lift, her entrance to a climb up the shaft -

And then she slumps to the ground.

The Grey's SCREAMING.

There's no way out.

77 EXT. NEWCASTLE ESTATE -- CONTINUOUS 77

Kid, on foot, carries Nu's rifle, as he searches a row of back gardens. Red is nowhere to be seen.

CUT TO:

78 INT. TOWER BLOCK. NEWCASTLE -- CONTINUOUS 78

Dolly is huddled, catatonic. Only the shallow rise and fall of her chest stops her looking like a corpse.

CUT TO:

79 EXT. NEWCASTLE ESTATE -- CONTINUOUS 79

Kid makes his way to the towers. The SOUND of BEAU SNORTING. He listens, and then moves at speed to the north block.

CUT TO:

80 INT. TOWER BLOCK. NEWCASTLE -- CONTINUOUS 80

Dolly. FOOTSTEPS outside. She becomes alert. Her breathing quickens. She scopes around for the gun. Panic rises as it's nowhere to be seen. She gropes into the shadows of the stairwell - nothing. She abandons her search and looks around for something else. Her eyes fall on -

Nu's stick - tied to Beau. The FOOTSTEPS are right outside.

CUT TO:

Kid entering, rifle raised, to see -

Beau. And no one else.

He makes his way up the stairs -

CUT TO:

Kid reaching the first floor. He looks down the long balcony either side -

- empty -

He passes along the walkway, tests each door as he goes -

CUT TO:

Kid taking the next flight. He reaches the second level and moves out onto the walkway -

- No one to be seen -

Again he starts to check the doors -

CUT TO:

Kid testing the final door. It opens. He raises the rifle and walks into the dark flat. He moves slowly from room to room -

the place is preserved in immaculate condition, set up as if the owner has just popped out, except everything is covered in a fine layer of black dust.

After the last room reveals no one Kid lowers the rifle and walks back out into the sunlight. And into -

Dolly.

Kid moves to raise the rifle but -

Dolly is already swinging with Nu's stick. Her blow is inaccurate, but her force is true, and Kid has to drop the rifle to catch hold of the end of the stick -

Dolly tries to shake him off - she shoves the captured weapon at him with all of her might -

Kid, surprised by the sudden push, takes a step backwards and steadies his bulk on the balcony edge. He LAUGHS, excited by her ferocity -

There is a mighty CRACK -

Before either can react the rotten rail disintegrates under Kid. He clings onto the stick as he sways over the drop -

Dolly grips the other end -

For a split second their eyes meet, Kid's smirk is still hanging on his face -

But Kid's hand loses grip and -

he plummets to the ground -

A DULL THUMP.

Dolly looks over the broken rail -

Kid lies on the ground, his arm and both his legs splayed in the most unnatural of poses.

Dolly steps away, picks up Nu's rifle, turns and runs.

CUT TO:

81 EXT. NEWCASTLE ESTATE -- MOMENTS LATER 81

Dolly races Beau up to the mine entrance. The air is filled with smoke. She jumps down and runs inside.

CUT TO:

82 INT. MINE ENTRANCE -- MOMENTS LATER 82

Dolly reaches the grate. From below she can hear the SCREAMS of the Grey. She tries to winch up the lift but it won't budge - the gate below is open. She gives up and tries the grate - locked. But

- a small gap opens where the lower catch is broken -

Dolly heaves with all her strength and manages to wedge her thigh into the opening. Half-crushed she struggles the rest of her body through -

And now she hangs off the grate over the drop down the shaft. The opening snaps shut. She scopes her options -

The stone walls below the grate are as good as sheer.

She looks to

- the suspension cable hanging from the centre of the roof -

Dolly doesn't look down again, doesn't really stop to think, but flings herself into the air and -

lands clinging to the cable. Every part of her body that she can wrap around this lifeline is clamped in place as she inches her way down into the mine.

CUT TO:

83 INT. MINE -- MOMENTS LATER 83

Nu is passed out in the opening of the lift. The Grey HYSTERICAL nearby. And then there's a METALLIC THUMP -

The trap door in the lift roof rises and Dolly drops through -

She runs to Nu and shakes her - no response. She looks over to the lever, then peers through the smoke. Her eyes rest on -

the Grey as it reefs at its halter -

CUT TO:

- a halter rope being fed over the lever -

Dolly steps back into the lift where the Grey and Nu wait for her. She throws the grate shut and yanks the rope - the lift disappears towards the surface.

CUT TO:

84

EXT. MINE -- MOMENTS LATER

84

The Grey careers out into the sunshine followed by Dolly as she struggles under the dead weight of Nu. Dolly clears the smoke and drops to her knees. She lays Nu down on the ground. Even now she is slowed by the sight of -

Nu's blackened, bloody form.

Beau appears at her shoulder and Dolly grabs a canteen of water. She splashes it into Nu's face.

Nu COUGHS and opens her eyes. She sees -

Dolly's anxious gaze above her.

DOLLY

Where are the others?

Nu shakes her head.

CUT TO:

Dolly hefting Nu up onto Beau. Now Dolly's up on the Grey.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Did you kill Red?

Nu does not answer.

CUT TO:

Dolly and Nu riding painfully slowly across the surface of an open faced mine. Nu lolls over her saddle. Around them coal dust billows into a black clouded wake. Dolly pivots, squinting around through the dark fog -

They reach the far side and ride up out. Dolly directs the horses back along the mine ridge -

CUT TO:

Nu and Dolly making their way across the rocky mine edge. The terrain becomes too much for the horses. Nu slides down from Beau, rifle in hand, but she staggers to the ground. Dolly runs to her aid. She grabs food and water and assists Nu up the incline.

CUT TO:

The women reaching a vantage point of the entrance to the mine valley. Nu is spent. Dolly slides her to the ground against a rock. Nu weakly checks her rifle. Nu pulls a strip of goat meat from the bag and sucks on it.

86 EXT. NEWCASTLE SUBURBS -- DAY

86

Red rides back towards the estate. Something catches his attention. A scent on the wind. He looks up towards the Angel and sees -

smoke billowing from beneath the hill.

He charges his horse onwards.

CUT TO:

Red arriving at the opening to the mine - it's smoking like a chimney stack. His horse remonstrates against the black air. He's forced to ride away. He scans the ground and then turns and races down to the estate.

CUT TO:

Red riding through the estate. The place is eerily silent.

RED
(calling out)
Kiiiiid!

No reply as he heads for the tower block.

CUT TO:

Kid - apparently dead. But then his eyes open and he looks up to see -

Red.

KID
I'm ok. I'm gonna be ok.

Red raises his gun.

KID (CONT'D)
It's just a flesh wound.

Kid starts to laugh but it disintegrates into a whimper - a strange, unsettling sound from this hardened old-timer. He tries to move but his body is shattered.

KID (CONT'D)
Please. Red. Please.

Red does not look away. A SHOT RINGS OUT.

87 EXT. THE AMBUSH POINT -- EVENING

87

The setting sun.

Nu sits crouched against the rock. She watches the path below. She is breathing heavily, the mental exertion of her focus weighs on her abused frame.

Dolly's eyes move between Nu and the empty valley.

Nu becomes aware of Dolly's gaze.

NU

I will not lead him to where I am going.

DOLLY

How do we even know he's comin'?

NU

He has come this far.

Nu watches the valley.

Dolly slumps down against the rock - she no longer looks out for Red's arrival. Then -

DOLLY

Wot happened to those children?

Nu does not move or answer.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

I might as well have killed them myself.

NU

I do not think about the lives I am responsible for ending.

DOLLY

We're not the same person.

NU

We are both killers.

Now it's Dolly's turn to stay silent.

Nu continues to look out into the valley as the flames of the sun reflect and disappear deep into her eyes - consumed into a world that is as dark and unknowable as the landscape that shelters her.

And then she raises her gun. And we hear THE ECHO OF HOOVES.

Dolly turns and peers over the precipice -

A rider has appeared on the far side of the mine valley and moves at speed along its floor -

Dolly glances at Nu -

And, strangely, Nu's previously laboured breathing is now calm. A stillness has descended on her. She tracks the rider with her rifle -

As he approaches we see it is Red.

Dolly holds her breath.

Nu does not - but she does squeeze the trigger and she does FIRE A SHOT clean across the scarlet sky. The SNAP of the rifle REPEATS through the air -

Yet Red keeps riding. Until - what seems like an age later - his body reacts to the bullet as it thumps into his flesh. He is momentarily forced backwards before his reflexes cause him to hunch against the hit and he slumps forward onto the neck of his horse. The horse continues to gallop with no one to guide it until it disappears from view under the shadow of the quarry edge. It reappears on the other side - riderless.

