



The earthling

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"THE EARTHLING"

STRANGE SOUNDS.

FADE IN.

NIGHT on a FLAT PLAIN through a 1:1 LENS. Various plants and rocks.

TITLES BEGIN.

An EXOTIC/GROTESQUE INSECT struggling across the earth. A strenuous, solitary journey.

Occasionally white light, sometimes flashing red or green, illuminates the creature. Surreal.

DAWN. The creature efforts on. LONG on the red, rising dome of the sun.

DAYBREAKING, casting long shadows.

The insect's antenna touches the smooth, hard, flat surface of...

...TARMAC. The creature moves on, across the gray endless sheet.

The SOUNDS ALTER, augment, almost identifiable...

Identified. REVEAL a 747 on final approach.

The ROAR. The insect freezes, senses, shudders. FOLLOW the 747 in. Wheels hitting, burning white and spitting black. Reverse thrust braking, spewing hot shimmering exhaust fumes.

The 747 megabeast docks. Begin disembarcation. Many people.

747 DOORWAY -- TWO STEWARDESSES' farewell.

A woman fumbles, drops her packages and stalls the line. One stewardess assists. The other looks off into belly of plane, the corners of her mouth emoting. She's looking up into...the eyes of PATRICK FOLEY, who's patiently waiting, looking back, unwavering. Deep into each other's eyes. Finally, stepping up, a faint smile, soft voiced:

FOLEY

Goodbye.

STEWARDESS

I...I enjoyed talking with you.

I...I never met anyone like you before.

Foley is quiet, emotional. He knows the young woman means this deeply. The moment is compelling. Foley nods, his mouth and eyebrows animated by their quiet, passionate connection. He turns and leaves. He is wearing an old dark wrinkled lightweight suit, a black slouch hat, and battered cowboy boots. He's carrying a cheap suitcase secured with a belt. The man is weathered, not beaten. He's quiet and reserved, not sad or drawn. While he has the physique of a 45 year-old man, there's a graceful weariness about the man that only comes from a heluva lot of experience.

CUSTOMS MAN (o.s.)

What's the purpose of your visit?

FOLEY

Passing through.

CUSTOMS MAN

How long you intend to be here?

FOLEY

Two to three weeks.

CUSTOMS MAN

I'll give three weeks.

EXT. OUTSIDE AIRPORT -- DAY

A NEWSPAPER VENDCR by his curbside stand urges a down 'n outer to move away from the stacks he's trying to straighten. As Foley walks by, the vendor whips up a paper. Foley reaches into his pocket reflexively. Stops, realizes he doesn't want a newspaper. He moves on, hails a cab.

INT. TAXI

The DRIVER is thin, clean-shaven, and wears a long pony-tail. A BABY CRIES. The driver turns to the seat next to him, talking softly as he negotiates the traffic. Foley leans forward and looks over the seat.

DRIVER

Yup. 's mine...during the day...
while my mate's in school...Law
School. So while she's bustin'
book, Baby and I hack out the
bucks...look at the little hummer
breaking teeth here...ow-w-w.

Foley peers over the seat again, somewhat amazed.

DRIVER (cont)

You have any kids...grandchildren?

Foley shakes his head, starts to reach down, but wipes his lower
lip instead.

DRIVER (cont)

You like kids?

FOLEY

I don't know.

The driver looks curiously at Foley. The child coos.

DRIVER

He likes you...

EXT. FERRY BUILDING

Foley stands outside the cab, digs his pockets, hands the driver
a \$100.00 bill.

DRIVER

...yeah, it's on the other side of
Port Jackson, may have to take a
water taxi...

He looks at the large bill Foley hands him.

DRIVER (cont)

...hey, mister, I don't have change
of a hundred...

Foley motions him to shut-up and drive on. He walks away towards
the ferry building. The taxi horn tattoos out thanks as it peels
away.

EXT. THE FERRY - UNDERWAY

Foley's standing near the bow, tasting spray. An OLD MAN, eccen-
trically dressed, is not far away, lost in his own world, talking
to himself. All of a sudden, he turns to Foley, pointing off at
a small passing island.

OLD MAN

You know what that is?

Foley looks, nods, pleased that he remembers.

OLD MAN (continuing)

"Pinchgut," they calls it, like your own Alcatraz, terrible place, Pinchgut. Some say I escaped from there. Others that I'll be sent there someday.

FOLEY

They better hurry up, hunh.

The old man gets the joke, takes no offense, laughs, and waves a defiant fist in the air.

OLD MAN

Yeah, right, let them try... come and get it!...eh, mate, you're Irish, ainch?

FOLEY

Black as a

The steam-horn of the great freighter behind them blots out all sound. The old man slices the air with his hand: the freighter is silenced on cue. He grabs up Foley's hand, inspects it.

OLD MAN

Your father was lean and mean and worked the land.

FOLEY

Aye, but my mother read me poetry, had black hair, white skin, and violet eyes.

OLD MAN

G'on w'cha...wh'are ya goin?

FOLEY

(turning the question back)
Where're you goin?

OLD MAN

(sing-song)
Back and forth
every day.
Love the sea.
That's me.

FOLEY
(matter-of-fact)
Why?

OLD MAN
Got nothin' else to do...and everybody's
got to do something, eh?

Foley nods, thoughtful.

ON A STREET WITH MANY LOOK-ALIKE HOUSES

Red roofs. The harbour below and in the distance. Foley is walking up this street, looking for a house number. Something tentative, almost shy about the man.

ON FOLEY

Becoming somewhat emotional. The look-alikes blink by.

FOLEY

Finds the number he's looking for. A small sign says, MOLLY ANN HOGAN - PHYSICAL THERAPY, NUTRITION, HOMEOPATHY. He opens the little iron gate. Stops. He hesitates, ponders, vacillates. He retreats, quickly turning, crossing the street. Stops. Looks back. Ponders. His inner drama beginning to show.

ON THE HOUSE

The window. The pretty curtain moves...someone's peeking out.

ON SCENE

Foley turns away again abruptly, shaking his head. A few steps. Stops. Again he spins, makes for the door, resolute. He makes it as far as the gate. Stops. Damn it's hard. O.s., a DOOR OPENS. Foley looks up.

MOLLY ANN (o.s.)
How strange life is. Why just the
day before yesterday, I swear I saw
your face in the face of a rose.

Foley is transfixed, for a brief moment transported...who knows where? MOLLY ANN HOGAN, more than a woman out of his past. Still beautiful. Serene.

FOLEY
Molly Ann...

Slowly they approach each other.

MOLLY ANN

I was cutting roses...for Amy Sue Caldwell's shower, and...in the heart of the flower, I saw you, Patrick Foley. Why you're looking fine, just fine...

FOLEY

It doesn't look all that good now.

MOLLY ANN

Oh, you don't know...what do you know?

FOLEY

(triggered)

Molly...look at me!

She takes his hand and gently leads him into her house.

MOLLY ANN

We all grow old...

INT. MOLLY ANN'S HOUSE

Feminine and delicate, but not prissy or precious.

MOLLY ANN

(continuing)

...and I don't care. I see you the way I want to...and what I want, I...

She stops herself. Looks at him intensely now...deeply.

FOLEY

(relieving the moment)

I'm not going to stay long.

MOLLY ANN

You never did...you never do... you...

Again, she stops, turns, can't hold back any longer...she bursts into his arms. Both bodies shudder...and each has to hold the other steady.

MOLLY ANN

...you could, though.

FOLEY

No.

Slowly -- a shyness towards each other gathering -- they separate. Foley sees, reaches for, a photograph...of a young man and woman. Is emotionally moved. Clearly it must be the two of them. Molly Ann steps into the kitchen, puts fire on under the kettle. Steps back.

MOLLY ANN

What do you mean, "no"? You wrote you were coming...and it's been...it's been twenty-five years. That's a quarter of a century.... What are your plans, Patrick?

He tries to tell her...with only his eyes...those eyes of experience which she is now searching for answers. Suddenly, she becomes cheerful.

MOLLY ANN

Well, we'll take just the time we want...even if it's only a few weeks...even days, it'll be enough.

He becomes like a shy school-boy, unable to say what he feels. She indicates he step ahead of her into the kitchen. His sweeping arm insists she lead the way.

INT. THE KITCHEN

Foley, at the table, streamed with sunlight, somewhat relaxed, is finding his thick hands almost awkward with the fine bone-china cup and saucer. Tea. Molly Ann is just looking at him, drinking him in.

MOLLY ANN

Sounds to me like you've kept on the move. Always thought you would. But you still haven't told me what brings you here.

FOLEY

I'm going back.

MOLLY ANN

(stepping over to stove)
Back? Back, you mean, to the farm?

Foley nods, rises, goes to window.

MOLLY ANN

Well, yes, of course, but...

FOLEY

...And I wanted to see you.

MOLLY ANN

Just see me...not talk...
not touch...?

At these words he moves towards her, passion flushing up in their faces. Foley halves the distance between them, when it hits him... in his chest. He tries to disguise the pain. But it is too much for him. For a moment time stops...the world disappears. He claws air. She grabs him, steadies him.

MOLLY ANN

Patrick? Patrick!!

Immediately, he recovers...even smiles, chuckles...makes light of whatever afflicted him. She is concerned.

EXT. MOLLY ANN'S BACK DOOR

She leads him out...again he insists she lead the way...through a small, white latticed grape-arbor.

MOLLY ANN

Patrick, I feel strange...as if
some wave of fear just floated
up my spine...

She stops and turns into him...her hands reaching up....

MOLLY ANN

I think I understand now...but,
you know, you don't have to go...
it...it would be okay to stay.

He smiles peacefully, gently urging her to continue on into the backyard.

IN THE BACKYARD GARDEN

Petite. Beautiful roses. A few dwarf fruit trees. Quiet. They are on the grass...Foley lying on his back, his shirt off. She is smoothing his face with her hands as she talks.

MOLLY ANN

Do you remember the day I told
you I was pregnant?...and how
easily you answered: "Tell them
we're getting married," you said.
Tell them! You would have married
me, you say?

(on Foley's nod)

But would you have stayed?

(he shakes his head)

Why not?

FOLEY

I don't know.

MOLLY ANN

But, then, two days later, I had...
we had a miscarriage...and that
 was that.

Molly Ann begins to massage Foley's chest. Her motions are those of a healer...occasionally flicking her hands and fingers off to one side, as if to throw away the bad energies or poisons.

MOLLY ANN

...We could have had another. We
 could have picked our time. I was
 strong...I had ten, fifteen, maybe
 twenty years then!

Very slowly, like a ballerina curtseying, she bends over, covering him, crossing his neck with hers. She fills her lungs with his scent. His hands come up and move down the side of her face, her shoulders, arms...down to her fingertips.

MOLLY ANN

(whispering)

Patrick, you fool! I could have
 given you a child! You understand?
 Someone to pass it all on to...someone
 to cry for you, when you needed crying.
 Or to be there, so it wouldn't be so
 lonely, so alone.

HOLD...while they merge, deeper, tighter, closer....

MONTAGE OF THEIR BEING TOGETHER IN VARIOUS SYDNEY HARBOUR PLACES.

EXT. WATERFRONT SURPLUS STORE - DAY

Exiting the store, Foley carries a big bag and his suitcase...
 Molly Ann a smaller bag of purchases. They head down to the water.

ALONG THE WATER

They stop, look out across the water. Foley pulls a pair of used eight-inch leather hiking boots out of a bag and puts them into an old Army knapsack.

FOLEY

...Fellow back there actually thought
 those new plastic things were better
 than these old, leather jobs.

Molly Ann smiles. Foley empties bags and suitcase and repacks his knapsack. There's a small sheath-knife, a strangely marked down comforter, an army cook kit, a green "possibilities" bag, a can-teen...Molly Ann is charmed by his connection to his paraphernalia.

MOLLY ANN

You know, you were so wrapped up in your battle with the rest of the world then...and wrote poetry to someone who didn't really exist. But I did...

(facing him)

...in flesh and blood...I was real! But you had adventures to run... and some vision of yourself, to turn yourself into some god. So you ran off, to South America, with Christian...to survey a road over the Andes...a dumb road. You should have been my man.

Foley looks at her, then steps over to a trash basket and throws away his suitcase.

EXT. ON A WATER TAXI

Moving fast through the harbour water's activities. Foley and Molly Ann, by themselves near the prow, their arms around each other. She turns into him, her arm going up around his neck. It's a glorious day. People in boats, on docks, notice them.

MOLLY ANN

I was a fool...blinded by love... but you were afraid. It was almost as if you were waiting to pounce upon anyone who loved you. Well, I was loving you! And you knew that, didn't you?

(on Foley's nod)

Ah, Foley...it was perverse...do you know that? It was perverse.

Fear enters Foley's face...he starts to shake his head real hard. He looks about...trapped again. The taxi slows for other traffic. It passes within a yard of an outreaching dock, upon which senior citizen artists are painting behind their easels.

FOLEY

(almost inaudible)

There had to be more to it.

MOLLY ANN

There is no more.

FOLEY

I don't believe that.

Both faces run with tears as they look deep into each other. Of a sudden, they are completely surrounded by a million WHITE BUTTERFLIES. They are everywhere on this part of the harbour. Molly Ann

smiles as she pulls Foley's face gently down to hers. Trembling, she licks away his tears with her tongue. Then, with unspeakable sadness, he takes her tears on his middle finger...rubs his finger slowly over his own lips and tongue.

MOLLY ANN

The slightest thing you did to me...the smallest touch you gave me...was such a big thing to me. I felt it so much...it was more powerful than you'll ever know.

FOLEY

(strained whisper)

There's a lot of things I may never know.

Foley melts, looks as if he's about to cry...holding it in... gulping air. He looks around. Then, in one fluid move, he picks up his knapsack and steps out onto a passing dock. He doesn't even turn around to see Molly Ann one last time. He mightn't be able to go.

ON MOLLY ANN

Watching him go, through the butterflies, sad-happy-proud.. So much feminine dignity in this woman.

MOLLY ANN

(to herself)

I'm glad you stopped...it was right. We wanted it that way.

ON FOLEY

Winding his way through people, butterflies, the docks. Seeing nothing but his mind's eye's embrace of Molly Ann.

FOLEY

(to himself)

We were together.

ON FOLEY

FOLEY

I'll never forget you...Molly Ann.

ON MOLLY ANN

MOLLY ANN

I know who you are, my man
Somewhere...sometime...I'll
find you again...

ON FOLEY

Beginning to smile and shake his head, holding back the laughter that keeps down the emotion. An image hits him.

FOLEY

...In the face of a rose...

CUT TO:

ON TWO KOALAS IN A TREE - DAY

CRANK FOCUS, behind them, in the distance, is the region where the green foothills and the arid plains meet. The heat shimmering. The haze a faint mauve. UP THE SOUND of a BUS ENGINE.

ON A HIGHWAY BUS

Leaving the foothills, heading out into the desert.

Up ahead, a road, so straight it hurts the eye, vanishing at a point hundreds of miles away on the horizon.

ON FOLEY

In the window, waking up, looking out - ahead...and behind.

ON A RED DIRT ROAD

Also endlessly straight. Enter bus, extreme left f.g. Stops. Crossroads. Door opens. Foley descends, flop-hat shading his eyes. Carrying his knapsack. The driver has already protested Foley's decision to get out here, so he just shakes his head, pushing Foley out of his life with his hand.

DRIVER

(off Foley's absent wave)

...crazy old coot.

Bus pulls away, leaving Foley alone...

ON FOLEY

Walking alone along the red dirt road. Steady, easy, tranq... it hits him again! The pain, in the chest...he grabs his throat, eyes widen, mounting fear...one knee buckles.

A few moments later, Foley takes a single sip of water. The moment passes.

LATER. Walking now with a bent stick. Foley stops, looks up:

FOLEY

(in quiet awe)

I remember you...

ON AYER'S ROCK - FOLEY'S POV

Huge, solitary megalith, rising up like Leviathan out of the depths of the desert. Awesome. Hard to explain.

Foley is like a minnow approaching a whale. He relates to the rock, then continues on his way.

MIS-EN-SCENE - LONG SHOT

With Foley a tiny figure, the Rock in the distance, and miles away, down the red dirt road, a galloping ball of dust...approaching.

ON FOLEY

Stops, listens, turns. He SEES the approaching dust cloud. The sun has taken its toll of the man. The SOUND of a DIESEL.

ON SCENE

As a big, dusty logging truck begins down-shifting...stops a little ways ahead of Foley.

Foley, with effort, climbs up and into the cab.

INT. TRUCK CAB - MOVING SHOT

The driver's name is RED CLAY - 40, pocked, thin, a happy, older bushbroke Huckfinn. Red keeps looking over at Foley with awe and curiosity behind his grin. Foley sleeps sitting straight up, his face muscles slightly twitching. The truck drifts, goes over a bump, and Foley starts awake...and into a painful coughing attack.

RED

Sorry.

He hands Foley the canteen. Foley doesn't want it.

RED

You alright?

Foley spits out his window.

FOLEY

Never felt better.

IN A GULLY, BELOW THE ROAD AND BRIDGE

A huge carrion bird is setting on top of a dead animal, tearing flesh away. TILT UP, as the logging truck passes by above.

INT. TRUCK CAB

Red sneaks another look at Foley. He looks away as Foley turns.

RED

I can't believe that I was the one what brung you in...I s'pose I heard about you all my life, you know. You're sorter on the famous side of hometown chit-chat there, though. Everyone thinks you're dead by now.

FOLEY

So have I a couple of times.

RED

Place has changed alot.

FOLEY

Yeah.

RED

Won't recognize it.

FOLEY

Probably not.

RED

Broken dreams. Lost fortunes. It's God's country now. But the trees are growin' back... I guess I was a boy when you left, uh?

Foley seems to be drifting off again.

EXT. ON THE LOGGER

Bouncing now. The red road beginning to dip and rise, climb up out of the desert.

RED (o.s.)

I'm always glad to leave that oven behind. Where'd you sleep last night?

FOLEY (o.s.)

In a cave under the big rock.

RED (o.s.)

Damn....'Course you're who you say you are, but...they won't believe me up there to tell 'em.

FOLEY (o.s.)

Don't even try.

PAN ahead to the approaching mountains. Looming green behind the red dust air. Welcome.

A MOUNTAIN PASS - LONG

The barest suggestion of a road cutting down diagonally from a notch in the ridgeline. Almost too tiny to see, the logger coming down the grade.

INT./EXT. FROM THE MOVING TRUCK

A great green expanse. Valleys and mountains and trees and ferns. The winding road ahead. Exotic colored birds flying rainbows across the road.

On the downgrade road ahead, a city slick, super-equipped Caravan is loaded to the gills with luggage and camping gear. Tall timber rising up on all sides. As the logger starts to pass, WE SEE, through the dust and sunlight reflecting off the rear window of the Caravan, the face of a child, staring with wide eyes at the big truck. Foley glances at the Caravan only as it falls behind. He and the child do not see each other.

EXT. ESTABLISHING - SANDY MUSH - HOT LAZY DAY

Years ago it was a company logging town -- hundreds of people who stirred their coffee with their thumb. Today, most of the inhabitants are old pensioners, living memories. A handful of younger, stronger folk do a little farming...and everybody does what they can to get by. There isn't a building in the town that doesn't show at least 30 years of hard wear, and most of these are empty, ravaged, or crumbling. The population is now 119 -- correction, 118 as of yesterday.

Today is Sunday. Even less is happening. If it weren't for an old pickup rumbling down a gravel road between a mixed breed of dwellings, and a thin wisp of smoke drifting out of one of the larger structures, and a few scattered animals, and two dinged and dusty late model vehicles -- an outsider might take this place for a ghost town.

EXT. PARNELL'S MEETING HOUSE

No longer a huge logging machinery barn, it now serves the town as a general store, post office, restaurant bar, gas station, repair shop, meeting hall, and sitting porch. At the moment, four old men and one old woman -- R.C. McGROATY, HARLAN, UNCLE, and LYLE -- all in their seventies and eighties, except Uncle who's ninety-three, are sitting there, sipping, smoking, chewing ...waiting for something other than the weather to talk about.

ANGLE ON PARNELL'S GAS PUMPS

A wandering gaggle of geese bolt and scoot. And yet nobody on the porch moves, even as the big logger pulls in, switches off, creates silence again. Red steps lively down. When he reaches the porch, he looks back to see that his passenger isn't coming yet.

R.C.

Yo, Red. Got the rig runnin', eh?
Was the blow-plate on the axle,
wasn't it?

RED

(embarrassed)

Yeah...

McGROATY

Ya got me m'batt'ries?

Red's thumb says: "Yeah, they're back in the truck." LYLA looks out, puffs on a cigarette in a holder.

LYLA

Thought you wasn't due back but
tomorrow. Who ya got there,
anyway?

Red smiles cockily, mysteriously, and heads towards the door.

RED

I need a beer.

Various reactions all around. R.C., McGroaty, and Harlan gather themselves up, follow Red in. Lyla lingers, trying to catch a glimpse of the stranger...shrugs, then goes in. Uncle, almost in the next world, just sits there.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

At first favoring Uncle...until finally a CU of Foley, sitting in the cab, breathing long, slow, and heavy, a little expectancy riding in his eyes, as he takes in his surroundings.

INT. PARNELL'S

It's bare, white-washed, functional. Light from the front window doesn't reach too far down the long bar. Old, handmade logging tools are stuck up on the walls and in the rafters. Dart boards on every wall. A few more men and women, slightly younger, are already inside. Red motions impatiently for another beer, but Parnell, who has a nervous tic of always raising his eyebrows before utterance, is arguing with someone, pointing outside with his thumb. Everyone is a-buzz with speculation. Near the end of the bar sits DAWSON, fat, 50, and aggressive.

DAWSON

(to Red)

You ain't older'n me, so you
don't know 'im!

RED

(unctuously proud)

I do now, peabrain.

DAWSON

(to Harlan)

Well, my pa used to talk about him all the time. He said Foley was a commando in the war.

R.C.

I came just after Foley left, I think... 'n I heard he ran cattle in Colorado, until everybody started using hormones or something to fat their beeves, which I think he wouldn't do... busted him out, I think.

HARLAN

(wise, aloof)

That was later. After the war he and Christian laid road in Peru... ...they were gonna come back here and do things right, but they had a fight, fell out, 'n only Christian came back. Until now.

RED

(interrupting)

Our own Chris Neilson!?

HARLAN

(nods)

There was a lot of land, land that ain't never been cut... his father didn't believe in it. Almost went broke back then when everybody else sold their timber to the Company.

LYLA

Everybody who sold out went broke when the drought came.

DAWSON

Well, maybe he got work for us.

LYLA

Don't be daft. If he could afford that, think he'd a-walked in?

