SLOW WEST

By
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BLACK SCREEN

SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)
Once upon a time, 1870 to be exact,
a sixteen year old kid travelled
from the cold shoulder of Scotland,
to the baking heart of America to
find his love. His name was Jay -
her name was Rose

FADE IN:

EXT - COLORADO FOREST - NIGHT

Our hero, JAY CAVENDISH lies on a blanket, a colt six-shooter
gun in his hand, and looks up to a sky full of stars

He begins his nightly recital, naming each constellation

JAY
Pegasus, The Great Bear, The
Dragon, Andromeda

JAY is sixteen, skinny, dark hair and dark eyes, handsome in
an other-worldly way

He is about to sleep fully clothed, and what fine clothes
they are - an exquisitely tailored three piece suit and fine
leather boots

JAY lifts his gun up and points to the night sky and pretends
to shoot

He makes a soft sound on each ‘pretend shot’ and a star
appears and forms Orion

JAY (CONT’D)
Orion’s Belt

JAY lowers his gun and smiles as he remembers the love of his
life, ROSE ROSS

CUT TO:

EXT - SCOTLAND - DREAM FLASHBACK - WINDY BEACH - DAY

ROSE ROSS, beautiful, dressed in peasant clothes, sits on top
of JAY, smiles

CUT TO
EXT - COLORADO FOREST - NIGHT

JAY stows away his gun, tucks his wallet into his inside pocket, rolls onto his side, shuts his eyes and falls asleep

CUT TO:

EXT - COLORADO FOREST - DAWN

Next day, first light, dawn chorus, JAY rolls up his blanket and grabs his duffle bag

TITLE - SLOW WEST

JAY sits on his horse. His horse is laden with many bags, cases, blankets, boxes

JAY pulls out a small wooden box and lifts lid to reveal a compass

JAY rides off in the direction - WEST

He rides awkwardly though the trees, holding the compass aloft

EXT - EDGE OF FOREST / PRAIRIE - DAY

JAY rides out of the forest into an open grass prairie

The sun now beats down

Strange structures appear. Dotted across the prairie, bodies wrapped in cloth lie on stilts facing the sky

A Native burial ground, a happy hunting ground

The stilts are adorned with feathers and beads

JAY weaves through the structures and past a group of native women sitting, preparing dead bodies of men wrapped in cloth

JAY rides past. The women ignore him

EXT - FOREST - DAY

Into the forest

A line of native women and children pass JAY

The final native, carrying a baby looks at JAY as he passes

JAY rides on, bringing his compass out again and continuing West
JAY has another flashing memory of ROSE and their time together in Scotland

CUT TO:

EXT - SCOTLAND - HILLSIDE - DREAM FLASHBACK

A strong wind blowing, a heathery landscape and beyond a rough sea

Rose stands on top of a small rock formation and lifts her arms causing her shawl to flap in the wind

JAY sits next to her

ROSE turns and smiles at JAY, then leaps from the small rock and runs down the hill

CUT TO:

EXT - FOREST - DAY

JAY rides into a cloud of dense smoke

The forest air becomes ‘foggy’ until JAY is but a faint silhouette

He and his pony begin to cough

JAY covers his mouth with cloth

The air is thick with ash

Black jagged shapes- burnt stumps of trees emerge from the grey

Now only shades of grey

SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)
I was drifting west when I picked up his trail - deep in Colorado Territory - A jack-rabbit in a den of wolves, fortunate to be alive

(The voice over is an older man than JAY, with an Irish accent - Later we will meet the man who owns this voice)

JAY, now walking his horse, has covered his mouth with a handkerchief

JAY is covered head to toe in gray ash, and so is his horse

JAY enters a clearing

Remains of tee-pee frames and tree stumps smoulder black and smoke
This was a Native camp, freshly razed to the ground

JAY leads his horse through the remains

No bodies. The dead removed

Another forest clearing

A distant gun shot startles JAY and his horse

JAY stops

Another gun shot

Then another

JAY walks slowly from his horse

More gunshots

Branches snap under foot from yonder, the sound of someone running towards JAY

A muscular young NATIVE MAN sprints from the brush and skids to a halt in front of JAY

Bare chested, coated in blood

Standing proud and waiting as if preparing to die by JAY’S hand

JAY ash-grey

The young MAN blood-red

For a moment they study each other’s strangeness

Another gunshot and the NATIVE MAN looks around then bolts past JAY

More rustling and twig snapping as THREE MEN dressed as Union soldiers emerge

TWO BOYS in dirty old Yankee uniforms and an OLDER MAN in an officer’s outfit

Guns are quickly raised to point at JAY

OFFICER
Arms abroad boy!

JAY raises his arms up

YOUNG SOLDIER 2
Red skinned or white?

The coat of ash covering JAY the source of confusion
JAY
Sir. I am British... Scottish

The officer barks orders to his two protegés

OFFICER
Catch the savage

The two YOUNG SOLDIERS run off into the woods

JAY and the OFFICER stare at each other for a BEAT

Two muffled gunshots then silence

The OFFICER smiles, thinking the NATIVE has been killed

JAY
I am Jay Cavendish, Son of Lady Cavendish

OFFICER lowers his rifle and walks towards JAY

OFFICER
We’re all Sons of Bitches

Seemingly from thin air, a figure appears behind the OFFICER and cocks his gun by the OFFICER’S ear, while taking the OFFICER’s gun in one smooth action

This is SILAS SELLECK

Mid thirties, lean, fit

SILAS is dirt ingrained, only his eyes are clean

SILAS looks WILD, yet..

His movements are skillful, economic, fast, his posture confident, capable and in control to the point of blasé

Succinct in words and action

OFFICER (CONT’D)
A grave play, boy

JAY draws his gun and points it at SILAS

JAY
Sir. Lower your pistol

SILAS sighs, then slowly circles round continuing to hold his gun to the OFFICER’S head, and moves towards JAY

JAY (CONT’D)
Hey!

SILAS moves up to JAY, continuing to point the gun at the OFFICER, and snatches JAY’S gun from him
SILAS points JAY’S gun at the OFFICER and pulls the trigger, but the gun is empty and clicks.

The officer smiles at this, but quick as a flash, SILAS raises his own gun up and shoots the officer between the eyes. Dead before he hits the ground.

Without taking his eyes off the officer, SILAS throws JAY’S gun him.

SILAS
Clean it. Oil it.

JAY fumbles the catch.

SILAS walks over to the officer and crouches down.

Pulls out a large knife and cuts a pouch from the officer’s belt.

JAY looks on.

JAY
What do you want?

SILAS checks the contents of the pouch and stuffs it into his belt.

JAY (CONT’D)
He was an Officer.

SILAS looks through the man’s pockets and finds a tin.

SILAS
Wearin’ a dress don’t make her a lady.

SILAS pockets the tin.

SILAS (CONT’D)
They ain’t soldiers. Least no more. Indian slayers.

SILAS moves round and removes the OFFICER’s boots and addresses JAY without looking up.

SILAS (CONT’D)
Keep headin’ West solo you’ll be dead by dawn. How you made it this far is a miracle.

JAY
I take care of myself.
SILAS
Sure kid. You need chaperonin’ and
I’m a chaperone

SILAS gets up and walks towards JAY

JAY takes a step back, still holding his gun

SILAS walks past JAY and towards JAY’s horse

JAY
Safer to travel with a killer?

SILAS
That’s right

SILAS checks out JAY’s laden horse. Too many bags and cases
for a small pony to carry

SILAS begins to cut the bags free

SILAS (CONT’D)
First lets save your pony’s life

SILAS cuts a case free and it drops to the ground

SILAS (CONT’D)
I counted a dozen of them bastards
attack them Indians back there.
Minus three that leaves... too many

JAY’s turns and looks into the woods in all directions

SILAS, now down on his knees, rakes through JAY’s case.
Tosses out a kettle, throws a useless box over his shoulder.
Tosses boots and a shirt

Finds a book, looks at the cover and holds it up to JAY

JAY reads the title

JAY
‘Ho for the West. A traveller and
Emigrants Hand-book

SILAS keeps looking at JAY

JAY (CONT’D)
To Canada and the North West States
of America’..

SILAS keeps staring

JAY (CONT’D)
..By Edward Hepple Hall

SILAS throws the book over his shoulder
SILAS
Well ho for the West

SILAS casts the whole case aside, gets up and walks towards JAY

SILAS (CONT’D)
Dollars. Fifty now, fifty when we split

JAY turns his back to SILAS and fumbles in his wallet
Turns back around and hands SILAS fifty dollars

JAY
Until we reach a forest called Silverghost

SILAS snatches the cash, counts it, and walks off

SILAS
Lets drift

JAY runs around and picks up his ‘Ho for the West’ book, grabs the reins of his pony and follows SILAS

CUT TO:

EXT - FOREST - DAY

JAY rides behind SILAS through the forest, brushing the remaining ash from his hair and suit

JAY trots up level with SILAS

JAY
What’s your name?

SILAS snaps

SILAS
Drop back, single file

JAY drops back behind SILAS

SILAS leads, JAY follows, staying single file as instructed

JAY (SHOUTS)
Why you headin’ West?

SILAS does not respond

JAY (CONT’D)
You care not why I’m headed West?

No response
JAY (CONT’D)
There was an accident - My girl and her father fled from Scotland, settled out West. It was all my fault.

SILAS (TO HIMSELF)
Take a hint kid?

JAY
We love each other

SILAS (TO HIMSELF)
Sure you do, kid

They ride on in silence

Close up of JAY, sound of waves breaking – Another memory of Rose

EXT - SCOTTISH SAND DUNES - FLASHBACK - DAY

Moody grey sky

Large waves crash onto a sandy beach, the beach becomes sand dunes

JAY stands at the top of a large dune

ROSE, standing at the bottom, shouts up to JAY

ROSE
JAY! A thousand ways to die, choose one

JAY strikes a thinking pose

JAY
Bow and arrow

She pulls a pretend arrow from a pretend quiver and pretend fires it at JAY

JAY pretends to be shot in the heart and falls dramatically

He rolls down the dune to ROSE’s feet and lays still, face up, eyes shut, tongue out

ROSE jumps on top of JAY and smiles. (This is the moment we saw in JAY’s first memory at the beginning of the film)

JAY’S eyes are shut, ROSE places her hand on JAY’S chest and leans in, her ear to his chest, continuing the charade by checking if JAY is breathing

JAY places his hands on Rose’s hands
ROSE smiles, but pulls away, breaking the moment, pushes
JAY’s head to the side

    ROSE
    Silly boy

ROSE jumps up
Runs up the dune, shouting

    ROSE (CONT’D)
    My turn

JAY looks up to the sky

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EXT - LIGHT FOREST - DAY

JAY rides behind SILAS
Low light, long shadows
Distant echo of a pretty acapella song emanates from the trees ahead
JAY head slumped, the music stirs him from his daydream
Three AFRICAN MEN, clothed in dusty ragged Union soldier suits, sit in a circle, one in a makeshift wooden wheel chair, one on crutches, wounds from the Civil War
They sing a beautiful Congolese song. (They’re Congolese)

SILAS rides straight past, JAY stops to listen
SILAS stops, grumps, spits, and turns
SILAS wolf whistles, JAY ignores
SILAS shakes his head, turns and trots off
The band smile, singing for the pleasure of singing. The song ends and the man on crutches looks up at JAY

    SINGER (IN FRENCH)
    Did you enjoy our music?