Nu lowers her rifle, automatically ejects the cartridge and puts it in her pocket. Only then, like a delayed reflection of Red, does she slump against the rock.

Dolly stands, open-mouthed, in unresolved shock. Then -

NU (CONT'D)

Find him.

Dolly looks in disbelief to see -

Nu holding out the rifle to her.

DOLLY

You got him.

NU

Maybe. But you need to make sure.

DOLLY

You wot?

NU

You need to finish him.

CUT TO:

Dolly making her way down the rocky hill-side with the rifle in hand. Her movements are far more assured than when we first met her.

CUT TO:

Dolly reaching the base of the hill. She works her way through the maze of blackened rubble. She stops dead.

- A foot protrudes from behind a large rock -

Dolly grips the rifle and traverses around the rock to see -

a second foot, then legs, torso, and finally - Red's face. His eyes are open - they stare fixedly ahead. It's hard to tell how much blood there is as the sun casts it's final crimson shadow directly onto him.

And then he looks at us.

CUT TO:

Nu lying unconscious against her rock.

A figure appears over her. Dolly stands and observes Nu. Then she reaches down and pulls Nu up. Nu can't keep her feet. She's not with it but Dolly's already got Nu's weight underneath her as she carries Nu down the hillside. In her haste Dolly does not see -

the food bag discarded by Nu's rock.

CUT TO:

Dolly riding the Grey and leading Beau. Nu is passed out on his neck as they make their way out of the coal mines.

88 EXT. A68. NORTHUMBERLAND -- DAWN

88

Dolly leads Nu, still lying on the neck of her horse. They're travelling through thick fog - its wetness causes the dirt to run in streaks off Nu's face.

The sun is rising, starting to burn away the whiteness, but the landscape remains ghostlike. A long, undulating road stretches down the valley and disappears into distant hills. The women look like wraiths in the mist. Dolly shakes with cold. She stops her horse and looks back at Nu -

She is unmoving.

Dolly drives the Grey on. Beau follows behind.

89 EXT. CAMP. NORTHUMBERLAND -- NIGHT

89

Nu lies on the ground.

Dolly pulls an old T-shirt out of her bundle and unwraps her knife. She gently cuts Nu out of her lacerated shirt. She dresses her in the faded tee and then bundles her in Dolly's own jacket and everything else she has to hand. But Nu shivers and sweats all at once. Dolly feeds her water.

She checks the content of the flask and carefully screws the lid on tight.

Dolly rummages through their belongings. And now she searches desperately. She stops as she remembers the meat bag back at the mines. In her hand is all the food they have left -

the end of a bag of oats.

She puts it back next to the near-empty water flask and looks at Nu. Then she looks to her knife. She picks it up and heads into the trees.

CUT TO:

Dolly in camp. She's set a fire. And now she's attempting to light it. She has all her tools prepared and her knife at her side. But try as she might the spark is not coming. Dolly looks at her palms, red raw from her efforts and the reopened cable burns. She fixes her focus and keeps going.

TIME CUT TO:

Dawn. A fog has settled over the camp.

Dolly lies shivering in the cold. The only covers are piled over Nu. The firewood lies untouched by heat. Too chilled to sleep Dolly gets up. She takes her knife out from under her saddle - her makeshift pillow - and handles it. Then she stows it in her belt. She begins to tack up the horses.

90 EXT. A68. NORTHUMBERLAND -- MORNING

90

Dolly and Nu ride on. Nu still lies over Beau's neck as Dolly leads her forwards. They cross a bridge -

the river beneath is bone dry -

91 EXT. A68. NORTHUMBERLAND -- EVENING

91

Dolly is again working at lighting a fire. She drops the spindle in pain. Her hands are bleeding. She turns away frustrated. But as she looks back -

a tiny whiff of smoke spirals up from the tinder.

She falls to her knees and starts to blow. The smoke thickens and then a flame appears. Dolly turns to Nu, elated -

Nu lies pale and unknowing on the ground.

Dolly turns back to her fire. Despite the circumstances her face is alight. She starts to feed the flames.

92 EXT. THE BORDER -- DAY 92

A massive mountain landscape. Dolly looks out into the first valley of Scotland. Behind her a sign reads

"Welcome to Scotland's Borders - Scotland's leading Holiday Break"

93 EXT. SOUTRA SUMMIT WINDFARM -- AFTERNOON 93

The women ride up a steep incline. At the top we see -

an army of decrepit white metal windmills - those left standing are stock still in the dead heat.

- A CREAKING noise - One windmill shifts its sails, picks up speed. There's a PATTERING sound and a fat raindrop bursts on Dolly's cheek. Then another. Suddenly it's raining fast.

Dolly grabs the collection of flasks and opens her grinning mouth to catch the storm -

CUT TO:

Night. Still raining. Dolly is huddled in the tarp on her horse, hunched against the downpour. She looks over at -

Nu, wrapped in her oilskin, shivering violently.

CUT TO:

94 INT. CAVE -- NIGHT 94

Nu lies by a fire. She opens her eyes.

Dolly pours oats into warming water.

The bag is now empty - the food gone.

95 EXT. THE CLYDE -- AFTERNOON 95

Dolly leads the way as the women ride on across country. They reach the brow of a hill. Dolly draws up her horse. Nu joins her at her side - she is awake but sickeningly pale. From where they stand they now overlook

the river Clyde. It stretches out ahead and as far as the eye can see to either side as it cuts the land in two. Further in the distance is the bridge. But in between, away to the east is the city of Glasgow.

Dolly leans down and pulls off her boots. She slings them together with a spare shirt and hangs them around her neck. Then she spurs on her horse and plunges towards the river.

CUT TO:

The women at the water's edge.

DOLLY
Can you swim it?

NU
Can you?

Dolly sets her expression and gees the Grey into the Clyde.

The women make their way across: Nu clings onto Beau while Dolly swims side by side with the horses.

CUT TO:

Dolly and Nu emerging on the north bank into a different world. The City suburbs have been replaced with dramatic rocky scenery. We've reached the gateway to the highlands.

Dolly looks to Nu and we see

- her face - ashen from the cold of the swim.

The women ride their horses fast on towards the north.

CUT TO:

Dolly turning off the main road. Nu follows as they start along the West Highland Pathway -

CUT TO:

Dolly riding ahead along a forest track. There is a faint LAPPING SOUND. She rounds a turn and comes to a halt -

Loch Lomond shines in the autumn sunlight.

CUT TO:

The women riding single file on the loch side in the last moments before dark. The glass-like water reflects their forms in the timeless silence of the fading light. Above the loch massive hills loom - the full extent of their range hidden in an evening mist.

Nu lies with her eyes shut next to the fire.

Dolly returns to camp carrying the rifle and Nu's empty snares but no kill. She lays the hunting tools down and her eyes fall on

- Nu's stick -

CUT TO:

Dolly standing at the edge of the loch, meditatively working the stick. Her breath smokes in the cold morning air.

97

EXT. HIGHLAND PATHWAY -- DAY

97

The women riding up to the Bridge of Orchy. They are both wrapped in a strange assortment of their own clothes and gear. Nu's bundled up in her animal skins, formed into a makeshift blanket. The horses snort white steam from their nostrils. Dolly stops. She looks to the sky -

A single white flake appears through the air and spirals down to land on her face. Then another, and another...

CUT TO:

Dolly and Nu riding up a steep forest track with snow falling all around. They encounter the remnants of an old wooden fence. Dolly leans over and picks up the last of the man-made picket pales. She snaps them into pieces as she rides along and places each piece under the tarp behind her. She hands pieces to Nu, who stows them in her saddle bag.

CUT TO:

Dolly and Nu riding through zero visibility snow fall -

CUT TO:

Dolly and Nu digging out a snow hole with their cooking tin, knives and hands.

Nu struggles and collapses into the snow.

But Dolly works for the both of them.

They crawl inside and Dolly pulls out the drinking flask. They both swig - and that's their supper. Dolly produces the collected wood and gets to work on a small fire.

CUT TO:

A small flame, choking on damp tinder. Dolly grabs her pack and brings out her copy of Madame Bovary. She rips out the pages, one by one, as she feeds her fire.

CUT TO:

Dolly emerging from the hole into a blinding white glare. She squints against the sunlight as it burns up from the snow and then she ducks back inside.

DOLLY
It's bright.

She picks up a lump of charcoal from the dead fire and thumbs a black streak under each of her eyes and across her mouth. Then she turns to Nu.

