

"THE POSTMAN"

Screenplay  
by  
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Based on the novel by David Brin.

FIFTH DRAFT  
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"THE POSTMAN"

Imagine this...

We're flying! Soaring over the Rocky Mountains. "Oh beautiful for spacious skies..." And we see what we've been flying on. An American Eagle, majestic, soars on the thermals, circling the mountains. It flies off. And it's still. Just the ambient forest. And the stillness is broken by a voice in the wilderness:

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)

...I've had it! I'm tired of being on the trail with you guys all day long. All you do is complain..."When can we stop...?" "When can we stop...?"

And in the distance, a mule emerges from the trees. A Lone Rider. In his thirties, wearing an old weathered cowboy's coat, a battered cowboy hat, there's something incongruous, ironic about him. There's a rifle in the saddle boot. A bedroll, and his few belongings, strapped to his saddle. And tromping after him are three heavily laden PACK MULES. For all appearances a saddle tramp, a drifter, in the 1870's, when there was still manifest destiny, and our country was young. We'll come to know him as THE POSTMAN. He's talking to his mules...

THE POSTMAN

...Well I'm the guy who says when we stop...and when we don't stop...If I listened to you we wouldn't be here at all! "I don't want to go west." "I don't want to go west." Well, it's not up to you! We're going west!

One of them, a doleful-eyed mule, doesn't seem to be listening.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(eyeing him)

George, you complain more than anybody.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (mimicking him,  
 whining)  
 "You're hungry, you're tired,  
 you're thirsty, you're hot, you're  
 cold..." I'm sick of it! This  
 isn't a democracy! When I want to  
 stop, that's when we stop...!

George won't look at him. The Postman looks at him until he gets his attention.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (smiles, pleased)  
 ...And now we're going to stop...

And he laughs. And he suddenly brays. And the mules, one big happy family, bray. They come to a stand of aspens. A river.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 Whoa...

He reins to a stop. He gets off.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (motioning)  
 Wait here a second...

George, not paying any attention, thirsty, runs to the river to take a drink. The Postman, running after him, swats him with his hat.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 Damn it, George, how many times  
 have I told you not to drink or  
 eat anything until I check it out  
 first.

Chastised, head down, George backs off. The Postman takes a bandana out of his pocket. He ladles some water out of the river into the bandana. He empties it, looking to see if there's any harmful residue left. There isn't.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (nods, satisfied)  
 Okay fellas, drink up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The mules come to the water to drink. The Postman, on all fours, in a row with them, drinking. Hearing something, in unison, they all look up. And TWO MEN on horseback, sooted with trail dust, carrying rifles, approach them.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(friendly)

Hey, how you doin'? Good water...

But it isn't their intention to drink with him. The Lead Man raises his rifle.

THE LEAD RUSTLER

Put 'em up...

The Postman slowly raises his hands. The other Man climbs off his horse, starting to the mules, to go through the Postman's stuff.

THE POSTMAN

(cautioning him)

Please don't get too close to the animals. They're trained to attack.

The Man slows.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(a beat)

I have to warn you boys I'm a United States Marshal. It would be smart if you ride off and forget about this whole thing.

THE LEAD RUSTLER

(laughing)

You're a what?!

THE POSTMAN

(carefully)

I'm going to use my hands to open my coat now...

He slowly lowers his hands, opening his coat. And sure enough, he's wearing some kind of badge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

I'm a duly authorized Federal Marshal for the Rocky Mountain Territory, and you're getting dangerously close to really pissing me off.

THE LEAD RUSTLER

(laughing, to his compatriot)

You hear this. We're pissing him off. What are you going to do, "Mr. Marshal," arrest us?

His companion starts to laugh, when suddenly a shot rings out, and hit in the chest, he's knocked off his feet. And FOUR MEN, on lathered horses, come riding out of the trees. Fierce looking, they're wearing some kind of black and orange Army uniforms. SCOUTS. The surviving Rustler turns to ride off. One of the Scouts disinterestedly raises a shotgun, and shoots him in the back. The Postman, scrambling onto his mule, the pack mules running after him, gallops down river. There are the sounds of the Scouts in hot pursuit:

THE POSTMAN

(to the pack mules)

Take off...!

They scatter in the trees. The Scouts are almost there. The Postman looks for a place to hide. And suddenly, he spurs his mule into the river, hiding among some tall weeds in a deep pool along the shoreline. The Scouts come around a bend. They move along the riverbank. And as they move by, we see, among the weeds, just above the water-line, the mule's nostrils. And underwater, the mule furiously treading water, the Postman holding on for dear life. The Scouts ride off. The mule swims The Postman to the bank. They catch their breath. A moment, and the Postman whistles a signal, and the mules come running out of the trees. They regroup. The Postman, filled with bravado, in the general direction of the Scouts:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Pussies...!

And knowing just how hollow his bravado is, sheepishly smiling, quickly turning, he races off with his troops into the forest.

## EXT. THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS - SUNSET

The sun's settling over the Rockies. And emerging from the forest, The Postman and his troop, come down a trail onto an old dirt road. They ride along the road in the gathering darkness. They come up a rise. The Postman stops. A breeze ruffles his coat. AND WE SEE, ahead of him, incongruous, at the bottom of the rise, what's left of a MODERN FOUR LANE HIGHWAY. Weeds and grass grow over what was once white lines and concrete. A Sign: "U.S. 70." They ride along the deserted Highway. There's a rusted exit sign. They ride down the grassy off-ramp. At the end of the off-ramp a Union 76 ball is on top of a forty-foot pole. An abandoned Gas Station. And alongside the Gas Station is a deserted Truck Stop Restaurant. The Postman dismounts. He uncomfortably takes his rifle out of the boot. An old bolt-action carbine, that's seen very little action. And awkwardly holding the rifle, the mules behind him, he cautiously goes inside.

## INT. TRUCK STOP RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Some wildflowers grow between what was the counter and the kitchen. Knee-high grass covers the floor. There's a sound. The Postman turns. And in a corner, under a broken out window, a deer is on the floor. Suckling on her teats is a doe.

THE POSTMAN

(to the deer)

Sorry...

The mules forage in the grass. The Postman wanders around the abandoned restaurant. He sees a cigarette machine.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

I'm rich...!

Excited, he breaks open the machine looking for cigarette packs. It's empty. He frowns. He wanders. There's a broken juke box. He takes out a CD.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(reading it)

"Bon Jovi..."

He shrugs, unfamiliar with it. He takes out another one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (reading)  
 "Biff and Jud Go To Hawaii..."

He chucks it. Taking another one:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 "Po' Broke & Lonely..."  
 (the cut)  
 "Mama Said, Knock You Out..."  
 (imagining what it  
 sounds like,  
 singing:)  
 "Mama said, knock you out...  
 knock you out..."  
 (vamping)  
 "I'm gonna knock you out..."  
 "Gonna knock you out..." "Gonna  
 knock you out..."

He trails off. And he's quiet. He sits at the counter.  
 After some moments:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (to his mules,  
 musing)  
 ...The best years of my life...  
 These are supposed to be the best  
 years of my life...

As he sits at the counter in the abandoned restaurant:

EXT. THE TRUCK STOP - NIGHT

A full moon hangs over the Truck Stop. Over the mountains.  
 The gas station's Union 76 ball, in silhouette, is like an  
 ancient totem. And there's a Voice:

A NARRATOR'S VOICE (OVER)  
 The country isn't young anymore.  
 It's thirty years after the  
 environment was destroyed, the  
 economy collapsed, democracy  
 failed, and the shit hit the  
 fan...

DISSOLVE TO:

## EXT. THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY - DAYBREAK

The sky, filtered through a perennial layer of fine dust, is a madman's watercolor. The forest, that looked so pristine at first glance, has, in the light of day, denuded scars on the hillsides, the vestiges of clear-cut logging. And ahead of us, The Postman on his mule, the pack mules trodding along behind him, move along the empty Highway.

## THE NARRATOR'S VOICE (OVER)

Chicken Little's warning had come true...A massive hole had opened in the ozone layer. Temperatures suddenly rose. There was worldwide drought. Starvation. Diseases of epidemic proportion. There were rebellions. Anarchy. Nations ceased to exist...In America, Nathan Holn, known as the "Pennsylvania Farmer" started his Holnist Movement for what he called, the "Soul of America." It led to the second great Civil War...Civilization, as we know it, had come to an end...

The Postman, and his mules, move into the distance.

## THE NARRATOR'S VOICE (OVER)

The United States was now a vast wasteland. There were no cities, no electricity, no gasoline...Few would travel far from the safety of the remaining settlements and towns. Those that did were either adventurers, outlaws, hustlers, or fools. This, my good friends, is the story of one of them...

## ROLL MAIN TITLES:

"THE POSTMAN."

And Lou Reed's singing, "Take A Walk On The Wild Side."  
"And the colored girls go..." The Black singers coming in with: "Do da do da do da do da do da do..." And as The Postman rides along the empty Highway, under a madman's sky:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN COLORADO - DAY

They come along a silent street in an abandoned town. Rows of empty houses. Their batten-boards weathered, their lawns, turned to weeds, overgrown into the street. Useless cars, rusted, sagging on flattened tires, are parked along the curbs and in the driveways. As The Postman and his troops rides through the still streets: "Do da do da do da do da do da dooooo."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A SHOPPING MALL, SOMEWHERE IN COLORADO - DAY

The mules trodding along after him, he rides through a deserted mall. The stores empty, abandoned. He slows in front of a Kinney's Shoes. He looks at his own shoes. They're worn, to the point of falling apart. Dismounting, he goes into the Kinney's.

INT. A KINNEY'S SHOE STORE, DESERTED MALL - DAY

It's bare, the racks picked clean. There are some scattered boxes. He goes through them, looking for shoes. He finds a mismatched pair, one tasseled loafer, a wing-tip. As he puts them on:

EXT. THE DESERTED SHOPPING MALL - DAY

He sits on a bench outside of an abandoned K-Mart. There's something almost Chaplinesque about him in his mismatched shoes. The mules graze in some weeds by an empty Gap store. "And the colored girls go..." "Do da do da do da do da do, ooooooh."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A CANYON, SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - SUNSET

The Postman and his mules, far off in the distance, move across an endless canyon with its red-rock gorges and natural bridges. We might as well be on the moon. And as they move into the distance, dwarfed by the landscape, like the last creatures on earth: Lou Reed's singing, "Do da do da do da do da do da do, dooooooo..."

END MAIN TITLES:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - AFTERNOON

The mules stand in an empty two lane road that razor cuts the plains to the horizon. And we see The Postman up on a billboard. Standing on the catwalk, he looks at a tattered Rand McNally Road Atlas And Travel Guide. He looks through a pair of binoculars with a broken lens, across the horizon, for signs of life. There's a distant plume of smoke.

THE POSTMAN  
(shouting, to the  
mules)  
It's our lucky day...!

He scrambles down the billboard. He hops on his lead mule.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Everybody ready?

And as they move off across the plains toward the distant plume of smoke:

EXT. A SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - AFTERNOON

They come along an old road. And in the middle of nowhere, is a small, overgrown town. Husks of rusted cars, boarded-up stores, weather-beaten buildings, line a dirt street. And the town's populace, about fifty people, young and old, beat, hardened people, seeing The Postman, stop what they're doing, silently watching him ride into town.

THE POSTMAN  
(smiling)  
How's everybody this afternoon?  
Nice to see you...

And some children, like children everywhere, run to follow the stranger.

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)  
That's far enough...

And three men, holding rifles, are standing in the street. The Postman stops.

THE POSTMAN  
(tipping his hat,  
smiling)  
How are you guys?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A MAN

What do you want here?

THE POSTMAN

(his smile)

My business...is your pleasure.  
For something to eat, a place to  
sleep, give me five minutes of  
your time, and I'll show you the  
world.

And before they can say anything he hops off his mule. He respectfully takes off his hat. There's a lot of "The Rainmaker," in him. Some people venture into the street.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(for all to hear)

I've been on the road for a number  
of years. I've been to places  
with names like Indianapolis and  
Chattanooga...Detroit and  
Cincinnati...I've seen things that  
would take your breath away...I've  
seen things that would make a  
grown man cry...

Some more people come into the street.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and  
girls...friends, Romans,  
countrymen...

He smiles to himself.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

I bring you...

(motioning)

Stand back, please give me some  
room...

(a beat, for  
effect)

Civilization...!

And with a flourish, untying ropes, pulling back tarps, he reveals the pack mules' cargo. A conglomeration of twentieth century artifacts:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Clothing, signs, a stereo, Nintendo games, CD's, a VCR, magazines, hardware, old newspapers, videos, utensils, books, toys, cosmetics... A collection of twentieth century junk from the ridiculous to the sublime. He starts putting things in the street.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(as he unloads)

...I'm a historian. A collector.  
I can tell you more about the  
twentieth century than any man  
alive...All reflected in the  
simplest items that only travel  
can bring you!

He picks up a knife:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Something like this...This is  
something you don't see everyday.  
They called it a ginsu knife.

Demonstrating it like a carnival huckster:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

It cuts, it dices, it slices, it  
peels, it made cooking a breeze  
and a half...A prized possession  
in every household...

He smiles. He takes up a thigh-master.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

And this! This was very popular a  
number of years ago.

And he lays on the ground, putting the thigh-master between his legs, exercising.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Pride was reflected in muscle  
tone. Staying in shape was a full  
time job...And with this, you only  
needed minutes a day.

(bouncing to his  
feet)

But we've got lots here folks.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

You're welcome to browse, take as much time as you'd like...But please, be careful, many of the items are priceless!

A MAN

(disdainful)

This is nothing but garbage.

THE POSTMAN

(a beat, as if wounded)

Garbage? One man's garbage is another man's antiques! These are artifacts, my friend. A once in a lifetime exhibition. Where's your spirit of adventure?

ANOTHER MAN

You're full of shit is what you are. A big mouth looking for a handout. Let's run him out of here...

AND ANOTHER MAN

(motioning with his rifle, threatening)

Pack your stuff and get your ass on the road.

It's quiet. The party's just about over. And there's a little Boy's voice:

A LITTLE BOY (OVER)

What's this?

The Postman turns. And a little boy, no more than five, is holding a television's remote control clicker. There's a glimmer of hope.

THE POSTMAN

(taking it)

You don't know what this is?

The Boy shakes "no."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 Didn't your parents ever tell you  
 about T.V.?

He shakes "no."

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 It's that funny looking box with a  
 window on it that you probably  
 have in a corner, or in a closet  
 somewhere.

(explaining)  
 People would kick their feet up on  
 a table, sit back on a couch, and  
 watch the world.

(a beat)  
 You could see men walk on the  
 moon...

And he suddenly takes a step in the dirt street, acting it  
 out:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 "That's one small step for man..."

And he jumps like he's weightless.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (quickly turning)  
 Or a game of baseball from Yankee  
 Stadium...

He steps up to bat. He swings.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (announcing)  
 "There's a long deep drive...!"  
 (watching an  
 imaginary ball)  
 "Back, back, back, back, back,  
 back..." "It's gone...!" "Mickey  
 Post took that curveball deep...!"

And he makes the sound of a crowd into his cupped hands.  
 The people look at him like he's crazy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (undaunted)  
 It made us laugh...  
 (doing Marge  
 Simpson)  
 "Homer, how do you let people  
 treat you that way...?"

And some of the older people, in spite of themselves, fondly smile, remembering.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 It kept us awake..."Here's..."  
 (confusing the two)  
 "Jay Letterman...!"

And he fires off a typical Late Night routine. And some other people warmly laugh, remembering. And The Postman, taking advantage of the situation, walking among them:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 Any requests?

AN OLD WOMAN  
 Do you know, "The Brady Bunch?"

And to the Old Woman's delight he sings the "timeless" "Brady Bunch" theme.

A MAN  
 We used to watch a show in the late nineties called, "The Marples," about a crazy family that lived in Alaska. Did you ever see it?

THE POSTMAN  
 (doing that show)  
 "There's just no denying it...  
 It's cold up here..."

THE MAN  
 (laughs)  
 My father loved that show...

Daylight's begun to wane. The Postman looks at the people standing in the dirt street, and for a moment, he's quiet, with his own memories:

EXT. A SUBURBAN STREET, ST. LOUIS, IN THE 1990'S - NIGHT

A childhood memory. A summer's night. Porch lights on. A quiet suburban street.

INT. A SUBURBAN HOME, ST. LOUIS, IN THE 1990'S - NIGHT

And we see a small boy, the young Postman, lying on the floor, watching television with his family. And as the boy drifts off to sleep, to the murmur and the flickering light of the television, when the world was still safe and innocent:

EXT. THE SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN FUTURE UTAH - DUSK

The Postman surrounded by the people in the dirt street.

THE POSTMAN

(to the little Boy)

There were a hundred and forty channels from Jesus to Jeopardy.

(giving the Boy the clicker)

When you wanted to watch something else, all you had to do was point it, and press this little button.

And the Boy, being a boy, points it at The Postman, and clicks.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(after a beat, historic)

"Good evening. This is Peter Rather with the Nightly News. The President, in an emergency session, met today with his top science advisers about the discovery of a new and potentially dangerous hole in the ozone layer...The President reassured..."

(Click. The Shopping Network.)

"Only four minutes left for the earrings..."

(Click.)

"We interrupt this broadcast for the following bulletin.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

The Governor of California has called out the National Guard to quell the water riots in that state..."

(Click, a beer commercial)

"Why ask, Why?..."

(Click.)

"...Unemployment reached 18%..."

(Click.)

"Nathan Holn and a group of armed supporters took over the Senate Chambers today." "The fiery Populist, in a speech on the Senate floor, called for Americans to take up arms..."

(Click.)

"Yo, MTV Raps..."

(Click.)

"The President, in an executive order, has suspended the Constitution. Martial law has been declared...Citizens are advised there will be a dawn to dusk curfew..."

(with a finality)

"Broadcasting will be suspended until further notice."

"Goodnight."

And it's dead still. He looks at the somber faces. He's gone too far.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(before it's too

late, smiling,

doing "Babaloo.")

"Hello, Lucy, this is Ricky, I'm at the club." "Did you wash my shirt?" "I need it for tonight's show." And Lucy, with her friends, Fred and Ethel, go down to the laundry room.

He crosses to an imaginary door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 Lucy opens the door --  
 (abruptly)  
 And soap and water comes pouring  
 out! She tries to shut the door!

He struggles against the "door."

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 The water keeps pouring out! She  
 looks at Fred and Ethel and she  
 says...  
 (doing Lucy,  
 bawling)  
 "Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

He smiles. And the people are moved to applaud. They linger  
 in the street, talking.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (to a Woman)  
 Do you think I could get something  
 to eat?

THE WOMAN  
 There isn't much -- but I'll be  
 glad to fix you something...

As he follows her across the street:

THE POSTMAN  
 (his smile, to  
 himself)  
 Thank you God!

And as he does a little hop and skip:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - NIGHTFALL

An empty road. And The Postman, contentedly chewing on a  
 toothpick, is being escorted by an armed guard out of town.

THE POSTMAN  
 (his smile)  
 Thanks for your hospitality...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He waves. They don't. And as the men, making sure he's leaving, watch The Postman and his little troop move off along the empty road into the night:

DISSOLVE TO:

IT'S RAINING.

