

THE RIVER

- 1 VARIOUS EXTS., FARM COUNTRY - DAY AND NIGHT 1
- A quiet rain has begun to fall: gentle rain, mossy rain.
- It drops onto the earth and into ponds and streams that have barely returned to normal after the winter runoff some weeks earlier.
- The sky is darkening. There are thunderheads just behind the wind.
- The rain arrives in force.
- Quickly it loses its charm.
- The ground, having taken in all it can, suddenly begins to spew little rivulets. They bear themselves hurriedly, joining others. They flow into streams which are beginning to gather force as they rush down the mountainside.
- It rains all day.
- 2 It rains all night. 2
- The rain is beating down on the places where farmers work and dwell. It overflows gutters and troughs and batters equipment and roofs, and animals. It inundates the corn fields.
- 3 EXT. GARVEY FARM -- DAY - CLOSE ANGLE 3
- Rain falling in a bucket. The bucket filling.
- ANGLE
- The pig trough dotted with raindrops. Furrows run with rain in the open fields where young stalks of corn stand.
- Rainy day sky. Long sweeping easy rain.
- The bucket overflowing.
- 4 The rivulets grow into streams and the streams begin to strut with new-found importance, as though they always believed they were destined to become rivers, but there is only one river... 4

5

EXT. RIVER - DUSK

5

A roaring overflow. It's grown gigantic and swollen. The flood line marked on a pole is red-lined at 11 feet.

The earthwork levee along the river's edge can't hold. Soil's being swept away.

The river has taken trees, shrubs and outbuildings hurling them downstream in a rush of destruction.

One particular tree has come to serve as a funeral bower for an impaled, bloated cow, and as it rushes by it leads us to the Garvey family.

6

LEWIS GARVEY

6

a boy on the gentler side of twelve, is seen starting a generator which will provide light from hastily erected spotlights as they work. Then he runs to a pickup truck and turns the headlights on. The headlights reveal:

TOM GARVEY

slamming a bulldozer blade into the earth, gouging up an enormous wedge of earth and sandbags and pushing it forward.

Tom Garvey is a true individualist. He is the quintessential American independent farmer, and his days are numbered.

The motor grinds. Rain hisses. Black diesel smoke curls through the rain.

ANGLE

Lewis jumps out of the truck and rushes back to help his father by spotting leaks in the levee.

MAE AND BETH GARVEY

are filling improvised sandbags. They strain against the mud, slipping and desperate.

Mae is a remarkable young woman who has retained both her attractiveness and her sense of humor in spite of an arduous life as Tom's partner and the mother of their two children.

At age six, Beth already exhibits signs of her mother's stability and serenity.

CONTINUED

6 CONTINUED

6

Mae and Beth pick up the heavy bags and struggle to stack them on the levee.

7 THE LEVEE - NIGHT

7

Swirling water eats away its underside. A muddy stream spurts over the blade of the dozer.

8 ANGLE - ACROSS THE RIVER

8

up and downstream of the Garvey family there are others working by truck lights and generators.

9 GARVEY

9

Digging it down deeply. The dozer stands on its nose, straining against the earth, forcing it to rise and confront the river.

The dozer strains. He backs off the throttle. It's too late.

A bearing blows on one of the dozer tracks. The track grinds to a halt. The dozer spins crazily on the other track. It tilts dangerously. Its headlights sweep the sky.

GARVEY

Face streaming rain.

GARVEY

Lewis, get back.

THE DOZER

The earth shifts askew. The dozer's spinning slowly around. The uneven force against the blade snaps the coupling.

MAE

throws herself out of its path and gathers Beth up as Lewis just escapes the cutting edge.

FULL

Garvey fights the machine, the earth, the river.

10 FAR DOWNSTREAM 10
Small figures. Another family working.

11 ACROSS THE RIVER 11
Through the distant rain, men are heard shouting as they work.

12 GARVEY 12
off the dozer, struggling with the broken coupling.

ANGLE - LEWIS

LEWIS
Dad, it's goin'.

FULL

The earthen bank collapses. The river pours over them, knocking Beth off her feet.

MAE
Beth! Get her -- get her!

Garvey leaps to rescue Beth as Mae and Lewis are tumbled across the field. Garvey turns to find the bulldozer toppling toward them. Clutching Beth, he jumps aside and manages to make his way to Mae and Lewis who are back on their feet.

GARVEY
(to Lewis)
Grab her hand.

Lewis holds Beth tightly while all around them the fields are flooding.

GARVEY
Get the creatures.

13 THE BARN 13
Already flooding. Hay floating, the cows lowing, the pigs squealing with fright in their pen.

LADY, their mongrel sheep dog bitch is barking, trying to herd the animals.

CONTINUED

13 CONTINUED

13

LEWIS (v.o.)

Lady!

She runs towards him. Lewis pushes open the barn doors.

LEWIS

Out. Sooooo.

Lady flushes the lambs.

14 EXT. BARN

14

Lewis comes rushing out and sees Mae running for the farm house. Suddenly, Beth pulls free.

BETH

I have to save, Ernie.

LEWIS

(yelling after her)

Beth!

15 EXT. CATTLE PENS

15

Garvey is fighting the sweep of waters and finally gets the bull's pen open.

GARVEY

Yow, Bram, yow.

The Brahma rages through, snorting, crazy, turning to charge at Garvey who dodges as the terrified animal splashes through the rising waters.

16 INT. FARM HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

16

Mae is tugging frantically at a low cabinet drawer that is stuck. Beth comes clattering down the stairs clutching her doll, Ernie.

MAE

Beth, help me.

Beth helps her tug at the drawer which looks like it will never come unstuck.

17 EXT. BARN

17

Lewis is waving his jacket at a six hundred pound sow that is as stubborn as the drawer.

CONTINUED

- 17 CONTINUED 17
- LEWIS
- Snow White. Snow White. Move.
Sooooe...
- The white sow lumbers into the water and a dozen piglets squeal at her side.
- 18 EXT. FARMYARD 18
- Garvey and Lewis gather up cows, chickens and the rest of the livestock.
- 19 INT. FARM HOUSE - LIVING ROOM 19
- Mae and Beth tug one more time and the drawer comes unstuck. Mae reaches in and fishes out a huge object that is wrapped in heavy see-through plastic. It is an old handmade wedding quilt, an authentic piece of American folk art.
- Mae and Beth rush to the door.
- 20 EXT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT 20
- Mae pushes Beth out of the door ahead of her. She sees the water moving inexorably toward the house.
- MAE
- Oh, Lord.
- 21 EXT. FARM - NIGHT 21
- The family, clutching the few things they have saved, are seen moving with their animals towards distant high ground.
- 22 EXT. FARM - DAWN - MATTE 22
- The farmhouse stands on a mirror of sky.
- All the land is flooded and still. House, barn, machines, three white geese, they float in the mirroring water where images of scudding clouds drift as on a crystal sea.
- 23 MONTAGE 23
- shots in brilliant sunlight depict the devastation of the community.

23-A LEUTZCORP GRANARY - DAY

23-A
(X)

A helicopter, its rotors turning with the Leutzcorp insignia on its cabin, stands on a pad. The twin towers of the granary command the surrounding landscape.

A Leutzcorp employee ushers SENATOR ED NEISWINDER, a distinguished looking man wearing the State Seal in his lapel, toward the waiting helicopter.

ANGLE

The employee opens the door and the Senator looks inside to see JOE WADE, a rough-hewn, athletic man of thirty-four, at the controls. Sitting behind him are HOWARD SIMPSON, a middle-age country bank loan officer, and HARVE STANLEY, Wade's bullish foreman. All wear headsets.

WADE

Hop in Senator.

NEISWINDER

(confused)

Mornin' Joe...where's the pilot?

WADE

He's not feelin' too good, Ed, but don't worry. I'm sure I can figure out how this thing works.

The Senator nervously straps himself in and puts on a headset.

23-B WADE

23-B

expertly maneuvers the helicopter off the pad and with a flair he banks it gracefully toward the horizon.

(X)

24 CLOSE - TWO-LANE COUNTRY ROAD

24

moving below us. The rhythmic roar of a helicopter is heard as the broken white line flicks by. Suddenly the road disappears under water.

The camera pans to:

THE ROOF OF A FARMHOUSE

standing in a flooded field.

25 INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

25
(X)

WADE

All this bottom land used to be duck
marsh back two hundred years ago.
Natural springs all over it. Real
fine water.

(X)

NEISWINDER

How many farms flooded, Joe?

WADE

What do you figure, Howard?

HOWARD

Oh, maybe eight, nine, all told.
Same as always.

(X)

WADE

Seems to me nature's tryin' to tell
'em something.

(X)

He banks the helicopter.

(X)

26 EXT. LOW ANGLE

26

The helicopter swoops close by.

27* WHAT THEY SEE

27*

A herd of cows, clustered for protection on a small piece of isolated ground, stampedes into the water as the helicopter's downdraft whips the surrounding trees.

28* THE HELICOPTER'S SHADOW

28*

appears on an ancient barn sitting in a flooded farmyard.

29* A HUGE OAK TREE

29*

split in half by the force of the storm is seen below.

30* BACK TO SCENE - HELICOPTER

30*

Wade banks his helicopter so they can get a good look as he points out a specific farm:

WADE

Those are the Garveys down there.

31* WHAT THEY SEE

31*

Farm buildings surrounded by water.

A diesel pump throwing black smoke into the air and water off the land.

The Garvey family working to repair a gaping hole in the levee.

NEISWINDER (v.o.)

Might qualify for disaster relief.

WADE (v.o.)

These men don't want state aid, Senator. They're an independent breed.

32* BACK TO SCENE - HELICOPTER

32*

NEISWINDER

You mean 'hands off,' Joe?

WADE

Hard workin' guy, Tom Garvey. Stubborn sonofabitch.

33

EXT. GARVEY FARM - DAY

33

The helicopter flies over the Garvey fields as Tom, Mae and his children work to repair the hole in the levee.

The bulldozer sits cocked in mud, crazily wreathed in an intricate web of blocks and tackle.

34

THEY

34

look up at the helicopter.

MAE

Joe Wade.

GARVEY

(without a smile)

The flying farmer.

Mae bursts into laughter.

35

INT. HELICOPTER

35
(X)

flying.

NEISWINDER

Why'd you show me all this, Joe?

WADE

Ed, what we need here is a dam.
You're an expert on water rights --
that's why your friends put you in
the State house. Look into it.

NEISWINDER

If all this goes under water, what
happens to the farmers?

WADE

They'll get a fair price for their
land, won't they Howard?

(X)

SIMPSON

They're in no position to bargain,
but we'll certainly try to be fair.

(X)

WADE

Senator, I'm talking about enough
hydroelectric power to serve the
whole county.

(X)

Neiswinder studies him.

NEISWINDER

You and old man Leutz got a personal
interest here, Joe?

CONTINUED

35

CONTINUED

35

Wade turns to Simpson and says with a winning smile:

WADE

You hear how he talks to a
fraternity brother?

Wade moves the controls and the cabin banks radically.

EXT. HELICOPTER

The helicopter swoops toward the sun.

36

EXT. MILLROCK - DAY

36

Small and plain, named Millrock in 1882 when there was a grain mill on the river. A sense of decay pervades the town. A listless group of unemployed drifters shuffles aimlessly on the corner of Main Street.

Another group studies a bulletin board in front of the State Employment Office.

Mixed among boarded-up store fronts, "For Sale" signs, and other evidences of the town's economic decline, are Leutz's Pharmacy, Simpson's General Store, Millrock Realty, and Bob's Pool Room.

ACROSS STREET FROM BANK

The town Sheriff stops his patrol car to roust a drifter who has been sleeping on a bench using his tattered suitcase as a pillow.

MAE

waits anxiously in front of the bank with Lewis and Beth.

BETH

Mom, can I get an ice cream?

MAE

As soon as Daddy's finished.

BETH

When will he be finished?

LEWIS

(impatient)

When he's done.

MAE

Soon, Beth, soon.

ANGLE - WADE'S BRONCO

Wade pulls over to the curb. He is driving an elaborate, customized Bronco.

WADE

Morning, Mae.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MAE

(X)

Joe.

WADE

I saw you took some water.

MAE

Coulda been worse.

WADE

Anything I can do?

MAE

We'll manage.

Wade nods and drives off.

37

INT. BANK - DAY

37

A simple farm bank, just as plain as the town. Garvey sits in front of Howard Simpson, wearing a brown suit, Montgomery Wards. His shiny, neatly-pressed tie, lies uncomfortably on his workshirt.

Garvey's thick loan portfolio is on the desk in front of Simpson.

He holds a stained, folded paper open in his manicured banker's hands. He looks up.

SIMPSON

You need ninety-seven-hundred dollars?

GARVEY

That's right. I need to plant a new crop. I need to fix my dozer. It's all on that list.

Simpson thumbs through the portfolio.

SIMPSON

Let's see...three-hundred-twenty acres...borrowed sixty-thousand in nineteen-seventy...a second for eighteen-five in seventy-six. Two-hundred-fourteen-thousand worth of farm equipment on which you paid only sixteen-three...

(shakes head)

You owe us a lot of money, Tom. I'd like to help you, but if we give you another loan, how you gonna make the payments?

(X)

CONTINUED

37

CONTINUED

37

GARVEY

I'm a good customer, Howard.

SIMPSON

I know that....

GARVEY

I made my payments the first of every month for twelve years.

SIMPSON

That's not the point, Tom....

GARVEY

That is the point. Ten years ago you people were trippin' over yourselves tryin' to get me to borrow money.

SIMPSON

But it's different now. Land values are down. You owe us more than your place is worth.

GARVEY

Are you turnin' me down?

SIMPSON

Now, now...take it easy, Tom.

GARVEY

Take it easy? You're tryin' to put me out of business.

SIMPSON

Nobody said that.

GARVEY

You don't have to say it -- you're doin' it.