JAY answers in French

    JAY (IN FRENCH)
    Yes. I enjoyed the song very much

SINGER (IN FRENCH)
It’s a song about love
JAY (IN FRENCH)

Love is universal, like death

JAY nods to the band, who start playing again, and rides after SILAS

EXT - DRY LAKE, DEAD TREE, FLOWERS - DAY

The Sun bakes the land. JAY and SILAS keep heading WEST

SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)
The kid was a wonder. He saw things differently. To him we were in a land of hope and good will. The way I saw it, kick over any rock and most likely a desperado would crawl out and knife you right in the heart if there was a dollar in it

CUT TO:

EXT - RIDGE OVERLOOKING DRIED RIVER BED - DAY

A rag-tag posse of seven men and a woman, all on horseback, form a row and watch a distant SILAS and JAY cross the river bed

The posse are all distinct and characterful

A Chinese man, ‘TATOO MAN’, in traditional Chinese garb, long black hair and beard

A Dylan-esque musician ‘THE MINSTREL’ with a feather in his hat and a banjo strapped to his back

A Mexican woman, poncho and braids ‘MARIMACHO’

A wizened ol’ gold-digger type. Large soft hat, silver beard - this is SKELLY

A good looking young kid, arrogant expression. This is ‘THE KID’

A crazy looking goggle-eyed man, aged beyond his years by drugs and liquor. This is PEYOTE JOE

The gang leader - PAYNE - Massive fur coat, cigar

PAYNE watches SILAS and JAY with added interest and a knowing half smile

CUT TO:
SILAS and JAY have set up camp
JAY sits on his blanket, SILAS up against a tree
JAY throws rabbit bones from his plate into the trees
SILAS sees this
JAY lies back and looks at the stars while SILAS is filling bullet shells with fresh gunpowder

JAY
Same stars. Same moon

SILAS ignores him

JAY (CONT’D)
One day we’ll be wandering ‘round that moon

SILAS ignores

JAY (CONT’D)
They’ll build a railroad

SILAS keeps ignoring

JAY (CONT’D)
But a railroad up and down the ways. A railroad to the moon. And when we get there, first thing we’ll do is hunt the natives down

SILAS bites

SILAS
No Indians on the moon

JAY sits up

JAY
No. The natives of the moon. The moon people

SILAS flashes JAY an incredulous look
JAY lies back down, points to stars and begins his nightly recital

JAY (CONT’D)
Pegasus, The Great Bear, The Dragon

A crackle of sticks under foot in the darkness

SILAS
Shh!
JAY shuts up
SILAS gets up, picks up rifle
JAY sits up
SILAS soldier-like, cocks rifle, moves off into the woods
JAY about to follow

SILAS (CONT’D)
    Sit down
JAY obeys, and now feels more alone than he did when he was alone..

JAY brings his gun out and stays still for a BEAT
SILAS emerges from the shadows
SILAS picks up Jay’s rabbit bones and throws them into the fire

SILAS (CONT’D)
    This is the last time I’m gonna clean up your shit
SILAS sits back up against the tree, places his rifle on his lap and covers himself with a blanket
SILAS’ way of saying good night
JAY looks around
Wolves howl
JAY lies back and stares up at the moon and stars and slowly and quietly un-cocks his gun

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EXT - RIVER CUTTING THROUGH PRAIRIE - DAY
Horse clops on wood as SILAS and JAY ride across a rickety bridge

CUT TO:

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EXT - CANYON - DAY
Mid day sun beating down, the familiar red-tailed hawk screech
SILAS and JAY walk their horses up through a yellowish rocky canyon
The canyon narrows forming a pass a couple of yards wide
A buffalo has got trapped in the narrow gap and died there
It has been picked clean of meat down to its gleaming white bones
The skeleton blocks the route WEST

JAY and SILAS approach

JAY
Must have been winter when Rose passed through here

They begin to pull the heavy bones from between the rock

JAY lifts up the skull

SILAS
What’s she like?

JAY perks up

JAY
She’s a beauty. And.. She does not waste words. They tumble out, wit following wisdom

SILAS
You haven’t bedded her, have you

SILAS laughs

JAY shakes his head

SILAS gestures to the buffalo rib cage

SILAS (CONT’D)
Grab that end

JAY
You’re a brute

They lift the rib cage together and dump clear of the trail and walk the horses through the pass

EXT - ALONG BASE OF CLIFFS - DAY

SILAS swigs from a water bottle and tosses it back to JAY

SILAS
A trading post up ahead. We can dine at a table while sitting on a chair

CUT TO:
SILAS and JAY ride up to the trading post

A small one room wooden shack, a veranda running along the front

There is a horse tied up out front. It is jet black, shiny and muscular

SILAS looks at the horse as he dismounts

SILAS
Tie the horses round back

JAY leads the horses round the side of the building

SILAS reaches the veranda

Left of the trading post door there is a makeshift notice board fixed to the wall

SILAS turns to make sure JAY is out of sight, then checks all the notices

Amongst a number of wanted posters of grim faced outlaws, a wanted poster for ROSE ROSS and JOHN ROSS

Beneath a drawing of JOHN and ROSE, a crude likeness, reads - JOHN ROSS and his daughter ROSE ROSS - ‘WANTED FOR MURDER - REWARD $2000 DEAD OR ALIVE’

SILAS rips the poster from the board

SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)
Everyone knew about the bounty, except Jay. He was leading me right to it.

The trading post door swings open and a man exits. SILAS turns his head

This is VICTOR THE HAWK - He is wearing a priest’s get-up, white dog collar, black suit, black hat, perfectly groomed. Everything about this man is long, sharp and clean

VICTOR carries a long black case, about the length of a large rifle and probably containing a large rifle

For a brief moment he stops and looks at SILAS. A beat of recognition between both men. SILAS looks down at the case, VICTOR knows he knows.. A bounty hunter can smell another bounty hunter

VICTOR tips his hat, walks off, mounts horse, rides off
SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)
There were few of us left, men
beyond the law

SILAS walks into the trading post

SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)
But the most dangerous were the
last to fall

JAY saunters around the corner, sees VICTOR riding off

CUT TO:

INT - TRADING POST - DAY

Inside the trading post is dark and dusty, shelves on all
sides are filled with necessities. Native blankets, furs,
buffalo skins, pots, pans, coffee, ammunition, saddle bags,
suits, boots, shovels, pan handles, horse shoes, bags of salt
and corn, jars of honey and rolls of string. (See p. 168
Little house in the big woods)

A counter runs along the back of the shop. In front of the
counter and to the left, two small wooden tables, four
chairs. To the right, more shelves piled high, and an
entrance to a small changing room covered by a large Native
rug

An OLD MAN stands behind the counter

SILAS walks up to the counter, strikes a match on the side,
lights his cigar

STOREKEEPER
May I ask you to place your iron on
the counter while you browse?

SILAS obliges, then wanders round the room checking the stock

JAY enters, closing the door behind him

SILAS
We’ll be dining

JAY wanders over to some clothes on a rail

JAY
May I try on a suit?

STOREKEEPER
Sure, be my guest

JAY crosses the room and enters the small changing room,
pulls closed the native blanket curtain
SILAS sits down at a table in the opposite corner of the room

CHANGING ROOM

There is a filthy mirror on the wall

JAY wipes it clean with his sleeve

Looks at his disheveled reflection

SHOP FLOOR

The STOREKEEPER picks up a couple of glasses and a bottle of whisky and approaches SILAS

STOREKEEPER (CONT’D)

Whisky?

SILAS shakes his head

SILAS

You got meat?

STOREKEEPER

I got condemned bacon. Traded it for bullets. Both’ll kill you pretty quick

SILAS shakes his head, pulls out the wanted poster, unfolds

CHANGING ROOM

There is a comb on a string next to the mirror

JAY picks it up but sees it is full of old hair and drops it

JAY brings his gun out from his inside pocket and lays it on a stool

SHOP FLOOR

SILAS studies the wanted poster

CHANGING ROOM

JAY tries on the suit jacket, notices a hole right by his heart

The hole was made by a bullet and around the hole, dried red crusts of the blood of the previous owner

JAY sticks his finger in the hole

SHOP FLOOR

The door swings open

A man and a woman enter
They are Swedish, a young couple, clothes dusty from travel
They move nervously, jittery, eyes showing desperation. The man JOHAN is skinny. (Ref: Shame by Bergman)
The woman MARIA, skinny but wears so many clothes and rags and shawls that she looks larger
JOHAN notices SILAS and looks at MARIA with concern
SILAS keeps his eye on the man as he nervously approaches to the counter
JOHAN points to a blanket on a high shelf behind the storekeeper

JOHAN (SWEDISH ACCENT)
Blanket please

STOREKEEPER
Blanket, ha..

The storekeeper climbs on a stool and reaches up for a blanket
While his back is turned, MARIA swipes some items and places them in her bundle of bosom

STOREKEEPER (CONT’D)
Ma’am, you have to purchase items before baggin’ ‘em. That’s how we do it here in America

SILAS alert
MARIA throws a sharp stare at JOHAN

MARIA
Johan!

SILAS smells trouble
JOHAN brings a colt pistol from his inside jacket pocket and points it at the head of the storekeeper
The storekeeper raises his hands and takes a step back

JOHAN
S..s..sorry.. Money .. Pl..please

CHANGING ROOM
Jay stock still, listens
SHOP FLOOR

STOREKEEPER
Now looky here, you realise if I give you money, here’s the only place round where you can spend it

MARIA
Johan!

JOHAN cocks the gun

SILAS and JAY both frozen in their respective places

JOHAN
Money!!