CUT TO:

Dolly and Nu, faces painted, struggling through snow that builds over their horses' bellies -

CUT TO:

Dolly and Nu are on foot. Dolly holds the rifle and walks behind Nu, who limps after a trail of prints through the snow. Nu stops. She staggers and falls. Dolly tackles her up to sitting but Nu is unable to stand again.

CUT TO:

Dolly fighting silently through the snow, carrying the rifle. She looks ahead to a bluff. From behind it we can see

a small billow of smoke rising into the sky.

She crouches down and battles to the incline. As she reaches the slope she gets onto her belly and crawls up towards the smoke. Dolly peers over the top of the bluff to see -

- a stag, snorting out puffs of steamy breath into the air.

She moves noiselessly into position and makes aim. She holds her breath as she tries to stop from shaking. She bends her trigger finger - stiff with cold.

-- A CRACK SHOCKS across the moor --

The deer starts up as the round explodes into the snow by its hooves.

CUT TO:

Dolly grappling through the snow. She slips into a bluff and claws her way back out.

CUT TO:

Dolly reaching the deer tracks. She looks at the ground - tries to identify the entry hole of the bullet. But she sees no sign. Desperate, she starts to dig.

CUT TO:

Dolly digging up the snow. But now with no aim - furiously wasting her limited energy. She stops. Wet with sweat. She slumps down and stares blankly out -

the stag is still in sight - the only interruption to the empty landscape ahead of her -

CUT TO:

PANTING BREATH. Dolly running through the snow. She reaches Nu and the horses and makes straight for the Grey. She grabs the bridle. Dolly drops the rifle and draws out her knife.

Again, her hand shakes.

She turns her back to the animal. She catches her breath. But she does not move. Then her face cracks. She lowers her head and walks away from the horse. She seats herself in the snow across from Nu and takes in the sight of the older woman:

Nu sits upright with her eyes shut. The tarp has fallen open to reveal her scar. We can also see her borrowed T-shirt and, faded to near-invisibility, the Barbara Kruger logo -

- Buy me

I'll change

your life -

Dolly observes Nu in this weakened state -

DOLLY (CONT'D)
We'll find her.

NU
I know.

Dolly watches Nu - assessing the situation. Then -

DOLLY
She's your kid, right? Gracie.

Nu puts her freezing hands into the jacket pockets. She opens her eyes and draws out the tea-diffuser -

NU
What is this?

DOLLY
It's a tea diffuser. My mum gave it to me as a medal.

NU
For what?

DOLLY

I don't remember. I just remember
feeling proud to win it.

Nu inspects the diffuser and then turns her gaze out over the horizon.

Nu's dark and bloody form is framed in isolation against the relentless white of the moor.

NU

You know what we will find. And you
know what I will do. Nothing will
stop me.

DOLLY

I don't believe this is about
revenge.

NU

You are right.

DOLLY

I know. You came back to help me.

NU

No. I came back to finish things.

DOLLY

And your daughter?

NU

This is not about her. Not anymore.
I stopped thinking about her a long
time ago.

Nu holds Dolly's gaze for a moment. Then she turns away and her eyes again fix on some indeterminate point in this stark, open landscape.

DOLLY

Then what is this all about?

Dolly waits but Nu does not look back to her or speak again. Dolly frowns - unconvinced. Stiff and tired she allows herself to sit for awhile. Then -

DOLLY (CONT'D)

We need to keep moving. I think
we're close.

Nu doesn't respond.

Dolly rises and puts her hand on Nu's shoulder. Nu slumps over onto her side. Dolly sinks to her knees and shakes Nu but she is unresponsive. She slaps her face, gently at first, then harder. Nu does not regain consciousness.

We can hear Dolly's HEART THUMPING as she stands. She turns to the Grey. Without hesitation she strides forward, draws her knife as she walks, grabs the bridle and thrusts the blade into her horse's heart -

-- A SCREAM - like the world is being rendered in two --

CUT TO:

Dolly awash with blood hacking through the Grey's carcass -

CUT TO:

Dolly catching the warm, thick blood in a bottle.

CUT TO:

Dolly pouring the dark liquid onto Nu's lips. Nu lies limp as Dolly tries to get some of the blood down her throat.

CUT TO:

Nu unmoving on the tarp as

Beau and Dolly pull her on through the snow. Dolly swigs from the bottle. A moment later she doubles over and wretches up the blood. She pulls herself to standing and pushes on -

CUT TO:

Dolly driving Beau forward as they drag Nu across the darkening moor.

Dolly takes a laboured step. Then another. Then she falls.

CUT TO:

Dolly and Nu's bloody forms. The snow around them a shocking red. In the dying light we can now see, just a little further on from where their bodies lie, a farm.

FADE TO BLACK:

98

INT. BEDROOM. THE HOGG'S FARM -- MONTAGE OF TIME:

98

DOLLY'S POV:

Blurred images of a small bedroom - a cracked ceiling - faces close and far - until they all begin to clear into one face - A CHILD. She looks down, worried, eager. And then - shadowy forms in the background. Men. Watching. Waiting.

TIME CUT TO:

Dolly opening her eyes with a start. She is drenched with sweat. She looks around her to find -

she is alone. She takes in the room. Sparse but homely.

With slow, awkward movements, she gets herself out of bed. She's still in her travelling clothes - no one has undressed her. Except her boots are at the end of the bed. She reaches inside them, looks for something, but comes up empty-handed. Agitated, she scans the room. Her eyes fall on the bedside table, and the object she is searching for -

- her knife -

She takes it up and slips out of the room.

99

EXT. HALLWAY. THE HOGG'S FARM -- CONTINUOUS

99

Dolly creeps down the dark hallway. She reaches a door and stealthily opens it. Inside we see -

Nu in bed. Unconscious. Deathly pale. But her chest is rising and falling in an even rhythm.

Dolly exhales. And then she starts -

A figure is sitting in a chair in the corner of the room - so still he went unnoticed. He stands and approaches and we see ELI HOGG - an old, white-bearded man with large, soulful eyes. He opens the door fully to encourage Dolly to enter.

She stands her ground, grips the knife behind her back.

ELI

Come in. She'll respond better tae
a friend.

He turns to a dresser and picks up a bowl of water. He takes out a soaking compress and places it carefully on Nu's forehead. Nu moves her head - weak but restless.

Dolly cautiously enters the room.

ELI (CONT'D)

She's been mighty sick. For a wee
while there we weren't sure she
would pull through. I didnae want
the bairn to see her. But Gracie's
been occupied with you.

Dolly turns at the name -

DOLLY

Gracie?

ELI

My granddaughter. She's been
keeping vigil at your bedside for
two days.

(MORE)

ELI (CONT'D)

She'll be disappointed tae have missed you waking. But she'll be back any minute.

Dolly stows her knife into the back of her belt and covers it with her shirt. She approaches the bed. Eli steps aside -

Nu's wasted form is more changed than we have realised. And her left arm is bound against her chest.

DOLLY

Has she come round at all?

ELI

No. But give her time. She's a tough'n. And you? You seem in fair form?

DOLLY

I just needed a good sleep.

Dolly turns away from Nu to find Eli standing close to her. His presence is so gentle she was unaware of his proximity.

ELI

I'm Eli.

DOLLY

Dolly.

ELI

Would you like tae come down and join my family for a bit of supper?

DOLLY

Thank you. But I want to stay here.

Eli nods and leaves the room.

Dolly turns back to the bed - to what lies in front of her.

TIME CUT TO:

Morning. Dolly wakes. She's still sitting but with her head and arms on the side of Nu's bed. Dolly looks up and sees - a tray of food left waiting for her on the sideboard.

TIME CUT TO:

Dolly sitting with Nu. Outside we hear the SOUND of A CHILD'S LAUGHTER. Dolly moves to the window and surveys the view -

A small farmyard, covered in snow, and then white as far as the eye can see. And just below the window a wood pile with two figures at work. ANGUS, Eli's son-in-law chops wood, while the Child, a girl of around 8, stacks the fallen pieces. This is GRACE.

ELI (O.S.)
She wants tae see you.

Dolly turns to see -

Eli at the door. He carries another tray.

ELI (CONT'D)
Gracie. She's been asking for you.

DOLLY
I'm happy for her to come.

ELI
She won't. She's scared tae come in here.

Eli looks at Nu's ghost-like appearance and starts a fit of coughing. He puts the tray down.

ELI (CONT'D)
You could try tae feed her.

Eli, still coughing, leaves the room. Dolly turns back to Nu.