SIMPSON

Lower your voice.

GARVEY

I need that loan, Howard. I earned it.

Several heads have turned toward them.

Garvey and Simpson stare at each other. A long uncomfortable silence.

CONTINUED

37

CONTINUED - 2

37

SIMPSON

Leutzcorp might give you a damned good price for your land. Why don't you go talk to Joe Wade about it?

GARVEY

I'm not lookin' to sell. I'm lookin' to stay.

Simpson glances past him.

SIMPSON

That's your family, isn't it?

38

ANOTHER ANGLE

(X)
38

Mae has come inside with the children and sits on a bench where she watches.

GARVEY

Yes. That's my family.

SIMPSON

Fine lookin'.

Garvey waits for a decision.

(X)

Finally Simpson sighs, and closes the file.

SIMPSON

I don't know what we can do for you, Tom. We can roll your notes over again. Don't know what else.

Garvey grabs the list, gets up and walks out.

39

EXT. BANK - DAY

39

The family is coming out of the bank and moves toward their pickup which is parked across the street from the Leutz Pharmacy.

GARVEY

(tugging at tie)

Why'd you come in?

MAE

So he could look at me and the kids close up.

(placating him)

I don't think it made any difference.

CONTINUED

39

CONTINUED

39

GARVEY

It sure didn't.
(ripping tie off)
Neither did this.

BETH

Mom, can I get my ice cream now?

LEWIS

Beth...shhh.

BETH

(to Lewis)
She said when Dad's finished.
(to Garvey)
Aren't you finished now, Dad?

GARVEY

(raising voice)
No, Beth. I'm not finished.

Beth stares up at him, not understanding the intensity of his reply. Tom reaches into his pocket and pulls out a dollar.

GARVEY

(by way of
apology)
Go get some ice cream.

The kids run ahead toward the pharmacy.

MAE

You look real handsome. I cut your
hair good this time.

GARVEY

(tugging at
his collar)
It itches....

40

INT. FARMHOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

40
(X)

Mae at an old dressing table, sits, brushing her hair.
She watches Garvey in the mirror.

He's seated on the bed reading a letter by the light of
a beautiful old lamp.

GARVEY

Wade didn't waste any time, did he?
Howard must have called him the
minute I left the bank.

CONTINUED

40

CONTINUED

MAE

40
(X)

Hmmm.

She continues to watch him as he studies the letter.

GARVEY

We'd come away clean with about
twenty-five thousand dollars.

MAE

More like twenty-eight.

CONTINUED

40

CONTINUED

40

GARVEY

I'm not interested.

MAE

Because it's him?

GARVEY

My people are buried here, Mae.
This is our home place.

He drops the letter on the bed and walks out.

She picks up the brush and runs it through her hair.

41

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAWN

41

Beth is finishing up a bowl of cereal. Mae enters from another room with the wedding quilt in her arms.

She puts the quilt down on the kitchen table and moves to a counter which is already stacked with preserves. Beth begins to examine the quilt.

MAE

Beth, wipe your hands before you touch that.

BETH

It's so beautiful.

MAE

Your great grandma sewed every stitch with her own hands.

BETH

Do I get it when you die?

MAE

(smiles)

I'll make you one of your own. Here you carry it.

Beth picks it up and Mae reaches for the box of preserves and they go out the door.

42

EXT. FARMYARD - DAWN

42

Garvey and Lewis are hoisting a freshly-cleaned six-row planter into the back of their dilapidated truck.

CONTINUED

42

CONTINUED

42

Six pressed-back chairs are strapped in the bed of the truck.

Mae comes out carrying the preserves; Beth the quilt.

Garvey puts his hand on Beth's shoulder.

GARVEY

Beth, honey. Take that back inside.

MAE

Please, Tom...

GARVEY

It's not for sale. Take it inside, Beth.

Beth does as she's told. Garvey climbs into the cab. Lewis jumps up on the back of the truck. Beth comes out and gets in the cab with her mother.

Garvey swings around up the dirt road past their gates to where the blacktop begins. The truck's yellow headlights cut dim arcs.

43

INT. PICKUP - GARVEY, BETH AND MAE

43

GARVEY

What'd you pack up?

MAE

Oh -- the pears, applesauce, the blueberry jam.

GARVEY

Leave the jam.

MAE

Okay.

She pulls out the jars and stashes them under the seat.

MAE

You like my jam, huh?

GARVEY

Yeah.

She smiles. The sun cracks the sky with light. Long shadows sweep the land.

CONTINUED

44 FULL 44
The Garvey truck passes a farm similar to their own. Another truck labors onto the road. It hauls an old combine.

45 INT. TRUCK - DAY - GARVEY, MAE AND BETH 45
Mae looks back.
MAE
The Tessleys, they're selling their combine.
Garvey glances into the rearview.

46 WHAT THEY SEE 46
ROD TESSLEY driving. SALLY and the GIRLS crammed in the cab with him.

47 INT. TRUCK - GARVEY AND MAE 47
MAE
I think Lewis has a crush on Lisa Tessley.
BETH
I think so, Mama. On Betty Gaumer too. (X)
MAE
Shh....

48 EXT. ROAD - DAWN - MOVING 48
Garvey's passing the entrance to David Birkin's farm.

49 WHAT THEY SEE 49
The grey farmhouse needing paint and shingles. Birkin is putting his Jersey milk cow into the cow trailer. The milker's already loaded in his truck.
JUDY BIRKIN lifts their two small children onto the seat.

50 MAE 50
seeing them.

CONTINUED

50

CONTINUED

50

MAE

The Birkins, too.

She bundles Beth closer.

MAE

Are you warm enough?

51

FULL

51

Lewis waves to Lisa Tessley. She waves back.

52

MOVING - DAY

52

The sad caravan reaches the outskirts of town. It passes a red brick building -- the Harkness Iron Works. A huge sign: "NO HIRING - DO NOT INQUIRE."

One of several smokestacks emits a few wisps of smoke. One short row of cars in the enormous parking lot indicates that a skeleton crew is all that occupies the factory.

Beyond the factory's gates, whole families are living in cars and campers in hope that the factory will return to normal operation. Some vehicles are adorned with signs: "A Job Please -- Family of 5 -- I need work."

52-A

INT. TRUCK - MAE, GARVEY AND BETH

52-A

MAE

There's more of 'em everyday. Where are they coming from?

GARVEY

A lot of them look like farmers.

(X)

53

EXT. AUCTION BARN - DAY

53

The sun's gotten harsh. Thirty or so men, with their wives and families under the white banner hanging from the big red barn: HAL ARMSTRONG -- FARM LIQUIDATOR -- SALES -- AUCTION TODAY. The auction is already in progress.

The camera moves past the farmers who have their possessions on the block. Tight-lipped, weathered faces, eyes hard pressed.

THE WOMEN

have set out their goods on rickety tables; preserves, quilts, pies, old bottles, furniture, sepia family photos in frames, whatever is worth something to the antique dealers who prowl through, picking and pawing.

HAL ARMSTRONG

bangs his gavel as another valued farm implement is sold at a cruel price. He raises his bullhorn to continue.

ANGLE

Lewis is helping his father unload the planter from the truck. David Birkin steps over to help out.

BIRKIN

Morning, Tom. Need a hand?

GARVEY

No thanks, we can handle it.

Birkin turns away, Mae moves to him.

MAE

Don't mind Tom, you know how he is.

BIRKIN

Just like his father.

JUDY BIRKIN

lays out some crystal perfume bottles, some lace, a few pieces of china, poignant remnants.

Mae and Sally Tessley watch as Judy holds a crystal vase up to the light and studies it.

MAE

(quietly to Sally)
Look.

Judy reluctantly lays the vase on the table among the other objects.

SALLY

I hate being a farmer's wife.

Mae moves to Judy.

CONTINUED

53

CONTINUED

53

MAE

How you doin', Judy?

JUDY

We sold our stock.

MAE

I heard.

JUDY

Easier without the animals.

MAE

Yes.

JUDY

Miss the milk.

(a thin
smile)

But, I don't miss the milkin'.

CONTINUED

53

CONTINUED

53

MAE

You got some pretty pieces.

JUDY

Thank you.

MAE

You should get a lot for that vase.
It's a good one.

Mae rests her hands on the backs of her own pressed-back chairs.

JUDY

Don't matter none. Just old things.

Sally walks over to Mae.

SALLY

I think your planter's next.

Mae moves hastily through the crowd to Tom's side as Armstrong steps in front of Garvey's planter.

Buyers closely surround the planter, examining it with practiced eyes. They are tough-eyed men who wear Sears shirts and straw hats. Some wear J.C. Penney suits.

Lewis stands beside his father as the auction resumes. It's like a bludgeoning. The planter is sold in seconds for next to nothing.

With understanding beyond his years, Lewis reaches up to touch his father's arm.

MAE

(gently)

Go find your sister.

54

Armstrong now sets up a large photo of the Gaumer farm on an easel, gesturing his stockmen to pull up Gaumer's heavy equipment.

54

GAUMER, his WIFE, and children -- BILLY and BETTY -- stand next to the easel looking dazed and frightened.

CONTINUED

54

CONTINUED

54

ARMSTRONG

Okay, now. Next we have lot four-
teen, the Gaumer farm. Everything to
be sold. Ya' want to know anythin'
'bout this equipment or livestock,
ya' just step up and ask Mr. Gaumer
here. He's worked it and he knows
it, and ya' just ask him.

The farmers suddenly begin to stir.

GARVEY

Dan Gaumer. He's just three
miles down river.

MAE

Then his land's gone, too.

FARMERS

The bitter word is whispered through their ranks.

ARMSTRONG

You all know his place down near
Osborne.

EARL SMOOT, a local farmer, pushes forward.

SMOOT

You ain't gonna sell him out here.
(starts to shout)
No sale. No sale.

ARMSTRONG

Now hold on boys....

Others pick it up.

FARMERS

No sale. No sale.

ARMSTRONG

Now we're runnin' a professional
auction here boys, so let's just
settle down....

FARMERS

No sale!

CONTINUED

54

CONTINUED

54

Armstrong looks over at the Sheriff. The Sheriff moves closer with some armed deputies.

ARMSTRONG

You boys ain't listenin' to what I'm sayin' now, so if you'll just shut up for a minute...

FARMERS

No sale!

GAUMER

He steps forward, anxious, his family worried.

GAUMER

It's too late. They already took it.

GARVEY AND MAE

listening to the shouts, exchanging looks.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Gaumer waves his arms awkwardly, needing to shout.

GAUMER

Ya' don't understand. My farm's gone. They already foreclosed me.

The men suddenly become still.

ARMSTRONG

You hear? I ain't selling his farm. Now, go on, move back.

GAUMER

(anguished)

I appreciate what you're doin' but my place is already gone. This stuff is just what's left and I'll need the cash to clear out. So you go on, Mr. Armstrong.

HAL ARMSTRONG

working down the list.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ARMSTRONG

We got an IHC five-oh-three combine
with a thirteen foot grain head and
four row corn picker, what am I bid?

55 EXT. ROAD - PRE-DAWN - CLOSE - LEWIS' FEET ON BICYCLE 55

Shot widens to reveal Lewis on his bike working his way up a hill in the early light.

He pedals to the top, stops and looks down.

WHAT HE SEES - THE GAUMER FARM

The Gaumers are leaving. They are tying things to the top of an old, battered station wagon, piled high with the few possessions they have left. Betty comes out of the house and helps her brother lift a box onto the tailgate.

Lights still burn in the farmhouse, casting an eerie, early-morning glow on their activities.

Suddenly Billy sees Lewis and dashes up the road to where Lewis sits on his bike. There's an awkward silence.

BILLY

Dad says they got Little League
in the city. Uniforms and
everything.

LEWIS

(numbly)

That's great.

Betty has moved tentatively up the hill toward them.

BETTY

Billy...Dad says we gotta hurry.

The three of them stand awkwardly, staring at each other.

BETTY

'Bye, Lewis.

She runs back toward the car.

BILLY

Gotta go.

Billy turns and runs back down the hill. Lewis watches them all climb into the old station wagon.

Suddenly, a door opens and Billy rushes into the house to turn off the still burning kitchen lights. He gets back in the wagon and it moves clumsily up the driveway towards the main road.

CONTINUED

55

CONTINUED

55

As the wagon passes, Billy waves a tentative good-bye and the Gaumers are gone.

Lewis turns back to the desolate farmhouse below.

WHAT HE SEES - THE FARM

The cattle pens empty, the house decrepit, its doors open, the early morning sun creeping up over the horizon, casting ghostly shadows.

56

EXT. GRAIN ELEVATORS - LATE AFTERNOON - WIDE ANGLE

56

The storage elevators rise in twin towers, commanding the flat landscape.

Black on yellow signs: LEUTZ GRAIN CORP.

FARMERS

Tessley, Birkin, Smoot, Zemke, Youngdall, wait their turn.

BLACKBOARD

Joe Wade and Harve Stanley, stand in front of a blackboard which lists the price of future contracts.

AUG. 3.50 SEPT. 3.50 OCT. 3.50

Stanley looks up from the sheaf of papers in his hand. He has to yell above the falling grain.

STANLEY

Garvey.

Garvey raises his hand, coming forward.

WADE

What do you say, Tom? You get the water off your land?

GARVEY

It's goin'.

CONTINUED

WADE

You want to contract?

GARVEY

Yep.

WADE

Three hundred acres. How many bushels?

GARVEY

A hundred-and-thirty an acre.

WADE

That much?

GARVEY

That's right.

STANLEY

Three-forty-five.

GARVEY

(turning)

Says three-fifty.

STANLEY

Morning's price. It's gone down since.

SMOOT

Who sets the damn price?

WADE

The free market sets it, you know that.

ZEMKE

I heard it was little gnomes in the Chicago pits.

YOUNGDALL

I heard it was fairies on Wall Street.