MARIA goads JOHAN

MARIA (IN SWEDISH)
Johan! What must be done!

JOHAN follows his wife’s orders and smacks the storekeeper in the face with the butt of his pistol

The storekeeper falls out of sight and rises with a shotgun and shoots JOHAN point black in the chest

JOHAN is flung backwards against a post and falls down dead

MARIA in shock, pulls out a small pistol and fires it at the STOREKEEPER, who falls down dead behind the store counter

MARIA is now hysterical

MARIA (CONT’D)
Johan!!

She stops breathing, in shock, turns and points her gun at SILAS

SILAS, unarmed, stares at MARIA

SILAS
Breathe

CHANGING ROOM

JAY picks up his gun from the stool

SILAS (CONT’D)
Breathe.. In.. And out

MARIA (PLEADINGS)
Money!
CHANGING ROOM

JAY is listening to SILAS and breathing in and out in time. SILAS is actually talking to JAY, to calm him and direct him, and it's working

SHOP FLOOR

MARY (MORE DESPERATE) (CONT'D)
Money!!

SILAS
Breathe in.. And out

CHANGING ROOM

JAY breathers in and out

MARY (O.S.)
Money !

SHOP FLOOR

SILAS
Breathe

JAY walks out of the changing room, directly behind MARIA, and MARIA directly in front of SILAS

MARY (RAGING)
Money !

SILAS
In.. And out

And on “out” JAY pulls the trigger, shooting MARIA in the back, MARIA falls down dead

JAY frozen to the spot, stares at the dead body, drops his gun

SILAS breathes a sigh of relief, then gets up fast

SILAS (CONT’D)
Grab some provisions

He turns to see JAY still frozen to the spot, staring at the woman

SILAS (CONT’D)
Jay!

SILAS collects useful items, tins of food, ammo, oil

JAY collects useless items, chocolate, honey etc
EXT - OUTSIDE TRADING POST - DAY

JAY exits the trading post into the bright daylight
He stops abruptly
Two CHILDREN stand, hold hands, waiting for their parents
A GIRL aged ten, a little BOY aged six, blond, sweet
SILAS exits and sees the kids

SILAS (TO HIMSELF)
Shit..

SILAS shuts the door before the kids can see the fate of their parents
JAY approaches the kids
SILAS goes to fetch the horses
JAY lays all the stuff he’s gathered from the shop at the feet of the kids then just stares at them

KID (SWEDISH)
Why are you sad?

SILAS reappears with the horses

SILAS
Dry your eyes kid - let’s drift

JAY begrudgingly turns, mounts and they ride off, leaving the kids to their fate

EXT - ROCKY LANDSCAPE / EDGE OF FOREST - DAY

JAY and SILAS ride in silence
SILAS begins to whistle a tune - Yankee doodle..
JAY snarls, thinking SILAS is happy
CUTTING TO SILAS, we see he is putting on a brave face, holding back a tear
SILAS looks down at his hand
His hand is shaking violently. SILAS clenches into a fist

JAY
We could have taken them in

SILAS growls
SILAS (TO HIMSELF)
In where?

CUT TO:

EXT - CAMPFIRE FOREST - NIGHT
JAY lies awake and we enter his thoughts, his memories

CUT TO:

INT - SCOTLAND - COTTAGE - DREAM FLASHBACK - DAY
Single room crofters cottage, basic but homely. Hard packed earth floor, small kitchen table, fireplace for heat and cooking. Bunk beds down one wall, a tiny window the only light source

JAY and ROSE sit side by side on the bed

JAY looks mournful, ROSE happy

ROSE makes a gun shape with her hand and pretends to shoot JAY in the heart, and smiles

JAY makes an effort to smile back

JAY
How do you feel.. About me

ROSE turns serious

ROSE
You’re the little brother I never had

JAY gutted, almost resentful

JAY
You don’t mean that. That’s not what you mean

JAY looks at ROSE, that same longing look from the dunes

ROSE
I’m sorry my Romeo, but these violent delights..

ROSE grabs JAY and tickles him

ROSE (CONT’D)
Have violent ends..

JAY stands up and turns to ROSE
JAY
What choice do you have? A farmer, a fisherman!

ROSE’s smile wiped

ROSE
Best you leave now, Jay

ROSE hears a gate shut outside and springs into nervous action, looking around for a place to hide JAY

He should not be in here

JOHN ROSS (O.S.)
No violence, we need protection, crofters rights..

The voices of ROSE’s father, JOHN ROSS, and another MAN approaching the door, ROSE panics

ROSE
Under the bed

JAY shakes his head

JAY
No

ROSE does not take no for an answer and pulls JAY under the bed

JAY crawls under, turns himself around to look out

ROSE’s father JOHN ROSS is a big man

He is with a smaller man named CALUM, a friend of the family

ROSE
Daddy

JOHN ROSS

Rose

CALUM

Hello Rose

JAY watches from under the bed

CUT TO:

LATER - More men enter the room, JAY still stuck under the bed

CUT TO:
25  EXT - NIGHT - CAMP

JAY stirs

SILAS is up and taking a piss
He scratches his ass with the barrel of his gun
JAY turns over and drifts back into..

26  EXT - SCOTLAND - COTTAGE - EVENING

The room is now full of people and JAY is still trapped under the bed
Two WOMEN sit knitting in the corner of the room
Three MEN play musical instruments
JOHN ROSS holds court at the table, telling a wild tale
ROSE stands by the bed, looks down at JAY and they exchange a quick smile
Another man enters the crowded room and lays a lobster creel down by the bed, right in front of JAY
Inside the creel is a cat
Another MAN recites a Gaelic poem
The atmosphere cuts dead when..
Another MAN enters, flanked by two BURLY MEN. This is RUPERT, JAY’s uncle and the landowner
This wipes the smile from ROSE
The rest of the room looks nervous
JAY shrinks to the dark back wall of the bed

    JOHN ROSS
    Lord Cavendish! May I help you?

    RUPERT
    I’ve come for my nephew

Rupert looks under the bed and finds JAY

    RUPERT (CONT’D)
    You should not be in here. These people are peasants

    CUT TO:
EXT - CAMP - NIGHT

SILAS finished pissing, returns to his camp bed

CUT TO:

EXT - SCOTLAND - OUTSIDE ROSS COTTAGE - NIGHT

RUPERT drags JAY by the scruff of the neck out the door of the Ross cottage, followed by JOHN ROSS, ROSE, and some of the other MEN

JAY breaks free of RUPERT and walks to ROSE’s side

JAY
I’m with Rose now

This is news to ROSE, news to ROSE’s FATHER, and news to RUPERT

RUPERT slowly approaches JAY

He lifts a hand to slap JAY, but instead slaps ROSE

This enrages JOHN ROSS, he grabs RUPERT and throws him backwards to the ground

A thud as RUPERT smacks his head on a rock

The rock drips with blood and RUPERT looks all but dead

JAY runs off into the dark of night

EXT - CAMPFIRE - FOREST - DAWN

JAY turns to look at SILAS, fast asleep

JAY quietly and slowly rises up and rolls up his blanket all the time watching SILAS

SILAS appears not to waken

JAY glances round camp to check he’s not left anything

SILAS opens his eyes and looks at JAY, then shuts his eyes again

JAY creeps out of camp

EXT - PLAINS - MORNING

JAY rides, morning has broken

JAY is out of the forest and now on the vast flat plains of Southern Colorado
Noon sun, JAY sleeps as he rides WEST

Sun low, shadows long
JAY stops
In the distance a horse and wagon, a camp fire, one MAN
A DOG trots over from the camp towards JAY, a little wolf-like scrubby mongrel
Pants happily, sits looking at JAY
JAY decides to approach the camp, slowly
The MAN now stands, rifle in hand
JAY stops again - within earshot of the MAN
The MAN places his gun down and waves
This man is WERNER. He has a kind, intelligent face, middle aged, stubbly beard, (looks and sounds like Werner Herzog)

WERNER (GERMAN ACCENT)
Good evening!

JAY smiles at WERNER

JAY
I come in peace

WERNER smiles back

WERNER
My ears hear your music!

WERNER beckons JAY to join him

WERNER (CONT’D)
Come, come

JAY dismounts
WERNER giddily runs to the back of his wagon and pulls out a second chair, places it next to his little fire

WERNER (CONT’D)
Sit. I have coffee

WERNER sits opposite , happy to have the company
JAY sits, looks down at a journal next to WERNER
JAY
You a writer?

WERNER
Perhaps

WERNER holds up his journal. A long title fills the front cover

He reads the title slowly

WERNER (CONT’D)
I am “Recording the decline of aboriginal tribes – their customs, culture and habits – In the hope of preventing their extinction or conversion to Christianity” – The title of my account. Too long?

JAY
Perhaps

WERNER lays the book down

WERNER
So now. East. What news?

JAY looks East

JAY
Violence and suffering, and West?

Werner looks West

WERNER
Dreams and toil

JAY
I passed though burnt remains of an Indian camp

WERNER saddened, picks up his journal

WERNER
This is dreadful news
A race extinct, their culture banished, their places re-named, only then will they be viewed with selective nostalgia, mythologised and romanticised in the safe guise of art.. And literature

Werner holds up the journal on ‘literature’

WERNER (CONT’D)
This is a new world for us, also for them
Sun setting, light fading

WERNER gets up walks towards his wagon

    WERNER (CONT’D)
    You must be hungry

He roots around the back of the wagon. He has all sorts in there, about four saddles, many bags, much junk

He finds some bread and brings it to JAY

    JAY
    'Til now my sole company’s been a brute

    WERNER
    Sorry to hear this

    JAY
    I escaped

WERNER hands JAY bread, sits back down

JAY takes a bite of bread

    JAY (CONT’D)
    Thank you

CUT TO:

EXT - WERNER CAMP - NIGHT

Camp surrounded by blackness

JAY and WERNER lit by the fire, the back of WERNER’s wagon lit by a lamp

    JAY
    I killed a woman yesterday

    WERNER
    Part and parcel

WERNER warms his hands by the flames

    JAY
    You care not to share your company with a murderer?

    WERNER
    I’d be a lonely man if I did

WERNER shakes his head

    WERNER (CONT’D)
    I am no Judge nor Father
WERNER now looks devilish in the light of the flames

WERNER (CONT’D)
In a short time, this will be a long time ago

Distant wolves howl

WERNER picks up his rifle and stands up

WERNER (CONT’D)
Camp here. Blanket?