TIME CUT TO:

Dolly feeding Nu. Or attempting to. She tilts Nu's head up and spoons the soup to her mouth. The food goes everywhere but down Nu's throat. And Nu is unresponsive, oblivious to Dolly's attentions. Dolly lays Nu's head back onto the pillow. Outside she hears the LAUGHTER.

100 INT. KITCHEN. THE HOGG'S FARM -- MOMENTS LATER 100

A small, functional, warm room. Eli stands over an open range and stirs a large pot. Eli's 18 year old grandson, LEWIS, sets the table. The door opens. The men look up to see Dolly.

ELI
Lewis, lay another setting.

Lewis stares at Dolly, flushes scarlet and looks away.

LEWIS
Yes grandpa.

Eli smiles at Dolly to share the humour of his grandson's adolescent embarrassment.

ELI
Please, Dolly, take a seat.

He gestures to a chair.

DOLLY
Can I help with anything?

ELI

Tonight you're our guest. Tomorrow
you can be family.

Dolly uncomfortably takes the offered chair.

CUT TO:

Dolly watching Eli and Lewis finishing the preparations for
supper. They both appear to take pride in the meal.

ELI (CONT'D)

I hope you don't mind but we've
been making use of the horse you
slaughtered. Nae point letting good
meat go tae waste.

DOLLY

You're welcome to it.

ELI

I hate to lay criticism on the
provider but you've still a lot tae
learn if you want tae earn a living
as a butcher.

The door opens and Angus enters closely followed by Grace,
who carries logs. The two of them stop dead at the sight of
Dolly. They stare at her, open-mouthed.

ELI (CONT'D)

Dolly, my son Angus. And I've told
you all about Gracie.

Angus nods an awkward greeting. This is obviously a family
not used to company.

Gracie looks shy and runs over to the fire. She disposes of
the logs and then hangs around Eli's legs. She peers out at
Dolly from behind his protective frame.

Dolly is just as interested in her as she is in Dolly - her
likeness to Nu is subtle, but it's there.

Eli serves up a bowl of stew. He hands it to Gracie.

ELI (CONT'D)

Here, Gracie, why don't you take
this tae our guest?

Gracie stares at the proffered bowl and then carefully takes
it. She keeps her eyes on its steaming contents as she slowly
walks to Dolly. She places it down in front of her. She looks
up and gazes at Dolly full in the face. Dolly's transfixed.
And apparently so is Gracie.

DOLLY

Thank you.

Gracie grins, a wide, open smile. The innocent pleasure of this expression rids her of any shadow of her mother. She settles herself in the seat next to Dolly. Angus approaches with his own supper.

ANGUS

Gracie, that's my seat.

Gracie looks up at him - stubborn and unmoving. And it's like a child version of Nu has appeared at Dolly's side.

Dolly watches her with wonder.

Angus moves away, unwilling to battle her. Gracie turns back to Dolly and there's that smile again.

101 INT. NU'S BEDROOM. THE HOGG FARM -- NIGHT 101

Dolly falling asleep at Nu's side. She wakes again and rises from her chair. She leaves the room, taking a last look at Nu before she closes the door and heads back to her own bed.

102 INT. DOLLY'S BEDROOM. THE HOGG FARM -- MORNING 102

Dolly wakes up to find -

a pair of large eyes staring intently at her. Gracie lies at the end of her bed.

Dolly sits up, surprised.

GRACIE

You slept late.

DOLLY

I was tired.

GRACIE

Grandpa says you can help me with my work today.

Dolly nods, unable to refuse this child's expectant request.

CUT TO:

Dolly up, dressed and leaving the room. She opens the door to discover Gracie waiting outside.

DOLLY

I'm just goin' to look in on my friend.

Gracie's face falls. She reluctantly follows Dolly down the hall but as Dolly opens the door Gracie stalls.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
You can come in if you like?

Gracie shakes her head. Again her face has set into a stubborn expression. Dolly looks into the room to see

Nu, as she has been for days.

And then Dolly looks down -

a small hand has taken her own and is gently pulling at her.

GRACIE
Come on.

Dolly looks at Gracie's eager face. She closes the door on Nu and allows the child to lead her away.

103 EXT. FARM -- DAY

103

Dolly and Grace shovel snow away from the barn doors.

LEWIS (O.S.)
Hey! Stop!

Dolly looks up to see Lewis running towards them. He arrives out of breath and tries to take the shovel from Dolly.

GRACIE
She can manage.

LEWIS
(to Gracie)
She's not well.

DOLLY
I'm fine.

Lewis observes her.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
Honestly, I'm fine.

Lewis relents. He turns to Gracie and takes her shovel.

LEWIS
Let me help.
(to Gracie)
Grandpa needs you.

Gracie purses her lips but does not argue. She runs off towards the house. Dolly catches Lewis's eye. He flushes beet again and turns away to the digging.

104 EXT. HALLWAY. THE HOGG'S FARM -- NIGHT 104

Dolly makes her way to her room. Gracie's door is ajar and a light glows from within.

GRACIE (O.S.)
Dolly? Dolly, is that you?

Dolly turns hesitantly towards the door.

105 INT. GRACIE'S ROOM. THE HOGG'S FARM -- CONTINUOUS 105

Dolly puts her head around the door -

Gracie's room is almost bare except for a dresser and Gracie's single bed. Gracie is lying under the covers - she looks happily to Dolly.

GRACIE
Come in.

Dolly enters, cautious. She does not approach the bed.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
(on the edge of sleep)
Will you tell me a story?

DOLLY
I don't know any stories.

GRACIE
Grandpa knows hundreds.

Dolly looks embarrassed under the child's attention. She picks up a small doll from the dresser and mindlessly turns it in her hand.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Where did you come from?

DOLLY
The south.

GRACIE
What's it like?

DOLLY
It's better here.

GRACIE
Why?

DOLLY
(shrugging)
It feels safe.

GRACIE
Are you going tae stay with us?

BEAT.

DOLLY
We'll see.

Gracie smiles and closes her eyes. Like that she's asleep.

Dolly moves to set down the wooden doll and for the first time looks at it -

It is hand-carved - lovingly made.

She quickly places it back and walks out.

106 INT. DOLLY'S ROOM. HOGG'S FARM -- MOMENTS LATER 106

Dolly enters her room and shuts the door behind her. She stands still for a moment, succumbing to her thoughts. She starts to undress. She draws her knife out from her belt and is about to place it under the pillow. She stops. Observes it. Then she stows it in the cupboard and shuts the door.

107 EXT. FARM -- DAY 107

Dolly and Gracie cross a snowy field in the direction of the barn.

108 INT. BARN -- MOMENTS LATER 108

Dolly and Gracie enter the barn and head for the hayloft. Dolly climbs up and hefts a couple of bales of hay over the edge. She climbs back down. As she shoulders the first she stops. She is looking at the far side of the barn.

DOLLY
Wot's that?

An old bath sits in the corner.

Gracie looks at Dolly - she's covered in so much dirt it seems to be what holds her together. Gracie smiles -

CUT TO:

Dolly laying neck deep in smoking hot water. It's already black with the grime that's come off her but she's oblivious as she bathes in its warmth. Her eyes are open - she gazes above herself and watches the clouds of steam spiral themselves up and away.

Gracie appears with a pail of hot water. She tips it into the bath so that it's brimming.

She hands Dolly a bar of soap and Dolly starts to wash. She fights with the mess that is her hair but Gracie steps in. She takes the soap and lathers it into Dolly's head.

Dolly sits up, closes her eyes and allows the child to wash her. And before she knows it Gracie strips off her own clothes and clambers into the bath behind her. Dolly doesn't stop her as the child continues to comb out the woman's hair.

CUT TO:

Dolly wrapped in a blanket beside the bath as she lifts Gracie out. Dolly dries her off with another blanket and then helps to dress her. Gracie picks up a folded garment and hands it to Dolly.

GRACIE

I thought you might like this.

Dolly opens it up to discover an old dress. She frowns.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

It belonged tae grandpa's daughter.
Lewis's mother.

DOLLY

(shaking her head)

It's not a good idea.

She tries to hand the dress back to Gracie but the child does not take it.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Gracie, I don't know that I can
give you wot you want. Do you
understand?

Gracie just stares at her, uncomprehending.

Dolly attempts a smile. She holds up the dress again.

CUT TO:

Dolly buttoning up the dress when -

Lewis dashes into the barn. He's too out of breath to speak. But we can read his face.

Dolly turns and runs past Lewis out of the barn.

CUT TO:

109

INT. HALLWAY. THE HOGG'S FARM -- MOMENTS LATER

109

Dolly races up the stairs and into Nu's room.