GARVEY

(to Wade)

I say it's your father-in-law. He sets everything else in this county.

WADE

If you don't like the price, you can haul your crop to the city. You're a free man, Tom, you got options.

CONTINUED

56 CONTINUED - 2

56

GARVEY

If you haven't got cash, you haven't got options.

NEW ANGLE

A torrent of hybrid corn seed pours into the back of Garvey's truck. A dry waterfall of sound.

Garvey's face is golden with corn dust, but his eyes are narrow, watching the grain men with their scales.

57 EXT. MAIN OFFICE - ADJACENT

57

The door opens and Wade emerges with three men in business suits. They carry rolls of blueprints under their arms.

WADE

...if you have any trouble filing these, get to Ed Neiswinder. He knows all about it.

The men shake his hand and walk down the ramp as Wade turns to Garvey who stands nearby:

WADE

How come you didn't answer my letter?

GARVEY

Didn't know I had to.

WADE

Gonna plant one more crop, huh?

GARVEY

Yeah, it gets to be a habit.

Garvey climbs into his truck and drives away. Wade watches as the truck trails golden dust.

58 INT. BARN - SUNSET

58

Late afternoon sun streaks the barn. Mae and Beth attend an ailing cow.

CONTINUED

58

CONTINUED

58

BETH

She don't look good, Mama.

MAE

Don't worry, this medicine'll make her better. It's strong.

BETH

Hear that, Jessica? You just rest and I'll come see you before bedtime.

59

EXT. FARMYARD - DUSK

59

Sparks spray from an acetelyne torch as Lewis wearing a welding mask works on the wounded dozer.

Garvey, wearing goggles, stands beside him supervising.

GARVEY

(taking off goggles)

Go ahead. Don't be afraid. I'm gonna take a little nap.

He lies down and leans against a bale of hay.

LEWIS

Dad, don't go to sleep. Maybe you better do it.

GARVEY

You're doin' fine. Go on.

Garvey closes his eyes. Lewis reluctantly turns back to his work. The sparks fly as Garvey pretends not to watch.

60

EXT. MILLROCK - DAY

60

A few cars and trucks move through the town.

Several obviously unemployed men congregate on street corners.

61

STATE EMPLOYMENT OFFICE - DAY

61

A family, husband, wife and three children, stand in front of the office checking the bulletin board for possible work.

62

AN OLD TRUCK

62

with belongings roped on top moves slowly down Main Street. As it passes the general store we discover:

EXT. GENERAL STORE, MILLROCK - DAY

Beth, sitting alone on a bench next to several large grocery bags. The bags are full of staples, canned goods, etc. She is eating from an open box of cookies. Her mother is nowhere to be seen.

Nearby some sharp-eyed city women are looking through various items from the liquidation sale that are set up on tables outside the general store.

VOICE

Are those Oreos?

Beth looks up. Wade stands beside her.

ANGLE

WADE

My favorite. Yours too?

Nothing. He sits beside her.

BETH

Mama said I'm not supposed to talk to strangers.

WADE

I'm no stranger. I was born here. How long have you lived here?

BETH

Six years. I'm only six.

WADE

Well, I win. Do you think I could have just one?

She studies him carefully, then makes her decision.

BETH

No.

WADE

You're your father's daughter all right.

Mae appears from inside the general store.

MAE

There's no answer, Beth. We'll just have to wait for him.

CONTINUED

62

CONTINUED

62

WADE

(rising)

Hello, Mae. I was trying to talk
your daughter out of a cookie.

MAE

I bet you didn't have any luck.

WADE

Not yet...Can I give you a lift? I'm
on my way to Sterling. I have to go
right past your place.

Mae hesitates.

WADE

If Tom's on his way he'll have to
pass us...

MAE

I guess it'll be all right.

WADE

Let me help you with these.

They load her packages into the Bronco parked nearby.

Suddenly Mae looks up, concerned.

WADE

What is it?

WHAT SHE SEES

One of the city women is examining Judy Birkin's crystal
vase.

BACK TO SCENE

MAE

That vase was Judy Birkin's. She had
to sell it at auction.

Wade walks over to the woman.

WADE

(conspiratorially)

Don't buy that. It's a cheap copy.

He takes it out of her hand and into the store leaving the
woman and Mae open-mouthed.

NEW ANGLE

Wade comes out of the store. As he gets into the car he hands Mae the vase which is in a brown paper bag.

WADE

You give it to her.

He puts the Bronco in gear and drives off.

63 EXT. ROAD - DAY

63

The Bronco passes the Harkness Iron Works and the adjacent trailer camp and moves smoothly thorough the countryside.

64* INT. BRONCO - DAY

64*

Mae notices a set of golf clubs in the back.

MAE

You play a lot of golf?

WADE

When I have to.

MAE

Must be awful hard for you. All that walkin'.

Wade looks at her and smiles. He reaches into the glove compartment and removes a cassette and slips it into the tape deck in the dashboard.

WADE

You still like Willie Nelson?

MAE

Sure.

An instrumental standard is heard from the expensive speakers. They listen in silence. Mae smiles.

WADE

What are you smilin' at?

MAE

Nashville. I can still see the look on your face when they wouldn't let us backstage.

CONTINUED

64

CONTINUED

64
(X)

WADE

I knew him. I swear I knew him. He came to Texas A & M to a party. I spent a whole month with him that night.

Mae laughs.

BETH

What's so funny, Mom?

MAE

Nothing, honey. I just got the giggles.

WADE

(to Beth)

How you doin' back there, sport.

BETH

Fine.

He leans over to Mae.

WADE

You think you could convince her to give me a cookie?

MAE

Do your own dirty work.

Beth has overheard. She hands him a cookie.

BETH

Here.

WADE

If you want a soda, you just reach in that fridge and help yourself.

MAE

Now, you're corruptin' my daughter.

WADE

If she's your daughter she can handle it.

Mae's smile fades. They drive in silence for a moment.

MAE

We got your letter...Tom's not interested in selling.

CONTINUED

64

CONTINUED - 2

64

WADE

How do you feel about it?

Mae doesn't respond.

WADE

It must be hard to hang on.

MAE

Not for Tom Garvey.

65

EXT. GARVEY FARM - DAY

65

Garvey and Lewis sit astride the barn roof hammering a new section of corrugated tin into place.

GARVEY

Lewis, it's crooked.

LEWIS

I'll get it, Dad.

He slides down a bit and taps the sheet of tin with his hammer.

GARVEY

Good boy...That's got it.

As he hammers it in place he looks down and sees Wade's Bronco turn into the driveway and pull up to the house.

Mae and Beth and Wade unload packages.

66

EXT. FARMHOUSE

66

Mae takes the last of the packages out of the Bronco.

MAE

(picking up
the vase)

It's a nice thing you did.

WADE

Just neighborly.

(waves to Garvey)

Tom.

He drives away.

67

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

67

Mae and Beth are putting the groceries away as Garvey enters and moves to the sink.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

GARVEY

I'm sorry, Mae...the roof took longer than we thought.

MAE

What's wrong with it?

GARVEY

Old age.

Mae reaches to put something away in a high cabinet. Garvey comes up behind her and puts it in the cabinet for her. He puts his arms around her. She turns to him. They stare at each other for a moment.

MAE

Beth -- go feed the chickens.

BETH

I fed them this morning.

MAE

Feed them again.

Beth goes out reluctantly.

MAE

It's two o'clock in the afternoon.

GARVEY

My favorite time of day.

He kisses her.

MAE

(whispering)

We gotta be quiet.

They kiss again.

EXT. CORRAL -- SUNSET

Garvey and Mae sit up on a corral fence watching Beth on a horse. Lewis walks beside her, holding the bridle.

After a moment Garvey motions to Lewis to let go. Lewis does so. Suddenly Beth realizes she is riding alone.

Everybody applauds. Beth smiles proudly as she rides around the corral.

EXT. FIELDS - DUSK - CLOSE - DISK AND HARROW

as earth is turned over violently. A flock of birds feast on earthworms that are exposed by the plowing.

69

EXT. TRACTOR - DUSK

69

Mae, with Beth on her lap, expertly maneuvers the tractor across the land, preparing it for planting.

She reaches the end of the field.

MAE

Hold tight, now. Here we go.

She hits the hydraulic lever, raising the disk and harrow and turns to start another pass.

IN THE DISTANCE

Garvey and Lewis can be seen.

70

EXT. FIELDS - DUSK

70

Garvey and Lewis stand looking over a row of stakes which has been placed at precise intervals for planting.

GARVEY

You got your Grandad's eyes, Lewis.
That's a good straight row.

Lewis smiles, pleased.

Garvey stoops to pick up a rock.

GARVEY

This field has been plowed a
hundred times and the ground
keeps spittin' these things up.

He gives the rock a heave.

LEWIS

You and Grandaddy used to do this,
didn't you Dad?

GARVEY

Mm-hmm.

Lewis flings a rock just as his father did.

LEWIS

This is where he hurt his leg,
isn't it?

GARVEY

How'd you know that?

CONTINUED

70

CONTINUED

70

LEWIS

Mom.

GARVEY

Got real tough for him after that.
That's when we moved to the city.
'If you're bossed -- you're lost.'

LEWIS

What?

GARVEY

He used to say that when he came
home from that factory. He hated
it. Knew it would kill him.

They stand silently watching Mae and Beth as they continue
to work in the distance.

71

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

71

Mae, Beth and Lewis are dressed in their Sunday best.

They are passing huge fields where modern machinery is
plowing. Every few ticks of fence signs are posted,
black on yellow: LEUTZCORP.

In the distance an enormous irrigation rig, large enough to
rain-wet acres in a pass, droops on spindly insect legs,
waiting.

New water pumps dot the landscape.

Drilling rigs high as towers are being erected in the field.

Beth sits between Lewis and Mae.

LEWIS

It's not fair. I disked it, I
staked it. I should be plantin' it.

MAE

There'll be plenty of field left
to plant when we get back.

BETH

(points to
drilling rigs)
What are those?

CONTINUED

71

CONTINUED

71
(X)

LEWIS

Deep drilling rigs.

BETH

For what?

LEWIS

Water.

MAE

Mr. Leutz is running low.

LEWIS

Is all that Mr. Leutz's?

MAE

Mr. Leutz and Mr. Wade's. Eleven
thousand acres.

LEWIS

Wow....

MAE

(to herself)

Hard to believe he wants more.

71-A EXT. ROAD - DAY

71-A

As the Garvey pickup truck moves toward town it takes us to Joe Wade, Harve Stanley, and a WATER EXPERT. They have been watching laborers pull hundreds of feet of pipe out of the ground. As the last length of pipe emerges, the drilling bit is revealed.

Then an ugly mixture of sand, rock, and mud oozes from the shaft.

WATER EXPERT

Your aquifer's about gone, Joe.
You're gonna have to find some
way to get to the river.

WADE

I've found a way.

72 INT. CHURCH - DAY

72

The MINISTER stands in his pulpit. He is in his forties. Nearby Rod Tessley, a Deacon of the church, is puffed with self importance.

CONTINUED

72

CONTINUED

72

Mae and the children sit near the Birkins, Sally Tessley, and other faces familiar to us from the flood, the auction, etc.

MINISTER

(summing up)

He is the bringer of sunshine and rain and the force behind the miracle of life itself. Perhaps the water was a test, a test of our faith in Him. Let us turn now to hymn eighty-six.

The organist plays. The congregation sings.

73

EXT. GARVEY'S FIELDS - DAY

73

The singing can be heard over. Garvey is running down the row of stakes, knocking them over with the dual front wheels of his ancient tractor. Behind the tractor an old two-row planter drops seed into the ground.

74

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

74
(X)

The Minister can be seen in the b.g. chatting with the departing faithful, most of whom seem nourished by the service.

Lewis is seen talking to Lisa Tessley.

Mae who has Beth beside her catches up with Judy Birkin.

(X)

MAE

Judy. Wait a minute. I have something for you.

She moves to her truck and takes out a package wrapped in tissue paper. Judy stares in disbelief as she unwraps her vase. (X)

JUDY

Mae, I can't take this.

MAE

Joe Wade bought it and asked me to give it to you.

JUDY

(covering her feelings)

That man is full of surprises. He wants to buy our farm. (X)

CONTINUED

74

CONTINUED

74

MAE

We got a letter, too. So did the
Tessleys.

(X)

JUDY

Offering good money, considerin'.
You thinkin' of selling?

(X)

MAE

Tom wants the land for Lewis and
Beth.

JUDY

It's getting so hard to hang on, Mae.

MAE

I know.

Judy goes. Mae stands watching her. Rod Tessley approaches. (X)

TESSLEY

(good naturedly)

Where's Tom?

MAE

Planting with his father's old
two-row. He'll be at it for days.

(X)

75

EXT. FIELDS - LATE AFTERNOON

75

Garvey and Lewis are hard at work. Lewis walks alongside
the tractor, a wrench in his hand, watching carefully to
make sure the seeds are being thrown into the ground.

LEWIS

Wait, Dad. It's jammed again.

He reaches down into the planter and fools with the chain.

LEWIS

Okay, try it.

CONTINUED

75 CONTINUED

75

Garvey moves on. He gets to the end of the row and starts to lift the planter so he can turn it. Suddenly there is a terrible sound from the hydraulic mechanism, oil spurts out.

GARVEY

God...bless it -- now what?

Lewis rushes over to the tractor as Garvey kills the ignition and jumps down. Lewis finds the trouble. He pulls out a leaking hose and shows it to his father.

GARVEY

I just bought that hose!

76 EXT. PICKUP - AFTERNOON - MOVING

76

The pickup moves toward town at high speed.

77* INT. BOB'S POOL ROOM - DAY

77*

The place is crowded with farmers and with members of Leutzcorp's softball team who wear shirts with the company colors. They are drinking beer and playing pool.

Dominating a pool table in the back is HARLEY, owner of Harley's Garage, a combination gas station, repair shop and John Deere Dealership.