JAY nods

JAY
Thank you

WERNER returns to the back of the wagon and pulls out a blanket, brings it to JAY

WERNER
I shall dream up some advice and in the morning dish it up with fresh eggs

JAY
What’s your name?

WERNER
Werner

JAY
I’m Jay. Good night and thank you Werner

WERNER nods, turns, climbs into the back of his wagon and shuts the doors

JAY alone under the vast starry sky

EXT - PLAINS - DAWN

When JAY wakes up in the morning he is more than alone again.

WERNER has gone, and taken JAY’S horse, all JAY’S possessions, clothes, everything

JAY sits up in his all-in-one long Johns and looks around

Stands up

Looks down, a chicken egg sits on a note

Picks up the egg, the note flaps along the ground

JAY runs after it, grabs the note and reads
NOTE- “West” and a arrow

JAY looks at the arrow west and turns round with the paper in his hand before realising the joke of having an arrow west drawn.

JAY throws the note to the wind, angry and amused in equal measure

Drapes the blanket over his shoulder

Tries to peel the shell from the egg

Picks up a small stone to chip the egg shell, and the egg breaks, but it is raw, not boiled, and drips to the ground

EXT - PLAINS - MORNING

JAY wanders across the vast windy plain

CUT TO:

EXT - PLAINS - DAY

JAY's now staggering, hungry, tired

He spots a few mushrooms sprouting from the dust

He throws himself to the ground dramatically, like he hasn’t eaten for a week

Sniffs the mushrooms

The wind blowing hard, has prevented JAY from hearing a horse approach from behind him

The shadow of the man on the horse slides over JAY

JAY turns round to see SILAS and he has JAY'S horse in tow, possessions intact

SILAS (O.S.)
You can eat those

SILAS nods at the mushrooms

SILAS (CONT’D)
Eat enough of them, you can fly to Rose

JAY looks at his horse and looks at SILAS

JAY
You kill Werner?

SILAS takes time to shape his answer
SILAS
No. No reason

JAY goes to his horse and brings out his wallet from his suit
Pulls out the rest of his money and holds it out to SILAS

JAY
This is all the money I have. Get me there in one piece

SILAS takes the money

SILAS
Sure kid

SILAS hands JAY a biscuit

SILAS (CONT’D)
Have a biscuit

JAY munches it fast

CUT TO:

37
EXT - PLAIN - DAY

SILAS and JAY ride across the plain towards a forest

CUT TO:

38
EXT - FOREST - DAY

SILAS and JAY have stopped and are looking at something in the woods

JAY
That's a shame

SILAS
Is it?

We see what they are looking at
A tree has been chopped down and fallen on top of the feller, completely squishing him
His arms stick out as if a cartoon, his flesh long gone, his clothes disintegrating, his skeleton hand still grasps the axe

JAY
No. No, it's not

Both men smile at each other
Nothing like someone else's misfortune to bond a friendship

**JAY (CONT'D)**

Charles Darwin talks of ‘evolution by natural selection’

**SILAS**

For our sake let's hope he's wrong

CUT TO:

39  **EXT - WOODS - DAY**

The men ride on, SILAS is riding in front of JAY

**JAY** is singing

**JAY**

My lord is hunting he has gone, hounds and hawks with him are none, beyond Silverghost lies his game, Rose Ross is her name

SILAS puts on his jacket for no reason other than to bring out the ROSE and JOHN ROSS Wanted poster

SILAS checks that JAY is not looking (JAY is not)

SILAS looks at the drawing of ROSE, flips it over and looks at the $2000, flips it back to ROSE, then pockets it

40  **EXT - CAMP BY RIVER IN FOREST - DAY TO EVENING**

A pretty clearing in the forest, dappled light through trees, a gentle trickling stream, a campfire crackling, logs laid out for sitting, a kettle boiling

**JAY** sits on a log

SILAS approaches him while sharpening a large hunting knife

SILAS walks behind JAY holding the knife up

**SILAS**

The knife's got to be as sharp as a razor

**JAY**'s face has been lathered up with soap, the irony is JAY is still too young for even the hint of stubble

**SILAS (CONT’D)**

You hold the knife flush, against the skin

SILAS holds the knife flush against JAY's throat
SILAS (CONT’D)
And it's a scraping motion against
the grain, not a slicing motion

SILAS scraps the knife up the side of JAYS face and wipes
the soap on a cloth over his shoulder

SILAS (CONT’D)
Like so.. We gotta make you
presentable for her

JAY smiles at this

JAY
I know why you need my help

SILAS pauses..

SILAS
Oh yeah?

JAY
Yeah – You’re lonely. You’re a
lonely man

The truth throws SILAS for a beat

SILAS
Sure kid

JAY
Sure kid. Lets drift. The silent, lonely drifter

SILAS continues to shave JAY

JAY (CONT’D)
You’re a lonely, lonely man

SILAS
No need to concern over me

SILAS places the blade on JAY

JAY flinches

SILAS (CONT’D)
Hold still

JAY
All I’m saying is.. There’s more to
life than just surviving

SILAS
Yeah – there's dyin’. Survival
ain't jus’ how to skin a jack-
rabbit.

(MORE)
SILAS (CONT’D)
It's knowing when to bluster and
when to hush. When to take a
beatin’ and when to strike

JAY
Where's your folks?

SILAS
Father's in the ground in Ireland,
Mother's in the ground in Canada

JAY
So what keeps you from joining
them?

SILAS snaps

SILAS
I dunno kid, quit askin’ me shit

JAY smiles

SILAS (CONT’D)
I was fine ‘til you showed up

JAY
I showed up? You showed up

SILAS
Yeah well maybe I’m tired of
showin’ up

A distant noise like tinkling of glasses..

SILAS stops shaving JAY, half finished, and looks to the
trees, brings out his gun and cocks it

SILAS (CONT’D)
You’re done

SILAS slowly walks across camp towards the noise, gun pointed

A man wanders into view - PAYNE - we remember him as the
leader of the posse watching JAY and SILAS ride days back

We especially remember because PAYNE wears an enormous fur
coat

PAYNE is a generation older than SILAS and a generation
wilder

PAYNE chomps on a cigar, (bigger than SILAS’s cigar) carries
a couple of glasses in one hand (source of the clinking) and
a bottle of absinthe in the other

PAYNE pauses for dramatic effect, unbothered by Silas and his
gun
PAYNE holds his hands out wide as he does a balletic turn walking into the middle of the camp.

Another dramatic pause, removes cigar.

PAYNE:
May I enter?

SILAS:
It's a free country.

PAYNE:
Try telling the natives that.

PAYNE playful, SILAS wary, JAY entertained.

PAYNE (CONT'D):
I propose a trade. A mug of coffee for the finest imported absinthe and a cigar of unrivaled quality.

JAY:
We drink tea.

PAYNE ignores JAY.

PAYNE pulls out a couple of cigars from his belt, hands one to SILAS and one to JAY.

PAYNE:
One for you, young man.

PAYNE, SILAS, JAY, all move to the logs by the fire and sit in a triangle.

PAYNE pours three glasses of absinthe as he checks SILAS out.

PAYNE (CONT’D):
Still not a mark on you.

JAY confused.

JAY:
You know him?

SILAS smiles.

SILAS:
Fuck yourself Payne.

PAYNE smiles.

PAYNE:
I’ve tried.. Believe me I have tried.

PAYNE takes a swig of the tea JAY has poured him.
PAYNE (CONT’D)
Oh.. That's damn fine coffee

JAY
It's tea

PAYNE passes an absinthe to SILAS, and to JAY, stands and toasts

PAYNE
To bad times in the green hour

SILAS downs, JAY sips

PAYNE (CONT’D)
Down it boy, it's liquid joy

PAYNE casually to JAY

PAYNE (CONT’D)
So you headed West ?

SILAS interrupts quick before JAY can answer

SILAS
North

They are all lying to each other and they all know it

PAYNE
Yeah, I’m headed .. South! The chill. I can’t stand it – Makes my joints ache

PAYNE moves his finger like he’s pulling an invisible trigger and makes a threatening squeaky sound, moving in close to JAY, and re-fills his glass

PAYNE (CONT’D)
So why north kid ? Someone special?
You’re sweetheart maybe ?

Now SILAS moves in close and gives JAY the ‘don’t answer’ stare

PAYNE breaks the tension

PAYNE (CONT’D)
Hey.. I’m teasing, I’m teasing. You must be born on a Sunday, eh? You born on a Sunday?

JAY just shakes his head

PAYNE (CONT’D)
You born on a Sunday?
JAY
I don’t know

SILAS now very alert to PAYNE's line of questioning

PAYNE
So it's fortunate that you're headed North because West, it's bad, big trouble, big storm coming

SILAS decides to cut this quick

SILAS
Easy Payne. He's just a kid

PAYNE
No, he's not. He's an outlaw, just like us

This saddens SILAS but pleases JAY

PAYNE (CONT'D)
Any-hoo! Let's drink. To friends, old.. And new

They all down another absinthe, but SILAS and JAY have drunk way more than PAYNE

PAYNE made sure of that

CUT TO:

EXT - CAMP BY RIVER - NIGHT

An empty bottle of Absinthe on its side – lit by the moon

PAYNE sits on a log watching SILAS and JAY

SILAS is showing JAY how to draw and cock his gun quickly, and SILAS, half-cut, is still pretty handy

SILAS shows JAY how to spin his gun round his finger

SILAS
Spin it!

JAY tries to copy but drops the gun

The nozzle lands and sticks in the dirt

SILAS (CONT’D)
That's pretty good

A swaying JAY leans down and picks up the gun, the nozzle now packed with mud
SILAS (CONT’D)
Get that dirt out of it.. Clean it

JAY tries to clean it with his cuff then looks directly down the barrel of the gun

JAY stumbles over to a tree and taps the gun against the trunk

The gun goes off with a loud bang and JAY drops it and falls over

This amuses SILAS greatly and he celebrates by firing his own gun into the air

PAYNE is sitting back against a tree, his face in shadow, watching JAY and SILAS unravel

PAYNE shakes his head

The plan to get SILAS and JAY drunk and talking is failing, now they are too drunk

   JAY
   I need to piss

SILAS flaps his gun in the direction of the forest (same path as PAYNE came from top of scene)

   SILAS
   Away from camp!