HARLAN

'Sides, if he's anything like his father, he won't be hiring anyone... do all the work himself.

RED

How's that?

HARLAN

Old man Foley didn't believe in two classes of people, one to work and the other to command the pay. Nope... he lived here for awhile with his wife...and the boy Patrick...till he bought them that place, big place in the mountains...top of the last range before the desert starts.

MCGROATY

(mysterious)

The Murramurras....

Everybody nods thoughtful. Silence. Red looks out towards the window, starts shaking his head...until he raps his knuckle on the bar for service. Parnell, sipping beer, staring out the window, looks back towards Red, but that's all. Lyla steps over to the window.

LYLA

He's getting down.

All heads, some fast some slow, turn towards the door.

EXT. ON THE TRUCK

Foley steps down from the truck. As he hefts his pack to his shoulder, that searing pain threatens to hit again. But he shakes it off, makes for the porch.

PARNELL'S PORCH

Uncle's eyes follow Foley. Foley nods, perhaps in recognition, lays his kit on the porch bench, follows a sign around back to the restrooms. The rucksack falls to its side on the bench.

INT. PARNELL'S

Foley walks across the porch, passing by the window. Harlan is just inside.

HARLAN

(restrained excitement)

You're right, by God, there he is!

RED

(proud and impish)

Gotta have that beer!

A loud, scratchy, demanding voice claws out from the back room:

JESSICA (o.s.)

Parnell!?

Parnell quickly disappears into the back room.

HARLAN

I thought he was dead.

DAWSON

I heard that, too. Probably
ain't him.

RED

Then who is it, ball-bearing eyes?!
Dyin' fer that beer! Parnell?!

Through the front window, out by the gas pump, the Caravan we saw earlier pulls in. A man in his late 30's, his wife, and their nine year-old boy get out, stretch, looking around for service.

JESSICA, 45, and bound to grow into a Mammy Yokum, comes out of the back, looks towards the front window, and booms:

JESSICA

Parnell!! You got a paying
customer!

Parnell comes out of the back room, combing his hair.

PARNELL

Dalton!!

DALTON, Parnell's small, wiry, ten year-old tomboy, has been sitting unnoticed on the floor against a far wall, playing with her dog. She gets up as if she were eighty-six.

RED

Dalton, little princess...you
wanna a beer? I'm buyin'...

But Dalton holds up a finger, meaning: "hang on, business first." She steps around the counter and takes down a keyring. With a shrug, Red steps around the counter to fetch his own beer.

PARNELL (o.s.)

Where you goin', Red?!

EXT. PARNELL'S

Dalton shuffles out to give service, just as the DALEY family mounts the porch to enter. ROSS is a goodlooking, rugged insurance man from the Sydney "slurbs," has a winning smile, a desire

to please, short patience, and an unjustified confidence in himself. His wife, BETTINA, is intelligent and feminine, carries herself with an air of sensitivity and tentativeness. She is from Kansas, her hair the color of corn.

DALTON

(without looking up)

Fill 'er up?

ROSS

Uh, yeah...sure, that's right.

(to his son)

Come on, son, let's grab a bite.

Ross plows ahead of Bettina into the restaurant. The boy, SHAWN, is a bright-faced lad with light golden hair and eyes that dart and fingers that explore the textures and the reasons for everything within reach. Shawn lingers...by the pumps, intrigued that Dalton is doing a man's job all by herself. Uncle just sits there, sucking his gums.

ANGLE ON THE CARAVAN

Dalton pumps the glass-reservoir full, then sets the nozzle in the vehicle, while she goes to the hood. But it's too hard to release. Shawn knows about this problem, nods his concern as he slides up alongside to help squeeze down on the latch. For a moment, Dalton resists the help, then accedes. It pops open. Shawn feels the coldness between them, backs away. Dalton spits like a man onto the exhaust header and laughs once at the sizzle.

ON SHAWN

Walking toward the porch, looking back at Dalton, a bit dejected. As he mounts the steps, Uncle's silent presence startles him. The old man's pipe falls from his hand. Shawn swallows, then picks it up and hands it to the old man. At the door, Shawn's eye catches on Foley's rucksack. He is rivetted...totally fascinated: he can't take his eyes off an old and strangely colorful, painted leather bag that has fallen out.

INT. PARNELL'S -- FAVORING THE DALEY'S

Ross and Bettina are seated at a wobbly table off to one side. Parnell is now behind the bar. Difficult for the locals not to keep looking over at Ross and Bettina.

ROSS

I told him to come in...don't worry. What do you want to eat?

BETTINA

(under her breath)

I don't know.

FAVORING PARNELL

PARNELL

(to Harlan)

How long ago was it Foley
leave here?

HARLAN

Don't know. Maybe he came back
for awhile after the war...
when his folks died. Maybe...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PORCH

Shawn reaches out his hand...just to touch the curious bag...

DALTON (o.s.)

(low, macho warning)

Hey!

Shawn whips around. Dalton has crawled up under the hood to
check the oil: her eyes squinting, dip-stick in her hand,
she looks mean. Shawn retreats to the restaurant, embar-
rassed. As he opens the screen door, a kitten trapped there
darts out. Shawn jerks back, reflexively frightened.
Uncle's eyes on him, Shawn hurries in.

INT. PARNELL'S

Ross approaches the bar.

ROSS

Howdy. While the family's
deciding, I think I'd like
to buy you all a round.

PARNELL

Well, now, that's a blessing.

ROSS

And I'd like to ask if there's
a place to camp nearby?

DAWSON

Camp anyplace you don't get
shot off of.

Laughter all around. Shawn enters, goes to his mother.
Ross flows with the macho humor.

ROSS

We'll take our chances. We'd like to spend the night in Sandy Mush, because...well, this is a special place...

RED

Is when I'm on the prowl.

More laughter. Ross smiles again...with the boys. Everyone drinks beer.

ROSS

Well, you probably know, but this is the nearest town to the farthest place in the wilderness range.

PARNELL

(confused)

Say what?

ROSS

(flustering)

The most remote spot in the National Forest is, uh, well, it's about a hundred miles in... and we aim to camp on that spot.

PARNELL

(gently amused)

Well, sir, when you find that spot you come back and tell us where it is.

RED

(good humored)

We're really out of it, aren't we boys and girls?

HARLAN

This is a pure hick town.

Ad-libs. Ross chugs his pint...picks up a menu.

PARNELL

(taking the pressure off)

Now, Red here just drove in with an oldtimer who surveyed out most of the logging roads back about a thousand years ago. He'll be in in a minute...

Dalton comes in the front door, throws her hair back with a flick of her head, and grins and Shawn. He buries his face in the menu. Bettina bends over, says something in Shawn's ear.

PARNELL
 (continuing)
 ...Dalton, you go check see if the
 old man's still there...

The girl wheels about. Harlan reaches out a gently restraining hand on Parnell's arm...shaking his head for Parnell to drop the subject. Shawn steps over to Ross.

DALTON
 Yeah, okay
 (to Ross)
 But you need a quart of oil.
 (exits)

ROSS
 (to Dalton)
 Eh, put it in...I mean...
 (to Parnell)
 ...does she service my Caravan
 by herself?

PARNELL
 (nodding)
 Yeah, she's good alright for
 a girl...but lazy.

Shawn tugs on his sleeve.

SHAWN
 And I had to help her open
 the hood, Dad.
 (on Ross' acknowledgment)
 Mother wants to know if she
 can have a drink.

It hits Ross: wrong...! he's done it again. Damn! He looks over at Bettina...who's glaring back at him.

EXT. WIDE SHOT - PARNELL'S

CONTINUE INT. SOUNDS. Dalton comes out, looks at the bench, looks around.

DALTON
 (yelling inside)
 Nope... 's gone.

HARLAN (o.s.)
 I knew he wasn't coming in,
 Parnell.

ROSS (o.s.)
 Excuse me, gents.

O.s. ad libs die down as Ross' FOOTSTEPS cross the floor. Dalton glances at Uncle. The old man's eyes are closed, slightly fluttering...as he slowly sips his beer from a long reed straw.

ROSS (o.s.)
(under his breath)
Bettina, I'm sorry...

BETTINA (o.s.)
You did it again, Ross.

SHAWN (o.s.)
What you do, Dad?

Bar conversation ends in laughter and groans. INT. SOUNDS DISSOLVE INTO EXT. SOUNDS. In the distance, Foley is walking up a dirt road.

ANGLE ON A RAMSHACKLE BUILDING

Foley reads the sunparched and peeling sign. Says: CHRISTIAN NEILSON - BLACKSMITH. When the sleeping dog sees Foley, it rises in greeting...it is missing one of its legs. Foley steps up to the wide-open, double doorway of a workshop, peers in. No one. The SOUNDS of iron beating on iron, coming from a delapidated wood and steel barn-like structure across the road, draws Foley away. Dog follows.

INT. BARN SKELETON

More sky than roof above. Wafts of blue smoke reach out around Foley as he enters, calls out.

FOLEY
Christian!

ON CHRIS NEILSON - IN A FURTHER ROOM

Acetylene torch roaring in his left hand, pinchers in his right, this man is cutting out the steel innards of the building. For scrap. Neilson is big and big-bellied, has a dusty walrus moustache, and he, too, is missing a leg: he has fashioned himself a wooden peg-leg. He's about Foley's age...and meaner, word has it.

FOLEY (o.s.)
Christian!

Neilson stops. It was his imagination. No, he heard it. Sounded like...nah, he continues his work. Hold. He puts down his tools, looks about. He hears footsteps approaching.

CHRISTIAN
Halloo...

Footsteps draw nearer. Neilson is curious as hell.

ON A DOORWAY

Foley steps into view.

ON NEILSON

A blank, staring face is a kaleidoscope of subtle emotional expressions. Neilson's mind refuses to recognize Foley. But everything else about him does.

ON FOLEY

Taking forever to let the softest of smiles creep out.

ON SCENE

The two men silently, slowly approach each other, until they are face-to-face.

For another few moments these two old friends communicate only with looks and gestures, as if they were deaf and dumb. Christian fingers into his lip a fresh lump of Copenhagen snuff. His dog nuzzles up to him for affection, gets it. Christian starts for the door, motioning for Foley to follow. Stops. Breaks out laughing. They shake hands, heartily.

CHRISTIAN

Goddam...

FOLEY

Yup.

CHRISTIAN

You've come home.

FOLEY

I'm going up.

CHRISTIAN

Well, I will be goddammed.

FOLEY

(smiles at this)

Yup.

Christian swings his big arm over Foley's shoulder and leads him out into full sunshine.

INT. THE BLACKSMITH'S SHOP

Dusty shafts of air swirl as the two men leave the sunlight and become silhouettes. Foley drops his bag. Christian puts some water in a coffee pot and the pot in the forge. Gives the bellows a few pumps.

CHRISTIAN

...alright then, when you come back down we'll discuss it. You were right about a lot of things and I've learned a few others.

FOLEY

(shaking his head)

No, that's...I'm sorry Christian, but that's not the way it is.

CHRISTIAN

Whaddya mean?! We know the right ways now.

Foley turns, walks away...towards his bag and the door. Then he spins abruptly, facing Christian. Speaks soft, intensely.

FOLEY

Hey, it's been a long time.
 (beat, then serious)
 I love you, Christian, but you
 just don't listen...
 (pointing to his own ear)
 ...You don't hear! I'm not
 coming back!

CHRISTIAN

What are you saying? What about
 the land...?

Foley interrupts, cuts him off with a sharply raised hand.
 Christian immediately takes off on another tack.

CHRISTIAN

Alright, it's...it's good that
 you're here...here you have
 friends, people who care. That's
 a comfort, that is.

Foley nods, is deeply moved...but unmoved.

FOLEY

I don't want to be buried...
 don't want to be fussed over...
 don't want to wait around...
 I want to go.

CHRISTIAN

But we wait around together, yah?
 You and I had plans, remember?
 Our ashes into the sea?
 We swore to it, by God.

Foley looks deep into Neilson's rapidly blinking eyes, but his
 expression says his mind's made up. Neilson tears himself away,
 picks up a sledge and begins to hammer out his frustration.
 Foley wanders the shop. Rain starts to DRUM on the metal roof.

CHRISTIAN

You were always s'damn stubborn.
 Is it pride, or you just trying
 to live something down?

FOLEY

Christian...

CHRISTIAN

And ornery, I say...
 (punctuated with sledge)
 ...bull-headed, opinionated,
 self-righteous, stuffy, snobby,
 and...and secret. Who the hell
 ever knows what you're thinking?

FOLEY

Time to go...

CHRISTIAN

Oh, sure...thirty, forty years pass.
That's just a holiday for you...
passin' through...just slummin'.

A few rain drops leak through, hit Foley on his arm. He opens his hand and watches the water collect in his palm.

CHRISTIAN

Aaah, if you wanna go, go.
Truth is, I can't stop you.

Foley comes to shake his hand. Neilson flares up.

CHRISTIAN

So this is where it ends...in a
fucking handshake. Well, no,
by God! You're a coward, Foley...
because you're running out...not
on me, but on yourself. A man
got a duty to take care of himself...
and his land...not just chasing
off after some 'paradeezical'
meadow that reminds him of who
knows what dream.

FOLEY

Your woman still with you?
(on Christian's nod)
Tell her I always thought of her
as good as any man...and stronger
than most.

CHRISTIAN

(plaintive)
Foley, I need you.

FOLEY

You got Meg.

CHRISTIAN

That ain't enough.

FOLEY

You can't have it all.

CHRISTIAN

I want it.

Foley turns, walks again toward the door.

CHRISTIAN

You're still restless, Patrick...
even now. Whyn't you just work
here with me? Be good...

FOLEY

Because it isn't me. You aren't
me and this isn't me...and because
I'm not into pounding pig iron!

MEG (o.s.)

What you like to pound, Patrick
Foley?

The two men snap around. Relief floods Foley's face. MEG, hefty
and curvaceous, stands in silhouette against the open doorway.
She enters imperiously. This '60-plus woman has handled all man-
ner of men in her day.

FOLEY

There she is, Meg Meetrees, the
finest dancer south of the Equator.
You every marry him...t' make it
legal?

MEG

Hog piss.

She sees the coffee pot steaming, takes it off, makes coffee.

CHRISTIAN

Patrick just got here and now
he says he's leaving...and,
I, uh...

MEG

He's old enough to know what
he's doing...young enough to
try it again.

CHRISTIAN

You don't understand...it's crazy
...he...he's not well.

FOLEY

(flaring now)
Ease off, Christian.

MEG

He looks okay to me.

CHRISTIAN

Well, yeah, but...woman,
that's not it...

(to Foley)

...are you taking medicine?

Foley glowers...reaches into his coat pocket, takes out two plastic bottles of pills and concertedly places them into the forge fire. Christian tries to stop him.

CHRISTIAN
You crazy ol' boar-coon!

FOLEY
(soft, lethal)
Fall back...or get broke!

CHRISTIAN
No!...no, godammit! It ain't right...

MEG
Neilson, what the hell's eatin' on you?

CHRISTIAN
(to Foley)
You just can't hack it anymore.
(more sledge blows)
No...No...No! I'm not a-gonna let you do it!

He stomps heavily towards Foley, throwing his hammer down...his claws out in front of him. Meg steps in between, straight-arming her man in the chest.

MEG
You stop, hear?! How many years has it been?...

CHRISTIAN
(still coming)
No...No!

FOLEY
I'll be going.

CHRISTIAN
I'll break your fuckin' leg first!

Neilson pushes Meg out of the way. His arms open wide. The two men begin to circle each other...their arms out to grapple and tear...natural movements for old warriors. Meg turns and leaves the shop in disgust. Then, like two rutting boar grizzlies, they explode into each other's arms, connecting with enormous bearhugs. Breath and grunt rattle the room. But immediately it becomes clear that they are not squeezing as hard as they could.

SOUND-OVER WE HEAR THE SCENE of these two men fighting in a South American cantina...over forty years ago. WE HEAR the men around the fighters, friends and locals cheering, urging, wagering for the outcome! Some bet on the powerful Swede...others on the speedy man from Down Under. THE SOUND DIES OUT SLOWLY as Foley and Neilson ease off their struggle and discover themselves hugging each other...in a very emotional farewell embrace. Both men are on the verge of crying...whispering in each other's ear.

CHRISTIAN

I don't want you go.

FOLEY

I know.

CHRISTIAN

Guess there ain't much more to say.

FOLEY

'sbeen said.

ON FOLEY - IN AN OPEN FIELD - A SERIES

Passing scattered, abandoned logging equipment and a few wandering animals. A jackass nibbles grass by a couple old donkey engines; two nannies and their kids do the same by some stacked pressure-tank burners; a gopher darts out of some old dynamite boxes; two kittens, playing inside a coil of kinked steel choker-line, meow at Foley as he goes.

DIRT ROADS UP A DRAW

Outskirts of Sandy Mush. Scattered timber...second or third growth. Muddy rutted roads. Foley stands at a fork, before a sign: B. Bobby Burns -- Breeding Stables and Pack Station. Shifting his pack, Foley trudges up the hill, the mud sucking hungry at his boots. Foley mounts the hill slowly, taking in every tree, fence post, set-back shack, grazing animal, bird, skyline...he's been here before.

FOLEY'S POV - LATE AFTERNOON

The road ahead of him...the dreamy way it slowly reveals what lies just over the hill. Coming into view is the great white arched gateway of the "B B B Ranch". Corrals in the foreground, buildings beyond. But everything is old now, paint peeling, bailing wire and patch-boards keep things functional. In an unswept corral, a few horses stand listless in the late afternoon sun.

ON FOLEY

Standing there, looking out at the ranch, very emotional about it. He throws his pack over a fence post. A windmill creaks. A watering trough drips. Knots of flies hover and bounce in the air. Foley walks toward another corral, with a fine mountain view off the far side. He shuffles through the dust along the fence, looks out.

BOBBY (o.s.)

That you...or am I goin' blind
as well?

Foley turns, snorts up a thin, shy smile.

ON BOBBY

Sitting on a plank-bench in the shade, B. BOBBY BURNS: a little older than Foley, large-framed, but lean now as a sun-dried string bean. With the help of a gnarled cane, he rises slowly, approaches. He's wearing a waistcoat and a bandolier to carry things in.

BOBBY

(almost to himself,
which is his way)

Yessir, I got a stitch in my stepping
now, too. Had me a stroke last
December...dumb thing. You seen
anyone lately?

Foley nods thoughtfully, kicks a horse turd, looks out over the place, squinting into the sun. Shakes Bobby's hand.

FOLEY

Molly Ann...Neilson...and
Meg, of course: she's a
tough old hide, but he
loves her.

BOBBY

(unemotional)

We dance like fools down the road
of life; if you don't make it solo,
you can take a wife. Shee-it. You
ever get hitched?

Foley shakes his head. The two men start walking the fences. Bobby looks at Foley real hard, squints, flicks his head to ask for more details. None coming.

BOBBY

You can turn a horse, even a
runaway hog, but you cain't
turn a woman...no way! Me...?
That's another story...don't ask,
Bullback, or I tell ya.

(off Foley's look)

I left here, went on a walkabout -
ran a station, dug for gold, was
a mayor of a town (pop. 35), fell
in love, had some kids - it all
about drove me crazy. Gad, the
bush goes on forever out there.

(MORE)

BOBBY (cont)

So I came back here to the trees...
like you it looks. My dancing days
are done, my loggin shoes don't fit
no more. So I feed and care and
talk at my animals...and I ain't
even gunta ask why you're back.

(long beat, Foley nods)

My brother, Rodney, died, going on
fifteen years now. And you know,
I never thought I'd get arthritis,
but I'm getting it...

FOLEY

(almost interrupting)

Hey, Bobby...(long beat)...I brought
you something.

The men stop and grab a rail. Foley reaches into his pocket,
hands Bobby a painted leather pouch, dangling a fetish from the
tie-string. Bobby's arthritic fingers attack the leather pouch.
IN ON BOBBY.

BOBBY

What it is I don't wonder! No
telling with the likes of you.

(takes out the contents)

Downright purty hand-tied flies.
Hain't been fishing for a long
time.

Bobby looks up, somewhat emotional. Foley's gone.

CORRALS NEAR THE BARN AREA

Foley comes around the back side of the tack room. In front, a
mule is loose, half his body inside the tack room door, robbing
the grain bin. Foley whistles loudly; the mule backs out. Foley
closes the door, just as Bobby catches up to him. They walk
along the corral, empty except for an ancient 1-1/2 ton flatbed
truck.

BOBBY

Things ain't what they used to
was...I ain't even sure the
mountains are the same anymore.

FOLEY

I'm going in to the valley, Bobby.

BOBBY

I thought...Yeah, well, that's
a notion.

INT. THE BARN

The door opens and Foley steps in. Some chickens squawk. Bobby follows him through shafts of sun that float like shining swords.

BOBBY
What you driving?

FOLEY
I'm not.

BOBBY
I get older, but you get
tougher, is that how it is?

FOLEY
No.

BOBBY
And you can get there alright...huh?

FOLEY
First thing in the morning.

BOBBY
Four or five days, you figure?

FOLEY
More like a week...
(slaps his thigh)
...on these.

Bobby shakes his head, looks at Foley, then changes to nodding his head thoughtfully.

BOBBY
This be it, then?

FOLEY
(steely, intense)
Yeah. I want it out there.
I want it alone.

Foley looks up into the high rafters. PAN to a large horned owl ...sitting and staring.

INT. MAIN HOUSE - NIGHT

The light thrown out of the large fireplace dances on the two men's faces, on saddles and other tack, stuffed animals, ranch and logging tools, fishing gear, rifles (even an old flintlock), Coleman stove, a black velvet Hong Kong painting, magazines, hundreds of old bottles. Bobby and Foley sit in rocking chairs before the fire, between them a small table loaded with Bobby's pipes, a platter with a half-eaten roast bird (the skewer still through it), some cobs of corn sitting in tin-foil wrappings, a bottle of sour mash, etc...

Now Bobby picks up that bottle and reaches over real slow, tops off Foley's glass.

BOBBY

Nowadays there are tourists, townies, come through here. They either people I rather wouldn't want ride my animals, or they just goin' in... they call it into the wilderness... with their four-wheel vehiculars... movable fallout shelters I calls them. And they just stop by here for water, advice, approval. Ain't that a goose! They go home...I know it...talk about ever'thing they learned up there from that "good ole boy." Shee-it!

Bobby picks up the Abo pouch, admires it.

BOBBY

Lemme give you your magic bag back.

FOLEY

No, I've had it long enough. Now you have it.

Bobby reaches over, hands Foley an apple. Foley shines it before eating it.

BOBBY

Aincha gunta peel it?

FOLEY

No, I like them better this way.

BOBBY

Well, I'll be blown, you've become a townie.