Wade can be seen talking into a wall telephone.

WADE

(into phone)

Hi, Ruthie. Sorry to bother you on a Sunday. This is Joe Wade. Is the Senator around?

Wade cups his hand over the phone and turns to Harve Stanley, the team catcher, who is standing at the bar:

WADE

Gimme a beer, will ya', Harve?

As Harve hands him the beer he turns to the farmers in the bar:

STANLEY

Trouble with you boys is you're all muscle-bound from rustlin' all that cow shit out the barn door.

CONTINUED

77

CONTINUED

77

HARLEY

(between shots)

Let's give 'em a rematch next Sunday
Harve. They wasn't ready for Joe's
pitching arm.

Through the window of the pool room, Garvey's truck can be
seen screeching to a halt. Garvey leaves Lewis in the
truck and walks into the pool room.

WADE

Hey, Tom -- you should have been out
there today. Your buddies could
have used you.

Garvey doesn't answer him...he's found who he wants.
Harley. He advances on him, holding the busted hose.

GARVEY

Harley, I need a hose. I'm plantin'.

HARLEY

It's Sunday. I ain't open on Sunday.

GARVEY

I'm not tellin' you to 'open.' Just
drive down there and dig me out a
new one.

Harley leans over the pool table to shoot.

HARLEY

And I'm tellin' you I'm a Christian
and there ain't no way I'm openin'
up on Sunday.

He goes to shoot, but Garvey has grabbed the fat end of the
stick and holds it in his hand.

GARVEY

(quietly)

Harley, if I don't have a new hose
in my hands in five minutes you're
gonna have a Christian burial.

The bar goes deadly quiet. .

SMOOT

See you, Harley.

Everybody laughs.

78

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

78

A banner hangs across the front of Harley's Garage:
INTEREST DEFERRED - CASH REBATES - LET'S TALK. Various
new model tractors are on display.

Lewis sits in the cab of a space-age John Deere tractor.
A sign on the tractor reads: REDUCED - EASY PAYMENTS:

79

INT. GARAGE - DAY

79

Harley is rummaging through boxes looking for a hose as
Garvey stands nearby.

(X)

HARLEY

(X)

(muttering)

...T-seventy-eight-ninety-nine-
thirty-'B'-'N'...'nah....

Through the window Joe Wade's Bronco can be seen pulling up
to the gas pump. Wade gets out and calls to Harley.

(X)

WADE

(X)

Harley, long as you're open on
Sunday, I'm gonna pump myself some
gas.

Harley reaches into his pocket, takes out a set of keys and
flings them through the open door to Wade. Harley turns
back to Garvey.

(X)

HARLEY

Nobody stocks parts for that old hunk
o' junk you drive. Why don't you let
me sell you a new tractor?

GARVEY

Just get the hose, Harley.

80

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

80

Wade turns to Lewis.

WADE

Nice machine, huh?

LEWIS

It's okay....

81

INT. GARAGE - DAY

81

Harley pulls out a hose and holds it out to Garvey.

CONTINUED

81

CONTINUED

81

HARLEY

Try this one. That'll be four
dollars and...

He sees the look on Garvey's face.

HARLEY

Forget it. I don't do business
on Sunday.

Garvey takes the hose, turns and walks out of the garage.

82

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

82

Joe Wade is standing up on the tractor showing Lewis the
tape deck.

WADE

You can plow a field and listen to
your favorite cassette.

GARVEY

Let's go, Lewis.

Lewis climbs down.

WADE

How come you don't play ball
anymore, Tom?

GARVEY

I don't have time for games.

WADE

Too bad, there's a game next Sunday.
Doesn't seem to be anybody in the
valley that can touch my fast ball.

Lewis studies his father.

83

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD BEHIND PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY

83

Garvey is at the plate looking at Wade on the mound.

84

ANOTHER ANGLE - STANDS

84

Lewis and Beth watch anxiously.

85

OMITTED

85
(X)

86

THE STANDS

86

LEWIS

(overlapping)

Come on, Dad, make it three for
three.

BETH

(imitating)

Yeah, three and three.

Lewis looks at Beth.

87

THE GAME

87

Wade lets the first pitch go right for Garvey's head.
Garvey is forced down into the dirt. Harley, who is the ump
behind the plate, makes a grand understatement as he yells:

HARLEY

Ball one.

THE STANDS

BETH

Why'd Daddy fall down ?

LEWIS

He didn't want to get hit in the
head, stupid.

BETH

Who you callin' stupid?

LEWIS

(shouting)

Go get him, Dad.

THE GAME

Garvey brushes himself off and sets for the next pitch.

Wade winds up and delivers. The ball rockets toward Garvey's
head. Tom bites the dust for the second time. He jumps up
and takes a step toward the mound. Harley stops him.

HARLEY

I'll talk to him, Tom.

CONTINUED

87

CONTINUED

87

TOM

No...I'll talk to him.

He walks slowly to the mound. The crowd quiets as Garvey reaches Wade.

GARVEY

(quietly)

You havin' a little control problem, Joe?

WADE

Guess so.

GARVEY

Well, get hold of yourself. Put one right about here and see what happens.

Wade smiles as Garvey goes back to the plate.

The windup. The pitch. Wade tries to jam him, but Garvey takes a step back and lets go. The ball takes off for what looks like a country mile.

88

ANGLE - LEWIS AND BETH

88

Screaming.

89

ANGLE - GARVEY'S TEAMMATES

89

Cheering.

It's an inside the park home run if anyone ever saw one. Garvey rounds third and the ball comes flying in.

Harve Stanley grabs the throw from the outfield and plants himself in front of the plate.

Garvey slides, putting Harve on his ass.

HARLEY

Yerrout!!

Cries of outrage go up from the farmers and the crowd, most particularly from Lewis and Beth.

90

EXT. GARVEY FARM - DUSK

90

The pickup is seen leaving the main road and turning into the farm.

Tom and Lewis and Beth get out of the cab and Beth runs ahead of them into the kitchen.

91 INT. FARM HOUSE - KITCHEN - DUSK

91

BETH

Mom, Daddy hit a homer, but...

She looks around. Her mother isn't there. Several loaves of over-baked bread, partially burnt, sit up on a kitchen counter and the oven door hangs open.

BETH

Mom? Mom, we're home.

Garvey and Lewis enter the kitchen, seeing the burnt bread. Garvey shuts the oven door.

LEWIS

Smells funny in here.

Beth comes back into the kitchen.

BETH

Mom's not here.

Garvey looks out a window.

WHAT HE SEES

A dim light shining through the barn window.

BACK TO SCENE

He leads the way out of the kitchen.

92 INT. BARN - DUSK

92

Mae sits on the ground, her knees up, leaning against one of the stalls. Jessica, the cow we saw earlier, lies dead nearby.

The barn door opens and Tom and the children walk inside. They move slowly towards her. She turns to them, speaking without emotion; abstract:

MAE

I burnt the bread...I was here and
I forgot...I'm sorry Beth, I tried.
I should have called the vet, but we
owe him so much money I just
couldn't face him. I'm sorry.

CONTINUED

92

CONTINUED

92

She gets up and moves past them and out of the barn into the gathering darkness.

Beth stares at the cow and then turns to her father.

BETH

Is Jessica dead?

GARVEY

Yes. Go in the house with Lewis, now.

BETH

I have to say good-bye to her.

He nods for Lewis to take care of Beth. Lewis understands.

Tom goes out of the barn.

93

EXT. THE RIVER - NIGHTFALL

93

Mae sits by the bank of the river staring into the water.

Garvey approaches. He kneels down next to her.

MAE

I don't know what to do about Sears
...I sold the quilt...I payed the
FHA...Power company sent a final
notice, but I have a money order
for that...I found an old pair of
sneakers that Lewis outgrew...I
can give those to Beth...but I don't
know what to do about Sears.

GARVEY

The corn will be ready to cut in
ninety days. Can you hold on 'till
then?

MAE

I don't know. We got nothing left
to sell...but the land.

94 EXT. PICKUP - DAY

94

Tom is driving alone; grim, determined, stone-faced. Trees flick by between him and the camera as he drives.

Suddenly the trees give way to another pattern; man-made, the steel supports of a bridge.

Angle widens to reveal Tom driving across a bridge into the bowels of a city; an industrial nightmare.

95 EXT. SCRAPYARDS - BEFORE DAWN - WIDE ANGLE

95

Heaps of industrial remains; giant gears, bent shafts, steel bones flung behind chain-mesh fence. Abandoned mills rise beyond, black scratched on the horizon.

200 men cluster in the scrapyard. They're haggard. They stomp off the chill around trash can fires, waiting to be looked over by five foremen and a couple of fellows wearing shirts and ties and pens in their pockets. Low level management.

Tables are set up on sawhorses. The men move down the line. The ones already picked stand aside. The unlucky ones form ugly little groups. Toughs push them on.

96 EXT. GATE - MOVING

96

Garvey and his cousin Roy, move toward the line.

ROY

Spring, ya' think it'd warm up. The city gets colder every year...I guess you noticed it's not so good between Ida and me. Now that I'm workin', maybe she'll get off my case.

Moving toward the hiring table. Ahead is a foreman named SWICK.

ROY

That's the guy -- Swick, he's the crew boss.

Roy urgently whispers to Garvey.

ROY

Take your hat off...Hiya', Swick, This is the guy I told you about... my cousin, Tom. He needs the work.

Men in line grumble at the intrusion.

CONTINUED

96

CONTINUED

96

SWICK

(yelling)

Shut up.

(turning to Garvey)

What can ya' handle?

GARVEY

Whatever you've got. Cut and weld
both oxy and arc. I do layout. I
can template. I can braze.

ROY

I'm tellin' ya', Swick, he's my
cousin. He's good.

The noise is harsh.

SWICK

Okay. He's on. But he fucking
better be good. Ya' get eight-
fifty an hour. Fifty hour week.
And ya' get a flop.

GARVEY

Not quite getting it.

ROY

ROY

It's nothin', it's an on site job.

97

FULL

97

A sharp blast of whistles. Men strain to roll back
screeching metal gates.

Trucks grind in. Their headlamps cut across the faces of
the men: Irish, Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Poles, nervous and
shifting, flotsam on an uneasy sea.

FOREMAN

Load up. Go on, you want to work,
load your asses.

WIDE ANGLE

The men picked to work rush the trucks.

CONTINUED

- 97 CONTINUED 97
- Foremen shout. The white shirts blow their whistles, shrill to the gut.
- Gears wrench. The trucks jolt forward into the street.
- 98 EXT. CITY STREET - BEFORE DAWN - MOVING 98
- Garvey's pressed tightly against the slats. Men sway around him, wedged together.
- 99 WHAT HE SEES 99
- They pass through steel-town bowels: Sooted black mills, slurry pipes and conduits, slag piles.
- 100 FACES OF THE MEN 100
(X)
- 101 MOVING 101
(X)
- The trucks skirt deep potholes. They pass bolt-studded sheds, windowless warehouses. On every gate signs are posted: CLOSED NO TRESPASSING NO JOBS STAY OUT: Trashed with slogans: SWASTIKAS, FUCK THE EYEATOLLAH, SOLIDARINOSC.
- 102 GARVEY 102
- looking upward at the smokestacks crowding out the sky. No plumes of sulphurous smoke, no yellow billows.
- GARVEY
It's all shut down.
- ROY
It's all gone to hell.
- 103 FULL 103
- The trucks turn down a wide concrete slab street.
- Ahead is a vast complex of blackened and rusted buildings behind tall wire fences and thick studded gates. ALLIED IRON FABRICATION.
- It stands at the edge of the city where marshland melts into scrub woods. A desolate landscape of chemical dump to a bleak horizon.

CONTINUED

103

CONTINUED

103

150 men mass in front of the gates. They carry picket signs. They're unionmen.

GARVEY

(to Roy)

What is this?

The unionmen see the trucks. They yell and rush forward. Beyond them inside the gates, fifty uniformed and armed security guards stand ready.

Truck horns blare. The guards pull chains from the gates, ready to spring them open.

MOVING

GARVEY

That's a strike. We're scabbing.

The unionmen rush the trucks. They throw bricks and stones.

UNION MEN

They jump on the trucks smashing at windshields with baseball bats. Toughs beat them back with nightsticks. Heads crack as the unionmen yell.

UNIONMEN

Scabs. Scabs. Scabs.

FULL

The trucks relentlessly plow toward the gates.

They're swung open against the unionmen. The trucks roll through to safety.

Gates swing shut. The guards push the unionmen back. They're still hollering "scab."

Swick swings from the truck.

SWICK

Get off.

The men pile off.

GARVEY AND ROY

getting off the truck.

CONTINUED

103 CONTINUED

103

GARVEY

We're taking their jobs.

ROY

Tom, it's the only jobs there are.

Bricks still shatter around them.

104 INT. FACTORY - DAY - WIDE ANGLE

104

The men are marched in, a snaking mass.

Other workers look up from gigantic lathes and long metal benches dotting the acres of oil concrete in the enormous workshed.

It stretches a quarter of a mile and is four stories high, girdered, catwalked, iron skinned. Dingy clerestory windows filter pale yellow light.

MOVING

Garvey walks with the others. Swick bellows to be heard.

SWICK

Tool crib's down there. You get number tags. Don't lose 'em. You break a tool, ya' pay for it. You ruin the work, ya' pay. Piss call is ten minutes every two hours. You get hurt, tough shit, ya' get band-aids and bailing wire.

A goggled worker pulls a flaming wooden rake removing slag from molten metal.

Machines clang and grind. They bite and snap. Rollers spin, conveying large heavy steel plates across the center of the shed.

SWICK

You get a cot and bedding. You eat what's in the canteen. No booze, no dope. You stay here all week. Ya' want out before Saturday noon, you go through that picket line on your fucking own.

Welding torches arc in brilliant flashes. Riveters work further down the line on oddly shaped girders.