JAY wanders into the dark

PAYNE waits a beat until JAY has gone

Stares at SILAS

   PAYNE
   Easy see how you two crossed paths. One’s a falling angel, the other’s a rising devil

PAYNE walks towards SILAS

SILAS staggers towards PAYNE

   SILAS
   I’m no angel

As SILAS tries to step over a log, catches his foot and falls hard to the ground with a thump

   PAYNE
   True

PAYNE helps SILAS to his feet
The men embrace

SILAS using PAYNE to balance, PAYNE holding SILAS close

PAYNE (CONT’D)
You think that's a smart play –
teamin' up with him – quicker than
trackin’ him – simpler

SILAS
Ain’t no play about it

PAYNE
Yeah, I guess if you knew where
Rose and daddy was, you’d be done
babysittin’

SILAS stays quiet

PAYNE (CONT’D)
Never was a bean-spiller was ya?
Not sober, nor liquored up, never
was

SILAS stays quiet, the men still holding each other close

PAYNE (CONT’D)
What you gonna do with two thousand
dollars?

PAYNE places both hands on SILAS’ shoulders

PAYNE (CONT’D)
Come back to us

SILAS loses patience, pulls out his gun, cocks it and pushes
the nozzle into PAYNE's belly

SILAS
I’m not like you Payne

PAYNE get's it, takes a step back, and another, and another
and keeps walking backwards into the darkness

CUT TO:

EXT - NIGHT - FOREST

JAY is deep in the forest taking a piss, lit by the light of
the moon

Turns and heads through the trees, seeing the flames from a
camp fire

JAY
Silas!
EXT - FOREST - ANOTHER CAMP - NIGHT

He trips and stumbles into the camp then freezes and looks about

A group of ten folk sit round the fire. JAY recognises none of them

(We recognise this posse. They are PAYNE's posse from the ridge)

They all look up at JAY

THE KID, SKELLY, PEYOTE JOE, THE MINSTREL, TATTOO MAN
MARIMACHO with the TWO SWEDISH KIDS from the trading post

THE KID stands up, knife in hand itching to leap on JAY and cut him up

JAY
What have ye done with SILAS and PAYNE?

Sitting next to THE KID, SKELLY, oldest of the gang and 2nd in charge after PAYNE

Nudges THE KID

SKELLY
Back down kid, Payne needs him alive, you'll get your chance

THE KID reluctantly obeys and sits back down in a huff

JAY confused, not realising he's wandered the wrong way and entered the wrong camp

JAY
What have you done with the river?

PEYOTE JOE, bulging crazy eyes from way too much Peyote, answers JAY with an ominous tone

PEYOTE JOE
They took it

JAY sits down in the circle of folk, between TATTOO MAN and PEYOTE JOE

The SWEDISH GIRL watches him, recognising him from the trading post

JAY doesn't recognise her

JAY turns to PEYOTE JOE
JAY
Who took it?

PEYOTE JOE
Didn’t see their faces

MARIMACHO sees the SWEDISH GIRL stare at JAY

MARIMACHO
Kid!

The SWEDISH GIRL breaks her stare and obeys MARIMACHO, crawling under a blanket with her brother

MARIMACHO tucks them in

SKELLY, sitting next to THE KID on the opposite side of the fire to JAY, continues a conversation

SKELLY
All I’m sayin’ is in my day we tried to keep out o’ the papers. You youngsters tryin’ to get in em makes no sense

THE KID
And all I’m sayin’, Skell, is I want folks to respec’ me. What’s the point in dyin’ if nobody knows you dead. Same goes for killin’

SKELLY spits a gob of chewed tobacco into the fire and looks around at his audience and clears his throat

SKELLY
I partnered with a youngling once upon a time, by the name of Bill Allson. Dying to be famous, actually, killing to be famous. Come to me one time and he said..

EXT - WILD WEST STREET - BRIGHT HOT DAY

A stereotypical Wild West street, a younger SKELLY (teeth in and shaved) and another man (BILL ALLSON)

BILL ALLSON is cut from the same cloth as THE KID, new generation cowboy, good-looking, cocky swagger, fame-seeking

The men walk and talk

(SKELLY is still telling the story but the characters mouth the words)
BILL ALLSON (SKELLY'S V.O.)
"I killed thirty men and countless savages, and I still ain't got me no wanted poster"

SKELLY (SARCASTIC)
Where's the justice in that? I says

Its a one horse town and it looks deserted, dream-like

The men approach a makeshift wooden shack, operating as the town saloon

SKELLY (V.O.)
So I’m thinking, the only way to stop this kid croakin’ more innocents is to draw up a poster. Let him find it

A hand draws a wanted poster - BILL ALLISON, WANTED - $500 DEAD OR ALIVE, its a crude poster, badly drawn

EXT - WILD WEST STREET - DAY

SKELLY hammers up the wanted poster on the outside wall of the saloon

SKELLY (V.O.)
The next morning I put the poster outside the waterin’ hole he was drownin’ in. Wasn’t long afore he sees the poster - “BILL ALLSON, 500 DOLLARS DEAD OR ALIVE” He yells me over

BILL ALLSON looking at the poster

BILL ALLSON
Skelly!

SKELLY (V.O.)
And what he says chills me to the bone

CUT TO:

EXT - NIGHT - POSSE CAMP

THE KID
What he say?

SKELLY
Be a thousand by tomorrow

CUT TO:
EXT - OUTSIDE SHACK / BAR - DAY

SKELLY crosses the street towards the saloon

SKELLY
Next morning I go get the poster, to pin in up the next town. The poster ain’t there

SKELLY looking at the bit of wall, four corners of the poster remain, the poster ripped down

SKELLY (CONT’D)
I hear a gun shot and a body hit dirt. I spin around and see a mean son-of-a-bitch leanin’ over a blob

CUT TO:

EXT - POSSE CAMP - NIGHT

All the posse captivated by SKELLY’s story

SKELLY
I presume this bastard seen the poster, thought it real an’ gunned down Bill for the reward

CUT TO:

EXT - WILD WEST STREET - DAY

SKELLY walks to the middle of the street, pulling out his six shooter without breaking his stride

The man leans over the blob

SKELLY fires, hitting the man in the back

SKELLY (V.O.)
So I walk and I shoot, and BANG, he falls to his knees and dies

The man is on his knees

CUT TO:

EXT - POSSE CAMP - NIGHT

JAY lost in the story

SKELLY
On his knees like he’s prayin’ to be alive again
SKELLY'S tone now sad

SKELLY (CONT’D)
As I walk towards the dear departed..

CUT TO:

EXT - OUTSIDE SALOON - DAY

BILL ALLSON staggers out of the saloon

SKELLY
Bill Allson steps out the saloon across the street! Alive as you an’ I – bottle o’ whiskey in one hand, the wanted poster in the other

SKELLY steps up to the kneeling dead man

SKELLY (CONT’D)
I step up to the prayin’ dead man and nudge him with my boot and he falls, revealin’ a dead lump of fur and meat

SKELLY kicks over the dead man, revealing a dead black bear

CUT TO:

EXT - POSSE CAMP - NIGHT

SKELLY
It was a God-damned black bear

Smiles and shake of heads around the camp fire

SKELLY (CONT’D)
You know what Bill Allson says to me?

TATOO MAN
What he say?

SKELLY
He says “you jealous bastard, trying to get your own poster”

PEYOTE JOE giggles

THE KID does not

THE KID
Bullshit

MARIMACHO smiles
MARIMACHO

That's a good 'un Skelly

Most agree with mumbles

JAY rouses out of the story and the silence sobers him up

He looks around the camp, now alarmed

JAY

There's been an appalling misunderstanding. I'm at the wrong camp!

JAY scrambles to his feet

JAY (CONT'D)

Good night - good riddance

JAY runs off into the darkness

A gentle strum of a banjo and THE MINSTREL begins to sing

THE KID, now standing again, drops his knife into the dirt in anger

(To the tune of One man went to mow)

THE MINSTREL

The good Lord brings the rain.. To wash away our troubles
The devil adds the lightning To show us he's still near
So the good Lord sends some thunder To warn us of the devil
But devil's gonna blow us all away..

EXT - CAMP IN FOREST BY RIVER - NIGHT

JAY returns to his own camp

PAYNE has long gone

SILAS is swaying, drunken, deep in thought

JAY (O.S.)

Silas! There's people in the woods

SILAS turns to JAY

SILAS

You love her?

JAY

Who?
SILAS snaps

   SILAS
   Rose!
   JAY
   Yes

BEAT. SILAS sways

   SILAS
   Then go home, kid

JAY stares at SILAS, excitement becomes anger

   JAY
   She's mine

   SILAS
   She's nobody's

A BEAT then JAY lunges at SILAS

   JAY
   Fighting talk

JAY tries to hit SILAS but SILAS just smothers JAY's actions as he tries to calm him

   SILAS
   Shhh!

JAY calms, sobbing

SILAS lays him down on his blanket, like a baby

JAY cries

   JAY
   You're always shushing me!

   SILAS
   Cos you're always running your mouth off

A loud crack of thunder

JAY'S gun on the ground

Ants are marching into the barrel as the first drops of rain hit the ground

Massive thunder crack and a flash of lightning

JAY out cold, we enter his absinthe fueled dreams
A basic wooden room, walls painted white, a table and chair
Nothing else, looks like a stage set
The only light source is a candle on the table
Rose sits on a chair at the table, reading a book by the candle light
Two windows on the wall behind ROSE, but instead of glass, paper, semi-transparent oiled paper
Slowly and theatrically lights fade up from outside, glowing through paper windows
JAY is slumped against the opposite wall. Rose does not see him, JAY is the sole audience to this strange 'play'
He smiles as he sees ROSE
A distant crack of thunder and SILAS enters the room from a door on the right, smiles at Rose
JAY stops smiling, looks confused, then upset
SILAS sits at the table with ROSE and starts to read a newspaper
ROSE gets up and approaches JAY (POV CAMERA), leans in and picks up.. a baby
The baby is crying
ROSE sits back down and rocks the baby

ROSE
Jay-bird, why so sad?
SILAS smiles
Suddenly rain and thunder sound
From somewhere (reality, not dream) we hear JAY shouting

JAY
Silas!!
The lights dim on the dream scene
SILAS wakes up - (note - the audience is led to believe this was JAY's dream, it begins as JAY'S dream, as we cut back to reality with SILAS waking, we may presume this is also SILAS dream)

SILAS wakes up

JAY shouting

Dawn throws light on an unexpected and chaotic state of affairs

Thunder crashes, lightning is flashes, heavy rain falls in sheets

The river has burst its banks and the camp has become the river

The water is up to SILAS’ waist as he sits upright against a tree

Food, clothing, blankets, equipment, all float around them and down the river

SILAS leaps up

JAY looks for his gun

JAY
Silas! I can’t find my gun

SILAS looks down at his now empty holster, then runs to the side of the tree where he left his rifle, now just an empty case

SILAS
Son of a Bitch!