EXT. FARMLANDS, SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - AFTERNOON

A rain like we've never seen before. Veritably shimmering, silver, it's tainted with acid. And The Postman, wearing a hooded rain slick, the mules trodding after him, come across what were once fertile farmlands. The land eroded now, fallow. On a knoll is an old farmhouse. Rusted husks of farm equipment. A rickety old windmill, aching as it turns. The Postman rides up to the house. He climbs off his mule. It's still.

THE POSTMAN

(calling)

Anybody home?

There's just the sound of the rain. Awkwardly taking his rifle, he approaches the farmhouse. He climbs onto the porch. It creaks under his weight. He knocks on the door. It's quiet. Opening the door, he goes inside.

INT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

It's furnished just as it was thirty years ago.

THE POSTMAN

Hello.

Dead silence. Turning, he goes back outside.

EXT. THE FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

THE POSTMAN

(to his mules)

Nobody's here...Let's make ourselves at home...

And suddenly a shotgun blast roars past him. He dives, flattening on the porch, covering up. Another blast roars. He quickly crawls back inside.

INT. THE FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

THE POSTMAN  
(yelling out)  
What did I ever do to you?

There's a thick silence. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Look, I'm coming out...

He stands, moving toward the door.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
You should know I'm a Federal  
Official, under the protection of  
the United States Government.

He raises his arms.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
If any harm comes to me, this  
place will be crawling with  
federal agents.

He steps into the doorway. Arms raised, he comes outside.

EXT. THE FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

He squints in the gloom. A shotgun barrel is trained on him. And a young Girl, about 13, is standing at the bottom of the porch, sighting down a shotgun.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(his smile)  
How are you?

Stoic, she motions him to stand off the porch. He steps down. He turns at a sound. And two other children, holding rifles, come from along the side of the house. He looks up. And four more children, of varying ages, the older one's leveling weapons on him, are standing on the roof. This isn't the Von Trapp Family.

A WOMAN'S VOICE (OVER)  
You wouldn't be the first.

And a WOMAN, in her late thirties, holding a pistol, comes between the children. A large-boned, strong woman, with sharp blue eyes, she's not somebody to fuck with.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

(smiling)

Nice family you have here...

(a beat,

cautiously)

I'm going to lower my hands to go  
into my pocket now...

He slowly lowers his hands, taking an I.D. out of his  
pocket.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(flashing it)

I'm with the Agriculture  
Department. Farm Management  
Bureau. We're doing a survey of  
reclaimed land -- if you could  
tell me what crops you're  
growing --

THE WOMAN

(deadly)

Don't play games with me. What do  
you want?

Seeing he can't bullshit her, he smiles, self-effacing.

THE POSTMAN

Just a place to get dry -- maybe  
something to eat...

She studies him. After some moments:

THE WOMAN

Take off your clothes...

THE POSTMAN

What?

THE WOMAN

I said, take your clothes off...

THE POSTMAN

I'm not a Holnist, if you're  
looking for a tattoo...

She suddenly fires a bullet by his ear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(in motion)

But I'll be happy to take my  
clothes off...

He hurries out of his clothing. He stands naked.

THE WOMAN

Turn around.

He turns around. Satisfied, she nods, and moving by him, goes into the farmhouse. As the children silently look at him, a stranger in a strange land:

INT. THE FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Candles flicker. Bedding's on the floor. A fire's burning in a fireplace. And The Postman's sitting on the floor with the children. He's showing them a tiny replica of an airplane.

THE POSTMAN

...These were called engines, they  
pushed the air...These were the  
wings...

(showing them)

It flew like a bird, anywhere you  
wanted to go...

A small boy takes it, looking at it with wonder. The Postman smiles. He gives the teenage girl an old "Tiger Beat," with a picture of "90210," on the cover. He gives the other children some things, including a toy telephone, a "Leonardo" Ninja turtle figure, a circa 2000 cabezon stick, a Dr. Seuss book, "Oh, The Places You'll Go...!" He instinctively turns. And the Woman, standing on the stairs, is quietly watching him.

THE WOMAN

(to the children)

It's time for bed.

They crawl into their bedding, huddled by the fire. The Postman quietly gets up.

THE POSTMAN

(awkwardly)

Goodnight.

And he goes outside.

## EXT. THE FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The rain's stopped. The air literally humming with electricity. Lightning licks at the horizon. The Postman crosses to a barn. The mules are peacefully sleeping. Their cargo, stacked on the floor. The Postman lays out his bedroll.

THE WOMAN (OVER)

Where you coming from?

He turns. And the Woman's quietly come outside, standing by the barn.

THE POSTMAN

(after a beat)

East. Way east...I thought I'd find out what was on the other side of the mountains...

She nods. It's quiet.

THE WOMAN

What's left?

THE POSTMAN

There's some towns...A settlement here and there...Just pockets of people really...On a clear night, from the Mississippi, you can still see the fires burning from the cities along the east coast...There's no electricity, no running water, no schools, no police, no firemen, nobody to pick up the garbage, run the power plants, work the factories...

(in short)

Nobody's home.

THE WOMAN

Is there a government?

THE POSTMAN

(shakes "no")

The Holnists. They control everything to the Rockies...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE WOMAN

(nods)

I killed a Scout last week.  
They're moving west. By the end  
of the year the rest of the  
country will be Holnist.

THE POSTMAN

(shrugs)

I can't worry about that any-  
more...I've got enough to do.

THE WOMAN

(a look)

What exactly do you do?

THE POSTMAN

(simply)

I'm thirty-four. I'm trying to  
make it to thirty-five...

He smiles at her. She doesn't.

THE WOMAN

That's it?

THE POSTMAN

(nods)

Pretty much...

But he feels it requires more of an explanation.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(after a beat)

My father was a doctor. A  
pediatrician. He was a Loyalist.  
He believed in the Constitution...

(a beat)

My family was killed in the early  
days of the war...a little thing  
called the St. Louis Solution...

She looks at him.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

I was ten...I grew up in refugee  
camps...

As he looks out at the horizon:

EXT. BUSCH STADIUM, ST. LOUIS, IN THE EARLY 21ST. CENTURY - DAY

And as far as the eye can see, the Baseball stadium is teeming, literally choked with refugees. Mainly women, children, and the elderly, crowd an endless encampment of tents, and makeshift hovels. Holnist soldiers, in their distinctive orange and black uniforms, stand guard around the stadium. There's a droning sound. And above the stadium, like a spectre, is a "Goodyear Blimp." And on its undercarriage, its message board keeps repeating in red letters, "The truth will set you free." "Nathan Holn." And we see a group of soldiers, eating. And a young Boy, the young Postman, entertaining the soldiers, is doing impersonations of famous personalities, "singing for his supper." "George Bush," "Jack Nicholson," the turn of the century comic "Ruhl:" ("What can't you taste, touch, smell, hear, or see, but can kill you?" "Radiation, baby.") And he dares to even imitate the "great" Nathan Holn with his distinctive twang:

THE BOY (cont'd)

A reporter asked me the other day,  
"Mr. Holn, what do you mean by  
morality?" "... I told him, I  
know it when I see it..."

The soldiers, entertained, give him some food. Ferreting it away, he goes off by himself to eat it. And a teenage boy, twice his size, comes over to him. Hitting him, he takes the food away from him. The little Boy runs away, sitting on the ground in a corner of the stadium. And as he sits alone, quietly crying:

THE POSTMAN (OVER)

I was drafted when I was  
fifteen...I saw the Holnists take  
Washington...

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C., 2006 - DAY

And we see a long column of Holnist soldiers, in their orange and black uniforms, riding on horseback down Pennsylvania Avenue. And at the head of the column, walking, leading them, a diminutive man in his early sixties, in a plain suit, is the Pennsylvania Farmer himself, Nathan Holn. People line the route. And we see among them, in an orange and black uniform, the young Postman. And as he watches Nathan Holn walk to the White House:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (OVER)  
I saw them execute the President.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C., 2006 - DAY

A small square ringed by Holnist troops. And among the regiments, holding some horses, is the young Postman. And as he witnesses the solemn hanging of the "last" President of the United States:

EXT. THE FARMHOUSE, SOMEWHERE IN FUTURE UTAH - NIGHT

THE POSTMAN  
I deserted when I was  
nineteen...I've been on the road  
ever since...

THE WOMAN  
Is Nathan Holn still alive?

THE POSTMAN  
(shakes "no",  
ironic)  
He died of skin cancer...There's a  
three man military tribunal  
running the show now.

They silently watch the light show on the horizon. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(meaning the  
children)  
Where's their father?

THE WOMAN  
He died last year...of the  
measles. He's buried on the hill.

She looks at a hillside. The Postman's quiet. After some moments, he goes into his pocket. He takes out a small jewelry box. He takes out of the box, still in their original package, two AA batteries.

THE POSTMAN  
I stumbled on a box of these.  
These are all I have left.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He takes up a CD player. A CD.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
They should hear music at least  
once in their lives...

He gives them to her. She looks at the batteries. She looks at him, a flicker of gratitude. It's quiet. After a moment, he goes into a saddle bag.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Do you remember these?

And he takes out a small green apple. He holds it in the palm of his hand like a treasure.

THE WOMAN  
(startled)  
My God, I haven't seen one of  
those since I was a child. I  
didn't know there were fruit trees  
anymore?

THE POSTMAN  
(nods)  
I didn't either.

He takes out a pocket knife, cutting it, giving her a slice.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
About a year ago I saw a tree  
growing in the middle of nowhere.  
I saw one again a week ago just  
outside what was Denver.

He shrugs, mystified. And as if they were somehow connected:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Have you heard of a place called  
St. Rose? It's supposed to be a  
city somewhere in the west that's  
alive. Where there's people...  
lights...food...books...music...

THE WOMAN  
(laughs)  
I've heard of ten of those  
places...always different names.  
It's just a figment of somebody's  
imagination.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN  
(shrugs, smiling)  
I'm going to find it.

THE WOMAN  
Good luck looking west...

And for the first time, she smiles, taken with his boyishness. She looks at him. There's an awkward quiet. A moment, and she turns to leave.

THE WOMAN (cont'd)  
Well, goodnight.

THE POSTMAN  
Goodnight...

She crosses to the house. She slows, turning. After a beat:

THE WOMAN  
(motioning)  
Come with me.

It isn't a question. She starts into the house.

THE WOMAN (cont'd)  
Come on.

And as he follows her, his hands awkwardly in his pockets, inside:

INT. THE FARMHOUSE, THE WOMAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A candle burns. Naked, they lie on a fourposter, caressing each other.

THE POSTMAN  
(quietly)  
What's your name?

THE WOMAN  
Let's leave it like it is.

And as she blows out the candle:

INT. THE FARMHOUSE, THE WOMAN'S BEDROOM - DAWN

The Postman, suddenly awakened, sits up in bed. The Woman's running out of the room.

THE POSTMAN

What's going on?

And he turns, and sees, out the window, a cloud of dust. And off in the distance, coming across the fields, in black and orange uniforms, are armed RIDERS. HOLNISTS.

INT. THE FARMHOUSE - DAWN

The Woman's quickly gathering the children. The Postman comes running down the stairs. He runs outside.

EXT. THE FARM - DAWN

He runs for his mules. He stops. And he sees his mules, George leading them, sprinting across a field to safety.

THE POSTMAN

(shouting)

Get back here...!

They slow. George looks back at The Postman, seeming to consider it for a moment, but thinking better of it, sprints away with the others.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(chagrined)

Goddamnit...!

The Woman runs with her children to an overgrown field. Pushing some dirt away, she pulls open a hidden storm cellar door. The children hurry down inside. She looks back at The Postman. The Riders are almost there. And running across the field to the Woman, he follows her down inside.

INT. THE STORM CELLAR - DAWN

A confined, dank room, with timbers reinforcing the walls. They sit huddled together on the dirt floor. The Woman comforts a crying child. One of the children, frightened, comes to sit on The Postman's lap. The Postman looks at himself, wry, unused to the role of a protector. And as they sit, waiting to see if the storm will pass:

DISSOLVE TO:

## EXT. THE FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Some men stand guard. And riding up to the house, are some Holnist officers. Dismounting, they go inside. A moment, and a Man on a pale horse, flanked by two officers, comes riding across the fields. Wearing a greatcoat, his hair blowing, an angular man in his fifties, he has the distinctive eyes of a madman or a genius, it's hard to tell which. The Commanding General of the Holnist Expeditionary Force, JOHN CARVER BETHLEHEM. His officers go inside. He stops on the porch, lighting a cigar. As he stands on the porch, like a daguerreotype of General Lee at a farmhouse at Gettysburg, quietly surveying his domain: A breeze blows across the field. And hidden in the weeds, the storm cellar door.

DISSOLVE TO:

## INT. THE FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The yellow light of an assortment of candles burns in the house. And we see Bethlehem and his Staff Officers, sitting around the dining room table, eating, studying maps that are spread out on the table. We see a map of the United States dated 2026. The areas occupied by the Holnists are colored in the distinctive orange and black. Their sphere of control extending from the east coast, to now, beyond the Rockies. Arrows show their western advance. The west, colored in red, is marked: "The Frontier."

## EXT. THE FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Guards walk sentry in the fields. They approach the storm cellar door.

## INT. THE STORM CELLAR - NIGHT

They can hear the approaching footsteps. The men talking. They look up, waiting. The footsteps go by. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN

They're going to find us...It's  
just a matter of time...

And gathering his courage, a reluctant hero at best, he climbs up the small ladder. He raises the door a crack. he looks out. The Guards are in the distance, the yellow light from the candles in the farmhouse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(motions, to the  
Woman)

Let's go...

She whispers, getting the children ready. The Postman slowly opens the door, silently crawling out.

EXT. THE FARM - NIGHT

He helps the Woman and the children out. They silently move across the overgrown field. A Guard turns. They stop. The tall weeds sway in the wind. He turns away. And as The Postman, the Woman, and the children, move across the field:

EXT. THE FARMLANDS - NIGHT

The moon's shrouded in clouds. And The Postman, the Woman, and the children, are running across the dark fields. After some moments, the Woman slows. And her main concern being for her children:

THE WOMAN  
(to The Postman)  
I know a family a few miles from  
here. We may be able to stay with  
them...  
(after a beat)  
I don't know if there's enough  
food or --

And it's obvious there isn't room for him.

THE POSTMAN  
(shrugs, nods,  
understanding)  
I'll be okay. I always land on my  
feet.

She nods. She looks at him, and turning with her children, she starts off. Slowing, she looks back at him.

THE WOMAN  
My name's Marie.

THE POSTMAN  
(his smile)  
Nice to meet you, Marie...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE WOMAN

I hope you find what you're  
looking for...

They look at each other, and she moves off. He watches them go until they disappear across the fields. Alone, hands in his pockets, he quietly walks across the fields. Stopping to figure things out, he sits in the shadows against an old stone wall. He looks over the wall. He stops. And spread out in a valley below him, as far as the eye can see, is the encampment of the HOLNIST EXPEDITIONARY FORCE. A thousand man multi-ethnic Army, with horses and war wagons, and the deadly accoutrements of "modern" warfare. And there's a strange light, like an aura, around them. The source of the light a huge fire, fueled by the kinds of artifacts The Postman collects for his sustenance. They're literally burning the remains of the twentieth century as they move across the land. He turns at a sound. And three Holnist Scouts, on horseback, patrolling the perimeter, are standing over him.

INT. THE FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Bethlehem and his officers sit by a fire, reading, like a Bible study class, from a book, "The Manner Of Man," by Nathan Holn.

BETHLEHEM

(reading aloud)

"...To be a successful soldier you  
must know history..." "How man  
reacts..."

(interpreting the  
text)

He's speaking here of the basic  
nature of man, which we know, of  
course, is fear...

And as if on cue, we see The Postman, his hands manacled, being brought in. Bethlehem doesn't even acknowledge his existence.

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

(reading on)

"...Weapons change, but the men  
who use them don't change at  
all..."

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

This is an interesting passage.  
When he says men don't change at  
all, what he's talking about is  
destiny.

The men appreciatively nod. The Postman makes a face like,  
"What?" A moment, and Bethlehem raises his eyes to look at  
the Scouts.

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

(to the Scouts)

What do you want?

A SCOUT

(meaning The  
Postman)

We found him roaming around.

BETHLEHEM

What are you bothering me with  
this for?

He still hasn't looked at The Postman.

THE SCOUT

I'm sorry sir. He was near the  
lines. We found these on him. We  
thought you should know about it.

He starts to hand Bethlehem The Postman's binoculars.

BETHLEHEM

(a look)

Don't ever hand anything to me.

The Scout puts them down on a table. And for the first time,  
Bethlehem looks at The Postman. Their eyes meet. After a  
moment:

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

(a smile,  
disdainful)

He looks like a very dangerous  
man...Are you a dangerous man?

And he laughs, returning to his officers, about as concerned  
with him as an elephant with a gnat on his ass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE SCOUT

What would you like us to do with  
him, sir?

BETHLEHEM

(chilling)  
Surprise me.

THE POSTMAN

(in trouble here)  
You seem like an intelligent  
man...I'm sort of a student of  
human nature myself -- I'm sure if  
you had a chance to get to know  
me...

But Bethlehem's talking with his officers. And as The  
Postman's led off to an uncertain destiny:

THE SUN RISES OVER THE FIELDS.

EXT. THE FARM - DAWN

And Bethlehem, with his coterie of officers, are riding off.  
They move across the fields. And as they ride into the  
distance, returning to their troops: It's still. The quiet  
farmhouse. A breeze swaying the weeds in the field. And we  
see The Postman, badly beaten, his shirt torn, his face  
bloody, lashed to the old windmill, a kind of crucifixion, a  
warning to others. He lifts his head, looking around him.  
A moment, and he whistles, signalling for his mules. It's  
still.

THE POSTMAN

(calling)  
John, Paul, George...Dana...

Nothing. He's quiet. All alone. There's a sound. He  
turns. And Dana, the lead mule, comes across the fields to  
the windmill. A moment, and John, always stoic, and Paul,  
the perennial follower, come across the fields. And the  
doleful-eyed George, appears on a hillside, coming down to  
the windmill. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Anybody have any ideas...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's quiet, the mules standing half-asleep. The Postman struggles to free himself. It's to no avail. Dana looks up at him. And suddenly, she turns her backside to the windmill.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(realizing)  
Don't...!

But she mule kicks the old windmill's rotted standard. It precariously sways.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(terrified)  
Let's try to think of something else...

But she kicks it again, and the standard cracks, the windmill toppling over backwards...

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(going down)  
Can't you see I'm tied to this thing...!

And the windmill crashes to the earth, splintering. The Postman lays on the ground, dazed. The mules come to stand over him. Collecting himself, he manages to get to his feet. He crosses to the barn, for his cargo. He stops. It's long gone. He's still. After some moments, he quietly gets on Dana. Battered and bruised, he slumps in the saddle. And as they ride off, into the distance, across the fields:

THE POSTMAN'S VOICE (OVER)  
(singing to himself)  
"This old man, he played one. He played knick-knack on my thumb...With a knick-knack patty-whack, give a dog a bone, this old man came rolling home..."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PRAIRIE, SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - DAY

The Postman, and his mules, move across an empty prairie. He slows. And ahead of him, sitting on the prairie, is a boat. A cabin cruiser. He rides on. And littering the prairie are boats. A sign's on the ground. "Lake Ogden." And pulling up, we see it's a dry lake bed. As The Postman and his troops ride across the dead lake:

THE POSTMAN'S VOICE (OVER)

(singing)

"...This old man, he played  
two..."