CONTINUED

104 CONTINUED

104

SWICK

All right, you fitters over there,
shapers and finishers, you go on.
Welders to the right, go on, goddamn
it, move.

Garvey and Roy slip off with the other welders toward the
crackling arcs.

105 INT. FACTORY - DAY - HIGH ANGLE

105

Welders working below, arcs burning, sparkling ants in a
vast metal hive.

GARVEY AND ROY

Arcs in hand, helmets on their heads, gloved, aproned, stand
near welders working on large metal plates that requires
five intricate welds.

TRUCK, Black, bull-necked and bitter, shows them the working
pattern.

TRUCK

Ya' tack here, same here. Then you
go back. Got to be sound, Jim,
because they magneflux.

GARVEY

Name's Tom.

TRUCK

Nice to meet you, Jim.

ROY

What're we making?

TRUCK

What the hell do I know? A boiler
for a ship, a power plant. It's
work that's all I know.

Garvey sets his helmet in place. He strikes the arc. A
burst of sparks.

HIS EYES

Intent.

CONTINUED

THE WELD

The steel melts and pools, rippling, blindingly bright.

106 EXT. THE RIVER - DAY - FULL 106

The water glows. Sparkling ripples. Early morning sunlight.

107 EXT. FARM 107

Long shadows. Young cornstalks rise into light. Beyond the fields the house and barn divide earth and sky.

A yellow school bus winds toward the Garvey farm.

108 INT. BARN - EARLY MORNING 108

Mae, Lewis and Beth are milking. Lady sits nearby.

A distant horn is heard.

MAE

There's the bus. Go on. I'll finish up.

LEWIS

Mom, there's too much to do. Lemme stay home.

MAE

Lewis...

Reluctantly the children exit, Lady follows. Suddenly Beth rushes back inside.

MAE

What is it?

Beth responds by giving her a good-bye kiss. Horn again. Beth rushes out.

Mae follows to the barn doorway.

109 WHAT SHE SEES 109

On the main road the school bus waits. Lewis yells for Beth to hurry.

- 110 BACK TO SCENE 110
Mae turns back to the milking.
- 111 INT. AND EXT. FARM - DAY - MONTAGE 111
(X)
Mae goes about her solitary business.
Feeding chickens.
Feeding hogs.
Making a bed. (X)
Putting cows to pasture.
Tending sheep.
Cultivating on the old tractor.
- 112 INT. HEN HOUSE - DAY 112
Mae is gathering eggs in a basket. She hears a Voice from outside.
VOICE
Mae....
She stops; picks up the last of the eggs and walks outside.
- 113 EXT. BARNYARD - DAY 113
Mae comes out and sees Wade, his Bronco parked nearby.
They stare at each other.
MAE
Tom's not here.
WADE
I heard. Our crop looks pretty good. But I wouldn't wait for rain. I'd irrigate. Want me to send someone to help?
MAE
I can handle it.

CONTINUED

113 CONTINUED

113

She suddenly smells something coming from the kitchen.

MAE

Not again!

She thrusts the basket of eggs at him and runs into the house.

114 INT. FARM HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

114

Mae rushes in and rescues eight loaves of bread from the oven, but it is too late. Black, acrid smoke is pouring from the oven.

She throws the oven door open and reaches inside to pull the loaves out and burns her fingers in the process.

MAE

Oh...no...

She bursts into tears and sits down at the kitchen table.

Wade enters, holding the eggs. Watches her a moment, then:

WADE

You openin' a bakery?

MAE

(through tears)
I sell them to Mavis at the
store...if I don't burn 'em.

WADE

Is there good money in that?

MAE

I don't know. So far it's cost me a
fortune.

She wipes her eyes with a pot holder. Wade hands her a clean handkerchief.

WADE

Nice lookin' eggs.

MAE

Wanna buy a dozen?

WADE

If you cook 'em. I'm hungry.

CONTINUED

114

CONTINUED

114

MAE

Cook 'em yourself. I'm busy crying.

She gets up and goes to the sink and washes her face. He pulls a skillet off a hook.

WADE

Want some?

She shakes her head and sighs and sits back down at the kitchen table, poking at her ruined loaves.

Wade cracks some eggs into the skillet. As they cook he notices school photos of Lewis and Beth on the counter over the stove.

WADE

Great kids...Emily wanted kids so bad...we shouldn't have waited. She would have been a terrific mother ...Now that she's gone I'm gonna end up leaving everything to my sister ...I hate my sister.

He breaks the moment by flipping the eggs high in the air and catching them so skillfully that the yolks don't break.

MAE

Pretty slick.

WADE

The fastest skillet at the campus
Steer N' Beer.

He deftly slides the eggs onto a plate and sits.

WADE

Sure you won't have a bite?

She shakes her head, "no." He leans over and takes her hand.

WADE

Mae, can't you talk to Tom? Can't you help me handle him?

She withdraws her hand.

MAE

Don't come around here, Joe. It's not right.

She walks out of the kitchen into the yard. He follows.

115 EXT. FARMYARD - DAY

115

As Wade catches up with her.

WADE

Mae, I'm sorry. I didn't mean
'handle,' it's not what I meant
to say.

MAE

You shouldn't be here. And don't
bother sending us anymore letters.

WADE

I'm trying to help you.

MAE

We don't need your help.

WADE

Does he want more money? Is that it?
Okay -- I'll give you another ten
thousand.

MAE

You still don't understand, do you?
You know how much things cost, but
you have no idea what they're worth.

She walks away.

116 INT. FACTORY - NIGHT - WIDE ANGLE

116

The machinery is still but the furnaces glow, waiting for
tomorrow.

Rain beats heavily upon the windowpanes.

The welded plates have begun to take on complex, ugly forms.

Steel pipes stand in thick rows, a dark crop growing in a
concrete field.

117 INT. BARRACKS - NIGHT - WIDE ANGLE

117

Cots line the walls, unmade, used in double shifts.

The latrines and showers steam in dim yellow light.

The canteen's closed. Strewn with trash, the remains of
greasy ribs, chicken parts, automated coffee.

CLOSE - MEN

sprawled against the cots, passing smuggled booze, worn out.

GARVEY

lies exhausted on a cot, arms folded behind his head. He stares at the ceiling and listens to a cheap transistor radio.

Truck and Roy are on adjacent cots. Nearby, an archway to the open latrines. BAINES, Kentucky poor, another farmer comes in and sits on his cot next to Garvey, his head in his hands.

BAINES

I just talked to her. She don't sound good.

GARVEY

This your first?

BAINES

Yeah.

ROY

What month is she?

BAINES

Seventh. I don't like her workin' the farm alone.

ROY

Don't worry, kid. When nature takes over, it's smooth as silk.

A farm report comes on the radio.

TRUCK

(to Garvey)

Can't you get some music out of that box?

He reaches over to change the station. Garvey grabs his hand.

GARVEY

Leave it. The weather's next.

TRUCK

The weather's comin' in the window. It's rainin'. What else do you need to know.

ROY

He's got a farm too.

TRUCK

You workin' in this shithole you can't be doin' so good.

A toilet flushes. A FAT MAN buckles his pants as he exits the latrine.

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED

117

TRUCK

(exploding)

Jeszus! Somethin' musta crawled
up inside you and died.

FAT MAN

(unaffected)

Maybe it was your momma.

He continues on without missing a step.

TRUCK

I gotta get me some air.

(to Garvey)

How 'bout you, Farmer. You into
air ain't ya'?

ROY

(getting up)

I could use a smoke.

He looks at Garvey. Garvey and Baines rise with effort,
aching from the week's labor.

118 EXT. SHED - NIGHT

118

Rain drips noisily from the eaves as they walk in the dim
light.

In the far distance, flickering light from barrels of fire
silhouette the barely discernible forms of the strikers.

Truck, Baines, Roy, and Garvey stop near a cyclone fence.
They try to get comfortable on empty drums beneath an
overhang. Truck chews on a candy bar as the others
light up.

TRUCK

Hey Jim, how come you guys grow
all that food and people are
still hungry?

GARVEY

I don't know. Somethin's wrong
somewhere.

TRUCK

You're a farmer.

GARVEY

I got no answers.

CONTINUED

118

CONTINUED

118

Baines moves cautiously to a barely exposed gate hidden behind stacks of boxes. Truck lifts a heavy barrel two or three times over his head.

TRUCK

If I had some land, I'd make it a
fuckin' garden. I'd feed the world.

Garvey chuckles.

TRUCK

Whaddya weigh, Jim?

GARVEY

One-sixty.

TRUCK

(to Roy)

You?

ROY

One-fifty-five.

Truck puts down the barrel.

TRUCK

(flexing)

You mothers are starin' at two-
hundred-and-five pounds of USDA
prime nigger.

(to Baines)

How 'bout you, kid?

BAINES

(at the gate)

One-sixty-three...I'm goin' home.

He unravels the chain and slips through the side gate.

TRUCK

Hey!

Suddenly four or five strikers, watchdogs, emerge from the darkness and jump Baines, throwing him to the ground.

STRIKERS

(kicking him)

Scab sonofabitch.

Garvey and Roy rush through the gate to help.

TRUCK

(calling after him)

You crazy?

THE MELEE

An ugly scuffle: one striker wields a length of pipe. He catches Roy across the shoulder. Roy buckles in pain.

GARVEY

beats the striker off Baines as another jumps him from behind.

TRUCK

TRUCK

Dumb-ass farmers.

He tears through the gate. Truck, strong and vicious, city-bred for mayhem -- pulls the strikers off Garvey's back and drags the injured Baines through the gate to safety. Roy is hit in the teeth. Blood spurts.

ROY

Oh, Jesus, Tom.

Garvey pulls the attacker off him, picks him overhead and flings him into a stack of pallets. He drags Roy through as Truck covers his retreat swinging a length of chain at the other strikers.

TRUCK

C'mon, motherfuckers.

The strikers retreat. Truck slips back through the gate. The other three sit exhausted, nursing their wounds.

GARVEY

(to Roy)

Are you okay?

ROY

Terrific.

TRUCK

(to Garvey)

You crazy farmer -- You're really strong, ain't ya'? Lucky for that dude you didn't hit him.

Garvey stares silently back at him. Rain mixed with blood streams down the side of his face from a nasty gash on his eyebrow. He turns to Baines who is wiping the blood from his face with an oily handkerchief.

GARVEY

You all right, kid?

BAINES

Yeah. Thanks.

119 INT. FACTORY - DAY - GARVEY

119

The shop swelters. The din is thundering. Garvey's at the public phone on a break. A butterfly bandage covers the gash on his right eyebrow. He's shouting but his voice's barely heard.

GARVEY

Beth? Beth, it's me, Daddy. Get your mother...

120 EXT. FARM - DAY - FULL

120

Beth's slamming through the screen door, calling for her mother.

BETH
Mama, Mama, it's Daddy.

121 MAE AND LEWIS

121

in the fields. She runs toward the house through rows of noticeably taller corn, golden pollen swirling around her.

122 INT. FACTORY - GARVEY

122

Guys yelling. Metal crashing behind him. He's talking but he can't be heard.

Then, a terrific smile.

123 INT. FARM HOUSE - MAE

123

Holding Beth close to the phone, turning to Lewis.

MAE
We're going to the city to visit
Daddy.

124 INT. FACTORY - DAY - FULL

124

Garvey and Roy cleanly dressed. Ready to get out for the weekend.

Other men getting into the truck.

SWICK
Meet the pickup Sunday midnight.
Ya' don't show, ya' don't get back
in. Okay, take 'em out the dump.

125 MOVING

125

Down factory streets.

The back gate opens onto dump and marsh.

Three strikers there, more watchdogs. They yell when the gate opens and the truck grinds onto the twisting back road.

Stones thrown wide.

126 EXT. DUMP AND MARSH - DAY - MOVING 126

The truck sloshes through steaming chemicals then cuts along a dirt road by the edge of the scrub woods.

Heavy thuds of gunfire.

ROY

Twelve gauge. Poachers been in there all summer. Everybody's hungry. Look.

127 WHAT THEY SEE 127

A pair of deer skirt the marsh, frightened and skittish. They see the truck and leap any which way.

ROY

They're getting pushed out. Whitetail. Ida could sure use the meat.

128 MOVING 128

The truck lurches on. Another far-off boom.

129 EXT. CITY STREET - MOVIE HOUSE - NIGHT 129

A long line: families, lovers, Saturday summer night. IDA, Roy's wife, stands with Beth who wears a new pair of sneakers.

Mae and Garvey stand behind them with Lewis.

GARVEY

I'm hunting with Roy in two weeks. Gonna bring back venison for your Mom. You come with us.

Lewis is astonished.

LEWIS

I can, Dad?

GARVEY

Yes.

LEWIS

I can?

CONTINUED

129

CONTINUED

129

GARVEY

I said yes.

Lewis leans over to Beth.

LEWIS

Didya' hear that. I'm goin' huntin'
with Dad and Roy.

Mae hugs Garvey.

The flashing neon light of a motel can be seen in the b.g.
They've got their own way of saying things, the way they
look at each other.

GARVEY

The kids can stay with Ida and Roy.

MAE

Good.

130

INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

130

An old room in an old hotel with a high, old-fashioned
ceiling. Curtains blow in an open window. City lights
blink outside casting an intermittent soft glow in the room.

MAE AND GARVEY

An attempt at lovemaking. He struggles desperately...
perspiring.

GARVEY

I can't...I'm sorry, maybe I want
you too bad.

MAE

I know, me too.

They laugh, each relieved at the other's honesty. She
pulls a sheet over them and as she does notices an
angry burn on his arm. She bends to it and kisses it
gently.

MAE

How'd you get that?

CONTINUED

130

CONTINUED

130

GARVEY

The machinery's hot.

She kisses the wound on his eyebrow.

MAE

And this?

GARVEY

People aren't so neighborly in there.