FOLEY

I guess so.

Bobby pulls out his knife to peel apple. And so they drink their sippin' and set their fire...and pass this night together. IN CLOSE ON FOLEY.

FOLEY'S VOICE

I gotta go.

EXT. THE CORRAL WITH MOUNTAIN VIEW - DAWN

Bobby stands by a fence overlooking his valley. The dawn sun washes and warms down his face. Tears quietly flow over his cheekbones...until footsteps behind prompt him to blow his nose (and wipe the tears away). Foley is wearing a large, old elk-skin coat and a short-brimmed, sweat-greased hat.

FOLEY

I say, I gotta go.

BOBBY

(softly)

...Wusht I could go...

(walks off, confused)

Goddamn...game leg...

(taps leg with cane,
talks to it)

What I ever do to you? My
head had the stroke, not
you...

Bobby limps to the barn. Foley follows. Near the barn, Foley has another quick attack of pain. Bobby sees this only out of the corner of his eye.

INT. THE BARN

Bobby opens the tall doors, steps in, waits for Foley.

BOBBY

Foley, I got something else...I,
uh, I want you to take a horse.

Foley reaches the doorway, stops dead in his tracks.

FOLEY

You're not hearing me?...Been tryin'
to tell ya that...

Bobby leads the way through the old big barn towards another door.

BOBBY

Fool! I hear you. What I am
going to give you, I don't want
back. You git that!?

(opening the door)

The stud's real old...But his
heart's big.

A THREE-WALLED PADDOCK

Opens onto a small, EXT. corral. Bobby waits. Foley's eyes widening slowly. Standing listless in the sun is what once was fine horseflesh. Dirty, dull, oblivious to the flies, the animal pays little attention to the two men who approach it. Foley looks to Bobby for information, but Bobby's a stone. Foley picks up a rear foot and examines a fetlock scar, then walks to the front, takes the head in his hands, pulls back the lips, looks deep into the animal's eyes. The horse snuffles.

FOLEY

CERBERUS?!

BOBBY

(lop-sided smile)

No, but that's his colt and he's more than 25. He'll take you to the river...then turn 'im loose... out there.

(beat)

He'll go in my place.

For some reason the horse seems to come alive, look younger, stronger.

EXT. BY A CORRAL FENCE - LATER

Foley stands, his arms and chin resting on the top rail. The horse, on the other side, carries an ancient saddle, old leather jacket.

BOBBY

That old six-string rig is yours, too...never use it anymore... it gotta go. And that jacket, too.

Foley looks back and forth from Bobby to horse, gives in. The two men now lean on the fence together. They look at each other, nod. Then they both stare straight ahead again...this is their way of saying goodbye.

AT CORRAL WITH THE VALLEY VIEW

Bobby leans against the fender of his old Jeep pickup, looks at the leather pouch in his hand, then off. In the distance, a lone horse and rider in the valley below, gradually disappearing into the pines and gum trees.

ON FOLEY AND THE HORSE

Riding slowly through the tall, thin trees that come together somewhere above in a canopy of green. Proud horse, proud rider.

DISSOLVE

EXT. PARNELL'S - CLOSE ON THE ABORIGINE POUCH - DAY

RED (o.s.)

So you folks are headin' out to find that sacred spot s'far from civilization, eh?

The pouch is dangling from Bobby's hand. He's sitting on the porch with Harlan, Uncle and others, showing off his new flies. Red is cleaning some parts in gasoline. Ross is filling the water tank he had built into custom-made bumpers.

Shawn is slowly edging from his father toward Bobby. Parnell is holding the reins to a matched pair of draft horses. A fat man wearing a small vest is examining the horses which are obviously for sale.

ROSS

(friendly but in control)

That's right....
And we'll find that spot, too.
It was marked off on this old
logging map we have...called the
Murramurra Range.

Bobby looks up on these words, concerned. He slowly turns the leather pouch over in his hand. Shawn is fascinated by the painted bag.

BOBBY

(quietly to Harlan)

Is he talking about Foley's Valley?

Harlan shrugs as he reaches for another one of the flies. edges even closer.

After Dalton puts the hood of the Caravan down, she comes over and takes the reins from her father. Bettina comes out from the rest-room, looking for something to dry her hands on.

PARNELL

(to Ross)

A good friend of that ol' timer
I was tellin' you about...what
might also know the whereabouts
of that place...well, he's sittin'
right o'yonder.

(points to Bobby)

Bobby is uncomfortable; he wants to avoid the issue. Harlan shakes his bowed head at Parnell's big mouth. Bobby turns to Shawn whose eyes stay glued to the bag.

BOBBY

What's your name, child?

SHAWN

Shawn Daley.

BOBBY

You like to fish?

SHAWN

Nah...not too much.

BETTINA (o.s.)

Shawn

Shawn "doesn't hear", reaches out tentatively to touch the colorful bag.

BOBBY

Took ya'self a fancy to this
here thing, now dincha?

He takes the flies out and extends the bag to the boy.

BOBBY

This here is a genuine Nagmulla
Aborigine medicine bag.

SHANE

Is that Indian?

BOBBY

Yessir, give to me by the son
of Eagle Cry himself.

(extending it to Shawn)
G'wan now...take a look at it.

Shawn gently takes the dark, beaded bag. Something about it holds him...all five senses embrace it.

ROSS (o.s.)

Shawn!

HARLAN

Hey, Bobby, his old man is
calling him.

As Ross approaches, Christian Neilson appears. They converge. Christian causes the horses to swing round which makes Ross jump, the horses following suit. No one else moves, though.

ROSS

(embarrassed)

Big fella...

(to Bobby)

...Excuse me, Sir, but...

(he points north)

...these gentlemen tell me
that you might know the
Murramurra Range.

BOBBY

(interrupting)

Mister, I know a place where you
can take this here son of yours
and catch....

CHRISTIAN

Hey, Bobby, he's talking about
Foley's Valley...

Bobby motions for Christian to hold off, to drop the subject.

BOBBY

(cont. to Ross)

...where you can catch some
of the plumpest fish you ever
did see.

The horse swings the other way and Ross has to jump again.

ROSS

Ah...well, thanks, but I told
my friends that I was going to
the most remote spot...up beyond
the Murramurra Range.

BOBBY

I think you'd be better off if...

Christian loses patience, interrupts:

CHRISTIAN

Look, here, friend, there is a
road, but some of it's gone now.

(leading Ross away)

You may run into an old friend
of mine. If'n you do and he
needs a lift back here, you do
him a favor...

Trails off. Bobby is shaking his head in disgust. He looks to
Harlan, sucks his lip, then turns back.

BOBBY

What say I was to give this to ya?

Shawn's eyes widen...back and forth from bag to Bobby.

SHAWN

Is it really Eagle-Cry
the Indian's?

BOBBY

Guaraneffinteed.

Shawn's ecstatic. Harlan's cynical. Bobby's pensive.

EXT. IN THE MOUNTAINS -- FOLEY AND THE HORSE

Moving down a long stretch of dirt road. The muscles of horse
and rider knot and gather...a tension is building, a circuit of
energy is forming. The horse wants to move faster. Foley's
breathing becomes more passionate...as he connects with the
horse's rekindled spirit. Slowly and smoothly they work up into

a perfect canter. SOUND UP: the painful breathing, the grunting, the straining of both animals. They fly. Around a bend, a rolling meadow off to one side. Leaving the road, onto a rising grassy knoll, horse and rider come streaking. Perfect rhythm. One animal now. The knoll gets steeper as they reach for the summit. At the top of the knoll, the horse rears up and paws the air once, twice...then suddenly his rear legs crumple. Foley and the horse come crashing down in a heap, winded, wasted, spent. Foley lies there; the horse twitches and can only raise his head. Foley moves, catches his breath...seems to be laughing at himself.

ON FOLEY AND THE HORSE

Both walking down off that hill; both slightly limping. The horse carries only Foley's pack. A dizzy look on Foley's face.

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS - LATE AFTERNOON

Below, in a small valley, a stream feeds into a tiny pond reflecting the sky. PAN TO FG: logging road, vista point...the

ROSS (v.o.)

See...we weren't lost. Just
like I said...the headwaters
of the North Fork. We're
going the right way!

UP FROM A STREAM

Bettina and Ross are putting up the tent. Shawn is clearly worn out as he lugs his sleeping bag out of the Caravan. Too tired, too cranky, he drops his bag, slumps down on it, starts to cry softly. Bettina goes to the boy.

BETTINA

(gently)

Don't you want to help?

ROSS

I want him to stop that whimpering.
Let him alone...right now!

The tent lines tangle in Ross' hands. Frustration.

BETTINA

Take it easy...he will. It's
not easy to stop crying.

It starts to rain; the conversation stops and it's a mad scramble to get their gear and themselves into a partially erected tent.

DOWN BY THE STREAM - LATER

Sunlight sparkles off the wetness everywhere. Ross stands in the middle of the stream wearing waders, fishing. Shawn is fishing downstream on the bank, trying to untangle a backlash in his reel. His pole bends.

SHAWN

I got one...I got one! Help me, Daddy!

ROSS

(loud whisper)
Good, but keep quiet...just reel it in!

I can't, the thing won't turn...
what'll I do?... What'll I do?

Ross reluctantly wades toward Shawn. They exchange poles. Ross has to pull in Shawn's fish by hand. Meanwhile, Shawn dangles Ross' fly and catches another one.

SHAWN

Daddy, I got another one!

Ross drops Shawn's rod and runs for his expensive one with the automatic retrieve. He almost slips and falls.

ROSS

No, Shawn...don't touch that!

Too late...Shawn presses the lever and the line is sucked in...sans fish...sans fly.

ROSS

Why can't you do as I say? I'm doing my best to teach you everything, but that was my best mosquito fly...Hey, where are you going.

But Shawn doesn't answer...he just walks away, hurt. Ross could kick himself.

DOWNSTREAM - ABOVE A CATARACT AND POND

Bettina sits on a boulder in the sun...for the moment at peace with herself and her surroundings. She touches the sun with her face, the air with her nose, the moss with her hand. She listens to the sounds...her eyes relate almost sensually with everything. She hears something behind her. BEAT.

BETTINA

(softly)

Ross?

Nothing. She doesn't move, listens harder, is a little afraid.
 BEAT. A hand comes down on her shoulder, making her bolt and
 scream!

It's Ross.

ROSS

(smiling)

Pretty good, uh? Move like
 a bloody Abo through the
 bush, I do.

BETTINA

Don't ever...

And she counts ten to herself to keep from clawing his eyes out.

ROSS

I'm sorry...won't do it again...
 just wanted to show you...

BETTINA

Show me tenderness and
 sensitivity. That's all I
 demand...nothing more. I
 flew halfway around the world
 with my little baby so he
 could have his father...please,
 for all our sakes, understand
 that getting back together,
 after all these years, is a
 very delicate thing.

ROSS

I know...I know...we'll make it.

BETTINA

Ross, dear Ross, just slow down...
 with me, with Shawn. This is a
 lovely place...we don't have to
 go any farther.

Ross turns upon hearing something up in the trees.

ROSS

(pointing)

Look!

Up above, a family of possum move gracefully and rapidly along.

BETTINA

Ross, the important thing is
 that we're together...and feel
 like we're together. Doesn't
 matter where.

ROSS

But I...I thought if I brought
you both here...

BETTINA

All this is wonderful, really...
but this isn't where we live.

ROSS

(anguishing)

No, but...

BETTINA

Our problems don't have to do
with survival in the wilderness
...I just don't want my son being
brought up to think women are
kitchen utensils.

ROSS

(pointing to himself)

Hey, I'm trying to change....

Slowly, emotionally burdened, Bettina reaches out to him, they
join hands, draw together.

ROSS

I know what you want...I
just...

Bettina looks up and around after the possums.

BETTINA

(holding back tears)

We care for each other...it's just
that sometimes we're so different.

She looks off after the possums.

AT THE WATER'S EDGE - LATER

Shawn sits on the bank moping...launching a piece of driftwood
to which he's affixed an empty matchbook cover as a sail. Shawn
"sailboat" sets off on its own journey, passing logjams, negoti-
ating little white-water rapids.

A RIVER - LOW ANGLE - SUNDOWN

Skirting the sandy shore, another piece of driftwood approaches
CAMERA. All of a sudden, the towering, stamping leg of a horse
comes crashing down on the piece of driftwood! WIDEN to SEE the
horse stopped by the river, bending down now to drink. Foley
comes up, takes his pack off the wheezing horse, looks around,
heaves a weary sigh. Not far away, spanning the river, is a
three-rope, V-shaped, walking bridge, bits of weeds and moss
hanging from it.

UNDER A SPREADING RIVERSIDE TREE

Foley is shirtless, all his gear at his feet. Foley takes the saddle, bridle, and blanket, and, with the respect appropriate to a ritual burial, places them high up on a limb. He puts on his shirt, ties his great coat like a bed-roll down over his pack...grunts as he swings his pack on his back.

THE ROPE BRIDGE

Halfway across Foley turns again to the horse. A silent goodbye ...the horse stares as Foley continues across the taut, swaying ropes.

ALONG THE RIVER SOMEWHERE - NIGHT

A strange and eerie sight: the horse slowly plodding along by the tirelessly flowing waters, under the eternally mysterious stars.

INT. THE CARAVAN - MORNING

The view off to one side is magnificent...falling away into a great timbered valley...rising up on the other side into another majestic mountain range. Bettina caresses Shawn who's sleeping in her lap. Bettina stares quietly out the window.

ROSS

How'ya doing, sweetheart...?

BETTINA

...Huh?...? Oh...I don't know...
it's all so vast, and still...
makes you wonder whether we should
even be here. It's ...it's almost
too beautiful.

Ross looks at her, looks at Shawn, puts his hand on Bettina's shoulder in comfort...drives on, a pensive, nervous smile on his face.

AT A STREAM

Near the top of a tall eucalyptus, above a high, boulder-strewn cataract, a koala stops munching. PAN DOWN and ACROSS to the other side, where the Caravan is parked, having been driven right out to the edge of a huge rock slab overlooking the waterfalls. OVER THE SOUND of the water:

ROSS (o.s.)

...What the hell did we come here
for...if not to have FUN!

SHAWN (o.s.)

It's too cold.

FOLLOW the cascades DOWN to the pools below. Ross is standing knee-deep in water, wearing swimming trunks and goose-flesh. Shawn's on the shore, suited up, shivering, hanging back.

ROSS

Come on, Shawn...this is important to me...something I want you to be able to do. Sure it's cold, but so what...?

He ducks under the water, comes up spewing and splashing.

ROSS

...IT'S GREAT! Come on, now!

But Shawn wheels, runs away. Ross is crestfallen...looks around, shivers, and slowly climbs out...his spirits doused. Further down the stream, Bettina is picking wildflowers on the banks.

DISSOLVE

STEEP ROCK, SHRUB AND BLISTERING SUN

Images of the late-summer's sun's maximum efforts in the world above the timberline. Three brush-tailed rock-wallabies sit on a ledge before a cave. They freeze, caution alerted? UP THE SOUND of labored breathing. Foley's red and sweating face comes into FRAME. The wallabies escape into their sanctuaries.

FOLEY

(sardonically)

Viva la short-cut. Viva la companie.

Foley stands against a steep slope of loose shale. His walking stick tri-pods his stance. His face reflects the toilsome trek and his grim determination. He takes a sip from his canteen. This is not quite the same man. Up comes his staff. Onward... but he slips OUT OF FRAME, out of control, down the slope. He slides on his belly toward a sheer drop-off. Using his walking stick, he jams the point in, hoping the drag will stop him. One yard from the edge, it does. He rolls over, wheezing in pain. Dirt caked with the sweat of his face. After awhile, Foley stands...up out of somewhere comes a thin, ironic smile: his defense against fear or exhaustion. He looks out and everything he sees reinstalls his strength, draws him on.

CLOSE ON A SLOPE OF WILDFLOWERS - DAY

Two bodies hugging each other, one big, one small, come tumbling, steam-rolling down the hill. Shawn squeals with joy in his father's arms; Ross howls...until they roll to a stop, sit up... and wait for the world to catch up. Finally, Ross has a serious thought. He gently pulls Shawn around to face him.

ROSS

Hey, com'ere. I know you've
seen your mother and I argue.
I know it upsets you. Someday
you'll understand that it's...
not easy.

(Shawn's attention wanders)

Hey! The only thing I want you
to know...is that I love you.
You hear me?

(Shawn nods shyly)

So will you help me...
soften that Yankee mother of
yours?

(Shawn shrugs, "I dunno know")

Good.

Shawn looks hard into his father's eyes. He really is trying to
understand. Pure innocent intensity and concern.

EXT. STEEP WINDING ROAD

Mountains behind mountains covered with trees and ferns. The
Caravan appears, climbing the bumpy, overgrown road.

INT.

Shawn is trying to keep from spilling a plastic bucket of berries
and eat them at the same time.

BETTINA

(to Shawn)

That's enough of those...you'll
spoil your appetite.

(to Ross)

Couldn't we pull up under a tree?
I'll fix the last of our frozen
steaks.

ROSS

I want to find a camp-spot with
the perfect view. And I want
to get out of this thing and
build a proper fire.

SHAWN

But I'm hungry, Daddy.

Bettina shakes her head impatiently. As Shawn reaches for another
berry, she yanks away the bucket, spilling a few. Shawn gobbles
these up.

INT. POV

Bumpy. Outside, the land falls away on one side revealing a vast
expanse of green valley.

ROSS

Okay, okay...I think this is it.

BETTINA

I hope so.

EXT. LONG ON CARAVAN

Pulling up to a high flat spot that overlooks the valley. Shawn flies out the door, runs to the limits of the salient. Gravel underfoot. Doesn't realize until he's right at the edge...that they've picked a spot over virtually a sheer drop of 2,000 feet... a canyon and stream below. It's awesome to the boy. He backs away from the height. When Bettina steps up and sees, she grabs the boy, yanking him back further.

ON SCENE

As Shawn scampers away to explore, Ross steps over to her, entranced with the view.

ROSS

(almost without looking at her)
Pulling Shawn away like that can put an unnatural fear of heights into him. Kids learn that, you know.

BETTINA

(glowering)
Unnatural...?!

She stomps away to the Caravan. Climbs in the back.

ON THE CARAVAN

Bettina is somewhat cramped in the back seat, setting up the stove, pulling out supplies.

SHAWN (o.s.)

I'm hungry, Ma.

BETTINA

(under her breath)
Since when is my child's safety unnatural?

ROSS

(stepping over)
Honey-babe, please wait. I'll build you a beautiful fire and set up the tent. Don't be cross with me.

BETTINA

No, that'll take forever, and I want to get this over with.

ROSS

Wait, will ya. I'm gonna move
the Caravan into position.

(calling out)

Shawn! Shawn, do your thing
and find us some proper firewood.

BETTINA

Nevermind, Shawn!

ROSS

Sh-h-h. Go ahead, son, and
remember what I taught you.

(to Bettina)

Come on, love, leave him be.
It's a good job for a boy.
He'll discover something
every time he does it.

Bettina continues with the food. Ross takes a few steps away to
decide where to put the vehicle and the fire.

ANGLE

As Ross gets in behind the wheel, Bettina is lighting the camp-
stove.

ON SHAWN

Off among the trees, thoughtfully deciding on every stick he finds
whether it's proper firewood or not.

INT. CARAVAN

Ross begins to turn the vehicle around.

BETTINA

Ross, you're going to spill the
marinade. Don't move.

ROSS

Relax. You just prepare it.
I'll cook it outdoors.

EXT. ON SCENE

BETTINA

We don't want to wait.

While Bettina tries to cook and hold everything down, Ross is
backing and forthing the Caravan.

ROSS

I'll whip you up some nice
biscuits...

BETTINA
 (stubbornly)
 We've already cooked some rice.

The Caravan bumps over a rock. Exclamations from both of them.

ON THE TIRES

From reverse into forward, with torque, spitting earth and gravel. The stove cover crashes down. Bettina cries out.

ON SCENE

Moving in reverse again. The rear tires ride up on a small round log and spin. When they hit dirt, they dig in, lurching the strongly towards the precipice. Ross brakes hard, causing something to spill into the fire. Steam and smoke. Chaos.

INT. CARAVAN

Ross quickly tries to throw the gear-shift in low, but it lands in reverse instead. They lurch again, but in the unexpected direction.

ON THE TIRES

Stopping, sliding...as they try for traction. Nearer the drop-off the slope under the wheels becomes steeper. Soft, crumbly earth. The tires spin forward, but the vehicle edges backward now!

INT. CARAVAN

Bettina is oblivious to everything but the mess in front of her. Ross is cursing his macho into dominance as a reaction against panic...begins to move recklessly rather than deliberately. The engine races. We hear, we feel...the tires spin.

ON SCENE

As the wheels spin, the vehicle moves, slides further downhill. Steeper. Now a huge hunk of earth and rock break off and falls away. One tire is caught!

ROSS
 Aw, no-oo...

He eases up for the first time. Stops. Starts up again slowly, but the damage is done. The fallen tire spins and the Caravan slips back. Now the other rear tire is useless.

BETTINA
 Ross...! Ross!
 Look out...over here...
 My God!

ROSS

Jump out, Bettina...for
 Godsakes, jump!
 I can...I can't hold it!

The vehicle is going...over the edge, inexorably.

ON SHAWN

Stepping up with a full load of firewood in his arms. Pre-conscious horror in his innocent, blank face.

ON SCENE

The Caravan is done for. Down it falls, the scream of the engine mixing with Ross's and Bettina's. Ross manages to open his door somewhat...before the Caravan's rear-end hits the jutting boulder, flipping the front-end up and over backwards.

ANGLE

The Caravan hits again five hundred feet down. Explodes!

ANOTHER ANGLE

The wreckage draws upon itself a landslide from above. Tons of earth and rock, smoke, dust, and noise rise in a horrible din, a ghastly spectre. The vehicle is soon completely covered.

ON SHAWN

Still carrying the wood, he edges closer to the edge. Now he drops the wood. He looks over, as the last series of boulders hit bottom below.

SHAWN

(softly)
 Mommy?

Without thinking he begins to climb down. But he doesn't get far before he stops, is afraid...of the steepness, the slippage. He tries to climb back up. Then it happens: the loose earth underfoot slips out. He falls and slides. Down on his belly, clawing out with tiny fingers, into the moving earth, to stop. Impossible. The boy slides, faster and faster. He rotates to his back, still feet down. Down...down...down, on what is now a long talus of loose, raw earth and rocks. Just before what appears to be a sheer drop, Shawn manages to scramble to one side, picking up the slope again. Down, down...rotating...sometimes almost completely covered with earth as he goes...and scraping through all the other noise is Shawn's high-pitched wail of terror.