And as they disappear in the distance:

DISSOLVE TO:

A SIGN: "SALT LAKE CITY."

EXT. A FREEWAY, SALT LAKE CITY - AFTERNOON

And The Postman and his mules, ride along an empty freeway that circles the city. He starts down an off-ramp. George balks.

THE POSTMAN

I know, I know all about it...

(a standing rule)

Never go into a city...

George just looks at him with his doleful-eyes.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(after a beat)

You want to eat, don't you? Then  
we have to get the show back on  
the road.

And as they cautiously ride down the off-ramp:

EXT. SALT LAKE CITY - AFTERNOON

They come into the center city. They stop. Abandoned, the streets are covered with sand. The Great Salt Lake Desert, blown by the winds of 1998, has deposited its sand on the city. There's a sense of the biblical, "the sands of time." He rides along an avenue through the urban desert. The sand in some places piled to the second story windows of the steel and glass office buildings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The traffic signals, and the light standards, poking their heads like curious snakes out of the sand.

As he moves through the city a strong wind starts to blow, the sand swirling. Buffeted, he lowers his head into his coat against the blowing sand. The wind abates as quickly as it's come. He looks up. And he stops. The sand's shifted. It's left exposed parts of vehicles. The cars and trucks and buses, toppled and tossed by the apocalyptic winds, and buried in the sand storm thirty years ago. And although we don't see them, their passengers, buried with them, forever riding.

Respectfully, The Postman gets off his mule. He quietly walks with the mules along the street. He slows. He sees a small gold button, with the insignia of an eagle, laying in the sand. He bends to pick it up. It's attached to something. He pulls on it, and suddenly coming up from the sand is a jacket sleeve. And reaching out of the sleeve is the skeletal remains of an upturned hand. He recoils. Turning, leading the mules, he walks off. Bothered, he looks back. The hand, plaintive, reaching out of the sand. He hesitates, then slowly crosses back to it. Kneeling, he digs out the sand around the hand. As he digs:

EXT. SALT LAKE CITY - AFTERNOON

He's standing in a shallow hole. He's partially uncovered a white JEEP that's on its side. The plaintive hand reaching out of the driver's side window. There's a faded emblem on the jeep's door. An eagle. He wipes off more sand. There's lettering. "UNITED STATES." He rubs sand away. "POSTAL SERVICE." He digs the sand away. He finds the door handle. Struggling, he opens it. He leans in. And in the driver's seat, still belted in the seat, his uniform intact, with its eagle patches and a small embroidered American Flag, is the skeletal remains of a MAILMAN. His leather CARRIER'S BAG is beside him. He pulls out the mailbag.

Sitting in the street, he opens it. He takes out old, rotted, advertising flyers. Yellowed, disintegrating newspapers, with supermarket coupons. A stack of rotting magazines. There's a parcel. He unwraps it, the brown paper falling apart in his hand. Inside, is a baby's gift, an infant's sweater with small sailboats on it. And wrapped in cracked rubber-bands are packets of LETTERS. The rubber-bands break at his touch. Taking up a letter, opening it, he idly reads it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

(to the mules)

Here's a piece of good news.  
Jerry's decided to go to school to  
get his contractor's license...

He tosses it. He opens another letter. He peruses it. He turns to look at the Mailman. He reaches to take the hat off of him. Oddly respectful, he runs his fingers along the hat band. He hesitates, then puts it on. He sees his reflection in a store window. He straightens the hat. He stares at his reflection.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(singing to  
himself)

"Oh Yes, wait a minute Mr.  
Postman..."

He takes up the mailbag, putting it over his shoulder. And screwing around, he moves along the street like a mailman.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(singing as he  
goes)

"Please, please Mr.  
Postman..." "...Deliver the  
letter, the sooner the better..."

The mules run to catch up with him. And as they move along the street, just a Postman and his mules on their appointed rounds:

THE SUN, BIGGER THEN WE'VE EVER SEEN IT, SEEMS TO FILL THE SKY.

EXT. A DESERT, SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - DAY

Telecommunication satellite receivers, huge dishes, pockmarked and busted, with panels missing, pointed at the silent sky, dot the barren terrain. And far in the distance there's a puff of dust. A rider. And we see it's The Postman, like Lawrence of Arabia, crossing the desert with his mules. He's wearing the Mailman's hat and uniform, the mailbag over his shoulder. And as this latter day "Lawrence" and his mules, ride by the dishes, into the sun:

EXT. THE DESERT, SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - NIGHT

The endless desert. The sky ink, blanketed with stars. And in the middle of nowhere The Postman's lying on the ground, the mailbag for his pillow, trying to go to sleep. The mules, in silhouette, stand silently around him.

THE POSTMAN

(quietly)

I'm sorry, boys. I know how hungry and thirsty you are. I'm doing the best I can.

And Dana, the most sensitive, comes to lie beside him. She nuzzles him.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(affectionately)

I love you, too.

And John and Paul, feeling left out, come to lie beside him.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

I love you, too.

George, standing his distance, won't look at him.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(after a beat)

I even love you.

And George, hearing what he wanted to hear, comes to lie with them. The five of them lying together.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(suffocating from  
all the love)

Could you fellas give me a little room.

They make some room. It's quiet. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Goodnight.

They're still. And suddenly, The Postman brays. The mules, following suit, braying. And as they lie under the stars, braying to the heavens at the fates:

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN UTAH - DAY

The Postman, still wearing the uniform, the mailbag over his shoulder, exhausted, the mules plodding after him, comes along an empty Highway. There's a Sign: "Thank You For Visiting Utah."

THE POSTMAN  
(riding by)  
It's been fun, hasn't it kids?

And just past the first sign: "Welcome To Idaho, Land Of Potatoes." The road divides. A rusted road sign: "Twin Falls...32 miles." And another, "Pocatello...40 miles. He stops at the crossroads. It's still.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(looking at the  
empty roads)  
What do you think, fellas? Which  
way?

He looks down the roads, considering it. He looks at the mailbag. And a thought occurs to him. He grabs a handful of letters out of the mailbag. Going through them:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(reading the  
addresses)  
Baltimore, Denver, Coral Gables...

He tosses them, a breeze catching the letters, the letters rolling off in the wind.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
...Farmington, Sioux City,  
Cheyenne, Boston, Mass., Salina,  
Fresno...

And he suddenly stops.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(holding a letter)  
Twin Falls.

He stares at the envelope, a godsend. And the decision made for them, they turn onto the road to Twin Falls. As he moves down the road, still going through the mail:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 ...Las Vegas, Amarillo, Chicago,  
 Chicago, Chicago...

And as he rides off, a trail of mail littering the highway behind him, on his way down the yellow brick road:

EXT. THE SAWTOOTH MOUNTAINS, IDAHO - DAY

On a peak, with an unobstructed view, a tall wooden sentry-tower overlooks a plain. An armed SENTRY watches the horizon through binoculars. At the foot of the mountains is an old town. It's surrounded by a protective log wall. An overgrown road leading to the town's thick log gates. It looks now like Fort Apache. Twin Falls, Idaho. The Sentry, scanning the horizon, stops. And we see, from his POV, off in the distance, coming across the plain, wearing the mailman's uniform, the mailbag over his shoulder, The Postman and his mules. The Sentry fires a flare gun. And suddenly a BELL sounds from the town. The gates are swung open, and TEN ARMED MEN, on horseback, come racing out. They ride to intercept The Postman.

EXT. THE PLAIN, IDAHO - DAY

He approaches the town.

THE POSTMAN  
 Everybody ready?

He straightens his cap. The Riders come to a stop some distance from him.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (to the mules)  
 Smile, boys.

He comes to a stop.

A LEAD RIDER  
 (shouts)  
 What are you doing around here?

The Postman hesitates, then:

THE POSTMAN  
 (after a long beat)  
 United States Mail.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE LEAD RIDER

What?

THE POSTMAN

(with authority)

The United States Mail.

The Men laugh.

THE LEAD RIDER

And I'm the fucking president of  
the United States.

He sights his rifle.

THE LEAD RIDER (cont'd)

I'd strongly suggest you ride on.

The Postman studies his adversaries. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN

I'm a representative of the United  
States Government, authorized by  
order 417 of the Restored Congress  
to deliver the mail.

(after a beat)

I have to warn you that tampering  
with, or in any way obstructing  
the mail's safe passage, is a  
Federal Offense, punishable by the  
full extent of the law.

The Riders stare at him. They aren't amused. Having gone  
this far, he presses his luck:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

You are further ordered, by  
emergency legislation, the Bolin  
Act of 2025, to provide a Mail  
Carrier with sanctuary and  
nourishment to insure the  
continued orderly operation of the  
United States Postal System. I am  
formally requesting sanctuary.

And he slowly starts to ride toward the gates. The lead  
Rider fires a warning shot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE LEAD RIDER

That's far enough, asshole.

He stops.

THE LEAD RIDER (cont'd)

You have ten seconds to turn around and keep riding. If you don't, we're going to assume you're a Holnist scout, and blow your head off.

The Riders level their weapons.

THE POSTMAN

(cautiously)

I'm going to use my hands to go into my pocket now.

He slowly lowers his hands, taking a letter out of his pocket.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Is there a Jacob Williams here at 1486 Birch Street...

THE LEAD RIDER

Five seconds...

The Postman, in trouble, grabs another envelope out of his pocket. A "Publishers Clearing House Million Dollar Sweepstakes."

THE POSTMAN

Mrs. Eleanor Stevens, 1124 Ridgeway...

The Riders finger their weapons' triggers.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(digging out a letter)

...Mrs. Irene March, 4781 River Road, Twin Falls, Idaho, 83301.

And it's suddenly dead still. The Riders motionless, startled. After some moments:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A RIDER

Irene March? You have a letter  
for Irene?

THE LEAD RIDER

(for all of them,  
quietly)

You mean there's a government?

THE POSTMAN

(a sigh of relief,  
his smile)

I'm your Postman, aren't I?

And as he rides between them, moving toward the town, with a sheepish smile:

EXT. TWIN FALLS, IDAHO - DAY

What's left of the once thriving mountain community is a single dirt street with a high curb. The town's been figuratively bombed back into the nineteenth century. A small herd of cattle graze in a park where a Little League field was. A blacksmith's working. A woman washes clothes in a tub. As The Postman comes along the dusty street, the people come to line the curb watching him pass.

THE POSTMAN

Irene March?

A MAN

Follow me.

And he leads The Postman to an old frame house at the end of the street. The people hurry to follow him. Riding up to the house, he gets off his mule. The people gather in the street. There's an air of expectancy. The Postman looks at them, at their expectant faces, and he has a twinge of conscience, regretting the guise.

THE POSTMAN

(whispering)

Maybe this wasn't such a great  
idea...

But he's gone past the point of turning back. Taking the letter, he crosses to the door. He knocks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And a WOMAN, in her late fifties, blind, her eyes milked with cataracts, answers.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(seeing her, it's  
only getting worse,  
to himself)

Oh, no...

(after a beat,  
uncomfortable)

Mrs. March. I have a letter for  
you.

MRS. MARCH  
Bill Carter. This is a cruel  
joke.

THE POSTMAN  
The letter's real, Mrs. March.

And he hands her the letter. She touches it in disbelief.

MRS. MARCH  
(stunned)  
They're delivering the mail again?

THE POSTMAN  
(quietly)  
We just started.

MRS. MARCH  
My God...a letter...

She fingers the envelope, a rare jewel. Hands in his pockets, uncomfortable, The Postman turns to leave.

MRS. MARCH (cont'd)  
Would you read it?

THE POSTMAN  
(awkward)  
I'm sure it's personal...

MRS. MARCH  
Please.

She gives him the letter. He hesitates, then carefully opens it. The people move closer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

"Dear Irene. I'm sorry I haven't had a chance to write. Everything's been so crazy...The strange weather -- My God, it's been so long since it's rained... The food shortages...Businesses going under...That man from Pennsylvania causing all the trouble...It's all so hard to understand...David's home from school. You should see him. He looks two feet taller. We're going to miss you for Christmas. Maybe next year we can all be together. I hope Andy's back is better. Rob sends his love, June."

Tears drip from the old woman's eyes.

MRS. MARCH

My sister in Salt Lake...Thirty years ago. I never saw her again.

He hands her the letter. She holds it by her cheek.

MRS. MARCH (cont'd)

Thank you...

She reaches out to gratefully touch his face.

MRS. MARCH (cont'd)

You're a saviour.

THE POSTMAN

No...I'm not...

He awkwardly turns from the door.

MRS. MARCH

Will you stay for supper?

THE POSTMAN

I don't think so...I sort of lost my appetite...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He crosses to his mules. As he gets on his mule: A Man reaches to shake his hand. Other people affectionately touch him. As he rides through the crowd:

A WOMAN

When's the next mail?

THE POSTMAN

It's tough to say.

THE WOMAN

Soon?

He looks down at their hopeful faces.

THE POSTMAN

(nodding)

Well, we're doing the best we can...

ANOTHER WOMAN

Please stay...

And as the people affectionately surround him, The Postman smiling, chagrined:

INT. A STABLE - EVENING

Tallow lanterns light a stable. Horses stand in stalls. And in the middle of the stable floor The Postman's soaking in a bathtub. The mules are happily eating. A Woman comes just inside the door, carrying his uniform on a hanger.

THE WOMAN

I washed and pressed your uniform.

THE POSTMAN

Thank you.

She hangs it on a post nail.

THE WOMAN

Do you want more hot water?

THE POSTMAN

(shakes "no")

It's perfect.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE WOMAN

You need your rest.

And she leaves. The Postman lays back.

THE POSTMAN

(languid)

Have I died and gone to heaven?

He looks over at the uniform.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(to the mules, a  
smile)

Clothes make the man, boys...But a  
uniform...!

He whistles. And he turns at a sound. And a burly MAN, sooted with trail dust, rides into the stable. Dismounting, he puts his horse in a stall. As he unsaddles his horse:

THE MAN

I understand you're from the  
government. A mailman.

The Postman nods. The Man comes by the tub.

THE MAN (cont'd)

I'm Walter Briscoe...Sheriff  
here...

He offers his hand. The Postman reaches to shake his hand, when suddenly the Sheriff pushes his head under the water, holding him down. The Postman flails, struggling to breathe. The Sheriff yanks him up.

SHERIFF BRISCOE (cont'd)

I ride a three-town circuit. I  
know every piece of news, gossip,  
for two hundred miles. There  
isn't any mail service -- There  
isn't any government...Is there?!

And he ducks him again. Pulling him up.

SHERIFF BRISCOE (cont'd)

Is there?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gasping for air, The Postman shakes "no."

SHERIFF BRISCOE (cont'd)  
 (holding him by the  
 throat)  
 You're going to tell them the  
 truth.

THE POSTMAN  
 They'll kill me.

SHERIFF BRISCOE  
 Probably.

EXT. TWIN FALLS - NIGHT

The yellow light of candle lanterns flicker from a Ralph's Supermarket.

INT. A SUPERMARKET, TWIN FALLS - NIGHT

It's bare. The shelves long since emptied. All that's left as a reminder of the abundance is a faded banner heralding a special years ago, "TURKEY SAUSAGE \$2.49." In the empty aisles the townspeople are sitting at long wooden tables. Women ladle soup out of steaming kettles. And The Postman, wearing his freshly pressed uniform, followed by the Sheriff, his hand conspicuously on his holster, comes in. Seeing The Postman the people start clapping, and it grows until the supermarket is filled with applause. A Man crosses to greet The Postman.

THE MAN  
 I'm Peter Cole. Twin Falls mayor.

The Postman quietly shakes his hand. The Mayor leads him to a table. The Sheriff, his hand never leaving his holster, sits across from him. The Women finish serving the soup. A Man, stands, bowing his head. Heads bow. It's still.

THE MAN  
 Dear Lord. Thank you for the food  
 we are about to eat...And for  
 giving us hope in the person of  
 the postman.

And a VOICE, filled with belief, sings out: "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound..." The Postman turns.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A pretty young woman in her late twenties is singing. ABBY. Her eyes meet The Postman's, and she smiles. The people join her, singing, their voices raised in faith in the abandoned Ralph's. When they've finished:

THE MAYOR  
(rising, to The  
Postman)  
It's an honor, on behalf of Twin  
Falls, to welcome you.

And The Postman quietly stands. It's still. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN  
(awkward)  
I'm grateful for your  
hospitality...I'm moved by your  
faith...

He looks at Sheriff Briscoe. His hand on his holster.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(after a beat)  
But I don't want to mislead  
you...I'm not the answer to your  
prayers...

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)  
(interrupting him)  
Is there a President?

He looks across at the Sheriff. He looks at the faces of the people, desperate for something to believe in. He looks at himself. He seems to shrug...And...

THE POSTMAN  
(his boyish smile)  
There sure is. His name's  
Jonathan Swift. He's from a place  
called Henderson, Kentucky.

THE SHERIFF  
(angrily standing)  
You're a lying son-of-a-bitch!  
He's nothing but a drifter who  
found a bag of mail...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

All eyes are on The Postman.

A TOUGH LOOKING MAN  
What's the truth?

It's dead still. They stare at him.

THE POSTMAN  
(all innocence)  
The truth is, I have a job to do.  
It's a dirty job, but somebody has  
to do it.

And the real truth is, they don't want to know the truth.

A MAN  
Sit down, Walter.

A WOMAN  
Tell us about the President.

And Sheriff Briscoe angrily stalks out of the market.

THE POSTMAN  
(after a beat)  
The President. Well, he's in his  
late forties.  
(sparking to the  
task)  
He has a saying..."Things are  
getting better, getting better all  
the time."

There's a warm applause at that.

A VOICE  
Is he a Democrat or a Republican?

THE POSTMAN  
Parties are outlawed. The  
individual is what counts. You  
vote for the best man.

ANOTHER VOICE  
Are there courts of law?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

You're judged by your community.  
Common sense is the highest law.

ANOTHER VOICE

(shouts)

Is there an army?

THE MAYOR

Let the man eat his soup...There  
will be plenty of time for  
questions...

The market's filled with the good noise of optimism. The Postman sits down to eat. As he bends over his soup bowl he furtively glances at the faces. He winces, this time he's gone too far:

INT. THE RALPHS SUPERMARKET - LATER

There's the sound of a piano. A woman playing from a book of "Rock Standards." An incongruous, slow tempo version of "Stairway To Heaven." Some couples are dancing in the lantern light. The Postman is surrounded by a group of people.

THE POSTMAN

(awkward, winging  
it)

...We're hoping to have seventy  
riders bringing the mail to a  
hundred and four towns. We're  
planning to have a relay station  
in Salt Lake. I'm the first  
postman west of there...

He instinctively turns. And he sees Abby, watching him. Dark eyed, she has an illusive quality that's alluring. He's attracted to her.

ABBY

Hello.

THE POSTMAN

Hello...You have a beautiful  
voice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY

(a beat)

Do you like to dance?

THE POSTMAN

(awkward)

It's been awhile.

ABBY

(smiling)

I'll lead -- all you have to do is hold on.

He laughs. Taking her in his arms, he dances with her. She keeps looking at him.

THE POSTMAN

(self-conscious)

Is something wrong?

ABBY

(shakes "no")

I was just wondering how tall you were.

THE POSTMAN

(shrugs)

About six feet.

ABBY

Are you smart?

THE POSTMAN

I don't know. Smarter than some, stupider than others.

(smiles)

How am I doing so far?

She smiles.

ABBY

Do you have any inherited diseases?