She leans over and admires a red mark on his neck.

MAE

I know where you got that...I gave
it to you.

Horns blare. A siren is heard. From the next room there
is heavy snoring.

MAE

The snore that ate Birmingham.

GARVEY

You ought to hear the barracks at
three in the morning. Sounds like a
saw mill.

Mae laughs.

GARVEY

(a beat; then:)
Crop's okay?

MAE

It's doin' fine.

GARVEY

Can you take care of it all?

MAE

I can handle it.

He caresses her face.

GARVEY

Anything wrong?

MAE

No.

GARVEY

Wade been around?

CONTINUED

130

CONTINUED

130

MAE

No.

GARVEY

You don't always tell me everything.

MAE

Want me to make something up? We
got weevils in the corn? Snow White
won't suckle?

She's promised herself she won't tell him more.

MAE

You don't tell me everything, either.

He nods. Outside another siren wails.

GARVEY

The plant's noisy...hot...hard to
breathe. When I go out for air, I
see the strikers. Even when I can't
see them, I know they're there.

She kisses him gently and runs her hand across his chest.

GARVEY

I can't sleep. If I do...I dream.
I dreamed about the river last night.
Only it wasn't a river, it was a
snake. I couldn't find the head or
the tail...it had me wrapped so hard
I couldn't breathe.

MAE

(caressing him)
Some nights I miss you so bad...I
ache for you so bad...

He sits up and takes her in his arms.

GARVEY

He's stopped.

MAE

Yes.

GARVEY

Let's wake him up.

Breath escapes her within his embrace.

- 131 EXT. FARM - DAWN - FULL 131
The sun rises over the ears of maturing corn. The picker stands in the field, ready.
- 132 INT. FARMHOUSE - DAWN - CALENDAR 132
The days crossed off. Only this Saturday with a picture of a deer pasted upon it.
- 133 INT. FARMHOUSE - LEWIS' ROOM - DAWN - LEWIS 133
already nearly dressed. The calendar near the mirror.
Carefully, he ties the laces of his hunting boots. He wears a red shirt. He has the proper cap. He blouses his pants correctly.
He has laid out his gear. Knapsack, canteen, belt, knife. He gathers them up, one by one, with careful consideration.
- 134 INT. FARMHOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS 134
Lewis comes down the stairs. He sees Mae in the kitchen making breakfast.
LEWIS
Mom, it's time for me to get the gun.
His voice so serious. She nods, her own voice soft.
MAE
You know where it is.
She watches, arms folded, as Lewis goes to the front closet where an L.C. Smith 12 gauge leans against a peg next to a deer rifle. He pulls the bolt, checks the action, and carefully puts the rifle into its canvas case. (X)
He looks at Mae, so much a man's look. (X)
- MAE
Eat your breakfast.
- 135 EXT. MILLROCK - EARLY MORNING 135
Lewis already on the bus for the city. Mae outside, the bus pulls away.
Her single wave of good-bye.

136 EXT. SCRUB WOODS - DAWN - WIDE ANGLE

136
(X)

Garvey moves cautiously through the misty woods. Lewis stays close to him. Roy walks five yards away. Licenses and tags are pinned to their caps.

Distant gunfire, then five closer blasts.

LEWIS

Every shot unsettling.

LOW ANGLE

They tread through fallen leaves. Lewis cradles his rifle carefully.

(X)

Beer cans among the leaves.

Another step. The torn off haunch of a deer.

LEWIS

He passes it.

LOW ANGLE

More beer cans. Remains of a fire. The decapitated head of the creature propped on a rock.

Somebody's stuck the butt of a cigar in the creature's bloody muzzle.

GARVEY

shakes his head.

LOW ANGLE

Moving past a steaming hole where magazines have been used as toilet paper.

137 EXT. SCRUB WOODS - DAY - HIGH ANGLE

137

Garvey, Lewis, and Roy are in stands in the crotch of trees ten feet above the ground. Insects hum. Nothing else moves. The sun's high.

CONTINUED

137 CONTINUED

137

GARVEY

There.

A buck moves through the brush.

LEWIS

His finger tightens on the trigger.

GARVEY

Watching.

LEWIS

He fires.

FULL

The deer is hit but it stumbles on.

Garvey and Roy drop from their stands. Lewis is already down, running ahead through the brush.

138 MOVING

138

Lewis follows the wounded deer ahead. Then, there's a clutch of gunshots.

WHAT HE SEES

The deer's fallen. Men are running toward it.

MEN

It's my kill. Goddamn you, it's mine. Get away. It's my kill.

Four men shoving at each other. Knives already out. They fall on the animal.

LEWIS

I shot it.

A man turning with a look of menace.

LEWIS

I shot it.

Garvey and Roy restrain Lewis. The men neatly gut the carcass where it lays.

139

EXT. BACK ROAD - DUSK - MOVING

139

Roy drives. Garvey up front with Lewis. The day's experience still hangs heavy.

LEWIS

Why'd they do it, Dad? It was my deer.

GARVEY

They were hungry.

LEWIS

It's still wrong, isn't it?

GARVEY

Yeah...it's still wrong.

They're passing the factory where the strikers are changing pickets for the night.

LEWIS

That where you work, Dad?

GARVEY

Yes.

LEWIS

They're striking.

GARVEY

Yes.

LEWIS

How do you get in?

GARVEY

They drive us in the back way.

LEWIS

Are they right to strike?

GARVEY

I don't know...Do you think it's wrong for me to take their jobs?

LEWIS

I don't know, Dad.

ROY

(changing the
subject)

Ida'll get you on the bus early,
Lewis.

GARVEY

Tell your mom and your sister I love
them.

140 INT. FACTORY - MORNING - FULL - A DEER

140

A young buck moves through light and shadow on iron walls.

A whitetail, pelt ticked with grey, muzzled black, the first buds of antler, eyes dilated with fear.

The thunder of the metalworks. The lightning of the torches. Air streamed with pungent smoke.

CONTINUED

140 CONTINUED

140

It throws its head. Hooves click on concrete.
Garvey looks up and blinks.

GARVEY

Hey.

MOVING

The deer slips between great lathes lying idle, under
conveyors bearing wide steel sheets.

Roy, others, trailing after it.

ROY

What the hell is it?

TRUCK

It's a goddamn deer.

FULL - THE DEER

Runs. It skitters on the oily floor. It dashes across the
vast workshed.

Men see it and yell. Torches are thrown down, work
dropped. Like dogs, they pack and chase.

FAT MAN

Get it.

THE DEER

Suddenly headed off by another knot of men. Its footing
unsure. They block its path.

It breaks the other direction.

HIGH ANGLE

The deer runs through the fields of iron, rows of pipe,
barrows of black steel plate.

Men hound it every side.

It slips in oil. Small hooves snap in curls of smoke.

Men dart one way, then another, yelling.

CLOSE - THE DEER

Sparkles of welding arcs reflect in its eyes.

WIDE ANGLE

Pipe clatters. Men jump workbenches. They cut every route of escape.

HIGH ANGLE

The creature circles desperately within a closing ring.

LOW ANGLE

Faces of the men, flushed and victorious.

The deer is trapped.

It shakes. Its legs splay. It urinates in terror.

THE MEN

A stillness grows. A grey leaden silence.

THE DEER

Its muzzle droops slack. Its tongue hangs flecked with pale foam. Its eyes are dulled, exhausted, inexplicably resigned.

FACES OF THE MEN

Garvey, Truck, Baines, Roy, young men and old, their eyes so selfsame as the deer's.

THE DEER

Its heart pounds terribly as if to burst.

THE MEN

Each man seeing it is himself trapped in steel and pain.

FULL

They crush forward. The circle collapses inward, pushing, shoving. Then, with a cry, the deer's raised unharmed over their heads.

141 EXT. FACTORY - DAY - MOVING

141

The mob of workers sweep toward the small back gate that opens to the marshland.

THE DEER

They carry it in their arms.

FULL

At the open gate, they set it down. It stands for a moment too scared to move.

Then it turns and bounds free.

142 EXT. FARM - DAY

142

Mae hefts Garvey's canvas tool bag and starts toward the fields.

MOVING

past the drying silo, the chemical and fuel tanks, onto the banked path to the distant field.

143 WIDE ANGLE

143

Mae walks through corn rows. Cows low in their hay field.

The picker's cocked on a furrow in a cleared area next to a cornfield.

The belt drive's unhitched. Mae slings down the bag, pulls out a wrench, slips under the machine to work.

CLOSER

A broken cotter pin. A gear off the greasy shaft. She begins to set it. She stops.

Something's moving through the field, crashing through corn rows.

WHAT SHE SEES

Thick rows above her.

MAE

She listens. The thrashing grows louder. She crawls from under the picker.

FULL

The bull, Bram, is tearing through the corn, snorting, horns lowered. His tie-rope hangs loose from his muzzle ring. His nostrils are flecked with blood.

MAE

Bram, how did you get loose?

Angered and uncomfortable from his injury, he charges Mae. She sidesteps the first rush, throwing the wrench into the bull's muzzle. He thrashes past her to the edge of the field and stands there.

She reaches for his rope but he twists away and plunges deep into the cornfield.

MAE

You're gonna pay for this.

She picks up the wrench and turns back to the picker. She bends against the gear, placing it, then tightening it with the wrench.

CLOSER ANGLE

The gear snaps forward. The picker slips from the bank. Mae's arm is jerked into the machine catching between gear and belt. She cries out.

Her arm is caught. She can't free it.

MAE

She tries to pull her arm free. She prys at the gear and belt but she's trapped.

MAE

Oh, damn me. Damn me.

144 EXT. FARM - DAY - MAIN ROAD - LATER

144
(X)

A Leutzcorp Station Wagon, driven by Harve Stanley pulls up to the farm.

Bags of fertilizer are piled high in back of the wagon. He yells towards the house:

STANLEY

Mrs. Garvey -- I got your fertilizer.

He honks his horn.

145 EXT. FIELD - DAY

145

Mae hears the distant car horn.

MAE

Here...help me...

Her mouth's too dry. Her voice too weak.

She struggles to free herself. Trying to pull her arm loose. Nothing.

146 EXT. BARN - DAY

146

Harve Stanley moves towards an open barn door, peers inside and calls:

STANLEY

Mrs. Garvey?

147 EXT. FIELD - MAE

147

Sprawled upon the ground. Her arm trapped.

HER ARM

Swollen and red.

MAE

Exhausted.

148 EXT. BARN - DAY

148

Harve Stanley has driven to the barn and is unloading the last of the bags of fertilizer which he has stacked near the barn door.

He looks around once more and then climbs into the station wagon and drives off.

149 EXT. FIELD - DAY - MAE

149

Mae lies weakly against the picker. The sun throws longer shadows.

A thrashing in the corn rows. Mae tries to see.

Suddenly the bull pushes into the clearing. It snorts, locking at her.

MAE

She stares back at it. It paws the ground. With her free hand, she unlaces her boot and pulls it off.

BRAM

He tosses his head. He would turn away.

MAE

Hey.

He stops. She throws her boot at it.

CLOSER

The boot hits the bull. He lowers his head, horns pointed, and charges her.

Mae twist her legs under the picker to get away from the horns of the bull. It gores the picker.

GEARS AND SHAFT

The force of the blow clicks the gears over a notch.

It yanks Mae's arm painfully, but gives her hope.

(X)

LOW ANGLE

The bull bellows and turns. It charges again.

THE GEARS

snapping forward with the blow.

MAE

She cries out but squirms as close as she can and kicks him with her foot. He whips around to charge the picker once more.

FULL

Bram hits the picker low, trying to gore Mae. The machine rattles over her. Her arm's wrenched again.

CLOSER

The bull's head six inches from hers, its horns hooking, trying to catch her.

GEARS AND SHAFT

The gear spins. Mae's arm is wrenched loose. She's free.

MAE

Suddenly diving forward between the horns. She grabs the dangling tie-rope.

She yanks hard, dragging its nose into the earth. It bellows in pain, big eyes rolling wetly.

Mae wraps the rope around the axle and holds on.

150 EXT. FARM - DAY - FULL

150

Lady dashes to where Mae drives the picker out of the fields.

Bram is being pulled along, much subdued.

Mae gets off the picker, wan, dirty, weak. She holds her arm against her, swollen and bleeding. She stumbles toward the house.

151 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

151

Mae moves to the sink and holds her bleeding arm under the faucet. She flinches in pain as water runs over the wound.

She grabs a kitchen towel and wraps the wound tightly. The pain is severe. She moves to the phone, dials and waits for an answer.

MAE

Judy, where are you? Oh God...

She puts down the receiver and dials another number.

MAE

Please be home...

No answer. She moves back to the sink and throws cold water on her perspiring face. She staggers unsteadily, beginning to lose consciousness. She forces herself to breathe deeply. A combination of nausea and shock.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

She turns and barely makes it to the phone. She dials "O."

152 INT. MILLROCK COUNTRY HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY WAITING ROOM 152
- DAY

Joe Wade sits on a bench. The door opens and Mae and a Doctor emerge. Her face is drained, colorless. Her arm is bandaged and in a sling.

DOCTOR

Tell Tom to do the cooking for a couple of days -- you should be off your feet.

He hands her a bottle of pills.

DOCTOR

These'll help when the shot wears off.

MAE

I'll be fine.

She turns to Wade who stands waiting. He offers his arm for support and gently eases her towards the exit.

153 INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 153

Mae is lying on the sofa, her head propped on a pillow. Wade comes from the kitchen with a glass of water and the bottle of pills.

He supports her while she takes a pill.

She lies back on the sofa.

He sits in a chair beside her.

MAE

Thanks Joe.

A pause. They are staring at each other. She avoids his eyes.

WADE

Mae...

CONTINUED

153

CONTINUED

153

MAE

Don't Joe....

WADE

I'm gonna say it.

MAE

I don't want to hear.

She gets up to move to the stairs. He blocks her way.