Near the bottom, he slides down past a protruding fender of the Caravan...he grabs for it...but down...down....

A few yards from the bottom he does grab a jutting rock...and swings around underneath it. Just in time. For above him, brought down by his descent, is another wave of land sliding down upon him. A few vanguard stones make him instinctively cling and huddle up under the jutting rock formation above. The earth rushes down past him, over him...covering him...and quickly everything is still again. Silence again. Dust hangs in this air.

THE AFTERMATH

Where the overhang was, some earth and rock begin to move. Coughing and sputtering, clawing for air, choking, nearly suffocated, desperately spitting dirt from his mouth, Shawn emerges. One step out of his hole and he stumbles. His face expresses the terror of complete physical and psychological dislocation. He fights hard to focus. A few stones still slide down the freshly exposed, main body of the landslide.

Shawn's mouth moves, but no sound is heard. Shawn stumbles, hurt, scraped and bleeding, to the big slide. His tiny hands start frantically to dig into the new mountain where surely the Rover and his parents are. Shawn is spitting, gagging; his mouth moves, he tries to speak...he digs...faster and faster...until: he grabs his head, covering his ears and eyes with his forearms. SILENCE!

ON THE LIMB OF A TREE

A bird alights and pace quickly to and fro.

ON A POOL

In the creek, a frog swims up, climbs a rock, croaks once.

BACK ON SHAWN

Digging, whimpering, a tiny figure dwarfed in the canyon. TILT UP to an outcropping of rocks above him that failed to fall.

In a near catatonic state, his eyes closed, a mask of pain frozen on his face. The rhythm of the UNDERSCORE matches his body's slow bobbing. The UNDERSCORE stops as his eyes pop open! Silence. Unbearable silence without...but clearly mind-wrenching horror within. Shawn fights for "consciousness" of his surroundings. He looks down at his hand. He SEES a large, white, long-legged Assassin spider dragging a crushed leg, passing over his bleeding fingers. Shawn neither moves nor reacts. The spider limps away...as does Shawn's dull but searching gaze. A CROW CALLS.

ON A LARGE BLACK RAVEN - DUSK

Landing on the branch of a dead shrub that projects from the walls of an opposite cliff. The 7/8 moon rising at the end of the canyon is slightly larger and directly behind the bird.

SHAWN

Staggers out toward some trees not far from the bottom of the landslide. NIGHTSOUNDS begin to test the air.

LATER - NIGHT

Shawn huddles down under the largest tree, twitching, shivering. The distant HOWL of dingos snaps his head up. He stands; a dead limb breaks off in his hand. He drags it with him to the landslide. The hole he's been digging is surprisingly large. The HOWLING of the pack is closer now. He turns on the sound, tries to "push them back" into the night with grunts and pokes on the stick. Dirt and perspiration blacken his face. The whites of his eyes glow. Still nearer, the dingos' sound changes to yaps and growls. Shawn backs up towards the hole he was almost buried in. His head whips around in the direction of some bushes... then back to the foot of the landslide.

He SEES a few dark shapes moving...one, two...how many more? ...wild dingos are zeroing in...on him!

SHAWN

Backs up to the hole, trying but unable to cry out, poking the air with his stick...while the dingos make a fearful racket fighting viciously over the food. Unconsciously, Shawn eases back into his burrow while a woodpecker bangs his head against a tree then laughs crazily into the night. The painted leather pouch falls from Shawn's belt at the entrance...as he re-enters his burrow in abject terror.

INT. THE HOLE

Hell's Hole. Diverse animal SOUNDS made all the more macabre by the acoustics of the canyon, come and go upon the dark tides of night. Shawn shivers, fights to stay awake, his survival instincts throwing all his senses into complete chaos. Finally, fitful sleep opens up the channel for speech...but it's garbled, barely intelligible.

SHAWN

...wait...wait...it's cold...
where are you?...I'm over here...
over here...No...no...I can't come
...no...come here...I'm not crying
...here kitty...uhgeeach...g'way...
gaa...

A few loose rocks roll past the opening.

ON SCENE - PREDAWN

A dingo sniffs the entrance. Falling rubble during the night has made the hole smaller. When the animal's nose passes over the leather pouch, it backs off sharply a few steps.

INT. THE HOLE

Shawn is a dark shadow slumped in the recesses, neither awake nor asleep, his unconscious emotions distorting his face. Outside, WE HEAR the dingo howl, long and final. Shawn's consciousness shifts...instinctively he emits a grotesque rasping cry.

EXT. ON SCENE

At the sound the dingo tucks tail, flees. HOLD. A few rocks are pushed out over the lip of the hole. Shawn appears, a ghastly sight, encrusted with earth and blood. Like a blind child seeing for the first time, his eyes cannot adjust to the diffused morning light...or the circumstances. He peers out into the eerie misty morning of the canyon. Unconsciously, he picks up the leather pouch. It means nothing to him, it falls from his hand. His mouth is dry and foul. He tries to stand, muscles and joints ache, his coordination is confused. He stumbles down the slope, his mouth now silently and repeatedly forming some word, perhaps "Mama".

WHERE THE CARAVAN MUST BE

Shawn looks down into the pit he's been digging. He stumbles in ...gathers himself into a ball and sits there. His little chest begins to heave, to breathe faster.

PAST THE LANDSLIDE

Further up the canyon, two grays and two joeys are approaching... nibbling, sensing. Shawn's SOUNDS gradually build into a wail. He cries, finally letting it out. The grays bolt upstream about 50 meters. They stop, sniff, listen. The young climb into their mothers' pouch; then poke their heads out to see. The mothers trundle-hop away.

ON SHAWN - IN THE DIGGING

His crying is total...dry and raspy...heart-rending...pathetic. We become aware of the SOUND of running water.

A SERIES - THE STREAM

Makes music of its own. In the BG, Shawn is crying. While a fish jumps for a moth. A large cuscus sits on the bank washing itself. Birds strut on the opposite sandy shore. The mist hovers about the canyon in dense white pockets. Shawn's crying pierces the solitude of a large, marshy inlet full of reeds. Suddenly the air is a-whirl with the flapping wings and startled cries of a hundred water-fowl taking to flight.

NEAR THE STREAM

A bushy-tailed glider sits on a limb, chewing, the Water-birds chatter. Shawn wanders towards the water, still sobbing. So thirsty. The SOUND of the stream assails his ears. Then the SOUND of (an animal) ...BECOMES, for Shawn, the SOUND of his mother calling his father:

BETTINA (o.s.)

Ross...Ross...bring me the water-jug, will ya, Hon?

Shawn stops, breath catches, peers into the dissolving mists.

SHAWN

Ma-a...Ma-a...

AT THE STREAM

Sunlight glares off the white rocks. A brown snake warms its blood on a rock slab. Slowly, imperiously, it raises its head, flicks its tongue. In the DISTANCE, the head of the boy approaches, weaving this way and that above the brush. He will pass the snake on the RIGHT. The snake slowly worms away to the LEFT. But, closer now, Shawn gets stuck and so turns HARD to HIS RIGHT. The boy and the serpent are now on convergent paths! For a moment Shawn disappears from CAMERA. The snake slithers away in Shawn's direction. Shawn cries out! The SOUND of crashing brush. He has fallen through a river-bush and lies face down oblivious to the world, sucking up huge amounts of water. A few meters away, the head of the snake comes out of the brush, stops, looks, backs and sways.

SNAKE'S POINT OF VIEW - HAND-HELD, SWAYING

Of Shawn...slurping, coughing, drinking far too much too fast. POINT OF VIEW backs and the vegetation closes in and obscures Shawn from view.

A SERIES - ON SHAWN

Wandering away from the stream, wet, bloated. Circling the landslide, looking up at the towering cliffs, feeling trapped. Pacing around the trunk of a tree, holding his swollen stomach. Sitting in a heap out in the open, where he HEARS a peewit-like bird call, and....

BETTINA (v.o.)

Shawn...Shawn...Shawn...

He staggers up...that sound exploding in his head as he runs to the landslide; but now he beats more than digs upon the rubble.

ON SCENE - LATER

Shawn has fallen asleep in exhaustion in the pit he's dug on top of his parents' grave. The sun beats down. A SERIES OF SHOTS of Shawn being visited by curious animals while he sleeps. The last

by a rabbit-eared bandicoot. Shawn is curled up, sweating in his parka. He opens his eyes. He SEES the bandicoot. But this makes Shawn squeeze his eyes closed very tight.

ROSS (o.s.)
(enthusiastically)
You two just wait till we get where
we're going...you'll see animals
that you've never dreamed existed...

Shawn opens his eyes...his head following the coot away. The sound he now makes is so pure and plaintive that the coot stops for a moment, moves away.

Sitting in his pit, his eyes see nothing...sand dribbles out of his hand into a conical pile. His SOUND is the soft, wavering chant of an idiot babbling.

Shawn slowly moves down through the trees, brush, and grass, towards the stream, desperately experimenting with the edibility of the vegetation. But the things he finds are bitter, unpalatable. Frustration mounts, his mind dulls, and hunger gnaws fierce in his belly.

AT THE STREAM

A platypus sits up in the shallows, eating a crayfish. Downstream on the bank, Shawn dumbly watches. He looks down at the water. He SEES fish!...lazily swimming about. Without thinking, he rushes with outspread arms into the creek, chasing down the flashing fish. The platypus bolts, dropping his food, and disappears. Shawn catches nothing, hits his own head in frustration.

IN FRONT OF HIS DIGGING - SUNDOWN

He sits with a small stack of twigs, mindlessly rubbing two sticks together...At a SOUND he looks up. He SEES a family of spiney anteaters waddle by. Silent tears roll down his cheeks. Then the SOUND of dingos is heard in the distance. Shawn is startled. A pair of kookaburras fly off with cackling laughter. Frightened, Shawn shuffles across the 200 meters that separates him from his burrow.

AT THE BURROW

He struggles up the rubble with imaginary demons at his heels. At the entrance, Shawn spots the painted, leather pouch, half-covered with dirt. As he picks it up, the dingos' HOWLING STOPS. Clutching the bag, Shawn sinks into his hole.

ON SCENE - NIGHT

The full moon rises. It stares the little boy in the face. HOLD. He moves about. A look of disbelief floods his eyes and mouth. He clambers out of the burrow. In the moonlight...he quickly pulls off his parka, feeling for something in the lining: it's an open roll of Lifesavers! He is actually drooling by the time he gets the first into his mouth. Soon all but one are gone. He clamps a tight fist around the remaining candy. Dizzy, his stomach hurting, he slumps back down against the entrance...his eyes rolling. IN CLOSE. TERRIBLE NIGHT SOUNDS.

AT THE CREEK - MORNING

The dark, darting shadows of fish...the scuttling crawdads. Shawn is on his knees at the lapping edge; he reaches out an unsteady hand, but the crawdad scoots away. He picks up a water-slug, but cannot eat it.

AT THE LARGE TREE

Shawn stumbles up and reaches out to touch the thick bole of his tree, his stomach bloated with water. The air is split by the chatter of a tree-kangaroo above. A nut falls at Shawn's feet.

ON THE NUT

A rock in Shawn's hand comes crashing down, smashing the nut. Shawn's awkward fingers scratch for the tiny bits of meat. But this only makes him weaker and duller...consciousness comes and goes. Somewhere on high a wedge-tailed eagle screams, long and portentous. TILT UP into the leaves and sky. The eagle dives...screams again. SUPER THE SOUNDS OF Foley grunting and efforting physically in the extreme...

OTHER LEAVES, SAME SKY, SAME EAGLE

HOLD. THEN TILT DOWN...CLOSE ON Foley looking up. Though his eyes are still keen, he wears the wracking strain of his grueling trek. He wipes what could be a bit of blood away from one nostril and the corner of his mouth. He looks at his hand, sneering the stain away on his shirt. He stands there, his strength and spirit flagging badly, his legs wide apart. His eyes droop...almost as if he were about to take a nap while standing. The EAGLE SCREAMS again. Foley snaps awake, looks up with a defensive snarl... then glances around, alerted; he doesn't know what it is, but something in the area is not right. He moves off slowly, a stoic to his burden of pain and infirmity.

ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE LANDSLIDE

Shawn looks dejectedly through the boxes that have already been scavenged clean by the dingos. He hears something down by the stream, looks up. (Shawn can move quickly, but there is a moment of dull lag before his reflexes fire now.) He SEES a like animal stretching up on its back legs eating something. The animal pays little attention as the boy, an addled smile flooding

his face, draws near. A single ripe perfect berry is plucked by the almost prehensile fingers of the animal. Shawn's battered, stony face plods towards the fruit. The animal, its face smeared with berry-blood, snarls upon being disturbed. Totally bent on reaching the fruit, Shawn's voice gradually rises:

SHAWN

G'way...G'way...G'WAY...G' W A Y ! !...

The animal turns again, swipes the air with its paw.

FROM THE OPPOSITE RIM OF THE GORGE - ON FOLEY

Looking down. Shawn's frenetic CRIES rise up from the distance below.

ON SHAWN

Oblivious to any danger, he backs the animal down. As it retreats, Shawn attacks the berries.

FOLEY'S POV

Shawn is a tiny figure below...plucking, gorging on the fruit. CLOSE BY, the SOUND of Foley's heaving breathing, grunting, crackling and eating of seeds.

A SERIES - ON SHAWN

Being badly scratched by the bramble's thorns. Various animals watch the child.

ON FOLEY

Concern, bother, and exertion twist his face as he lowers himself, almost sliding, down a steep, eroded gulley on the side of the canyon...all the time keeping a fix on the boy below.

FOLEY

No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no...

Taking a breath, he peers out around some rocks.

He SEES, closer now, that Shawn is shaky on his legs from the acidic shock of so much fruit. The boy staggers towards the landslide.

ON SHAWN

But he doesn't make it. He crumples to his knees. He tears at his belly. His chest heaves, his gut spasms. He pukes, shudders, almost convulses. He tries to cry out, but only gags. At the landslide, Shawn drags himself past his digging, touching a nearby boulder as if it were his mother's soft cheek. The front of his parka is covered with blackberry juice. His head rolls...he looks up.

He SEES, rising 25 meters above him, that stony outcropping that refused to fall, jutting out over the landslide. Using all his strength, Shawn slowly climbs the loose rubble heap.

ON THE EROSION GULLY

As Foley checks his descent and looks out across at the boy again. His face and mouth become animated and he appears to be mumbling under his breath.

He sees Shawn painfully pulling himself up the back side of the outcropping.

ON SHAWN

Making his way out to the sheer-drop edge of the outcropping. He looks down, wavers, his head reels. Shawn wants to jump and end the pain and the horror and the loneliness.

ON FOLEY

Half-hidden by a large boulder and foliage, his face is now devoid of emotion as he watches the boy.

CLOSE ON SHAWN

A breeze blows his hair. He loses his footing, slips, reflexively grabs for rock. He holds on, but wants to let go; tries to cry...but cannot. He shakes his head. Slowly he collapses back from the edge, just as the huge rock he was holding onto breaks loose and falls away.

ON FOLEY

On a ledge, sitting on his pack...simply, but intensely staring across at the boy, spitting the shells of seeds.

He SEES the landslide, the empty boxes, the tire tracks, the diggings...It must be clear here that Foley is sizing up the situation, deducing what has happened.

DISSOLVE

ON SHAWN - NEARING SUNDOWN

Still collapsed, just back from the edge, staring off into space. Occasionally a muscle twitches.

ON FOLEY

Sitting...staring...until he breaks out, mumbling to himself again almost angry as he weighs the choices of action. He spits out one more shell, then walks away just as another attack of pain swipes at him from the side. Gritting down the pain:

FOLEY

Jesus, heart!

A SERIES - ON FOLEY

Reaching the downstream, canyon floor; glancing back as he moves quietly away. We catch snatches of his conversation with himself:

FOLEY

Bobby's right...poor sonsabitches
don't know a goddam thing!...

What the hell they expect me to do?
Never happen!...

Can't teach him...and can't take him.
I won't!...

What the goddam hell good would it do?!...
He's past pain...out of his head already!

How the hell does a kid ever recover
from that?! Be frightened and...and
guilty all his whole life...

Better off...

ON SHAWN - SUNDOWN

His breathing is more regular now, though he still clings unconsciously to the rocks. A BEAT. His nostrils flare briefly. His head twitches once. Red and bleary eyes flutter. He smells something. His head turns into the breeze that comes up from the canyon.

ON SHAWN

A few meters from the bottom of the landslide. He stumbles and slips the rest of the way down. But he stands quickly. Literally following his nose, he heads towards the bend in the road. He passes the forgotten boxes, the contents gone or rotted. He angles off the road and follows the creek. He sees nothing, but lifts his head into the breeze. He reaches the water's edge and seems to want to cross...but for a few more meters he runs downstream into a stand of mangroves. A frenzy on his face, he crosses the stream on deadfall and slippery rocks. Halfway across he stops, looks back to the landslide. Then, with a twisted face and tortured sound, he continues across, sniffing the air aggressively now. Once across, he gets his foot momentarily caught in a ganglion of exposed (Tamarisk) roots. Supple shoots hit him in the face.

NEAR AN OUTCROPPING OF ROCK

Shawn stops...his nose having lost the trail. A guttural sound of panic in the dying evening light. A swirling breeze whips by

him. His hunger points and pushes him on. Shawn winds through the maze of boulders and brush...enters a small dry tributary draw.

IN THE DRAW

As Shawn moves around the backside of a huge boulder, his face is thrust into the glow of a flickering light. Awe, confusion, disbelief flood the boy's face. He moves a few steps, oblique to whatever he sees. His face twitches, his eyes won't focus. He SEES the rising moon, still low at the east end of the canyon. It comes to rest (as Shawn stops) behind the spectral sight of Patrick Foley...hunched up and sitting behind the fire...which illuminates his features eerily from below. Foley's teeth rip meat away from a rabbit bone, his throat emitting soft, but primitive sounds. He doesn't seem to care about the boy's presence. A (animal's) CRY rakes through the twilight. Foley's eyes dart off just once. The smell and sight of the cooking meat, the heat of the fire, transfix the boy. But the old man just keeps on eating. The child begins to drool. The fire spits. Shawn's mouth moves to speak, but only a rasping hiss comes out. Suddenly, Foley flings the almost bare bone at the boy's feet. Shawn's nervous system falters for a moment before he can reach down for it. Soon he is tearing at every shred of softness. When Foley finishes most of the meat off a piece of ribcage, he throws that to the child.

It's torturing for the child to watch Foley finger up some dark glops of greens that simmer in a pan over the fire. Shawn moves even closer to the fire, his nostrils flare. In concert with a POPPING in the fire:

FOLEY

You want to share the fire? Then
first bring some firewood!

The boy freezes. In his head (v.o.) Shawn HEARS some of the last words his parents uttered: arguing whether he should fetch firewood. He violently shakes his head for a moment, then anguishes as he tries to understand the work-exchange required. He stumbles off, scooping up twigs and sticks and dropping them carelessly on the flames. As Foley arranges the wood with a stick, Shawn closes in on the pan. His eyelids flutter as he eats, virtually inhaling the remaining vegetables and broth.

ON SCENE - DUSK

When Foley finishes the last bone, he throws that to the scavenger-child. Weary and aching as he rises, Foley fetches the pan, scours it with sand then rinses it with water from his canteen. Shawn retrieves every discarded bone, then sits spread-legged near the fire, sucking and chewing on the gristle and marrow. After placing a few more evergreen boughs over his lean-to, Foley pulls his comforter out of his pack and lays it under the lean-to. A stack of dry wood and his great coat are also nearby. On

the opposite side of the fire some green limbs are walled up to form a heat reflector. Foley stokes the fire, then sits back down on his stump. He eyes the boy and ponders.

FOLEY
(to himself)
You're half-dead...together
that makes one of us.

The child looks up, uncomprehending. He's still hungry.

FOLEY
There is no more...nothing...
'less you bring it in.

They look intensely at each other. Finally, Shawn turns towards the landslide and points with animated, emotional pain into the night.

FOLEY
Yeah...yeah, I saw...they're gone.
They're gone and you're not.

But Shawn is still too disoriented to establish any communication. He looks at the bones in his lap...picked clean. He lets them fall to the ground at his side.

FOLEY (cont)
...Get up and throw them in the
bushes! The animals can't get
to them when they're that close to
the fire.

Shawn does so. He staggers away from the light, Foley's eyes following him into the darkness. Shawn trips and falls into a bush. Foley shakes his head, picks up a stick to whittle.

ON SCENE

Foley sets the fire. The stick he carves looks like a small Trident. Shawn soaks up the warmth, rocks back and forth, and occasionally looks from the fire to Foley.

FOLEY
What's your name, child?

Shawn's mouth opens but nothing comes out. All he can do is point to the landslide...with urgency.

FOLEY
Alright, alright...now you listen
good. You take this handle...
here, this is the handle.

Shawn does what he's told.

FOLEY (cont)

Now in the morning time you point that right hand stub at the sun, but you walk the way the middle one points. And when you think it's noon, you point the middle one and you follow the middle one. Okay? In the afternoon or evening you point the left fork to the sun, but you still go the way the middle one points. You got that? At nighttime, put the stick on the ground with the handle pointing to the Southern Cross...but in the morning the middle again points the way you gotta go. The middle stub will take you North. North, kid...North.

Shawn looks at the stick, then at Foley, then off into the night. The bridge of Foley's nose rests pinched between his thumb and forefinger. He gets up, shakes his head, stokes the fire. Shawn is scrunched up small, trying to keep warm.

FOLEY

'N you sleep on soft piles of leaves, 'n you pull more leaves all on top of you, and sleep in the shelter of a deadfall tree. "N you eat whatever you can find...eatin' wrong is better 'n not eatin' at all. You look to the creeks for food...the water plants, the young plants. 'N you eat bugs, I don't care what kind...they're just fat and protein anyway. Catch frogs ...eat flowers...peel away bark and eat the roots that ain't too bitter...and eat all the seeds you can find...and any berry that isn't white on the inside or out.

Shawn just stares dumbly at Foley. The old man spits, picks up his coat. He looks back and forth from his coat to the boy... lays the coat on a log next to his lean-to, then crawls into his bed.

ON FOLEY

Lying in bed. Firelight reflects off tears rolling from the corners of his eyes.

FOLEY

No way...ain't no way!

(whispering hiss to himself)

Why are you here? Why are you alone...
and so goddamn helpless? No...no...
you're on your own...you are on your
own. Damn it to hell, God!

(bursting loud, as if
to the gods)

Alright!...you listen to me. You
follow that stream...that's all.
Just follow the water downstream.
You'll meet other streams, but you
just follow the water downhill...
you'll pass a road, in three or
four days, that cuts across a gravel
bottom, but you stay with the water,
always downstream. When you get to
a railroad track...you take those
tracks to the left...to the North...
and in a couple of days you'll find
someone...they'll find you...someone.