CUT TO:

110 INT. NU'S BEDROOM. THE HOGG FARM -- CONTINUOUS 110

Dolly enters and abruptly comes to a stop.

Eli stands over Nu who lies propped up in bed - her eyes open.

Nu looks to Dolly.

Dolly is on the verge of tears.

Nu takes in -

Dolly's new dress, washed hair and flushed, healthy cheeks -

Nu's eyes are cold.

ELI
Is Gracie coming?

Nu's features darken.

Dolly does not answer.

Nu's stare penetrates Dolly.

Dolly steps towards Nu but as she reaches the bed Nu's eyes close - shut to the world and to her.

111 INT. KITCHEN. THE HOGG'S FARM -- MORNING 111

Angus and Gracie sit at the table. Dolly and Lewis bustle around the kitchen, working together.

The door opens and Eli enters - only he's not alone. He supports a frail Nu on his arm.

ELI
We have a new guest joining us.

ANGUS
Good morning.

Nu does not respond to the greeting.

A shadow settles over the breakfast table.

Dolly watches fearfully as Nu takes her seat -

Nu is observing the members of the family. Her body's weak but her mind is at work.

NU
This is your whole family?

ELI
And my granddaughter. Gracie.

Nu's face betrays nothing.

Lewis stops what he's doing - as if something has been left unsaid. Dolly and Nu both see this.

Eli, coughing, takes the seat across from Nu. Then -

ELI (CONT'D)
 There was my daughter, she died
 when Lewis was born.
 (BEAT)
 And Will.

Nu picks up her table knife.

Dolly catches her breath.

NU
 Will?

ELI
 My son.
 (PAUSE)
 He died last winter.

Dolly has avoided anything to do with this up until now. She glances furtively at Nu but -

Nu's face is unreadable, set against any expression.

When Dolly speaks it could be to either Eli or Nu -

DOLLY
 I'm sorry.

She lays a plate of food in front of each of them and sits next to Nu.

Nu doesn't look at her. And then her attention snaps to the door. As Gracie walks in.

Nu stares at her child. Her focus is absolute. Her knuckles are white as she grips her knife.

Gracie's eyes fall on the stranger. She looks away, instantly disliking this new arrival.

Nu reads this reaction. Her eyes blacken.

ELI
 Angus, cut the bread.

Angus does as bid.

Gracie takes her seat between Eli and Dolly. She immediately grabs a piece of bread and puts it on Dolly's plate.

Nu's mouth compresses.

Eli ruffles Gracie's hair.

ELI (CONT'D)

It's no like you tae be a mother
hen -

(to Nu)

I suppose it's being around all us
men. But she's taken a real shine
tae Dolly.

NU

Has she?

ELI

It's been good for her. I doubt she
has any memory of seeing another
lass before.

Dolly's face clouds and her eyes again dart to -

Nu's grim features -

NU

(ice-cold)

What about her mother?

ELI

Gracie disnae remember her. She
lost her a long time ago.

Eli starts to softly cough again.

Nu looks at

Dolly, who cannot hold her gaze.

Without another glance at Gracie, Nu turns to her plate and
mechanically sets into her breakfast.

112 INT. NU'S BEDROOM. THE HOGG'S FARM -- MORNING

112

Nu is dressing. She crosses to the window and picks up her
bandana. Something catches her attention from outside. She
stops mid-movement as she looks out of the window.

In the farm yard Gracie and Angus play around in the snow.

Nu is still, her eyes for once expressive, troubled.

Outside Gracie charges at Angus and he mock falls into a
drift as the girl bundles on top of him.

In this moment a flicker of light appears in Nu's face. But
she shifts slightly and becomes aware of

her own movement in the window. The shadow-reflection of her scar glares out at her from the pane.

There is a KNOCK at the door. Nu turns away from herself as Dolly enters - and for a second Dolly catches a glimpse of dark conflict. Then Nu's mask is back on.

DOLLY
How are you feelin'?

NU
I am getting better.

DOLLY
Good. I was worried.

NU
I can see.

DOLLY
Look --

NU
-- Do not get comfortable.

DOLLY
Wot does that mean?

NU
Nothing has changed. As soon as I am strong we will leave.

DOLLY
With Gracie?

NU
With Grace.

DOLLY
We can't just take her. Gracie has a family. She loves these people.

NU
She is my child.

DOLLY
But she don't know you. Wot you're talkin' about would be wrong.

NU
Was what they did right?

DOLLY
I'm not sayin' that. You're justified --

NU

-- I do not need justification.
This is what I am going to do.

DOLLY

You didn't expect to find her like
this. Aren't there some things that
can be left alone?

NU

Is that what you want?

DOLLY

I'm just tryin' to help. This is a
good home.

NU

Whose side are you on, Doll?

Dolly hesitates in her answer.

Nu turns and walks out of the room.

Dolly stares at the shut door. Then she walks over to the
window and looks out to see -

Angus messing around with Gracie in the snow.

And now Dolly's face betrays her own conflict.

113 INT. KITCHEN. HOGG'S FARM -- NIGHT

113

Nu sits by the open range.

Eli comes in from outside. He pulls up a chair across from
Nu. He falls into a fit of coughing. He holds an old
handkerchief to his mouth as he wheezes away.

Nu watches him, her eyes forbidding.

Snow is falling outside.

Soon Dolly enters with a stack of logs. She takes a seat
between Nu and Eli. Nu doesn't acknowledge her.

DOLLY

You'll be needin' some more wood.

Nu looks at Dolly with barely-disguised contempt. To avoid
this accusatory glare Dolly turns to watch -

the snow through the window.

Eli looks out the window thoughtfully.

ELI

We knew it was coming. Gets to be the ground becomes a part of you, working it for so long. We could sense the change. You can't keep nature trussed up.

DOLLY

How do you manage?

ELI

My family has been on this land for longer than I could tell you --

The door opens and Gracie pads in in her night dress. She makes straight to Eli and curls up onto his lap. He cradles her as she gazes out at Dolly with big, dark, sleepy eyes.

ELI (CONT'D)

-- It's been a life of change, the weather the least of it. We survive because we adapt. Find another way of doing things. A new order.

They sit together, all thinking their separate thoughts. Then Eli turns his focus to Dolly.

ELI (CONT'D)

What about you? What do you want now?

Nu snaps her eyes from Gracie to Dolly.

Dolly sits trapped between the interrogatory and the hopeful gaze. She looks away from the flanking adults down at her hands. There is a silence. Then -

ELI (CONT'D)

(to Gracie)

It's time you were in bed, lassie.

Gracie cups Eli's ear and whispers something to him. He looks across at Dolly and smiles.

ELI (CONT'D)

(to Gracie)

Well she's only just sat down tae get warm. Maybe if you go up right now she'll follow you in a wee while tae tuck you in?

Gracie jumps up smiling and makes to leave.

ELI (CONT'D)

(to Gracie)

Say good night tae everyone.

GRACIE
Good night, grandpa.

She kisses him. Then, to Dolly -

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Good night, Dolly.

She runs up to her and kisses her affectionately. Then she turns to Nu. This is the first time we've seen her interact with this other stranger. Gracie looks dubious, even a little frightened. She keeps her distance -

GRACIE (CONT'D)
(quickly)
Good night.

And then she's gone.

The atmosphere is thick. Dolly tries not to look at Nu.

NU
(to Eli)
There is little family resemblance
between the girl and you.

Eli falls into another heavy coughing fit. As he recovers -

ELI
Her parents were neighbours - we
took her in when they died. She's
been with us around four years now.

NU
(stone-faced)
That was good of you.

ELI
When my daughter died everything
seemed tae fall apart. That was
nearly 20 years ago. But with
Gracie it's all come back together.
That's a new order. A better one.

He turns to Dolly.

ELI (CONT'D)
She'll be waiting for you. She's a
headstrong young thing - never lets
you back out on a deal.

Dolly gets up quickly and leaves, as if glad to escape.

Nu stares hard at Eli, who watches the fire, and coughs quietly into his handkerchief. Then -

NU
Why did you take her?

ELI
 (between fits of coughing)
 Gracie? What else could we have
 done?

NU
 Left her where she was.

Eli looks up at Nu. The coughing stops.

NU (CONT'D)
 You must have had a reason.

Eli assesses Nu. Then -

ELI
 It gives me peace that I took her.
 You see, I'm not well myself.

He opens the handkerchief - it is spotted with blood.

ELI (CONT'D)
 We had no more women. I couldnae
 let my family disappear like that,
 could I? I couldnae let us fail.

NU
 No. Of course not.