THE POSTMAN

(enjoying her)

You sure are different.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY

I have my own way of looking at things. Does it bother you?

THE POSTMAN

I've never been accused of being predictable.

ABBY

(smiles)

That's good. I like that in a person.

She looks into his eyes.

ABBY (cont'd)

You have what my mother called, "trusting eyes." Are you trustworthy?

THE POSTMAN

(his smile)

I only lie to strangers.

She smiles. After some moments:

ABBY

Are you sterile.

THE POSTMAN

(laughs)

What?

ABBY

Can you procreate?

THE POSTMAN

(smiling)

I've never had a problem, if that's what you mean.

Seeing that's not what she means, his smile fades. They stop dancing.

ABBY

My husband had the mumps when he was younger.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY (cont'd)

There weren't any antibiotics left. He became sterile. We want a child. I need a father for it.

THE POSTMAN

(a beat)

You're serious.

And she certainly is.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(after a beat,  
awkward)

There's plenty of men here...

ABBY

There was a woman that wanted to have children. Her husband couldn't. She got pregnant by a friend of his. Everything was fine until she started showing. The men fought. One of them was killed. This is a small place. It can't be with anybody here.

THE POSTMAN

(at a rare loss for  
words)

You don't even know me.

ABBY

I know they can't just let anybody be a postman. You must be unique.

He doesn't know what to say.

ABBY (cont'd)

(a beat, her smile)

Anyway, I like your eyes.

And a YOUNG MAN comes beside them.

ABBY (cont'd)

This is my husband Daniel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

(uncomfortable)

Daniel.

ABBY

He hasn't said "no."

DANIEL

(warm)

You'd be doing us a great favor...Please think it over.

And affectionately taking Abby's hand, they walk off. The Postman watches them go. And as he looks at his uniform, troubled:

EXT. TWIN FALLS - NIGHT

The Postman moves along the quiet street. He slows. There's an old brick building. And chiseled in the stone above the door: "UNITED STATES POST OFFICE, TWIN FALLS, EST. 1863." He goes inside.

INT. TWIN FALLS POST OFFICE - NIGHT

The moon shines through the dirty windows into the abandoned post office. He wanders in the debris. He stops to look at an old framed sign. The Postman's credo: "Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night, will stay these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." He turns at a sound. And a YOUNG BLACK MAN, holding a shotgun, stands in the doorway. He has a guileless, open face. FORD MACY.

Ford

I'm on watch.

THE POSTMAN

I got that feeling.

FORD

Will the mail be coming through here...?

THE POSTMAN

Stranger things have happened.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He wanders behind the counter. He opens a closet. There are some old uniforms. He bends, picking something up. He looks at it in the moonlight. Ford comes beside him. The Postman's found a postage stamp.

THE POSTMAN

A dollar four, you could talk to the world.

He turns to leave.

FORD

My grandfather was supposed to have been a mailman. A place called Las Vegas. He showed me his uniform once...

(a beat)

How do you get to be a postman?

THE POSTMAN

You have to be in the right place at the right time...Nice seeing you.

And he starts outside.

FORD

(after him)

I'd be interested.

THE POSTMAN

The organization is kinda shaky. It might not last.

FORD

(his smile)

What does?

The Postman smiles.

FORD (cont'd)

(offering his hand)

Ford Macy.

THE POSTMAN

Good to meet you, Ford...How old are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

Nineteen...

THE POSTMAN

Wait a couple of years, see what happens.

FORD

(quietly)

There's no future here. I want to do something with my life.

The Postman's quiet.

FORD (cont'd)

What's it take?

And he sees just how badly the open-faced young man wants something, anything, he can hold onto.

THE POSTMAN

(after a beat)

Can you ride?

FORD

Horses used to scare the shit out of me.

(smiles)

But I'm okay now.

THE POSTMAN

(smiles)

Me too.

(a beat)

It's very lonely. You mind being alone?

FORD

I've been alone since I was twelve.

THE POSTMAN

You're going to run into a lot of people who won't believe you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD  
 (a smile, meaning  
 his color)  
 I'm used to being different.

THE POSTMAN  
 (smiling)  
 I like you Ford Macy.

After some moments:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (a shrug)  
 What the hell.  
 (a beat)  
 Raise your hand.

Ford does.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 Repeat after me. I, state your  
 full name, will obey the laws and  
 defend the Constitution of The  
 Restored United States.

Ford repeats after him. The Postman hesitates, trying to  
 think of something else to say. He looks over at the sign.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 And I hereby vow, that neither  
 snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor  
 gloom of night, will stop me from  
 the swift completion of my  
 appointed rounds.

Once Ford's echoed him:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 You are now empowered to carry the  
 mail, to authorize mail carriers,  
 and establish post offices.  
 (smiling, shaking  
 his hand)  
 Congratulations, you're a postman.

Ford smiles, pleased. The Postman starts to go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

When can I get started?

THE POSTMAN

Pick yourself out a uniform. Wear it around for awhile -- see what it feels like. I'll be in touch with you.

And as he smiles, and leaves:

EXT. THE STABLE - NIGHT

Crossing to the stable, he goes inside.

INT. THE STABLE - NIGHT

The mules are peacefully asleep. Some bedding's been left out for him. And he stops. A batch of LETTERS have been left for him to deliver. He winces.

THE POSTMAN

(to the mules)

Pack up, boys. I think it's time to leave.

A VOICE (OVER)

Will you deliver this for me?

He turns. And Mrs. March, holding a cane, is standing in the stable door. She takes an envelope out of her pocket.

MRS. MARCH (cont'd)

A friend wrote it for me. It's to my daughter. She left here five years ago. I haven't seen her since she was fifteen...

(distant, quiet)

How do you tell children they can't have dreams?

(a beat)

The last I had heard she was living up north in Salmon...

He quietly takes the envelope. She blindly looks at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. MARCH (cont'd)  
The sheriff's right about  
you...Isn't he?

He doesn't say anything.

MRS. MARCH (cont'd)  
It doesn't make any difference. I  
have a feeling about you. You'll  
do what's right.

And she turns to leave.

THE POSTMAN  
(a beat)  
Do you need help?

MRS. MARCH  
(shakes "no")  
I like the walk alone.

And she leaves. The Postman's quiet. Annoyed, he shoves  
the letters the people have left into his mailbag. He  
slows, looking at Mrs. March's letter. He gives a look  
like, "I'm fucked."

Undressing, he lies on the bedding. He stares at the moon  
through a missing slat in the roof. There's a slight sound.

THE POSTMAN  
Just leave it...

It's quiet. He turns. And he sees Abby is standing in the  
moonlight. She takes her dress off. She comes to lie  
beside him.

THE POSTMAN  
You sure --

She puts her finger on his lips, silencing him. She stares  
into his eyes.

ABBY  
It would make it easier for me if  
you would close your eyes.

He looks at her, and he closes his eyes. And as they make  
love:

## INT. THE STABLE - DAWN

Abby's asleep with her head on his chest. And suddenly, a gun barrel's jammed against The Postman's cheek. And the Sheriff's standing over him fingering the trigger.

## THE SHERIFF

All right, wise guy. You tell them there's a government, an army that's going to protect us!

## EXT. TWIN FALLS - MORNING

Men, holding weapons, are crouched along the walls, and on the rooftops. And across the plain, along the horizon, on horseback, in wagons, and on foot, are a battalion of HOLNIST TROOPS. And three Riders, one of them carrying aloft the Holnist Flag, rides across the plain from the Holnist line. And there's the sound of hoofbeats.

## EXT. THE PLAIN - MORNING

And riding out across the plain to meet them, are the Sheriff, the Mayor, and two other men. And trotting along on his mule, not exactly thrilled to be there, is the erstwhile Postman. The teams of riders meet midway. Besides the Holnist flag-bearer, are two Holnist officers. A wind kicks up dirt around them. And there's the sound of approaching horses. And coming across the plain, in his greatcoat, on his pale horse, along with two aides-de-camp, is Bethlehem. He stops on a rise above them. He leans forward on his saddle horn, surveying the Twin Falls men. And he stops, seeing The Postman.

## BETHLEHEM

The dangerous man!  
(after a beat)  
You seem to show up where you shouldn't be. That's a bad habit.

## THE POSTMAN

(motioning)  
Your hat's on crooked.

Bethlehem's motionless. He hasn't taken his eyes off of him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETHLEHEM  
 (a beat, meaning  
 the uniform)  
 What are you supposed to be?

THE POSTMAN  
 (barely audible)  
 The Postal Service.

BETHLEHEM  
 Excuse me?

Everyone looks at him.

THE POSTMAN  
 (a beat, awkward,  
 audibly)  
 The United States Postal Service.

And for the first time, Bethlehem laughs, hard.

BETHLEHEM  
 That's very impressive.

He looks at the Twin Falls men.

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)  
 (to one of his  
 officers)  
 Mr. Andrews.

The officer takes an official looking document out of his coat pocket.

MR. ANDREWS  
 (reading)  
 By directive of the Revolutionary  
 Council, and in accordance with  
 the Laws of Eight, the town known  
 as Twin Falls, Sector Four of the  
 Western Region, will be liberated  
 and made subject to all rules and  
 regulations of the Holnist  
 Confederacy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETHLEHEM

(after a beat,  
matter-of-factly)

One way or another, Twin Falls is going to be a part of the confederacy. With, or without bloodshed, doesn't really matter to me. You will be expected to sign a petition of unconditional surrender. You have an hour to give me your answer.

He starts to leave.

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

Good morning, gentlemen.  
(and wry, to The  
Postman)  
Mr. Postman.

And as he rides back toward his lines:

INT. AN OLD CHURCH, TWIN FALLS - DAY

The Twin Falls citizens crowd an old church. The Mayor, at the pulpit, is leading a heated discussion.

A MAN

...I have a wife and a family to think about...What you're talking about is suicide.

ANOTHER MAN

I was in a place called Omaha when the Holnists took the city. They put the men in labor camps... They sent the women and children to indoctrination centers...I'll take my chances with "suicide"...

A MAN'S VOICE

...What does the government have to say?

And they all turn to look in the back of the room at The Postman. He turns as if expecting to see somebody from the "government" had walked in...and he remembers they mean him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A MAN

What's the government going to do about it? Is the army on its way?

THE POSTMAN

(awkward)

Well, the government's struggling to survive. I think it will be some time before we'll see the army out here.

He hopes that takes him off the hook. But he's not going to get off that easy.

ANOTHER MAN

What do you think we should do?

And it's quiet, all eyes on him. He uncomfortably puts his hands in his pockets.

THE POSTMAN

I'm not a very brave man. I'd rather talk than fight.

He looks around the church. And he finds himself, with the courage the uniform gives him, surprising himself, and rising to the occasion:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(shrugs)

I don't know, maybe some things are worth fighting for?

And as they look at him:

EXT. THE PLAINS - DAY

Wind swirls across the empty plain. And we see The Postman, holding a white truce flag, the wind ruffling his uniform, riding on his mule toward the Holnist lines. An escort rides out to meet him. He's led through the lines. He looks at the Holnist "soldiers". A wildly disparate group of men, from "believers" and mercenaries, to conscripts and forced labor. He's escorted to a field tent. Officers, standing around a camp table, pore over maps. He's shown into the tent.

## INT. BETHLEHEM'S FIELD TENT - DAY

His escort leaves. The Postman, left alone. He looks around the General's tent. On a small table there's an old framed photograph of Bethlehem and Nathan Holn. As he looks at it:

BETHLEHEM (OVER)

That was taken in Detroit after  
the Battle at Dearborn Hills.

The Postman turns, and Bethlehem, buttoning a clean tunic, has come out of his quarters.

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

I was twenty-five...The army's  
youngest field commander...

THE POSTMAN

(meaning  
Bethlehem's battle  
ribbons, wry)

That's a lot of fruit salad.

BETHLEHEM

(motioning at the  
battle ribbons)

The Battle of Baltimore, The  
Louisiana Campaign, The Second  
Atlanta, Memphis, St. Louis...

And hearing St. Louis, The Postman stops. He's dead still.

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

(buttoning his  
tunic, impatient)

Well, what's their answer?

THE POSTMAN

By a vote of 197-64...they said...  
(after a beat)

Fuck you, Jack!

Bethlehem smiles at their response. He opens the tent flap.

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

(laughs, wry)

..You better get back to your  
"postmen"...They're going to need  
you...

They look at each other. And as The Postman leaves:

EXT. THE PLAIN - DAY

The Postman, plodding along, on his way back to Twin Falls, finds himself alone, halfway between the two forces. He stops. He has a chance to run for the hills. He's quiet. He looks at the Holnist line. He looks at Twin Falls. He looks at his uniform. And in spite of himself, he feels an obligation. He can't escape it.

THE POSTMAN

Shit...

He slumps his shoulders. And as he rides back toward Twin Falls:

THERE IS THE SOUND OF URGENT SHOUTS

EXT. TWIN FALLS - DAY

And a Man, carrying weapons, comes running across the street. Men, sighting weapons, are crouched along the walls. A machine gun is hauled up a ladder. People hurry, unloading wagons, piling furniture, cabinets, beds, anything that's heavy, barricading the gates. And The Postman, lending a hand, muttering to himself at his situation, hoists a box of ammunition up onto a wall. He gives it to a man. Turning, hands in his pockets, he looks out across the plain, dealing with the fates. And Ford, wearing a postman's uniform, carrying his shotgun and a rifle, comes running along the wall. He comes beside The Postman, saluting him.

THE POSTMAN

(chagrined)

Please, don't do that!

Ford drops the salute. And he sees The Postman's unarmed. He gives him the rifle. The Postman, awkward:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

I'm not much with one of these.

Ford

(his open smile)

Fake it. I'm "bad" enough for both of us.

And there's a rebellious shout. And Daniel, Abby's husband, raises an old American Flag over a building. Shouting, to the Postman:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DANIEL  
God Bless America!

The Postman waves.

THE POSTMAN  
(muttering to  
himself)  
Oh, no...

And a shot sounds from the Holnist line. The Holnist troops start advancing on Twin Falls, spreading out across the plain. Flatbed war-wagons are driven forward, mortars in their beds. The mortars are fired, their shells whistling into town. Over-shooting the walls, they burst through the windows of an abandoned McDonald's, a deserted Warehouse Records.

And a monster gun, a huge cannon mounted on the back of an old John Deere semi, pulled by a team of ten horses, is rolled up. It's fired, thumping away, the rounds whistling into the town.

The acrid pall of gunpowder hazes the plain. And suddenly, out of the pall, a line of Holnist troops, a forward unit, ride for the walls. The Twin Falls fighters open up on them. The Holnists are cut to ribbons. The Fighters shout, triumphant. It's shortlived. A Holnist manages to reach the gates. He throws a stick of dynamite.

And there's a tremendous explosion, blowing out the gates. And another wave of assault troops attack. A ferocious gun battle rages. The walls are under siege. The Twin Falls men, outnumbered and outgunned, are forced to retreat. The Postman and Ford scramble down off the walls, onto the street. Holnists are everywhere.

FORD  
(to the Postman)  
This way...

He runs with Ford into an alley. A Holnist rides into the alley, coming after them. Ford turns, firing, blowing a shotgun hole in the man's chest. The Postman looks at Ford as if to say: "You are 'bad.'" As they run for the mouth of the alley another Holnist comes after them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD (cont'd)  
 (to The Postman)  
 Over here...

They cut through an overgrown parking lot and into a Sears.

INT. A SEARS - DAY

They run through the abandoned store, past the Allstate Insurance booths, and up an escalator. And a Holnist, riding into the store, comes up the escalator after them. Turning, Ford fires, stopping him, the horse falling backwards off the escalator onto the floor. And some more Holnists come riding into the store.

Ford and The Postman run across the second floor, down the aisles of useless appliances. Splitting up, they scramble, hiding behind some refrigerators. The Holnists ride up the escalator onto the second floor. They sweep the floor firing automatic weapons, the bullets riddling the refrigerators. The Postman and Ford huddle behind the refrigerators under the fusillade. The Postman shakes his head as if to say, "...How did I ever get myself into this?" He looks over at the innocent young Ford in the postman's uniform. And he feels a responsibility. And muttering to himself, a reluctant hero, he suddenly stands, whistling for them to stop shooting.

THE POSTMAN  
 Hold it...Hold it...I'm coming  
 out...

And with his arms raised, he comes out from behind the refrigerators.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (his smile)  
 Nice shooting.

He slightly turns, nods a subtle "goodbye" to Ford, and he's led off. As Ford lays motionless, hiding behind a Whirlpool:

EXT. TWIN FALLS - DAY

The Postman, arms raised, is led out of the Sears. The street's littered with bodies and dead horses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A Holnist, on a rooftop, lowers the American Flag, and raises the Holnist colors. And more survivors are led out of the buildings, moving into the street, their arms raised in surrender. The Battle of Twin Falls is history.

EXT. TWIN FALLS - AFTERNOON

Holnist troops line the street. It's deathly still. The townspeople in the sanctuary of their dark houses. And a Holnist Officer, standing in the street, is reading an announcement, his voice carrying in the still street.

THE OFFICER

...All men under the age of fifty, and over the age of thirteen, will be inducted in the Army. All arms, weapons, provisions, goods, and possessions, are property of the Holnist Confederacy. All residents will be considered illegal aliens, and required to take an oath of allegiance to the confederacy. A dusk to dawn curfew is in effect. Violators will be shot...

And triumphantly riding into town, flanked by his staff officers, is Bethlehem. He moves along the quiet street, saluting his men as he passes. He rides to a frame house at the end of the block with a Holnist Flag out front. As he lights a cigar, standing on the porch with his officers:

INT. A COURTROOM, TWIN FALLS - AFTERNOON

An old courtroom. Soldiers ring the court. A Holnist Officer, a small green book at his elbow, "The Laws Of Eight," sits at the Judge's bench. Bethlehem, wearing his greatcoat, sits off to the side in a straight-back chair. And standing before the bench, under guard, are the Sheriff, the Mayor, Daniel, some other men, and The Postman.

THE JUDICIAL OFFICER

...In violation of Law 7, you have been found guilty of crimes against the state...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE JUDICIAL OFFICER (cont'd)

(intoning)

By the authority vested in me by  
the Revolutionary Council, and  
Emergency Order 46, you are  
sentenced to death.

(a beat)

May God forgive you.

THE POSTMAN

Is there some kind of appeals  
process?

Not in this lifetime. The Guards start to take them away.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(to Bethlehem)

I thought the Holnist "Revolution"  
was supposed to be about justice?

Bethlehem looks at him.

BETHLEHEM

Did you ever hear Nathan Holn's  
"New Order" speech?

THE POSTMAN

(wry)

I must've missed that one...

BETHLEHEM

He said, "I'm tired of people  
complaining there's no justice..."  
"If you don't like what's  
happening in this country, get  
your guns and do something about  
it."

THE POSTMAN

What about a little thing called  
"democracy?"

BETHLEHEM

(disdainful)

Democracy is a privledge, not a  
right...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

He said, "When men can no longer shoulder the burden of freedom, when they no longer vote, when they allow others to do their thinking for them, they have forfeited that privilege." There is only one great inalienable right. "The right to survive."

(simply put)

You, I'm afraid, have lost that right.

THE POSTMAN

Is this open for discussion?