Foley looks over at Shawn who's simply staring back at him. Foley is tired. He feels a spasm of pain coming up, but with concentration and slow breathing he manages to suppress it.

FOLEY

(wearily)

Then look it's North...that's all
you need to know. During the day
you track with the sun. At night
you fix your back to the Southern
Cross...You just gotta decide to
make it...

(under his breath)

...or not.

PAN UP TO THE STARS. ZERO IN on the Southern Cross. PAN DOWN TO Shawn -- his gaze, his arm, and his finger are pointing to the Southern Cross! PAN BACK to Foley: his head is raised and he is looking at Shawn.

FOLEY

So you know the Southern Cross...

Shawn shivers as his arm slowly drops...from the constellation. Foley is fighting his weariness, trying to think this all out.

LATER

Shawn dozes by the dying fire, or snaps awake at the NIGHT SOUNDS, shivering. He struggles up and cautiously approaches the lean-to, picks up Foley's heavy coat and moves off a few meters where he collapses. He pulls the coat over himself and sleeps...

Foley lifts his head just enough to see what the boy has done. He reflects on this, his eyes flare with a thought, then he, too, sleeps...

A SERIES - SCAVENGERS OF THE NIGHT

Various animals creep up to eat the bones. In the distance, the embers of the fire. The eating stops for a moment when Foley COUGHS.

THE CAMPFIRE - DAWN

Nothing but grey ashes remain. PAM TO a pile of eucalyptus boughs and leaves. It moves. Shawn crawls out, shivering in his parka. He looks around, but the coat, the old man, and the lean-to are gone. The fear of being alone again implodes within him; he seems on the verge of breakdown. But an enormous flock of parrots arrive and settle into the trees around him. Their raucous CHATTER gains his attention. He looks for the old man again. Nervous and panicky, Shawn starts for the creek. But his eye catches on a couple of handfuls of jerked meat lying on a large rock. The boy sniffs, tastes. He'd eat it all if his mouth weren't so dry. He heads for the creek.

AT THE CREEK

Shawn drinks and eats. A BULLFROG CROAKS loudly, startling the boy. A few meters away, in a moist depression in the sand, the bullfrog sits. Shawn thrusts the remaining jerky into his pocket and leaps out. The frog disappears. Shawn stares at the empty depression. It is a large footprint. There are others. They lead off upstream. Shawn follows.

THE CREEK - NEAREST THE LANDSLIDE

Shawn is moving on after the footprints. Momentarily he is drawn back to the landslide, but even he has survival instincts. It is a brief, but intense, moment of decision. He pushes on after the tracks.

HAND-HELD POV - THE SOUND OF FOLEY'S HEAVY BREATHING

Shawn is about 150 meters away, scanning in the CAMERA'S direction. He searches the ground near him. Finding footprints, he follows. His eyes and mouth and arms open wide, pleading for help. But his attention soon wanders; he drops to the water and drinks huge amounts. WE HEAR Foley crashing through the brush. Shawn has difficulty standing. He looks off again upstream, then toward the landslide, suppressing a heaving, spasming chest.

SHAWN

(with excruciating difficulty)
My name is...my name is...MY NAME...

ON FOLEY

Standing on the bank upstream as stiff as the two stones he now squeezes tight in each hand.

FOLEY

(in a low, burning rasp)

Are you gonna make it? Are you gonna die?

He smashes the stones together loudly...turns, stomps off.

SHAWN

Hears this, but dully. He heads toward the sounds. He looks back and forth from the trail to the landslide. He takes the last bite of his jerky. His shallow, rapid breathing becomes deeper and longer. He finds the footprints and slowly begins to follow them. WE HEAR A PACED, SUCKING SOUND.

FOLEY'S FOOTPRINT IN THE MUD

FOLLOW THEM a few meters until they disappear around a bend in the stream.

ON SHAWN

Trudging uphill along the bank. When he reaches the mud, he stops and stares off after the footprints until they disappear. He looks back towards the landslide one more time. Checks to make sure there isn't any more meat in the leather pouch, then follows the footprints again.

WIDE HIGH MEADOW

Plants and animals in profusion. Shawn is aware of very little. The meadow is like a dream, so open...and he is so alone. His eyes catch something. He SEES Foley going into a blackbutt grove 300 meters away. Shawn isn't sure if he really saw him. He struggles as fast as he can across the meadow...the wind drawing figures in the grass.

IN THE BLACKBUTT GROVE - MOVING SHOT

Shawn walks in confusion amidst the graceful white-trunked blackbutts, shadows sweeping brindled patterns over him. A kea glides silently by under the canopy of chiddering leaves.

ON A SEED-EATING MARSUPIAL MOUSE

Grazing for seeds. BEAT. The kea swoops. Sharp talons lift the mouse into a world from whose bourne no mouse-traveler returns.

ON SHAWN.

Staring off at the slow flapping wings. He strains his ears for Foley, then climbs a rise. When he can see down into a lush gully chiselled out by the stream below, he freezes. He SEES Foley, moving slowly up the creek, pausing every now and then to gather wild foodstuffs. Foley's eyes dart up once to Shawn, but he says nothing and continues what he's doing. He picks, eats, picks, pockets, ferrets, finds, eats, pockets, and moves on. Above him, Shawn is starting to make inarticulate sounds again.

ON THE TWO

Shawn above and Foley below, moving upstream. Foley moves slowly, eats slowly...a clawing pain in his chest. Shawn holds out his hand for something to eat. Foley pays no attention. Shawn's step crumbles the edge. He slips, slides down the sheer slope of the gully. Foley turns on the boy, pointing menacingly at him.

FOLEY

You!...You!...what is your name?!

Caught off guard, Shawn tries, but cannot answer. Pathetic. Towering above the boy, Foley's attitude doesn't help.

SHAWN

My...my name...n'n'name, name is...
is...is...is...is...my name...name
is...is...

Foley turns away, resumes his picking.

FOLEY

Can't remember your name? Well,
forget it, you don't need it.

SHAWN

I...I...wait...my name is...my
name...arghghghgh!

Foley glances back as Shawn reaches into his pocket. Foley's eyes widen...it takes a moment to refocus on what Shawn has in his hand and is now extending as a gift-offering to the old man. Foley is dumbstruck. In Shawn's trembling hand is Eagle-Cry's medicine bag. Foley staggers back against the steep bank, his eyes flicking back and forth between the boy and the bag.

FOLEY

Where'd...you...?

He pushes himself up with his walking stick and quickly moves away. Shawn starts to sob, but still holds out the bag. Foley stops.

FOLEY

You keep it. I don't want it back.
You...That bag...once belonged...
to...to...

SHAWN

(bursting out
high pitched)
Eagle Cry! Eagle Cry! Eagle Cry!

FOLEY

Yeah, that's right.
(to himself)
Musta been Bobby...but how?...and why?
(to Shawn)
Yeah, I know that bag...aborigine.
You keep it.

Foley sighs deep, looks around, then nods. But, abruptly he turns and shuffles away. Shawn runs after him, grabbing his coat. Foley recoils, snaps around glaring, and breaks the boy's hold with his staff. Foley moves away, leaving Shawn pointing to his stomach. Shawn scrambles after him, nearly mindless now in his attempt to connect.

SHAWN

(as he goes)
I'm hungry...I'm hungry. We...we
lost our food...you can give me
some food, please. Lost our food,
we...we...take me back to...to...
hungry, I'm hungry...can't you...?
I can't find them...where are they?
...I'm...I hungry....

A SMALL, MARSHY POND

As Foley skirts the pond, some waterfowl take to the air. He heads for a twisted wild fruit tree on a knoll, pocketing a few stalks of the (purple flowering alpine onion) as he goes. Shawn follows, holding out his hand. Foley wheels on the boy.

FOLEY

You're on your own...s'fetch your
own!

Shawn does. He eats, but he doesn't pocket.

SHAWN

(to himself)
...We had a stove, we had a
refrigerator...the stove was
gas, and we had graham crackers
and teeny hotdogs in a can...we
had Koolaid and freeze-dried
pineapple...

Foley bites an (the fruit) , half-exposing a worm. Making sure Shawn sees the worm, Foley eats it with one bite. Shawn reacts, but can't stop eating or talking.

SHAWN (cont)

...and we had water in our bumpers
we had extra gasoline. My...my...
he caught 14 fish...too small...but
we kept them for food...he...

Foley freshens his mouth with (an onion), moves on...

ON THE SIDE OF A MOUNTAIN

As the terrain becomes steeper, Foley trudges along a switch-back trail, looking out at the distant mountain, arranging landmarks in his mind. He reaches down, plucks a few (blue-berries) from a low-lying bush, moves on.

FOLEY

(to himself)

Blind as a bat, city-bred snuffler!
Poor excuse for a human-child.

(to Shawn)

If you follow, you take care of
yourself. And if you take care of
yourself, you might stay alive.

Shawn looks at Foley, hurt, then at the (berries).

SHAWN

I want to go home...

STEEPER TRAIL THROUGH TIMBER

Foley needs his walking stick to pull himself up the slope. He's hurting. Shawn has difficulty keeping up. Foley stops for a drink. Shawn comes up wanting some.

FOLEY

You get your water from the leaves
of the plant there.

Shawn pulls a few leaves off the plant. It's a thistle-type; he pricks himself.

FOLEY

Get the young leaves, the soft ones,
but if the old ones have gone to seed...
There! You eat some of those...calm you
down.

(to himself)

How the hell did I know that? (BEAT)
I'm remembering...

The boy chokes up, starts to cry. Foley shouts back at him.

FOLEY

Bring me some them seeds there
and I trade ya some meat.

AT THE RIDGELINE SADDLE - NOON

A mob of wallabies snaps alert. Then, with a strange CHITTERING SOUND, they bound quickly into the trees. A BEAT later, the head of the old man rises up above the ridgeline. His breathing is labored and wheezy...he is still stoic to the pain. Shawn doesn't see Foley stop and so runs into him. Foley swings out with his hand and grazes the top of Shawn's head.

FOLEY

Go on! Go on, you...back down...
just follow the stream down...You
got just as much chance of making
it as ya did before. I...haven't
changed a thing...Or else you keep
your eyes open!

Foley suppresses a pain in his chest just as he himself notices where they are. Shawn stares wide-eyed out into a vista. Shawn Foley's face trembles and he finds it hard to swallow. He turns to Shawn. Shawn is unable to comprehend what he SEES: a most incredible vista, a huge high mountain valley that throbs with color, texture, and beauty. A flock of (geese) fly low over the ridge, swoop down into the valley below. Foley heaves a sigh of relief. He moves to the edge of a steep slope, peers over the edge to make sure, grunts approval, then sits down on a rock. Shawn looks down. He SEES a lake almost directly under them, nestled in a steep-sided bowl. Shawn shies away from the edge. He scrambles back to the trail they have just come from. He even takes a few steps along the trail in that direction. He looks back and forth between the great valley and the way he's come.

SHAWN

(choppy hysterical)

I...going...to...my mommy...I going
to my...daddy...I....

FOLEY

Your mama's dead..and your papa's
dead...that's the hard truth. Just
like my mama's dead...and my...papa's
dead...and some day you're gonna die
like someday I'm gonna die.

He wheels around on Shawn, swallowing his own chokiness. Shawn starts to sob.

FOLEY

But until then, you fight like hell to stay alive. You get that?! You're on your own, cuz I ain't even here to help you. And you're in my way...a bothersome sissy-kid...and I don't even know you....

Shawn opens up like a steam-valve blowing!

SHAWN

Shawn Daley! SHAWN DALEY! S H A W N
D A L E Y !!! That's my name!

FOLEY

My name's Foley, Patrick Foley....

SHAWN

(to himself)
Foley Patrick Foley.

Foley is sitting, swaying, looking out. Shawn is crying softly.

LONG SHOT - ON THE TWO, FROM THE LAKE BELOW

ON SCENE

Foley is pocketing some seeds that are scattered on the ground about him. Shawn wanders off, eating what he finds. As Foley starts a gradual descent along the ridgeline, he looks around. He SEES Shawn standing above him, holding out both his hands filled with something.

FOLEY

What's that?

SHAWN

I saw this little animal...he was over by a tree. He was eating these.

Foley trudges back up the hill.

FOLEY

By the back of my hand...you've found yourself a (hazelnut) tree.

UNDER THE (HAZELNUT) TREE

The two of them are stuffing their pockets, pounding nuts, eating the sweet meat.

ON THE TRAIL

Foley looks back at the kid who trundles along with bulging pockets. Foley's jaw crushes a nut.

AT THE LAKE

Where steep, curving slides of rock and shale rise up on three sides, trees on the other. Foley plods stoically to the water's edge, sits on a rock, takes off his foot gear, and cools his feet in the water. Shawn lags behind, but runs the last few meters to the water...gulps it up.

FOLEY

(washing his feet)

Dumb kid doesn't even know what to do with water. Thinks it just for drowning his stomach in. Stomach probably end up hating him someday. But you my little friends...

(talks to his feet
and rubs them)

...best pair of work-horses I ever had...

(sarcastic)

How many pair of socks did his mommy make him wear?

Foley begins washing out his socks. He looks over at Shawn. Shawn looks up at the reference, then counts them. He holds up two fingers.

FOLEY

...Oh, so more than one. Well, then, wouldn't the clever thing be to wash one and wear the other?

SHAWN

She gave me clean socks every day... she washed them...she was my friend...

Shawn can't hold back the sobs and whines.

FOLEY

Hey! A man has only two friends out here...two, and that's all...and you walk all over them all day long. Your feet! Without them, you're a dead man. So go on, you ask your feet if they like the way you take care of them...making 'em stay every day in the same old pair of dirty, stinking socks. They're your only friends out here...you get that?!

Foley puts on a dry pair of socks, ties the wet pair to the back of his pack, and wanders down toward the affluent end of the lake. Shawn takes off a pair of socks.

ON FOLEY

Under a tree, almost snoozing, eyes the boy down by the water, a look of question on his face.

ON SHAWN

Walking up pensively from the lake, a pair of socks hanging from his belt. From a handful of crushed nuts, he picks out the meats. When he sees that Foley is sleeping, he starts to circle around him. But at 20 meters away he stops and looks at his coat: he SEES that a (fruit) and the last piece of jerky have fallen from the pocket. Shawn approaches in stealth, intensity frozen into his face. He takes the food, but makes too much noise in doing so. He barely escapes the old man's flailing staff.

FOLEY

(roaring)

Argh, you make a lot of noise,
you...!

AT THE LAKE

Shawn looks back, but Foley isn't coming after him. He eats the fruit, has a hard time chewing the jerky. While he eats, his fingers play with a sharp piece of obsidian he has picked up. In front of him, a fish jumps. Then another.

SHAWN

If I had my pole, I wouldn't get my
lines tangled...I'd get that fish.
I'd get you fish...I'd get you...!

All of a sudden, the air is sliced with a SWISHING HISS as a supple branch lashes down on Shawn's neck and back. He screams, drops the rock, and scoots away out of reach.

Foley picks up the obsidian rock and pockets it.

FOLEY

You're not only a wimpy kid who
whines and cries and wastes his
time, but you're also deaf and
half blind. You hear me right
now...But can you hear the water
lapping? Can you hear the birds
back there? Can you hear the
double-drummer up on the ridge?

Shawn takes each image as an arrow in his side.

FOLEY (cont)

Can you hear the wind? The trees creaking and rubbing? You're deaf to those frogs at the other end... and you're deaf to the sun ping-pong off those rocks. You're deaf to your own heart beat...and you're deaf to me coming up behind you. Don't just talk to the fish... catch it!!!

SHAWN

You're mean...you aren't even nice! But my...my daddy was nice. And my daddy was the best fisherman in the whole world! If I had my daddy's fishing pole I would catch that fish and not give you any!

Foley laughs, coughs, and spits -- then walks away.

AT THE LAKE'S OUTLET STREAM

Foley surveys the area while taking off his shirt. He picks his spot, then approaches the stream slowly, quietly, the last few meters on his belly. When Shawn's approach becomes too noisy, Foley throws him a fierce, piercing look. Shawn halts. Foley reaches the edge of the grassy bank and slowly eases his arm down into the water. And he waits.

UNDERWATER SHOT - FISH SLOWLY DRIFTING TOWARD HAND

OPTICAL

ANOTHER ANGLE

And waits...his whole being concentrated in his arm and hand. Shawn's transfixed stare soon becomes one of fidgeting boredom.

DISSOLVE

ON SCENE

Movements in Foley's eyes indicate subtle movement in his fingers below. The barest hint of a smile. Shawn holds his breath, sees Foley's cheek twitch...just before his eyes widen: letting out a howl, Foley rears back, water splashing, his arm shaking, his hand gripping tightly the gills of a huge, thrashing fish. Shawn is startled, mouth hanging open in awe, as Foley holds the fish out to him, mesmerizing him with his words.

FOLEY

You see, I don't talk at it...I git it. I don't talk at it...but I see where they're laying...the lunkers...the big, fat ones...sleeping down in the cool...waiting out the sun...

FOLEY (cont)

...leaning up against the carved-out bank...waiting for a bug to wash on by...And so I move slow...like a lazy driftwood log...and then I wait...and then real slow...and wait...and move...and w...Ah-ha!

And with that Foley has Shawn by the throat, and lifts him, like the fish in his other hand, into the air.

FOLEY (cont)

That's how I outsmart all the wonderful creatures!

Shawn grabs Foley's wrist, dangling, thrashing.

ON A SANDBAR

Foley finishes cleaning the fish and lays it on a rock. He notices a hole in the high-water embankment. Foley stands with the help of his staff. Shawn moves. Foley whips around snarling, reflexively protecting his fish. Shawn eases back down. Foley's chest pains him as he shuffles over to the hole. He sniffs the opening.

FOLEY

Fox. You in there? Scrunch on back, Momma, I just need a bit of your bedding.

With his stick he scrapes out some debris. Deep inside the GROWL of a fox bitch. He takes what he wants and pokes the rest back in.

FOLEY

Just as I thought. Well I'm only gonna borrow some of this bird's nest...that's all.

CAMPFIRE SITE - NEARBY

Shawn looks on as Foley uses flint and steel to light a fire.

FOLEY (o.s.)

Just one...as if it came out of my fingertips...just one I lay down... knock it off gentle right into the nest...one more...

The tinder is the old bird's nest. A spark catches, is brought to Foley's face. He blows, the glow brightens and grows. Foley says "Pah!" and the smoking glow becomes flame, which is placed under a teepee of kindling.

ON SCENE

Foley has the fish slipped in and held between two long length-wise slits cut into the middle of a green branch. This spit is resting between two upright forked sticks. The single pan is suspended over the fire, steaming with the vegetables and herbs that Foley is now tearing off and dropping in.

LATER

Foley is eating his fish, enjoying every mouthful. His eyes flick out at Shawn: drooling, watching, chin on knees. Suddenly the boy jumps up, runs off. Foley keeps eating. After a few moments, Shawn returns and drops wood next to the fire. Like a dog at a butcher store, he watches Foley. Absently, Shawn picks up and strikes the flint and steel. A spark flies; Shawn gasps. He tries again...nothing. Foley throws the fish spine and head, with a little bit of flesh on it, at the boy's feet. Shawn grabs it up.

STILL LATER

Shawn is sucking the head down to dry bone. Foley dumps the left-over cooked greens out onto a flat rock. When he turns to clean the pot, Shawn wolfs them down.

SHAWN

But I'm still hungry...I want more!

Foley is putting together his bag and pack.

FOLEY

Good. That's healthy. See you stay that way.

SOUND BEGINS HERE of Foley grunting with effort, as if climbing a steep hill.

A BEAUTIFUL, TIMBERED RANGE - EXTREME LONG SHOT

The SOUND of Shawn's labored breathing joins Foley's. In the distance, WE SEE the pair breaking out of the trees and crossing an open patch of bare ground on top of a hill. The going is rocky, the footing uncertain. They come around an outcropping of boulders and disappear into some trees. Incredibly beautiful terrain.

TRACKING SHOT - THROUGH THE TREES

Foley lumbers on steadily ahead, his hands reaching out now and then to touch a tree or pick off a leaf. Shawn follows.

FOLEY

People wander around half-asleep all their lives. You're asleep right now. You gotta keep your eyes open, boy ...and stay connected to what's all around you. Don't be crowding me!... You keep your eyes open and your mouth closed and your step real gentle...

ON THE TWO - MOVING INTO A STAND OF DECIDUOUS TREES

FOLEY

A hand can reach out and touch a leaf and see that leaf like a pair of eyes: can never do. A man on foot can feel the earth breathe and turn under him...he can listen with his toes...

The intensity to Foley's tone verges on madness. Shawn stops, squirms and turns away. He wants to cry. The plant he's chosen to test turns bitter in his mouth.

SHAWN

I don't like you.

FOLEY

(striking out)
with his stick)

And I ain't in love with your mewling and puking ways.

Dodging the swipe, Shawn grabs his gut and retches up the plant he has been eating. Foley moves on.

FOLEY

You never saw me eating that plant.
That's (Dogbane).

Shawn grabs a trunk of a tree for comfort and support.

CAMPSITE - AFTERNOON

In an area swept clear of debris, a campfire has been set up. PAN TO Foley as he cuts and arranges eucalyptus boughs into a lean-to and a browse bed.

Shawn's eyes peer out through some nearby foliage. Shawn SEES Foley lopping off a branch. But the old man presently grabs his heart against a stabbing pain. Shawn watches, reacting to Foley's agony.

SHAWN

(under his breath)
(Dogbane.)

The pressure in Foley's chest is excruciating. He has to sit down, closes his eyes and calms his breathing. The SCOUND of a nut being smashed snaps his head up. Shawn sits spread-legged under the trees, using a rock to smash the (hazelnuts). As he picks out and eats the meat, he keeps looking off at Foley.

THE CAMPFIRE - LATER

Foley sits on a log, carving a four-inch slot into the end of his walking stick. He's chewing on something. Out of his pocket he pulls Shawn's long, pointed, obsidian stone. He slips it into the slot. Shawn is on the other side of the fire. His eyes widen upon seeing the black rock.

SHAWN

That was mine!

FOLEY

Everything is yours...everything around you...

(beat)

...only you don't know that cuz you're always asleep.

SHAWN

(shaking his head)

Uh-uhh...

Foley slowly pulls a long, chewed and softened, thong of raw-hide from his mouth. The boy pouts, drops his head to his knees, covers his ears with his arms.

FOLEY

See...just like now.

Shawn's head pops up, eyes blinking, trying to focus.