114 INT. DOLLY'S BEDROOM. THE HOGG'S FARM -- MOMENTS LATER 114

Dolly sits on her bed - head in hands. The snow CRUNCHES
 outside - she goes to the window. She sees -

Nu's tall, dark form making its way towards the stable. She's
 carrying her saddle roll.

Dolly looks panicked.

CUT TO:

115 INT. STABLES -- CONTINUOUS 115

Nu entering the stable. She puts her hand on Beau's nose. The
 horse nuzzles her. She stands there for a moment, allowing
 the affection. Then she throws down her roll in the straw and
 lays out next to her horse.

CUT TO:

116 INT. DOLLY'S BEDROOM. THE HOGG FARM -- CONTINUOUS 116

Dolly looking out the window. She SIGHS - whether from relief
 or worry we can't be sure.

117 EXT. FARMYARD -- DAY

117

Dolly and Gracie stand over the woodpile behind the stables. Gracie is watching as Dolly splits logs. Her swing is accurate and powerful.

GRACIE

You're like me - you're a hard worker. That's good.

CUT TO:

118 INT. STABLES -- CONTINUOUS

118

Nu has her pack out and is cleaning off what looks like an oversized metal nutcracker. From outside she hears the conversation of Dolly and Gracie. She listens as she works.

GRACIE (O.S.)

Grandpa always says that's the only way tae be.

CUT TO:

Dolly and Gracie.

DOLLY

Well he's right.

GRACIE

He'd be happy if you wanted tae stay with us here.

DOLLY

I told you - we'll have to see.

CUT TO:

Nu. She pauses in her work. She frowns. She puts the instrument away and makes for the yard.

CUT TO:

Dolly and Gracie.

GRACIE

I don't see why you can't say yes?

DOLLY

It's not up to me.

GRACIE

But I know grandpa wouldnae mind.

DOLLY

It's not just your grandpa.

GRACIE
Well who then?

Nu appears in the stable doorway.

Dolly and Gracie simultaneously look over.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Oh.

DOLLY
(to Gracie)
Why don't you ask?

Gracie drops her eyes and shakes her head. Everyone is embarrassed. Dolly plays matchmaker -

DOLLY (CONT'D)
(to Gracie)
Didn't Eli send you for something?

GRACIE
I'm waiting for you to help me. I
can't carry the sack on my own.

DOLLY
I've got to finish up here.
(to Nu)
Why don't you help her?

GRACIE
What about her arm?

Nu draws her arm out and demonstrates that she can use it. Then she replaces it in the sling.

Gracie shrugs, disappointed.

Nu shifts uncomfortably.

Gracie runs off in the direction of the barn.

Nu hesitates -

DOLLY
Please. Try.

Nu looks to her daughter's departing figure. And then she follows.

Dolly watches after them.

119 INT. BARN -- LATER

119

Nu and Gracie stand in the store at the back of the barn. Gracie climbs onto a pile of sacks and tries to lift one. Nu intercedes and in the process

- their hands meet -

Gracie pulls back sharply. She eyes Nu with distrust. Then she jumps down and runs out of the barn.

One-handed, Nu hefts the sack onto her shoulder and follows.

120

EXT. FIELD -- MOMENTS LATER

120

Nu walks through the fields, following Gracie back to the farm. Nu watches the child intently as -

Gracie, unaware of her audience, plays about in the snow. After a while Gracie turns back and looks at Nu - as if she has just remembered her own chore.

GRACIE

Do you need help with the sack?

Nu shakes her head.

Gracie shrugs.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

You're strong.

Nu's mouth turns up at the compliment.

NU

I am getting strong again.

Then -

GRACIE

Are you a woman?

Nu slows.

NU

Yes.

GRACIE

(matter of fact)

You don't look like a woman.

NU

...

GRACIE

You don't have any hair, and you've got marks all over you. And your hands are -

Gracie wrinkles up her face, as if she's thinking about something that revolts her.

Nu stoically takes this in. Then -

NU

And what does a woman look like?

Gracie considers the question. Then -

GRACIE

(simply)

Like Dolly.

The girl breaks into a smile and turns around and runs away from Nu back towards Dolly and the farm.

Nu watches Gracie retreat. And then her grip disappears and the sack falls to the ground.

CUT TO:

Dolly chopping wood. Gracie comes racing over to her and starts to stack the logs. Dolly looks down towards the barn -

At first she can't see Nu. Then, just beyond the fenced boundary of the farmyard, her eyes fall on a dark figure.

Dolly's face shadows.

From where she stands it looks as if Nu is sitting down in the snow.

CUT TO:

Dolly running down towards the barn. She rounds a corner in the path and sees

Nu making her way up the hill towards her.

Dolly slows to a walk as she approaches Nu. She reaches for the sack.

DOLLY

Here. Let me help you.

NU

I do not need help.

Dolly takes the sack anyway. But Nu does not let go and the women end up carrying it between them.

There is a deep silence.

Dolly looks out at the distant mountains.

DOLLY

It's beautiful here.

NU

You will not convince me to stay.

DOLLY
She'll come round.

Nu stops and turns to face Dolly.

NU
But I will not.

Dolly looks at Nu's face, into her eyes. They are black.

NU (CONT'D)
That part of me is lost. I am what
you see. Nothing more.

Nu drops her hold on the sack and walks away from Dolly.

121 INT. DOLLY'S BEDROOM. THE HOGG FARM -- NIGHT 121
Dolly anxiously looks out of her window at -
A light glowing at the back of the stables.

CUT TO:

122 INT. STABLES -- CONTINUOUS 122
Nu crouching with her back to us over a small, hot fire. On
the ground beside her is the 'nutcracker', its wooden handles
splayed open. She has a pan over the white heat. She takes
something and drops it into the pan with a small CLANG -

The lead weights from the mine.

CUT TO:

Nu scooping black slag from the top of a silver liquid.

CUT TO:

The liquid pouring from the pan -

CUT TO:

Outside. A HISSING SOUND. Nu grasps the wooden handle
protruding from the snow and draws out the 'nutcracker'. She
opens it up and knocks it against her boot -

Two bullets fall from the mould. They CLINK down next to two
other casts on a square of material laid waiting in the snow.

CUT TO:

The stables. Nu picks up her rifle and draws the bolt. The
casing ejects. Nu catches it, inspects it and lies it next to
the other three waiting casings.

Beside them lies Nu's reloading tin.

123 INT. KITCHEN. HOGG'S FARM -- NIGHT

123

Eli is kneading dough when Nu enters.

ELI

You're up late. Everyone else's fed
and gone tae bed.

NU

I want provisions.

ELI

You're leaving?

NU

At first light.

ELI

You're no fit tae travel. Why don't
you wait a week or two?

NU

There is no more time.

Eli nods. Then -

ELI

And Dolly?

Nu doesn't respond.

Eli puts the dough aside to rise. He offers his hand to Nu.
Her face gives nothing away as she shakes it.

ELI (CONT'D)

Take whatever you want.

NU

Thank you. I will.

124 INT. THE STABLES. THE HOGG'S FARM -- LATER

124

Nu silently enters the shadows of the stables. She carries a
pack. She moves to Beau and begins to lash on the provisions.
Without stopping or turning -

NU

Are you coming?

From behind Nu a figure steps forward out of the shadows -

DOLLY

Not like this.

Nu turns on Dolly.

NU

You think that you will stay here?
You will be mother to Grace? Breed
for one or more of these men?

DOLLY

It wouldn't be like that.

Nu gives her a scathing look. Then -

NU

There is something in your way. I
do not fit into your family.

DOLLY

You could.

Nu turns back to Beau.

NU

Go and get packed.

Dolly stays where she is.

DOLLY

Maybe it's not that you don't know
how to stay. Maybe it's that you
won't let yourself remember.

NU

There is nothing left to remember.

Dolly steps to Nu and takes hold of her.

DOLLY

I don't believe you.

Dolly turns Nu to face her. As Nu speaks she raises her eyes
to Dolly - they are emotionless.

NU

The family you are looking for, it
does not exist. Not here, not
anywhere.

DOLLY

If you believe that then wot are we
doin' here?

Nu turns away from Dolly and finishes tying off the
provisions. For the first time Dolly's eyes fall on the
horses - both Beau and the farm horse are saddled.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Why are you taking their horse?

But Dolly already knows the answer. Nu turns back to Dolly and looks her straight in the eye. Nu draws her rifle from Beau's scabbard.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

This is not what we came here for.

NU

It's what I came here for.

DOLLY

I don't believe this is just about winning for you.

NU

You can come, or you can stay. But do not get in my way.

Nu makes to leave but Dolly places herself between Nu and the stable door.