Bethlehem motions, and as the men are taken out:

EXT. TWIN FALLS - NIGHTFALL

The townspeople silently stand along the curbs. Holnists, sitting on their horses, flank the street. Bethlehem sits on his pale horse in the middle of the street with his officers. And dangling at the end of ropes, hung from the light standards, are the bodies of Daniel, the Mayor, and the Sheriff. Abby, heartbroken, sits in the street under her husband's still figure. And The Postman, on a horse, his hands tied behind his back, is led along the street. He's taken under a lamppost. A noose is put around his neck.

THE POSTMAN

(to Bethlehem,  
desperate)

Wasn't Nathan Holn's last words to his followers, "Be Merciful?"

BETHLEHEM

"Mercy is given, not taken." The third Law of Eight.

THE POSTMAN

Huh?

The noose is tightened around his neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(a last gasp)

You sure you want to do this?  
I'll be a martyr. They'll write  
poems about me...Sing folk  
songs...Do you really want to hear  
people singing folk songs?

Bethlehem, ignoring him, motions to a Guard.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Wait...!

But the Guard smacks the horse. It runs off. The Postman's  
left hanging, writhing. It's quiet. And suddenly a Woman  
shouts:

THE WOMAN

God Bless the Postman --!

And some other people shout out...A clarion call..."God  
Bless the Postman..." It grows until it fills the street.  
Bethlehem looks at The Postman's hanging figure.

BETHLEHEM

(after a beat)

Cut him down...!

A Guard cuts him down. The Postman falls into the street,  
struggling to breathe. Bethlehem rides over to him.

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

(to the people,  
magnanimous)

I'm a merciful man.

(and to The  
Postman, quietly)

You're right. You're nothing but  
a pathetic clown. Why should I  
make a martyr out of you...?

The Postman's motionless.

BETHLEHEM (cont'd)

(smiles, wry)

What are you waiting for? Don't  
you have mail to deliver?  
People are depending on you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And The Postman quietly picks himself up. He walks along the street. The townspeople, along the curbs, silently watch him. He looks up, and he sees Abby. He affectionately looks at her. Turning, he slowly walks through the town. He walks out the gates. And as he walks off, a small figure in his uniform, moving off into the distance:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PLAINS, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - NIGHT

The Postman, the moon at his back, walks along an empty road.

THE POSTMAN

(half-singing)

"This old man, he played one...He  
played knick-knack on my thumb..."

And as he walks into the night:

EXT. THE RANGE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAYBREAK

A morning mist shrouds a small range lake. A "lake," is a misnomer, really just a big mud hole. And The Postman, naked, waist deep in the water, quietly scrubs the dirt off of him. And there's the sound of a horse in the distance. The Postman stops, peering through the mist. And a Rider comes racing toward the lake, bearing down on him. The Postman's defenseless. And as the Rider gallops out of the mist, we see it's Ford. Wearing his uniform, carrying The Postman's mailbag, he's leading The Postman's mules. And the animals, seeing their friend, run into the water, surrounding him, all of them, including The Postman, braying, happy to see each other. As The Postman looks at Ford, grateful:

EXT. THE RANGE LAKE - MORNING

The mist's lifted. The sun filling the sky. The Postman, wearing the only clothes he has, the uniform, gets on Dana. Ford rides over to him, giving him his mailbag.

FORD

(enthusiastic)

...Where do we go? Where do we  
take the mail from here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

(come to his  
senses)

The mail...? There's two thousand  
Holnist assholes coming this way  
and you're worried about the  
mail...?

Ford's quiet.

FORD

(hurt)

I took an oath. You said I was a  
postman.

(a beat)

I believed you.

And The Postman's quiet. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN

(sincerely)

Look, I'm sorry, Ford. I'm just  
trying to keep my head above  
water.

Ford's silent.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(after a beat)

I've been looking for a place  
called St. Rose. When I find it  
none of this will matter...Do you  
want to ride with me?

Ford doesn't say anything. There's an awkward quiet. The  
Postman, truly sorry, shrugs. And turning, the mules  
plodding after him, he starts to ride off. But he can't  
help himself, and he slows, looking back at Ford. And  
quickly turning, he rides back to him.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

You want to be a postman so bad --  
here...

And he tosses him the mailbag.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Good luck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They look at each other, and turning, he rides out with his mules across the barren range. And as Ford, holding the mailbag, watches him ride away.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

A strip of cracked two-lane blacktop that runs across the stark range land. And in the distance, riding along the empty Highway, comes our troop. There's a marked difference. Their ride seems purposeless, aimless. And as they move along the empty Highway:

EXT. A TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - AFTERNOON

They come along the main street of a small abandoned town. It's a scene we've become accustomed to, the empty stores, husks of rusted cars, dark traffic lights. As he stops at a silent street corner:

EXT. A HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - AFTERNOON

A sea of tract homes. And there's an old rusted sign:

"WARNING. TOXIC WASTE. BE ADVISED THIS AREA HAS BEEN CONDEMNED. NO TRESPASSING."

And riding through the empty tract is The Postman and his mules. Contaminated, the earth has literally slumped, some of the houses tilted as they fall into the sagging earth. He comes along a quiet street past the rows of deserted homes. He dismounts. As they go into a house:

EXT. THE HOUSING TRACT, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - NIGHT

The moon hangs over the dark, silent, neighborhood street. And we see The Postman and his mules standing in a living room window, their faces pressed against the glass, looking outside.

EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

The pack mules, laden with "artifacts" again, stand in the street. And The Postman, wearing some old levis he's found, a Nike cross-trainer on one foot, a shoe on the other, and a tee-shirt with a late 20th century Rock Group's logo, comes out of a house carrying a Fax machine. He puts it on top of George's pile. He secures the mules' ropes. And as they ride off:

EXT. A SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

A knot of people stand in the street listening as The Postman puts on his show. He goes through his familiar paces. But there's something missing. He's lost his sense of humor. His wry amusement's gone. It all rings hollow.

A BOY

What's this?

He's holding the mailman's hat.

THE POSTMAN

(a beat)

That's...nothing...

And as he does his best to give his patented rap:

EXT. THE HIGH DESERT, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - NIGHT

The endless dark land. And there's a prick of light. And we see The Postman, sitting on the ground, the mules asleep around him, reading a "Hammacher Schlemmer" catalogue by the light of a tiny plastic key-ring flashlight, "Idaho Savings And Loan." He puts the catalogue down. It's quiet. Empty. He's utterly alone. He looks at his things, the sum total of his existence. Where he's been, and where he's going. He's still. And he sees the mailman's uniform coat. Getting up, he puts it on. He runs his hand over the fabric. He feels an envelope in a pocket. He takes it out. The letter Mrs. March had sent. He looks at it. As he stands in the dark, wearing the coat, looking at the letter:

THERE'S AN OLD BILLBOARD WITH A PICTURE OF A FISH WITH ITS MOUTH OPEN. "WELCOME TO SALMON, IDAHO." "HOME OF THE BIG FISH."

EXT. THE SALMON RIVER, IDAHO - DAY

And coming down a riverbank is The Postman and his mules. The once mighty Salmon River has been reduced to a trickle. He crosses the river. He comes up onto a far bank. He slows. And living along the riverbank, and in the trees, in shanties and makeshift tree-houses, is an encampment of TEENAGERS. A desolate, joyless group, stricken with lethargy and apathy, this isn't Camp Shalom in the Poconos. The Postman rides into the encampment. The teenagers come to see what's going on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN  
I'm looking for Susan March...

A VOICE (OVER)  
I'm Susan March.

He turns, and a young Girl, with red hair, comes down toward him.

SUSAN  
(suspicious)  
What do you want?

THE POSTMAN  
I have a letter for you...

She slows. He takes the letter out of his pocket, giving it to her.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
It's from your mother...

She stares at him in disbelief.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Why don't you read it?

She looks at him, then opens the letter. She quietly reads it. A breeze accentuates the stillness. Finished, she puts it down, the paper blowing in her hand.

SUSAN  
(moved)  
I never really had a chance to say  
goodbye...

And tears of sadness fill her eyes. After some moments:

A YOUNG BOY  
You mean they're delivering mail  
again...?

THE POSTMAN  
(awkward)  
I guess I'm the only one...

SUSAN  
Why are you doing this?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

Your mother asked me to...

A GIRL

Could you take a letter to Hammond? My parents don't know where I am...

A YOUNG BOY

(excited)

You think I can send something to my brother...?

THE POSTMAN

I can't make any promises...

But it doesn't seem to matter. At the thought of contact with the world, they seem like just kids with hopes and dreams again. The Postman looks at their young faces. And for the first time in his life, he feels like he has some purpose.

EXT. THE SALMON RIVER - AFTERNOON

And The Postman, sitting on his mule, surrounded by the teenagers, is collecting letters, scraps of paper, anything they could write messages on. He looks at Susan.

THE POSTMAN

Take care of yourself...

And he starts to leave, the teenagers walking alongside him, seeing him off. He rides back down to the river. And as he crosses the river with his mules, riding away:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

It's raining. And The Postman, sitting on his mule in a dirt street, watches as a Woman (somebody's mother), standing on her porch, opens a letter. As she reads the letter, The Postman turning with his troops, riding off:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PRAIRIE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DUSK

And far off in the distance, in silhouette against the darkening sky, we see The Postman, wearing his hat and uniform, the mules plodding along after him. And as they ride, like a pen and ink drawing, across the horizon:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PRAIRIE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

The Postman and his mules come across the endless, barren prairie. And seeing something, he slows. And in the middle of nowhere, its branches in silhouette, like a tree growing in Brooklyn, stands a small, solitary, apple tree. He looks with wonder at the tree. And suddenly, there's the distant sound of a horse. He turns. And far off in the distance a rider's coming hard across the prairie. He comes closer and closer. And as the rider crosses their path, in shouting distance, The Postman abruptly stops. And we see it's a young Girl. No more than fourteen, she's wearing a postman's uniform, a mailbag over her shoulder. She slows.

THE GIRL

(deadpan, shouting)

Emily O'Brian, South Idaho Postal  
District...Any letters?

And for once, he's speechless. And with no time to stop, she races off. And as The Postman, stopped dead in his tracks, looks after her as if to say, "What the fuck --?"

EXT. A TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

A small roadside prairie town. And we see Emily, still dusty from her ride, sitting on the curb outside of an abandoned "7-11." And standing alongside her, in mailman's uniforms, are two young men. CHARLIE BOWAN, a rangy, amiable boy in his early twenties, and TOMMY DODD, a long-haired boy just seventeen. A small crowd of people are in the street. And standing in the street, in his postman's uniform, delivering mail, is the guileless true believer, Ford Macy.

FORD

(holding up an  
envelope)

...A Mr. Roger Larson...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A MAN  
(astonished)  
That's for me...

FORD  
Anne Porter...

And we see, riding into town, The Postman and his mules. He stops at the end of the street.

Ford finishes delivering the mail.

FORD (cont'd)  
(after a beat)  
...We need your help...We can't do it alone...We can offer you a uniform, three meals a day, and a chance to be a part of something you can believe in...Is there anyone who wants to join us...?

And there's a familiar voice, over:

THE FAMILIAR VOICE (OVER)  
Three meals a day?

Ford turns. And riding through the crowd is The Postman. They look at each other. And The Postman breaks into a smile.

FORD  
(a beat, his smile)  
What took you?

EXT. THE PRAIRIE - NIGHT

The little band of mailmen are camped on the prairie. A campfire's burning. Emily, and the young men, are asleep on the ground in bedrolls. And Ford and The Postman, sitting by the fire, are looking at an old Automobile Club Road Map.

FORD  
(motioning)  
...We've been carrying the mail in this area...We've gone from two or three pieces of mail a day to over thirty pieces a day...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Postman nods. He's quiet. He stares at the fire. After some moments, a reverie:

THE POSTMAN

...We'll put a post office in every town, and we'll have an army of postmen delivering the mail...

And getting caught up in the idea...

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Families will get to know each other again. People will exchange ideas and information. We'll bring them hope...We'll be united again...

(a beat)

...We'll beat the Holnists...

And catching himself, he laughs at the whole idea. And they're quiet. He looks at his "army," the extent of the United States Postal Service, for that matter, the entire United States Government, and it doesn't exactly inspire confidence. He looks at Ford, his ever hopeful face. After a moment, shrugging:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

What the hell...

He affectionately puts his arm around Ford.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(his smile)

Let's go for it...

AND THERE'S THE STACCATO SOUND OF HOOFBEATS.

EXT. A HIGHWAY - DAWN

And The Postman and his mules, with Ford, Emily, and the two boys, mailbags over their shoulders, come riding along an empty Highway. Some moments, and Tommy, the long-haired boy, turns off the road, riding out across the prairie. Further along, Charlie, waving, rides off. And then, Emily, stoic, rides away. The Postman and Ford move along the Highway. They come to an intersecting road. They look at each other. And Ford, about to ride off, salutes him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Postman starts to say something about the saluting, hesitates, and shrugging, salutes him back. And Ford, on a mission from God, rides off. The Postman moves along the Highway. He smiles to himself, in general, ironic. But in spite of his skepticism, he urges Dana to pick up the pace. He goes into a trot. And it becomes a full gallop. And as we pull up, and we can see each of the "postmen" going their separate ways, galloping off, with a purpose:

EXT. THE RANGE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

There's a small ramshackle house, off a rural road, in the middle of nowhere. And a family, a man, woman, and their children, stand in the front of their house. And The Postman, sitting on his mule, takes some letters from them. And as he turns, the mules plodding after him, riding off across the range:

EXT. A FARM TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

An old grain elevator looks out over what was once a thriving farming community. The town's virtually abandoned. And the few remaining farm families, farm potatoes in a hardscrabble field. And Ford, rides across the field to them.

FORD

(his smile)

Hello. My name's Ford Macy. I'm  
with the United States Postal  
Service...

And as he takes a letter out of his mailbag:

EXT. A TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

The town, never more than a blink, is deserted. Some horses and wagons are outside what was once a rural grocery and feed store.

INT. THE RURAL GROCERY STORE - DAY

The old store is crowded. Crowded with men, women, and their children, who have made the journey from the small pockets of "civilization." There's the good noise of conversations. People talking with "neighbors" for the first time in years. And the reason for their journey is at the back of the store.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There's a counter where a Post Office once was. And inside the station, is our friend The Postman.

THE POSTMAN

Ladies and Gentlemen...

They quiet.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

...For President Swift, and the First Congress of The Restored United States, I officially declare, Postal Station 8...

(a beat)

What's the name of this town?

A MAN

(shrugs)

We haven't needed one...

THE POSTMAN

(a beat)

...I officially declare, Postal Station 8...

(wry)

...Elvis...Elvis, Idaho, open for business...

And as he smiles:

EXT. THE RANGE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - NIGHT

The moon lights the range. There's the sound of hoofbeats. And riding hard, in the moonlight, is Ford. And as he races across the range, far off in the distance, there's an ominous light.

EXT. THE RANGE, SOME LOW HILLS - NIGHT

The light is coming from the other side of some hills. We move down, and camped along the range, as far as the eye can see, their fires roaring, is the Holnist Army.

And we see Bethlehem, on his pale horse, with an OFFICER, and two other men, on the top of a hill. Looking through binoculars, Bethlehem watches as Ford, the mailbag over his shoulder, rides across the range. A moment, and lowering his binoculars, Bethlehem turns to the Officer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETHLEHEM

I want you to find out what the  
fuck is going on!?

And as he rides down the back of the hill to his troops:

THE MOON SEEMS AS BIG AS THE EARTH.

EXT. A HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The moon hovers over an empty Interstate. And riding along the empty road, the mailbag on his back, looking like some kind of post-Apocalypse Don Quixote, comes The Postman and his mules. As they seem to ride into the moon:

THE POSTMAN'S VOICE (OVER)

Repeat after me...

EXT. A SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

A deserted range town. And in the middle of the street, sitting on his mule, is The Postman. And on horses, wearing postman's uniforms, mailbags over their shoulders, are a group of men and women of various ages. Their hands are raised, taking the oath.

THE POSTMAN

...I, state your full name, will  
obey the laws, protect and defend,  
The Constitution of The Restored  
United States of America.

They repeat after him.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

And I hereby vow, that neither  
snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor  
gloom of night, will stop me from  
the swift completion of my  
appointed rounds...

As they echo him:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

A little Boy, holding a letter, stands in the middle of an empty dirt road. He patiently waits. And after some moments, a Rider, wearing a postman's uniform, a mailbag on his back, comes galloping along the road. The little Boy reaches to hand him the letter. The Rider, without breaking stride, takes it, racing off. As the little Boy turns to walk back along the country road:

THE AUTOMOBILE CLUB ROAD MAP IS SUPERIMPOSED ON THE SCREEN. AS WE FOLLOW THE LETTER'S PROGRESS:

EXT. AN OLD HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

The Rider gallops south along what was Highway 12. As he rides off:

EXT. A PRAIRIE TRUCK STOP, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

Another Postman waits on a horse in a road outside of a deserted truck stop. And the First Rider comes galloping along the road. The Second Rider takes off. The First Rider catching up to him, handing him the mailbag. As the rider races away with the mail:

EXT. THE PRAIRIE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

Still Another Postman, carrying the mailbag, races across the prairie. As he rides off in a cloud of dust:

EXT. THE RAMSHACKLE HOUSE, THE IDAHO RANGE - DAY

The isolated family's small house off the country road. And another Rider, in his postman's uniform, sits on the porch steps, waiting. Seeing the dust of the approaching Rider, he turns and jumps on his horse, starting off across the range. The Rider catches up to him throwing him the mailbag. As the new Rider gallops away:

EXT. A TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - TWILIGHT

The outskirts of a small town. Old, mostly deserted, wood frame tract houses, are along a street. A Mailman rides up to a house. Getting off his horse, he crosses to knock on the door.

THE MAILMAN  
Mail for you Mr. Davis...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An older Man takes the letter.

THE OLDER MAN

Thanks Bob.

The Mailman rides off. The old Man sits on his front steps. He opens the letter. In a child's handwriting:

"Dear Grandpa. I lost a tooth.  
I hope I can meet you sometime. I  
love you anyway.  
Jimmy Davis."

And the boy's tooth is in the envelope. As the old man sits on his steps, the letter in his hand:

WE LOOK FOR A LAST TIME AT THE SUPERIMPOSED ROAD MAP, AND HOW WE GOT TO HERE:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A POST OFFICE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

And we see The Postman, busy, cranking an old hand operated printing machine, printing out flyers...There's a drawing, as if somebody was whispering in somebody else's ear a warning. And in big letters: "PASS IT ON..." "BE PREPARED!" "THE HOLNISTS ARE COMING!"

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

And there's the sound of a horse. And a postman comes galloping through the town. And as he distributes the flyers, alerting the citizens:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - MORNING

Hoofbeats pound the pavement. And a detachment of Holnist Soldiers, a flag bearer holding their flag, come riding along an empty Highway approaching a small town. And as they come up a rise, suddenly appearing in the road ahead of them, waiting for them, is a line of armed townspeople. They attack. And as the Holnists are routed:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ELVIS, IDAHO - DAY

It's quiet. A small handmade flag, ruffling in the breeze, hangs outside the rural grocery store. On the flag is an eagle. The Postal Service eagle. And a Man, wearing a postman's uniform comes outside. The Elvis Postmaster. He quietly sweeps the porch. And the day's stillness is broken by the sound of riders. And riding through the town is the Holnist OFFICER and five Holnist Soldiers. The Postmaster turns back into the store.