IN A THICKET - CLOSE ON A RABBIT SNARE

Dangling about two centimeters above the ground. PAN TO another snare, then TO a third, where Foley squats, his breathing labored, concentrating on setting the snare.

FOLEY

(to himself mainly)

You can't stop your mind from wandering...but you can keep it busy so it doesn't have time to wander. So you keep talking to it: "What you doing now, Mind? ...what you doing now?...That's right, keep working, Mind... what you doing now? Easy now... just lip it...just a hair...there."

WIDEN to include Shawn, bent over attentively, his breathing shallow. Foley stands with the help of his walking-stick.

FOLEY

Now give me some of them nuts...
I got another idea.

CLOSE ON A BURROW'S ENTRANCE

A number of nuts have been cracked and spread before a wombat's hole. In the shadows near the entrance, the vague outline of the animal nibbling greedily on the nutmeat, edging closer. TILT UP: Foley sits poised on his haunches, peering down, the spear ready on his shoulder. Slowly the spear rises into cocked position. NOW!...But as he throws, a searing pain slashes across his chest. Foley twists, falls back, unable to follow through. The spear sticks into the ground, just missing the animal.

ON SCENE

The spear vibrates by the burrow. Foley is hunched up, pushing off the pain. He raises his head, a genuine look of concern on his face. He turns slowly toward Shawn. Shawn slowly approaches. Concern written all over his face, too. Shawn stands before the entrance, one hand resting on the spear. He watches quietly as Foley shuffles away in pain.

ON THE BURROW ENTRANCE

The spear gone, the wombat is seen again edging closer, nibbling.

AT THE CAMPSITE

Foley rubs some herbs between his hands, drops them into the steaming pot. Stirs, mumbles.

THE BURROW

The animal edges out, nibbles, but suddenly darts back inside. TILT UP TO Shawn, spear poised. He lets out the breath he's been holding, whimpers, and immediately begins scratching himself fiercely near his collarbone. With one hand he pulls away his shirt and jacket, exposing his shoulder. With his other he reaches up and touches something. His finger flicks at something small and black. He panics.

SHAWN

It's stuck in me!...ugk!!!

Evinced fear and disgust, he slowly pulls at a fat, blood-filled tick. The skin stretches...until it breaks loose. He instantly drops it, stomps it.

SHAWN

Die!...DIE!...D I E ! !

A cacophony of squawking, screaming GOBBLES slices through the still air. Shawn looks off.

AT THE CAMPFIRE

Foley drops the pot of herb tea, grabs up a firebrand, and runs off as fast as he can toward the sound.

ON SHAWN

Taking a few steps to gain ground. He drops his jaw.

A HILLOCK

Foley rises up into view, pumping uphill with great effort. Without stopping, he lets out a loud war-cry and brandishes the smoking stick. PAN WITH HIM until WE SEE what he is charging: a large tiger cat in a clearing has brought down a mallee fowl. Startled, the tiger cat drops its catch and snarls. But it instantly snaps the large bird up again and bounds away gracefully into the trees. Foiled, Foley gives up the chase and glances off. He SEES, in the distance, that Shawn is watching. Wheezing badly, Foley heads back to camp. Shawn runs up, carrying the spear. Foley doesn't look at him.

FOLEY

A man will die eating nothing but rabbit. Gotta have fat. That's why I wanted that wombat. If you can recognize the cravin', you'll know what your body wants. What do you think those little white things were in the vegetables I cooked yesterday? Rice? Where am I going to get rice? It was almost pure fat.

SHAWN

Where did you get it?

FOLEY

Under a log.

SHAWN

What was it?

FOLEY

Maggots...

CAMPSITE

The two squat around the fire, poking the coals.

FOLEY

'Course a rabbit'll do in a pinch...
and that bird would've been just fine.
Why...the crop of game birds and the
stomach of grazing animals...any fool
knows is a fine salad, dressing and
all...don't need to add a thing...
maybe a little salt, or gall juice.
I see you walked off with my stick.

SHAWN

Uh-uh...I was...I was hunting.

FOLEY

D'ya git something?

SHAWN

Uh-uh...I had a tick.

FOLEY

D'ya git it out?

SHAWN

Yeah.

FOLEY

D'ya eat it?

Shawn shakes his head.

FOLEY

Why not?...it was eating you.

Shawn drops his head. He SEES a large beetle crawling on the ground by his side. His finger goes out to touch the insect... but he can't do it. A shiver of disgust runs up his spine. He back-hands the bug away.

A TALL GUM - SUNDOWN

A large, glider possum runs up the trunk. CRANE UP with it as it moves out on a limb near the top, halved by the setting sun. It chatters at something...perhaps at the setting sun. It steps out on a limb...and leaps, flies, glides away.

THE CAMPFIRE

Shawn looks at Foley's leafy lean-to. He notices some extra sticks and boughs that Foley cut, but didn't use. Shawn looks off, hears nothing, then picks up two sticks. He goes to the other side of the fire and starts building his own lean-to.

LATER - ON SCENE

Foley enters carrying a few sun-bleached kangaroo bones. Frustrated, Shawn tries to adjust the last boughs of his crude but recognizable lean-to. Foley notices this as he sits down to work on something he's making with the bones.

ON SHAWN - NIGHT

On his haunches, the fire flickering in his face.

FOLEY (o.s.)

Man out here got time to think about only one thing...and that's staying alive. When he's not thinking about ways to stay alive, he's dying... slow but sure, he's losing ground...

WIDEN TO INCLUDE FOLEY

FOLEY (cont)

...Firewood that child brought was wetwood. Freeze our ass that way... Wait a minute! I hear something out there. Wonder what it is?

(to Shawn)

You go check on what it is.

SHAWN

(rising, taken aback)

But...

Shawn takes a few steps away from the fire.

SHAWN

It's too dark to see.

FOLEY

I know a guy who's blind...he can move through the forests at night faster than I can even with a torch... So why don't you just walk all the way around this place and see what's out there...using your ears and nose. Anyone knows that it isn't your eyes that see in the dark.

Shawn disappears cautiously into the darkness. Foley's eyes track Shawn's movements.

ON SCENE - FEW MOMENTS LATER

Shawn re-enters the firelight, grateful to be out of the darkness. Foley is cutting up a pair of buckskin pants with his knife.

SHAWN

It's a rabbit.

FOLEY

What makes you think so?

Shawn edges closer to Foley, holding his hungry stomach.

SHAWN

Rabbits don't make any noise...so
it was a rabbit.

FOLEY

You looked with your ears...and
didn't "see" anything, huh? Good.

Shawn nods. Foley nods.

FOLEY

In a few days I get to where I'm
going. There's a hot bath there
waiting for me. It's all there...
beneath the peak at the end of this
valley, beneath the great rock crag...

With his knife, Foley points off in a direction...then he stabs
it hard into his log bench. He goes to his lean-to and starts
laying out his down comforter. Desperation rises in Shawn's
face; he must act to eat! He moves stealthily to Foley's pack.
As Foley crawls into bed, he looks up...loudly:

FOLEY

You want food...Go git it!!

Shawn returns to the log next to the knife. A few sobbing
spasms tattoo themselves across his chest. Unconsciously, he
tries to pull the knife out. He can't. He begins to sway in
frustration. His hand on the knife wiggles it back and forth.
After a second, the knife pulls away from the log...like the
sword from the stone. A look of amazement in his eyes. He has
learned something. A flash: he turns around with the knife
and menacingly pokes out at Foley. But immediately Shawn stabs
the knife back into the log. On the verge of crying, he rises
and walks over to Foley's great coat.

SHAWN'S LEAN-TO

He lies on his back, the coat pulled up under his chin. The
night SOUNDS include a distant dingo howling. Shawn SEES a
large, yellow-gray spider, suspended in mid-air from the boughs
above, turning on its rope in the light of the fire. CHANGE
FOCUS to the firelit eucalyptus boughs, a few inches above.
AGAIN CHANGE FOCUS...through the boughs TO INFINITY and the
STARS above: bright ones, faint ones.

The fire reflects in the tears that fall from the corners of Shawn's eyes. Muscles in his face quiver and twitch. A squeeze of his eyes sends a flashflood of tears down his cheekbone. His breathing becomes more shallow, more erratic. He begins to cry, quietly to himself. When the crisis passes, he turns on his side and looks across at the fire, his eyes wide and filled with firelight and terrible memories. HOLD... UNTIL the night is cut right down the middle by the brief, piercingly thin SOUND of a rabbit squealing, then thrashing in the brush. Then it's quiet again. Foley's eyes start open, but he doesn't move. Shawn sits up, looks over at Foley, and sees that the old man is still asleep. Shawn rises, peering out in the direction of the sound. He strains his ears. He lifts his head and sniffs. In the moonlight, Shawn moves off slowly.

THE MOONLIT WOODS

Shawn is enthralled by a mixture of fear and curiosity as he steps cautiously through the trees. He pauses, listens. For a moment he hears that thrashing SOUND again. When it is quiet, he moves off in that direction.

He stops upon seeing something ahead...then slowly proceeds. He SEES a rabbit dangling in Foley's snare, efficiently strangled. Gingerly he approaches it. As he reaches out for it with loathing and disgust...soft, greedy, grotesque animal sounds emanate from his throat. He takes the rabbit down.

CLOSE ON THE HEAD OF A YOUNG FACE-PAINTED ABORIGINE

WIDEN. He sniffs the air, hears Shawn in the distance.

ON SHAWN

Approaching the second snare. Another rabbit. There is a twisted smile on his face now to match his sounds...as he takes the limp body of the rabbit from the snare.

ON THE ABORIGINE

Approaching. He hears Shawn not far away. His eyes dart about. He walks stealthily. His whole body is streaked in white, like a zebra.

ON SHAWN

A strange grin on his face as he returns with a rabbit in each hand. An animal sound and breaking branches brings him up short, fear mounting. He enters a clearing. A full wash of moonlight hits Shawn from behind, as he pads quickly through the low brush and fallen leaves. When he reaches the middle of the clearing, he SEES the Aborigine, stalking him in a closing circle. Shawn can barely believe what he sees. His mouth is open wide, but only short staccato sounds come out with each

breath. He looks for escape. The Abo closes the distance between them. Shawn first makes a move to run, but the Abo reflexively feints to the same side, covering. Shawn stares at the Abo, frozen. The Abo stares back. Shawn makes the short guttural sound of a cornered animal. The Abo imitates it. He SEES the eyes of the Abo glow in the moonlight...as he now glides toward him. Shawn suddenly rears back and throws one of the rabbits at the Abo. The young man reacts backwards a few steps, checking, looks out once more at Shawn, then goes to the rabbit. Shawn sees his escape...circles round the strange terrifying creature.

NEAR THE CAMPSITE

The faint light of the fire reaches out to touch the trees. Shawn enters, walking swiftly, out of breath. He puts the rabbit under his parka, heads toward the campfire.

CLOSE OF FOLEY

His breathing shallow and rapid, almost non-existent as he listens for an outcome. At the first sounds of Shawn's approach, Foley sighs once, long and deep, and lets his eyes close again. PAN UP to Shawn quietly returning to his bed. He looks once at Foley, then, adjusting the rabbit under his parka, he crawls under the coat.

Shawn grins strangely and makes even stranger sounds...grotesque, primitive satisfaction. He pretends not to hear the sounds of something moving around the camp. But Foley hears, waits, his hand on his staff. Shawn's eyelids start to droop.

LIMB OF TREE AT THE CAMPSITE - DAWN

A forest kaka alights and begins its raucous chatter. Morning SOUNDS and morning lights. It flies down to a lower limb. Jabbers. Flies down to the ground...not far from Shawn.

ON SCENE

Shawn is curled tightly in a ball on his side, sans coat, shivering. The bird hops very close to Shawn, then belts out a string of kaka expletives. Shawn starts awake and the bird flies up to the first limb. The first thing the boy becomes conscious of is the rabbit. He pulls it out from his parka. He looks at it closely, rapt, curious...strokes it once. He looks to Foley. Gone...as is the lean-to! Shawn rises, a little kinked and achey, and shuffles to Foley's spot. The ground has been wiped clean with boughs. Shawn looks but finds no footprints. Because of his unconscious panic, he fails to notice Foley's spear sticking up out of the fire's dead ashes.

SHAWN

Hello...! Hello! Hello, anywhere...!

A SERIES - OF SHAWN

Holding the rabbit by the ears. Moving rapidly in a wide circle around the campsite, looking for tracks. Sitting in a funk at the foot of a tree. In a draw nearby, trying to figure out the lay of the land...nothing. He runs off, the rabbit thumping along by his side. But it's no use; he can't figure out the right way. Now he's lost completely. He looks up. He SEES, rising out of the cold gray ashes of last night's campfire: Foley's spear! He's run in a circle! He moves quickly to the spear, reaching out timidly to touch it... take it...examine it...

SHAWN

How did I come back here...?

He walks aimlessly through the woods, talking to himself and his rabbit, trying not to pay attention to all the animals he hears or sees.

SHAWN

(mocking, hurt tone)

...get me those leaves, get me some firewood...get out of here...don't bother me...get your own...GET YOUR OWN!...What's your name?...what's your name?

(adamant)

My name is Shawn Daley!

(now sad)

I don't know where I am...

He starts to cry, but catches himself -- his emotions retreat and attack.

SHAWN

...get out of here...I don't have to...leave me alone...I don't want to...

(bending down to watch a turtle)

...take care of your feet, they're your best friends...makes me freeze...you're not nice at all...what'd I ever do to you!...I'm not asleep and I'm not going to tell my name...not my secret name...it's "god"...G-O-D...and I'm never going to tell you...You're always coughing...probably smoke too much...I'm glad you can't buy any cigarettes...you eat BUGS...you're crazy!...and mean...and I'm not going to eat the ticks I pull out!...Probably

(MORE)

just becuz the firewood was a little
 bit wet he wants to ditch me again
 ...God will punish him...but I have
 his rabbit...and it's mine now...
 pretty rabbit...did he kill you?...
 well, I won't let him eat you...
 don't worry...I have your rabbit,
 Foley Patrick Foley! And I have
 this:

(holds up spear)

And I have dry socks...see?

(gushes close to
 crying)

You BASTARD!! And I washed my
 underwear, too...and you can just
 wash your own...and you stink,
 too...you smell...take a bath...
 a hot bath until you drown...How
 can you take a hot bath out here?
 Under the crack. No, the Crag.
 At the end of the valley...?

He runs around, trying to gain a view of the valley. Looks up.

SHAWN

(to his rabbit)

You stay here...don't worry...I'll
 be right back.

Shawn wedges the rabbit between two branches. At first he's
 afraid...but he works up some courage and starts climbing a
 tree...almost with a vengeance. Determination and urgency
 to see across the valley mix with fear of the height. Up and
 up...

THE VALLEY - LONG SHOT

For a moment, WE SEE Foley disappearing into some trees about
 400 meters away. WIDEN and CHANGE FOCUS to include Shawn climb-
 ing up, into FRAME...looking out, tenaciously holding on. He
 looks around. He gasps. CHANGE FOCUS AGAIN: in the distance,
 rising up in front of the mountains at the end of the valley:
 an enormous rock crag!

SHAWN

(excited)

Yeah...that's where you're going...
 you can't fool me. It's just one
 big valley...and there's a big tree
 on the way...I can find that...and
 from there it's in...

(pointing again)

...that direction.

Constantly trying to hold his hand out in the right direction,
 Shawn starts to climb down.

SHAWN

It's just past that open space...
over that hill...and the sun is
there...

He doesn't realize how agile he is in descending.

ON SHAWN

Moving swiftly through the trees and brush...pointing his spear
out in front of him from time to time. And he still carries
the rabbit thumping by his side.

SHAWN

He's just like Stevie's big
brother...always trying to ditch
us...but we always find him...
(to the rabbit)
Don't worry...he's not going to
eat you...

Not far ahead, a (fox) is stalking something. But Shawn's arrival
scares the predator away. Just behind a tree, he finds a
fledgling (red-wing blackbird) on the ground, trying to fly.

SHAWN

Musta fallen out of its nest.
That fox almost got you, huh?

He picks up the bird, looks around. PEEPING somewhere above in
scrubby tree. He SEES the nest. Flitting about nervously are
the adult (red-wings). Shawn takes out the painted medicine
bag and gently slips the little bird into it, the thong closed,
hangs the bag from his mouth, and now without a second thought,
climbs the tree.

UP IN THE TREE

Shawn places the bird carefully back into its nest, smiles. As
he descends, he sets his bearings again, but also finds an old
bird's nest on another limb. As he puts it into the bag, he
almost falls.

LOOKING DOWN A DRAW ABOVE A CREEKBED

Shawn walks along a ledge on the rim, pausing to climb up on a
boulder and sight the crag again. The rabbit is still with
him. He veers off the ledge and heads down into the deep
draw, nodding confidently to himself. He stops at a stream;
there is a sheer drop and only a deadfall log spans the chasm.
He stares at the thin bridge...then abruptly stands up on the
log on which he was sitting. Using the spear as a balance pole,
he walks slowly from one end to the other...then back, this
time more quickly, and with greater confidence. He smiles at

his cleverness. He hops off the log, then hops back on and almost runs the length and back. Now, he takes a deep breath and crosses the chasm, skipping once joyfully as he touches down on the other side.

ON THE TRAIL

Shawn unconsciously feeds on some berries he's found.

SHAWN

...And when it's dark and he's sleeping, I'm going to take his knife away...and maybe his stone that sparks fire, too.

(to the rabbit)

Won't we?...and then, he'll be cold and he'll freeze.

ON FOLEY'S FOOTPRINTS

Clear depressions lead across a soft, grassy bog...up into a gently rising, green alpine vale. Off to the left: "The Stairway of the Giants," steep granite walls that rise up in chunky terraces. Straight ahead: the Crag. PAN TO THE RIGHT where Foley stands, chest heaving, looking at the Crag. He takes off his pack, turning slowly to look behind...

He finishes cutting and trimming another walking stick, dons his pack, looks back again, and continues on into the vale... head bowed, leaning heavily on his staff.

ALPINE VALE

Foley slowly makes for higher ground, stops for a breather, checking the route fore and aft. He is about to continue on when he SEES a pack of dingos exiting the tree-line at the upper end of the meadow. The dogs descend, occasionally stopping to nose the air. Decision time...as Foley watches them and considers the routes. He looks up at the rising rock faces to his left. He shakes his head, then turns and retreats back downhill, but this time hugging the cliffs more closely.

ON THE DINGOS

Coming slowly down the middle of the meadow...splashing across a winding stream...stopping to smell the uphill breezes. For a moment it seems as if they've picked up Foley's scent, but then they veer off to follow the fall-line of the meadow again.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE VALE

Shawn excitedly finds Foley's trail across the bog.

IN THE VALE - INTERCUT SHAWN AND THE DINGOS

Converging on each other...one heading up, the other down.

BOTTOM OF GIANT'S STAIRWAY

Having reached a vantage point atop a steep talus below the giant steps and switch-backs above, Foley SEES the dingos disappearing behind a landswell...Foley heaves a great sigh and ponders...suddenly, his eyes narrow and he peers hard down through the trees towards the bog. He SEES Shawn, plodding along...on a collision course with the pack. His eyes dart back and forth between the dogs and the child...his gaze so piercingly intense as to suggest telepathic warning. Now, though Foley's snarling lip argues against it, he raises his cupped hand to holler. But as the first aspirated sound leaves his throat, he breaks out coughing hellishly. He tries again too soon...and doubles up in pain. He stares down at the boy; he glowers with fire and intent in his eyes....

ON SHAWN - IN THE VALE

Everything about him has become more alert now...he notices things...even unconsciously sniffs the air. He spear-sights ahead along Foley's trail and snorts up a cocky smile. He looks around, then ahead...then slowly his gaze rotates over and up...to the foot of the Giant's Stairway. He sees Foley. Shawn is angry. He ducks down in the contours of the rolling vale to hide himself from the old man's eyes.

ON FOLEY

The pain subsides and he looks for the boy.

FOLEY

Damn!!...

The boy is gone, but the dogs have become excited, sniffing. They head off quickly toward the spot Foley last saw Shawn. Foley takes off his hat, wiping the hatband with his elbow.

FOLEY

(loudly)

We're all just on our own...
ever' blamed one of us!

Shawn (o.s.)

You can't fool me!

Foley whips around, looks down.

AT THE FOOT OF THE TALUS

Shawn is out of breath, a hurt expression on his face. WIDEN TO INCLUDE Foley turning away, resuming his climb. Still carrying the rabbit and spear, Shawn follows.

SHAWN

How come you're always trying
to get away?

FOLEY

You got your life to lead...I
got mine.

Shawn makes it to the top of the talus and stops.

SHAWN

I don't like you.

FOLEY

Good.

SHAWN

I'm going to follow you out
of here...until I find someone
to help me look for my mother
and father.

Foley stops on a high switchback, looks down.

FOLEY

Ain't no one to help you...never
was, never will be...only yourself.

SHAWN

Then I'm going back...and I'm
taking this rabbit with me, too.

FOLEY

No, I don't think you will...
look behind you.

Shawn whipping around. He SEES the pack coming out of the brush
25 meters away sniffing the ground, yelping out their threats.
Shawn cries out, backpedals, wheels and starts to climb. For
a split second he is unable to advance because both hands are
full. Decision: he throws away the spear. Then, with one
hand, he claws his way up into the rocks. But he misses the
switchback trail.

FOLEY (o.s.)

No that way! Up this way!

But Shawn can't hear, he can only climb!...The dingos snap at
his heels and scramble and slip on the jagged rocks.

THE CLIMB

Foley snorts, shakes his head, continues to plod up the lazy
(but for him, grueling) traverses. Shawn find chinks and cre-
vices, slots and fissures, cracks and ledges. And still, he

clings to that poor rabbit. When the going gets rough, he stuffs it inside his shirt. The sound of the dogs and an occasional glimpse keep him scrambling. Shawn is angling away from the switchback trail. Soon there's an inward curving vertical face that separates him from the trail. The only way up now, is up...and up gets steeper. Shawn crawls up a crevice, sometimes having to use his back to chimney up.

SHAWN

HEY...!
 (no response)
 H E Y !!

FOLEY (o.s.)

(puffing)
 Yeah...?

SHAWN

Where are you?
 (no response)
 I don't know which way to go!
 (no response)
 HEY!!!...
 (under his breath)
 Dammit.

FOLEY (o.s.)

There's only one way to go...

Shawn slides out of the crevice onto a ledge. He looks down. Wrong. He hugs the wall...30 meters straight up and down! He changes cheeks to look back the way he's come...Foley can see him, as he stands out across from him, leaning on his staff.

FOLEY

Well...climb!

SHAWN

WHICH WAY?!