PAYNE has stolen all their weapons

They splash around grabbing their gear

Each lightening flare reveals a fresh tableau of chaos

JAY'S book ‘Ho for the West’ slowly revolves as it floats off down the river

CUT TO:

EXT - VAST PLAIN - MORNING

A vast plain
In the distance a forest, beyond the forest a mountain range, on the mountain a storm, distant cracking of thunder, faint flashes of lightning

This is the storm SILAS and JAY are in, and it looks about a day's ride from the middle of the plain

The plain, on the other hand, is backing hot, clear blue skies

A house sits in the middle of the plain, freshly built, bright yellow pine, oiled paper, not glass, on the window

JOHN ROSS stands on the porch of the house he has just built

JOHN looks at the distant storm and shakes his head - he needs the storm to be here, to water his crops

He turns to watch a figure walk slowly towards him across the plain

This is KOTORI, a young, handsome Native American, dressed in 'settler' shirt and trousers

KOTORI carries two large jack rabbits, has a rifle over his shoulder, holds up the rabbits

JOHN nods and smiles

JOHN ROSS
Come in Kotori

CUT TO:

INT - PIONEER HOME - DAY

The Ross house is simply constructed, whitewashed wood walls, paper windows, we may recognise the room from JAY's dream during the flood

Now it is furnished - simple furniture mad from pine- a dresser, a table, chairs, a bed

The dresser has plates, apples, bottles of milk, glasses

There is also a milk churn, other objects of use for daily life far from any store

There is a rifle on two nails above the door, a single bed in the far corner (John's), a door leading to a tiny room where Rose sleeps - and in the back a small larder full of food and utensils, and a back door

ROSE is now dressed in trousers and shirt, more practical, making her look more grown up, her platted hair makes her more 'American'
ROSE ROSS picks up a butter mould and carries it across the room

She pauses mid stride as she hears KOTORI approach - she is very alert

KOTORI enters, ROSE smiles

    ROSE
    Kotori

She takes the jackrabbits from him and hangs them up on a nail in the back larder

JOHN enters and sits down at the table with KOTORI

ROSE pours her father a cup of coffee

    JOHN ROSS (SARCASTIC)
    Turned out nice again

ROSE turns

    KOTORI
    Coffee!

ROSE turns back and pours Kotori a coffee

    ROSE
    You always ask for coffee and you always spit it out

ROSE slowly lifts the top of the butter mould, but the butter has not set and sinks out in a yellow splodge onto the table

    ROSE (CONT’D)
    For Gods sake

    JOHN ROSS
    Language Rose

ROSE scrapes up the butter

    JOHN ROSS (CONT’D)
    An improvement, stayed on the table

They exchange smiles

    CUT TO:

EXT - PRETTY MEADOW - DAY

Meanwhile..

SILAS and JAY are out of the woods and on a grass meadow

Their drenched worldly goods are spread out on the grass
SILAS sits on his saddle and pours water from his boot

JAY wrings out his suit jacket

SILAS tries to spit, his dry mouth producing a dribble down his chin

SILAS
Only thing dry's my mouth

SILAS places a soggy cigar in his mouth

JAY
My head is killing me

SILAS looks at JAY, a testing, intense look

SILAS
You remember nothing from last night?

JAY
I remember Payne.. Then rain

SILAS unravels a knotted rope

JAY looks at all the wet gear, looks at SILAS, looks at the rope

JAY (CONT’D)
Give me that rope

SILAS throws the rope to JAY

CUT TO:

SILAS and JAY are riding across the meadow with a rope tied like a washing line, stretched between the two horses

To keep the rope taught they ride about fifteen feet apart

All their wet gear is tied to the rope, enabling them to dry while they ride

Both men ride in their long-johns

It is both practical and ridiculous

SILAS smiles at JAY

SILAS
Not bad kid

First compliment and JAY acts cool but smiles to himself

They ride into the sunset, but this is not the end..

CUT TO:
PAYNE and his gang appear on the lip of the ridge and stop, looking down the hill.

They are about 500 yards behind JAY and SILAS, who have dismounted and are at the bottom of the hill.

SILAS SELLICK (V.O.)
I must have been Jay's age when I joined Payne's gang.

PAYNE's gang watch as SILAS and JAY stop at the edge of a forest at the bottom of the hill.

SILAS SELLICK (V.O.)
Those were prosperous times in our trade. When I split, I was lucky to do so with my life.

This forest is Silverghost, the forest JAY paid SILAS to get him too, so they must be close to ROSE now.

In fact on the far side of the forest is a plain and on the plain sits a house and in that house ROSE, JOHN and KOTORI.

SILAS turns and looks back up the hill, his fears confirmed when he sees PAYNE and his posse at the top of the hill.

JAY turns to see the posse.

JAY
What do they want?

SILAS
They're bounty hunters. You know what that means?

JAY
They hunt bounty?

SILAS rummages in his saddlebag and pulls out the wanted poster.

SILAS

SILAS passes JAY the poster, now sodden from the flood and breaking apart.

JAY takes a long hard look at the drawing of ROSE and at the words DEAD or ALIVE.

JAY
Wanted .. Dead or ..

SILAS
Dead or dead, kid.
JAY takes a BEAT to process

JAY
And I’m leading them to her

JAY passes the poster back to SILAS

JAY (CONT’D)
We’ll lead them South

SILAS shakes his head

SILAS
There will be others

JAY
Others?

SILAS
Two thousand dollars entices a certain breed of undesirable

JAY takes a good hard look at SILAS

JAY
And just what breed are you?

SILAS thinks about striking JAY but changes his mind

He mounts his horse, looking into the forest

Silverghost is a silver birch forest, white trees and green leaves make it look inviting

SILAS
Local tribes call this forest ‘the place of spirit trees’, trappers call it ‘Silverghost’ - Legend has it, folks go in, they don’t come out

JAY climbs on his pony

SILAS (CONT’D)
Least we may shed the superstitious from PAYNE’S company

PAYNE and his company still stand in a row at the top of the hill

SILAS and JAY, their horses still tied together with the washing line, ride into the forest
EXT - TOP OF THE HILL - DAY

The posse watch SILAS and JAY ride into the forest

SKELLY
Ah God damn you Silas

CUT TO:

INT - PIONEER HOME - DAY

ROSE is clearing the table, JOHN polishes a horseshoe, KOTORI drinks his coffee
A knock at the door
JOHN signals ROSE and KOTORI to sit at the table
JOHN gets up reaches for the rifle above the door

JOHN
Who be it ?

ROSE signals for KOTORI to move into ROSE’s little bedroom

VICTOR (V.O.)
Victor Self.. Reverend Victor Self

Victor has a well spoken English accent, clear and polite

JOHN lays the gun down when he hears the word ‘Reverend’

VICTOR (V.O.)
Sorry to bother you, looking for a chap by the name of Parker..

JOHN opens the door to VICTOR

VICTOR removes his hat, it is the very same man SILAS saw outside the trading post. Hawklike features, black suit, white dog collar, black hat

This is the sharp shooting bounty hunter, VICTOR THE HAWK

VICTOR
James Parker

JOHN takes a second to think

JOHN
No Parkers here minister, won’t you come in

JOHN opens the door wide, revealing to VICTOR’S POV, ROSE, standing pointing the rifle at him
VICTOR
Sir I thank you, but decline

VICTOR nods behind JOHN

JOHN turns to see ROSE pointing the gun at VICTOR

JOHN lunges at ROSE and grabs the gun

JOHN ROSS
Rose!

JOHN ROSS places the gun back up on the nails above the door

JOHN ROSS (CONT’D)
I’m sorry minister

VICTOR smiles

VICTOR
The Good Lord has me on an errand -
Bless you and your lovely wife

JOHN ROSS
My daughter

VICTOR
Ah .. Good day sir

VICTOR places his hat back on his head, turns and walks off

JOHN ROSS walks onto the porch, ROSE follows, they both stand staring at VICTOR as he rides off

JOHN ROSS
Heavens above Rose, Scotland is far far away. Nobody knows where we are. Nobody knows who we are

ROSE
He knows I’m your daughter, I’m called Rose.. And he knows we’re here

JOHN ROSS
He was sent by providence. The Lord sensed my wavering faith. Rain is coming

JOHN ROSS turns and walks into the house, leaving ROSE on the porch to watch VICTOR ride into the distance

She knows trouble is coming

ROSE turns into the house and shuts the door
JAY and SILAS wind through the silver birch trees of Silverghost

The forest is oddly quiet, lacking of bird song or the chirp of crickets

JAY and SILAS are still in their long johns and have forgotten about the washing line - their clothes now dragging along the ground

JAY
Thou shall not be afraid of any terror of night, nor for the arrow that flyeth by day. For the pestilence that waketh in Darkness, nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noon day. (Psalm of David)

SILAS responds

SILAS
“O'er all there hung the shadow of fear, a sense of mystery the spirit daunted, and said as plain as a whisper in the ear, this place is haunted” (page 200 Ambrose Bierce)

JAY is taken aback by SILAS sudden poetic knowledge

CUT TO:

SILAS, now back in dry trousers, picks up his shirt from the washing line rope and shakes the leaves from it. We see the rope still ties the two horses together

JAY thinks he sees something move in the trees

He wanders into the middle of the clearing

A superbly camouflaged figure in between the trees pulls back the string of a bow

JAY sees the movement but not the figure

JAY
Silas .. The trees are moving

SILAS turns to look but sees nothing
It’s called a hangover kid. You’ll get used to it.

The figure, a NATIVE AMERICAN, is painted to look like a silver birch tree.

His bow is drawn and his arrow points at JAY.

His tribe must be the reason why ‘men come in to Silverghost don’t come out’.

The arrow is released with a whizz.

JAY instinctively raises his hands to cover his face.

The arrow shoots right through the palm of JAY’s hand and stops an inch before his forehead.

JAY holds up his hand with the arrow stuck clean through it.

First disbelief, then panic, then pain.

SILAS wanders over.

Behind SILAS and JAY, TWO MORE NATIVES dart from the trees and leap on their horses, and gallop past SILAS and JAY.

SILAS and JAY can only watch.

The washing line rope is still tied between the horses and drags along the ground.

The NATIVES pass each side of a tree, the rope snaps tight around the base of the trunk, bringing the horses to an abrupt stop and trowing the natives into the air.