As the Soldiers come along the street, the Holnist Officer, sensing something's wrong, slows. He instinctively looks up. He stops. And our main man, The Postman, his hands quietly in his pockets, is standing on an old building's roof. And along the street, on the rooftops, ready for them, are citizens armed with rifles and shotguns. One of the soldiers fires at them. And the citizens open up on them, catching them in a vicious cross-fire, cutting them down. The Officer, mortally wounded, rides away. And the people, standing on the rooftops, raising their arms triumphant, salute The Postman. And as The Postman, uncomfortable with the adulation, waves:

EXT. THE RANGE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

The forward arm of the Holnist Army is coming across the range. And we see the mortally wounded Officer, covered with blood, slowly riding to them. Bethlehem, with some of his men, ride over to him. The Officer, slumped in the saddle, manages to say:

THE OFFICER

The Postman...

Bethlehem's still. He turns to an Aide, a Tall Man in a broad-brimmed cavalry hat.

BETHLEHEM

(quietly)

Find him...Kill him...I want this  
shit stopped!

And as he turns, silently looking out across the range:

LONG DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A RECREATION VEHICLE PARK, ON THE SNAKE RIVER, IDAHO -  
LATE AFTERNOON

Armed postmen ride sentry on the perimeter of an old R.V. PARK. Rows of rusted trailers and mobile homes sit on flattened tires. And it's busy, uniformed mailmen coming and going. There's the familiar sound of brays. And we see The Postman and his troop riding into the R.V. Park. As he rides through the park the mailmen stop, deferentially saluting the "living legend". There's even the sound of a guitar, a man sitting on a trailer's steps, playing what sounds suspiciously like a folk song. The Postman winces, chagrined. He rides up to a rusted Winnebago with a Postal Service flag out front. And standing in the doorway, still dirty from the trail, is Ford and Charlie. The Postman and Ford look at each other.

THE POSTMAN

(a beat)

What's for dinner?

And as they smile at what they've accomplished:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE R.V. PARK - DAYBREAK

The sky is a color we've never seen before. And The Postman and his mules, along with Ford, Charlie, and the long-haired Tommy, ride out through the Park. They reach an empty Highway.

CHARLIE

We're going up north to Montana...

And waving, he and Tommy ride off. Ford and The Postman move along the Highway.

FORD

I heard there's some towns in Nevada...I'm going to see what I can get started down there...

THE POSTMAN

(nods)

I'm going to Maui...

He smiles, but Ford doesn't know what the hell he's talking about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (seriously)  
 I'm going west, toward Oregon...

FORD  
 (a beat)  
 Take this...

And he gives him one of his rifles.

FORD (cont'd)  
 (affectionately)  
 I don't want anything to happen to  
 you.

And touched, he takes it in the spirit it was given. He awkwardly puts it in his saddle boot.

THE POSTMAN  
 (after a beat)  
 Keep in touch, kid...

They look at each other. And they tap crisp salutes on the brims of their hats. The Postman smiles, wry. And turning, they go their separate ways. And as The Postman and his mules ride off along the ribbon of Highway under the lunatic sky:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ANOTHER HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

The Postman's standing on a billboard looking through binoculars across the horizon. And far off in the distance, across the range, there's the silhouette of a town.

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

They come along an overgrown Highway. It's curiously busy. Riders and wagons coming and going. And ahead of them, along the road, beyond it some distant mountains, and beyond them, the unknown Oregon, is the small town.

EXT. THE SMALL TOWN - DAY

They ride across a bridge over a river. They come onto a main street. There's an abandoned Holiday Inn, an old movie theater, banks, etc.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There are cooking fires. People living in the abandoned buildings, on the street, and in the rusted husks of vehicles. And at the end of the town, along the range, are rows of tents. The town a latter day "frontier" outpost.

He comes along a tent row. An arms market flourishes. Stacks of weapons of all kinds. There's a sign outside a tent: "Settlers Wanted." A Man, urging people to go with him to:

THE MAN

...The jewel of the northwest...  
Seattle.

A BYSTANDER

There isn't a Seattle anymore,  
asshole. It's under fifteen feet  
of water.

And another Man outside a tent, offering:

THE MAN

Real Estate...Thousands of acres  
for sale, dirt cheap, in Oregon...

And still another Man, a latter day Kit Carson, promising:

THE MAN

Safe passage to California. I was  
the first man to set foot in Los  
Angeles since the earthquakes. I  
know the trails better then any  
man alive...

The Postman rides along the tents. A FAT MAN is outside one of the tents. An armed Man behind him. And some men are standing in the street.

THE FAT MAN

...Do you need somebody to do your  
cooking? Your cleaning? Sleep  
with you when you want it -- stay  
out of your way when you don't...

He motions to the armed man. He goes into the tent.

THE FAT MAN (cont'd)

I've got some women here...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And the armed man comes back out with a battered young Woman.

THE FAT MAN (cont'd)  
Twenty-four years old. Never been married.

An older Man comes closer. He looks at her. Holding his hat.

THE MAN  
I've been alone for ten years...I have a place near Caldwell...It isn't much...but it's comfortable enough -- It could be a home...

She's stoic.

THE FAT MAN  
(all business)  
What do you have in mind?

THE MAN  
I have some cattle...

The Postman, sickened, turns to leave.

THE FAT MAN  
What's your hurry? I have just what you're looking for.

The Postman gives him a disdainful look, starting to ride off.

THE FAT MAN (cont'd)  
Does she interest you?

The Postman slightly turns. The armed man is bringing another woman out of the tent. And the Postman stops. And coming out of the tent, bruises on her face, is ABBY. She turns and sees him. They touchingly look at each other. The Postman gets off his mule. He crosses to Abby. Taking off his hat, he touches her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN  
 (after a beat,  
 turning)  
 What's the matter with you? This  
 woman's very sick!

THE FAT MAN  
 What are you talking about?  
 There's nothing wrong with her.

The Postman touches her skin.

THE POSTMAN  
 I'm a doctor. She has jaundice...

Looking in her eyes:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 Her pupils are dilated...

And tenderly examining her:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 ...Swollen glands...a high  
 fever...irregular pulse  
 rate...dehydration...hair loss  
 ...tremors...  
 (a beat)  
 My diagnosis would be malaria...

THE FAT MAN  
 (suspiciously)  
 What is this bullshit --?

THE POSTMAN  
 (adroit)  
 Has she recently been anywhere  
 near Twin Falls?

The Fat Man stops.

THE FAT MAN  
 (a beat)  
 That's where I got her from.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

(nodding)

Well, that explains it. There's a vicious epidemic there. I'm surprised you didn't get it...

(slowing, looking at him, frowning)

As a matter of fact your skin's pretty yellow...

The Fat Man looks at his skin.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(taking Abby's arm)

I'm going to have to put her under quarantine.

He helps her onto Paul. He gets on Dana.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(a parting look)

I'd get that taken care of if I was you.

(shrugs)

It's probably too late already.

(a beat)

It's a slow, agonizing, miserable death, I wouldn't wish on a fucking dog.

And as he rides off with her:

EXT. THE HOLIDAY INN, THE SMALL TOWN IN IDAHO - EVENING

The old abandoned hotel.

INT. A ROOM, HOLIDAY INN - EVENING

Besides the ravages of time, the room hasn't changed in the thirty odd years. Abby's standing by the window, her back to the room. The Postman comes besides her. He tenderly touches her bruised face.

ABBY

(sarcastic)

The Holnists are big believers in "family" values...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY (cont'd)

They made the single women marry soldiers...

(a beat)

On our wedding night, when I wouldn't let him touch me, he beat me...He kept beating me for a week...I didn't say a word...I wouldn't give him the satisfaction...When he couldn't break me he gave up trying...And they sold me to the fat man for some rifles...

And tears run down her cheeks. He holds her, letting her cry in his arms. They lay on the bed. After some moments:

ABBY (cont'd)

I wanted to have children for Daniel...He thought we could make the world a better place...Teach our children something different...

(bitter)

Nothing will ever change...I'm not so sure I want this baby...

THE POSTMAN

(slows)

Baby?

ABBY

(nods)

I'm pregnant...

She looks at him.

ABBY (cont'd)

(shrugs)

It only took once.

THE POSTMAN

(realizing)

I'm the father?

ABBY

(a smile)

That's usually how it works.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

(smiles)

Yeah, I guess it does.

He looks at her. And they're quiet, each with their own thoughts. After some moments, he hesitantly reaches to touch her stomach.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Can I?

ABBY

(nods)

It's yours too.

She lifts her blouse. He affectionately touches her stomach. She starts to cry again. A different kind of tears. He moves up next to her. He kisses her.

THE POSTMAN

(his smile, ironic)

Tell me something about yourself.

ABBY

(laughs)

I was going to ask you the same thing.

And as they hold onto each other in the Holiday Inn:

EXT. THE SMALL TOWN - EVENING

The busy tent row. And we see, riding along the tents, the TALL MAN in the broad-brimmed cavalry hat, and two Holnist Soldiers. The Tall Man slows. He sees The Postman's mules standing outside of the Holiday Inn. As he quietly looks at the mules:

DISSOLVE TO:

A LIGHT RAIN'S FALLING.

EXT. THE SMALL TOWN - DAYBREAK

People stand along the street, huddled around fires, trying to get warm. And there's the sound of familiar hoofbeats. And coming along the muddy street is The Postman on Dana, Abby on Paul. And John and George plodding along after them. As they turn a corner:

EXT. THE BRIDGE, THE SMALL TOWN - DAYBREAK

Happily talking, they come onto the bridge. The Postman suddenly stops. And ahead of them, coming onto the bridge, are the two Holnist Soldiers. The Postman turns. And riding up onto the bridge behind them is the Tall Man in the broad-brimmed hat.

THE TALL MAN

(nods)

Mr. Postman...

The Postman hesitates, and awkwardly taking the rifle out of the boot, gets off of Dana.

THE POSTMAN

Go ahead, Abby...Find someplace  
you and the baby can be safe...

He looks at his mules, their doleful eyes:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Go ahead, go with her...

But they won't leave him.

ABBY

Not without you...

A Soldier raises his rifle. The Postman looks at Abby, his mules:

THE POSTMAN

(pleading)

Go ahead...

He swats at the mules.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Goddamnit, get out of here...!

They won't move. And suddenly, the Soldier fires. And the good mule Dana, hit, bleating, falls onto the bridge. She tries to stand, her legs buckle, and she rolls over on her side.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(screams)

No...!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And in a blind rage, he fires the rifle. He hits the Soldier, sending him flying off his horse. The other Soldier fires. Running, The Postman pulls Abby down onto the bridge, protectively kneeling over her. The other Soldier rides for him, firing. The Postman fires, the Soldier stopped in his tracks, lurching in the saddle along the bridge, wildly firing, and slumping dead. And there's the sound of a horse. The Postman turns. The Tall Man's riding right at him. They fire simultaneously. Time seems to stop, and the Tall Man suddenly sits bolt upright. And his arms wide, he goes careening off his horse. His foot catches in a stirrup, the horse dragging him back across the bridge.

And there's a deathly stillness. The Postman crosses to Dana. She bleats, barely alive. The other mules come around her, bleating, heartbroken. The Postman strokes her head. And for everything:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

I'm sorry...

She looks at him, and as only animals and children can, gives forgiveness, and shuts her eyes.

The Postman quietly stands. Abby, comes beside him. And as we look down on them on the bridge in the small town in Idaho:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

And the forward arm of the Holnist Army, row after row of soldiers, come riding like a wave along an empty Highway. And a Scout comes racing across the range. He rides up to Bethlehem. He motions, telling him about the shootout on the bridge. Bethlehem turns to an Officer, saying something to him. The Officer salutes. He barks an order to a detachment, and as they ride out across the range, to hunt down the Postman:

EXT. A MOTEL 6, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - AFTERNOON

An old abandoned motel along an empty Highway. "We Offer HBO." The mules forage in some weeds. The Postman, hands in his pockets, is quietly standing outside of a motel room. The door's open. Abby, resting on a bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

...You should take off, Abby.  
It's too dangerous to be with  
me...

ABBY

Let's get one thing straight.  
I'm staying with you because I  
want to...

He looks at her, not used to anybody wanting to be with him at all. And there's suddenly the sound of horses. The Postman quickly turns, awkwardly grabbing up his rifle. And galloping up to the motel are three well armed postmen.

THE LEAD POSTMAN

(no time to waste)

...The Holnists are looking for  
you...We're going to have to get  
you out of here...We'll take you  
somewhere you'll be safe...

And as they hurry to leave:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE MOUNTAINS, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

The Postman and Abby, with their escorts, come galloping through a forest. They come to the top of a mountain. Spread out below them is a valley. They ride down the mountain. And ahead of them, is the eerie sight of dangling chairs. A chair lift, forever stopped over a ski run, at a ski resort. As they ride under the chairs, moving past a deserted ski lodge:

EXT. THE VALLEY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

They ride across what was a golf course past some silent condominiums. They ride down to a low river. And backed up against the mountain, in a grove by the river, is a house. A Postman, holding a rifle, is standing by the door. He salutes The Postman. The Postman salutes, awkward. And as he and Abby go inside, the postmen standing guard:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY - ANOTHER DAY

Horses are in the front yard. Postmen standing on the porch, talking.

INT. THE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY - DAY

It's busy. The Postman giving orders, postmen coming and going. He looks over a map with some postmen:

A YOUNG POSTMAN  
...They've shut off our routes  
here, and here, and here...

THE POSTMAN  
(after a beat, off  
the cuff)  
Did you ever play football?

They look at him, blank.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
It was a game...You tried to get  
from one end of the field to the  
other without being tackled...

They stare at him, "tackled?"

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Anyway...there was this play,  
called an end around...What they  
did was fake they were going one  
way...  
(acting it out)  
...and they gave the ball to  
somebody else going completely the  
other way...

They stare at him.

ANOTHER YOUNG POSTMAN  
(after a beat,  
enthusiastic)  
That's not a bad idea. If we were  
to come around this way...

And as The Postman smiles, a natural "leader of men."

EXT. THE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY - NIGHT

Postmen stand guard.

INT. THE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY - NIGHT

The Postman and Abby lie in bed, quietly talking. He spoons her, lying close to her. He affectionately puts his arms around her, touching her stomach.

THE POSTMAN  
(contentedly)  
I've never felt so good...

They're quiet.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(after a beat)  
Listen...

They turn. There's a hole in the roof. And snow is softly falling into the bedroom. He passionately, gratefully, kisses her. And as they make love, the snow silently falling:

EXT. THE RANGE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

A light snow's falling. A Rider, in a postman's uniform, a mailbag over his shoulder, rides across the snow covered range. And there's the crack of a rifle. The Rider, hit, falls with his horse into the snow. And on a hillside, a Holnist Soldier gets back on his horse, riding off. It's still. As the snow falls on the dead mailman and his horse:

EXT. THE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY - DAY

The Postman is talking to a group of postmen on horseback. It's somber. As they ride away, The Postman quietly watching them go:

EXT. A SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

Four mailmen, their hands tied behind their backs, are standing in a parking lot against the wall of an old "Stop And Go" convenience store. And suddenly there's the unmistakable sound of automatic weapon fire. The postmen summarily executed. And as they lie motionless in the parking lot:

FIRE LIGHTS A NIGHT SKY.

EXT. ANOTHER SMALL TOWN, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - NIGHT

And Bethlehem, with some of his officers, sit on their horses at the end of a street, watching as a small town, and its Post Office burns to the ground. As Bethlehem buttons his greatcoat, and rides off:

EXT. THE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY - AFTERNOON

And a Man in a postman's uniform, sooted from his ride, is standing by a lathered horse outside their house. And The Postman's quietly reading a letter. He puts it down. He nods to the Man. The Man gets on his horse and rides off. The Postman instinctively turns. And Abby's standing in the doorway. As they look at each other:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY - DAYBREAK

The sky's threatening. And The Postman, wearing his uniform, gets on his mule, John. An escort of postmen are on horseback, waiting. Abby's standing in front of the house. He looks at her. He's never had anybody to say goodbye to.

THE POSTMAN

(affectionately)

You sure you'll be alright?

ABBY

(nods)

I can take care of myself.

He nods. And there's an awkward quiet. They know it's the last time they might ever see each other again. They look at each other, he gives her a sweet wave, and he starts to ride off. A moment, and Abby shouts, running after him. He slows.

ABBY

(a beat)

I'll miss you...

And it's something nobody's ever told him before. He bends, holding her. And after a moment:

THE POSTMAN

(his smile)

Leave a light on...

And as he turns, riding off along the river:

EXT. THE RANGE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

The Postman, and his escort, come galloping across the range. As they ride into the distance until there's just a puff of dust:

THERE ARE POUNDING HOOFBEATS.

EXT. THE RANGE, SOMEWHERE ELSE IN IDAHO - DAY

And we see Bethlehem, and the forward arm of the Holnist Army, moving across the range in full advance.

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

The Postman and his escort ride along an empty four-lane Highway. And there's a figure in the distance. A Rider, sitting on a horse in the Highway. They stop. They take their rifles out of their boots. They slowly approach the rider. And coming closer, The Postman smiles, breaking into a gallop. And sitting on his horse in the Highway, waiting for him, is Ford. As The Postman rides up:

FORD

(smiling)

What took you?

They warmly embrace. And as they ride off together along the empty Highway:

EXT. THE RECREATION VEHICLE PARK, ON THE SNAKE RIVER - DAY

They ride into the trailer park. And it's humming, crowded with postmen who've come to make their stand. And seeing The Postman a cheer goes up from one end of the camp to the other. As The Postman, embarrassed, waves:

THE POSTMAN

Hi.

EXT. THE R.V. PARK - DUSK

There's a quiet, a palpable tension. The men eating dinner, feeding their horses, readying their weapons, softly talking. And The Postman and Ford stand in a trailer's doorway, under a postal service flag, talking.

THE POSTMAN

...Where are Emily and the boys?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORD

I left Emily in Nevada. The boys  
are on their way back from  
Montana...

The Postman nods. They watch the sunset. The camp in  
shadows. And suddenly a Rider comes galloping into the  
camp.

THE RIDER

(shouting)

The Holnists --!

And before he can finish, a full compliment of Holnist  
troops attack the camp from all sides. The camp's under  
siege. The men retreat to the trailers. There's a  
tremendous fire-fight. The Holnists blasting away at the  
Winnebagos and the Airstreams. The postmen returning the  
fire with their own.

INT. A TRAILER - DUSK

Ford breaks out a window, firing his shotgun. The Postman,  
awkwardly holding his rifle, fires. The trailer's rocked by  
the blistering Holnist attack. And after some moments,  
Ford, seeing it's hopeless:

FORD

I'm going to get help...

He starts for the door. The Postman grabs him.

THE POSTMAN

You don't have a chance...

FORD

I've got to try...

And he makes for the door.

THE POSTMAN

(shouts)

Ford...!

But it's to no avail. Ford taps a goodbye on the brim of  
his hat, and firing his shotgun, storms outside. The  
Postman can only watch.

## EXT. THE R.V. PARK - DUSK

Ford, firing his shotgun, runs to his horse. Under withering fire, he gallops through the camp for the river. As he tries to cross the river he's met with a hail of gunfire. His horse goes down, Ford falling into the water. And as his body's swept downstream, and he's gone...