Foley turns, shaking his head, trudges on up the grade. Shawn sucks in choppy little breaths as he edges out the ledge a bit further. With his trailing hand, he reaches up and grabs a knob...but it's rotten and pulls out. The rocks fall and hit the ledge behind him, taking out part of the ledge. He cries out...but when one of his calves begins to vibrate, the experience is so new and so terrible that he freezes--all but his calf. Up is out of the question, so he moves a few inches further along the ledge. But the progress is stopped when his belly refuses to round a protruding rock: it's the rabbit getting in the way. Foley now 20 meters to the side and a bit higher than Shawn, stops to look from the next switchback.

FOLEY

Get rid of it.

Shawn shakes his head adamantly, no. Slowly he reaches down with his hand and pushes the bulge around until it is almost at his back. Then he rests his cheek against the wall again... Time flows...and Shawn goes nowhere.

FOLEY (o.s.)

(booming)

WELL?

Shawn again has to change cheeks. But Foley is not to be seen.

FOLEY (o.s.)

You comin' or not?

Shawn looks back and forth, slowly, carefully...then up. He SEES the nose, the eyes, the hat and the sky above...that's all. Foley is 20 meters above him, looking down...Foley SEES that much of Shawn...and the rocks and dingos below. Shawn hugs the wall again.

SHAWN

Help me...HELP ME!

FOLEY (o.s.)

...Like I said...You gonna stay down there all day?

SHAWN

I can't.

FOLEY

You what?

SHAWN

I CAN'T!

FOLEY

You mean, you won't.

Shawn starts to cry softly to himself.

FOLEY

Then go on back, cuz I sure as hell don't need you.

SHAWN

I CAN'T...besides, those animals will kill me...

FOLEY

Yeah...they might eat ya up...and then poop ya out in cute piles flowers might grow from, but then that doesn't matter. What does matter is that rabbit. I got a fire going, 'n if you get up here, I'll cook it.

SHAWN

It's mine.

FOLEY

Alright...I'll give ya a piece.

SHAWN

I want half!

FOLEY

Alright, but I give ya only a few minutes...if you ain't up here, I piss on the fire and go!

But Foley has no fire going...he's just sucking on his teeth, anxious to move on. Shawn's squeezing his eyes tight, breathing hard, building up courage. His leading hand reaches down and scrapes loose dirt from a possible foothold. He raises his left foot and tests the toe-hold.

FOLEY (o.s.)

Trust your legs...strongest muscle... put the power to it.

Shawn does so. Up and up, muscles straining, slowly rising... fingers crawling up ahead, feeling for a lip, an edge, anything. And up...amazement in his face that he hasn't fallen.

SHAWN

It's my rabbit...it's my rabbit...

FOLEY (o.s.)

'Course, if you wanna stay down there and cuss at the mountain, that's okay, too, But it's a pretty good mountain, and doesn't have a thing against you. You're the one what's making a nightmare of it. Fact is, it's all nothing but a dream...so push hard...and before long you'll wake up...and find yourself right here...next to the fire...

Nub by knob, the pitch lays back, as Shawn climbs. The wind rises too, whistles in his ears. Shawn's confidence grows... He only slips once...until he makes another ledge which he can traverse to another fairly easy crack.

ON FOLEY

Foley sits on his pack, on a wide ledge overlooking a magnificent vista. Then he HEARS movement off to one side. But doesn't move...First a hand, then a head...it's Shawn crawling up out of the crack onto the ledge. He struggles up, his breath shuddering. He looks around, slowly dragging his way to Foley.

SHAWN

There's no fire.

Foley looks out, but not at Shawn. He nods.

FOLEY

I lied. Come on...bring that rabbit. We'll go make a fire... and you'll get the best piece, I s'pose.

(standing)

...still a dream though...

(louder, to the boy)

I said, it's still a dream! We're just having the same dream, that's all.

Wobbly on his feet, Shawn reaches in to pull out the rabbit. As he does so, the painted leather bag falls to the ground. Foley picks it up...looks at it real hard. Shawn holds the rabbit out to Foley. They exchange gifts.

MIDDAY CAMPFIRE

Shawn is voraciously tearing away the meat from a rabbit bone. Foley sits on a log by the fire, not much interest in eating. He picks up the case-skinned rabbit-pelt (turned inside-out and pulled over a bent and springy branch) pulls fatty membrane off the inside of the skin. Shawn, his jaws tired of chewy rabbit, comes over to stand by Foley. The old man puts the pelt down... cuts off a piece of the rabbit's intestines. On the log next to him, Foley cuts lengthwise strips from the gut: he's making sinew.

SHAWN

I'm scared those animals' gonna follow us up here...don't you think?

FOLEY

(flatly)

Back off! You got worries about those dingos, go do something about it...go stand guard...git yourself a spot upwind 'n see if you can smell them...

Shawn turns away, dejected, but thoughtful.

FOLEY (cont)

...close your eyes...picture them... magnificent beasts...It don't take two of us to make sinew out of this belly-gut.

Shawn turns his head back and forth, sniffing in the wind, wanders away. Foley's questioning eyes follow the boy off.

FOLEY

You take care of your needs and I'll take care of mine!

SHAWN

I will!! And I'll tell you something else...

(returning)

...I don't like rabbit anymore... I want something else.

FOLEY

Says who?

SHAWN

Says me!

FOLEY

Nope...says your stomach. It's asking for more fat...rabbit doesn't have much fat...told you that!

At the snap of a twig, Shawn whips his head around, alert... but it's nothing.

FOLEY (cont)

I herded sheep in Wyoming one year. Met a man...last of the mountain-men, maybe. He said "humpmeat"... that's what used to supply the fat... buffer and griz...humpmeat. Damn few of them creatures around anymore.

SHAWN
(keeping his distance)
How come?

FOLEY
Been hunted down...crowded out,
made into coats, put in zoos, or
laughed right out of town...unloved
and alone...

Foley starts to laugh, and it builds into a wild and crazy noise
that frightens the boy.

FOLEY (cont)
(crazily)
...this is the twentieth century...
this is the twentieth century...
I'm living in the past...

He stops abruptly in the middle of this outburst...stone-cold
sober.

FOLEY (cont)
Yeah. The buffalo's gone...and
the grizzly's going.

SHAWN
My mother said there was a grizzly
last year that killed somebody.

FOLEY
He was ornery...because he was
lonely.

ON THE TRAIL - MOVING SHOT

Foley trudges painfully uphill through the gums, a faraway look
in his eyes. He whips his head around, SEES Shawn moving up
the slope on a parallel path about a hundred meters away.

A PROMONTORY - BLUE AND BILLOW-CLOUDED SKY BEHIND

Foley stands out on the point, a breeze blowing. He heaves a
sigh, walks back. Ten meters away, Shawn sits on a log, poking
curiously at the huge stemless mushroom that grows out the
stump-end. Foley starts to sit down right next to Shawn. The
boy jumps in fear out of the way.

SHAWN
What's that for?

He points to a kangaroo bone Foley's been carving on. Foley
only grunts. As he carves a notch into one end of the bone,
the chest-pain comes again.

SHAWN
(pointing to his chest)
How come you're always hurting?

FOLEY
Because I smoked too much when I
was young.

SHAWN
I thought so.

FOLEY
And because when I was a kid,
I thought it was alright to be
stubborn and dumb.

SHAWN
You have any kids?
(no response)
You wanna know how I found you
back there?
(no response)
I remembered the Crag and I climbed
a tree...How come you left so many
footprints? That's dumb...

Foley looks hard at Shawn now...then softens.

FOLEY
Maybe I'm growing old.

SHAWN
How come?

FOLEY
Like I said, if you forget to
ask your mind what it's thinking
about, you grow old.

SHAWN
And get white hair?

FOLEY
Uh-huh.

SHAWN
My daddy had three white...hairs
but mommy...pulled them out.

Foley gets up, walks off. Shawn loses himself in his thoughts.
Then he jumps up and looks off in the direction they've come...
searching, yearning. He shouts after Foley:

SHAWN

Wait! We gotta go back! My mommy
and daddy are back there. We gotta
save them...they're just lost...my
daddy has white hairs, too...

CUT TO:

PANORAMIC VIEW

Shawn looks out at it, wistful, sad, nervous. He turns around.
Foley is standing before a natural corridor formed by the trees
and the lay of the land.

SHAWN

I can't see the Crag anymore.

FOLEY

You're not only asleep...you're
blind.

Foley points with his thumb up and over his shoulder. Shawn
looks up. Awe fills his face, SEES, over the tops of the trees
...the huge Crag, towering up 400 meters above them. Foley
slowly moves up the corridor, bent over, looking closely at
the ground as he goes.

SHAWN

What are you looking for?

FOLEY

For sign.

SHAWN

What sign?

FOLEY

Sign...spoor, tracks, droppings.
Animals' like people: you can tell
a lot about them by what they leave
behind... If you're hungry enough,
you look for sign.

AT THE UPPER END OF THE NATURAL CORRIDOR

Foley exits. Although most of the valley can be seen behind
and below them, they are in an area of large exposed granite
boulders and (birch) trees. Shawn scampers up with something in
hand.

SHAWN

What's this?

FOLEY

Roo sign.

LONG ON Shawn and Foley: two specks of color on a wide plateau, a false ridge that cuts across the entire valley.

SHAWN

Looks like large rabbit poop to me.

They are moving through the gathering trees.

SHAWN

Are we going to get there today?

FOLEY

Tomorrow.

SHAWN

How come?

FOLEY

I got something to do here that I swore I'd never do down the other side.

SHAWN

How come?

FOLEY

Look here, little man...you're here because you decided to tag along...and decisions are like promises. You break your promises?
(on Shawn's negative)
...Well, neither do I. Now back off.

IN A GLADE

Foley is rigging a double-deadfall. Shawn stays out of Foley's way, but he hovers about, looking on intensely. Using the thin, nylon line that he takes from his bag of "possibles," Foley hoists the second log into place above the narrow path and braces it temporarily with another.

FOLEY

(to himself)

Raising the logs is hard, but setting the trigger is the bitch.

AT THEIR CAMPSITE - LATER

Foley squats by the fire, arranging the burning wood. He checks the wind's direction by the smoke. He SEES Shawn about 150 yards away...through trees, past jutting rocks...wandering about at the site of the rigged dead-fall.

FOLEY

Hey! You little devil...Get
out of there!

Shawn looks up. Foley motions him away, angrily.

FOLEY

For cryin'...he's going to smell that
place up!

ON SCENE - MID-AFTERNOON

Shawn stands before Foley, holding out his hands filled with various greens. Foley is picking out the ones that are good, discarding the ones that aren't.

SHAWN

...But you said that one was good.

FOLEY

I never told you anything! What
you learn, you learn on your own.
If you're right, you live. If
you're wrong, you die. Either way
it's up to you...

SHAWN

What about those two fish you just
caught?

FOLEY

I'll tell you later....

ON SCENE - LATE AFTERNOON

They each have a pile of berries, seeds, tubers and nuts before them. Occasionally, they reach over and pull out a glop of potherbs from the steaming pot between them.

SHAWN

How come we gotta eat this stuff...
when you had two fish all the time?

FOLEY

All I could get was two...and we're
not eatin' those. But you can eat
whatever you catch! Now you keep
your voice, hear?

Foley looks up into the sky...then off down toward the dead-fall trap.

ON SCENE - SUNDOWN

Foley is quietly working on his kangaroo-bone and buckskin contraption. Shawn is at the end of an unsuccessful attempt to

make fire with Foley's flint and steel. He throws the striker down in frustration.

SHAWN
What are you making?

FOLEY
Christmas presents.

SHAWN
Ha! I don't believe you. You're crazy...you escaped.

FOLEY
I what?

SHAWN
You escaped from a...a place where all the crazy people go.

FOLEY
Humpf....

NIGHT

Shawn fixes up his own lean-to. He looks across the dying fire at Foley, straightens up, and, tired of sneaking, stomps over to Foley's coat, taking it boldly.

SHAWN
I know you're not going to take me home.

FOLEY
(half-asleep)
This is home.

SHAWN
(more to himself)
Crazy escape-man.

IN ON Foley...Shawn's last words striking some chord. Foley HEARS (the silky voice of a mature woman):

MOLLY ANN (v.o.)
You're crazy, Foley...but I love you...

CUT TO:

CAMPSITE - DAWN

MOLLY ANN (v.o.)
Goodbye, Patrick...say hello to your valley for me.

Foley is in his bedroll, staring straight up into the sky... his eyes tracking something. Finally they close and, over the end of a long, mortal exhale, the loud, falling SCREAM of the eagle IS HEARD. A LONG BEAT. Then, C R A S H !! -- the deadfall trap! And Foley is bounding up, albeit in pain, and reaching for his footgear. Shawn wakens, sits up quickly and is immediately afraid. Without saying a word, and without knowing why, he pulls on his boots. Scooping up his knife and cooking pot, Foley heads off quickly downhill towards the deadfall trap. Shawn scuttles after him, tripping on his shoelaces.

AT THE DEADFALL SITE

Foley crashes through, fire in his eyes.

FOLEY

A wallaby...glad it wasn't any bigger. Don't want what we can't use.

Shawn comes up, shivering...his eyes go wide.

SHAWN

Wow...we got one.

The small roo lies dead of a broken back beneath the criss-crossed fallen logs. Foley kneels by the head. He places the pot under the animal's neck...brings the knife around....

FOLEY

(softly)

It was necessary...thank you.

LONG SHOT - IN SILHOUETTE

Like an old Indian initiating his grandson in the ways of the forest, Foley stands holding the pot out reverentially before him over the wallaby. He takes a drink of the blood. He slowly turns to the boy, extends the pot to him. He recoils a step...then tentatively reaches out for it. He looks from the pot to Foley and back again...then slowly draws the pot to his lips.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE ON SHAWN

Wide-eyed, almost mesmerized. WIDEN as he watches Foley skin out the animal, tied up between two trees. As Shawn's face reacts to the process, his look wanders off for a moment.

SHAWN

Hey! One of the fish is gone...how
come you put them down here?

The remaining one lies on a bed of leaves on a rock.

FOLEY

We needed meat. I didn't want
anybody warning the wallaby about
the deadfall trap. Those fish
are for that eagle up there.

Both of them look up into the sky. They SEE an eagle soaring
and circling.

FOLEY (o.s.)

See, the eagle is a friend of the
kangaroo...and this tells him that
I asked the roo's permission before
I did this...

Shawn looks back and forth between Foley and the sky.

FOLEY (cont)

...otherwise he would have told the
roo to go the other way...Maybe
it's just an Aborigine superstition...
but if it is, then why is that eagle
up there just when I decide I have
to take down a kangaroo. Huh?

(beat)

Here...hold my breakfast.

He hands Shawn the heart and liver. He backs up, sort of
repulsed...stumbles, falls backward, but doesn't let the organs
touch the ground.

CAMPSITE - MID MORNING

Foley is setting out the last of the sliced flesh to be jerked
in the sun. Shawn wolfs down a piece of roasted heart-meat,
then eyes the meat still cooking.

SHAWN

Why do we have to eat the heart
first?

FOLEY

Because you don't have to air or
age that meat...works so hard it's
already a thousand years old.

Shawn circles the meat, wanting more. Foley growls to keep the
boy at bay.

SHAWN

You have any children?

FOLEY

What's that have to do with anything? Haven't you already asked me that?

Abruptly Shawn's attitude changes...he retracts his hand, glowers.

SHAWN

You don't!...because you're too mean!

FOLEY

It's okay to be mean.

SHAWN

(going interior again)

You're crazy...just a crazy-escape-man.

Foley immediately loses his temper: the nearest object to throw is a hunk of meat. It hits the boy hard on the back. The child immediately pounces on the meat, greedily.

FOLEY

G'wan...I got better things to do than talk useless to you. Today my meat dries...and I rest...and you, you want anything else to eat, you go find it. Nobody dies out here of hunger...nobody! They die because they're asleep!

A SERIES

NOON -- Shawn walking in the woods, trying to imitate Foley's techniques of awareness. AFTERNOON -- Foley sleeping with his kangaroo "contraptions" on his lap. NIGHT -- Shawn sitting alert by a fire, while Foley prepares for the night.

CAMPSITE - PREDAWN

On Foley: asleep. Foley snaps into full-awake! He sits up, looks around. He SEES...nothing out of the ordinary. Shawn is totally covered with his coat...Foley looks up into the lightening sky. Shrugging off his concern, he quietly rises, dresses. Foley ties the rolled up bedding to the heavily loaded backpack. He takes a step toward Shawn for the coat, but changes his mind. He swings the pack on and starts to leave, but a SOUND behind him makes him wheel and face it. It's Shawn...trying to return to his decoy bed unnoticed. He's licking his fingers...there's blood on his face and hands.

FOLEY

Down with the carcass and the other scavengers, eh? Good...you're one of the unsung heroes of the forest.

Foley adjusts his pack, using a tumpline over his forehead to support the additional weight.

SHAWN

Aren't you gonna take your coat?

FOLEY

You use it...you carry it.

At the foot of a steep, narrow defile, the old man and boy begin their climb. There's a high-pitched stoney echo to their footsteps.

IN THE DEFILE

Brilliantly colored rocks, twisted shrubs, stunted trees. Foley is sweating, busting a gut under his load.

SHAWN

...If you're not leaving this valley, how come you're climbing out of it?

FOLEY

I'm not. It's a false-wall...it's a valley within a valley...it isn't easy to find or get into...more like a plateau...far-away and lost to the rest of the world. Never been put on a map...except once...a long time ago...but that was just a local logging map.

(beat)

Maybe 40 years ago...I made that map.

SHAWN

That's the spot...that's the place we were going...my Daddy had an old map...said it was the farthest spot...

Foley pays no attention. He stops to adjust his load, but doing so almost causes the tumpline to pull him over backwards.

SHAWN

Let's rest...can't we?

But Foley ignores him, struggling under the weight.

FOLEY

No, there isn't...stopping. Gonna make it...gotta make it...you, too, if you aren't a coward...

NEAR THE RIDGE AT THE TOP OF THE DEFILE

FOLEY

...gotta make the promise...

It's clear he's in constant pain now.

AT THE RIDGE

Foley gains a view of the plateau beyond...but only for a second. An attack of pain hits him and he pitches to his knees. Shawn makes the ridge and instinctively runs to offer aid. But Foley doesn't want any help. He wants the view and fights like crazy to see past the shrubs. He tries to poke the boy away with his staff, so that as he stands, he slips...and falls forward. The weight of the pack shifts, unbalancing Foley completely. He tumbles forward wildly down the steep slope. Foley comes to rest some ten meters down...half-unconscious, bloody contusions on hands and face and head. He pushes away the boy who only wants to help, tries to rise but cannot.

FOLEY

You're right...I am crazy...It's over
...I can't even stand up. You're on
your...ow...OW! Godammit, something's
poking me...We aren't going anywhere.

SHAWN

But where are we going?

FOLEY

It wasn't far.

SHAWN

But where?! Where!!!???

FOLEY

(a pained whisper)
Right...behind you.

Shawn turns around. Amazement floods his face. He SEES a shallow valley, a miniature version of the Serengetti Plain! Meadows, stands of different trees, streams, ponds, and animals of all kinds in profusion! Stone walls marking off plots of land once farmed. Both of them now just stare out and relate to this incredible place. An orange and green light suffuses the air and fills their faces. In spite of everything, they smile.

FOLEY

Can you make it? Then I can make
it...who said I couldn't?...Just
give me a second.

Shawn anxiously nods his head...glad, hopeful. He looks out again over the plain.

ON SCENE

Foley is somewhat rested, but he's shaky and his eyes move as if he had a splitting headache. He closes his pack, then picks up a hunk of the wallaby meat. He cuts it in two, hands Shawn a piece, and slowly begins to chew his own, though without much appetite. Shawn attacks his piece voraciously.

DESCENDING TO THE PLAIN

Shawn moves awkwardly with the coat. Foley relies heavily on his walking stick.

MANY LITTLE PONDS

Dot the area they now pass slowly through. Some of them are hot pools with volcanic steam bubbling up, swirling with mists that disappear in the breeze. Foley knows exactly where he's going. Shawn follows in a trance.

BUBBLING MUD HOLES

Abound everywhere. Shawn is frightened momentarily by a huge "mwooping" mud-explosion that takes him by surprise from behind.

OUTCROPPING OF ROCKS, SCATTERED LEAFY TREES

The two appear from behind the rocks and immediately send clouds of birds up into the air.

SHAWN

Where are we?

FOLEY

(pointing)

Right through those trees...that's where I'm going. This is where I've been going all along. Sometimes I knew it, sometimes I'd forget. This is where I started.

They move toward the stand of trees.

EXITING TREES - INTO A LUXURIOUS GLADE

Paradise. A sandy-bottom creek runs through it...animals abound, unafraid. Foley lays out their campsite next to the remains of what once was a stone cabin. While Shawn explores the immediate area, Foley just stands there, oblivious to pain and bruises, taking it all in. Then, a LOUD explosive chatter

of animals. Standing on a rise, Shawn looks out...then runs back frightened. Foley is smiling. Shawn's head is moving in little jerks, his eyes flashing...his sensory input is phenomenal.

SHAWN

(softly)

What is this place?

FOLEY

Look around you, boy, don't you see? This is a dream, too. This is the beginning and the end. This is where the world started... right here. This is where we all came from.

Shawn is feeling very small...enthralled. Foley slowly starts walking.

SHAWN

Can we go now?

FOLEY

(in a world of his own)

I wonder if I could start believing in the wee folk again...coming here? Do you know what a leprechaun is?

Shawn is swept away inside by a sensorial whirlwind. He nods his head "yes", but says, tentatively:

SHAWN

No-o-oo...

FOLEY

Doesn't matter!...they exist in many places...go by a different name... dress up different...speak a different language...but it's all the same. They live behind tiny windows that you and I can't see...but that always look out onto beautiful places... wherever there's harmony. Don't you feel it? They take care of this valley. I could sense them...just give me some time...

(reflects)

...which is something we don't got... 'cause we got things to do.

(thin smile)

But they can wait.

(to Shawn, ecstatically)

Dammit, kid, they can just wait forever!

SHAWN

But what kind of a place is this?
Tell me.

FOLEY

It's a magic place. My father brought me here. I was about your age. Just as young and green as the grass. I thought this place was where all the heroes in the world came...just to walk with each other, quietly, when they had to get away. And I lived here. Papa sometimes told me stories, I mean, the ones that change a man---he told me those here. I never went to school. This was my school. He said he could teach me more here in one week than...

He looks over at the boy. Shawn is going interior fast; there are tears welling up fast.

SHAWN

My daddy...he...where?...

FOLEY

My daddy and momma and I lived here until I was a young man, full of angry apples.

SHAWN

...and mommy...

FOLEY

Yeah. When I left, I left alone, too. I swore I'd never return. I swore...but that's not what I swore. No.