MAE

Leave me alone.

WADE

You called me when you needed me.

MAE

There was nobody else....

WADE

(overlapping)

I can't stop thinking about you. I
try, but I can't help myself.

MAE

It's too late. You made your choice.
You married Emily, you're Frank
Leutz' son-in-law. Now let me go.

WADE

Lives can change, Mae. I can make
them change.

He turns and picks up an old kerosene lantern from the
mantle piece.

(X)

WADE

This kind of life is over. Can't you
see that, Mae? Old man Leutz isn't
going to live forever. Think of
what that could mean to your kids.
Life doesn't have to be so hard.

(X)

MAE

Unable to answer.

Suddenly the school bus is heard, kids yelling "good-bye" to Beth and Lewis in the distance.

Mae sits up.

MAE

It's my kids...go home, Joe.

He turns and goes.

She rises with some effort and tries to pull herself together for her children.

154 INT. FACTORY - DAY - FULL

154

Swick passes among the men, shouting.

SWICK

You're fired, all of ya'. Get your pay from the window. I want ya' out of here in an hour. The strike's over. It's settled. You're out.

155 EXT. FACTORY - DAY - FULL

155

All the scab workers massed at the gates, herded by guards with billy clubs.

Outside stand the strikers, just hanging back.

MEN

Garvey, Roy, Truck, others, not liking what they see.

TRUCK

Where are the trucks? Swick, you bastard, where are the trucks?

Other men hollering the same.

SWICK

No trucks. It's part of their deal. No trucks. You walk out.

Guards are closing in on them. The gates are opening.

Men yell angrily. Swick nods for the guards to use their clubs.

MOVING

Confused and angry, the men are pushed through the gates.

The strikers back off. The gates are closing behind the workers.

Garvey and the others looking down the street.

156

WHAT THEY SEE

156

Hundreds of strikers, their wives and children appear from the side streets and form two long lines through which Garvey and the others must pass.

THE MEN

Suddenly silent, frightened, no other way out except through the gauntlet stretching the length of the street.

They gird themselves for the violence that's certain to come.

They move cautiously through the gate, looking side to side, trying to determine where it will begin.

THE STRIKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Strangely still. They watch implacably as the scabs move slowly by.

TRUCK

clenching his fists.

TRUCK

(mutters)

Let's get it on.

MOVING

Camera pans the faces of the strikers and their families; stoic, grim. A sense of revulsion.

THE SCABS

continue their painful parade, heads lowered, barely breathing.

BAINES

BAINES
(to himself)
God help us.

STRIKERS

One of them starts a barely-audible hiss that's soon picked up by his friends on both sides of the gauntlet.

THE SCABS

look around nervously as they walk, some bewildered, others already understanding.

GARVEY

moves with the shuffling crowd, his brows furrowed, unable to mask his humiliation.

ROY

moves beside Garvey, trembling.

OTHER WOMEN AND CHILDREN

spit at the scabs.

They flinch. Some shield their faces. Others like Garvey do not.

THE STRIKERS

continue their insistent hissing.

A WOMAN HOLDING A CHILD

steps in front of Garvey and spits in his face.

WOMAN
You scum...

Garvey stares at her, the spit trickling down his face. The other scabs jostle him as they move past.

GARVEY

turns and joins the remainder of the men as they disappear into the shadows of the city.

157 EXT. FARM - SUNDOWN - WIDE ANGLE

157

Garvey turns in the drive and stops. Lewis, repairing the silo, sees him, climbs down, and runs toward him, calling:

LEWIS

Dad. Mom -- Beth -- Dad's home.

Beth is running from the porch.

BETH

Daddy.

She throws herself into his arms. Mae is coming from the house.

She hugs him tightly. He kisses them all.

Mae turns toward their crop, holds her hand out to him.

MAE

Come. Look.

He takes her hand. The four of them walk out towards the cornfield.

158 EXT. CORNFIELD - SUNDOWN

158

The family walks through the towering field. Mae watches as Garvey stops and opens a random ear.

GARVEY

It's a good crop. I'm proud of you. All of you.

They continue to walk through it slowly, touching each other and their crop lovingly.

159 INT. FARM HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT - BETH

159

turns from her parents' closed bedroom door and moves down the hallway to Lewis' room.

160 INT. LEWIS' BEDROOM

160

He's half-asleep. Beth crawls onto his bed and puts her head down next to his.

CONTINUED

160 CONTINUED

160

BETH

(whispering)

They finished kissing. Now they're
just talking.

LEWIS

...Mmm...

BETH

Daddy says a lady spit on him.

LEWIS

Huh?

BETH

Lewis...are daddys allowed to cry?

LEWIS

(suddenly awake)

It's all right...go to bed.

He kisses her and she turns to go to her room.

161 EXT. CORNFIELD - DAY

161

A Leutzcorp pickup stands besides a field of corn. Mae and Garvey stand just at the edge of their cornfield with Harve Stanley, watching him closely as he shucks an ear of corn and then studies it carefully.

STANLEY

Pretty dry, Tom...Don't weigh enough.

MAE

What are you talking about?

She shows him a perfect ear of corn.

STANLEY

Hey, I offered to get you some help
irrigating this crop and you told me
you could handle it yourself.

MAE

I did handle it myself. My son and
I...

STANLEY

Well I don't want to stand here
arguing, but...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

GARVEY

We got a contract, Harve.

STANLEY

If the corn's no good, neither's the contract. Two-seventy-five. Take it or leave it.

GARVEY

It costs more than that to grow it.

STANLEY

Tough. Next time you got a crop to raise, don't leave it to a woman.

Mae leaps toward Stanley. Garvey stops her, turns to Stanley and hits him so hard he falls back unconscious, crashing through the corn.

Garvey picks an ear of corn from a fallen stalk and runs for his pickup.

Mae watches him go.

162
THRU
165

OMITTED

162
THRU
165

165-A EXT. LEUTZ GRAIN CORPORATION - DAY

165-A

A number of late model cars are parked in the loading area. Several Leutzcorp. employees are hosing down the loading dock as Garvey careens into the parking lot.

He jumps out of the truck carrying the ear of corn and calls to them:

GARVEY

Where's Wade?

1ST EMPLOYEE

Inside I guess.

Garvey charges through the door heading for the offices.

165-B INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR - DAY

165-B

An elderly SECRETARY moves down the corridor carrying a box of files.

CONTINUED

165-B CONTINUED

165-B

GARVEY

Where's Wade's office?

SECRETARY

Sir, I'm afraid you'll have to see
Mr. Stanley first.

GARVEY

I've seen Mr. Stanley. It's
Mr. Wade's turn.

He moves past her, down the hall, opening doors as he
goes.

INT. WADE'S OFFICE - DAY

Joe Wade stands with a group of men, hunched over blueprints
on a table. A minor argument has erupted and Senator Ed
Neiswinder is trying to mediate between Wade and LEROY
BUTLER, a heavy-set contractor.

LEROY

Look, all I'm saying is...

NEISWINDER

(interrupting)

Leroy tied up an army of men and
equipment and he turned down two
highway jobs to do this. You gotta
get that land sewed up.

WADE

I give you my word, it'll be done.

The door bursts open and the men all turn and look up as
Garvey enters and tosses the ear of corn across the room to
Wade.

GARVEY

Wade. You tell me this corn's too
dry.

The men look at each other in disbelief.

WADE

Tom, we're in a meeting. This isn't
the time...

GARVEY

(interrupting)

Yes it is. Don't send some flunky
to do me in. Have the guts to do it
yourself. I want to hear it from
you.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

WADE

Will you excuse me for a minute,
fellas.

The men ease gingerly past Garvey. The last man out closes
the door.

WADE

Okay, bonehead...you want it, you
got it.

He steps to a table and flings back a green felt cover.

WADE

Go on -- take a look at the
future.

An elaborate model of the valley lies before them. All the
farms are gone. In their place an enormous body of water
and an imposing concrete dam. Next to the dam stands "The
Leutz Hydroelectric Plant."

Tom stands stunned.

GARVEY

(numbly)

You're gonna flood the valley.

WADE

That's right.

GARVEY

You're crazy! My people are buried
on that land. And so are yours.

WADE

Yeah, but they're dead and I need that
water. Little farms like yours don't
count anymore, Tom. I'm the future,
and you're in the way.

(X)

GARVEY

Maybe so. But if you're the future,
I don't want any part of it.

(X)

He turns to leave.

(X)

WADE

You selfish bastard, who are you
doing this for? Your kids? Mae?
She deserves better.

(X)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED - 2

Tom grabs the edge of the table and flings it against the wall, smashing the model to pieces.

GARVEY

The only way you're gonna get me off
my land is in a pine box.

He turns and goes.

165-C OMITTED

(X)
165-C

166 EXT. VARIOUS, FARM COUNTRY - DAY

166

167 EXT. VARIOUS, FARM COUNTRY - NIGHT

167

A truncated version of the opening montage is seen with a radio announcer's voice heard over. The weather report is for heavy, unseasonable rain.

168 INT. FARM HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

168

The sound of heavy rain on the tin roof as Garvey sits intently before the TV watching a late news weather report.

Mae sits nearby darning Lewis' socks.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

We've got real heavy stuff comin'
down upstate and the forecast is
for more of the same. Flash
flood warnings are in effect in
the northeastern part of the state.
The barometer is twenty-nine point
twenty-four and falling fast....

The report continues. Beth enters, fresh from her bath, dressed for bed, holding out a towel.

CONTINUED

168 CONTINUED

168

BETH

Mommy, will you dry my hair?

MAE

Honey, this towel is wet. Go get me
another one from the...

GARVEY

(interrupting)

Shhh!

BETH

(loud whisper)

There are no more dry ones.

Garvey turns and gives her an angry look. Mae puts her
finger to her lips and leads Beth out of the room.

169 EXT. THE RIVER - DAY

169

Growing by the minute, sweeping along. More weather news
heard over. A different announcer.

FLOODLINE

It's marked on a tall, thin pole, standing cocked in the
river, painted bands marked off in feet. The river stands
at 8 feet. The marks go to 12. The height of the levee is
11 feet. Red-lined.

170 EXT. GARVEY'S LEVEE - NIGHT - RAIN

170

As in the beginning the Garvey family is working to
strengthen the levee. Truck lights cut through the rain.

IN THE DISTANCE

Other farmers struggle as well. Another weather report.

MAE

shouts over the noise of the dozer.

MAE

...Tom...Tom...

She waves her arms and finally gets his attention. He idles the dozer.

TOM

What?

MAE

I've got to get these kids to bed.
School tomorrow.

GARVEY

Lewis'll have to stay with me
tonight. Forget school.

MAE

I'm taking Beth.

She grabs Beth's hand and they struggle through the mud toward the house. Garvey and Lewis continue working.

171 EXT. THE RIVER - DAY - FLOODLINE

171

The river has risen. It is at 9 feet.

172 INT. FARM HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

172

The kitchen window is opaque with the driving rain.

Mae stands at a counter wrapping sandwiches. The light through the window casts eerie shadows on her exhausted face.

Lewis opens the door and leans in, his slicker dripping on the floor.

LEWIS

Mom, we're going to get fill at the
Ironworks.

MAE

Wait. I have sandwiches for you.

A horn honks impatiently.

CONTINUED

172 CONTINUED

172

LEWIS

There's no time.

MAE

You missed lunch, Lewis -- you have
to eat and so does your father.

She pushes the bags at him. He rushes out.

173 EXT. FARMYARD - DAY

173

Lewis splashes over to the 5 ton truck and hops into the
cab.

174 INT. TRUCK - DAY

174

Garvey heads for the main road. He is almost there when
a terrible grinding noise is heard. The truck falters and
stops. Garvey jerks the emergency brake.

GARVEY

Goddamn it!!

175 EXT. THE RIVER - DUSK

175

A raging torrent. Part of a bank collapses under the flow.

176 INT. BARN - NIGHT

176

The truck sits inside the barn. The engine is hanging over
the open hood suspended by chains from a block and tackle.
Garvey is bent deep over the transmission.

Lewis is holding a work light for him.

Beth is watching from a safe distance, petting one of the
cows.

GARVEY

(to Lewis)

Go out to the pickup and get me the
other ratchet set.

Lewis puts the light down on the fender and goes.

GARVEY

Beth, come hold this light for me.

BETH

I have to pet Alice. She's sad.

CONTINUED

176

CONTINUED

176

GARVEY

(sharply)

Beth...

Beth moves to him reluctantly and takes the light.

GARVEY

Hold it up high.

BETH

Daddy, I'm tired.

GARVEY

(raising his voice)

I said hold it up...

She begins to cry. She runs out of the barn.

177

EXT. THE RIVER - DAYBREAK - FLOODLINE

177

The river is up to 10 feet. A horse is swept downstream, his bridle trailing uselessly in the churning current.

178

INT. BARN - DAY

178

The rain continues inexorably. Lewis is asleep on the floor, his head against a bale of hay.

The engine is back in the truck.

Garvey, hollow-eyed, slams the hood shut.

Mae enters with a steaming mug of coffee. He ignores her and moves to the cab of the truck. He climbs in and hits the starter. The engine coughs, and sputters to life.

GARVEY

Wake Lewis.

MAE

Tom, I want to talk to you.

GARVEY

Not now. Lewis, wake up.

Lewis stirs.

MAE

Leave him alone.

GARVEY

What?

CONTINUED

178

CONTINUED

178

MAE

You're driving him too hard. He's a child. What's the matter with you?

GARVEY

Lewis, get in.

Lewis moves to the cab of the truck.

MAE

(stopping him)

I won't let you do this.

GARVEY

Let him go. We gotta save this crop. If we don't keep the river out, we're finished.

MAE

Then let it in! Let it finish us before you do.

Garvey leaps from the truck and grabs for Lewis. Mae holds him tightly to her.

MAE

I don't want to live like this anymore.