## INT. THE TRAILER - DUSK

The Postman, bereft, sits back from the window on the floor of the trailer. As he sits, motionless:

## INT. THE SUBURBAN HOUSE IN ST. LOUIS, IN THE 1990'S - DAY

There's the sound of gunfire in the streets. And suddenly the front door bursts open. And Holnists in their orange and black uniforms storm the house. They rush upstairs. They kick open a bedroom door. And in the bedroom are The Postman's father, mother and sister. They're taken away. A Holnist stops to look in another bedroom. A Boy's bedroom.

## INT. A CLOSET, A BOY'S BEDROOM, ST. LOUIS IN THE 1990'S - DAY

And we see huddled in the back of the dark closet, hiding, the young boy, the young Postman.

## INT. THE BOY'S BEDROOM, ST. LOUIS - DAY

The Holnist turns, leaving. It's still. Some moments, and the Boy comes out of the closet. The gunfire has moved off down the street. The little Boy sits on the floor. He's truly, "home alone." He turns on a phonograph. A children's record. "...This old man, he played one...He played knick-knack on my thumb..." As he sits on the floor:

## INT. THE TRAILER, IN FUTURE IDAHO - DUSK

Tears run down his cheeks. And after some moments, pulling himself up, he fires out the window with a vengeance. And the trailer, under the fearsome Holnist onslaught, starts to literally come apart. The bullets, piercing the trailer's skin, pocking the trailer. The Postman flattens on the floor. And suddenly the door bursts open, a Holnist storming inside. The Soldier starts to fire:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN  
(suddenly jumping  
up, waving his  
arms)

Don't shoot...! Just don't shoot!

Startled, the man stops.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Are you stupid? Do you know what  
happens if you kill me? The  
General's going to have your nuts  
for breakfast. Don't you think he  
wants the satisfaction of killing  
me himself?

And having gotten his attention:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Have you ever seen this?

And he suddenly does a full Stoooge manuever (The Poke In The  
Eye As Metaphor), and pokes the man dead in the eyes. And  
grabbing his rifle from him, he turns the butt on him,  
knocking him down and out. And as he stands over him:

EXT. THE R.V. PARK - NIGHTFALL

The battle is all but over. The Holnists firmly and  
inexorably in control. Holnists move around the park  
mopping up resistance. And we see coming between some  
trailers, moving through the park, in the Holnist's uniform,  
doing what he does best, pretending he's somebody else, The  
Postman. And a handful of surviving postmen, taken prisoner,  
are sitting on the ground, being guarded by a Holnist. The  
Postman crosses to some horses. He gets on one. He leads  
the horses to the prisoners.

THE POSTMAN  
(to the Guard,  
motioning)  
I'm supposed to take these men for  
interrogation...

The Guard, hesitates.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Right now, Soldier!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Soldier salutes.

THE POSTMAN

(to his  
"prisoners")

On your feet.

They mount up. He rides his "prisoners" through the camp. He whistles, and his mule, the stoic John, comes running. And as he leads his "prisoners" out of the camp, to safety:

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - NIGHT

The Postman on his mule, and the remaining postmen, come riding along an empty road. The Postman stops. It's quiet. And after some moments:

THE POSTMAN

(to his men, it's  
over)

Go home...Go back to your towns,  
and your homes, and your  
families...

A YOUNG POSTMAN

What about the postal system...?

THE POSTMAN

A great man said, "You can kill  
the dreamer, but you can't kill  
the dream..." An idea is a  
powerful thing...

It's quiet. And a man turns, starting to ride off. He stops to shake hands with The Postman.

THE MAN

I'll never forget you.

And he rides away. And another Man rides by The Postman, saluting him. And another. And another. And they ride away. And it's still. And as The Postman turns, moving off along the empty Highway:

## EXT. THE R.V. PARK - NIGHT

The trailers are on fire. The battle over. And Bethlehem, with some of his officers, comes riding into the decimated trailer park. A field officer rides to meet him. He leads him to The Postman's trailer. Bethlehem dismounts. Taking out his pistol, with two of his men, they kick open the door. They storm inside.

## INT. THE TRAILER - NIGHT

The trailer's in tatters, riddled with bullets. Bethlehem moves through the debris.

A SOLDIER

Sir...

Bethlehem turns. And he sees, lying on the floor, The Postman's uniform. Bethlehem's still. After a moment:

BETHLEHEM

(to his men)

I don't care how many men it takes. Where you have to look. I want you to find him...!

The officers salute and hurry out of the trailer. And as Bethlehem stands in the trailer's doorway under what was the postal service flag, looking into the night:

DISSOLVE TO:

## EXT. THE RANGE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - NIGHT

The moon hangs over the range. And galloping across the empty range is the "last" Postman.

DISSOLVE TO:

## INT. THE HOUSE IN THE VALLEY, BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Abby's sleeping. She stirs at a sound, opening her eyes. And she sees The Postman standing in the doorway. And there's nothing he has to say she can't tell by looking at him. Getting up, she holds him. Suddenly, the mules bray. The Postman looks out the window. And high on the mountain, coming across a ridge, is a Holnist search party.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN  
 (quickly turning)  
 We have to go...

And as they hurry to leave:

EXT. THE VALLEY - EARLY MORNING

The Postman, in a postman's uniform again, comes running out of the house with Abby. The Holnists are coming down the mountain.

THE POSTMAN  
 (to the mules,  
 waving his arms)  
 Take off...

The mules scatter in the trees. The Postman, grabbing Abby's hand, hurries her down to the river. Crossing the shallow river, they hide among some trees. The Holnists come riding by the house. And following the mules' hoofprints, they go off into the forest. The Postman and Abby are still. And as a breeze ruffles the trees:

DISSOLVE TO:

WE'RE LOOKING AT A VAST PANORAMA.

EXT. THE RANGE, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - LATE AFTERNOON

Clouds seem to boil in the sky. An old road cuts across the range like a straight razor. The endless prairie spread out, like a sheet, to the horizon. And The Postman and Abby, George plodding along after them, come riding along the road.

ABBY  
 (spent)  
 I have to stop...

They rein to a stop. She climbs off the mule, sitting along the side of the road. He gets off, coming to sit beside her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY (cont'd)  
 (after a beat,  
 quietly)  
 We can't just keep on  
 running...What are we going to do?

It's quiet. He looks out at the prairie. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN  
 Did I ever tell you about St.  
 Rose, Abby?

She shakes "no." A breeze blows. And like "The Rainmaker:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 ...There's clean water, a place to  
 sleep, and enough food for  
 everybody...There's schools and  
 churches...family picnics and  
 baseball games...concerts and  
 Sunday dinners...

(a beat)  
 At night, if you listen closely,  
 you can hear people washing  
 dishes, children doing their  
 homework, watching  
 television...And when it's really  
 quiet, people talking...and making  
 love...

She looks at him, captivated by his sweet dream. He instinctively turns. And off in the distance, there's a puff of dust, the tell-tale sign of Riders. Reality.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (urgent)  
 Come on, Abby...

He helps her up. They get on their mules.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 (a beat,  
 hesitating)  
 Which way?

She looks at him. And after a moment:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY  
Which way is St. Rose?

And he looks at her, moved she still believes in him. It gives him courage. And as they ride out across the range, toward the distant horizon:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN IDAHO - DAY

The sky's dark, threatening rain. They come along an overgrown Interstate. They pass a billboard with the familiar golden arches: "WELCOME TO NEVADA...247 MCDONALD'S LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU." He slows, looking back down the empty road, knowing the Holnists, like a shadow, aren't far behind them. And as they move into the distance under the threatening sky:

DISSOLVE TO:

IT'S RAINING.

EXT. A HIGHWAY, SOMEWHERE IN NEVADA - NIGHT

The mules stand in the road. There's an abandoned car, an old Mercedes, on the side of the road.

INT. THE ABANDONED CAR, SOMEWHERE IN NEVADA - NIGHT

And The Postman and Abby are lying in the back seat, sleeping, out of the rain. And as the rain pounds on the car's roof:

LONG DISSOLVE TO:

IT'S COMPLETELY SILENT. A FLOCK OF BIRDS ARE FLYING IN FORMATION. AND THE IDYLLIC PICTURE IS SPOILED BY WHAT'S BELOW THEM. THERE'S A VAST, SCORCHED PLAIN.

EXT. THE PLAIN - DAY

It's littered, as far as the eye can see, with rubble. The wood and brick, steel and concrete, of what was a small town. One stucco house, somehow untouched by the catastrophe, is still standing. And in the distance, riding through the rubble, are The Postman, and Abby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As they ride toward the solitary house:

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)  
That's close enough, pilgrims!

They stop.

THE MAN'S VOICE (OVER)  
What do you want?

THE POSTMAN  
Where are we?

And a young wild-haired Man, with eyes to match, a SQUATTER, holding a semi-automatic weapon, comes out of the house.

THE SQUATTER  
You're in sunny California.

INT. THE SQUATTER'S HOUSE - DAY

It's filled with twentieth century junk. The kind of stuff The Postman used to collect. And The Postman, Abby, and the Squatter, are sitting at a formica table with Hollywood placemats.

THE POSTMAN  
(meaning the plain)  
What happened here?

THE SQUATTER  
There was a little accident. When the ground started to shake big time, the Hanford Nuclear Power Plant went...

(motioning with his hands an explosion)

"Poof."

(laughing)  
But the sunsets are beautiful...

And he laughs. The Postman and Abby are quiet. And The Postman, seeing something, stops. On a table are some apples.

THE POSTMAN  
Where did you get those?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE SQUATTER

(inconsequential)

A man comes through here once in a while...He leaves me some...

THE POSTMAN

Where's he coming from?

THE SQUATTER

(shrugs)

I don't know if he's coming or going?

And either does he.

THE POSTMAN

(taking a shot)

...Do you know anything about a city called St. Rose?

THE SQUATTER

(incredulous)

A city...?! What do you live in a tree? You must be joking...

And he laughs to himself at the idea of a city. After a moment:

THE SQUATTER (cont'd)

What's that stupid looking outfit you're wearing?

THE POSTMAN

(shrugs)

The Postal Service.

And that sets him off laughing again. But after a moment:

THE SQUATTER

(eyeing him)

How do you get one of those?

THE POSTMAN

What do you have to eat?

EXT. THE PLAIN, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - DUSK

The last traces of daylight shadows the plain. It's quiet. Abby's on her mule. The Postman, stands with the Squatter in front of his house. The Squatter's hand is raised.

THE POSTMAN  
 ...I, state your full name, will  
 obey the laws and defend the  
 Constitution of The Restored  
 United States of America.

The Squatter's memory is impaired:

THE SQUATTER  
 What was that?

THE POSTMAN  
 Just say I do.

THE SQUATTER  
 I do.

THE POSTMAN  
 Congratulations, you're the  
 Postmaster General of California.

The Postman hesitates, and he gives him his postman's hat and jacket. The last vestiges. The man puts them on. He likes the way they feel. He laughs. The Postman gets on John.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
 So long, man...

And he seems to be saying goodbye to more than just the man. And as he rides with Abby, George plodding after them, across the rubble-strewn plain:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A RIVER, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - DAY

The river's literally choked with the remains of California, carrying the flotsam of the dead civilization. As Abby and The Postman ride along the swollen river, a lamp floating by:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A SUBURB, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - DUSK

They ride through what was once a suburban neighborhood. The houses are gone. Endless streets with the cement pads where the houses stood, dotted with empty swimming pools.

DISSOLVE TO:

A FULL MOON LIGHTS A GUTTED NEIGHBORHOOD.

EXT. ANOTHER SUBURBAN STREET, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

The mules wander, grazing in some weeds. A campfire's burning in a single-story house that has just three of its walls standing. And the Postman and Abby are sitting on a bedroll, against a wall, by the campfire. Incongruously, the wallpaper from a child's room, a clown holding balloons, is still on the wall. The moon is framed in a useless window. And Abby starts to softly cry.

ABBY

I can't go on anymore...Let's go  
back to Nevada or Idaho -- at  
least we know what's there...

He nods, quiet. Shy lays her head on his lap. He affectionately strokes her hair. He looks at the moon. And meaning all the waste, and all the possibilities, literally and metaphorically:

THE POSTMAN

We walked on the moon, Abby...

She looks up at him, at his eyes. And after some moments:

ABBY

(shrugs, brave)  
Tomorrow's another day.

He kisses her. She closes her eyes. She can't seem to get comfortable. And after some moments she gets up, going around the side of the house. When she hasn't returned:

THE POSTMAN

(concerned)  
Abby?

It's quiet. Worried, he goes to look for her. He comes around the side of the house. He slows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She's sitting on the ground.

Abby...? THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

ABBY  
(looks up)  
The baby's coming early...

THE POSTMAN  
(panicked)  
What should I do?

ABBY  
(a smile)  
Just don't panic...

He helps her back "into" the house. He helps her onto the bedroll, covering her with a blanket. Sitting with her, he holds her hand. And as she rides a contraction, clasping his hand:

EXT. THE DEMOLISHED HOUSE, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - LATE NIGHT

Abby's drenched with sweat. The Postman, as best he can, helping her deliver the baby.

Once more... THE POSTMAN

A long moment, and there's a baby's cry. And The Postman, shaking, overcome with emotion, holds the newborn in his arms.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(at the wonder of  
it)  
Oh my God...

Tears run down his face. He lays it on her chest. Crying, she holds her baby.

What is it? ABBY

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POSTMAN

(a smile)

I forgot to look...

She looks.

ABBY

It's a girl...

THE POSTMAN

A girl...

(laughing)

It's a girl...

And they both start to laugh. Laughing and crying. And as they lie by the wall, the moon in the window, and the baby crying out with life from the ruins:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RURAL FIELDS, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - DAY

The Postman and Abby, the baby in a sling close to her chest, George plodding after them, ride across a blackened field. They stop. And ahead of them on a knoll, the first sign of any life, is a solitary apple tree. Buoyed, they ride by the tree, coming down the other side of the knoll. The charred earth recedes. Some hearty wildflowers are growing. Their pace quickens. Crossing the field they come to an overgrown road. Moving along the road they pass some farmhouses. The destruction is less rampant. Intermittently, structures are still standing. They come around a bend in the road. They stop. A deer has come out of some hills, standing motionless in the road, transfixed, looking at them. As they're motionless, watching the deer:

EXT. THE SCORCHED PLAIN, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - LATE AFTERNOON

The rubble-strewn plain is bathed in shadows. And riding across the plain are three Holnist Scouts. They ride up to the Squatter's house. Getting off their horses, they kick open the door.

INT. THE SQUATTER'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

As the Squatter, sitting at his dinette, wearing the Postman's hat and uniform jacket, looks up:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RURAL HILLS, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

A light mist is falling. Abby, nearly asleep in the saddle, and the weary Postman, slowly ride along a dirt road through some rural hills. Although there's an occasional wood-frame house, there's no signs of life. It's all dark, still:

THE POSTMAN  
(disheartened)  
I thought for a moment...

And he shrugs, trailing off. And it's quiet. They've gone as far as they can go.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(after a beat,  
disconsolate)  
Let's find a place to sleep...

He rides ahead of her up the hill. Reaching the top of the hill he stops. After some moments:

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
Abby...

She rides up alongside him. He's motionless. She turns. And she gasps, a small cry of astonishment. There's a road. Across the road, the coastline of the Pacific Ocean. And on a hill, above the ocean, magical, twinkling in the damp night, is the wondrous sight of the electric lights of a town.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)  
(emotional)  
St. Rose...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE SMALL TOWN - NIGHT

They ride along the coast road approaching the small town. It sits like a vision on the hill.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST. ROSE - NIGHT

They ride up a quiet street. Street lights are on. Lights burning in old, weathered, two-story clapboard houses...And there's a voice, over:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE VOICE (OVER)

Hello...

They turn. And a man in his late fifties, with long hair and wire-rim glasses, taking a walk, has stopped on the sidewalk.

THE MAN (cont'd)

Did you have a good trip?

It's the understatement of the year.

THE POSTMAN

(shrugs, his smile)

No problem at all.

EXT. ST. ROSE - NIGHT

The man walks with them along a street. There's life all around them. People moving around their houses. Children's voices...

THE MAN

...There's almost six-hundred people here now...Once a month someone else shows up, somebody who finds us...

Abby and The Postman are quiet, taking it all in.

THE MAN (cont'd)

...I came here fifteen years ago...My wife and I, we walked from San Francisco...

(a beat)

Kathy passed away last year...

And he's quiet. They turn a corner, coming along another block.

THE POSTMAN

What do you live on?

THE MAN

We grow our own food -- desalinate our water...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY

The lights...?

THE MAN

That was a big problem. It took us almost five years to generate power. We use the wind and the sea, the most natural forms of energy...

He shyly peers out his glasses.

THE POSTMAN

(a beat, looking at him)

Do I know you from somewhere? You seem familiar to me.

THE MAN

(shrugs)

I was a musician for awhile. Maybe you saw me do something.

THE POSTMAN

(realizing)

I know who you are -- You're famous.

THE MUSICIAN

(smiles)

Not anymore.

The Postman smiles. After some moments:

THE MUSICIAN (cont'd)

You can be anything you want to be here. When you're tired of one thing, try something else.

He smiles. He stops outside of an old two-story house.

THE MUSICIAN

You're welcome to stay anywhere that's empty. There's a good place around the corner. 917.

He turns up his walk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE MUSICIAN (cont'd)

Let me know if there's anything I  
can do.

(a wave)

Goodnight.

And he goes up the steps into his house.

THE POSTMAN

Nice guy.

(and after a beat,  
to Abby, wry:)

So, what do you think?

EXT. 917, ST. ROSE - NIGHT

The Postman, holding the baby, and Abby, quietly stand outside of an old weathered two-story clapboard house. The mules peacefully graze in a front yard. A moment, and The Postman and Abby go inside.

INT. 917, ST. ROSE - NIGHT

They stop in the entryway. The house is dark. The Postman hesitates, and turns on a light switch. And the most simple thing we take for granted, lights, warm, come on. They quietly walk inside. Abby wanders into the kitchen. There's a full compliment of appliances. She pushes a button on a cuisinart. And startled, she jumps back, as it whirrs to life.

The Postman wanders in the living room. Screwing around, he turns on the television. He starts, as a picture comes on. A Woman. "Community Access."

THE WOMAN

...A boy, Geoffrey Michael, 8  
lbs., 3 oz's...it's the Warner's  
third...

(a beat)

The Cunninghams are having an open  
house on the 15th. Pot luck,  
everyone is invited...

The Postman silently watches the screen in wonder. Abby comes beside him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE WOMAN (cont'd)

...The power will be on tomorrow  
from 6-8, 12-2, and 7-9 in the  
evening...

(after a beat)

Goodnight.

And the station signs off. It's quiet. The Postman sees a CD player. He puts a CD on. And suddenly taking Abby in his arms, he turns her around the living room. And as they laugh, exultant, dancing around their living room in St. Rose:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST. ROSE - NIGHT

The town's dark, quiet. The power off for the night.

INT. 917, THEIR BEDROOM - NIGHT

Abby's lying in bed nursing the baby. And we see The Postman silently standing at a window.

THE POSTMAN

(bitterly)

I've led them right here...

And as he looks out at St. Rose:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST. ROSE - DAY

The Postman, and the Musician, walk along a trail on a bluff overlooking the ocean. They stop to look at the town. There are large greenhouses where they grow their food. Windmills turn, generating power. Solar panels are along the hillsides. And on the top of a hill, there are endless rows of apple trees. And suddenly balloons, come floating up from among the trees.