Foley stops, looks down...Shawn is touching Foley's leg, for comfort.

FOLEY

But...but it's okay... 's okay, don't you see...?

A SALIENT OF LAND - LATER

Projecting into a small body of water. Foley and Shawn walk with staffs. After awhile, Foley suddenly grabs himself at the bottom of his rib cage...falls to his knees, crippled by pain. Shawn is frightened; he gasps. WIDEN. All around them a myriad

of waterfowl break for the air...squawking, flapping, rising... Foley shuffles back toward his pack. Without his staff, it would be impossible. His face alternates between expressions of worry and pain...and stoic nobility. The noise of the birds, the fleeting shadows they cast, make Shawn tuck and cover his head as he follows.

CAMPSITE

Foley rises with extreme difficulty from the campfire he's just made, but hasn't lit. In his hand, a flat rock the size of a ping-pong paddle. Shawn approaches, carrying firewood. The grim look of hunger in his face. He glances up at Foley, who is digging a hole in the ground with the flat stone a few meters away. Shawn drops his load and goes to Foley.

SHAWN

How long do we have to stay here?

Foley can't answer right away.

FOLEY

Not long.

SHAWN

Whatcha doing?

FOLEY

Things we don't need anymore,
we bury.

Foley digs. Shawn takes a few steps away...wheels:

SHAWN

I'm hungry...

Foley is lost in his digging.

SHAWN (cont)

...And I want some of the meat.
I don't wanna eat...plants. I
want meat...I...I need...protein!

Foley tries to frown...but a smile keeps getting in the way.

FOLEY

An animal finds what it has to eat.
If it's plants...you'll eat those.

SHAWN

You're not gonna give me any of
the meat?

Foley looks up, and shakes his head slowly, no.

SHAWN
 (hissing through
 bared teeth)
 Ga-a-a-a-a!

He storms away...in the direction of Foley's pack. As his hands near the supplies, Foley looks up:

FOLEY
 Ptshaw-w-w-w! Find your own!

Shawn's hands recoil from the bag as if hot. SERIES OF INTERCUTS: Shawn and Foley exchanging unintelligible animal sounds! Shawn runs away, pouting, mad, hurt. Foley opens his pack and starts to sort through its contents.

AT THE CREEK

In the sandy-bottomed shallows, a (raccoon) is dodging back and forth, trying to corner a fish. Swiftly blocking the fish's escape, the animal swipes out and beaches his next meal. INCLUDE Shawn taking all this in. Then, he walks a few meters to where the sandy bottom meets a rock bottom. A long, thin shadow darts away in the water. Shawn ponders, then jumps down and begins to build a dike in the shallows with stones.

LATER

Shawn is sopping wet from sweat and water, as he lays in the final stones to his dike. He stops and takes a look. He SEES about five meters away, a slow-moving fish drifting...darting...drifting again. Concentration in his face. He circles around, slowly steering the fish into the blocked-off area. He moves in, arms outspread, forcing the fish into shallower water. Shawn rushes the prey, clawing up sands, gravel, and water. He lets loose with a cry of surprise! There, flapping wildly on the shore, is a 14-inch fish. He lunges for the fish. It's slippery and difficult to grab the gill slits. Triumph!

CAMPSITE

Foley is dozing next to the pit he's dug. Shawn approaches the campfire, clutching his fish close to his chest. Though he's concerned with Foley sleeping in such an odd position, Shawn is determined to sneak off with the knife. As he wiggles the knife free from its log, Foley snaps quietly awake with the movement of his hand to his empty knife sheath. He looks off, sees Shawn. Shawn turns his back to Foley as he begins to clean his catch. The boy's intense concentration is broken only by an occasional flicker of squeamishness. Foley moves up quietly behind him to see. Shawn whirls around with a vicious, belly-sent cry of warning, slashing out with the knife. Foley barely misses being cut. Foley recedes, but in spite of his continuing pain, he twists out a thin, almost evil smile.

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LATER

Shawn is bent over, working with the flint and steel. Foley smiles, then climbs a rise to see the plain beyond. He SEES a herd of red kangaroos grazing in the distance. The sight is such a sensual delight. But a sharp, stabbing pain makes Foley cry out. On the SOUND, the animals break into a run. In the confusion, some of the animals bound toward Foley. Now Foley's eyes are half-closed. As if in a dream, the reds pass by, close all around him. As his eyes flutter wide, the SOUND of the mob dies down. He turns, SEES Shawn...smoke rising in front of him.

ON SHAWN

Concentration almost killing him, Shawn tries to be delicate with the glowing embers. He blows...he swallows...he blows.

ON FOLEY

Slowly turning away...towards the plain again. In the BG, Shawn YELLS triumphantly! Foley's eyes close, long and slow... he takes a deep breath, opens his eyes into a faraway gaze.

ON THE FISH

Dangling from a green stick by its gill-slit. WIDEN. It's cooking over the fire. Shawn stares at it, almost drooling. When he can stand it no longer, he cuts off the tail section. Putting the rest of the fish back, he eats lustily. His eyes dart, but he sees nothing. CHANGE FOCUS: Foley is sitting and watching the boy. Shawn is hungry, but graceful, like a cat. Foley watches in sheer delight as the boy eats...until another greater attack of pain hits him.

FOLEY

(as if to the Devil)

Argh!...what again? Go away!

Let me enjoy my valley...my farm!

Straightening himself up, ignoring the pain, Foley affects a proud air as he walks away with his stick. Shawn glances up from his feast. He SEES Foley, 100 meters away, taking off his shirt next to one of the bubbling hot pools. Behind him, one of the giant geysers goes off.

AT THE POOL

PAN across the bubbling pool until the geyser is seen...the spray...and a rainbow. At the other end of the rainbow, Foley is undressed, half his body in the water. He uses his staff, walks forward, lowering himself into the soothing, warm, bubbling waters.

ON SHAWN

Cutting another piece of fish...putting the rest back to roast. He looks off after Foley...until something else catches his eye off to the left. He SEES two little joeys come bounding into the campsite area. Shawn starts to walk rapidly towards Foley but the joeys want to play. Shawn joins in, but the joeys soon run off. Shawn starts to follow, but looks to Foley ...and back to the fish on the fire. He returns to the fish, then wanders away with the rest of his four-pound fish in his hands...eating on it like a cob of corn.

NEAR THE HOT POOL

Mechanically eating now, Shawn's eyes take in the site. He watches Foley lying back in the pool, dozing on the other side against the bank. Having eaten enough, he places his prize on a large boulder, looks around to make sure it's safe, then moves with his curiosity around the hot pool. Shawn touches the steam that rises out of the bubbling, boiling waters. He looks across at Foley, who is lost in the pool's sensual embrace. As Shawn bends to feel the temperature, he HEARS something behind him. It's a big golden dingo bitch and two pups. Shawn panics and cries out. Foley comes back to life.

FOLEY

You're not afraid...YOU'RE NOT AFRAID!
...Remember?...That's a beautiful animal...
or have you forgotten everything? So why
don't you just take off your clothes and
come on in the water. Come on in!

Since the dingo is still quite a ways off, Shawn starts to take off his clothes...but never takes his eyes off the dog. The dingo plays with her pups, sniffing the air, moving towards the pool. Shawn is naked...steps into the pool...it's hot! He turns toward Foley, feels for solid footing which just doesn't seem to be there. The dingo comes up behind Shawn as he tries to find another rock below. The dog stretches out over the water's edge to smell Shawn's fishy hair. Shawn turns, shrieks, and falls backward. He comes up gasping, dog-paddling, clawing towards Foley for dear life. Foley laughs, though weakly. Shawn reaches Foley and surprises the old man by clinging fiercely to his neck. Foley is both pleased and uncomfortably self-conscious.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

Of Foley discovering what it is to hold a small, naked ten-year-old boy against his own naked body.

ON SCENE

The dingos wander off, so Shawn breaks free and swims away. Foley doesn't want to let him go. Shawn swims and explores until he happens to glance off toward his waiting fish.

SHAWN (o.s.)

Hey!...you stop!

He SEES the dingo standing up and stealing it away.

SHAWN

(livid with anger)

Goddam that dog. You stop, that's mine...I caught it...I...

FOLEY

Let it be...let 'er have it... you can get another...you know that now.

SHAWN

But...

FOLEY

Sh-h-h-h.

SHAWN

If I had my spear...

FOLEY

I'm going to give you my knife.

SHAWN

...That beast wouldn't take my fi...!

Shawn stops, questioning Foley with a look.

SHAWN

Your knife?

FOLEY

Now that you've learned that you're an animal, the time has come to remember you're a human.

Shawn stops now to think. Everything is moving so fast.

SHAWN

But...that wild dog.

FOLEY

If you'd stop being afraid for a minute, you'd know that that dingo doesn't mean you any harm.

Shawn's agitation eases...he ducks under the water...comes up yelling and playing again. Foley rests to the music of Shawn's squeals and frolics.

LOW ANGLE - ALONG THE GROUND

The steam from the pool floats above the horizon...then, Shawn's head rises above the bank, his eyes scan left and right. He sees something...he rises a bit higher. He smiles...looks at Foley...scrambles up and out.

ON A NUMBAT

Scooting along as fast as it can...because here comes Shawn, your basic naked speedster, running rings around the bewildered animal. Shawn zooms in too close to suit the animal; it turns on him growling. Then Shawn, the fleet, circles around a bush, but runs up against the animal again. He and the animal run full-speed in opposite directions.

ON SHAWN

His head bobbing up behind a long, low bramble patch as he runs. He stops dead in his tracks. (Blackberries!) He picks a few and eats. A fat juicy one dribbles down his chest. The purple stain prompts artistic experimentation. He paints his chest, legs, and arms with the berry juice. His body covered with design, Shawn lies back on a rock and spots something up in the tree that supports the bramble bush...Shawn is climbing past the thorns into the tree. Up the trunk, edging out a limb. He looks into a large nest. He reaches in and takes one of the three eggs...It's more difficult climbing down using only one hand...Shawn walks proudly back toward the pool, examining his find.

SHAWN

(to the egg)

Hey in there, can you hear me...?

He hears the low groaning of the dingo instead. The dingo, the pups, are rocking and running after Shawn. He holds the egg in the air, squeals, and makes for the water.

AT THE POOL

Foley is brought awake by the commotion. Shawn comes flying. He doesn't stop...but laughing, egg high, he jumps in. He bobs up...miraculously still holding onto the egg. He grabs Foley's outstretched hand.

SHAWN

This is for you.

Foley's breathing has become long and deep and labored. He gazes with intense admiration at the egg.

FOLEY

This is kind of you. Eggs can make you strong. But I'm already way too strong...so I'm gonna show you how to eat them...alright?

Shawn nods expectantly, finds footing, and watches Foley show him how to suck on an egg.

LOW ANGLE - CLOSE ON SHAWN

Blowing water like a squirt gun out of the egg. He HEARS Foley. His head follows the old man out of the water. Foley's feet and staff ENTER FRAME just beyond Shawn. Shawn looks up into the sun as the old man passes. Shawn plays for another minute...then checks on Foley again. In the distance, Foley is naked, carrying his clothes, and disappearing into the trees. TILT UP along the campfire smoke-plume into sky.

TILT DOWN FROM SKY

INTO CLOSE-UP of Foley, his head tilted back, his eyes tightly closed and flickering---clearly experiencing pain and more...

SHAWN (o.s.)

(softly)

Foley...?

Foley's eyes flutter open...has difficulty with focus and recognition.

FOLEY

You...?

His eyes close again...Shawn is half-dressed.

SHAWN

My clothes stink.

FOLEY (o.s.)

(a beat, then wearily)

Wash them.

SHAWN

How come you're wearing that?

Foley sits cross-legged, wearing a very old but clean, lightweight, fawn-colored buckskin shirt. He's hunched-up in pain and his eyes are still closed...they open:

FOLEY

I don't know. I had an old Cherokee friend once; he gave it to me.

SHAWN

Did you mean that about your knife?

FOLEY

I meant it...

(beat)

...also. You're here because I couldn't take you out...there wasn't enough time. We never would have made it. Believe me, I know.

(long beat)

The only way you learn...is when you don't think of anything else... on your own...in spite of me. Your parents died too fast...no, wait... ...the most important thing...is... I'm not dying...not even going to sleep...believe me...it's all been a dream...and I can wake up any time I want to....

A tremendous bolt of pain, as if a knife were shoved up under his ribs, flashes like lightning across Foley's face.

FOLEY

Oo, bless it...I got one more lesson...only one more for you and...

Again the pain! Double! Something snaps inside of Foley. He turns away from Shawn. His eyes begin to roll---he sees, but interiorly.

FOLEY

...When I'm ready, Papa! I'll come home just like you...

(flaring angry)

...but I don't wanna rot away unnoticed...asleep to the rest of the world. I don't wanna hide. I'm not afraid of people like some I know! I wanna do something with my life!!

Shawn is terrified, but he reaches over and lifts Foley's face with his hands...shakes him. Foley comes to, "recognizes" the boy.

FOLEY

I...I...got to let you go your own way...there's just one more thing before you go...

SHAWN

(refusing to understand)

No! I don't want to go alone! You gotta go with me. I'm really afraid ...and...and...and I'm lost....

FOLEY

...No...You're not lost, and you're not afraid...neither one. You....

SHAWN

I want you to take me home...I want you to show me the way...I....

FOLEY

So...when you leave this valley, you take a good look from near the top of that stoney crag we passed...from the top of the world...it's easy... any direction will take you home....

SHAWN

But I don't know where my parents are anymore.

FOLEY

They're in your heart....

SHAWN

I...I....

FOLEY

Then go North...doesn't matter...you will make it...I know...! Just one more thing to show you. Wait! Wait! Just go look in the pack...everything you'll need.

Shawn looks over his shoulder...moves slowly to the pack. With all his might, Foley struggles to stand up. He slowly hobbles away.

MOVING SHOT

Shawn runs up alongside Foley holding the knife very carefully.

FOLEY

...The(woodpecker) always puts his holes on the East side of the tree...the spider always builds his webs facing North down here...moss on the South side...sun still sets in the West...just put them together ...you're home.

SHAWN

Is this what you mean? For me?

FOLEY

Yes. The knife's for you...everything else in there...all that meat. Just one more lesson for you....

A canopy of trees now envelops them. They move down what almost seems like a well-trodden path. Shawn begins to talk to himself, as if he were arguing, analyzing...planning. He lags, catches up, lags again. Foley begins to mumble to himself, too.

ON THE TWO - A SMALL WILDFLOWER GLADE - THE COTTAGE

As they enter, Foley raises his head high and walks proud to the other side. Rounding a stand of trees, he stops, stares. Not far away, are the remains of a lovely stone and cedar-shake Irish cottage. The SOUNDS all around create a strong inner presence. LONG BEAT. Foley raises his arm, pointing.

FOLEY

They had a dream. They gave it to me. Clean and honest...and right here! Look! But I ran away from this, too. Why?

(off Shawn's reaction)

Some people think they can have everything...but they can't. Others think they don't have what they want and need...but they do. Circles... we walk in circles...we oughta stop!

(LONG BEAT)

Mama couldn't tell him...and I didn't know how to listen to him... and he couldn't say it, besides....

(mood changes, fear entering his face)

...Do you hear that, Papa!?

(becomes aware of Shawn again)

But...I don't care about that...anymore. It's almost like it happened to someone else. All I care about is you.

SHAWN

Me!?

FOLEY

(hears only the word)

"Me?"...me, I still don't know who I am.

SHAWN

(panicky)

You're Foley Patrick Foley!

FOLEY
(taken off guard)
Yeah.
(smiles)
Yeah.
(genuine, innocent)
Thanks. And you're Daley Shawn
Daley.

SHAWN
(cocking his head)
Yes, but...

Foley stops walking. Shawn waits expectantly. After a LONG BEAT, Foley just turns to the boy.

SHAWN
(soft, small, pitiful)
...but if you leave me too, I am
going to die.

FOLEY
I don't think so.

SHAWN
You lied...you said...you would....

FOLEY
I said nothing...I promised you
nothing...I didn't ask you to come
along...you came along on your own
...as it should be...and you'll
leave on your own, as...

Shawn begins to panic. He starts to circle the old man slowly. His breathing becomes shallow and rapid.

SHAWN
You can't leave me...you can't leave
me...you can't leave me, too!

And then, with both fists raised, Shawn rushes headlong into the side of Foley...knocking the old man to the ground. Shawn pounds on the old man's chest...on his face and arms....

SHAWN
(beyond himself)
Don't leave me...you can't...please
don't leave me...please don't...I
don't ever want to leave you...I
hate you...I hate you....!

In spite of the pounding, Foley manages to sit up. He reaches out and embraces the boy.

FOLEY
I know...I know you do....

Both of them seem lost in their own thoughts as each holds onto the other. After a LONG BEAT, Foley fights off the pain again ...starts to act strangely...becomes aware of Shawn in a different light.

FOLEY

(to Shawn, out of the corner of his eye)
Hunh...? Who are you...I don't know you...you're not my son...anymore.

ON A GRAVE-MARKER CROSS

Carved in it: "James Farrington Foley -- 1885-1948." In the BG, Foley and Shawn.

SHAWN

Yes you do...I'm Shawn...Shawn Daley...you know...Why are you talking this way? Are you angry with me?

FOLEY

(in another world)
Angry?...I'm ashamed. You've made me the laughingstock of the country...When I see a neighbor they tell me of your disgraceful behavior.

ON SCENE - INCLUDE GRAVE MARKER: "LORNA R. FOLEY -- 1884 - 1947"

FOLEY

...I can't face them anymore....

As he speaks for his father, Foley's voice begins to pick up the Irish brogue.

FOLEY

...I dunno what to tell them...

SHAWN

(totally confused)
Why?...Why are you talking this way? What have I done?

FOLEY

You! You with your anarchic ways and demonic ideas...you're a bully and an antichrist...you torment your friends...you make fun of your mother and me...you show no respect for your elders or your God! YOU TELL ME WHY!!

SHAWN

(beginning to break)

I don't understand.

FOLEY

NO MORE!!!

SHAWN

(grasping for anything)

I don't mean to be bad...I...I'm
lost and...and I just want my
mommy and daddy....

FOLEY

You broke your mother's heart---God
rest her soul---and you've walked all
over me...But I've done wi'ye, and'll
have n'more! God-fearing people are
good, but you hate them. You fear
nothing and that makes you either a
fool or a convert to Hell! You believe
you are locked in battle with an unjust
God...but it is with the devils within
you that you fight. I will not live
to see you grow up and bring others
nothing but pain and sorrow.

Foley is reeling...gasping for air...when the heart attack
begins.

SHAWN

But...Foley...I'm not going to grow
up to do that...I'm good...I know
what's right...And I love my parents
...I love them...and...and I love you.

Foley freezes...reaches out a blind hand, groping...touches
Shawn. Upon the touch his emotional dike breaks open, floods...

FOLEY

You...you...love...me...Papa?

His face twists up. Crawls a few meters toward the grave.

FOLEY

Years ago...I buried you here
...and I swore if I ever came back
it would be in triumph! But I don't
know what my triumph is. What did
I do with my life? What's it all
been? Why the hell did I even live?!

SHAWN

(touching Foley's shoulder)

Don't be afraid.

FOLEY

(distant)

Afraid...? The only thing I'm afraid
of is a cold wind...that'll kill you
...just for standing around...

(he begins to cry)

...and looking dumb...then you'll
look...like a damn fool.

Foley breaks down completely. He falls forward onto the grave
and cries like a baby...Shawn strokes Foley's hair.

SHAWN

You'll be alright...don't cry...
Daddy loves you...Daddy loves you....

And Foley cries...but his crying gets softer...and then we hear
him say what he was unable to say so many years ago:

FOLEY

(to his father
in his grave)

I love you...Papa...I love you....
I...love...you...

Foley's breathing is short, gasping inhales now...with long,
imperceptible exhales inbetween. Fear and consciousness of
Foley's dying rise simultaneously in Shawn:

SHAWN

Wait! Oh, please wait...you...you
promised me...you said there was
one more thing...you wanted to show
me. Wait...What is it? What is it?

Foley dies.

GRAVESITE - NITE

Fire is flickering in Shawn's face---a tired, sweat-dried dirty
face. Revealed, on the other side of the fire: a new grave of
piled up stones next to Foley's father. Shawn stands, throws
another log on the fire, looks to the grave, then looks out
into the night. THE NIGHT SOUNDS...Shawn's HEARTBEAT...THE
CREAKING TREES.

ON FOLEY'S GRAVE - DAYBREAK

PAN TO Shawn, walking away through the trees, the small kangaroo-
bone and buckskin pack that Foley made on his back.

AT THE OTHER CAMPSITE

Shawn is covering up the hole Foley had dug for the things he
didn't want any more. That done, Shawn picks up the knife,
sheathes it. As he puts on his pack again, he notices some

writing burnt into the leather flap:

"I, PATRICK FOLEY, GIVE ALL MY
ESTATE TO SHAWN DALEY. THIS
IS LEGAL OR DAMN YOUR EYES.
AS I LAY DYING,

Patrick Foley
1920-1980

"FOLEY'S VALLEY" - LONG SHOT

Shawn is a small figure amidst the trees, the cabin, the fences, hillocks, geysers, mud-holes, and scattered wildlife.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A geyser goes up behind him...he turns slowly, takes it in, is unafraid.

TIMBERED MOUNTAINS - NIGHT - LONG SHOT

A fire burns in the distance below. The SOUND of slowly flapping wing is heard...somewhere in the night.

PANORAMA OF THE MOUNTAIN RANGES - DAY

PAN TO crest in FG. Shawn climbs to the summit. Everything is downhill from here.

HIS POINT OF VIEW

A LONG SHOT down the canyon of the landslide.

ON SHAWN

CLOSER to the landslide now, he looks down the canyon.

HIS POINT OF VIEW

From the rim of the canyon opposite the landslide.

ON SHAWN

He is sad, yet serene...fragile but confident. He starts to walk away...but turns back again. It's not easy to talk... out loud.

SHAWN

I still love you...always...and I
know you still love me...I...I....

And it's hard to leave. He bends down and picks up a handful of earth. It slips out slowly between his fingers. He looks up and over the mountains.

SHAWN

...Goodbye...Foley Patrick Foley...
please take good care of my mother
and father...just like...you...

His mouth still moves, but the SOUND dies away. He takes a deep breath...he sights along a newly cut "trident" into the sun...his head turns into profile...as the CAMERA PULLS BACK... AND BACK...LEAVING THIS TINY FIGURE STANDING STRONG AND ALONE IN THE MIDST OF AN IMMENSE AND BEAUTIFUL WILDERNESS...

THE EARTHLING

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