DOLLY

I'm already in your way.

Nu takes a step towards the exit. Dolly shadows her movement. But Nu is having none of it and viciously sweeps her aside.

Dolly's face surges with anger and frustration.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

THIS COULD BE OUR HOME!

Nu stops, sizes up Dolly -

NU

There's no such thing.

Dolly looks down to find she is standing over the axe handle. She picks it up and turns on Nu.

Nu ignores her and walks towards the door.

Dolly swipes at her. But Nu is shockingly fast. The older woman discards the rifle and intercepts the blow with her good hand. She twists the instrument out of Dolly's grasp. Next thing she counter-swings back through the air and smashes Dolly across the jaw.

Dolly staggers to the ground.

Nu throws the stick down and collects her weapon.

DOLLY (O.S.)

We're not finished.

Nu turns back to see -

Dolly clambering over to the stick - a red stripe spreads across her face. She reaches it.

Nu strides to Beau, sheathes the rifle and draws out her own stick -

Dolly stands and approaches. She goes for a hit but Nu expertly deflects the blow and again brings her weapon ruthlessly down across the same spot on Dolly's jaw -

Dolly collapses to the ground.

Nu walks to Beau but is stopped by the SOUND of DOLLY CRAWLING after her. She turns to see -

Dolly dragging herself to her feet.

NU

Do not get up.

Dolly uses the stick to push herself to standing. She straightens up. Her body shudders as she turns to face Nu.

DOLLY

Wot do you want?

Nu's eyes fix - out for a kill. She steps in to attack -

Dolly swings out - Nu moves to disarm her -

But at the last second Dolly flicks her wrist and changes the stick's trajectory. She swoops it under Nu's attacking hand and her weapon flies 180 degrees back around on itself and towards Nu's exposed flank -

With frightening accuracy the stick CRUNCHES into Nu's healing arm -

Nu instinctively puts her hand to the point of impact and -

Dolly doubles back and CRACKS Nu across her fingers. Nu drops her weapon -

Dolly reverses her swing and SLAMS Nu in the opposite side - smack into her ribs -

And then she flies one more swing down -

cracking the side of Nu's head. Nu falls to the floor. Dazed, she looks up from under her defending arms. Her face is blood-streaked, her voice barely audible -

NU

What do you want, Doll?

- Dolly stalls - her weapon hangs mid-air -

And then the stick falls from her hand -

As the rage seeps from her eyes it is replaced by remorse - and fear.

DOLLY
(horrificed)
I'm sorry.

Dolly drops to her knees and grabs hold of Nu as if she is trying to wrench the bruises off of her. Nu reaches up and draws Dolly into her. She pulls their foreheads together and stares deep into Dolly's eyes.

NU
(intensely)
No. I'm sorry.

Dolly grasps hold of Nu like she's hanging on for dear life.

NU (CONT'D)
If I've taught you anything it
should be - never let anyone get
too close.

Dolly flinches as she feels the cold knife edge at her throat.

NU (CONT'D)
Everything is competition.

Nu's eyes are again devoid of emotion. She draws a halter down from the wall behind them and ties Dolly's wrists. Dolly - aghast - succumbs to her binds.

Nu stands and limps out of the stables.

125 INT. GRACIE'S BEDROOM. THE HOGG'S FARM -- MOMENTS LATER 125

Gracie is asleep in her bed. The door opens and Nu's dark form looms over the child.

126 INT. THE STABLES. THE HOGG'S FARM -- MOMENTS LATER 126

Dolly fights her ties.

Nu appears carrying a struggling form over her shoulder. Gracie is bound and gagged. Nu places her on the second horse and starts to strap her to the saddle.

DOLLY
I won't let you do this.

Nu turns to Dolly - her cold demeanour cracking.

NU
You cannot stop me. No one can stop
me.

Dolly stares at the black figure - she makes a choice.

DOLLY
(shouting)
Help! Eli!

Nu looks across at
the house - enveloped in darkness. A light appears.
She turns back to Dolly. An eerie calm has descended on her.

NU
I was going to leave them out of
this. I was going to give you that.

Nu steps to Beau and unsheathes her rifle.

A look of dismay dawns on Dolly's face as she sees this and
realises what she's done.

DOLLY
Please. Don't.

CUT TO:

Eli, Angus and Lewis hurrying out of the house and into the
yard, carrying a lamp. Its light is overpowered by the glow
of the moon across the snow. All three stop in their tracks
as they see -

The black silhouette of a rider at the mouth of the stable
door - her rifle butt rests on one thigh as the gun points to
the heavens. Nu sits Beau with Gracie's horse reins grasped
in her hand.

ELI
What's going on here?

From the figure -

NU
Stand forward the man who stole
this child.

Eli and Angus look at one another, appalled. Lewis just looks
terrified. No one moves.

CUT TO:

Dolly working at the rope. It begins to loosen.

CUT TO:

Nu.

NU (CONT'D)

You have a choice. One of you. Or
all of you.

Angus steps forward. The snow under his feet dissolves from the heat of his urine. He is appealing to her and making confession all at once -

ANGUS

We'd went all the way tae London,
Will and me, looking for women. But
no one wanted tae leave the City
for what we offered. And there are
no free women left anywhere else.
I'd given up hope when we passed
the farm. And then we saw her -
alone. It was Will's idea. I knew
it was wrong. And I tried tae tell
him no. But we knew it was our only
chance. We told ourselves that she
was lost. And we took her.

Nu lowers the barrel of her rifle and trains it down at him.

Eli steps forward and blocks Angus from the gun.

ELI

No. They did it for me. I'm
responsible.

Nu alters her sights to Eli.

He sinks to his knees, his hands raised to her in futile supplication.

DOLLY (O.S.)

They're unarmed.

Dolly has managed to crawl out to the stable's mouth and lies propped in the snow.

Nu does not move or take her eyes from her prey. She levels her rifle at Eli.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Your child is watchin' you.

At this Nu turns her face to Gracie -

The girl's eyes stare wildly from above her gag.

Nu looks to Eli, wheezing and choking in the freezing air.

Again she aims the rifle.

DOLLY (CONT'D)
You can't win. No one wins.

Dolly's words arrest Nu mid-movement. Her body slumps, as if someone has torn the breath out of her. For a moment it looks like she is about to let go of Gracie.

But then - as if by reflex - Nu spurs Beau into life and the two horses thunder out onto the snow-crossed highlands.

Dolly and the men watch them disappear into the night.

127 EXT. THE HIGHLANDS -- LATER

127

Nu and Gracie are riding fast up into the mountains.

Nu slows as the ground becomes rocky. She is bent over her horses neck - her cracked ribs scream at her with every step. Gracie's reins are in Nu's good hand. Nu scouts the route ahead - she does not notice -

Gracie wriggling her small hands free of her ties. Gracie snatches her reins out of Nu's unexpected hand and spins her horse back the way they've come. Nu leans forward to grab the animal's bridle but Gracie sees her coming and kicks out.

Nu, overwhelmed by a surge of pain, misses her grip.

Gracie seizes her chance and races back down the track.

Nu spurs Beau into pursuit.

CUT TO:

Gracie galloping down the mountainside with Nu following.

CUT TO:

Nu rounding a hill-side at speed. Ahead she sees

Gracie galloping away - still at a distance -

But now they're on level ground Nu pushes it up a notch. She grimaces as Beau pelts across the compact snow after the child. They move at thumping speed. And slowly, steadily Nu gains ground, until she noses up alongside her.

NU

Stop!

Gracie turns around to see Nu bearing down on her. She forces her horse on.

Nu can't get to Gracie's reins as Gracie swerves off course. Nu has no choice. She pulls her feet up to saddle level and propels herself away from Beau.

Nu meets Gracie in mid-air and tackles her into the snow. She rolls to take the main impact of the fall.

They both come up, choking.

Gracie's horse disappears off into the dark.

Nu's pain is consumed by a stronger force as she pulls herself up and hoists the child into the air.

-- Nu holds Grace high above her, as if she might break her in two --

And then Nu lowers her daughter.

Nu gets back on her horse and rides forward, Gracie catatonic in her arms.

128 INT. DOLLY'S BEDROOM. THE HOGG'S FARM -- DAWN 128

Dolly changing into her old clothes.

An angry, bloody welt runs from her cheek to her neck.

She puts the discarded dress into the cupboard. Inside she finds the T-shirt she loaned Nu. She puts it on over her vest, and sees, where it was lying -

the knife -

Dolly takes up her knife, grabs a coat and leaves the room.