THE MUSICIAN

...We put apple seeds in the  
balloons. The wind takes them,  
scattering them. You'd be  
surprised how far they travel...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

No, he wouldn't. And as they watch the balloons going up, higher, and higher, and higher, the wind off the ocean taking them, carrying the seeds across the country:

EXT. ST. ROSE - DAY

The trail comes to a redwood forest. The Postman slows, humbled by the ageless trees, their high canopies shrouded in a sustaining mist. And if God's anywhere, He's here. As they quietly walk through the forest:

THE MUSICIAN

Can you believe somebody used to cut these down for patio furniture...?

The Postman smiles at the absurdity. And as they silently look around them:

THE MUSICIAN (cont'd)

This is what it must have been like a thousand years ago. It was paradise...

(bitterly)

Before people.

(after a beat,  
angry)

We're such a fucking destructive race...

And it certainly strikes home for The Postman. And after some moments:

THE POSTMAN

Do you know about the Holnists?

He nods.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

Do you have a way to defend yourselves?

THE MUSICIAN

What are we going to do, walk around with guns? That's not why any of us came here. We've gone on faith...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And The Postman's quiet.

THE POSTMAN  
(after a beat)  
What if they find you?

THE MUSICIAN  
(shrugs, helpless)  
Then I guess we're history, too...

And as they stand under the huge trees:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST. ROSE, THE POSTMAN'S STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

It's the "children's hour." Some people stand on their porches, talking. A woman pushes a stroller. A man barbeques in his yard. Some children play in the street. Abby, holding the baby, is on the sidewalk talking with some people. And The Postman, in their driveway, with a bucket of soap and water, is washing the mules like a line of cars.

THE POSTMAN  
(to George)  
You're next!

George looks at him with his doleful eyes. And as The Postman soaps him down:

EXT. ST. ROSE, THE COAST ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

The town on the hill. The empty road. And we see, riding down out of the hills, wearing a gray winter coat, a lone Holnist Scout. He stops, seeing St. Rose. A moment, taking his rifle out of his boot, he quietly rides down to the road. As he rides along the road, the rifle in the crook of his arm, toward the peaceful town:

EXT. ST. ROSE, THE POSTMAN'S STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

The Postman's busy scrubbing the unhappy George.

EXT. ST. ROSE - LATE AFTERNOON

The Scout rides into the small town. He rides up a quiet street. And people seeing him, stop. They shrink from the street. Fear permeates the air. And as the Scout, impervious, looking around, moves along the street:

EXT. ST. ROSE, THE POSTMAN'S BLOCK - LATE AFTERNOON

He washes the soap off George. He looks up, and he stops. And riding around the corner, a block away, is the Holnist Scout.

THE POSTMAN

(shouting)

Abby --! Get down Abby --!

Abby sprawls on the sidewalk, shielding the baby.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(to the people)

Get inside...! Get off the street!

He runs into his house. A moment, and he comes running back outside with his rifle. The Scout's motionless, at the end of the block, looking at him and his mules. The Postman awkwardly holds his rifle. They look at each other. It's silent. And after a moment the Scout quietly turns, and in no particular hurry, rides away. And as The Postman stands in the street, his rifle at his side:

THE POSTMAN, UNCOMFORTABLE, IS QUIETLY STANDING WITH HIS HANDS IN HIS POCKETS.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO, ST. ROSE - NIGHT

A small studio. And The Postman's awkwardly standing in front of a television camera.

THE POSTMAN

...Please listen to me... He'll be back -- and there will be many more...You can't hide and pretend it isn't happening...It won't go away...

INT. A HOME, ST. ROSE - NIGHT

A family is watching television.

THE POSTMAN

(on television)

...This is all that's left of civilization...It's worth fighting for...

INT. ANOTHER HOUSE, ST. ROSE - NIGHT

THE POSTMAN

(on television)

...If you can't do it for  
yourselves...Do it for your  
children...

EXT. ST. ROSE - NIGHT

And The Postman comes walking along his street on his way home. And it's quiet. People are standing in their windows, and on their porches. The Musician is standing on a corner. And as The Postman walks along the street:

A MAN

...I have a shotgun in a closet  
somewhere...

(and sadly)

I never wanted to use it again...

ANOTHER MAN

I still have a pistol from when I  
was a policeman...

There's no joy in any of this.

ANOTHER MAN

...There's still guns and  
ammunition in the sporting goods  
store...

And some others, men and women, show their support. And those that can't sacrifice their heartfelt convictions, are still. The Postman slows.

THE POSTMAN

(to the Musician)

I'm sorry...

The Musician quietly turns, and his hands in his pockets, he walks home. The Postman crosses to his house. Abby's standing on the porch. The people go back into their houses. And the power goes off. It's dark. And as The Postman sits with Abby on their front steps:

THERE'S A BILLBOARD: "THE SUNSHINE COAST, OREGON."

EXT. COASTAL HILLS, SOMEWHERE IN OREGON - NIGHT

There's a familiar light. And we see, camped along the hills, their fires burning, the Holnist Expeditionary Force. And we see the Scout, in the gray winter coat, riding into the camp. He rides to a tent where some Officers are standing outside. He says something. An Officer goes into the tent. A moment, and Bethlehem comes out. And as the Scout reports to him what he's found:

INT. 917, ST. ROSE - LATE NIGHT

The house is dark, still. And we see The Postman, alone in the living room, sitting at a table writing a letter by candlelight.

EXT. 917, ST. ROSE - LATE NIGHT

The street's dark. And we see The Postman getting on his mule, John. He moves off along the dark street. And as he rides into the night:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - DAYBREAK

And as The Postman rides through the devastation along a cracked and empty Highway:

THERE ARE POUNDING HOOFBEATS.

EXT. THE COAST ROAD, SOMEWHERE IN OREGON - DAY

And we see Bethlehem on his pale horse, and the Holnist Army, coming down the coast road in full advance. As they pass a green road sign: "Welcome To California," moving inexorably down the road:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE SCORCHED PLAIN, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

The sky's pitch, a sea of stars. The moon lights the vast, rubble strewn plain. And a figure appears in the moonlight. The Postman, riding across the rubble. He rides to the Squatter's house. He knocks on the door. And The Squatter, holding a candle, opens the door. And as he looks in the candlelight at The Postman:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST. ROSE - DAYBREAK

It's still. And the stillness is broken by the sound of hollow hoofbeats. And we see The Postman, exhausted, returning, riding back into the quiet town. And as he rides back to his house:

EXT. THE COAST ROAD, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - DAY

And as the Holnist army, wave after wave, moves down the coast road:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST. ROSE - LATE AFTERNOON

The Postman, riding sentry, the rifle in his saddle boot, comes along a street. And in spite of the rifle, he looks like Charlie Chaplin, an awkward protector. He rides by a man, holding a rifle, standing guard on a corner.

THE POSTMAN

Good afternoon...

He turns the corner onto another street. Two men, holding shotguns, are standing guard at the end of the block. He turns another corner. A man and a woman, carrying rifles, are walking along the street. They wave. He rides to the bluff overlooking the ocean. He stops, looking at the small town. And as The Postman, a reluctant hero, stands guard:

INT. 917, ST. ROSE - NIGHT

The Postman's sitting in the living room with the baby on his lap.

THE POSTMAN

(playing with his  
baby)

"...This old man, he played one...  
He played knick-knack on my  
thumb...With a knick-knack  
patty-whack, give a dog a bone,  
this old man came rolling home..."

The baby smiles. And as he holds his baby close to him, fearful:

EXT. THE COAST ROAD, SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - DAY

It's quiet. The road empty. And suddenly appearing on the top of a rise in the road, is a Holnist Flag Bearer. We slowly pull up: And we see, winding their way down the coast road, moving ever closer to St. Rose, Bethlehem, and the Holnist Army.

As they come along the road: There's a slight movement on a distant hillside. And we see a Man, a St. Rosean, watching the army through binoculars. As he scrambles down the back of the hill, getting on a horse, riding off:

INT. THE TELEVISION STATION, ST. ROSE - DAY

COMMUNITY ACCESS WOMAN

(on Camera)

...There will be a prayer service at 6:00 at the Good Shepherd's Church...

She's handed a note.

THE WOMAN (cont'd)

(after a beat)

...There has been a report the Holnists are twenty miles from town...To repeat, there has been an unconfirmed report the Holnists are twenty miles from town...

EXT. THE POSTMAN'S STREET, ST. ROSE - DAY

The street's rife with activity. People are erecting barricades, using abandoned cars, furniture, anything to close off the streets.

EXT. 917, ST. ROSE - DAY

The house has been turned into a command post. People hurrying in and out.

INT. 917, ST. ROSE - DAY

Women are making sandwiches. The television's on, reports streaming in. And The Postman is standing with some men and women at a dining room table, looking at a street map of St. Rose. A Man runs in:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE MAN

They just came around the Anderson  
Curve!

THE POSTMAN

They did?  
(a beat)  
What's the Anderson Curve?

THE MAN

We used to race cars there. It's  
five miles from here.

And it's quiet. The Postman and Abby look at each other. They've been here before. He kisses Abby and the baby. And as he awkwardly takes his rifle, and quietly goes outside:

THERE'S THE SOUND OF HOOFBEATS.

EXT. THE COAST ROAD, ST. ROSE - AFTERNOON

And the Holnist Army comes around a bend in the road. Ahead of them, on the hill, is St. Rose. And as they ride toward the little town:

EXT. ST. ROSE - AFTERNOON

A man, holding a rifle, runs across a street.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET, ST. ROSE - AFTERNOON

Two men and a woman, holding weapons, go running up a street.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET, ST. ROSE - AFTERNOON

And The Postman, along with a small brigade of St. Roseans, come running around a corner, hurrying along a street.

INT. THE TELEVISION STUDIO - AFTERNOON

THE WOMAN

...More men are urgently needed at  
the corner of Sixth and View...

## EXT. ST. ROSE - LATE AFTERNOON

A cold wind blows off the ocean. And the Holnist Army, their coats flapping in the breeze, come riding up a street into the small town. The streets are empty, quiet. It's like nobody's there.

And as they come riding along the street, men suddenly appear on the rooftops, with garden hoses. They spray the soldiers with water. And we see The Postman standing on a rooftop.

## THE POSTMAN

(shouts)

Now...!

And men, up on the power poles, suddenly cut the electric wires. And the lines falling onto the wet soldiers, send a deadly wave of electricity through their ranks, electrocuting them. They break ranks, turning onto various streets.

## EXT. ANOTHER STREET, ST. ROSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Soldiers ride up a steep street. And at the top of the street, on a crest in the road, from one curb to the other, are a line of old cars. And suddenly, St. Roseans push the cars. The old cars rolling down the street, gathering speed. And as they careen into the Soldiers:

## EXT. ST. ROSE, THE TOWN SQUARE - LATE AFTERNOON

The main body of the Holnist force comes riding onto a small old "Front" street with a town square. What were once antique shops, cafes, a good breakfast place, and an old house turned into a Bed and Board, surround the square.

And as they ride into the square, suddenly, from the second story windows, the cafes and the storefronts, all around the square, the St. Roseans open fire on them.

## INT. A BED AND BREAKFAST - LATE AFTERNOON

The Postman, kneeling in a bedroom window, sights his rifle. And as he fires:

## EXT. "FRONT STREET," ST. ROSE - LATE AFTERNOON

And the Holnists, taken by surprise, caught in the blistering cross-fire, are cut down.

INT. THE BED AND BREAKFAST - LATE AFTERNOON

The Postman watches as the Holnists, their ranks in disarray, are forced to retreat.

THE POSTMAN

(smiles)

Sorry.

And as he ducks from the sill, reloading:

EXT. "FRONT STREET," ST. ROSE - LATE AFTERNOON

The square's quiet. The St. Roseans in their sanctuaries. And suddenly wagons, with heavy guns in their beds, are driven into the square. They start firing rounds into the old buildings. Smoke palls the square. And The Postman and the St. Roseans, under the fearsome pounding, are forced out of the buildings. They fight their way through the square onto another street.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET, ST. ROSE - DUSK

The Postman runs around a corner. He ducks into the doorway of an old store. A fierce battle rages for the street. The Holnists and the St. Roseans firing from the cover of the doorways. And although they fight courageously, the St. Roseans, outgunned and outnumbered, begrudgingly are forced to give ground. They fall back to their neighborhood barricades. And there, they make a stand. And as the battle rages for St. Rose:

EXT. ST. ROSE - LATE NIGHT

The town's dark. Just the flickering light of the campfires. The opposing forces hunkered down for the night.

EXT. THE BARRICADE, THE POSTMAN'S STREET - LATE NIGHT

It's still. The men sleeping. The Postman, unable to sleep, quietly stands by the barricade. He looks at the block. His house. Abby, and the baby inside. He looks up the street, the Holnists and their campfires. He looks at the innocent men. And he knows it's hopeless. Hands in his pockets, he's quiet, thinking. And after some moments, turning, he bends, whispering, waking a man up. He motions him to be quiet. He wakes up another man. And another. He says something to a man. The man gets up running along the street to their comrades at another barricade. And as The Postman silently mobilizes the men:

EXT. THE BLUFF, ST. ROSE - JUST BEFORE DAWN

And we see, in silhouette, silently moving along the bluff, The Postman riding his mule John, and following him, like a religious crusade, the "army" of St. Rose doing "an end around."

EXT. THE REDWOOD FOREST, ST. ROSE - DAYBREAK

The first light of day breaks over the forest. And in the shelter of the towering trees, is The Postman and his force. He quietly sits on his mule. He looks at the men. And after some moments:

THE POSTMAN

("Henry V,"  
rousing, glorious)

"I see you stand like greyhounds  
in the slips, staring upon the  
start. The game's afoot. Follow  
your spirit; and upon this charge  
Cry 'God For Harry!' 'England and  
Saint George!'"

The men look at him like he's crazy.

THE POSTMAN (cont'd)

(shrugs)

There was this play, and they made  
all these movies...

It doesn't ring a bell.

A POSTMAN (cont'd)

Maybe we better just pray...

And as they bow their heads under the timeless redwoods:  
There's the sound of pounding hoofbeats.

EXT. THE BLUFF, ST. ROSE - MORNING

And riding hard across the bluff, moving toward the redwood forest, are a line of battle hardened Holnist troops.

EXT. THE REDWOOD FOREST, ST. ROSE - MORNING

The St. Rose men have spread out among the trees, their weapons ready, silently waiting. The Postman, his rifle at his side, stands under the cover of a tree. And he feels something on his forehead. A drop of water. He looks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And it's started to rain. Hard. A glorious rain. They're drenched. The men looking up at the heavens, cleansed by the rain.

And the Holnists come riding into the forest. Their horses flounder in the mire. And the men, spurred on by God's intervention, fire on them. The Holnists, forced to abandon their horses, fight knee deep in mud. The St. Rose Army, among the trees, picking them off. It rains harder and harder. The armies collide. There's fierce hand-to-hand fighting. The men, covered with mud, indistinguishable what side they're on. And the Holnists, in disarray, are forced to retreat! And there's a cheer, the St. Rose army cheering triumphant. And it quiets as they see Bethlehem, and a huge army of reinforcements, "the conscripts," coming along the bluff.

The Holnists mass at the edge of the forest for a final assault. Bethlehem rides along his troops. The Postman, and the small army of St. Rose, among the trees, waiting for the inevitable. And there's an odd stillness. The Postman instinctively turns, and he stops...A lone Rider is sitting on his horse among the trees. And we see it's Ford Macy! And coming through the trees alongside him, on horseback, are armed men in postman's uniforms!

The Postman turns. And riding through the trees is the stoic Emily, and the Boys. And after them, The Squatter. And behind them are more armed men in postman's uniforms. And throughout the forest, coming between the trees, are more, and more, and more, riders. An army of uniformed postmen, and townspeople, and farmers...A citizens army.

Ford comes galloping up to The Postman. He jumps off his horse. They look at each other.

THE POSTMAN

(after a beat)

What took you?

FORD

(smiling)

The mail's a little slow.

THE POSTMAN

I always liked you Ford Macy.

They embrace.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bethlehem, sizing up the situation, surveying the new troops, rides along his men barking orders. The Holnists close ranks, preparing to fight. Ford and The Postman take command of their army.

The forces stand ready. It's quiet. And there's a distant sound...music. It's coming closer, and closer. And we start to recognize it. Beethoven's magnificent "Ode To Joy."

And we see, coming into the forest, driving a wagon, The Musician. And on the back of the wagon, speakers are pouring out Beethoven's mighty anthem. It resounds, like the gospel, through the forest. And the Holnists, "the conscripts," the music stirring their dead souls, start laying down their arms.

Bethlehem, riding along his troops, frantically tries to rouse them. It's a lost cause. He turns to look at The Postman. And enraged, insane, gun drawn, he comes riding for The Postman. He raises his gun to shoot him. And The Postman, in a split second, raises his rifle, and with a wing and a prayer, fires. And Bethlehem, a look of surprise on his face, sits up in the saddle, and falls off his horse.

It's quiet. The Postman walks over to the mortally wounded Bethlehem. He bends.

BETHLEHEM

(looks up)

I was wrong...you are a dangerous man.

THE POSTMAN

(shakes "no")

The only thing that's dangerous is the truth.

And it's the last thing Bethlehem ever hears. The Postman stands. He turns to Ford.

THE POSTMAN

(a beat)

His hat's still on crooked.

Ford smiles. He comes to stand by The Postman. And as we slowly pull up, the triumphant people standing under the towering redwoods:

EXT. THE POSTMAN'S STREET, ST. ROSE - EVENING

The Postman comes along the street walking home. He goes up his walk. He slows. The porch light's on. And Abby's standing with the baby at the door. He smiles. And as he goes home:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST. ROSE - ANOTHER DAY

The Postman and Abby, holding the baby, walk with the mules along their street. The mules are laden with cargo, covered with tarpaulins. They turn a corner. And the Musician, taking a walk, waves. And a Mailman, a bag over his shoulder, making his rounds, comes along the sidewalk. It's Ford. He slows. He taps a salute on the brim of his hat. The Postman starts to say something, but instead, salutes him back. And turning up a walk Ford puts some mail in a mailbox. As The Postman, Abby, and the mules, walk out of the neighborhood:

EXT. THE BEACH, ST. ROSE - DAY

They come along the beach. They stop. The Postman takes the tarps off the cargo. And we see the mules are loaded down with guns. The Postman looks at the various weapons. He takes a rifle. He walks to the edge of the ocean. And as he throws the rifle into the sea, we FREEZE, and:

THE NARRATOR'S VOICE (OVER)

Well, that's the story...

EXT. ST. ROSE, POST OFFICE - ANOTHER TIME

And we see Ford, sitting with a group of young mailmen on the steps of a small post office, eating lunch. And we realize the narrator's voice was Ford's.

A YOUNG MAILMAN

Where's he now?

FORD

(after a beat)

I haven't heard from him in awhile.

(ironic)

He isn't much at writing.

(a beat)

The last I had heard...He was living in Arizona...Retired...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He takes an envelope out of his pocket.

FORD (cont'd)  
I was just going to send him a  
letter.

And licking a stamp he puts it on the envelope. And as he affixes the stamp, we move in on the stamp until it fills the screen. And we see it's a "Commemorative Stamp..." "The Postman." And there's a heroic rendering of our main man in profile, his jaw set, looking toward the future. "And the colored girls go, do, da, do, da, do, da, do, da, dooooo..."

FADE OUT:

-The End-