One lands with a roll and runs off in disbelief, the other smacks into a tree and lands with a thud and is knocked out cold.

SILAS and JAY can’t quite believe what they’ve seen, saved by the rope..

The NATIVE who fired the arrow at JAY cannot believe it either, not seeing the rope and thinking magic involved, he drops his bow and arrow and runs off into the forest.

JAY grabs SILAS, the arrow in the hand still a slight issue.

SILAS smiles.

SILAS (CONT’D)

Nice catch.

SILAS snaps the head off the arrow and pulls the remaining arrow out.
JAY yelps in pain
SILAS pats JAY on the back

SILAS (CONT’D)
We’ll fix you up on the way

CUT TO:

EXT - WHEATFIELD IN FRONT OF PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

In front of the Ross house is a small golden wheatfield, about a hundred meters square

In the middle stands a ragged scarecrow

At the back of the wheatfield, crouched low, facing the house is VICTOR THE HAWK

He opens the long case (SILAS noted at the trading post) and in it a long rifle, snug in red velvet, and a neat row of bullets

This rifle has a sight attached for distance shooting

VICTOR gently lifts the rifle up and looks across the field

About fifty yards to the left of the house JOHN ROSS is building a fence

Two posts are up and JOHN ROSS is nailing up a cross spar

VICTOR places a bullet in the chamber of the rifle

JOHN ROSS lifts the long piece of wood up and hammers in a nail, fixing the spar a post

The sun is beating down hard

VICTOR gages the distance between himself and JOHN ROSS while adjusting the sights and aiming

JOHN ROSS, sweating, removes his hat and stares up at the sun

VICTOR is about to pull the trigger, until a sound of the house door opening stops him

ROSE and KOTORI appear and run about fifty yards to the right of the house (JOHN ROSS is to the left). There is a washing line with sheets flapping in the breeze, and a pony tied to a post

KOTORI helps ROSE up onto the pony

VICTOR looks at ROSE, looks at JOHN ROSS, looks at ROSE

CUT TO:
SILAS and JAY wind through the silver birch

JAY’s hand is now wrapped in a dirty bloody rag

They ride out of the forest and onto a plain and stop

JAY jumps down from his pony and walks out onto the plain

In the distance a house, a washing line, a wheatfield, too far to see people, but it is the Ross house, and ROSE is riding, and JOHN ROSS is mending the fence and VICTOR is crouched at the back of the field, but from JAY’s view it looks peaceful and beautiful

JAY
I’ve made it

SILAS is behind JAY, still on his horse

SILAS
Are you sure that’s them

JAY ignores SILAS and lets out a relieved sigh

JAY
Exactly what I imagined

As JAY looks towards the house, SILAS dismounts, unhooks the rope from the saddle and walks towards JAY

SILAS has made a small loop in the end of the rope and he loops it over JAYS hand, pulls the loop tight and grabs JAY by the scruff of his neck

JAY (CONT’D)
Hey

SILAS drags JAY backwards, JAY struggling, falls to the ground, and is dragged along the ground on his back

JAY (CONT’D)
Silas! Silas, SILAS, what are you doing.. Stop, no.. Silas!

SILAS hauls JAY up against the nearest silver birch tree on the edge of the plain, moves behind JAY and passes the rope around the trunk, and ties his hands together

JAY is sitting, his back up against the trunk, wriggling and spitting with rage

SILAS, behind JAY, pulls out his large hunting knife

JAY sees the knife, stops wriggling, places his head against the tree, shuts his eyes
JAY thinks Silas is about to slit his throat

    JAY (CONT’D)
    Do it quick

SILAS looks at JAY incredulously

    SILAS
    I ain’t going to kill you

SILAS cuts the long end of the rope beyond the knot

    SILAS (CONT’D)
    I’m keeping you alive. We don’t have a gun between us

SILAS walks around and sits in front of JAY, rubs the tree above JAY’S head and the white powder of the silver birch rubs off onto SILAS’S hand

SILAS grabs the back of JAY’S head

    SILAS (CONT’D)
    Hold still

SILAS rubs the white powder over JAY’s face

    JAY
    What is this!

    SILAS
    Stops the sun burning you up

JAY rages

    JAY
    I’ll protect Rose or die trying

SILAS turns and walks to his horse

    SILAS
    That’s what I’m afraid of

    JAY (YELLS)
    Lay a finger on her and I’ll kill you

SILAS ignores JAY, grabs the reins of JAY’S horse, climbs onto his horse

JAY throws himself into a rage

JAY wriggles, dribbles

Begins to rub the rope up and down the back of the tree
SILAS gallops off with both horses across the plain in the direction of the Ross house.

CUT TO:

66 EXT - BACK OF WHEATFIELD - DAY (VICTOR)

ROSE and KOTORI walk slowly back to the house.

VICTOR keeps them in the sights of his rifle, his finger on the trigger.

...But first his view is blocked by the washing line, then by the scarecrow, then ROSE and KOTORI enter the house and shut the door.

VICTOR lowers his rifle.

VICTOR looks back towards JOHN ROSS and lifts his rifle and has JOHN ROSS in his sights again.

JOHN ROSS picks up a couple of nails from a little wooden box, places one nail between his teeth and begins to hammer the other one into the fence.

VICTOR steadies himself, holds his breath and his rifle stills.

A nail is hammered into wood.

Sweat drips from the rim of JOHN ROSS’s hat.

As the hammer strikes the head of the nail, VICTOR pulls the trigger, a loud bang echoes across the plain.

JOHN ROSS’S hammer falls to the ground.

67 INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY - (ROSE)

Inside the house ROSE hears the bang.

She stops what she’s doing and listens, the echo of the gunshot still audible.

68 EXT - TREE ON EDGE OF PLAIN - DAY - (JAY)

JAY frantically rubbing, also hears the shot and freezes.

69 EXT - EDGE OF WHEATFIELD - DAY - (VICTOR)

VICTOR lowers his gun, and in the distance, JOHN ROSS falls to the ground.
EXT - MIDDLE OF PLAIN - DAY - (SILAS)

SILAS gallops fast towards the house, JAY’s horse galloping by his side

EXT - FENCE OUTSIDE HOUSE - DAY - (JOHN ROSS)

JOHN ROSS lies dead - blood in the grass, ROSE can be heard shouting *(from screen right)* inside the house

ROSE (O.S.)
Dadda!! Da!!

CUT TO:

EXT - TREE EDGE OF PLAIN - DAY - (JAY)

JAY rubs rope against tree, faster than ever and it is beginning to fray

CUT TO:

EXT - MIDDLE OF PLAIN - DAY - (SILAS)

SILAS gallops across the plain

CUT TO:

EXT - EDGE OF WHEAT FIELD - DAY - (VICTOR)

VICTOR, now standing, puts his jacket on, brushes himself down, looking towards the house

CUT TO:

EXT - TREE EDGE OF PLAIN - DAY - (JAY)

As JAY rubs the rope against the tree we hear voices from behind him in the forest

A general mumble of stories being told, jokes exchanged, horse trots, twig snaps

JAY freezes and shuts his eyes

He is well hidden, low down, his shirt the colour of the silver birch, his face white with the dust from the bark

PAYNE’S posse slowly ride past JAY and out onto the plain, no one notices the boy tied to the tree

Chit-chatting away, the last to pass JAY is the MINSTREL - he whistles and strums a sad lament on his banjo
The posse are heading straight for the house.

JAY’s breathing quickens, matters going from bad to devastating.

Once out of earshot, JAY begins rubbing the rope with added ferocity.

CUT TO:

76 EXT - WHEATFIELD - DAY - (VICTOR)

VICTOR walks through the wheatfield, past the scarecrow, towards the ROSS house.

..Until he notices SILAS galloping into view from the right of the house.

VICTOR ducks down into the wheat.

SILAS rides to the back of the house.

CUT TO:

77 EXT - TREE EDGE OF PLAIN - DAY - (JAY)

JAY rubs, about half of the rope frayed.

PAYNE and his posse are half way between JAY and the ROSS house.

CUT TO:

78 EXT - PORCH OF ROSS HOUSE - DAY - (SILAS)

SILAS runs around the building and onto the porch.

SILAS
John Ross!! Rose Ross!!

SILAS bangs on the wall and the door.

SILAS (CONT’D)
You need to leave this house ..
There are men coming here to kill you!

To the left of the door, a paper window - oiled and translucent.

Fingers rip a hole in the paper, and ROSE’s eye appears peeping at SILAS.

SILAS is struck by ROSE’s beauty - even just the small glimpse of an eye..
SILAS (CONT’D)
Rose..

Another burst in the paper window below the eye hole and a gun barrel seductively slides out
SILAS holds his hands up and takes a step back and another

SILAS (CONT’D)
Easy .. I’m a friend

ROSE’s eye moves, she was looking at SILAS, now her gaze shifts to something behind and to the left of SILAS
The barrel of the gun also shifts round away from SILAS
SILAS turns to see what ROSE now looks and aims at
It is VICTOR in the field. And he is aiming his rifle at SILAS

VICTOR shoots
SILAS is hit on the shoulder and falls to the ground
ROSE’s eye disappears from the hole on the paper window
SILAS struggles to his feet and scrambles round the left hand side of the house and falls
VICTOR quickly reloads
SILAS slumps against the wall of the house
VICTOR can still see SILAS’ legs sticking out
VICTOR shoots SILAS in the leg
SILAS gasps and shuffles along the wall so he is completely out of sight
VICTOR again reloads
The scarecrow, about twenty feet behind VICTOR, is made of a cross of wood, with a ragged coat and a large hat
VICTOR aims his rifle, waiting for SILAS to reappear
The scarecrow lifts its head and lowers its arms
It is PAYNE, now wearing the hat of the scarecrow
PAYNE casually walks towards VICTOR and shoots him in the back
VICTOR falls down dead
PAYNE takes aim high
He aims at the Native American weather vane that sits on top of the house.
PAYNE shoots, the vane pings and spins.
Settles WEST.
PAYNE is happy about this and turns to shout an order to his posse.

PAYNE
Kill that house!

The posse pop up from all around him, like whack-a-mole, Shooting up the house.

CUT TO:

EXT - TREE EDGE OF PLAIN - DAY - (JAY)

JAY stops rubbing and listens to the distant gun shots, starts to rub again faster than ever.

CUT TO:

INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

ROSE is crouched below the paper window, holding her pistol.
Gun shots explode from outside.
ROSE lifts herself up and looks out of the hole in the paper she made with the gun barrel.
Through the hole we see the posse pop up and down as they fire at the house.
KOTORI runs to ROSE and hauls her down from the window, just as a bullet explodes on the window frame inches from where ROSE was.
Dust and splinters rain down on ROSE and KOTORI.
The inside of the house is being peppered by bullets.
Bullets pepper the back wall. A lamp is smashed off the wall.

EXT - WHEAT FIELD - DAY

PAYNE stands still while his men pop up and down around him.
PAYNE takes his hat of his head and holds it against his chest in honor of the house near dead.
INT - INSIDE PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

Bullets whizz through the paper windows
Plates are smashed from the dresser

EXT - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

SILAS inspects his shoulder wound then his leg wound
BULLETS whizz by him, hitting the wall by his head, but SILAS does not flinch
In fact he smiles

INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

More objects smash
A glass bottle of water
A porcelain statue
A jug of milk
A book (Pilgrims Progress)
An apple on a shelf

EXT - TREE ON EDGE OF PLAIN - DAY

A few strands left then a snap as JAY breaks the rope and frees himself
He jumps up and runs towards the house

EXT - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

SILAS places a cigar in his mouth and digs into his pocket
He pulls out his last match which is used and dead
This upsets SILAS more than the whizzing bullets and bleeding wounds

INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

KOTORI moves to the door and brings down JOHN ROSS’s rifle, then bolts the door
ROSE sits under the window holding her pistol
Above ROSE a shadow of a large knife rests against the oiled paper

An eye appears at the hole - the eye of the CHINESE MAN - TATTOO MAN

The eye looks around the room, ROSE out of sight below him

TATTOO MAN walks along the porch to the door and tries the handle

Then passes along the porch to the other window

ROSE moves into the middle of the room

She aims at TATTOO MAN’S silhouette and fires

TATTOO’S bloody head bursts through the paper, and slides down, leaving a bloody snail trail

ROSE runs back to below the window and ducks down

EXT - MIDDLE OF PLAIN - DAY

JAY runs fast towards the house

EXT - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

POSSE member - THE KID - slinks around the corner where SILAS slumps, but does not see SILAS

THE KID loads his gun

Bullets from the shooters in the field spray the walls around him

THE KID
I’ll show em how to do the job
right - yes sir no sir three bags full of.. Shhh

THE KID finally notices SILAS, slumped, unarmed, unlit cigar hanging out of his mouth

THE KID lifts his gun

SILAS resigned to death

A bullet whizzes from the field, meant for the house but hits the KID in the back

THE KID slides down the wall and rests next to SILAS

Lets out his last breath
INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

The silhouette of PEYOTE JOE passes the far window on the opposite side of the house

KOTORI spots him

He’s heading for the back door

KOTORI moves towards the back door

The door opens and KOTORI fires, blasting PEYOTE JOE dead

JOE lies on the porch but immediate rigor mortis has frozen his hand to the handle of the door

KOTORI can’t shut the door with JOE attached to the handle

ROSE joins KOTORI and the pull the door

As the door closes JOE is dragged along the back porch until his trousers snag on a nail

ROSE and KOTORI heave the door shut and JOE’S trousers are pulled down

ROSE and KOTORI run back to their positions below the windows at the front of the house

EXT - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

SILAS roots through the pockets of THE KID and finds a box of matches

EXT - MIDDLE OF PLAIN - DAY

JAY running, slower due to exhaustion, gunfire getting louder as he nears the house

INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

The gunfire suddenly stops

KOTORI looks out of the window at the field

The field looks completely peaceful and empty (the remaining men are lying low)

It is a strange moment of quiet mid battle

ROSE sobs

KOTORI looks at ROSE, then moves to her, props his rifle next to her and walks towards the back door
ROSE turns

ROSE
Kotori!

ROSE thinks KOTORI is abandoning her, and slumps back down below the window

SILAS is slumped behind the wall to ROSE’s left

SILAS starts to sing and ROSE hears through the wall

SILAS (SINGS)
I shall be carried to the skies,
on flowery beds of ease

ROSE listens, half scared, half relieved SILAS is still alive

EXT - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

SILAS strikes a match and lights his cigar

SILAS
While others fight to win the prize and sail the bloody seas "Am I a Soldier of the cross?": Isaac Watts hymn

INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

The moment of calm ends as the remainder of PAYNE’s posse begin to shoot again

ROSE takes a second to compose herself, then empties the dead cartridges from her gun and reloads fresh bullets

EXT - RIGHT SIDE OF THE HOUSE - DAY

The reason the men have stared firing again is because they are firing at JAY, who has reached the house

JAY runs past the washing line, dodging the flying bullets, runs round the back of the house, past dead PEYOTE JOE, and in the back door

INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

ROSE finishes loading her gun, sees a figure (JAY) run into the room, and instinctively fires, hitting JAY in the heart

JAY sees that his love ROSE has just mistakenly shot him, reels back against the back wall and slumps down
ROSE does not recognise JAY, the last person she would expect to run through the door, and JAY’s face white with powder from the birch tree

ROSE has presumed he is another of PAYNE’S men

ROSE lifts herself up to look out of the window and starts firing the pistol towards the field, eyes shut, knowing she is unlikely to hit any of the shooters anyway

She fires the remaining round but keeps going and the empty chambers click click click

Behind her on the far wall slumps JAY, a bleeding hole by his heart

Blood drips out of his mouth

JAY tries to call out to ROSE but he cannot talk

ROSE slumps back down below the window but does not turn around

JAY looks over to her

KOTORI returns to the room

KOTORI, now shirtless, has brought arrows, strips of cloth paraffin.

He sits next to ROSE and hands her the rifle

ROSE places her hand on his

ROSE

Until civilisation arrives

KOTORI leans in and kisses ROSE on the cheek

JAY looks gutted

There is a shelf above JAY and on that shelf a jar – large letters – SALT

A bullet hits the jar, and salt pours down right into JAY’s wound

JAY winces in pain

KOTORI picks up his arrows and bow and walks out of the front door

ROSE cocks the rifle, looks out of the window and aims
EXT - FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY

KOTORI has wrapped cloth around the tips of the arrows. He dips them in paraffin and lights them, aims and fires them in the air.

The flaming arrow arcs and lands in the dry wheat.
The wheat quickly burns and the fire spreads rapidly.

ROSE keeps aiming out the window, waiting.

In seconds the whole field has lit up and the remainder of PAYNE’S posse have no choice but to run out.

From the smoke and flames runs THE MINSTREL, gun in one hand, banjo in the other.

ROSE fires, shooting him dead.

MARIMACHO appears, ROSE fires and shoots her dead.

SKELLY stands up, flames all around him, ROSE fires shooting him dead.

INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

ROSE turns, throws the rifle down and picks up her pistol, moves up and looks out of the window, sees KOTORI lying dead.

ROSE

Kotori

ROSE slumps back down below the window, this time facing JAY.

The smoke from the burning field clears giving ROSE a clear view of JAY.

She looks directly at JAY for the first time.

JAY tries to speak.

JAY (WHISPER)

Rose

ROSE sees JAY.

ROSE

Jay

JAY sheds a single tear.

ROSE, still with pistol in her hand, crosses the room towards JAY on her hands and knees.

JAY smiles at ROSE and places his hand on hers.
ROSE begins to softly cry

ROSE (CONT’D)

Jay

ROSE holds JAY’s hand and tries to smile through the grief

ROSE (CONT’D)

Silly boy

JAY tries to talk but cannot

Light has been streaming through the front door, but it turns to shadow, darkening the whole room

ROSE turns to look

PAYNE stands at the door

ROSE realises that PAYNE cannot see her gun from his line of sight

ROSE slowly cocks the gun as PAYNE talks

PAYNE

Turn around Rose

ROSE turns the gun around and places it in JAY’s hand

PAYNE (CONT’D)

It’s over

ROSE leans in to kiss JAY on the cheek, giving JAY a clear view of PAYNE

PAYNE lifts his gun to ROSE

PAYNE (CONT’D)

Doesn’t hurt

Before PAYNE can pull the trigger, JAY fires and PAYNE falls to his knees

PAYNE falls forward onto his hands and rolls onto his back, dead

JAY shuts his eyes and lets out his last gentle breath and dies

ROSE sobs and lowers her head

EXT - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

SILAS struggles to his feet
ROSE sits in front of JAY

SILAS hobbles in through the front door, and sees JAY lying dead

SILAS

Jay

SILAS slumps down on his knees next to ROSE

They both look at JAY and not at each other

SILAS removes his hat

SILAS (CONT’D)

He loved you with all his heart

ROSE

His heart was in the wrong place

SILAS

His spirit was true

JAY dead, we hold him for a beat

PAYNE dead and we hold on him for a beat

This is a quiet tableau vivant style montage of all the people that died on JAY’S journey to ROSE

SKELLY lies dead in the wheat field, blackened, burnt to a crisp

MARIMACHO lies dead on the grass

THE MINSTREL lies dead next to his banjo which now has a bullet hole in the skin

KOTORI lies dead on the grass next to his bow and arrows

THE KID lies dead next to the house

PEYOTE JOE lies dead at the back door, his hand still frozen to the door handle, his trousers pulled down snagged on the nail

TATTOO MAN lies dead below the front window, the snail train of dried blood on the wood

VICTOR the HAWK lies dead in the wheat field next to his long case and long gun

JOHN ROSS lies dead by the fence

MARIA THE SWEDER lies dead in the trading post
JOHAN lies dead in a pool of blood in the trading post

THE STOREKEEPER lies dead behind the counter in the trading post

The Indian slaying old OFFICER lies dead on the forest floor

The two young Indian slaying SOLDIERS lie dead on the forest floor

End of montage of the dead

EXT - PLAIN WITH PIONEER HOUSE SITTING PRETTY IN THE SUN

Slow track towards a double bed inside the pioneer house, where there was a single bed before

Slow track towards the kitchen table - ROSE brings the butter mold to the table, as the two SWEDISH KIDS (from the trading post, then Payne’s gang) play by the table

ROSE lifts the lid of the butter, but it still has not set and flows onto the table

Slow track towards the horse shoe that JOHN ROSS nailed above the door, that was then shot and fell upside down

A man’s hands appear, turn the horseshoe and hammers a nail in to hold it ‘lucky way up’

SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)
There is more to life than survival. Jay Cavendish taught me that. I owe him my life

We track back to see it is SILAS nailing up the horse shoe

SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)
Ho for the West

SILAS turns, exits frame, black screen

THE END