GARVEY

Fine. Then go live in a big fancy house with Joe Wade.

MAE

Joe Wade?

(pause; then:)

Lewis, go outside.

Lewis goes. As soon as he clears the barn door, Mae hauls off and smacks Garvey across the face.

MAE

I don't want to live in a fancy house with Joe Wade. I want to live here with you. But you can't beat the river with a wife and two exhausted children. Why won't you get the others to help you?

GARVEY

I don't need them.

CONTINUED

178 CONTINUED

178

MAE

You don't need anybody, do you?
Nobody needs anybody else. You
...stupid...goddamned...FARMERS!!

179 EXT. ROAD - DAY

179

Garvey leads a convoy of 7 trucks along the river flowing fast and swollen. Tessley, Birkin, Zemke, Youngdall, Wilderfoot, and Smoot travel behind. Rain blows in the wind.

180 INT. GARVEY'S TRUCK - DAY - GARVEY AND LEWIS

180

The radio's loud in the truck, further weather reports from the farm station: reports of record rains, rising rivers all over the state.

181 FULL

181

The caravan passes the trailer camp outside the Harkness Ironworks. The number of trailers has noticeably increased.

CHILDREN

play in mud beneath overhangs.

MEN

huddle in groups -- listless and depressed.

WOMEN

cook on open fires protected by makeshift awnings.

THE CARAVAN

turns into the Ironworks.

182 EXT. HARKNESS IRONWORKS - DAY

182

Garvey operates a skip loader dumping heaps of abandoned, rebarred concrete and broken fire brick into the back of Birkin's truck.

GARVEY

working the loader back into the heap and scooping again.

LOW ANGLE

Truck wheels dangerously loaded. Birkin pulls away.

FULL

GARVEY

Lewis.

Lewis starts Garvey's truck, shifts gears, moves it forward under the loader.

Garvey dumps scrap into the back end.

183 EXT. THE RIVER - DAY

183

Grown gigantic, sweeping along.

FLOODLINE

The river stands over 10 feet.

184 MOVING

184

Garvey and the others drive their bulldozers and tractors up the banks of the levee.

Mounds of debris have been worked against the levee every twenty yards.

Mae walks along thumping the top of the levee with a thick pole, checking for hollow spots.

On the water side opposite, Lewis probes below the water with a stick, searching for undercuts.

Piles of sand are heaped at intervals.

The wives and children shovel sand into bags. Hundreds are already in place.

Beth and the Tessley girls work hard with their mothers.

Some of the women serve steaming cups of coffee and sandwiches to the haggard men.

185 EXT. THE RIVER - DAY - FLOODLINE

185

The storm's heavy.

The river's higher, almost 11 feet. Rain beats the surface into froth.

186 WIDE ANGLE

186

A diesel powered pump works doggedly. Water pours off the field back into the river.

Sandbags piled like battlements. Lewis and the girls work them upward, nearly exhausted.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The sky's darkening into dusk. Wade's Bronco driving the road near the river. They look up, knowing who it belongs to.

GARVEY

Wade.

It moves slowly toward them along the road.

187 INT. BRONCO - DAY - MOVING

187

Wade drives, Stanley beside him. Windows steam. The rain beats down. Radio's droning farm weather.

STANLEY

Gonna get worse. See that floodline?

Wade sees the families working on the bank.

STANLEY

They ain't gonna make it.

WADE

looking out the window, eyes narrowing.

WADE

They might. They just might.

188 ANGLE - GARVEY

188

Pouring rain. Thick and heavy.

As Wade's Bronco disappears, Garvey looks at:

THE FLOODLINE

It's 11 feet. Water laps at his boots.

189
thru
191

OMITTED

189
thru
191

192 EXT. MILLROCK - NIGHT - FULL

192

Wade's Bronco parked out in front of the bank. Headlights illuminate the driving rain. Windshield wipers work in vain.

Simpson pulls up behind the Bronco. He gets out, wearing a raincoat over his pajamas and rubbers on his feet.

Wade opens the door of the Bronco, bending out.

WADE

Where the hell you been?

SIMPSON

I was asleep, Joe. It's four o'clock in the morning.

WADE

Get your bank open.

Simpson unlocks the door, running inside to snap on a light and turn off the alarm.

193 INT. BANK - NIGHT - FULL

193

Joe Wade comes in shaking rain.

WADE

Get me twenty thousand in hundreds.

SIMPSON

Okay, Joe.

He shuffles to the vault. Outside, the Sheriff's car pulling up in the rain, light-bar blinking.

194 EXT. BANK - RAIN

194

Stanley in a hooded, yellow slicker stands talking with the Sheriff. Wade steps outside. Simpson follows with the money in a large canvas bag.

CONTINUED

194 CONTINUED

194

WADE

Get your men first thing in the morning and cruise down to Osborne.

SHERIFF

You sure you won't need me, Joe?

WADE

I'm sure.

The Sheriff gets back in his car and drives off. Simpson standing in the door.

SIMPSON

There gonna be trouble, Joe?

WADE

Go home, Howard.

195 EXT. TRAILER CAMP - DAWN - RAIN

195

Two large flatbed trucks with slatted sides marked "LEUTZCORP," stand waiting in the rain.

Stanley and three other Leutzcorp employees move among a large group of men.

THE MEN

hat brims dripping rain, faces drawn, they stand in quiet expectation.

WADE

sits in his Bronco watching nearby.

Stanley stands before the men with a fistful of bills. He hollers above the rain.

STANLEY

A hundred dollars a man. How many of ya' want to work.

Hands shoot up.

VOICES

(desperate)

I'll take it. I'll take it.

WADE

both fascinated and horrified by their wretchedness, steps outside.

WADE

(to Stanley)

Load 'em up.

Stanley and his assistants herd the men onto the waiting trucks.

CLOSER

as the men board. Baines, the young farmer from the factory, turns and waves, his face gaunt and haggard.

ANGLE

His freckle-faced young wife nursing an infant at her breast tentatively waves back.

ANGLE

They swing the gates shut. The men huddle close together shielding themselves from the rain.

FULL - THE TRUCKS

loaded to capacity, groan onto the highway. Wade's Bronco follows.

196 EXT. RIVER - DAY

196

Garvey, Tessley, Birkin, and the other farm families, work along the bank. They're exhausted, covered with mud and soaked through by the constant rain.

FLOODLINE

At eleven feet, but steady. Suddenly the squall passes. The rain stops. Faces turn upward expectantly.

TESSLEY

It stopped.

The word goes through the crowd. The farmers grab each other joyfully: a celebration.

GARVEY AND MAE

embracing. Her expression darkens suddenly.

197 WHAT SHE SEES

197
(X)

A convoy of trucks with Wade's Bronco in the lead pulls off the main road into Garvey's farm, and moves towards the levee.

ANGLE - GARVEY AND LEWIS

GARVEY

Lewis. Go get my shotgun.

(X)

Lewis sprints towards the house, splashing across the furrows.

THE TRUCKS

pull up some distance from the levee. The men, carrying picks and shovels, climb down and move towards the levee. Wade drives slowly beside them. Stanley walks alongside the Bronco, carrying a bundle under his rain gear.

THE BULLDOZERS

as they turn to face the approaching mob.

MOVING

WADE

(to Stanley)

You know what to do.

Stanley slips away from the main group into the alders near the bank to crawl along the riverside out of sight.

198 INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

198

Lewis slams inside, gets the shotgun from the closet, grabs a pocket full of shells, slips the shotgun under his rain gear and slams back outside.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - MOVING

Lewis running as fast as he can.

199

THE FARMERS

199

hit their hydraulics, the bulldozer blades rise like shields. Black diesel smoke billows above their heads as they rev their engines in a concerted warning.

THE DRIFTERS

mill uncertainly as Wade gets out of his Bronco and steps forward.

LEWIS

running as fast as he can, dashes up to Garvey and Mae, placing the shotgun in his hands and the shells into his pocket.

GARVEY AND WADE

face each other. Garvey slams a shell into each barrel of the shotgun and slams the breech.

GARVEY

Get off my land.

WADE

(shouting)

I'll give you all one last chance.
Ten thousand more to each of you.
You can harvest your crops. I'll
give you what we contracted for,
but then you gotta clear out.

(X)

No one moves.

WADE

I want your answers now.

(X)

THE FARMERS

They stand immobile, their families at their sides. In unspoken agreement they face Wade. Their answer is clear. The answer is "no."

(X)

WADE

WADE

Okay, boys -- tear it down.

CONTINUED

199

CONTINUED

199

A drifter pulls a sandbag away from the top of the levee.
The river starts to spill over the lip.

LEWIS

Dad...

GARVEY

raises his shotgun and yells:

GARVEY

Get off that levee.

He fires. A blast of buckshot whooshes through the alders
over their heads.

THE DRIFTERS

duck from the shotgun blast. Some start to back away.

WADE

WADE

(shouting)

You don't get a nickel if you run.
He's not gonna shoot anyone.

GARVEY

whirls and fires. The blast hits the radiator of the
Bronco, blowing it apart. A tire goes, too. Men dive in
the mud on either side.

WADE

I said tear it down.

A DRIFTER

one of the more desperate men runs toward the levee and
starts to climb to the top to widen the small breach.

GARVEY

reloads and levels his shotgun at the man. There's death
in his eyes.

GARVEY

Get down.

MAE

Terrified.

LEWIS AND BETH

Open-mouthed. Is their father going to kill someone?

WADE

WADE

Mae, don't let him.

THE FARMERS

Tense. Waiting.

THE DRIFTERS

Frozen.

THE LEVEE

The drifter turns to face Garvey. It is Baines.

GARVEY

(recognizing him)

Baines?...I damn near killed you.

BAINES

They took my farm...

GARVEY

I don't want to shoot you but I will. You're on the wrong side. We've been on the wrong side before. Tell them.

BAINES

His hand on the sandbags, tortured.

GARVEY

GARVEY

Why are you doing his dirty work?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BAINES

I'm hungry.

A DRIFTER

We're all hungry.

(X)

Wade grabs two men and savagely flings them toward the levee. They stumble and fall in the mud.

(X)

WADE

C'mom, goddamnit. Do what I'm payin' ya' for.

(X)

GARVEY

(points to Wade)

He says we don't count. But we take care of the land and he wants to drown it. Don't let him tear me down. All I've got is what's growin' in these fields.

(X)

The drifters mill uncertainly.

(X)

200 THE LEVEE

200

Suddenly Stanley runs through the mist down the top of the levee as fast as he can. He dives for cover.

Dynamite explodes behind him in a tremendous burst of flame. The mist boils upward.

When the smoke from the explosion clears, we see a gaping hole in the levee.

The river pours into the fields, a spout from an enormous pitcher.

201 GARVEY AND MAE

201

horrificed.

STANLEY

stands high on the levee staring defiantly at Garvey.

CONTINUED

201 CONTINUED

201

Garvey swallows, throws down his gun and rushes down the bank.

He picks up two sandbags, shoulders them, and stumbles under their load toward the gaping flood.

MAE

runs to help him.

FARMERS

The farmers and their wives and children grab sandbags and rush to help him.

202 THE LEVEE

202

The force of the water washes the bags away as fast as Garvey can lay them down. He stumbles pathetically, trying to stop the rush of water.

Suddenly the sound of a truck engine!

203 THE TRUCK

203

Baines throws the truck into gear and drives it up to the breach.

THE DRIFTERS

sensing his intention, rush to push the truck until it topples into the gap, helping to staunch the flow.

OTHER DRIFTERS

grab sandbags and start to pile them into the gap along with the farmers.

BAINES

leaps from the truck, grabs a sandbag and climbs toward Garvey.

GARVEY

takes the bag and splashes it in.

THE FAMILIES AND DRIFTERS

work on both sides of the levee, passing sandbags up chains of men, women and children.

204 CLOSE - A SANDBAG

204

as a shovel full of sand fills it. The bag is lifted upward and passed from hand-to-hand along the chain of people till it reaches Garvey who takes it and places it in the breech.

THE FLOODWATERS

Stop.

205 FULL

205

Mae throws herself into Garvey's arms with a whoop.

All up and down the levee the alliance of farmers and drifters goes wild with joy.

WADE

Defeated. Stands watching the celebration.

206 STANLEY

206

stumbles down the side of the levee in a clumsy attempt to escape. He finds his way blocked by a group of farmers and drifters.

He turns to run away but a circle of farmers surrounds him. The circle collapses inward -- pushing, shoving.

With a cry, they lift him overhead, climb the levee and toss him into the river.

207 WADE

207

stands near Garvey and Mae.

The crowd suddenly turns their attention to him, but his bearing and his power are enough to give them pause. He turns to Garvey and Mae.

CONTINUED

207 CONTINUED

207

WADE

Sooner or later there's gonna be too much rain, too much drought, or too much corn and you'll be finished. One more year, huh, Farmer? Okay. I can wait.

He starts to turn away and notices water pouring through a small, remaining leak in a pile of sandbags.

It streams down the levee.

He bends over, picks up a sandbag and moves to the levee.

The crowd watches silently as he tosses the bag into the gap, stopping the water's flow.

He brushes his hands and walks away.

GARVEY AND MAE

watch him go.

END CREDITS OVER...

208 EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

208

A bright, glorious, cloudless day.

A combine moves through the fields, harvesting the corn.

Garvey and Mae on the combine. Beth and Lewis trailing behind them.

ANGLE - LEWIS AND BETH

BETH

Lewie, are we gonna be rich, ncw?

LEWIS

Don't be dumb.

BETH

Who's dumb?...I bet we get a million dollars.

LEWIS

(shouting)

Dad, Beth thinks we're gonna get a million dollars for all this corn.

GARVEY AND MAE
on the combine.

MAE
(laughing)
What would you do if you had a
million dollars?

GARVEY
(a beat; then:)
I'd farm 'til it was gone.

FULL

The combine moves away from us into the lush rows of golden
corn.

FADE OUT

THE END