129 INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY. THE HOGG'S FARM -- MOMENTS LATER 129

Dolly walks along the hall. The kitchen door is ajar -

Eli and Angus sit at the table, faces down, in a devastated, shamed silence.

She passes them by only to encounter -

Lewis waiting at the front door.

LEWIS
Will she hurt her?

DOLLY
I don't think so.

LEWIS
Will she bring her back?

PAUSE. Then -

DOLLY
Go and be with your grandpa.

LEWIS
Come with me.

DOLLY
(Sharply)
Not now.

LEWIS
You're angry.

DOLLY
I just need to be alone.

For the first time Lewis sees she is wearing her old clothes.

LEWIS
You've changed.

Silence as Dolly holds his gaze.

Lewis drops his head and walks away into the kitchen.

Dolly opens the front door and stands framed in the boundary of the home. Beyond her black silhouette the light grows on the horizon. And then, in the dark dawn, we see Gracie's horse appear in the distance. It heads for us at a trot. For a moment Dolly does not move. Then she steps out of the house and away towards the mountains.

As she passes out of the gate she breaks into a run -

CUT TO:

Dolly swinging up onto the horse and spurring it into a gallop, back in the direction from whence it came -

130 EXT. THE HIGHLANDS -- LATER

130

Nu and Gracie making their way up into the mountains in silence - a void between them.

They reach a summit and Nu looks backwards across the sweeping view of snowcaps. In the distance she sees -

a rider moving towards them -

Her eyes narrow.

Gracie, her vigilant child, observes this and looks out to the rider -

CUT TO:

Dolly riding fast along Nu and Gracie's tracks -

CUT TO:

Nu leading Gracie on foot up into the rock outcrops. She puts her in a hiding spot and positions herself with her rifle -

CUT TO:

Horse hooves stumbling up through the snow -

CUT TO:

Nu, waiting, rifle raised -

CUT TO:

Feet hitting the rocky ground -

CUT TO:

Nu waiting. Absolutely still. All that can be heard is her own RASPING BREATH. Until she becomes aware of -

Gracie staring at her. Nu glances sideways and takes in the wide-eyed expression on her child's face -

Nu looks back to the sights, tries not to be distracted -

GRACIE
(quietly)
Please don't kill anyone.

Nu's face cracks - she looks to
the desperate innocence in her daughter's eyes -

GRACIE (CONT'D)
I'll come with you. Just don't kill
anyone.

Gracie puts her hand out for the gun -

And Nu is struck down. Her whole being is defeated.

Gracie takes the gun and pulls it out of her hands. Nu is unresisting. After a moment she looks up -

A figure appears on the mountainside - and Nu finds herself staring at Red.

Nu stands and steps back towards Gracie but the child scrambles away from her. Nu puts out her hand.

Red raises his gun.

NU
Give me the gun, Grace.

Mother stares at daughter. And Nu sees -

her own immovable face stare back.

CUT TO:

Dolly galloping across the snow. A GUN SHOT SOUNDS and echoes through the valley. Dolly pulls up her horse. Another SHOT RINGS OUT. Dolly drives on towards the noise -

CUT TO:

Dolly racing up the mountainside, her horse lathered in white foaming sweat -

CUT TO:

The steepening slope. Dolly's horse stumbles. It can't go on. She jumps down and continues to run after the tracks -

CUT TO:

Dolly appearing - as Red did - from the mountainside. Ahead of her she sees -

a dark form crumpled in the snow.

She rushes towards it and looks down to find -

Nu staring up at her. Nu is soaked with a wet, black stain and the snow underneath her is slowly melting red.

DOLLY

No.

Dolly falls to her knees. She reaches out to Nu but stops, unable to touch her - nowhere is unbroken.

DOLLY (CONT'D)

Wot happened?

NU

(gasping)

Red.

If the look of horror on Dolly's face could deepen - it does. She shakes her head, like she's trying to escape the truth.

DOLLY

No. No. No.

Nu moves her eyes to where Gracie was standing. Dolly looks across and sees -

Nu's rifle laying discarded on the ground.

The women look at each other.

NU
I need your help.

CUT TO:

Dolly scrambling back down the track carrying Nu's rifle. Her face flickers between fear and rage. She comes across the body of her horse - dead from exhaustion - laid out in the snow. But when she looks up she sees -

Beau, standing, waiting for her -

131 EXT. HIGHLANDS -- LATER

131

Red makes his way down from the mountain range. Gracie is tied over the back of his horse. He stops. We look with him -

The ghost of the woman he just shot is bearing down on him.

When she is within spitting distance Red's expression changes as he recognises -

Dolly. She pulls up Beau.

Dolly raises the rifle. She catches her breath.

Red observes her silently.

Nothing happens.

Red gets down from his horse and walks towards her. He stops. Pauses. Red holds out his hand to Dolly.

And Dolly starts to breathe.

A SHOT SOUNDS. Red's leg smashes out from under him and he falls to the ground. Dolly throws the bolt and dismounts. She keeps the rifle trained on her prey.

Red starts to move.

But Dolly is steady. She stalks towards him and her body seems to stretch and grow as her muscles ripple with a new kind of tension. Her whole being charges with a cold, detached energy. The deadly-calm focus that we have seen inhabit Nu in these situations has descended upon Dolly.

And Dolly's eyes are black.

Red tries to sit up and draw his gun.

Dolly shoots him in the head.

He falls back. He is dead.

She searches him and takes his gun and ammunition.

Dolly picks up her two spent cartridges out of the snow.

Only then does she turn to Gracie.

132 EXT. THE HIGHLANDS -- LATER

132

Dolly riding Beau across the mountain range. Gracie follows on Red's horse: her face speaks her trauma.

They reach the dead horse. Gracie observes it blankly. Dolly dismounts. So does Gracie.

Dolly looks back at the child - she's already seen it all. She turns and walks away. Gracie follows.

CUT TO:

Dolly and Gracie appearing from the mountainside. They walk slowly over to Nu's body in the snow.

One of Nu's hands lies palm to the sky. Cradled in its centre is Dolly's medal.

Dolly stares down at her friend, her dark expression unknowable. Then -

Nu's eyes flicker and open.

CUT TO:

Dolly racing Beau back down into the valley, Nu in her arms. Gracie follows behind on Red's horse.

133 EXT. THE HOGG'S FARM -- EVENING

133

Dolly and Gracie ride into the farm.

Gracie jumps down and helps Dolly with Nu. They try to carry her but she's haemorrhaging. Gracie runs home for help.

Dolly moves to follow but she's stalled. She looks down -

Nu's hand clasps her ankle.

Dolly turns back to Nu.

A RATTLESNAKE SOUNDS as Nu gasps for breath.

Dolly drops to her knees and gathers Nu up.

Nu looks to the farmhouse and then back to Dolly. Nu's expression is a plea.

Dolly clasps Nu's hand between her own as if in prayer. She stares into Nu's eyes -

- and in them we see all that has been lost, darting upwards, surfacing and breaking.

Dolly rocks back and forth, shakes her head. But this gentle rhythm will change nothing. Nu is resolved.

Dolly steadies her own breathing. Then she slips her hand under the back of Nu's head. Dolly holds Nu tight as she draws her knife and tenderly traces its edge along the length of Nu's scar. Nu bucks against the blade, the white mark splits red and Dolly crouches in the warmth of Nu's blood. Nu's form shudders against Dolly's grip. This final battle seems to go on forever - until we realise that it is Dolly who is shaking. Nu is now still in her arms.

Dolly cradles the body. She lifts her head to see -

the family together on the porch. Watching.

Dolly looks back down to Nu - a wasted grey figure. Dolly lays her down in the snow and rises.

Dolly stands over the dead woman, covered in blood, the true hero shot, and sheathes her knife.

The family look on in silence.

Dolly walks to Beau and mounts. Without a backwards glance she spurs Beau out from the farm.

Gracie breaks away from Eli's hold. She escapes the porch and gives chase to Dolly. But the child flounders through the snow. She falls, and is devoid of the strength to get up.

Dolly does not stop or look back. She raises up Nu's old black hat and places it on her head as she rides away --

134 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE -- SUNRISE

134

A wide plain at sunrise - in the far distance a lone rider comes into view. The last of the winter snows are melting and the odd crocus and snow drop push through the cold earth. We look to the rider's face and see -

Dolly approaching - but she is almost unknowable from her former self. She looks older, taller, more powerful. Her hair is cropped, her face weathered. And even under the shadow of the black hat we can see the red scar that trails a path across her cheek.

Dolly keeps going, onwards, past us. And we watch as the lone rider moves slowly, surely away across the plain towards the distant grey mountains -

FADE OUT: