

PRODUCTION DRAFT: 1-15-14

TEXAS RANGERS

Night 1

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TEXAS RANGERS

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1 ESTABLISHING - OPEN PRAIRIE, TEXAS - DAY (HIGH SHOT) 1

MEN on horseback GALLOP through SWEEPING shots of Texas.

TIGHT STYLIZED SHOTS: Hooves... Guns... Boots in stirrups...
Frothing horses... Hats... Grizzled determined faces--

2 EXT. SKY ABOVE THE ALAMO - SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS - DAY 2

Black VULTURES circle a smoke filled sky, above the battered,
shell-blasted walls of the ALAMO mission.

A tattered war-torn TEXAS FLAG flutters...PAN TO a BLACK FLAG.

Only sounds: Faint BIRD SCREECHES, DOG YELPS, a prairie WIND
sweeping dust across DEAD FIGHTERS - more uniformed Mexican
soldiers than rough-hewn Texan patriots, clenched together,
clutching guns, swords, knives - on blood-drenched earth.

SUPERIMPOSE: MARCH 7, 1836 THE ALAMO

HIGH-STEPPING HOOVES pick their way among the dead, an elegant,
balletic dance of a magnificent WARHORSE, saddle gleaming with
silver, its rider's uniform glittering with medals & gold braid:

PRESIDENT GENERAL ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA, handsome, grandly
majestic conqueror, attended by subordinate OFFICERS, rides
toward the battle-scarred facade of the old mission - Halts,
watches as--

Mexican SOLDIERS drag dead Alamo defenders from dark doorways
of BARRACKS, STABLE STALLS, the shell-shattered CHURCH to--

A SMOKING TRENCH - TEXAN BODIES stacked atop BURNING WOOD.

Santa Anna takes in the devastation with satisfaction, glances
at a clutch of WOMEN & CHILDREN SURVIVORS, among them
CONCEPCION (30s), her TODDLER SON (later named "PEDRO") a dark-
skinned TEEN SLAVE and SUSANNA DICKINSON (18) who numbly rocks
her CRYING BABY.

Standing apart...EMILY WEST (20s), a sinewy mulatto (who
historically becomes The Yellow Rose of Texas), conceals her
beautiful face beneath the cowl of her cloak - Only her EYES
clearly visible in the cowl's shadow, flashing with alarm as--

TWO SWEATY SOLDIERS, their eyes battle-mad, drag the bleeding
body of another young black man, the defiant JUPITER (20s).

They push Jupiter against a bullet-pocked, blood-stained wall, next to TWO INJURED TEXAS REBELS, one who mumbles incoherently.

A DOG/WOLF YELPS, following Jupiter, his master. Intimidated by the soldiers and shell-shocked, the distinctive mutt skittishly draws back, continuing to bark at them.

COLONEL ALMONTE (30s) Santa Anna's handsome, conscientious protege, indicates the cloak-covered Emily and the survivors.

ALMONTE

We found the women hiding in the church crypt, your Excellency.

Beefy, mustached COL. PORTILLA (40s), gestures dismissively...

PORTILLA

Shoot them, Almonte.

Distracted, Santa Anna notices...

FOUR AWKWARD SOLDIERS trying to form a FIRING SQUAD twenty paces from the wounded men against the wall - There's muttered disagreement amongst the hesitant soldiers.

SANTA ANNA

What is the delay?

Santa Anna stays mounted as Almonte offers re: their captives--

ALMONTE

As prisoners-of-war, we could possibly exchange them for--

SANTA ANNA

(over, brusquely)

This is not a "civil war," Almonte. These men are pirates -

Before the men can answer, the General draws his beautifully engraved PISTOL - BAM! The middle Texan falls, the other one lets out an INVOLUNTARY CRY, and Jupiter's panicked eyes lock on Emily's. She covers her mouth to keep from crying out as Jupiter silently mouths, "Goodbye, sweet sister" as--

--the firing squad soldiers fumble with their weapons until--

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

FIRE!

THE RIFLE SHOT VOLLEY raises a cloud of smoke...but only ONE BULLET finds its mark, hitting the second Texan in the hip - He WAILS IN PAIN, but both he and Jericho remain alive. Off Santa Anna's look, Almonte apologizes for the inept firing squad...

ALMONTE
 Regrets, Excellency.
 (re: slovenly soldiers)
 Peasants and convicts, sir.

SANTA ANNA
 Pistols! Ready...

Portilla and Almonte get out pistols, the others reloading--

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
 FIRE!

A RAGGED VOLLEY OF SHOTS completely miss Jupiter but HIT the remaining wounded man, who collapses in the hail of bullets. Shocked to be unscathed, Jupiter begins to hyperventilate.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
 Incompetents! Portilla--

Off his general's nod, Portilla quickly draws his SABER, strides to the wall, SLICES THROUGH JUPITER'S TORSO then STABS him through the heart - Without hesitating, for good measure he does the same to the slumped bodies of the other two.

A MUFFLED GASP - It's EMILY easing behind her fellow captives, lest anyone see the tears streaming down her cheeks. Off her cry, Portilla panting, his saber dripping blood, turns toward Emily, the traumatized, splotch-faced young Susanna Dickinson & baby, Concepcion & Toddler, the Teen Slave and the others.

PORTILLA
 Shall I take care of them also?

SANTA ANNA
 Colonel Almonte - your opinion?

The Wolf/Dog whines, rushes to the dead Jupiter, licks his face as Almonte covers his distaste for Portilla's actions.

PORTILLA
 The doctor says the one with the baby is afflicted with measles.

Almonte turns from the survivors to Santa Anna.

ALMONTE
 Dispatch them to the rebels.

Santa Anna considers, smiles...

SANTA ANNA

Noted - Infect them as they regale their drunken General Houston with stories of our triumph - Splendid, Almonte, splendid!

He turns to Portilla with less evident affection.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Colonel Portilla, ride swiftly to General Urrea's battalion and order him to attack Fort Goliad without delay.

Colonel Portilla WIPES his BLOODY SABER on the sleeve of a soldier, sheathes it, salutes. Santa Anna guides Almonte away.

The Wolf/Dog stands guard over his dead master, now turning .defiantly to BARK at Santa Anna. Portilla scowls.

PORTILLA

Silence that dog!

OFFICERS start SHOOTING at the fleeing mutt who, scampering away, dodges the bullets and disappears in the brush.

Watching Santa Anna, Emily's cowl slips for an instant. Before she pulls it back, we see how BEAUTIFUL she is...and how much she HATES Santa Anna.

3 EXT. ALAMO (AND ENVIRONS) - DAY

3

From the BURNING FUNERAL PYRE...across the prairie... until we come to a stand of FOLIAGE some distance away...through which we see a SET OF PIERCING EYES the moment they BLINK.

Silhouette of A COMANCHE (BUFFALO HUMP, 27) War Leader of the Penateka, Southern-most and largest band of the Comanche Nation, mounted on an APPALOOSA HORSE, both perfectly camouflaged by the brush that surrounds them. His face painted black. Braids slick with bear grease. He wears only a breechclouth, his thick, scarred chest bare to the winds.

The Alamo's flames dancing in his glistening black eyes, Buffalo Hump studies the carnage in total silence.

4 EXT. PRAIRIE, SOUTH TEXAS - DAY

4

MEN ON HORSES ride the plain - TEXAS RANGERS on a scouting mission for the Army: VERN ELWOOD (40s), good looking, cruel, dangerous; GATOR DAVIS (30s) from Louisiana with long wiry hair and a drawl; MANUEL FLORES (20s) tracker and knife expert;

and BILLY ANDERSON (40s), who, though scruffily-bearded, wears an animal tooth necklace, his hair in braids and other Kiowa Indian accoutrements. Near the front, the perpetually hungry BEANS WILKINS (20s) gnaws on an ugly plug of something as they ride. Gator squints at it.

GATOR DAVIS

What the hell kinda jerky is that?

BEANS WILKINS

(chews, studies it)

Rattlesnake...I think. Whatsit matter? Ever'thang we eat turns to shit anyways.

The men chuckle. With tough resolve, Ranger veterans, barrel-chested HENRY KARNES (40s) and ERASTUS "DEAF" SMITH (50s), deaf and sick with consumption, lead the pack.

Karnes pulls out a pebble from a stash he keeps in a pocket to get his partner's attention. He tosses it, bouncing it off Deaf, who turns to Karnes in his gruff, high-pitched rasp:

DEAF SMITH

WHAT?

HENRY KARNES

When Houston was governor of Tennessee did he marry a young woman, abandon her after but a few days, light out for the territory, take up with a Cherokee squaw and stay drunk for five years?

Deaf removes his hat to wipe his sweat - Slaps the hat against his thigh in an expression of weariness and irritation.

DEAF SMITH

Don't know he was drunk every day.

HENRY KARNES

Why'd he leave his tender young wife and quit bein' governor?

DEAF SMITH

(mocking)

Those your words, Henry, "tender young wife?"

Embarrassed, Karnes looks away. The others chime in laughing.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)

Guess if she rejected him, I 'spect he felt compelled to - by Honor.

VERN ELWOOD

Did'ja hear she had the organs of a man?

BEANS WILKINS

Some say he attacked her unnatural--

GATOR DAVIS

I hear-tell he weren't capable to consummate--

MANUEL FLORES

Never heard that last.

DEAF SMITH

Y'all know I can't read your lips when you's turned away! Nobody knows what took place 'tween 'em. I know Sam Houston ain't never spoke a word a'gin her, nor allowed one spoke in his presence. What's that tell you?

The RANGERS look confounded.

HENRY KARNES

Reckon the same it tells you - But you get a grasp of things a way we can't sometimes, Erastus.

A scratch in his throat, Deaf COUGHS into a handkerchief, glances at a SPOT OF BLOOD on the white linen, stuffs it into a pocket.

DEAF SMITH

General Sam Houston is a better man than his detractors.

BEANS WILKINS

Then why ain't he leadin' the army to rescue our boys at the Alamo?

MANUEL FLORES

I'd wager he has some plan in mind.

GATOR DAVIS

Sure he does. Why else we on this scoutin' mission?

VERN ELWOOD

Houston don't know what he's doin'!

BILLY ANDERSON

It's called military tactics, Vern. The General's gotta know what's goin' on 'fore he does anything.

The youngest Rangers, YANCEY BURNS (18) and TRUETT FINCHAM (17) hang out together. Yancey acts more worldly than he is. Truett's excited to be here but complains like an old hand.

TRUETT FINCHAM

We still get two bits a day if we workin' for the Army?

YANCEY BURNS

Rangers don't work for the Army, we work with the Army.

Wry by nature, Gator Davis smirks at the distinction.

GATOR DAVIS

S'right. They don't give us orders, they offer "recommendations 'n suggestions."

HENRY KARNES

Son - I give you a "suggestion," by God, you best know it's a damn order.

VERN ELWOOD

Be a long time a'fore you get paid anything, kid. Texas ain't got no money - Least not til we run the bean eaters out. No offense, Flores. You's a good bean eater.

Flores is getting tired of Vern's slurs...

MANUEL FLORES

Just like gringos - There's good, bad ...then there's hoopsacks like you, Vern.

THE POUNDING OF APPROACHING HOOFBEATS interrupt as we see...

KIT ACKLIN

SMOKE! I seen smoke!

The Rangers' best horseman, dashing young KIT ACKLIN rides in fast OVER A RISE, rears his horse back at the top and points:

KIT ACKLIN (CONT'D)

Over there! 'Bout 20 miles away!

Deaf and Karnes ride to the crest of the rise to meet Kit, Deaf gets out his his TELESCOPE for a better view--

ANGLE - Overlooking the miles of open prairie, wisps of SMOKE rise in the distance, BUZZARDS circling over the unseen Alamo.

HENRY KARNES

The Alamo?... DEAF, THE ALAMO--

Not hearing him, Deaf adjusts his spy glass, doesn't respond.

5 DEAF SMITH'S SPYGLASS POV - ABOVE DISTANT ALAMO (CONTINUOUS)

MOVING ACROSS THE HORIZON UNTIL ...a MEXICAN FLAG snaps INTO FOCUS, fluttering and next to that...the BLACK FLAG.

BACK TO SCENE (CONTINUING)

DEAF SMITH
Sonofabitch! Henry--

He passes the telescope, but Karnes, looking another direction, nudges Deaf to turn his way and grabs the telescope to see...

6 EXT. WAGON ROAD - IN THE DISTANCE - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 6

FOUR MEXICAN DRAGOONS GALLOPING... INDIAN WARRIORS giving chase. The Dragoons, escorting several Alamo survivors in a HORSE-DRAWN WAGON, leave the wagon behind, fleeing for their lives.

Braves waylay them, cut the horses loose from the wagon where the terrified Emily West, Susanna Dickinson cradling her baby, heavysset Concepcion and her Toddler Son huddle together, while the other Indians continue after the four Mexicans on horses.

INTERCUT - THE RANGERS & THE ATTACKING INDIANS

DEAF SMITH
What the hell...?

THE INDIANS

Tall, muscled, half-naked bodies glistening with smeared Alligator grease, sun-burned hair, faces painted half-red and half-white - They run down the panicked Mexican Dragoons and surround them.

THE TEXAS RANGERS - Karnes offers Anderson the telescope--

--but Indian expert Anderson doesn't need the spy glass to know what's going on as the younger Rangers swallow their fear...

BEANS WILKINS
They ain't Comanches, is they?

BILLY ANDERSON
Karankawas - Awful far inland but no mistakin' them.

GATOR DAVIS
Thought they's all kill't off.

INTERCUT - The VIOLENT CHAOTIC FIGHT between the Dragoons and Karankawas, who, despite the Mexicans' defensive GUNFIRE, KILL ALL FOUR DRAGOONS with their handmade weapons without a single Indian seriously injured. The Rangers react--

VERN ELWOOD

Renegades. Only 18 redskins, so
we got 'em badly outnumbered...

Truett scrunches up his face, counts on his fingers - Perplexed at how their 10 Rangers can be more than the 18 Indians.

YANCEY BURNS

Then, hell, let's go be heroes.

BEANS WILKINS

S'long as they ain't Comanches.

Karnes trains the telescope back on the wagon, where the women have been left stranded. Karnes' expression turns grim -

HENRY KARNES

Erastus, the woman with the baby...
That's Almaron Dickinson's wife--

All but young Truett know what that means - He looks to Flores.

MANUEL FLORES

Artillery Captain, at the Alamo.

DEAF SMITH

(a nod at distant smoke)
Santanistas raised the black flag.

A somber beat - THE ALAMO IS LOST. Muttered prayers & curses. Flores crosses himself, Gator and Beans remove their hats.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)

Gator head back... inform Houston
of the fate of the Alamo.

GATOR DAVIS

Best I stay 'n soldier up with you.

HENRY KARNES

Like Hell... The news is no use to
Houston if we all dead... Don't
dawdle, don't get yourself kill't.
The future of Texas is at stake!

Focused on the attack, Deaf REACTS as...

INTERCUT - THE INDIANS - At least six braves RIDE BACK TO THE WAGON, where the women huddle - A distinctive WAR-PAINTED BRAVE (a CANE SHAFT pierced through his chin, his sun-burnt hair nearly blond) arrives first, tries to pull Concepcion's crying Toddler Son away from her, then--

--THRUSTS HIS SPEAR into CONCEPCION who falls...dead - Her Toddler SCREAMS.

DEAF SMITH
(sotto voce)
That cuts it.

He SLAPS his horse with his hat, takes off, triggering--

7 EXT. PRAIRIE, SOUTH TEXAS (VARIOUS) - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 7

--THE TEXAS RANGERS CHARGE!

WAR WHOOPS, BATTLE CRIES, KIOWA YELPS, and REBEL YELLS from our heroes tearing down the rise to save the Alamo survivors!

Gator hesitates watching his compadres attack, then, with a breathless curse, turns around and GALLOPS OFF the opposite way.

A FEW HUNDRED YARDS AWAY FROM THE WAGON - THE OTHER 12 BRAVES look up from scavenging and SCALPING the murdered Mexicans--

They swiftly conclude their bloody work and hop back on their horses in a pell-mell dash to intercept the charging Rangers.

THE BATTLE - A SWIRL OF FURIOUS ACTION on multiple fronts...

THE RANGERS sweep down on the SIX BRAVES AT THE WAGON - Deaf draws first blood, SHOOTING a Karankawa attempting to abduct the hysterical Susanna Dickinson and her baby.

Seeing them coming, the Painted Brave who killed Concepcion, grabs her TODDLER, secures the squealing child to his horse, TAKES OFF--

YANCEY & TRUETT react to the Painted Brave riding away with the kidnapped toddler and rein their horses around to go after him.

Pistol in his left hand, BILLY ANDERSON THROWS A TOMAHAWK with his right hand that SMACKS into the forehead of a Karankawa ripping the cloak off EMILY WEST, who's valiantly been fighting back--

Emily tosses her ripped cloak aside to reveal the shapely beauty she's been covering up - She picks up a RIFLE dropped by a dead Dragoon, FIRES, then uses it like a club to fend off Karankawas.

To avoid an onslaught of arrows, expert horseman KIT swings down alongside his horse's body, hooking one foot & one hand on the saddle to keep himself suspended, riding sideways--

VERN wields a double-barrelled SCATTERGUN BLASTING a Karankawa off his horse - Then BLASTS him once more for good measure.

HENRY KARNES

Dismount... FIRE!

Rangers FIRE rifles and pistols - Swing off their horses to re-load and prime their single-shot, muzzle-loading muskets, forming a defensive semi-circle around the wagon to protect the surviving two women and baby.

A WHIRLWIND OF DUST arises from the battleground as now...

THE TWELVE KARANKAWAS from the Mexican Dragoon chase stampede in, SHOOTING ARROWS from their six foot long-bows. Karnes, Vern, Kit and Beans swing their weapons around to greet them--

The Rangers' BARRAGE OF GUNFIRE knocks two braves off their horses which REAR UP on hind legs and BUCK while the rest of the braves continue fighting - ONE OF THE HORSES TOPPLES, rolling sideways onto its Karankawa rider when--

KIT swiftly SMACKS the Indian with his gun butt, JUMPS ONTO the downed struggling horse - Getting control, Kit jerks the horse upright, rears it up like the Lone Ranger and continues fighting.

Karnes' pistol SIZZLES AND MISFIRES, he pivots and ducks just in time as an arrow flies straight at him. The ARROW PIERCES KARNES' ARM, leaving him helpless while the Karankawa raises a lance to finish him off--

--ANOTHER ARROW SLAMS into the Indian's neck... Karnes looks up to see who saved him - REVEAL THE ARCHER: Billy Anderson.

MANUEL FLORES gets surprised when a Karankawa swings a knife while LEAPING from his horse to tackle him off his mount.

The Indian and the Tejano Ranger topple to the ground - Flores, the better knife-fighter, GUTS the grappling Indian--

--then FLIPS the knife around his back to surprise a second attacker twelve feet behind. The shocked Karankawa gapes at the knife in his belly, dies. Flores retrieves his dagger.

The remaining Karankawas scatter and retreat as--

--VERN REPEATEDLY PUMMELS an Indian's face with a rock. Perversely enjoying it, until the face is obliterated and BLOOD has splattered all over Vern's face as well. Kit rides over to grab his friend's arm - Vern looks insane, but stops.

The situation stabilized, Deaf narrows his eyes at his two teenage Rangers chasing down the kidnapper - Heels his horse towards--

8 EXT. PRAIRIE, SOUTH TEXAS - ARROYO - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 8

YANCEY & TRUETT - SOME DISTANCE AWAY - The young Rangers FIRE their single shot weapons, ineptly try to re-load on the run.

Looking back, THE PAINTED BRAVE sees his advantage, wheels his horse around to face them, HURLS his WAR CLUB into Yancey's chest, KNOCKING him off his horse, sending his gun flying the other way.

The Painted Brave makes a scary KEENING NOISE through a hideous grin, taking his time to pull an arrow for his long-bow to kill the panicked Truett, frantically trying to re-load his pistol.

DEAF - STILL OVER A HUNDRED YARDS AWAY - He sees what's happening, jerks his horse to a stop, whips out his Hawken long rifle as--

THE PAINTED BRAVE pulls back his bow, aiming his arrow at Truett--

YANCEY, recovering on the ground, sees his friend about to be killed, scrambles towards his dropped gun several yards away--

Truett fumbles his re-load, desperately swings his handgun up to--

SHOOT WILDLY IN THE AIR...at the same time that Deaf Smith FIRES his long rifle from dozens of yards away, a dead-eye shot that--

--HITS THE PAINTED BRAVE, knocking him to the ground, causing his arrow to SWOOSH wide of its mark.

Both Truett and Yancey think its Truett's shot that hit, not seeing their Captain in the distance. Deaf re-scabbards his rifle and nudges his horse toward them. Truett looks from his gun to his dead, would-be killer on the ground, can't believe it...

TRUETT FINCHAM

I... I... got him.

YANCEY BURNS

Dang, boy, nice shot! I thought you was a goner.

Deaf catches the Painted Brave's mustang, to which the CRYING TODDLER is strapped, trots over with it, nods at the dead Indian.

DEAF SMITH

Take the scalp.

TRUETT FINCHAM

Don't need some stinky Injun pelt to prove what I done here.

YANCEY BURNS

C'mon, Truett, your first kill.
You earned it!

DEAF SMITH

Hush up - Ain't for him. It's for the
young'un. So when he grows up he'll
have a reminder that justice was done on
the devil what kill't his mama

The crying Toddler reaches out his tiny arms towards Deaf.

YANCEY BURNS

Cut it loose, Captain. It's of a
mind for you to hold it.

Deaf cuts the braided rope with his knife to free the Toddler from
the horse. Distastefully holds the crying child at arms-length.

TRUETT FINCHAM

Rock him, Cap'n.

YANCY BURNS

Say comforting words.

Still keeping the kid away from his body, Deaf lightly jiggles it.

DEAF SMITH

We kill't the savage, so shut up
with that infernal bawlin'.

Amazingly, the child STOPS CRYING, fixating on the rough-hewn man
holding him. Satisfied, Deaf sets him down on the saddle in front
of him - grabs his reins and tosses the knife to Truett.

They watch Deaf go - Turn to the Brave on the ground. Truett
stares, the last thing he wants to do. Yancey takes the knife.

YANCEY BURNS

I'll do it. You done the killin'.
(goes to Brave, turns)
You do realize I would'a shot him
if you hadn't - 'Course you'd a'had
an arrow through your heart.

He stoops to start his scalping, assures a benumbed Truett:

YANCEY BURNS (CONT'D)

But I would'a avenged ya.

9 EXT. PRAIRIE, SOUTH TEXAS - BY WAGON - DAY (CONTINUING) 9

Emily pours water from Karnes' canteen onto a cloth to wipe
and dab Susanna Dickinson's red-spotted face. The mother
lies on the wagon bed, next to her Toddler and the lifeless,
slumped-over body of Concepcion. Anderson crosses to Karnes.

HENRY KARNES

Good fortune for me you's handy
with that bow.

BILLY ANDERSON

Yep. Looks like you forgot to duck.

He BREAKS OFF the arrow head poking out Karnes's arm - Karnes grimaces as Anderson, then pulls the stick on out. Strained--

HENRY KARNES

I did duck, jus' slowin' down in my
old age... if not, this pig sticker
woulda ended up in my chest.

Anderson tends to Karnes' wound as the others re-gather. The sadistic Vern is feeling the rush of battle...

VERN ELWOOD

YEEHHA! 'JA SEE THAT!... WHOOOEEE!
Don't know what I likes more
killin' Redskin Squaw Hoppers or
Mexicoon Chili-Shitters.

Vern winks at Flores, who seethes with anger. Kit scowls.

KIT ACKLIN

Quit your yammerin'. You ain't
normal, Vern.

Emily's tending to the traumatized Susanna Dickinson and baby--

EMILY WEST

She's feverish! Needs doctorin'!

DEAF SMITH

Beans, you handle this one.

He hands him Concepcion's Toddler, shielding the child's eyes.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)

Don't let him looksee his mama.

BILLY ANDERSON

Hate ta hafta leave her here - But
we got no time for a proper burial.

GATOR DAVIS

Why cain't the women 'n childrens
ride in the wagon?

HENRY KARNES

Leavin' it with the horses.

Truett and Yancey ride back, the Karankawa mustangs in tow.

DEAF SMITH
Leave the Injun mustangs, too.

YANCEY BURNS
What for?

DEAF SMITH
Them.

Deaf indicates a distant rise on which TWENTY SILHOUETTED INDIANS ON HORSEBACK (not Karankawas) look down on them.

BILLY ANDERSON
Reckon you boys oughta polish your
observin' skills.

BEANS WILKINS
COMANCHES! I knew they's doggin' us--

DEAF SMITH
Let's go. Gator, you had measles
last fall - Saddle her with you.
(re: Susanna Dickinson)
Flores, you take the baby with the
pretty nigra lady.

HENRY KARNES
You heard the Captain. Leave the goods
and move on out - Nice 'n easy.

The Rangers move out, as, in the far b.g. BEHIND THEM...
THE WOLF-DOG (that belonged to Jupiter), hiding in the
sagebrush, ventures out and follows at a safe distance.

BILLY ANDERSON
I best lay back a bit as to show
'em no fear... Y'all go on - Git.

Anderson makes a show of moving slowly, locking eyes with...

A LINE OF COMANCHE WARRIORS (approx. 10) ON THE HORIZON

Fierce. Ominous. Even scarier than the war-painted Karankawas.

FAVOR THEIR LEADER: BUFFALO HUMP - Wearing a hide cape topped
by a Buffalo Head-dress, replete with horns. The young chief
watches the Rangers ride away, leaving their offerings.

10 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES - DAY 10

ESTABLISHING the campsite of the VOLUNTEER ARMY. Frontier, cowboy and civilian attire, few real uniforms, a DELEGATION OF OFFICERS impatiently mill by the Commander's tent.

11 INT. SAM HOUSTON'S TENT, ARMY CAMP - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 11

An impressive bear of a man, SAM HOUSTON, 1812 War Veteran, former Tennessee Governor, Indian fighter and honorary Cherokee Indian, periodic alcoholic, and now Commander of the Texas Army, stands SHIRTLESS, his BACK TO US - Battle SCARS visible, notably deep indentations on his upper right arm and a particularly nasty GASH ON HIS RIGHT SHOULDER, made by musket balls over twenty years ago. Droop-mustached DOC EWING (50s) wears a brass-chained monocle to examine and try to treat the agitated and restless General's wounds--

DOC EWING

Gotta get your rest, Sam. You're so peak'ed ya look like Death eatin' a cracker.

SAM HOUSTON

I have a motley, rag-tag, mutinous army of untrained, undisciplined, ill-equipped soldiers...and not enough of 'em - That's why I can't sleep!

DOC EWING

You got this wound twenty-some-odd years ago and it still festers?

SAM HOUSTON

(distracted)

Huh? Yeah, 1814, Battle of Horseshoe Bend - Musket balls. Got a Redstick arrow in the groin there, too, less than an inch from my manhood, but thanks to the Great Spirit that part remained unmarred.

DOC EWING

(operates tweezers)

Looks like chips of splintered bone still workin' their way out.

SAM HOUSTON

(back to rant)

I ordered Bowie and Travis to blow up the Alamo and abandon it--

DOC EWING
 (concentrated on wound)
 Can't imagine what a trial it must
 be to live with this--

Colonel GEORGE HOCKLEY (50s), Houston's tense, always-worried
 confidant & advisor, enters the tent.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
 Sir, they're still waiting to see you.

A weary sigh, Houston rubs his sleep-deprived eyes - selects
 his clothes - a Cherokee hunting shirt, a red sash and an armor-
 like buckle - Raises his voice for the men outside to hear...

SAM HOUSTON
 Here to be seen seeing me, if it's
 Mosely Baker and Sidney Sherman!

Through the canvas, an angry interjection...

MOSELY BAKER (O.C.)
 A delegation come to say attack
 them Mexicans now and find out why
 the hell we ain't!

SAM HOUSTON
 Then, by God, I reckon you better come
 on in this instant if not sooner.

Keeping his back to the entrance, Houston steps to a wooden
 bucket, unbuttons his pants as Hockley offers apologetically--

GEORGE HOCKLEY
 There's Juan Seguin, too.

When the DELEGATION enters, Houston's PISSING IN THE BUCKET.

SAM HOUSTON
 With due regard to the urgency of
 your call, I hope you don't mind my
 answering a call of my own.

The men react as Houston finishes and continues getting dressed.

JUAN SEGUIN
 Only curious what the plan is,
 General.

SAM HOUSTON
 I sent Deaf Smith and his Rangering
 company to spy on Santa Anna's
 whereabouts. Until we hear back,
 be damn stupid to fix on any plan.

He washes his hands in a basin of water under the mirror.
 Beefy, sour-faced MOSELY BAKER (40s) and aristocratic,
 blustery COLONEL SIDNEY SHERMAN (50s) come ready for a fight.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

Only one plan...ATTACK THE ALAMO!

SAM HOUSTON

Colonel Sherman, I believe you know
 better than to address me as if I
 am some dumb sonofabitch.

JUAN SEGUIN

General Houston, please, we must
 mobilize immediately. Travis
 cannot hold out much longer...

SIDNEY SHERMAN

Certainly, it's not your intention
 to ABANDON them?

JUAN SEGUIN

Sir, I promised my Tejano amigos I
 would return to fight. It's what
 Davy Crockett's promising to keep
 their spirits hopeful.

SAM HOUSTON

How many are we, Don Juan?

JUAN SEGUIN

374, by this morning's count, some
 are invalid, and not all have rifles.

SAM HOUSTON

And, George, what of our supplies?

GEORGE HOCKLEY

Beans and no meat for two days and
 we're well short of powder and shot.

JUAN SEGUIN

Jim Bowie is with fever, General. I
 plead for their sake.

SAM HOUSTON

(to group)

You think we ought to attack 5,000
 well-trained, rested and fed Mexican
 veterans, entrenched around San
 Antonio and supported by artillery?

MOSELY BAKER

We got the element of surprise.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

Doesn't matter a damn how many they are. They're only Mexicans, after all.

Seguin FLARES at the insult, yanks off his gloves - Houston places a hand on his arm to stop him from striking Sherman.

SAM HOUSTON

You're a fool. I should let Seguin cut your throat...

JUAN SEGUIN

General, what of Colonel Fannin's relief column? He was sending over 500 men and four artillery cannons-

SAM HOUSTON

George, tell them about our heroic, West Point-trained Colonel Fannin.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

Fannin was on his way to the Alamo when two wagons broke down betwixt-'n-between... so he changed course and turned back to Goliad.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

All the more reason we need to reinforce Travis!

Disgusted, Houston clips and lights a cigar.

MOSELY BAKER

So, goddammit Sam, what the hell you gonna do?

SAM HOUSTON

I'll tell you what I'm NOT gonna do: I will NOT sacrifice my army and the outcome of this war by charging pell-mell into Mexican lances! I will NOT fight Santa Anna the way HE wants us to fight!

The men are silenced by his fury. Houston takes a beat to gather himself, then, levelly...

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, we are a new Republic, struggling for our independence from an oppressive regime, just as our noble forefathers had to scrap for their liberty from the bloody British over a half-century ago.

(MORE)

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Stephen Austin had the right idea forming his rough 'n ready Ranging Companies. Deaf Smith and his Rangers are OUR "Minutemen". We should be fighting this war like George Washington: speed with mobility, pounce on the enemy, fall back and live to fight another day.

(puffs on cigar)

As your commander, I will choose when the day is right.

(blows cigar smoke)

Now that you've been elucidated, GET THE HELL OUT!

Admonished, the men leave the tent. Houston pulls Juan Seguin aside in a sincere moment.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Don Juan, if it means anything, I can't sleep at night because your amigos call out to me in my dreams.

12 EXT. DEAF SMITH HOMESTEAD - DAY 12

Deaf rides in hard to his simple prairie home.

13 INT. DEAF SMITH HOMESTEAD - DAY 13

Deaf's wife GUADALUPE SMITH (40s), a strong, capable Mexican woman, lights a candle before SAINT THOMAS - Off the DOOR OPENING, she turns from the painted saint to see Deaf, rain-soaked, framed in the doorway, stifling a COUGH...

DEAF SMITH

I ain't back, Guadalupe. Not yet.

She goes to kiss him, taken aback by how sickly he appears.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)

I gotta take the buckboard. On account 'a two women 'n a coupla younguns that's lived through a slaughter at the Alamo 'n need medical doctorin'. I raced ahead. They's a coupla miles back yonder.

GUADALUPE SMITH

Let them stay here, I'll nurse them and you. You are too sick to fight.

Guadalupe throws a reproachful glance at the Saint figurine with a MUTTERED SPANISH ADMONISHMENT for not answering her prayers. Deaf gently puts his hands on her shoulders...

DEAF SMITH

Lo siento, mi amorita - fightin's
only way we got to win this war.
(kisses her forehead)
I'll be back 'fore you know it.

He EXITS - Guadalupe sees the blood-stained handkerchief sticking out Deaf's pocket, hurries to a chest of drawers - Tears streaking her cheeks, she jerks open a drawer, pushes clothes aside, and seizes a STACK OF HANDKERCHIEFS.

14 EXT. DEAF SMITH HOMESTEAD - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 14

Guadalupe runs outside. Deaf is patting his horse.

DEAF SMITH

Ol' Charmaine's tuckered but done
me proud today. Give her a good
feed 'n waterin'...

He climbs on the buckboard, Guadalupe offers the kerchiefs.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)

Lupe, I got plenty linen.

But he takes one of the handkerchiefs to sweetly wipe her tears. Then stuffs the rest inside his shirt - Smiles thanks. He slaps the reins, COUGHS and moves off...

GUADALUPE SMITH

Drink your cough elixir!

15 INT. DEAF SMITH HOMESTEAD - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 15

WEEPING - Guadalupe re-enters to snatch the Saint, crosses to the stove to THRUST THE ICON into the smouldering coals - Punishing Saint Thomas for being lax in his spiritual duty.

16 INT. COMANCHE LODGE (TEEPEE) - DAY 16

Across from Buffalo Hump sits MAGUARA (57), the "Spirit Talker", balding, mystic CHIEF of the Comanche Nation.

BUFFALO HUMP

(In Comanche, subtitled)
My heart tells me it is time for war.

MAGUARA

*And the words of peace I spoke with
Stephen Austin should mean nothing?*

BUFFALO HUMP

*Santa Anna turned against his white
children--Austin's words will die
with him.*

MAGUARA consults with the other elders.

MAGUARA

*Take one war party - and tell us
what comes to pass between the
Mexicans and whites.*

BUFFALO HUMP

*My Chief...why not fight them now,
while they are both bleeding?*

MAGUARA

*When one is dead, and the other lies
bleeding, you will have your war.*

Buffalo Hump acquiesces to their will. The Chiefs rise, and begin to leave. Maguara reaches out to Buffalo Hump.

MAGUARA (CONT'D)

*Teach my grandson, Piakini, the
warrior's way, but protect him from
himself while he learns it.*

BUFFALO HUMP

I can think of no greater honor.

MAGUARA

*You may show the Mexicans and
Tejanos our power, but DO NOT draw
their blood.*

17

EXT. NEAR ALAMO, TEXAS - DAY

17

EXTREME CLOSE-UPS: FLIES BUZZING over SCATTERED BODIES, as...

A PEASANT leads a donkey dragging some burden behind, SINGING:

GRINNING PEASANT

*"En la mas deliciosa - Y mas poblada
aldea De la feliz Arcadia residia--"*

Halts the mule by the BURIAL PIT, unties the rope about the ankles of what could be DAVID CROCKETT's bloodied CORPSE - Wearing a coonskin cap, the body's dumped into the pit of corpses.

A SLOVENLY MEXICAN SOLDIER

Shifting his rifle from one shoulder to the other, watches the minion work, idly practices smoking tricks - sucking smoke from nostrils to mouth, blowing smoke rings...

THE GRAVE PIT smolders from a FIRE TO BURN THE BODIES - At a far edge of the pit, a WRIST lay on a fiery cross-beam, FLESH SIZZLING...the WEATHERED HAND, caked with blood...TWITCHES.

SOMEONE in this pyre of death hasn't died yet...REACHING UP, the WRIST is freshly burned with a RAGGED "X" from hot coals.

SLOVENLY MEXICAN SOLDIER
*Dios Mio, your singing hurts my head
worse than a night of bad tequila.*

--A SHADOWY FIGURE, silhouetted in the smoke, ARISES from the pit -

FLAMES now blazing behind him, the silhouetted figure holds a KNIFE - THUMP! The Soldier's eyes go wide, his last word a GUTTURAL GASP. The Peasant freezes, gets his throat SLASHED.

THE SURVIVOR dumps the bodies in the pit, HIS EYES transfixed on OTHER BODIES: A MOTHER, FATHER, YOUNG BOY and YOUNG GIRL.

FULLY REVEAL THE SURVIVOR: LORCA (60s) - C.U. HIS HAUNTED FACE, scarred, grizzled, tough - His eyes have gone mad.

18 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, TEXAS - DAY

18

MEXICAN OFFICERS YELL ORDERS - THE TROOPS BREAK CAMP.

Santa Anna, accompanied by Almonte, walks along THREE CAGES of his fighting ROOSTERS, which are loaded onto the back of a wagon.

SANTA ANNA
When I was your age, my first
campaign was in Texas, serving with
General Arredondo, who put down a
rebellion much like this one.

He opens a cage, removes a FIGHTING COCK, thumbs the comb on the bird's head, peers into its wild eyes.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
I call this bird "Arredondo." He's
never known defeat. Look at his
eyes, Almonte - they're quite mad.

He hands the rooster to Almonte, who holds it uncomfortably as all around them, the troops organize, ready to march.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
 General Arredondo slaughtered over
 a thousand American pirates and
 rebel Tejanos over twenty years ago-
 (gets a small SILVER CUP)
 --then left their corpses to rot in
 the field unburied for nine years,
 for all to see...and smell.

He places the silver cup on a sliding board beside the cage door as SOLDIERS, in their colorful uniforms, march past in formation, an ARTILLERY UNIT wheeling out a HUGE CANNON.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
 Arredondo tortured his prisoners
 before he shot them - Then executed
 the rebels' families and burned
 their homes to the ground.

He dismissively nods to passing OFFICERS saluting him, takes a SILK KERCHIEF from his uniform jacket, carefully unfolds it-

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
 We left all of Texas cloaked in
 tears and ashes as a warning to
 who'd ever again dare to raise
 their hand against Mother Mexico.

--to REVEAL a small STRAIGHT RAZOR with an ivory handle.
 Santa Anna flips the razor open - Gestures with it.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
 At the time, some of us young
 officers thought the General too
 ruthless; too unnecessarily cruel.

He turns his wrist to examine it in the sunlight - Dozens of tiny white scars run cross-ways over the vein.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
 We who marched with Arredondo know
 now that we were wrong - He was not
 harsh enough.
 (CUTS a vein, grimaces)
 My toughest battle will be against my
 own natural inclination to show mercy.

Santa Anna holds his wrist to allow the blood to stream into the silver cup, turns to Almonte. Smiles.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
 I will win that battle.

Santa Anna places the razor on the little shelf of the cage and wraps his wrist in the kerchief, stopping the bleeding.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
I will win it for YOU--

He takes the cup of blood and holds it out to the rooster, who dips its beak to feed on Santa Anna's blood.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
--so twenty years from now you'll NOT have to lead your sons north to fight this war AGAIN because Santa Anna, like Arredondo before him, was not man enough to win it once and for all.
(re: blood-drinking cock)
I share my blood with him. He's a good warrior, but he must be a great warrior.

ALMONTE
Does that... does the blood... make him stronger?

SANTA ANNA
We'll see - Only a select few can become champions. Take this one--

Replacing "Arredondo", he un-cages and holds a 2ND FIGHTING COCK, this one injured, an eye blinded. Santa Anna soothes it, smirking--

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
He loves tequila but rejects my blood, I call him "General Houston"

--which amuses him. He holds what's left in the silver cup up to the Second Cock...which turns away from the offered blood.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
See? No matter how you train it or dress it up, it's a common chicken--

With a sudden SHAKE of his wrist he SNAPS off the bird's head at the neck, drops it.

Almonte covers his reaction as Santa Anna smiles--

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
--and chickens lose their heads.

Almonte hands him a cloth to wipe his hands. GROOMS bring Santa Anna and Almonte their horses.

19 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES - LATE DAY 19

HORSE HOOVES POUNDING, Gator races into the camp, yelling...

GATOR DAVIS

The Alamo's fallen! Santa Anna's taken
the Alamo! The Alamo's lost!

Volunteers and Army soldiers react - The BUZZ spreads through the camp like a wave. His horse in a lather, Gator rides towards--

THE ARMY COMMANDER'S TENT - GENERAL SAM HOUSTON

Stepping from his tent, Houston hears Gator's news - Stands motionless a moment - Then turns to walk away, making sure his men see only his back as he stares off into the distance.

20 EXT. CAGE PLANTATION, YAZOO COUNTY, MISSOURI - NIGHT 20

A traditional Southern plantation estate. Trees sway with hanging Spanish moss. A FINE-BLOODED HORSE tied to a post.

JACK HAYS (PRELAP)

"Come to Texas! Come with a good
rifle. Liberty or death."

21 INT. PLANTATION HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 21

A southern meal with all the fixings - A HOUSE SLAVE serves dinner. Red-faced, white-haired ROBERT CAGE (60s) lectures:

ROBERT CAGE

Pipe dreams! Foolish adventures,
lost causes! I won't allow it!
You're not suited for that sort of
rough life, Jack, I promised your
father I'd look after you--

JOHN COFFEE "JACK" HAYS (20), despite his innocent good looks and unassuming, demeanor, is a natural Alpha male. He takes the rebuke levelly, flashes the TEXAS HANDBILL he was reading aloud.

JACK HAYS

A new country, Uncle - A wild frontier.
They need men like me to tame it.

(reads from flyer)

"The usurper of the South has failed
in his efforts to enslave the free men
of Texas. Our wives and daughters
must be saved from the brutality of
Santa Anna and his Mexican Army."

ROBERT CAGE

This is nonsense.

(grabs HANDBILL)

At the mercantile store in Yazoo,
you will learn business, see your
sister properly married, and secure
a future for your brother--

Jack's siblings, EMMETT (9) & MARY (11), watch the exchange.

JACK HAYS

That's not what I am destined to do!
As we speak, David Crockett's leading
his Tennessee volunteers to San
Antonio de Bexar to fight that despot
Santa Anna - I should be with them!

Over his expensive clothes, Jack wears a long "Bowie" knife on
his belt and a pair of long-barrelled pistols cross his stomach.

ROBERT CAGE

Those new pistols you wear, the knife,
that blooded horse outside, you look like
a Georgia lawyer going to a chicken fight.

Jack's face darkens - Tossing his napkin, he stands, bolts to
the door. Regretting his words, his worried uncle follows--

22

EXT. PLANTATION HOUSE - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

22

Jack bursts out the door to where his fine Tennessee gelding
is tied, saddlebags already packed, his uncle right behind.

ROBERT CAGE

Jack, why are you running off like
this? You get drunk and kill a man?

JACK HAYS

I'd've brought you a scalp if I had.

ROBERT CAGE

Have you gambling debts? Do you have
some girl in a motherly way?
(off Jack's headshakes)
You're heading out to WAR!

Jack checks his gear as Cage sighs, tries a different tack.

ROBERT CAGE (CONT'D)

Dammit, Jack, you expect too much of
yourself. That's what killed your father.

A chord struck, Jack pauses in his packing, low and intense--

JACK HAYS
I promised Pa I'd make a name for
myself.

ROBERT CAGE
But you cannot...

Jack cuts him off as his young brother and sister run out,
pursued by the House Servant - Forthright, mind made up...

JACK HAYS
Never doubt my gratitude, Uncle, for all
you've done - For Emmett, Mary and me.
(crosses to kids)
Do what Uncle Robert tells you. He's a
decent man. Learn your cypherin.
(to Emmett)
And don't you be testing your knife
under the bannister no more.

He hugs Emmett, but his little sister runs back in the house.

ROBERT CAGE
Please Jack, your future lies here.

Jack mounts up, as, crying, Mary runs back out with a basket.

MARY
You didn't et your dinner.

Jack softens, leans down, takes the basket, gives her a kiss.

JACK HAYS
I'll send for you both soon as we
crush the oppressors and get things
settled - Our future's in Texas!

As they watch him go, Mary picks up the HANDBILL Robert drops--

The words in bold: "COME TO TEXAS! LIBERTY OR DEATH!"

23

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES - NIGHT

23

Exhausted, the RANGERS ride into camp to much reaction - Emily
West, Susanna Dickinson, her baby, and the deceased Concepcion's
Toddler son ride in the buckboard driven by Deaf. Regulars and
volunteers rush over and crowd around them in a HUBUB of activity.

SOLDIERS IN CROWD (O.C.)
Is it true? The Alamo fell? Travis
dead? How many Mexicans? Any prisoners?

DEAF SMITH
 Ever'body stand back, give 'em room
 to get down - Fetch Doc Ewing. Got
 a sickly woman here.

Karnes, and Anderson help Emily and Susanna with her infant off
 the buggy. Vern holds up the young Toddler.

VERN ELWOOD
 DEAF! Whatta I do with this shit-bugger?

DEAF SMITH
 I dunno, make up a bedroll in my
 tent. Guess we'll see come mornin'.

With his beautiful, half-Mexican daughter, SARAH (16), Doc
 Ewing takes Susanna Dickinson and baby into the MEDICAL TENT.
 Seeing Sarah pick up a BUCKET OF WATER, Yancey and Truett yell:

YANCEY & TRUETT
 SARAH!

Truett rushes to help her - Yancey TRIPS him and steps in his
 place to get to the bucket first. A rakish smile...

YANCEY BURNS
 Mama taught me to ease a woman's
 burden ever' chance I got.

Recovering, Truett sweeps in to snatch the bucket from Yancey

TRUETT FINCHAM
 She shoulda taught you not to be
 such a horse's ass!

YANCEY BURNS
 Pardon my crass friend's language.

--as he grabs back onto the handle, both boys now ridiculously
 carrying the bucket as water sloshes. Opening the tent flap,
 Sarah takes the bucket away from them and starts inside--

SARAH EWING
 Thank-you, Truett, thank-you, Yance--
 (when they try to follow)
 Unless you're injured, you're not
 allowed inside the Medical Tent.

YANCEY BURNS
 Got a serious cut on my elbow--
 (checks elbow, not there)
 --someplace...

He checks his other elbow, locates a minor briar SCRATCH--

YANCEY BURNS (CONT'D)

Here! Purty sure it needs liniment.

Truett steps in front of Yancey, fixes lovesick eyes on Sarah.

TRUETT FINCHAM

I have a badly bruised heart.

Sarah rolls her eyes, and SHUTS the tent flap in their faces.

Left there, Yancey SLUGS Truett on the arm, exasperated...

YANCEY BURNS

"Bruised heart?" What bull manure!
She was gonna treat my elbow!

Shuffling off, Truett mutters "Was not", Yancey "Was SO" etc.
as, rough-housing, they continue the back & forth adlibs--

--passing HOCKLEY who makes a beeline for Deaf.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

DEAF! The General is waiting.

Deaf, Emily and Karnes follow Hockley to Houston's tent.

SOLDIER (O.C.)

DEAF!

Deaf does not hear him, but Emily tugs his arm. The Soldier
gets in front of Deaf's face...

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Deaf, we ridin' to the Alamo to aid
our patriots?

DEAF SMITH

That's up to Houston.

ANOTHER SOLDIER (O.C.)

DEAF! What about Travis?

DEAF SMITH

Dead.

Deaf walks away with Emily... Karnes stays back.

SOLDIER 2 (O.C.)

Crockett?

SOLDIER 3 (O.C.)

Bowie?

HENRY KARNES

Dead. Dead. They's all dead.

VARIOUS SOLDIERS (O.C.)
All of 'em? How? OH LORD...

A silent mass of SOLDIERS follow... Hockley opens Houston's tent flap for Deaf and Emily to enter, turns to the men...

GEORGE HOCKLEY
Keep back whilst the confidential report's being made.

He follows them into the tent. None of the men comply, pressing closer to the canvas to eavesdrop.

THE RANGERS CAMPSITE - Exhausted, Karnes, Kit, Flores, Yancey and Truett clean & feed their horses. Beans skins a RABBIT.

24 INT. SAM HOUSTON'S TENT, ARMY CAMP - NIGHT

24

At his desk writing, Houston looks up at the arrivals - a subtle reaction upon seeing Emily that he quickly covers.

DEAF SMITH
General, this is Emily West. She and Captain Dickinson's wife are among the few Alamo survivors.

SAM HOUSTON
Miss West...

He nods stiffly, formally. Emily wastes no time on niceties.

EMILY WEST
Santa Anna took no prisoners.

INTERCUT - THE SOLDIERS outside the tent, listening...

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
We was spared to carry Santa Anna's message. He'll show no mercy.

OUTSIDE HOUSTON'S TENT - SOLDIERS repeat Emily's account in loud whispers passing down a "telephone line" of soldiers...

SOLDIER 1
Santa Anna says he'll show no mercy...

SOLDIER 2 (O.C.)
No mercy from Santa Anna--

SOLDIER 3 (O.C.)
He'll be merciless...

RESUME - EMILY telling her story to Houston.

EMILY WEST
 He plans to drive all the Anglos
 out of Texas--

As she continues, INTERCUT FLASHES OF SANTA ANNA'S RAMPAGE:

25 EXT. LOG RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT (MOS SEQUENCE) 25

GALLOPING HORSES scatter mud - Santa Anna leads his CALVARY,
 armed with lances, sabres and rifles, some carrying TORCHES.

CONTINUE INTERCUTS - MORE SOLDIERS down the line, repeating:

SOLDIERS 4 (O.C.)
 Santa Anna's gonna drive all the
 Americans out of Texas...

26 EXT. LOG RANCH HOUSE - TEXAS COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT (INTERCUT) 26

Attacked by Santa Anna's army, an OLD MAN raises a flintlock
 at Mexican soldiers...CUT DOWN by a SABER before he shoots.

27 INT. SAM HOUSTON'S TENT, ARMY CAMP - NIGHT (RESUME) 27

EMILY WEST
 He plans to poison the wells and
 fields so people can never
 return... Burn every settlement,
 every ranch, every building--

INTERCUT (SCENE #21) - SANTA ANNA takes a TORCH from a SOLDIER,
 throws it through the DOOR, setting FIRE to the log ranch house--

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
 Santa Anna has General Urrea
 leading five hundred soldiers to
 Goliad for his next slaughter.

INTERCUT - SOLDIERS outside as the impact of this sinks in.

SOLDIER 5
 Santa Anna is moving 500 men on
 Goliad...

SOLDIER 6 (O.C.)
 Goliad's next--

SOLDIER 7 (O.C.)
 He's attacking Fannin at Goliad.

INTERCUT - SANTA ANNA LEADS HIS ARMY AWAY - They gallop off,
 leaving devastation and dead bodies. In the mud, a BROKEN
 PLATE churned by the horses's hooves, FIRE flickering in b.g.

EMILY WEST

General Houston, he mocks you to
his men, named a chicken after you.

RESUME - TEXAN ARMY CAMP - CAMPFIRES BURNING - THE SOLDIERS'
game of "telephone" ends on *Beans* skinning his RABBIT.

SOLDIER 8 (O.C.)

...and he done named a damned
chicken after General Houston.

BEANS WILKINS

Slitherin' snake sumbitch means to
wipe us out.

SERGEANT EPHRAIM KNOWLES (30s), a shifty, beady-eyed rogue,
discreetly mounts his horse with fully stuffed saddlebags.

KIT ACKLIN

Knowles, where ya goin'?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Away.

Knowles surreptitiously trots away.

28

INT. SAM HOUSTON'S TENT, ARMY CAMP - NIGHT (RESUME)

28

Houston, absorbing the impact of Emily's tale, explodes...

SAM HOUSTON

FOR GOD'S SAKE! Hockley, was I not
appointed to lead all forces of the
Texian army - regulars, volunteers and
militia - Duly endowed with all rights
and powers of Commander-In-Chief?

GEORGE HOCKLEY

Yessir.

SAM HOUSTON

Then why the HELL didn't Travis,
Bowie, or Crockett pay me one
goddamn bit of attention when I
gave a goddamn ORDER?! And now that
arrogant prick, Fannin defies me!

(turns to Deaf)

Deaf, as a loyal Texian citizen and
foremost authority on this land,
what is your expert Rangering
opinion? DEAF? You understand me?

DEAF SMITH
I'm deaf not dumb.

Chewing tobacco, Deaf spits... takes a second to ponder.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
San Antone's too close to Mexico
proper to be reinforced. Too far
from American settlements to
defend... Oughta move north of
Victoria, regroup and marshal our
forces, whilst Santa Anna gets
drunk with an abundance 'a
confidence... Then we attack!

INTERCUT - SOLDIERS outside Houston's tent listening.

SAM HOUSTON
If I had about 300 more Rangers
like him I'd win this war in a day.
(then, back to Deaf)
Deaf ride to Goliad, and, one more
time, instruct my good, fence-
sitting, West-Point-dropout Colonel
Fannin to abandon Goliad posthaste
and rendezvous with us at Victoria.

Deaf turns to go - Houston has more, catches Deaf's shirt-
sleeve to get Deaf's attention, making sure he reads his lips

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
Make sure Fannin understands he'll be
all by his lonesome with 5000 enemy
troops up his ass within the week.
(as Deaf turns to go,
catching him again)
Tell him this time I said "please."

Deaf grins, spits, exits. Houston yells to Hockley loud
enough for the men outside to hear...

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
Ready the men! We march at first
light to Victoria!

29 EXT. SAM HOUSTON'S TENT, ARMY CAMP - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS) 29

When Hockley comes out, the eavesdropping men fall back.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
You obviously heard the General.
Pass the word.

30 INT. SAM HOUSTON'S TENT, ARMY CAMP - NIGHT

30

Now that Emily and Houston are alone, all pretense drops, a past these two share and a swirl of emotions: simmering sexual attraction, loneliness... but at present it is exhaustion and mourning, veiled in a sardonic--

EMILY WEST

You're as blustery as ever, Sam.

HOUSTON

And you are...

EMILY WEST

I'm alive.

She adjusts her knitted SCARF. Houston struggles for words.

SAM HOUSTON

You're a long way from the French Quarter, Emily.

(ventures a smile)

I can still taste Lady Antoinette's beignets and...I see you still have that scarf I had her seamstress make for you.

EMILY WEST

Don't own much'a nothin' else.

SAM HOUSTON

I don't dare flatter myself that you traveled this vast distance to pay a call on me.

EMILY

Came seekin' my brother, Jupiter. To purchase his freedom.

SAM HOUSTON

Texas is slave free.

EMILY WEST

If'n ya-say-so...

She extracts a folded LEGAL DOCUMENT from a leather purse suspended from a cord around her neck, hands it to Houston.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)

Located him at the Alamo mission, told him he was free, but--

(stifling emotion)

(MORE)

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)

--he stayed to fight...ended up one of the last survivors. I watched Santa Anna personally execute him.

Sobs escape her. Houston steps in close to dab her tears. Emily stiffly gets control, swipes at her eyes, steps away from him, taking the document back from Houston to restore it to her purse.

SAM HOUSTON

If your brother was freed, why wouldn't he leave with you?

EMILY WEST

Jupiter liked to fight.
(a small ironic smile)
A family trait.

SAM HOUSTON

At least he died a free man.

There is an awkward silence between them. Then...

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

When you recuperate and are properly rested I will send you with an escort to Lavaca, with sea passage back to New Orleans.

EMILY WEST

No thank you. I'm of a mind to stay in Texas. Join the cause...
(wryly)
Could use a horse.

SAM HOUSTON

We'll discuss it in the morning.
(calling out)
HOCKLEY!
(tenderly)
It's good to rest my eyes on you.

EMILY WEST

Jupie was all I had left in this world... once you was gone.

Hockley opens the tent flap, stands there waiting.

SAM HOUSTON

Colonel Hockley will tend to your accommodations.

Emily turns to go with Hockley. Sam calls to her.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Emily, your brother may have been a darkie, but he was as much a Texas gringo as I am.

31 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES - RANGERS' CAMPSITE - NIGHT 31

Gator sips from his flask. Anderson and Vern eat their supper. Kit bounces the Toddler on his knee. Flores quietly STRUMS a GUITAR, a mournful Spanish ballad. The perpetually hungry Beans turns his spitted rabbit over the hot coals of their campfire.

Karnes and Deaf Smith cinch their saddles, pack water, readying to ride to Goliad. Squinting in the darkness, Karnes notices...

JUPITER'S WOLF-DOG - Crouched outside the camp, watching them. Karnes WHISTLES - its ears perk up but it stays put.

GATOR DAVIS

That a wolf?

HENRY KARNES

Reckon both, a wolf-dog. Been followin' us all day. Here, boy! C'mon on over here 'n say howdy.

VERN ELWOOD

Mongrel's gonna bite your hand clean off.

Karnes reaches out his hand. The dog tilts its head. Walking to the campfire, Karnes takes the rabbit off its skewer.

BEANS WILKINS

That's my personal rabbit.

HENRY KARNES

It's requisitioned.

He tears off a piece, offers some to Deaf. Beans throws up his hands as, eating the meat, Karnes makes a face off the taste.

HENRY KARNES (CONT'D)

This a damn jackrabbit? Tastes like three-day-old possum!

BEANS WILKINS

Pilfers a rabbit 'n complains.

Karnes lures the wolf-dog with the rabbit meat. The hungry mutt stands, ventures forward a few steps. Hesitates. Stops. Karnes acts like he's eating, smacks lips, throws a piece.

HENRY KARNES
C'mon, boy, mmmm, good.

The Dog trots to the rabbit meat, snags it, hurries back to his spot, hungrily devours it. Karnes smiles, throws more meat.

HENRY KARNES (CONT'D)
He likes your cookin', Beans.

Having been in a hushed confab several yards away, Yancey and Truett cross over to Deaf. Truett is distressed.

YANCEY BURNS
Captain, young Truett here is grievously worried about his Ma and requests a short leave of absence.

TRUETT FINCHAM
It's my mother and sisters, sir. Since we lost my daddy to typhoid three years back I'm the only man of the house.

YANCEY BURNS
With that cutthroat Santa Anna marchin' north, the Fincham family ranch is right in his path.

TRUETT FINCHAM
I wanna make sure they's moved out. Shouldn't take me but a day or two to help git 'em someplace safe.

YANCEY BURNS
I request to go with him, Captain. Make sure he comes back. The boy can hardly wipe hisself without my counsel.

TRUETT FINCHAM
Shut up. You just wanna meet up with more Injuns, so you can get a scalp like mine.

Yancey can't suppress a grin, shrugs--It's true. Deaf considers.

DEAF SMITH
You have a day. Meet us at Goliad.

With a "Thanks, Cap'n," Truett & Yancey hurry off.

32 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALEZ - MEDICAL WAGON - NIGHT 32

About to go, Yancey and Truett sidetrack over to Doc Ewing's Medical WAGON, where SARAH, wearing WILDFLOWERS in her hair, fetches bandage gauze and vials of medicine for her father.

YANCEY & TRUETT

SARAH!

TRUETT FINCHAM

We, uh, might be gone awhile and--

YANCEY BURNS

General Houston wants us to scout
on ahead and track down Santa Anna.

SARAH EWING

(alarmed) Oh no...that's too
dangerous! Why can't he send
somebody older and more experienced?

TRUETT FINCHAM

Reckon 'cause we's the best he got.

YANCEY BURNS

Bein' heroes is our cross to bear.

Truett reaches into his breast pocket, pulls out a DRIED
PRESSED FLOWER, proudly presents it to her.

TRUETT FINCHAM

My dear granny Lulu pressed this
flower in the family Bible on her
weddin' day. I'd like you to keep
it for me 'til I come back.

SARAH EWING

Why thank-you, Truett, I--

Yancey steps up to interrupt - Scrambling to match the
gesture, he uses a KNIFE to cut off a LOCK of his own hair--

YANCEY BURNS

You don't hafta give this back--

He ties the hair into a knot and hands it to her, earnestly--

YANCEY BURNS (CONT'D)

It's a part of me, and your'n to
keep long as the rivers run.

Truett mutters a mocking "it's a part of me"...shocked when
Sarah KISSES Yancey's cheek...then KISSES Truett's cheek.

SARAH EWING

I'll be madder'n a wet hen if anything
happens to either of you, so doggoneit,
you better take care of each other.

Numbly enraptured, the boys mutter, "Yes ma'am" "We will" as--

Sarah pulls WILDFLOWERS from her hair, giving one to each boy, hurries into her tent to keep them from seeing her misty eyes.

33 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES - RANGER CAMP - NIGHT 33

DEAF mounts up. Karnes, his arm out of the sling is now close enough to pet the wolf-dog. Deaf begins HACKING, coughing up blood, uses one of Guadalupe's handkerchiefs.

HENRY KARNES
I've a pint in my saddle bag. Ya
need a slug to ease the pain?

Deaf shakes him off. The wolf-dog now eats from Karnes' hand.

DEAF SMITH
Seeing as we move out at sun up, I
best show my respects to the missus

HENRY KARNES
Reckon so...

Concepcion's orphaned Toddler wanders over, starting to CRY.

GATOR DAVIS
Galdanggit, Flores, your gloomy-ass song
is distressin' the youngster - Gimme that.

GATOR takes the guitar, STRUMS and SINGS a rousing version of "Turkey In The Straw". Flores pulls out a HARMONICA and plays along as the mood picks up around the campfire.

VERN ELWOOD
Now all we needs is a jug 'n a
sweet lil' gal to poke.

The Toddler still cries, reaching out for Deaf.

KIT ACKLIN
Young'un reaching for you, Captain.

Deaf, ignoring him, rides off...

AFTER ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE YARDS, Deaf stops his horse...and, with a heavy sigh, turns back to glower at the crying Toddler.

34 EXT. MEXICAN SOLDIERS' CAMP - NIGHT 34

A patrol of FIVE SOLDADOS, laughing and eating beans. One soldier, CARLOS, wearing a colorful serape, plucks LEAVES from plants around the campsite to use as toilet paper.

MEXICAN SOLDIER 3

Go FAR AWAY! You stink like a she-goat at breedin' time... don't need to smell your shit all night too!

The soldiers LAUGH as Carlos MOVES OFF TO...

AN ISOLATED SPOT - Carlos sets his musket aside, his stack of leaves beside him, drops his pants, squats... His eyes POP WIDE...he KEELS OVER...a KNIFE stuck in back of his head.

REVEAL LORCA silhouetted in the moonlight, silently removes his knife... then steps into the flickering firelight--

BLAM! His rifle takes out the first man - BLAM! The stolen musket blasts Soldier 2. The remaining Soldiers scramble--

--but the leathery old man is too fast and deadly. Lorca bashes the butt of his rifle against the third man's skull. The last soldier takes off RUNNING - PHWOOOOK! Lorca's knife whacks straight through the man's throat.

Silence but for the CRACKLING FIRE. Lorca grabs the stewpot, digs in, stuffing handfuls of beans into his mouth.

35 INT. DEAF SMITH'S RANCH - NIGHT

35

Venting her frustrations by scrubbing the floor, Guadalupe looks up... At the door Deaf stands framed. Lovingly...

DEAF SMITH

You is and always will be my sweet desert rose.

He crosses to help her off the floor and into a chair.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)

Be right back.

He rushes out the door, leaving it open. Guadalupe stays seated, shakes her head at Deaf's strange behavior...

Deaf re-appears - Holding the Toddler, who's delighted at being held by this grizzled man, bouncing in his arms. Guadalupe's mouth drops. She stands. Gaping.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)

This poor little soul lost his mama today in an Injun attack. Far as we know, ain't got no one to care for it.

GUADALUPE SMITH

What... What is his name?

DEAF SMITH
 Don't rightly know. But I call 'im
 Pedro, after your pa.

She holds out her arms, the Toddler leans forward drawn into her embrace. Guadalupe's eyes tear with joy, and even Deaf's eyes get misty. Deaf wipes her tears with his handkerchief.

GUADALUPE SMITH
 He looks hungry. I will get some
 milk and mash up beans for him.

She goes to the kitchen as Deaf turns back to the door.

DEAF SMITH
 Ya might look fer some meat in
 there. Got one more mouth to feed.

He opens the door for the HALF-BREED DOG to run in. Getting her charred "Saint Thomas" from the stove, Guadalupe looks from the dog...to Pedro...to Deaf...and smiles.

36 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES - MORNING

36

Still traumatized, Susanna Dickinson lies in a WAGON near the Medical Tent, attended by Doc Ewing. TWO SOLDIERS nearby.

Sam Houston, dressed to lead his army, approaches, glances at Mrs. Dickinson...then Emily, rocking Dickinson's baby... The connection between Emily and Houston like a magnet - it takes Houston a moment to turn away as he comes to the doctor...

SAM HOUSTON
 Has Mrs. Dickinson spoken yet?

DOC EWING
 She hears but doesn't respond.
 Coupla the boys takin' her to
 relatives up in Nacogdoches.

Houston steps over to her, with a formal nod to Emily.

SAM HOUSTON
 Good morning, Miss West. Sleep well?

EMILY WEST
 My nightmares felt too real--
 (then, casually)
 By the by... I never remember my
 dreams. Do you?

A pointed reference to something in their past together... which discomforts Houston. He turns to Susanna in the wagon.

SAM HOUSTON

Mrs. Dickinson, my sympathies for the loss of your husband.

(as they prepare to go)

Before you go, is there anything you want to tell me about the attack? Perhaps about Santa Anna and the enemy soldiers?

She opens her mouth - Houston moves closer to hear her rasp...

SUSANNA DICKINSON

Kill them. Kill them all.

Reacting to this, Houston steps back from the wagon as the Soldiers climb aboard, one riding shotgun, and DRIVE AWAY.

37 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES - OUTSKIRTS OF CAMP - DAY 37

MANUEL FLORES approaches a troubled JUAN SEQUIN who sits alone on the outskirts of camp, between two raging BONFIRES -

MANUEL FLORES

You may not care for my company, but perhaps you won't refuse the nectar of the blessed agave.

He offer him a bottle of Tequila. Sequin shakes his head.

JUAN SEQUIN

You can ride with the Rangers. Kill Mexicans for them. But you're a fool if you think you'll ever be one of 'em.

MANUEL FLORES

Insult me if you want, Don Juan. I'm fighting for Democracy and the Constitution of 1824. Santa Anna broke the faith.

JUAN SEQUIN

Politics! There is only my family land--the love of the ancestors who gave it to me; and the descendants I hold it for as long as I breath.

MANUEL FLORES

I've given Houston my word.

JUAN SEQUIN

And what's that worth? I don't trust the Anglos any more than the Santanistas. What becomes of us?

MANUAL FLORES

We'll be free.

Sequin snatches the tequila and pours it down his throat.

JUAN SEQUIN

Santa Anna promises the same--if we
turn around before it's too late
and fight for him...

He SHATTERS the bottle on a rock, standing angrily between
two roaring fires, before he walks off under a veil of smoke.

38 EXT. DEAF SMITH HOMESTEAD - SUNRISE

38

A beautiful expanse of early morning Texas skyline as Karnes
laconically waits astride his horse as Deaf comes out, grins--

HENRY KARNES

Whooooee, a new young'un and a wolf-
dog pet. Lupe must be happy as a
bumble bee in a flower patch.

DEAF SMITH

Yep, I might as well hang up my
spurs, move ta town 'n work at the
general feed.

HENRY KARNES

Well, you are gettin' awful old.

Karnes grins as Deaf, mounting up, shoots him a look.

DEAF SMITH

Try to keep up, Henry.

He KICKS horse into a GALLOP, forcing Karnes to take off and
ride hard to catch up - ON THEIR BACKS, getting smaller on the
a glorious western horizon. Guadalupe stands in the doorway
with little Pedro and the half-breed dog watching them go.

39 EXT. TOLL ROAD - WEST OF SABINE RIVER - DAY

39

JAMES WYKOFF (40s), his austere wife PAULINE (30s), children
LUCAS (10), STEPHANIE (8), and gigantic slave NATE (20s) in
back, have parked their WAGON at the TOLL BARRICADE. The
family looks weary as James negotiates with an old, sour-
looking TEJANO TOLL ROAD OWNER then crosses back to them.

JACK HAYS nearby, watering his horse, overhears...

JAMES WYKOFF

I offered to clear brush and fill
ruts for two days...but he won't
let us pass til I pony up the six
bits toll.

JACK makes eye contact with Wykoff, who in shame, turns his
gaze to the dirt. Hays then looks at Wykoff's forlorn wife
and children and threadbare slave. The ribs showing on
Wykoff's oxen team. The listless pup.

Jack motions to the toll man. They confer in a conversation
we do not hear. Then, Jack reaches into his pouch, pays the
toll man, who lifts the barricade, waves the Wykoffs through.

Wykoff approaches Jack.

JAMES WYKOFF (CONT'D)

I ain't the kind to accept charity.

JACK HAYS

Didn't assume you were. But I'm
not the kind to ignore a decent
looking family who needs a hand.

He notices a crude letters scrawled on their wagon: "G T T"

JACK HAYS (CONT'D)

Going to Texas, huh?

JAMES WYKOFF

They're givin' away land.

JACK HAYS

(a look, then nodding...)
Good luck then.

JAMES WYKOFF

Didn't catch your name, friend.

JACK HAYS

Haven't made one for myself yet.

He mounts up. Pauline nods in thanks. The boy Lucas and
little Stephanie, cradling her puppy, smile...as Wykoff
flicks the reins and Jack rides off.

40

EXT. ROAD FROM FINCHAM HOMESTEAD - DAY

40

A WAGON, driven by Truett's panicked mother, MRS. FINCHAM
(50s), with his THREE YOUNG SISTERS, rattles away from their
simple adobe home. Truett and Yancey race to catch them.

TRUETT FINCHAM
 MA! Hold up! It's me - Truett!
 Where you racin' off to?

Upon seeing her son, the harried woman STOPS the wagon.

MRS. FINCHAM
 Don't you know? Santa Anna's army
 is comin' - Killin' everybody!

TRUETT FINCHAM
 Well yes'm, that's why I come home -
 to help pack us up and get you
 outta here. But where's--
 (re: empty wagon)
 --all our stuff? Ya didn't bring
 Granny's silver... Nothin'?

MRS. FINCHAM
 The Sergeant said we had to leave
 everything 'n just go - The
 Mexicans will be here any minute!

Truett and Yancey react - Something's not right here.

YANCEY BURNS
 Ma'am, Santa Anna's army is still a
 few days ride south. We got time to
 pack your valuables 'n keepsakes.

Truett looks to a HORSE tethered to a post outside his home.

TRUETT FINCHAM
 Is that "the Sergeant's" horse tied
 up right there?

MRS. FINCHAM
 Uh-huh, he stayed behind to burn
 the house 'n destroy all our goods
 so the Mexicans can't use 'em to
 supply and replenish their
 murderin' soldados.

YANCEY BURNS
 Mrs. Fincham, that man done
 bamboozled you.

SERGEANT KNOWLES holds a large gunny sack that he's filling
 with vintage SILVERWARE, candlesticks... Everything of value.

THE DOOR BUSTS OPEN - Knowles jerks around to see young Truett with a gun in his hand. Yancey appears right behind.

TRUETT FINCHAM
Sergeant Knowles? What the hell...

YANCEY BURNS
Last we heard, you was desertin'.
Now you're profiteering?

Knowles holds the sack behind his back, defensively...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
I done my duty 'n warned the old
lady 'bout the Meskins. I can't
help it if she's runnin' off
skeered 'n leavin' shit.

TRUETT FINCHAM
That's my mother, you despicable
poltroon! You loot my home?
(grabs BULL WHIP by door)
You forgot my daddy's prized bull
whip. Here. Let me give it to ya.

WHACK! He CRACKS the whip against Knowles, causing him to drop his gunny sack of stolen loot... YELPING in pain.

Yancey FIRES his gun at the deserter's feet, making him jump as Truett continues to WHIP the YELPING Knowles out the door.

42 EXT. FINCHAM HOMESTEAD - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 42

Truett's family watches, as Knowles is driven to his horse.

YANCEY BURNS
Hoodwink anyone else, we tie you
down, pour molasses on ye and let
the critters eat their fill, you
piece 'a crap excuse for a soldier!

Knowles GALLOPS away. Truett's sisters rush to hug him.

TRUETT FINCHAM
C'mon, Mama, let's pack the wagon.

43 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES - DAY 43

OPEN on Houston's eyes--narrow and focused, like a hawk's.

PULL BACK to see him watching the Rangers (Deaf Smith, Karnes and the others) finish digging SIX fresh graves, in a row.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

Not sure I approve of your methods.

SAM HOUSTON

It worked for General Washington during the revolution and for General Jackson in 1812...

(to grave diggers)

That's good enough. Climb out, re-prime your smoke poles and stand beside me, bearing arms.

(to Hockley)

Assemble the men. By company. In formation. Beat the goddamn drum.

Hockley moves off. Finishing up, the Rangers climb from the graves, look back at their work, exchanging perplexed looks.

44 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES (VARIOUS) - DAY (CONTINUING)44

Texan officers roust their men. Sergeants move among the infantry, tossing away plates of breakfast, dousing pipes and handrolls, pouring out whiskey, straightening their tattered clothes, and marching them off to Houston's parade ground.

SAM HOUSTON (PRELAP)

I promised you men an answer. I am now prepared to deliver it--

45 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, GONZALES - BY THE GRAVES - DAY 45

DEFIANT MEN stand in formation, many leering in contempt. General Sam Houston, on his horse, glares at his mutinous troops, backed by his loyal Rangers (Anderson, Kit, Gator, Flores, Vern and Beans) and Juan Seguin, and Hockley. The empty graves lie hidden behind them.

SAM HOUSTON

I've ordered Colonel Fannin to retreat from Goliad. Our army will fall back east and join our forces with his, picking up more volunteers along the way. As we regroup, we will regather our strength in numbers and spirit.

Moving up and down the line, Houston's HORSE side-passing, as he addresses the disgruntled and peevish troops. A wave of displeased murmurs from the dissidents, Baker calls out.

MOSELY BAKER

That kinda thinkin' is what done
lost us the Alamo!

SIDNEY SHERMAN

And cost us Travis, Bowie, and Davy
Crockett himself. We should be
marching to Goliad to fight!

SAM HOUSTON

That bowed up logic's about as
useful as a trap door on a canoe.
Mosely, Wiley, I'm as anxious as
you to right the wrong, but we must
be tactical, not rash.

MOSELY BAKER

Kicking Santa Anna's ass, seeking
vengeance, fighting for Texas
liberation and MAKIN' A STAND WITH
FANNIN sounds tactical to me!

VARIOUS SOLDIERS

He's RIGHT! We should FIGHT! YAAA!

SAM HOUSTON

Throwing your rope before you make
a loop ain't gonna catch a steer -
And tearing off in a puffed up half-
assed reprisal is exactly what Santa
Anna expects. He wants us sitting
smack dab on a powder keg of
emotions, with his match to the fuse,
ready to blow us all to kingdom come.

Houston nods to the Rangers, Seguin and Hockley... who step
aside, revealing the fresh dug graves. The armed Rangers
behind him, Houston eyeballs the group.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Fannin has his orders to join us
at Victoria. You men have yours.
(intensely)

You may question my military
strategy but not my heart. And if
any one of you question my command,
there's a grave reserved for you.

THE VOLUNTEERS & REGULARS dart nervous looks at the graves.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

I will give you your battle! I
will give you your blood!
(MORE)

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Your friends and brothers will be avenged, but it will be when and where your General orders it. Let me hear you say "Aye."

(off half-hearted "AYEs")

I am asking you a question. Answer so that God and Santa Anna can hear it. Let me hear "AYE!"

This time they answer like thunder, as a group, "AYE!"

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Good. Now MOVE OUT!

Off his gesture, a BURST OF MOVEMENT, the Texan Army on the march. Baker walks by Houston...who GRABS HIS ARM, leans in.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

I oughta belt you right in the damn mouth. You ever insubordinate me again in front of the troops, it will be a lot worse. Now get outta my sight. You disgust me.

Baker fumes but quickly moves away. Nearby, Emily has been watching this. Houston looks back at her, then rides ahead.

46

EXT. PRAIRIE FLOWER SALOON - DAY

46

Nacogdoches, Texas. Hat in front of him for "donations," a FRONTIER PREACHER, in filthy buckskins, holds a BIBLE and SINGS, surreptitiously drinking from a FLASK between verses.

FRONTIER PREACHER

"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb--"

JACK HAYS rides his fine horse up to the hitching post, looking as immaculate as when he left the plantation.

FRONTIER PREACHER (CONT'D)

"--shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His Name?"

Jack ties up his horse, flips a COIN into the Preacher's hat.

FRONTIER PREACHER (CONT'D)

Bless ye, brother. I can see yer one of God's Chosen Ones, a Soldier of the Cross!

JACK HAYS

'Bout how much further to San Antone?

FRONTIER PREACHER
 Dependin', 'nother fortnight, maybe.

Jack smiles, tips his hero's hat to the Preacher, and continues into the bar as the Preacher opens his Bible.

FRONTIER PREACHER (CONT'D)
 Isaiah 35: "The wilderness and the
 solitary place shall be glad for
 them; and the desert shall rejoice"

47 INT. PRAIRIE FLOWER SALOON - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

47

Jack crosses to the crowded bar, and, without a word, is served a WHISKEY by the BARTENDER who bites the coin Jack gives him to make sure it's real. O.S. PREACHER preaches.

FRONTIER PREACHER (O.S.)
 "--they shall see the glory of the
 Lord, the excellency of our God."

The cleancut Jack's out of place in this rough crowd, who smirk and whisper. Jack focuses on his whiskey, ignoring the GAMBLERS and a glaring RAW-BONED DRUNK with TOUGH COMPANIONS.

At a corner table sits a very large man in a very large hat: WILLIAM "BIG FOOT" WALLACE. Though in his 20s, Big Foot's a man among boys - He takes notice of the charismatic Jack as a SEXY SALOON GIRL slinks over to flirt and press her body into Jack's. Jealous, the drunk stands and challenges the kid--

RAW-BONED DRUNK
 This our place here! You
 greenhorns come acros't river best
 understand that!

BAR PATRONS, not wanting trouble, finish their drinks leaving Jack alone at the bar. The Saloon Girl eases away, too.

FRONTIER PREACHER (O.S.)
 "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and
 confirm the feeble knees--"

Seemingly lost in thought, Jack taps his glass on the bar for a re-fill. The Drunk glares.

RAW-BONED DRUNK
 You remind me of ever'thing I come
 out West to git away from.

The Bartender re-fills, Jack looks up at the Drunk, smiles.

JACK HAYS

Then I reckon your quarrel's with
your past - Not me.

Big Foot Wallace shakes his head, chuckles at the kid's unfazed response. No one else finds it amusing. Jack starts to lift his glass - The Drunk SLAPS it away, SHATTERING it.

FRONTIER PREACHER (O.S.)

"Say to them that are of a fearful
heart, Be strong, fear not--"

JACK HAYS

That was ill-mannered. You'll need
to replace my drink or face
consequences.

Locking eyes with the Drunk, who, flummoxed by this kid standing up to him, scowls in red-faced fury.

FRONTIER PREACHER (O.S.)

"Behold, your God will come with a
vengeance, even with a recompense"

RAW-BONED DRUNK

You some kinda half-wit idiot or
just plain, goddamn stupid?

JACK HAYS

Neither. Must just be you.

FRONTIER PREACHER (O.S.)

"HE will come and save you--"

Flaring, the Drunk slaps a hand to his pistol, waits for Jack to go for his. Jack keeps his hands on the bar a TENSE BEAT--

JACK HAYS

Don't let nothin' but fear stop ya.

The Drunk hesitates... Looks at the CROWD, JERKS OUT HIS GUN--

--JACK, quicker on the draw, SHOOTS HIM - SNATCHES the unfired pistol from the limp hand of the stunned, wide-eyed Drunk who's standing there numbly staring at Jack - Frozen.

The Drunk's COMPANIONS leap up, going for their guns--

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Settle down boys. Don't try it!

BIG FOOT wields a brace of pistols, holding off the men - We see on Big Foot's wrist: A distinctive silver WRIST CUFF.

The Drunk stands swaying, his shirt darkening with blood.

RAW-BONED DRUNK
I'll see y'all in hell--

He COLLAPSES - Everyone gapes... the Preacher peeks inside.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
It was a fair fight, we all saw it.

JACK HAYS
(to Big Foot)
A polite gesture, sir, but I can
manage.

Jack now holds the Drunk's gun on his Companions.

JACK HAYS (CONT'D)
Can someone please fetch whomsoever
it is around here that administers
justice? We need to report this.

Frontier Preacher is taken back, gawks at Jack...

FRONTIER PREACHER
Soldier of the cross, God's Chosen
One!

48 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP - COCKPIT - DAY

48

Two fighting roosters, one of them "Arredondo" Santa Anna's favorite, rise high in the air to meet in combat, razor sharp gaffs, fixed to their spurs with calfskin harnesses.

Moving through, Almonte finds Santa Anna at the COCKFIGHT--

ALMONTE
General, we should prepare to move out

Focused on the cockfight (we don't see, only HEAR the RATTLE & WHIR OF the birds' WINGS), Santa Anna holds up a "Not now" hand

The CROWD shows him no deference, jostling, leaning over the three-foot perimeter fence in the blood-stained cockpit as Santa Anna screams encouragement to his fighting cock--

OFFICERS AND PRIVATE SOLDIERS of the Mexican army, with a smattering of WIVES, WHORES, & CAMP FOLLOWERS who accompany the army (approx. 20 people) joyful or despairing until--

IN THE COCKPIT, Arredondo lies dead. The other bird's handler, a skinny soldier, UBALDO (18), holds his champion aloft to CHEERS, his outstretched hand wiggling for pesos.

SANTA ANNA
I did not bet that bird, Ubaldo.

UBALDO
Yes, you did, General, eight pesos.

SANTA ANNA
How is it you have eight pesos to bet with, Ubaldo?

UBALDO
It is a fact I do, Excellency.

The spectators fall silent as Ubaldo becomes quite anxious.

SANTA ANNA
You have not been paid. If you have eight pesos you robbed them from the women refugees.

Santa Anna picks up his dead chicken.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
And if you robbed them, Ubaldo, you raped them also. I know this. You are a disgrace to our army and our beautiful country.

Santa Anna thrusts the dead rooster under Ubaldo's nose.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
Do you confess that you bet on this coward bird?

Trembling, Ubaldo stubbornly shakes his head, "no."

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
I think you are a sly one, private Ubaldo - Too much Indian blood.
(drops the dead cock)
Do you know what magnanimous is?

UBALDO
No, sir.

SANTA ANNA
Even though you did not win, rape old grandmothers, have sly Indian blood and lie to your General--

He gets out his coin purse, slaps COINS in Ubaldo's hands.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

I pay you because we are victorious
and to show you what magnanimous
is. Do not try such a trick again.

(petulantly to crowd)

Enough rest and celebration!
Almonte! Assume command! Break
camp and press onward forthwith!

49 EXT. GOLIAD, TEXAS - DAY

49

Deaf and Karnes ride into town. COLONEL FANNIN (40s) walks up with his men and a big guy - Big Foot's older, huskier brother, SAMUEL WALLACE (30s) - Samuel wears a silver WRIST CUFF that matches his brother's.

DEAF SMITH

We bring orders from General Houston.

Deaf and Karnes dismount to give Fannin Houston's LETTER.

COLONEL FANNIN

No doubt ordering me to withdraw.
I know we're in a general retreat.

DEAF SMITH

Colonel, if you don't git, you 'n
your men gonna be overrun 'n die--

COLONEL FANNIN

I do what my conscience tells me.

HENRY KARNES

Goddamn your conscience, do what
Houston tells ya, FOLLOW ORDERS!

Karnes spits. Big Samuel Wallace steps right in Karnes' face.

SAMUEL WALLACE

We're with you, Colonel.

50 EXT. PRAIRIE FLOWER SALOON - DAY

50

Jack Hays gets ready to mount his horse as Big Foot exits.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Hear-tell you gonna go fight for
Texas, "Hardcase."

JACK HAYS

Mister, you making light of me?

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 After seein' you handle a gun,
 that'd be a pretty dumb idea.
 Name's William Wallace. Folks call
 me "Big Foot."

JACK HAYS
 On a'count -- you're big?

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 That... but mostly on a'count I once
 killed a Cherokee with big feet.

Jack laughs and shakes Big Foot's hand...

JACK HAYS
 "Big Foot Wallace" - John Coffee Hays,
 named after Colonel John Coffee, protege
 of President Andrew Jackson. Call me Jack.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 Jack... You some kinda genuine
 "blue blood" or somethin'?

Mounting his horse, Jack looks at him. He likes this guy.

JACK HAYS
 Somethin'. Colonel Travis issued a
 call to arms. I'm on my way to the
 Alamo Mission in San Antonio de
 Bexar to enlist.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 (frowns, mounts his horse)
 'Fraid you a mite late, son.
 Travis was killed by the Mexicans,
 with everyone else at the Alamo.

JACK HAYS
 Not David Crockett? He... He's
 gonna be a U.S. President some day.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 Yessir, the whole lot. I'm on my
 way to fight alongside my brother
 at Fort Defiance in Goliad.

In shock, Jack sits astride his horse, not sure where to go.

JACK HAYS
 Colonel Fannin's command? Reckon
 then...I'll enlist there.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 (spurs his horse forward)
 Better ride with me, Hardcase.
 Don't need you waylaid in any more
 gunfights.

As Jack and Big Foot ride out of the town, we hear...

ANDREW JACKSON (PRELAP)
 War is a blessing compared with
 national degradation--

51 INT. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE - DAY

51

Though dissipated & rail-thin, the regal ANDREW JACKSON (67),
 a PISTOL in each hand, towers in body and spirit over the
 nervous U.S. ARMY OFFICERS, led by a young West Point Captain
 - GENERAL GAINES' AIDE, watch Houston aim out an open window--

GENERAL GAINES' AIDE
 Mr. President, aren't you sending
 aid to the Texians?

--BOOM! The officers flinch as Jackson fires the first pistol.

ANDREW JACKSON
 No.

--BOOM! After firing the second pistol, he tosses both guns
 to a nearby AIDE, picks up his CANE and struts to his desk--

ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)
 They work fine. Mystifies me how
both could misfire when that
 miscreant tried to kill me.
 (to the Aide)
 Tell General Gaines to be prepared
 in the event that Santa Anna follows
 Houston into the Neutral Zone--

GENERAL GAINES' AIDE
 Sir, we are camped by the border to
 respond to hostile attacks...but
 I'm not aware of any hostiles
 active in the Neutral Zone.

ANDREW JACKSON
 Well, go and find them, son.
 They're out there, I promise.

GENERAL GAINES' AIDE
 Mr. President, what if, in
 following your orders, General
 Gaines runs into the Mexican army?

Jackson gets out a QUILL and piece of official stationary--

ANDREW JACKSON
 Well...that'd be a hell of a mess
 for my diplomatic corp - But the
 luckiest day in Sam Houston's life.

Scribbling orders, he folds the paper and seals it with WAX.

ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)
 As per the Adams-Onis Treaty, the
 U.S. Army cannot attack Santa Anna...
 but, should he follow Houston across
 the Texas border into the states--

He hands the SEALED ORDERS to the young Captain, grins...

GENERA GAINES' AIDE
 --we could certainly defend ourselves
 and give him the beating he deserves.

ANDREW JACKSON
 (WHACKS cane on desk)
 Just like I gave that fool assassin!

52 EXT. WAGON TRACK BY THE RIVER, CENTRAL TEXAS - DAY 52

Dozens of FLEEING SETTLERS, in wagons, carts, hand barrows,
 whisking their belongings from the advancing Mexican Army.

Houston rides past wagons and dispirited SOLDIERS, some
 seated in the mud, staring off into nothingness, others
 helping. Houston passes, Mosely Baker and Sidney Sherman.

SIDNEY SHERMAN
 He keeps on retreating, he's going
 to be doing it alone.

Baker grunts agreement. Houston, not hearing, rides past.

Houston watches EMILY jump off a wagon to pick up a dropped
 SACK of FLOUR - She returns it to the grateful family.
 Houston trots away to avoid Emily seeing him looking.

53 EXT. ALONG WAGON TRACK - ACROSS RIVER - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 53

The Rangers help settlers cross the river to join them...

Vern and Kit react to a flop-haired boy, COLBY PIT (17), and his beautiful, fair-haired sister REBECCA PIT (19) floundering in the river. Kit JUMPS IN to save them. Seeing the pretty girl, wet clothes clinging to her well-toned body, Vern DIVES IN right behind, swimming hard to get to her first as--

Her kid brother panicking, about to drown, Rebecca holds onto Colby as HE PULLS HER UNDER WITH HIM. Kit swims over to pull Rebecca to the surface. Vern arrives to grab onto her, too.

REBECCA PIT
(pushes Vern away)
Help my brother!

Vern turns as Colby CLUTCHES onto his arm - Reluctantly pulls the gasping boy to the shore...while resentfully watching Kit with the sexy Rebecca the entire time

REBECCA PIT (CONT'D)
Thanks for helping us. My name's
Rebecca Pit. What's yours?

VERN ELWOOD
Vern Elwood.

KIT ACKLIN
Awful pretty name, "Rebecca."
Mine's Kit Acklin - We're with the
Rangerin' Company.

Rebecca has eyes only for Kit. Vern's left with...

COLBY PIT
Thanks, mister. Ya saved my bacon.
I didn't know I couldn't swim.

AS WAGONS ROLL BY...FIND a melancholy SARAH sitting on the back of Medical Wagon, reading her Bible opened in her lap .

With a sigh, she closes her Bible...using both Yancey's lock of hair and Truett's pressed flower to mark her place.

54 EXT. FURTHER DOWN RIVER - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

54

SAM HOUSTON notices deserter Sgt. Knowles arguing with a stout, near-hysterical WOMAN (40s).

Houston rides to the Rangers helping others at the crossing.

SAM HOUSTON
Is that one of our soldiers?

GATOR DAVIS
Sergeant Ephraim Knowles. He
deserted a couple days ago.

SAM HOUSTON
Is that his family - did he leave
us to help them get away?

BILLY ANDERSON
Hardly. He's demandin'
compensation from that widder-woman
for helpin' her ford the river.

The sad-eyed Woman and her gaggle of hollow-eyed KIDS drops a
few silver dollars into Knowles' outstretched palm.

SAM HOUSTON
Scandalous blackguard. While the
door of my cottage is forever open
to brave men, it is eternally shut
against cowards. We must make an
example of deserters. Arrest him.
(turns horse away)
We try him at next halt.

55 EXT. GOLIAD, TEXAS - LATE DAY

55

Racing on horseback, Truett and Yancey TEAR INTO THE FORT,
WHOOPING & LAUGHING as they come in dead even, contrasting a
somber Karnes and Deaf, who pack saddlebags, ready to leave.

YANCEY BURNS
Beat ya! Dang! I'm faster'n a
ring-tailed bobcat!

TRUETT FINCHAM
Hell you are! I whooped you a full
nose ahead! Ain't that right Cap'n?

DEAF SMITH
(busy, not hearing them)
Get your Mama moved out?

TRUETT FINCHAM
Yessir. We late for the fight?

YANCEY BURNS
Where y'all off to?

HENRY KARNES
Back to camp. Fannin's a stubborn
varmint, won't obey orders.

YANCEY BURNS
Ain't he gonna join his regiment
with our'n.

HENRY KARNES
Says he'll "think about it."

TRUETT FINCHAM
Want us to linger 'n spy on him?

YANCEY BURNS
'N report back to you!

Deaf and Karnes exchange a look - Not a bad idea, but...

HENRY KARNES
You sure about that?

DEAF SMITH
They're wearin' their own boots.
Let 'em walk where they want.

HENRY KARNES
Urrea could reach Goliad in less
than five days. If Fannin hasn't
moved by day after next, ride due
east to report. We are regrouping
north of Victoria.

DEAF SMITH
Keep your eyes 'n ears open. Don't
tarry... You boys might become real
rangers yet.

Deaf starts COUGHING, his bloody handkerchief falls from his
pocket. Truett picks it up and hands it to him.

TRUETT FINCHAM
Feelin' poorly, Cap'n?

DEAF SMITH
(pretending to wipe nose)
Bloody nose... bloody nose...

TRUETT FINCHAM
Ah...sirs... we just want to say...
ah... um... we feel, that is...

YANCEY BURNS
What my jibber-jabbin' friend means
to say is we hold you in equal high
regard as our own daddies.
(both salute)
We proud to be Texian Rangers.

Karnes and Deaf smile, return the salute, and ride off.

56 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, CENTRAL TEXAS - NIGHT 56

LANTERNS AND TORCHES light the scene. Houston sits behind a rough plank over barrels between Juan Seguin and Sherman.

THE GALLERY: TEXAS SOLDIERS, SPECTATORS. EMILY in the back, she and Houston engaged in a game of furtive glances between them. Before the judges stands the deserter Knowles, flanked by rangers Anderson and Vern.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

The prisoner before the court is charged with desertion in time of war. Without furlough or orders, Sergeant Ephraim Knowles absented himself from camp at Gonzales, in violation of his sworn oath.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

No different from forty others.

SAM HOUSTON

Who speaks for Sergeant Knowles?

GEORGE HOCKLEY

No one as yet.

SAM HOUSTON

Sergeant, do you have a friend, or a member of your company who you'd like to speak for you?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

I speak for myself! My company's nothin' but a bunch'a snivelin' bastard weasels.

SAM HOUSTON

Sergeant Anderson, I appoint you to speak on behalf of the prisoner.

BILLY ANDERSON

I don't really know him.

SAM HOUSTON

That may be to his advantage.

Titters and muffled laughter come from the gallery.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
Sergeant Knowles, do you stipulate
to the facts as stated--

Assuming his duty, Anderson leaps to his feet to interrupt...

BILLY ANDERSON
He don't stipulate to nothin'. If
I'm speakin' for him, I'll be the
one doin' any stipulatin'.

JUAN SEGUIN
You deny that he deserted?

BILLY ANDERSON
Uh, no. I'm the one arrested him.

More LAUGHTER. Knowles scowls at the gallery, spits.

SIDNEY SHERMAN
You have anything to say on the
man's behalf before he's sentenced?

BILLY ANDERSON
I want to ask him some questions --
Sergeant Knowles, what exactly were
you doing before I arrested you?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
Arguin' with some ole widder woman.

BILLY ANDERSON
But didn't you help that poor lady
through the rushing waters of the
rising flood with her children and
pitiful few possessions?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
I got her across't, then the
ungrateful bitch didn't wanna pay--

BILLY ANDERSON
You got her across. Preservin' her
life and property from the
marauding Mexicans.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
That's right, I was savin' her...

BILLY ANDERSON
Sergeant, aren't you from some
little town in east Georgia?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
Milledgville, Georgia. What of it?

BILLY ANDERSON
Isn't there a feller there that
takes his pecker out in the store
and stands 'round in the rain?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
Yeah? Obediah Claymore.

BILLY ANDERSON
Ain't that area known for people
marrying blood relations. No more'n
one in twenty is born normal.

JUAN SEGUIN
Senor Anderson, are you saying that
Sergeant Knowles is not responsible
for his actions because--

BILLY ANDERSON
It's twenty to one he ain't right
in the head.

The gallery erupts with BIG LAUGHTER. Upset, Knowles yells.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
Damn you all to hell! I am too
right in the head! What's goddamn
insane is stayin' in this joke of
an army to fight for a lost cause!

The LAUGHTER DIES, Knowles' outburst reflecting the worst
fears of many of the soldiers. In the tense silence...

BILLY ANDERSON
Then you're sure to be executed.
(turns to sit)
I'm done defendin'.

Houston glances to Sherman and Sequin. Both officers nod.

SAM HOUSTON
Ephraim Knowles, for your cowardly
desertion from this army in
wartime, in accordance with
military practice and precedent,
the court sentences you to death.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
You call ME a COWARD?! Ain't that
the pot callin' the kettle black?

Vern SLUGS Knowles in the gut with his rifle butt.

SAM HOUSTON

Make your farewells and prepare
your soul for eternity. At first
light you will be taken before the
army firing squad, blindfolded and
shot. God have mercy on your soul.

Houston slams the palm of his hand down on the plank. As the
gallery exits, Houston pulls Hockley aside...

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Now that the message is sent...if
he were to escape in the morning...
I would not view it as a calamity.

57 EXT. TEXAN CAMP, CENTRAL TEXAS - NIGHT 57

THUNDER ECHOES as Emily sneaks through the sleeping camp.
LIGHTNING brighten the MEDICAL WAGON as she sneaks inside.

SOLDIERS in rain slickers, carrying shovels and canvas tarps
to prepare for the coming storm, rush past. After they go--

Emily re-emerges what she's just stolen from the Medial
Wagon: A LIGHTNING FLASH illuminates the BLUE BOTTLE labeled
"OPIUM." She stashes inside her coat as O.S. THUNDER BOOMS.

58 INT. HOUSTON'S TENT - NIGHT - HEAVY RAIN OUTSIDE... 58

Sweating, Houston tosses & turns in his sleep. JERKS awake
from his nightmare! A beat to get his bearings, he lurches
from the bed, pulls out a BOTTLE OF WHISKEY - Uncorks it -
Knocks back a drink, slams the bottle down. He whips around--

A LIGHTNING FLASH through the tent's fabric, reveals:

EMILY sits silently in a chair, eyes on Houston. No telling
how long she's been here. O.S. THUNDER & O.S. RAIN OUTSIDE
punctuate the silence. Houston shrugs re: the whiskey.

SAM HOUSTON

I don't drink when I'm at war.
It's medicinal to help me sleep.
(another long drink)
See? Just a shot to ease tension.
How long you been sitting here?

He deliberately CAPS the bottle, pushes it back.

EMILY WEST

Long enough... You still havin'
that same nightmare?

She rises and lightly strokes his wounded shoulder, smooths his tousled hair in a familiar manner. He stiffens.

SAM HOUSTON

This isn't Basin Street.
Persuasions received there are not
welcome here.

As he pulls away from her, Emily SLAPS him across the face.

EMILY WEST

"Persuasions?" As I recall, what
we did 'tween the sheets weren't
called "persuasions."

He goes to splash water on his face. She watches him, tears welling. Houston raises his head, water dripping. Emily's one of the few people he's allowed to see him vulnerable.

SAM HOUSTON

When we were together in New
Orleans, I had that dream only once
the whole time we were together.

EMILY WEST

You ain't taken care 'a that wound.

SAM HOUSTON

Doc says it's unlikely ever to heal.

EMILY WEST

I'm not talkin' about the hole in
your shoulder...

She undoes her blouse, tosses it... stripping as she talks.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)

You married a spoiled Daddy's
southern belle. Her hateful words
were meant to torment you. They
done more harm to you than all your
battles combined. Jes a lil' child
'fraid of a man who needed a grow'd
woman. She was terrified.

(stands naked before him)

Look at me, Sam. I'm not scared.

Houston stares, unable to respond. She lets him savor the soft temptations of her body. He reaches for the bottle.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
 Are you scared? Need "medication"
 'cause you're alone with me...?

Sexual tension boiling, Houston uncorks his whiskey, drinks long and slow, not taking his eyes off her.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
 You gonna give me a stallion or do
 I hafta steal one?

SAM HOUSTON
 Emily, I will not allow you to put
 yourself in harm's way.

EMILY WEST
 Why you think I'd do such a thing?

SAM HOUSTON
 You want revenge for your brother.

EMILY WEST
 What do you care what I want?

SAM HOUSTON
 This is not about what I want.
 (draws her to him)
 I couldn't bear losing you--

EMILY WEST
 Put your arms around me...feel me.

She folds into his arms. He kisses her - hard. They fall back on the cot... their pent-up passion now unhinged.

59 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, CENTRAL TEXAS - MORNING 59

Heavy fog drapes the campground - Houston's big black warhorse slips past - quietly leading it away: Emily.

60 INT. HOUSTON'S TENT - MORNING 60

Naked, sprawled across his cot, a hungover Houston stirs... Off the WHINNY OF A HORSE, Houston's eyes pop open. He jumps up, recoils from a hangover, staggers to open the tent flap:

HOUSTON'S POV: EMILY GALLOPING AWAY... Disappearing into fog.

HOUSTON watches her go, his face unreadable.

61 EXT. PRAIRIE TRAIL - MORNING (LATER) 61

Emily rides slowly, through the thick FOG - As slowly appearing through the MIST from the opposite direction...

LORCA, wearing the colorful serape stolen from a Mexican Soldier he killed, emerges draped in more pistols, with more Mexican scalps hanging from his horse, like a ghost rider...

THEIR EYES LOCK, the determined femme fatale and the avenger silently pass each other... Never breaking eye contact.

62 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, CENTRAL TEXAS - DAY 62

RANGERS Gator, Flores, Beans, Kit and Vern are just getting up, packing their saddlebags, having coffee as Kit Acklin RIDES IN from an early morning scout, does a trick dismount, hurries to get a coffee and warm his hands by the fire.

BILLY ANDERSON

You get ole' man Shrewsbury out?

KIT ACKLIN

Hell, no. Stubborn old fart took a damn potshot at me!

Anderson nudges the still-blanketed Gator with his boot.

BILLY ANDERSON

Let's go, boys - Gotta do a sweep and make sure no other homesteaders got left behind anyways.

The convicted deserter, Sergeant Knowles, shackled, curled in a ball is pretending to be asleep. Flores goes to fix coffee and Beans who gets up to stir a pot over the fire, sees him.

MANUEL FLORES

What do we do with him?

BEANS WILKINS

Nothin'. He's bein' executed.

KIT ACKLIN

I reckon he can wait here, 'till the firing squad come.

GATOR DAVIS

He ain't gonna wait! He run off when he WEREN'T gonna be executed--

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
 No, no, I'll wait for 'em. Y'all
 go on with your duties 'n chores.
 I'll stay right here - On my honor.

Anderson chuckles, "yeah, right."

KIT ACKLIN
 Let's shoot him.

MANUEL FLORES
 Were we supposed to execute him?

BILLY ANDERSON
 That's not Ranger work.

GATOR DAVIS
 Army convicted him, they shoot him.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
 Might I suggest---

VERN ELWOOD
 You're the damn deserter, you don't
 get a say!

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
 --take me with ya. I can help do
 whatsomever you need me for.
 (grabs saddlebags)
 Want me to carry these for ya?

VERN ELWOOD
 Too much jawin'...

Vern draws his gun to coldly blow Knowles head off. Anderson quickly slaps it away - Vern's GUNSHOT goes wild.

BILLY ANDERSON
 I said executin's not Ranger work,
 you dumbass miscreant.

Vern fuming... Looks around, then puts on a phony smile.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
 He's right - Makin' sure people's
 safe from Meskins is more important
 than shootin' some no-account
 deserter. I ain't worth it.

BEANS WILKINS
 (tastes porridge)
 That's for damn sure.

GATOR DAVIS

Hell, the shot 'n powder's worth
more'n you.

Knowles looks hurt off their laughter, but laughs along.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

S'how I see it. You're a smart man.

KIT ACKLIN

(needling him)

I still say we shoot him.

Flores crosses to Knowles, looks him straight in the eye.

MANUEL FLORES

You agree not to rabbit off - and
lend us a hand while we help get
these settlers to safety?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

'Course! S'what I was doin' before.

BILLY ANDERSON

'Cept, you don't charge for your
services - UNDERSTAND! And no
tricks. If'n ya try I'll gladly let
Vern shoot ya.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Yessir. I swear.

(then, packing up)

Though it don't make sense ta do
somethin' 'n not get paid for it.

(off their looks)

Just sayin'.

63 EXT. MEXICAN CAMP - MID-DISTANT VIEW - DAY

63

The fog's cleared. Emily stops, looks towards SANTA ANNA'S
ARMY CAMP. MEXICAN SENTRIES react to her arrival--

--and Emily spurs her stolen horse toward them.

64 INT. SANTA ANNA'S TENT - DAY

64

A RAZOR scrapes a neck with shaving cream as Almonte reports--

ALMONTE

Our sentries captured a woman riding from the north - where the rebel army is encamped. I thought you might want to question her.

WIDEN to show Santa Anna being shaved by his odd-looking, deaf-mute servant ROMOLO. Almonte holds Emily by the arm...

Santa Anna turns to look...and reacts, stunned by her beauty.

SANTA ANNA

Remove your hands off her, Almonte.

He runs his eyes up and down Emily's body, checks himself in the mirror. Romolo hands him a towel to wipe his face.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

No woman is ever held against her will in the quarters of Presidente General Antonio de Padua María Severino López de Santa Anna y Pérez de Lebrón.

ALMONTE

Clearly she belongs to someone of importance. No sign of the whip.

He lifts Emily's dress to reveal her fine lingerie.

ALMONTE (CONT'D)

And her undergarments - French lace. She is no common slave.

Santa Anna raises his eyes to meet Emily's, she SMACKS Almonte's hand away from her, irately erupting...

EMILY

I ain't "common"...OR a slave.
(holds Santa Anna's eyes)
Long ago, I was contracted as an indentured servant, but was freed.

Santa Anna's entranced by her beauty.

SANTA ANNA

What is your name, Senorita?

EMILY

Emily West. Late of New Orleans.

She curtsies as if charmed by the General. Then, with a fluid sensuality, she turns to look about... the beautiful carpets, mahogany furniture, silver candelabras, etc.--

SANTA ANNA

You may go with Colonel Almonte to answer his questions - Or you may remain here and answer mine.

--the enormous, centrally placed, canopied double bed on which Emily allows her gaze to linger. With a sly smile...

EMILY WEST

I believe I'd like to get to know his Excellency better.

SANTA ANNA

(enthralled, deciding)
I'll be fine, Almonte.

65 EXT. RICER ROAD, CENTRAL TEXAS - DAY

65

TEXAS SOLDIERS escort SEVERAL WAGONS of FRONTIER REFUGEES.

SAM HOUSTON (O.C.)

Goddamn Fannin...

Deaf and Karnes patrol the line, follow a frustrated Houston.

DEAF SMITH

I've seen drowning RATS more decisive-

Seething, Houston, who rides a new mount, a beautiful WHITE HORSE named "SARACEN," spots a WAGON, stuck in a muddy rut - Fueled by his anger, he dismounts to help push it out.

HENRY KARNES

Puttin' boots in the oven, don't make 'em biscuits. If'n you was askin' my opinion, which you ain't, I'd relieve him of command.

With their General down in the mud heaving at the wagon, Karnes and Deaf jump in to push as well.

Deaf and Karnes shove as Houston strides around to the front to pull on the tongue of the wagon, muttering his anger...

SAM HOUSTON

Goddamn Fannin, Goddamn bootstrap heroes, Goddamn parlor politicians, GODDAMN EVERY GODDAMN LEATHER-STOCKING PATRIOT who thinks he can win this war on his GODDAMN OWN against GODDAMN Santa Anna!

Off his powerful upward HEAVE, the wagon surges from the mud, with a CRACK! The WAGON DRIVER nods, waves thanks, rolls on.

Spent, Houston sits to catch his breath. Deaf COUGHS. Karnes uncorks his canteen and gulps the water down.

HENRY KARNES

I'm a bit parched myself.

Karnes offers Deaf the canteen. Deaf, spitting out blood, takes a swig, spits it out. Passes the canteen to a concerned Houston, who also takes a swig.

SAM HOUSTON

Deaf, what's Doctor Ewing say about your condition?

DEAF SMITH

Nothin' changed since Doc give me the long face. Don't you nevermind.

The three men sit on the ground for a quiet moment as old friends reflecting... sharing the canteen back and forth as the caravan of wagons continues to roll by...

The Medical Wagon passes, Doc Ewing calls out to Houston.

DOC EWING

Sorry ta hear about Miss Emily. Sure hope she's gonna be a'right. She's a mighty brave woman.

Deaf sees the impact of Emily's name on Houston who remains stoic. Karnes, oblivious, rolls a cigarette...a solemn moment between them... Houston, lost in thought, snaps out of it...

SAM HOUSTON

Deaf, that Tejano Ranger... Flores.

DEAF SMITH

Manuel Flores - He's with Anderson sweepin' for stragglers.

SAM HOUSTON

Summon him up for me.

The moment of bonding has passed... Deaf turns to Karnes.

DEAF SMITH

You heard the General. Let's go fetch Flores.

MANUEL FLORES (PRELAP)
Mr. Shrewsbury? You in there?

66 EXT. FARMHOUSE, CENTRAL TEXAS - DAY

66

Flores, Anderson, Kit, Gator, Beans, Vern and Knowles ride up to a farmhouse, some with their guns out, ready for trouble. The front door hangs open. No sign of life.

MANUEL FLORES
HALLOOO! Shrewsbury?

No response. The rangers look about.

BILLY ANDERSON
The Texian Gover'ment's orderin'
families to evacuate to safer
ground, Shrewsbury! Ya gotta go!

A CRASHING SOUND inside... Rangers ready guns, stay mounted.

GATOR DAVIS
Best come out for your own safety.

VERN ELWOOD
I'll shoot yer skunkass if'n ya don't.

BEANS WILKINS
I'll have a quick gander inside.

He dismounts to go inside.

VERN ELWOOD
Take Knowles. Learn the weasel
about rangerin'.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
I see what you do, I ain't dumb.
No need for me to go.

KIT ACKLIN
(smirks at Knowles)
Still think we oughta shoot him.

GATOR DAVIS
He's a fraidy cat.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
Y'all think I's yella?

Anderson, Acklin, Davis, Flores, Vern ALL SPEAK UP:

ALL RANGERS

I do! I say so! Me, too. You ARE
a coward! Yeller as piss! (etc.)

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

(dismounts in a pique)
I need a pistol.

BILLY ANDERSON

No need... We gotcha covered.

67 INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

67

Knowles enters, looking around the empty room, notes a
COFFEEPOT, uneaten food. He picks up a roughly scrawled SIGN
from the floor, puzzled to read: "GONE FER LICKER"

Off a SCRAPING SOUND from another room, unarmed, Knowles drops
the sign, grabs a shovel by the door, raises it defensively.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Who's that in there?

SCRAPING SOUND again - Knowles grips the shovel, nervous...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES (CONT'D)

YOU BEST ANSWER ME! It's rangers
come to help -

A GIANT HOG bolts from behind the door, panicked, KNOCKING
Knowles over before he can swing the shovel -

68 EXT. FARMHOUSE, CENTRAL TEXAS - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

68

THE HOG bursts outside - Startled, the Rangers quick draw to
SHOOT the PIG, killing it instantly. Knowles stumbles out.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Damn pig 'bout broke my damn leg!

Rangers laugh at their now-gimpy prisoner. Knowles grins.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES (CONT'D)

Looks like bacon 'n ham hocks for
supper.

ON THE ROOF TOP - Anderson with a telescope looking out.

GATOR DAVIS

Watcha looksee?

BILLY ANDERSON
Appears old Jake McClean's place is
a burnin'! Whoa, two riders comin'!

VERN ELWOOD
Bean-eaters?

BILLY ANDERSON
Can't tell yet. Just hold on.

IN THE DISTANCE - TWO RIDERS APPROACH

Beans raises his rifle. Kit Acklin steps in with his.

KIT ACKLIN
You shot the last one.

BEANS WILKINS
What difference it make?

GATOR DAVIS
How's the young man gonna get any
better if you don't let him shoot?

While they're arguing...Vern takes aim, FIRES! One of the
RIDERS' HAT FLIES OFF! Anderson sees through his telescope:

BILLY ANDERSON
GODDAMMIT! Hold your damn fire!
It's Karnes 'n Deaf!

Anderson springs from the roof onto Vern, knocking him down,
Vern jumps up swinging. Anderson slugs him again.

BILLY ANDERSON (CONT'D)
You almost blew Karnes' head off...
(HITS Vern again)
You been itchin' for a wallopin'.

Vern charges back... a VICIOUS FIGHT. The Rangers cheer.

KIT ACKLIN
My money's on Vern... he's a
squirrely one.

Vern pulls TWO knives, deadly serious - Flores draws his gun.

MANUEL FLORES
Put 'em down, Vern. Fun's over.

KIT ACKLIN
That ain't polite.

The Rangers pull them apart as Deaf and Karnes ride up. The RANGERS expect a reprimand for fighting. They don't get one.

HENRY KARNES

We gotta get this Ranger company a better spy glass.

Karnes slappin' his hat, which now has a bullet hole through.

DEAF SMITH

Truett 'n Yancey report back yet?

GATOR DAVIS

Ain't seen hide nor hair of 'em.

69

EXT. CAMPSITE BESIDE WATERFALL - DAY

69

JACK hovers over a cookfire, dicing potatoes, carrots, and onions, a gutted DEER hanging next to him.

BIG FOOT steps out of the waterfall, long underwear soaked, shaking like a dog to dry himself, then picks up a knife.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

You gonna cook them taters or make a necklace out of 'em to wear with your skirt?

He cuts off a slab of MEAT that he flops into a pan. Irritated, Jack picks out hairs, leaves, dirt off the venison as Big Foot sits to clean his fingernails with the knife.

JACK HAYS

I'd venture dyspepsia is not unknown to you.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Can't say I know 'im.

Jack tosses in the vegetables, and sets it on the coals.

BIG FOOT WALLACE (CONT'D)

You know, Hardcase, ya kinda remind me of my big brother, Samuel.

JACK HAYS

I'm chagrined by the notion of a resemblance between myself and any packmember of the Wallace species.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Well, don't get the big head on me.
Y'all don't look no more alike than
me and that mule's ass.

JACK HAYS
Dead ringers, then. Uncanny.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Naw, Sammy's got a way about 'im.
Horse sense, I guess you call it. I
see a lot of him in you.

Big Foot swabs his dingy fingers into the pan, pulls out a potato, and blows on it before he shoves it in his mouth.

BIG FOOT WALLACE (CONT'D)
Needs to stew a bit yet.
(SPITS it out)
When we was growin' up, Sammy saved
my sorry butt more'n once.

JACK HAYS
Ward off the bullies, did he?

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Hell, no. Made me whip 'em. If I
hadn't, he'd have whipped me worse.

JACK HAYS
(grins)
I sense our kinship.

Big Foot reaches into the pan. Jack stabs him with a fork.
Big Foot winces, backs off, while Jack fills his plate.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Samuel taught me how to be a man.
Sass me all you want with that high-
brow blather. I'm payin' you one
hell of a compliment.

JACK HAYS
If your brother's half the man you
are, we're gonna be good friends.

Big Foot smiles, belches, and shoves his plate aside.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Taters could'a used another five
minutes on the coals.

DEAF leads KARNES, ANDERSON, KIT, BEANS, GATOR, FLORES, VERN, and KNOWLES down the road. As they approach the house, a TEENAGER appears in the window, then flits OUT OF VIEW.

DEAF SMITH
Rangin' company! We're clearin'
out stragglers!

DEAF'S POV: A COW, standing by the front door. Pigs and chickens wandering in the yard.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
Somethin' ain't right.
(beat, then)
We saw ya in there! Ain't gonna
hurt ya, come on out!

Deaf pulls out his rifle. Motions for Flores, Anderson, Vern, and Kit to split off around back. Then...

WAILING (O.S.) inside the house, as FOUR TEENAGERS (two boys, two girls) file out, hands up--all of them in tears except the oldest ROY (19) as his frizzy-haired girlfriend CURLS (17) sobs into his shoulder. The other young man, patchy-bearded FUZZ (17) comforts the youngest, crying RUTHIE (16).

RUTHIE
Mexicans done kilt me 'n my
sister's Ma 'n Pa. Shot 'em down
like dogs, they did.

GATOR DAVIS
How come they let you be?

ROY
Their folks sent us to town for
groceries, gunpowder and ball.
Found 'em as they lay.

BEANS WILKINS
How you know it was Mexicans who
done it?

FUZZ
Seen 'em ride off with my own eyes.

HENRY KARNES
You boys related?

ROY
No sir. We's just ranchhands - Mr.
and Mrs. Davis was good people.
(MORE)

ROY (CONT'D)

They didn't deserve what was done
to 'em.

Through the OPEN DOORWAY, TWO BLOODIED BODIES - an OLDER MAN
and WOMAN - can be seen. Deaf looks on the scene with pity.

DEAF SMITH

Could help y'all with the buryin',
but we best get after them soldiers
'fore they hit the next farm.

Curls raises up from SOBBING into Roy's shoulder, sniffles--

CURLS

Thankee kindly, sir, y'all make
sure they don't murder nobody else.

Flores, Anderson, Vern, and Kit ride around from the rear.
Survey the scene. Look at Deaf.

BILLY ANDERSON

What they'd do for horses? We
didn't see no cavalry tracks.

RUTHIE

(distraught, angry)

Got two dead says they were here.
Whether you go after 'em or not
ain't my affair. But you leave us
be and let us bury our loved ones.

HENRY KARNES

If they're out there, we'll find
'em, sure enough.

DEAF SMITH

Our sympathies.

Deaf tips his hat, spurs his horse. The other Rangers
follow. Anderson looks back, curious. Then at the road.
Shakes his head, and rides on.

The four teenagers watch them go for a long beat. Then--

FUZZ

Them's gotta be the dumbest
white men in Texas.

They march back into the house - THROUGH THE OPEN DOORWAY, we
can see them filling rucksacks with anything they can carry.

Off a MOAN from the dying Old Man, Ruthie pulls a KNIFE from
her boot, walks over to him, and SLITS his THROAT.

71 INT. SANTA ANNA'S TENT - LATE DAY

71

Dining... Romolo pours sherry into crystal glasses. Santa Anna and Emily - Their eye contact sizzles with sexuality.

SANTA ANNA
My suspicion is that you are
running away from a man.

EMILY WEST
Why would you 'spect that?

SANTA ANNA
It's what beautiful women do.

EMILY WEST
I like to think I might be runnin'
to somethin'.

Almonte BURSTS in with SOLDIERS, guns trained on Emily.

ALMONTE
Excuse me General, the saddle of
the horse she was riding, has the
monogram of General Sam Houston.

Stunned... but even more intrigued, Santa Anna studies her.

SANTA ANNA
This the man you are running from?

Emily turns from his look, as if she's just been caught.

EMILY WEST
Likely hasn't noticed I'm gone.

ALMONTE
She's a spy, General - Or a nigger
slave sent to assassinate you.

SANTA ANNA
Why are you here?

EMILY WEST
Your soldiers brought me here--

SANTA ANNA
Why did you leave General Houston?

EMILY WEST
I saw his face when he heard what
happened at the Alamo. He wasn't
the man I thought he was.

ALMONTE

I do not believe her--

EMILY WEST

I was runnin' away, perhaps back to New Orleans, I don't know where.

SANTA ANNA

(smiles, intrigued)

Colonel, your vigilance is commendable, but I will handle the interrogation.

ALMONTE

Yes, your Excellency.

Masking his irritation, Almonte and his men leave.

SANTA ANNA

Now you are here. What do you want?

EMILY WEST

A warm bath... With you in it.

Santa Anna bursts out laughing.

SANTA ANNA

Romolo! A bath for Miss West.

72

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, CENTRAL TEXAS - LATE DAY

72

Silhouetted by the setting sun, KIT rides a BUCKING HORSE in a makeshift CORRAL - Rebecca watches, thrilled by his expertise.

BY A CAMPFIRE - Young Colby sits cleaning an OLD PISTOL as anxious SOLDIERS gather round Beans, who, roasting the HOG, pinches off a piece and tastes it, taunting them...

BEANS WILKINS

Mmmm, I'm so starved I'd eat the south end of a northbound goat.

The hungry men GROAN, AD-LIB, "Hurry up!" "Done yet?" etc...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Lemme carve that porker - I flushed him out!

The Rangers laugh at this, jump in to tease...

GATOR DAVIS

After you was done crying like a li'l girl, "My leg, my leg, the mean ole hog done broke my leg--"

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

(off everyone's laughter)

Did not! I risked my life goin' in
there - Coulda been Santanistas or
Comanches hidin' in ambush!

ANGLE - Sarah carries a basket of LAUNDRY (including recycled
bandages washed in the river) to hang on a rope clothesline.

VERN ELWOOD

That pert li'l seniorita that Truett
'n Yancey is sweet on must need
comfortin' with them boys gone--

GATOR DAVIS

Watch yourself, Vern. That's Doc
Ewing's daughter.

VERN ELWOOD

He married a Meskin?

MANUEL FLORES

Tejano - Doc won't never talk about
it...but she ain't around no more.

VERN ELWOOD

Poor thing - No mama.

He starts toward Sarah, past Anderson who smokes a pipe.

BILLY ANDERSON

Don't you be pesterin' that gal,
Vern! Her daddy'll shoot yer dick
off! And I'd help him!

Vern throws a "fuck off" hand gesture, swoops in to help her
catch the weighted-down clothesline when it droops and falls--

SARAH EWING

That's all right, I got it.

She struggles to raise the rope back up and re-tie it. Vern
takes the rope and easily ties it back firmly to the tree.

VERN ELWOOD

A young flower blossomin' like you
ought never try to do a man's work.

Sarah's grateful and flattered by Vern's attentions as the Doc
steps out of the Medical tent, frowning at Vern--

DOC EWING

Sarah, inside.

The young girl smiles again at Vern before rushing on inside the Medical Tent. Doc scowls at him until Vern moves off.

ANGLE - BY MAKESHIFT CORRAL - Dusty and sweaty from his ride, Kit shuts the gate as Rebecca, beaming, limps over to him.

REBECCA PIT

That was amazing...

KIT ACKLIN

Maybe the doc ought take a look at that ankle. Can't be too careful.

REBECCA PIT

Oh, it just twisted a little when I stepped off that rock in the river--

She stumbles, falls (purposely) against Kit, who catches her. She smiles her gratitude as Kit holds onto her, coyly...

REBECCA PIT (CONT'D)

Reckon it does need some attention.

73

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, CENTRAL TEXAS - NIGHT

73

BY AN OPEN TENT - Baker and Sherman discuss politics with Hockley, Seguin and a few others.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

President Jackson favors Western Expansion all the way to the Pacific.

MOSLEY BAKER

Then why the hell don't he step in and help us throw out these Mexican masters, then he's free to let us into the Union, with a clear path all the ways to California.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

The hell with the Union! Texas should be its own sovereign nation.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

Old Hickory is bound by treaty. He can't invade Mexico 'less you wanna give Spain, France 'n those scuzzy Brits an excuse to intervene. Then we gotta take on everybody.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

But this is Texas.

JUAN SEGUIN

Texas is part of Mexico. What do you think we are fighting for?

MOSELY BAKER

That's where you're mistaken, Cap'n. With Houston as our General we ain't doin' much fighting.

74 INT. SAM HOUSTON'S TENT, ARMY CAMP - NIGHT

74

Houston's writing, his back to Deaf, Karnes and Flores.

SAM HOUSTON

Been pondering your suggestion to relieve Fannin...which I should do ...but the politics of command always make it difficult to do what's right.

HENRY KARNES

You'd expect better from a West Point man.

Houston closes his journal. Passes cigars to everyone.

SAM HOUSTON

West Point, my ass. It's like putting a crow's egg in an eagle's nest. Politics be damned. If your Ranger boys come back without Fannin, I'll cut him loose.

DEAF SMITH

Truett 'n Yancey are due to report back tomorrow.

Houston lights Flores' cigar, studies him intensely.

SAM HOUSTON

Senor Flores, do you think you could infiltrate Santa Anna's camp?

MANUEL FLORES

If and when it comes to the point I cannot get into an enemy camp and get back out again... pull a pistol and shoot me. I wouldn't be worth weak piss rangerin' anyway.

SAM HOUSTON

Good, Flores... good. Assess the size and readiness of his troops.
(MORE)

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

(then, circumspect)

Find out if Emily is there - If she's in trouble, get her out. She can be high-strung, but you strike me as a man who can handle it.

75 INT. SANTA ANNA'S TENT - NIGHT

75

CANDLE LIGHT. Santa Anna and Emily sit in warm water and suds in a grand silver bathtub.

SANTA ANNA

Your love affair...was tempestuous?

EMILY WEST

If'n that means fiery - A blaze so scorching it consumes itself. Houston's obsessed with me or he's cold to the touch.

Emily slides her feet between Santa Anna's legs.

SANTA ANNA

I am cold when I have reason to be.

EMILY WEST

Then I must make certain that you stay very... very... warm.

She RISES, soapsuds clinging to her body. Mesmerized, Santa Anna watches her step out of the tub--

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)

You will like my surprise...

Emily reaches into her boot... ROMOLO QUICKLY GRABS HER HAND - Having not seen him come up behind her, Emily GASPS...

Romolo pulls her hand up, she's holding Doc's BLUE BOTTLE.

Santa Anna and Romolo look at the bottle... Emily pops the cork and seductively sips the liquid opium.

SANTA ANNA

Romolo! More hot water!

As Romolo exits, Emily holds the bottle for Santa Anna to sip. Santa Anna closes his eyes, enjoying the warm effects of the opium... Emily nibbles his ear and pinches his nipple--

--then quickly removes a SMALL PISTOL hidden in her boot and stashes it under a pillow. Just in time as--

Santa Anna opens his eyes. She re-enters the bath. His SHARP INTAKE OF BREATH lets us know that she's found his erection. He's panting, high, trying not to climax.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
Your General Houston...is he...
is he as much of a man as me?

Santa Anna, head back, revelling in her erotic manipulations.

EMILY WEST
Why General...is it me you want?
Or Sam Houston?

SANTA ANNA
(takes more opium)
Well, I have you. I can see how a
man could be obsessed with you...
But do not think I am fooled... I
know that a sweet-scented yellow
rose like you has sharp thorns.

EMILY WEST
Perhaps, on occasion...But tonight,
I am the one to get pricked.

She slides him inside her, thrusting. Santa Anna thrashes about off his exploding orgasm.

76 INT. GOLIAD STABLES - MORNING 76

Yancey saddles his horse. A sleepy Truett sits up.

YANCEY BURNS
No time to dilly dally, sleepyhead.
Gotta report back to Cap'n Smith.
There's hero'ing to be done.

Yancey picks up a pail, TOSSES WATER on Truett who jumps up.

77 EXT. GOLIAD, FORT DEFIANCE - MORNING (HIGH SHOT) 77

Silhouetted against a magnificent orange SUNRISE, Truett and Yancey gallop out of the fort, into the wide expanse of Texas.

78 EXT. GOLIAD PRAIRIE - VARIOUS ANGLES - MORNING 78

A spectacular day for a ride, over the hills, through the trees. The exuberance of youth as they playfully race each other, changing leads and kidding with each another.

Until the boys ride in close to...

79 EXT. GENERAL URREA'S CAMP - MORNING

79

A CIRCLE OF TENTS, tethered horses, artillery pieces. MEXICAN SOLDIERS sleep by smoldering campfires. Truett and Yancey are shocked to find themselves surrounded in the enemy camp!

TRUETT FINCHAM
Holy mother of Jesus!

Sleepy MEXICAN SENTRIES, equally startled, raise their guns--

YANCEY BURNS
HOLY SHIT! We gotta git back to
Goliad and warn Fannin!

The SENTRIES OPEN FIRE, near-missing Truett & Yancey as they hightail it back the way they came towards Goliad. Awakened by the GUNSHOTS, other Mexican SOLDIERS grab their rifles--

GENERAL URREA (40s), a greying, distinguished professional, explodes from his tent as Portilla rushes over from another tent - Urrea raises a hand to stop his men from shooting.

GENERAL URREA
CEASE FIRE! Let them go!

PORTILLA
They'll warn the rebels--

GENERAL URREA
--and strike fear in their hearts.
Fear makes men foolish and rash.

He picks up a brace of PISTOLS and straps on his SWORD--

GENERAL URREA (CONT'D)
Ready the troops for attack.

Portilla heads through the camp to rally the TROOPS as--

80 EXT. GOLIAD PRAIRIE - DAY

80

Yancey and Truett ride hell-for-leather back to Goliad to warn their fellow Texians at FORT DEFIANCE--

FADE OUT.

END NIGHT ONE

PRODUCTION DRAFT: 1-15-14

TEXAS RANGERS

Night 2

Written by
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NIGHT TWO - TEXAS RANGERS

81 EXT. GOLIAD, TEXAS - FORT DEFIANCE - DAY

81

Truett and Yancey race their horses into the fort.

YANCEY BURNS
Close the damn gate!

TRUETT FINCHAM
Meskins... Hundreds of 'em!

YANCEY BURNS
Just a few miles back--

The SOLDIERS and SETTLERS rush around, terror setting in.

SAMUEL WALLACE
Our last scouting report...Urrea's
army wasn't due for several days.

YANCEY BURNS
You got some lousy scouts.

SAMUEL WALLACE
Colonel, should I ride for help or
start organizing our defenses?

COLONEL FANNIN
No. Pack up...we're moving out--
(yells, to crowd)
PREPARE TO MARCH! Take only
essentials - HURRY!

PANIC starts... Everyone moves like lightning.

TRUETT FINCHAM
We ought make a stand right here.

SAMUEL WALLACE
The boy's right.

Fannin wrestles with the right decision...

COLONEL FANNIN
Stay put, we will be blockaded.

SAMUEL WALLACE
In the open, we'll be slaughtered--

COLONEL FANNIN
Not if we make it out in time.

Concerned, Yancey and Truett look to Samuel.

82 EXT. ARMY COMMAND TENT, TEXAN CAMP - DAY 82

Hockley, Deaf, and Seguin walk to the command tent. Hockley turns to speak with some SOLDIERS lounging about.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
Post a guard ten feet away. I want
no one within earshot.

JUAN SEGUIN
Good. There are spies everywhere.

83 INT. ARMY COMMAND TENT, TEXAN CAMP - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 83

C.U. MAP delineating the geography and positions: GOLIAD, THE ALAMO, VICTORIA, COMANCHE TERRITORY, SETTLERS PATHWAY WEST. Highlighted: Santa Anna's & Urrea's ARMIES, HOUSTON'S TROOPS.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
Santa Anna is decimating us.

Houston's finger pokes points on the MAP - He does not look up at Hockley, Deaf, Seguin.

SAM HOUSTON
Let's just see the situation for
what it is.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
Morale's sinking, General.

JUAN SEGUIN
Gotta tell the men something to
give them hope.

SAM HOUSTON
We need to learn from Travis's
mistakes - Do what is prudent, not
what emotion dictates. Santa Anna's
strategy is to catch us out on the
open prairie, where numbers count.

Deaf sees Seguin's conflicted position, leans to him, an aside-

DEAF SMITH
Ain't too late for you to cross
over to Santa Anna's line.

Seguin remains stone-faced as Houston points to the MAP.

SAM HOUSTON

Can't take the risk of getting pincered between Urrea's and Santa Anna's armies. We withdraw east to Victoria. Stretch out their supply lines. Pick our ground.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

The men will mutiny. There's talk already.

SAM HOUSTON

Let 'em talk while we're retreating...

Houston begins packing his saddlebags, preparing to depart.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

But what do we tell the Troops? And dissidents like Baker and Sherman--

SAM HOUSTON

To FOLLOW ORDERS! You men are in charge while I'm away. Our boys have one good battle left in 'em. If it comes at the wrong time, we all die.

JUAN SEGUIN

You're leaving? Where to?

SAM HOUSTON

(ignoring question)

Always look beyond the next battle to win the war, no matter the consequences.

Packing, he glances up as if surprised they're still here.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Drill the men. Discipline them. Make 'em an army. Dismissed.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

(as they exit tent)

Don't know if I feel a little better knowing all that...or a whole lot worse.

Houston catches Deaf by the shirtsleeve for a private aside...

SAM HOUSTON

Rally the Rangers. We're off to Goliad. I'm personally pulling Fannin's head out of his puckered West Point ass.

84 EXT. MEXICAN POSITION, COLETO CREEK - DAY 84

A MEXICAN ARTILLERYMAN tamps the charge of a large CANNON with his RAM ROD. A second ARTILLERYMAN drops a round into the barrel - a GUNNER holds the burning match near the fuse.

GENERAL URREA
FIRE!

The gunner touches his match to the fuse, the cannon FIRES, recoiling from the explosion, SMOKE FILLS THE FRAME...

85 EXT. TEXAN POSITION - DAY - INTERCUT 85

Fannin and his TROOPS quickly move through an open field of TALL GRASS heading towards the creek.

A CANNONBALL EXPLODES... unleashing death, despair and destruction as TEXANS scramble for cover and return FIRE.

THE BATTLEFIELD - TEXANS under siege - TRAPPED in the open tall prairie grass, about 400 yards from the CREEK.

ANOTHER CANNONBALL EXPLOSION. Shrapnel pierces Fannin's leg.

COLONEL FANNIN
Defensive positions. SQUARE UP!

The Texans square up (like circling up a wagon train) but in an extremely weak defensive position -

Fannin, crawls behind a WAGON next to the DEAD DRIVER'S BODY... Yancey rushes to Fannin's aide. Tearing the dead Driver's shirt, he wraps cloth around Fannin's wound.

COLONEL FANNIN (CONT'D)
WALLACE! Send scouts to Houston.

SAMUEL WALLACE
NEED VOLUNTEERS!

YANCEY BURNS
Houston done warned ya... he ain't sending no one--

COLONEL FANNIN
(frightened)
He must. He can't afford another Alamo massacre on his conscience.

INTERCUT - MEXICAN INFANTRY in formation, aim rifles...FIRE!

TEXAN POSITION - Truett INTO THE GRASS NEXT TO SAMUEL WALLACE
- working as a team, they take turns FIRING & RE-LOADING -

The MEXICAN SOLDIERS slowly and methodically advance.

Off EXPLOSIONS, Yancey, Truett and Samuel duck, FIRE BACK.

SAMUEL WALLACE

Choose your targets well, boys.
Powder and shot won't last.

SOLDIERS desperate for orders, huddle around a FROZEN FANNIN.

TRUETT FINCHAM

How in tarnation did Fannin become
an officer?!

SAMUEL WALLACE

Must'a married well.

86 EXT. MEXICAN POSITION, COLETO CREEK - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 86

Urrea signals Portilla, who, on horseback, rides over to him.

GENERAL URREA

Tell General Santa Anna that we
have the rebels from Goliad
surrounded. Surrender is imminent.

PORTILLA

His Excellency will not ACCEPT
surrender - You must finish them!

GENERAL URREA

This is MY command, Colonel. I am a
professional soldier, not a butcher

Jaw clenched in anger, Portilla wheels his horse around.

PORTILLA

I will deliver your message.

With a sharp heel to his mount, he GALLOPS OFF.

87 EXT. DEAF SMITH'S HOMESTEAD - DAY 87

Deaf's digging a hole, a goat and chickens nearby. Carrying
wet clothes, Guadalupe & toddler Pedro exit house, spot Deaf.

GUADALUPE SMITH

DEAF! DEAF!

Not hearing, Deaf continues digging. Little Pedro happily runs to Deaf, trips and falls. Guadalupe picks him up.

GUADALUPE SMITH (CONT'D)
You're digging the chest up?

DEAF SMITH
You an' the boy need to go to your cousins.

GUADALUPE SMITH
I'm not goin' anywhere without you.

DEAF SMITH
Them Mexican bastards are comin'--

GUADALUPE SMITH
I'm Mexican.

DEAF SMITH
So was I...now we're Texians -
(stops digging)
Yer right, I'm sorry - But this ain't about us. It's a'gin a tyrant we can't abide by.
(resumes digging)
Ain't seen Half-Breed.

GUADALUPE SMITH
Comes 'n goes, got a mind of his own.

DEAF SMITH
Smart dog. Knows when to git... which is what you gotta do til we whoop Santa Anna.

GUADALUPE SMITH
And if you do not?

DEAF SMITH
It don't matter 'cause we won't be here no more.

THUD - Shovel hits the chest. Deaf bends down to lift it up - Sees the sad and frightened Guadalupe crying. He puts down the chest to wipe her tears with his handkerchief. He gets misty as well, but remains stoic.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
I always seem to make you cry.

GUADALUPE SMITH

You are always wiping my tears.
But you never let me see yours.

She tenderly takes the handkerchief and wipes his eyes. The BLEATING of a GOAT, tied nearby shakes him out of it. A nod:

DEAF SMITH

I brought us a goat, fresh milk for
the boy.

88

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, CENTRAL TEXAS - LATE DAY

88

Hockley and Seguin drill a SQUAD OF INFANTRY. The troops lack precision and enthusiasm, grouse, half-heartedly participate.

INTERCUT - BAKER AND SHERMAN watch as the squad hesitates, and move haphazardly forward -

MOSLEY BAKER

Houston's gotta stop wasting time
with drills and march us to Goliad -
Else we'll have another Alamo on
our hands.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

If President Burnet knew the situation
here it'd be a different story.

Baker points out slickly-dressed MIRABEAU LAMAR (38) in line.

MOSLEY BAKER

That's Mirabeau Lamar. He's been
secretly circulating a petition
among the men to remove Houston.

The confused troops stumble into one another.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

HALT! Forward at the double!

The troops try to re-form. Frustrated, Lamar yells out...

MIRABEAU LAMAR

I volunteered to fight for Texas,
not be in a damn Easter parade!

Before Hockley can respond, Baker, stifling a grin, yells...

MOSLEY BAKER

Private Lamar, get over here!
(two-faced, to Hockley)
(MORE)

MOSLEY BAKER (CONT'D)
 Colonel, we will not tolerate
 insolent behavior. Keep drilling
discipline into these soldiers!

Lamar is prepared to be reprimanded... Instead, Baker and Sherman pull him aside for a furtive, private confab.

SIDNEY SHERMAN
 We need to get a message to
 Secretary of War, Rusk.

MOSLEY BAKER
 We are at a crisis with our gutless
 Commander and we hear that you are
 of like mind.

Curious about the men huddling, Seguin crosses, eyeing Lamar.

JUAN SEGUIN
 They may not know how to march, but
 they know how to argue.

In the mid-distance, Houston gallops across the field.

SIDNEY SHERMAN
 Where's he off to?

JUAN SEGUIN
 The General doesn't report to me.

MIRABEAU LAMAR
 Colonel Seguin, despite our poor
 marching abilities, be comforted
 that the men's hatred for Santa
 Anna binds them together--

After Seguin walks away, Lamar quips to Baker and Mosley...

MIRABEAU LAMAR (CONT'D)
 --and their hatred for Sam Houston.

89

EXT. DEAF SMITH'S HOMESTEAD - LATE DAY

89

THE TEXAS RANGERS - waiting, mounted, ready to ride, see...

HOUSTON APPROACHING at a fast gallop - not slowing down as he
 reins his horse and elbows around the RANGERS, continuing on.

THE RANGERS take off at full speed behind their leader, a
 magnificent force riding into action. Guadalupe, holding
 Pedro's hand, watches the men silhouetted against the SUNSET.

90 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP - NIGHT

90

START CLOSE ON HEELS OF A DANCING SENORITA... MARIACHIS play a rousing FLAMENCO. MEXICAN TROOPS drink and celebrate - a MEXICAN FIESTA. Amidst the festivities...

Emily, in a new dress, dances for a formally-dressed Santa Anna, who sits next to his OFFICERS, as Almonte approaches and whispers in his ear. Santa Anna nods, and rises, holding out his hands to stop the music. The dancers pause, as the entire festivity comes to an abrupt halt, all eyes on Santa Anna.

SANTA ANNA

Tonight, my countrymen, we celebrate not only our successes in battle, but the total victory to come! Houston is on the run. Settlers are scrambling for the US border.

Santa Anna acknowledges the CHEERS, showing off for the crowd... aware of Emily watching him.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

For over 300 years, history has spoken of Cortez's conquest of Montezuma, and his destruction of the Aztecs. So will it speak for centuries to come of Santa Anna's eradication of the Texian rebel army and reunification of Mexico!

Amidst the CHEERING CROWD, Emily is startled to spot RANGER FLORES lurking. He looks back... They make eye contact.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Who among you is a brave volunteer?

Many raise their hands. Ubaldo DOES NOT.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Ubaldo... I see you would like to accept this great honor.

The crowd CHEERS him on, so, reluctantly, Ubaldo steps up.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Dispatch this message under flag of truce to General Houston, from the great peoples of Mexico and me, Presidente-General Santa Anna...

(a nod to Emily)

"No matter how vast the territory, there will be no refuge, no escape, no surrender...no mercy.

(MORE)

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

You will be hunted down, butchered,
and fed to my pigs - Then, in turn,
we will feast on you in
celebration!"

The CROWD ERUPTS. Santa Anna smirks at an unhappy Ubaldo,
signals for the MUSIC to continue, goes to sit by Emily.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

The men need that sort of thing.

Having switched horses, Portilla rides up to Santa Anna.

PORTILLA

Your Excellency, Urrea has taken
Goliad with over 300 prisoners.

SANTA ANNA

Prisoners? Didn't you hear what I
just said! These men are fighting
under no recognized flag. The
rules of war do not apply!

ALMONTE

Your supreme Excellency, it's the
Easter celebration. Tomorrow is
Palm Sunday. Perhaps mercy would be
the Christian thing to do.

SANTA ANNA

They are of the Devil, not Jesus.
And there will be no Resurrection.

91 EXT. TEXAN POSITION, COLETO CREEK - NIGHT

91

A lull in the fighting. Campfires flicker. Terrorized,
fatigued faces pondering their fate. Truett's eyelids hang
heavy... his head drops - He jerks back up with a gasp.

SAMUEL WALLACE

Get some sleep, boys. Urrea won't
try another assault til morning...
He's in no need to hurry.

TRUETT FINCHAM

I feel like I've been et by a wolf--

YANCEY BURNS

--then shit off a cliff.

The boys muster a meager laugh at one another.

SAMUEL WALLACE
You boys brothers?

YANCEY BURNS
He's too ugly to be relations.

TRUETT FINCHAM
He's too stupid...

SAMUEL WALLACE
I got a brother. Call him Big Foot
on a'count he killed an Indian with
big feet.

Sharing a lighter moment together, Samuel looks at the unique silver, engraved bracelet on his wrist.

SAMUEL WALLACE (CONT'D)
Our Pap was a Virginia Blacksmith,
made us matchin' wrist cuffs to
bond us. I hope like hell to see
him again.

92

EXT. DECAYING SPANISH HACIENDA - MORNING

92

Shrouded by thick FOG. From another century, crumbling and overgrown - Big Foot and Jack sleep on bedrolls inside the decayed structure's partial shelter as--

--the FILTHY TEENAGE BANDITS, Roy, Curls, Ruthie, and Fuzz, quietly sneak through the dense mist a short distance away, eyeing Jack's fine blooded horse. A hot whisper--

ROY
Take their horses 'n let's git...

The curly-haired young vixen "Curls" untethers Jack's horse, glances back to check on their victims- She reacts to...

ANGLE - Big Foot's silver WRIST CUFF (a match to his brother Samuel's) glistening in the golden firelight.

CURLS
Want me that fancy geegaw--

She impulsively starts for Big Foot. Roy freaks. Ruthie catches her arm.

RUTHIE
Stop... you'll wake 'em up.

FUZZ
 (a loud cackle)
 Let's just shoot 'em!

Jolted into action, Roy swings his gun around just as--

--JACK jerks awake just in time to KNOCK Roy's gun OUT OF HIS HANDS and TACKLE the delinquent. Ruthie swings her rifle butt to POUND Jack off of boyfriend Roy.

Fuzz SLAMS his pistol upside Big Foot's face, knocking him unconscious. Fuzz cocks his gun to finish him off--

Dazed, Jack pulls a KNIFE from his boot, lunges at Fuzz, who stumbles backwards, FIRING wildly as Roy gets the horses. In the commotion Curls strips the bracelet off the unconscious BIG FOOT.

ROY
 FERGIT THE DAMN TRINKET, LET'S GIT!

Big Foot, groggily regaining consciousness, staggers after Curls who races to Roy and jumps on her horse.

The delinquents take off...Jack scoops up Roy's dropped gun, aims to shoot... Ruthie's horse SIDESTEPS in the crossfire.

BOOM! Ruthie SCREAMS, falls wounded, her horse runs away. Roy yanks the bleeding girl up onto his horse--

Jack & Big Foot recover as the punks ride off with the loot.

93 EXT. COLETO CREEK, TEXAS - MORNING 93

ARTILLERY and MEXICAN SOLDIERS creep forward into positions.

94 EXT. TEXAN POSITION, COLETO CREEK - MORNING 94

Yancey and Truett sound asleep, Samuel nudges them awake.

SAMUEL WALLACE
 I hear 'em clickin' 'n signaling

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! ARTILLERY EXPLOSIONS and MUSKET FIRE shred their position - Men SCREAM and die! Truett SHOOTs, but then, suddenly, his head JERKS BACK and his eyes glaze.

TRUETT FINCHAM
 Yance! I can't see--

Yancey sees Truett on his knees, gun still aimed...

YANCEY BURNS
HELP! SOMEBODY...WE NEED BANDAGES!

ONE SIDE OF TRUETT'S HEAD IS BLEEDING - As he collapses...

TRUETT FINCHAM
Yancey...?

Truett tries to turn to Yancey...FALLS. Yancey grabs him.

YANCEY BURNS
TRUETT!! No, oh God, please no...
(breaks, crying)
C'mon, partner, we gotta be heroes -
You can't die 'n leave me alone...

EXPLOSIONS pummel them... Samuel tugs at Yancey, who rocks his dead friend like a baby.

SAMUEL WALLACE
Leave him be, son. It ain't over
yet. Got yourself to look after.

YANCEY BURNS
Those sons 'a bitches - Those
goddamn sons 'a bitches--

Yancey gently lays Truett's body aside. Numb with shock, he scurries about, arming himself with dropped guns and knives.

YANCEY BURNS (CONT'D)
I'm gonna get Cap'n Smith. Ole Deaf
'n the Rangers'll get us outta this

SAMUEL WALLACE
You can't go out there--

He grabs ahold of Yancey's shirt. Yancey jerks away.

YANCEY BURNS
RANGERS DON'T TAKE NO ORDERS FROM
THE DAMN ARMY!

Samuel can't stop him. He jumps on his horse, gallops off.

95 EXT. OPEN BATTLEFIELD, COLETO CREEK - MORNING (CONTINUING) 95

In no man's land, Yancey swings down against the side of his horse, hand hooked on the saddle, a trick learned from Kit.

ANGLE - THE MEXICAN POSITION - GENERAL URREA

Cooling their cannons with water, Mexicans prepare for another assault. They look towards the battlefield--

--with Yancey's body shielded, from this angle and distance, it looks like a LOOSE HORSE trotting across the field.

INTERCUT - MEXICANS & TEXANS W/YANCEY'S RIDE

Fannin, Samuel and the Texans watch the brave Ranger with baited breath. Riding sideways, Yancey gets past the Mexican line, feeling safe, he swings back up into the saddle--

BLAM, BLAM, BLAM, BLAM! - HIDDEN IN THE TALL GRASS, MEXICAN SOLDIERS RISE UP TO RIDDLE YANCEY WITH BULLETS! Yancey's body bobs about like a marionette until he falls off, dead.

Fannin, Wallace, the Texans and even the Mexican Soldiers gape in horror. PAN ACROSS this tragic tableau of war, TO...

96 EXT. STAND OF TREES - OUTSIDE BATTLEFIELD - DAY 96

Stolen HORSES, loaded with WEAPONS and MEXICAN SCALPS.

PAN UP THE TREE: Perched on a limb, LORCA watches the battle.

97 EXT. TEXAN POSITION, COLETO CREEK - DAY 97

CANNON FIRE RESUMES...

SAMUEL WALLACE

Colonel, we should parley - 'fore we're entirely at their mercy.

FANNIN, unnerved, indecisive. Samuel rips the white shirt off a dead soldier, ties it to his rifle, WAVES IT over his head--

--distant CHEERING can be heard from the Mexican position.

Samuel hands Fannin a make-shift crutch.

COLONEL FANNIN

I'll insist on fair terms.

He pulls himself erect, squares his shoulders with dignity, hobbles towards the Mexican lines. Dry, gallows humor...

SAMUEL WALLACE

Don't be too tough on 'em, Colonel. They got their pride too.

98 EXT. BATTLEFIELD, COLETO CREEK - DAY

98

Texan and Mexican soldiers watch silently. General Urrea halts his horse a few paces from the limping, humbled Fannin.

GENERAL URREA

I can not offer you terms. You must surrender at discretion.

COLONEL FANNIN

If you won't grant their lives my men will keep killing Mexicans until their last breath.

GENERAL URREA

Surrender, Colonel. I will see that your men are fed and taken prisoner to the Presidio at La Bahia. In time, you may well be paroled and returned to your country. Otherwise, I must renew the attack and kill all who resist.

COLONEL FANNIN

If you'll give me your assurance that my men will be treated under the rules of war.

GENERAL URREA

As a professional soldier and a man of honor, I will appeal on your behalf to El Presidente.

COLONEL FANNIN

I suppose...that's the best I can do.

Urrea, not surprised, rides away. Fannin calls out...

COLONEL FANNIN (CONT'D)

I'll rely on your earnest efforts!

Urrea doesn't acknowledge. The Texan soldiers assume the Mexicans have accepted their terms, give a RAGGED CHEER.

ON SAMUEL WALLACE - Watching intently. Not so sure that their wishy-washy Colonel has made a truce.

99 EXT. PLAINS, CENTRAL TEXAS - DAY

99

Houston leads the RANGERS riding hellbent toward Goliad--

100 EXT. GOLIAD, TEXAS - DAY

100

TEXAN PRISONERS, SINGING the hymn "My Faith Looks Up To Thee," are herded out of town by MEXICAN SOLDIERS. They march past Portilla who watches with smug satisfaction.

COLONEL FANNIN
Colonel Portilla!

Fannin, on his crutch propels himself across the square.

COLONEL FANNIN (CONT'D)
Where are you taking my men? I...I should be with them.

PORTILLA
You couldn't keep up and would have to be shot like a lame horse.

COLONEL FANNIN
But... General Urrea promised--

PORTILLA
He does not speak for General Santa Anna who does not tolerate traitors

Portilla's smirk tells Fannin of his fate. Resigned, Fannin takes a moment to listen to the distant SINGING. Then...

COLONEL FANNIN
If I'm to be executed, I want to be shot in the chest and buried like a Christian, in a box, with a marker. I also ask you send this watch--

His hands shaking, Fannin forages in his pocket, produces a GOLD POCKET WATCH which he hands to Portilla--

COLONEL FANNIN (CONT'D)
--to my family in Marion, Georgia.

Portilla opens the watch, shakes it beside his ear.

PORTILLA
Perhaps, if you were a soldier - But you are a stinking WETBACK, swam across the Sabine River to squat illegally in MY country--

He pockets the watch, draws his pistol...

PORTILLA (CONT'D)
You only make trouble for soldiers.

BAM! He SHOTS Fannin in the face!

101 EXT. GOLIAD EXECUTION SITE - DAY (CONTINUING) 101

The PRISONERS are marched off the road. Portilla's GUNSHOT ECHOES across the plains. Samuel reacts to the shot...looks around as they walk, to a WOUNDED SOLDIER limping beside him.

SAMUEL WALLACE

They said we're taking a boat to Matamoros. This road's to Victoria--
(realizes, grimly)
I don't think we're goin' either place.

Catching up them, Portilla GALLOPS to the front to COMMAND...

PORTILLA

HALT!

THE PRISONERS stop marching, shift uneasily, as the Mexican Soldiers ready their guns. Portilla raises his sword.

PORTILLA (CONT'D)

KNEEL DOWN!

The confused prisoners hesitate, some comply, some MEXICAN SOLDIERS force the men to their knees, Samuel defiantly stands glaring at Portilla, yells at him across the way...

SAMUEL WALLACE

People won't forget what you're doing here - They'll remember this!
(louder, to everyone)
And they'll remember the Alamo!

PORTILLA

READY...

SAMUEL WALLACE

REMEMBER THE ALAMO!!!

PRISONERS

(starts chanting)
REMEMBER THE ALAMO!!!

SAMUEL WALLACE

(raises his fist)
REMEMBER THE ALAMO!!!

THEIR BATTLE CRY ECHOES OVER--

PORTILLA

FIRE!

--a CACOPHONY OF GUNSHOTS and AGONIZED WAILS of DYING MEN...

102 EXT. RIDGE - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 102

Lorca, witnessing the misty puffs of blood billowing up from the thick clouds of gun smoke, slowly lowers his telescope.

His eyes filled with horror... tears... and RAGE.

103 EXT. STAND OF TREES - DAY 103

Under a scraggly grove of trees along a wagon trail, FOUR MEXICAN SOLDIERS escort a SUPPLY WAGON, driven by a PEASANT COUPLE, armed with rifles and pistols.

They travel fast, the soldiers ducking under low-hanging branches of the largest tree when--

SOMEONE swings down from the tree and SMACKS INTO THE LAST SOLDIER, a tiger pouncing on its prey - They THUMP to the ground as the rest of the supply detail RIDE ON, unaware.

There's no struggle, the UNKNOWN ASSAILANT scalps the dead man, then begins stripping him of his uniform and distinctive blue coat. As he positions the hat on his head, WE SEE it's LORCA!

104 EXT. ROAD TO GOLIAD - DAY 104

GENERAL SAM HOUSTON leads the Rangers across the prairie - Deaf, Karnes, Anderson, Gator, Beans, Kit, Vern, and Knowles. The horses, lathered and slick with sweat, start to BLOW. Deaf moves up to ride alongside Houston. Patting his horse--

DEAF SMITH

--horses about played out, Sam.

Houston nods, slows his lead to a walk, the men follow suit.

HENRY KARNES

There's a waterin' hole a few miles yonder.

DEAF SMITH

Charmaine needs a good drink.

(patting horse)

'N a graze. Don't cha, ole girl?

GATOR DAVIS
Deaf, I believe you love that horse
more'n your wife!...

Gator grins with a "watch this" glance to everyone...

GATOR DAVIS (CONT'D)
DEAF! Who's the better mount, your
wife or your horse?

DEAF SMITH
(only reading last part)
My horse?

LAUGHTER. Deaf realizes it's a joke he didn't hear.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
Y'all havin' a jest at the expense
'a my impairment. Good thing is I
don't hafta hear disparagin'
nonsense from the likes of you.
(to Gator)
Anything that matters you best say
it to my face!

The men love their leader, laugh & yell "You tell 'im".

KIT ACKLIN
No sense in gettin' all hot 'n
bothered, Cap'n.

GATOR DAVIS
We was just wonderin' who bucks
harder.

Ignoring their laughter, Deaf walks on ahead. Houston,
sipping from his canteen, notices Knowles, subtly trying to
hide his face with his hat as he walks past.

SAM HOUSTON
SERGEANT KNOWLES!

Knowles shrinks, "oh, shit, caught" ready to bolt. All the
Rangers stop. Deaf, not hearing, keeps moving ahead.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
You trying to hide from me?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
Un, no...I mean...yes? Yessir,
General Houston?

SAM HOUSTON
I've had my eye on you... You're
Rangering now, are you?

BILLY ANDERSON
He prefers it to bein' executed.

SAM HOUSTON
How's he doing?

HENRY KARNES
Passable. Ain't tried to run off.

KIT ACKLIN
Still say we oughta shoot him, sir.

VERN ELWOOD
I tried, General--

BILLY ANDERSON
Executin's the Army's job.

BEANS WILKINS
We let him ride with us. Didn't
know what else to do with him.

SAM HOUSTON
Sergeant, what qualities do you
possess to commend you for a
pardon?

VERN ELWOOD
He don't have no good qualities!

KNOWLES
Uh...uh...ummm, well, I...I like
this part'a the country a lot, ya
know, breathin' the air, sleepin'
under the stars and, uh, breathin'--

VERN ELWOOD
Ya said that already.

BILLY ANDERSON
Dammit, Knowles, can't you think
of anything good about yourself?

Knowles can't take it, breaks under the pressure, blurts out:

KNOWLES
I ain't no good, sir. Never have
been. I lie, cheat, steal, cuss...
Don't care 'bout nobody but myself.
I'm bullheaded, onery as a snake--

SAM HOUSTON
 (catching this, quickly)
 Onery's good... not a bad quality
 for a Ranging Company

Rangers murmur agreement. Houston mounts up to catch up to Deaf... Knowles slack-jawed at the General's reprieve.

105 EXT. WATERING HOLE - DAY (LATER)

105

HORSE HOOVES POUNDING the ground... The Mexican convoy has paused to water the horses - Hearing the horses hooves--

--the MEXICAN SERGEANT squints into the sun, holding up a hand to shield his eyes from the sun's glare.

CAPTAIN'S POV - A GALLOPING SILHOUETTE

Refracting SUNLIGHT obscures the horseman's face, but he appears to be wearing the uniform of a Mexican Soldier.

MEXICAN SERGEANT
 Private Ortiz...?

Confused, the Sergeant frowns, taking a few steps forward to where, HE'S ALSO SILHOUETTED by the sun. For some reason, "Private Ortiz" whips out his SWORD--

--SWWAAAKKK! The Sergeant's HEAD TOPPLES while his arm remains raised - as if still shielding his eyes from the sun...with now nothing to shield.

As their Captain's headless body collapses, the dumbstruck supply detail can only gawk a couple of crucial beats--

Time enough for the UNKNOWN ASSAILANT to use the surprise (and the sun) to his advantage to LANCE ANOTHER SOLDIER--

--before the others, now YELLING & SQUEALING, SCRAMBLE for weapons - The PEASANT TEAMSTER COUPLE, both SCREAMING bloody murder, dive from their wagon into the water to get away as--

Soldiers FIRE but miss. The UNKNOWN ASSAILANT rears his horse and bears down to SHOOT ANOTHER SOLDIER--

The LAST SOLDIER is the fiercest fighters, grabs gun after gun from the wagon bed to KEEP FIRING. BULLETS slam into the UNKNOWN ASSAILANT's HORSE, which FALLS WITH ITS RIDER, tumbling into the Last Soldier.

Guns dropped in the collision, both men lunge for weapons at the same time--The Unknown Assailant wins and--

THE LAST SOLDIER raises his hands in surrender, muttering a panicked prayer. He backs away from the UNKNOWN ASSAILANT, whose is back to us as he slowly walks.

Only the Last Soldier sees the UNKNOWN ASSAILANT's face clearly, (WE DO NOT YET SEE HIM CLEARLY) - In doing so knows he will receive no mercy. He cuts and RUNS from the man's gun into the pond, SLOSHING through the shallow part until--

BOOM! He SPLASHES forward, his blood clouding the water.

Only the Peasant Teamster Couple remain alive, flailing in the depths of the pond. The wife can't swim, so her husband, with nowhere to go, pulls her back towards shore--

--where their killer awaits. He watches the pitiful lone survivors as compassionately as a shark.

OFF APPROACHING HOOFBEATS, the UNKNOWN ASSAILANT turns to see a newly-arriving SILHOUETTED RIDER - Like the Captain before, the Unknown Assailant raises a hand to shield his eyes as--

UBALDO (Santa Anna's messenger) rides INTO VIEW - the Mexican private gapes at the carnage of the battle scene around him--

THE UNKNOWN ASSAILANT stands amidst his blood bath... he lifts his head and reveals himself...LORCA.

Ubaldo stares at Lorca. Lorca stares back.

106

EXT. PRAIRIE - DAY

106

Hot and sweaty, Big Foot rides his horse as Jack, pissed-off that his horse was stolen, walks alongside, eyes ahead.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Sticks in my craw them trash got off with my wrist cuff.

JACK HAYS

You are out a trinket. I'm on FOOT. That was a blooded thoroughbred those wastrels took. Raised him from a colt I did.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

That's why you got your mind set on walkin' all the way to Goliad?

JACK HAYS

I have a choice?

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 An' that was NO trinket, Hardcase.
 It's a precious family heirloom -
 Made by my Pa for me 'n my brother.

Jack notices something, stops walking to stoop down and
 examine it - Rubs BLOODY DIRT between his fingers...

JACK HAYS
 Still damp... she's bleedin' out.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 Pissant-she-devil bitch, hope so.

JACK HAYS
 Blood trail leads thataway...

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 (nods opposite direction)
 Goliad is thataway...

Jack follows the blood trail, Big Foot follows Jack, who
 reaches the top of a small knoll, peers down into the gully:

RUTHIE, of the teenage killer/thieves, the one Jack shot...
 lies dead - VULTURES pick the eyes and flesh off her body.

JACK HAYS
 You got your wish.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 She wearin' my wrist cuff?

JACK HAYS
 Nope.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 (mutters)
 Pissant bitch... Sure you don't
 wanna ride?

JACK HAYS
 Like I said, two grown men can't
 ride double. It ain't dignified.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 You want dignity or blisters?

107 INT. TEMPORARY OFFICE OF STATE, HARRISBURG, TX - DAY 107

Hand-painted sign on an open door reads PRESIDENT, REPUBLIC
 OF TEXAS. Hard-used flag hangs on the wall.

White-haired Texas PRESIDENT DAVID BURNET (48) packs his belongings as his AIDES burn documents. THOMAS RUSK (30s), Secretary of War, reads a report amidst the chaotic activity.

THOMAS RUSK

Mr. President, our scouts report that the Santanistas are moving in faster than we anticipated. They just burned Bellville--

Mirabeau Lamar barges in unannounced, with an agitated, officious, gap-toothed aide FRANCISCO (20s) on his heels.

MIRABEAU LAMAR

Sirs, I'm here under urgent dispatch of Colonel Mosely Baker--

FRANCISCO

Senor, I told you, you can't come in here! President Burnet is busy--

MIRABEAU LAMAR

(handing Burnet papers)
It is my duty to present this petition from your rank and file--

PRESIDENT BURNET

And you would be?

MIRABEAU LAMAR

Private Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar, of Fairfield, Georgia.

PRESIDENT BURNET

Spit it out, boy. We gotta go before Santa Anna gets here!

MIRABEAU LAMAR

Houston will not engage--

PRESIDENT BURNET

(to Rusk)
Why won't your man meet the enemy?

MIRABEAU LAMAR

Because he's damn coward!

THOMAS RUSK

Houston may be many things, but a coward he is not!

MIRABEAU LAMAR

Perhaps when younger he was a brave soldier and valiant leader, but--

PRESIDENT BURNET
 (ignores Lamar, to Rusk)
 Then, for the love of God, what's
 in that man's head?

THOMAS RUSK
 I presume General Houston is
 picking his ground--

MIRABEAU LAMAR
 Or ceding it as fast as he can.

THOMAS RUSK
 MIND YOUR PLACE, PRIVATE!

MIRABEAU LAMAR
 Forgive me, Mr. Secretary.
 (respectfully composed)
 President Burnet, it's of desperate
 necessity you come to the front. I
 fear we face a mass desertion--

PRESIDENT BURNET
 Look around you, son... Santanistas
 are a half day's ride from here.
 We've abandoned our capital. Now
 I'm on the run again. If I am
 captured or killed the rebellion is
 finished... We're catching a boat
 to Galveston Island, enroute to New
 Orleans, to set up the provisional
 government.
 (orders Rusk)
 Rusk, you go tell Houston both his
 troops and the enemy are laughing
 him to scorn. He must fight. Or
 I'll find someone who will.

Francisco struggles with Burnet's belongings and a trunk.

PRESIDENT BURNET (CONT'D)
 (as they exit)
 Francisco, stop lollygagging.

108 EXT. WATERING HOLE - LATE DAY

108

Houston & Rangers (Deaf, Karnes, Gator, Beans, Kit, Anderson,
 Vern, and Knowles) ride in to water their horses, unnerved by
 Lorca's massacre site. Knowles wanders off to take a piss.

KIT ACKLIN
 Comanche attack?

They dismount, look around. Blood, but no bodies. Fight-torn ground, the overturned wagon, etc. Anderson investigates...

BILLY ANDERSON

Nope. No stray arrows. No unshod pony tracks. No scalped bodies...

HENRY KARNES

Bandits?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES (O.S.)

Ohhhh, GOD, sweet Jesus...!

Knowles stumbles back from the trees, as if seeing a demon.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES (CONT'D)

It...it's awful...it...it...

He VOMITS and points. Houston and the Rangers draw their weapons, cautiously walk to...

LORCA'S TORTURE SITE

Horrible. Grotesque. The victims of Lorca's massacre strung up like sides of beef, tortured before being brutally killed.

Like something envisioned by Hieronymus Bosch - Bodies hang upside down, in various mangled states - twisted, hacked, disemboweled.

BEANS WILKINS

What the hell...?

KIT ACKLIN

It's gotta be Comanches--

Houston and the Rangers are agape at the horror. The sadistic Vern, fascinated like a kid in fairyland, pokes a stick in one's chest cavity, muttering a sick joke...

VERN ELWOOD

Kinda gives ya a hankerin' for barbecued antelope.

HENRY KARNES

Makes no sense butcherin' em then stringin' em up.

DEAF SMITH

That ain't the point of it.

SAM HOUSTON

Someone's sending a message.

LORCA (O.S.)
 (bellows)
 THAT LUCIFER HIMSELF HAS RISEN...

Startled, the Rangers whip around to see the specter of evil incarnate, Lorca looming high on his horse under a tree.

LORCA (CONT'D)
 FROM THE BOWELS OF HADES to pare
 the turgid flesh off the bones of
 all Meskins...to pluck their eyes
 'n eat their livers 'til their
 wretched screams for the Angel of
 Death...DEAFEN THIS GOD-FORSAKEN
 EARTH!

Lorca's mad eyes bore in on the Rangers, who point their guns at him. Visibly shaken, Knowles can hardly find his voice.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
 Who... who are you?

LORCA
 I am the PUNISHMENT! A ghost
 warrior trapped between light and
 dark, here to smite every Jumpin'
 Bean Lubricano man, woman and child
 from the Texas plains.

SAM HOUSTON
 This is war... not a crusade--

LORCA
 Had you witnessed the abominations
 at the Alamo and Goliad, you'd
 think otherwise.

HENRY KARNES
Goliad--

SAM HOUSTON
 (pointed)
 You have news?

LORCA
 Steel yourself unflinching,
 Houston, as do I. Because to feel
 pain or fear would be to allow
 ourselves a mercy we cannot afford
 and I will not abide!

DEAF SMITH
 Goddammit, ya crazy bastard, speak
 plain.

LORCA
 They are all DEAD. Murdered.
 400... slain. Slaughtered after
 surrender... So much blood the air
 turned to a crimson mist...

Houston and Rangers are horrified and speechless.

SAM HOUSTON
 Colonel Fannin?

Knowles gawks. Standing too close, Lorca jabs his fingertip
 like a "gun" against Knowles's forehead...

LORCA
 Shot in the Face.

"PICHOO", he makes the sound of a bullet penetrating flesh,
 snapping Knowles' head back with his finger...

LORCA (CONT'D)
 Colonel Portilla pulled the trigger
 himself... then stole his watch...

HENRY KARNES
 Two of my Ranger boys were there.
 One wore a funny hat--

LORCA
 --in a red checkered shirt?

Karnes nods. Hopeful, the men react as...

LORCA (CONT'D)
 He made a worthy run for it. Got
 ambushed... Shot by so many bullets
 they shred the skin clean off his
 body and splintered his skull
 beyond recognition.

Deflated, the Rangers are numb with grief. Knowles is shaken.

LORCA (CONT'D)
 All the bodies lay as they fell,
 left to rot for maggots and
 buzzards.

BILLY ANDERSON
 By what right do you have to--

LORCA
 I claim the ANCIENT RIGHT, by my own
 death denied - There are innocents in
 this land.

(MORE)

LORCA (CONT'D)

Be warned, Ranger: The demons and dark spirits that inhabit my horde understand I have NO RIGHT to let Mexicans live. I will kill them ALL, sanctioned by Satan.

SAM HOUSTON

Your account of Goliad... I'll need more than a lunatic's word--

LORCA

I answer to neither man nor God.

Lorca WHACKS a rope with his sword - A BODY, hidden in the tree branches above, COMES HURLING down--

LORCA (CONT'D)

Santa Anna's courier. Ask him for his account.

--it's Ubaldo, Santa Anna's messenger, barely alive, his body swaying back and forth, hanging suspended by another rope.

LORCA (CONT'D)

You best make haste - A fresh dispatch from Santa Anna himself.
(gallops off, yelling)
I am the servant of Lucifer... Death to all brown-skinned MESKIN NIGGERS!

109

EXT. HARRISBURG, TX - DAY

109

In SLO-MO FLAMES build, ROLL thru town - From this smoke...

THE MEXICAN CALVARY (BACK TO SPEED) BURSTS THROUGH! Throwing torches, whooping it up. SANTA ANNA'S ARMY burns the town. BUILDINGS in FLAMES as terrorized TOWNSPEOPLE FLEE.

SUPER: "April 15, 1836 - Harrisburg, Texas"

From the smoke and flames, Santa Anna emerges, his arm linked with Almonte's. Santa Anna turns to feel the force of the heat on his face, eyes closed to heighten his other senses:

SANTA ANNA

The bite of the flames; the sting of the smoke - do you feel it? Are you hard, Almonte?

Almonte is surprised, almost enough to forget his discomfort.

ALMONTE

Hard, General?

SANTA ANNA

Your manhood - Is the flush of
victory and dying cries of your
enemy not as exciting as a young
boy's first look at his virgin
sister's naked buttocks?

ALMONTE

Well...uhm--

INTERCUT - MEXICAN SOLDIERS LOOT, RAPE, & DESTROY - Several
CRASH from a SALOON, pulling a SCREAMING WOMAN, ripping her
clothes, drag her to the LIVERY - MEN SHOT DOWN or BEATEN.

SANTA ANNA

Disappointing, Almonte. You have
far to go to be a successful leader.
What an ordinary man feels as pain
or revulsion, a real soldier must
learn to feel as pleasure. Which
is why, Almonte, I ask you these
things. There's a point.

Almonte braces for a tempest...

ALMONTE

I regret to inform you, Your
Excellency, that President Burnet
has escaped with his entourage.
We were only moments too late.

Santa Anna pauses, then surprisingly shrugs it off. Amidst
the insanity, he guides Almonte on down the street.

SANTA ANNA

(reflective)

A soldier's life is not an easy one,
Almonte. Long absences, hard travel,
short rations, the coarse company of
soldiers for months at a time -

As they walk, we notice in the b.g.--

RANGER FLORES has infiltrated the Mexican army, now dressed
as a common Soldado - When Santa Anna & Almonte pass, Flores
grabs a WOMAN & BABY, as to attack them like other Soldados.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Most of our men would desert if not
for fear of being shot. Our enemies
are a paltry rabble. The public's
gratitude is uncertain, the
politicians fickle, at best.

He gestures at the mayhem all around them--

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

This, Almonte, *this* is our thanks.

(a deep breath)

It's what makes our work
worthwhile, gives purpose to all
our sacrifices.

110 EXT. TRAIL SIDE CAMPSITE - NIGHT

110

DISTANT PRAIRIE SOUNDS - Horses mill around. A coffee pot percolates over bed of coals. Houston writes in a journal. Deaf feeds his horse oats from his hat. Karnes dictates a letter to Beans, who writes by the campfire light.

HENRY KARNES

There is little more I can add,
Mrs. Fincham, 'ceptin' that Truett
and Yancey accounted for themselves
in this campaign with-- What's a
fancy word for *cojones*?

BEANS WILKINS

(thinking, licks pencil)
Reckon' *valor* fits pretty good.

HENRY KARNES

With *valor*... You ought be proud
of your son, as the Rangers hold
him in highest regard.
Sincerely... H. Karnes.

Silence but for crackling fire as they reflect on the loss.

BEANS WILKINS

They was good boys.

HENRY KARNES

Read that all back to me from the
start. It's gotta be suitable.

BEANS WILKINS

Hold your horses...I'm so hungry my
belly button's startin' to gnaw on
my backbone.

On a RACK by the FIRE--a fat, 6-foot RATTLESNAKE gets smoked.

KNOWLES, GATOR, ANDERSON, on bedrolls, stare up at the stars.

GATOR DAVIS

That crazy old coot... I ain't seen
nothin' like him in the good Lord's
Christian world...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

His eyes were dead, like chunks of
black coal.

GATOR DAVIS

I don't recall the Bible speaking
'bout a demon of his ilk--

BILLY ANDERSON

Lorca.

GATOR DAVIS

What?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

That some Injun name for Beelzebub?

BILLY ANDERSON

It's Kiowa legend, from ancient
times... about a Atakapan warrior
killed in battle without honor. His
spirit rose, peeled the skin off
his barbarian enemies till the sun
burned their insides to a crisp.

GATOR DAVIS

Sweet Jesus! That's what he...
(nervous stutter)
He... he did...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

I likely will soil myself if we
chance upon his like again.

BILLY ANDERSON

More than likely, in your case...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Not sure this Rangerin' suits me.

ANOTHER ANGLE - VERN AND KIT, backs propped against their
saddles. Kit plays solitaire with weathered RED CARDS. Low:

VERN ELWOOD

If'n these jackasses won't say it,
I will. Our cause is lost, damnit.
Onliest thing we're gonna find in
Texas is our grave.

KIT ACKLIN

Turn and run? Is that it, Vern?

VERN ELWOOD

Why, hell, no! Turn, run, and fornicate! Texas is fine country, but Texican women are so ugly they could back a buzzard off a gut wagon. I'd sooner service a sow. I best get back to France... in Pareee, the missys paint their faces like dolls, wear bodices that make their teets hang out. And the clencher is...

(lecherous whisper)

They perfume their bush to smell like lilacs.

KIT ACKLIN

(shocked, laughs)

You are a sinner. Marked by a terrible stain.

VERN ELWOOD

Now your British wench is kinda husky, stinks a little when she sweats--and she's gonna sweat plenty if I'm ridin' her. 'Course, your best poke, in my experience, is ports-of-call off Spain--

KIT ACKLIN

You've been to Spain too?

VERN ELWOOD

Don't interrupt... Them skinny, dark-eyed Gypsy girls twirl 'round on your pecker like a butter churn.

KIT ACKLIN

Come near my sisters, I will shoot your lecherous ass graveyard-dead.

(serious)

And you best not so much as glance at Rebecca, that sweet gal we rescued at Gonzales.

VERN ELWOOD

(draws close, serious)

Come with me, Kit. We can catch a schooner outta N'awlins with some of my old swabbies. We ain't gonna do nuthin in Texas but die young...

111 EXT. HARRISBURG, TEXAS - NIGHT 111

CHARRED, SMOLDERING BUILDINGS. Drunken Mexican soldiers revel in the smoky, haze-covered streets. PAN the ruins to an ALLEY...clumps of weeds PARTED by a bloody hand--

The terrified face of LANE WALTERS(30) emerges, searching for a way out. Fit, handsome, but freshly fight-scarred, he stays motionless, silent, as the soldiers wash past him until ...a TORCH nearly hits his head, thrown by a MEXICAN SENTRY.

LANE picks up the torch, hurls it right back at the Sentry, limps into the shadows as the Sentry & cohorts pursue him.

Out of breath, panicked, trapped, Lane raises his arms in surrender, when out of the darkness...a HAND grabs his collar and YANKS him into a building doorway--

112 INT. BUILDING, HARRISBURG, TX - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS) 112

IT's FLORES, who clamps his hand over Lane's mouth, SSSHHH.

The pair thread their way through the abandoned storage building, until they reach a door. Flores RAPS his fist in a staccato pattern. The door slowly SQUEAKS OPEN TO A...

BACK ROOM - A safe house for a DOZEN TOWNSPEOPLE rescued by Flores, including the Woman & Baby seen earlier. Flores peeks through a crack in a BOARDED-UP WINDOW at the outside chaos.

MANUEL FLORES

The drunker they get, the better our chances.

FLORES' POV - HARRISBURG STREET

Francisco, President Burnet's aide, rides into town, spotted by a drunk Mexican soldier, JOSE (20s), who calls to him...

JOSE

Francisco! My friend!

FRANCISCO

Where is Colonel Portilla?

113 INT. SPANISH CATHEDRAL - NIGHT 113

Turned into a COCK FIGHT ARENA... SOLDIERS & their WOMEN CAMP FOLLOWERS drink, bet, holler, jeer the center-ring action.

Santa Anna and Emily sit above the action, watching, enjoying the day's victory. Almonte, smoking a pipe, stands nearby.

Portilla, followed by Francisco, enters, makes eye contact with Romolo. Seeing Portilla's signal, Romolo whispers to Santa Anna, who reluctantly gets up...

Emily firmly grabs Santa Anna's crotch, opens her mouth and kisses him hard... Exerting her sexual domination until--

--she permits the aroused, flustered general to leave, his mind conflicted between duty and pleasure... Romolo fumes and follows his General. After they're gone, Emily sneaks away--

114

EXT. SPANISH RUINS - NIGHT

114

VOICES IN THE SHADOWS. The door creaks open, Romolo enters to find Santa Anna in a hushed conference with Portilla, Almonte, and the spy from the Texas Government: Francisco.

ALMONTE

...and you know this how?

INTERCUT - EMILY sneaks around the ruins to eavesdrop.

FRANCISCO

I heard it from President Burnet's own mouth. He is fleeing to New Orleans by way of Galveston Bay.

SANTA ANNA

(to Almonte)

Intercept him at first light. The Texians' resolve will crumble once we capture their President.

(to Francisco)

And General Houston? What is his position?

FRANCISCO

Somewhere west of the Sabine below Gonzales. Tattle is he's rattled, his troops mutinous. Burnet ordered Houston to meet you on the field.

SANTA ANNA

That is exactly where I want him.

EMILY -- Eavesdropping as the men walk around the labyrinth of the ruins - She ducks in the shadows, slipping into the darkness...just before Almonte or Portilla look her way.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

We will divide the army into multiple divisions to pursue and destroy all remnants of the rebel army-- Have Urrea sweep the coast, tell Ramirez y Sesma to cut a swath north of our position. Pull a select garrison of dragoons, grenadiers and riflemen from their regiments for me. I will lead them directly into the heart of Houston's army.

INTERCUT - EMILY - Getting as close as possible...

ALMONTE

General... if you'll indulge me: Our many triumphant victories have been because we maintain an overwhelming force... Perhaps we should consult your Generals?

PORTILLA

His Excellency needs only to consult himself. Brilliant strategy, sir.

ALMONTE

A locust by itself chews a hole into a leaf. A swarm of locusts annihilates a forest.

Santa Anna, distracted by the sounds of CHEERS for his winning bird, turns back toward the cathedral as they walk and talk.

PORTILLA

(ignoring Almonte)
I applaud your military genius, General. It is an honor to serve with you in this campaign.

EMILY - Following their movements, she bumps into something, making a NOISE that--

ROMOLO notices, suspicious, moving off to find the source--

ALMONTE

(irritated)
And how can we be certain that President Jackson will not intervene?

EMILY - TRAPPED, she sees where they're going, panics--

SANTA ANNA

Almonte, you are naive. "Old Hickory" hides behind treaties, moves in shadows, whispers in corrupt men's ears. He stole Florida from Spain and claims Texas was part of the Louisiana Purchase!

Romolo looks around for Emily, just missing her--

Perturbed, Santa Anna stops to punctuate his thought.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Texas is the pathway to the Pacific. Jackson's wants it all - the whole territory all the way to California. Houston is merely Jackson's dog.

Santa Anna reaches into his pocket. Pulls out a bag of GOLD COINS - Drops ten into Francisco's palm.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

I reward results, Francisco. Locate and join up with Houston's army - Bring me news.

FRANCISCO

Yes, Your Excellency.

Off the sparkle of GOLD IN FRANCISCO'S EYES, go to...

ROMOLO - About to catch Emily, he lurches to where she was... no one is there - Emily slipped away just in time.

115 EXT. NEAR SPANISH RUINS - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

115

Emily hurries away to keep from being caught by Romolo when--
--she's suddenly GRABBED and pulled to--

A SHADOWY SPOT away from all the noise & activity. Her abductors are the drunk soldiers, Jose and chunky, obnoxious HECTOR (30s), who leers at her with a toothless grin...

HECTOR

A woman with full meaty bosoms--

JOSE

(lasciviously)
I liiike that.

Emily struggles to escape. Hector raises his KNIFE as Jose RIPS the front of her dress and pulls down his pants.

MANUEL FLORES

Be careful, my friend. She is the
Presidente-General's property.

The would-be rapists WHEEL around to Flores crossing to them.

HECTOR

You lying thieving whoremonger! You
want her for yourself.

JOSE

Easy, my friend. We will share her.
She is plenty woman for all...

Boozy, half-lid eyes finding focus, Hector squints at Flores.

HECTOR

Manuel? I know you, Manuel Flores!
It is me, Hector Ovaldo. We played
cards at your cousin Tito's in Vera
Cruz - Remember? I won.
(draws gun, w/contempt)
I was proud to take your money
'cause you join the filthy rebels--

MANUEL FLORES

You have me confused--

HECTOR

NO! I am quite certain. YOU ARE A
TRAITOROUS SPY--

Hector raises his gun, but Flores **THROWS HIS KNIFE FASTER!**

MANUEL FLORES

--and YOU are a dead card cheat.

With the knife sticking through his throat, Hector drops his
gun and keels over. Shocked, Jose DROPS his liquor bottle,
takes off running, YELLING with his pants around his ankles.

JOSE

HELP! HELP! We have a--

BLAM! He falls into the light of the street - Emily holds
Hector's gun. Several see Jose fall, among them Portilla,
and rush toward them. Emily whispers fast and low to Flores:

EMILY WEST

I have vital news... Meet me here
after the changing of the night guard.

Seeing Portilla approaching, Flores takes the gun from her.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
 (adjusts ripped dress)
 This soldier rescued me.

MANUEL FLORES
 Colonel, sir... They tried to rape
 the General's woman.

Santa Anna and Romolo hurry to them. Emily falls into Santa Anna's arms, buries her head in his shoulder as he embraces her. Santa Anna spits on Jose's dead body, orders Portilla:

SANTA ANNA
 String up their bodies - Where
 everyone can see.

116 EXT. TRAIL SIDE CAMPSITE - NIGHT

116

The Rangers sleep, Houston, tossing and turning, wakes up from a nightmare... He notices Deaf nearby, lovingly brushing and tending to his horse "Charmaine." Houston lights a cigar.

SAM HOUSTON
 Lord knows I wanted to be wrong
 about Fannin... At least, I didn't
 want to be this right.

No response. Deaf didn't hear a word. Houston picks up a stick and gently pokes Deaf in the ribs.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
 I'm hungry for counsel. I'd
 welcome yours...

Deaf gives Charmaine a last brush stroke & nose-to-nose hug.

DEAF SMITH
 One thing Santa Anna's done in your
 favor. He's let every Texian know
 that to surrender means death.

SAM HOUSTON
 The sonofabitch is cagey.

DEAF SMITH
 Think President Jackson'll help?

SAM HOUSTON
 (considering)
 I don't think he can.

DEAF SMITH

Why the hell not? He wants Texas,
don't he?

SAM HOUSTON

Countries aren't like people, Deaf.
We're free to do what we think is
right. A country is bound to act
in its own self-interest. Jackson
is mired in treaties and politics--

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

--leaving me at a loss on how to
oppose Santa Anna.

DEAF SMITH

Fight him like Comanches.

SAM HOUSTON

Meaning?

Deaf, a man of few words, takes this rare occasion to speak
his mind. He turns from Charmaine to sit next to Houston.

DEAF SMITH

Don't run from him no more. Stay
real close. Near enough he feels
your breath.

(COUGHS, gets control)

Watch. Wait. Let him know you're
always there and he can't touch ya.
Sooner or later, he'll show ya his
tender underbelly. When he does,
stick your knife in to the hilt,
then slit him through 'n through.

SAM HOUSTON

And what about his other Generals?

COUGHING harder, Deaf turns away to spit bloody mucus in one
of his wife's cloths. Houston waits, watches with concern.

DEAF SMITH

Cut the head off the snake and the
body dies.

Deaf pulls out another handkerchief to wipe his clammy sweat.

117 INT. SPANISH CATHEDRAL - LATE NIGHT

117

Torchlight. Tobacco smoke hangs in the air. The crowd from
the cockfight gone, the birds are being put back in cages.

MEN AND WOMEN sleep, passed out, a few smoking, intoxicated, hard-core GAMBLERS remain, playing backgammon for money.

Flores, ever vigilant, plucks a slow tune on a guitar (NOTE: BEGINNING THE MELODY for the song "The Yellow Rose of Texas")

Raking in his winnings, Francisco struts, triumphantly clucks and flaps his elbows like a chicken... amusing all.

FRANCISCO

Everybody pays Francisco! You, you,
you, the rebel Presidente Burnet
...even His Excellency Santa Anna
himself! EVERYONE pays me! And soon
the pirate Houston will pay me.

He trips. Flores catches him, masking his fury with a smile.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

I almost pissed myself.
(grabbing his crotch)
I need go to shake hands with my
wife's best friend.

Cackling at his joke, he starts off - Stops, uses his shirt tail as a ponch to catch and hold his pile of money.

118 EXT. NEAR SPANISH RUINS- LATE NIGHT 118

Francisco takes a leak - Clutching his shirt-tail of coins, he fumbles to unbutton his trousers and SPILLS the money.

As he bends to pick it up, he gets GRABBED BY HIS HAIR...

It's FLORES...whose KNIFE SLICES FRANCISCO'S JUGULAR--

MANUEL FLORES

This is how Houston pays spies.

BLOOD DRIPS ONTO FRANCISCO'S DROPPED PILE OF GOLD COINS.

119 INT. SANTA ANNA'S TENT - LATE NIGHT 119

EMILY lies with her hair cascading on a silk pillow, wide awake, WATCHING Santa Anna. She strokes his cheek to test if he's sleeping soundly. He rolls over and starts to snore.

Emily slips out of bed, her naked form in silhouette from the moonlight beaming through the window. She retrieves her silk gown, walks to the armoire where she pulls a hidden serape and a sombrero. Last, she pulls a leather diary (w/pencil), tucks it inside her gown and tiptoes toward the door.

SANTA ANNA
 (eyes closed)
 Where are you going, my angel?

Emily freezes. Deliberates... Her back to him.

EMILY WEST
 I'm thirsty, Antonio.

SANTA ANNA
 Didn't you see the pitcher on the
 dresser? Drink all you want and
 come back to bed.

Santa Anna opens the covers, beseeching her. Emily closes her eyes in frustration...then turns to Santa Anna with a beaming smile and tosses the hat to re-join him.

120 EXT. NEAR SPANISH RUINS - LATE NIGHT

120

Flores helps Lane Walters load women and men refugees into a wagon--covering them with a tarp.

MANUEL FLORES
 Head east towards Houston's Army.
 Keep a lookout for Comanches.

LANE WALTERS
 God bless you...

As they ride off, FLORES pulls out his pocket watch... CLOSE ON THE WATCH FACE: Time reads: 2:27 AM - O.S. FOOTSTEPS...

Flores reacts, begins to reveal himself...STOPS at seeing two Mexican SENTRIES, patrolling - He ducks back behind cover--

EMILY'S VOICE (O.S.)
 We have no time.

OUT OF THE SHADOWS walks EMILY, covered by the serape and wearing the sombrero. She passes Flores a handwritten NOTE.

EMILY WEST
 President Burnet must be warned,
 they know his location. Colonel
 Almonte is leaving at first light
 to Galveston Bay to intercept him.

MANUEL FLORES
 Horses are ready, we go now...

EMILY WEST

I'm of better use to Texas stayin'
here, gatherin' information.

MANUEL FLORES

There's no time to argue. General
Houston's orders.

EMILY WEST

(firm)

I don't answer to him.

Flores, stares into her eyes. Reading her. Understanding.

MANUEL FLORES

If you haven't killed Santa Anna
yet, you never will.

EMILY WEST

I've come to believe killin' him is
not enough - Death without knowin'
the shame of losin'... Defeats its
purpose. We destroy his army -
which kills his dream. Then, I
will be the last thing that bastard
sees when the light goes dim in his
eyes. I swear it. Now GO!

MANUEL FLORES

(doesn't buy it)

It may cost you your life.

EMILY WEST

I'm a nigger born outta punishment
to my mammy... grown up to be a
whore. What life?

MANUEL FLORES

Anything you want me to tell
General Houston?

EMILY WEST

Santa Anna is pursuing him
personally. It's an obsession...
(hands him her SCARF)
Give the General this...he'll know.
Be vigilant. Be safe. Hurry!

Flores mounts up, rides off. Emily slips back in the shadows.

121 EXT. ROCKY LEDGE - MORNING 121

Among the rocks, a DIAMONDBACK RATTLESNAKE coiled, HISSING-STRIKES OUT... the angry snake gets caught... REVEAL--

--LORCA capturing the squirming Rattler with a pronged stick, stuffs it into a gunny sack filled with other snakes.

122 EXT. TRAIL BACK FROM GOLIAD - MORNING 122

Houston and the Rangers are riding in the early morning...

A BARRAGE OF FLAMING ARROWS ZING OVER A RISE SMACKING TO THE GROUND IN front of them. The horses rear and jump.

TWENTY COMANCHES, LED BY BUFFALO HUMP, RACE OVER THE RISE encircling them, WHOOPING savagely, bows drawn--

The Rangers raise their guns, but Houston holds up his hand--

SAM HOUSTON
HOLD FIRE!

Surrounded, the Rangers keep their guns pointed, back their horses rump to rump to face two rings of warriors riding around them - one circling clockwise, outer riders counter-clockwise.

GATOR DAVIS
Lord Jesus, help us...

BEANS WILKINS
It's what I've know'd all along -
I'm gonna get tortured n' massacred
by Comanches.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
(panicking)
They's ridin' with Kiowa--

VERN ELWOOD
Told ya we shoul'da cut out--

HENRY KARNES
Don't nobody throw a conniption.
Keep your wits about ya...and your
fingertips on them triggers.

Anderson scrutinizes the braves in the circling war party.

BILLY ANDERSON
The one in the middle... He's the
War Chief... Buffalo Hump.

SAM HOUSTON
 Keep your eyes on your sights! Fire
 only if we fall DEAD!

Houston makes a show of DROPPING HIS GUN on the ground.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
 Anderson, throw down your rifle.

Anderson follows suit. Houston nudges his horse forward. The Rangers exchange confused looks. Deaf keeps his gun raised.

INTERCUT - THE COMANCHES

Slowly closing the circle, tightening on their prey. Human bones and scalps decorate their lances and shields.

KIT ACKLIN
 What're they waitin' for?

Guns on the Indians, the Rangers share a hushed exchange:

HENRY KARNES
 They like to watch the fear
 a'workin'.

VERN ELWOOD
 I say we open up on 'em now!
 Survivors get to them rocks 'n
 stand 'em off!

HENRY KARNES
 Follow orders, else YOU die first.

HOUSTON & ANDERSON - about fifty feet away when--

A COMANCHE BRAVE lets out a terrifying HOWL, throws his lance - It NEAR-MISSES Anderson's head - Both he and Houston ignore the lance, keep riding. Knowles is shaking, terrified...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
 They's just gonna lance 'em both
 straight off.

HOUSTON & ANDERSON RIDE THROUGH the two circling rings of braves. Anderson holds up a hand in peace, *SPEAKS IN COMANCHE...*

BILLY ANDERSON
We come unarmed to parlay.

INTERCUT - THE RANGERS watch, keep their voices low...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
 Anderson talks Injun?

VERN ELWOOD
He's part savage his ownself.

GATOR DAVIS
Mostly savage, kidnapped by the
Kiowa when he was 11 years old--

VERN ELWOOD
--They run stakes through his mama
'n cut her guts open--

BEANS WILKINS
--Then built a fire inside her
after the ants were done.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
Shit. That settles it for me.
They ain't takin' me alive.

Away from the others, Deaf holds a finger to his lips to
indicate that they ought to stop moving their lips.

BACK TO HOUSTON, ANDERSON & THE COMANCHES

SAM HOUSTON
Tell him I am Chieftain...

BILLY ANDERSON
He's aware.

SAM HOUSTON
Good. Then tell him to KILL ME--if
he wants war like the Comanche have
never seen.

His loud defiance brings shocked reactions from the Rangers--

BILLY ANDERSON
What?

SAM HOUSTON
Do it, Anderson. Exactly what I
said.

BILLY ANDERSON
Not sure that's such a good idea.
...me standing beside you 'n all.

Buffalo Hump is bemused by Houston's bellicose demeanor.

SAM HOUSTON
I said, tell him to KILL ME!
(eyeballs Buffalo Hump)
(MORE)

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Go ahead and light the FIRE that will scorch the Comanche from this earth! Or take his warriors and ride out in peace. Sam Houston grants him safe passage in OUR land.

Anderson *TRANSLATES IN COMANCHE* - Buffalo Hump listens, incredulous - *MUTTERS IN COMANCHE* to his warriors....and they all share in a BOISTEROUS LAUGH at the dead-serious Houston.

DEAF SMITH

Can't read his lips from here...

HENRY KARNES

You'd prefer not knowing, I know I would.

Buffalo Hump *ANSWERS IN COMANCHE*. Anderson translates...

BILLY ANDERSON

He says you ought lay off the fool's water when you enter the *Comancheria*.

Houston steps toward Buffalo Hump, TEARS OPEN HIS SHIRT, GRABS BUFFALO HUMP'S WAR LANCE, and presses the tip into the skin of his exposed chest deep enough to make it bleed.

SAM HOUSTON

My death brings Yankee soldiers like buffalo herds. Buffalo Hump's grave and ALL those of his people, will lie beside mine. "THE CROAKING RAVEN DOTH BELLOW FOR REVENGE!"

Houston glares at Buffalo Hump, who glares back. Anderson stops translating, a little stumped.

BILLY ANDERSON

Shakespeare don't go easy into Comanche.

Buffalo Humps *SPEAKS IN COMANCHE* as Anderson translates...

BILLY ANDERSON (CONT'D)

The winds say the Cherokee call you "The Raven," but Comanche call you "Wild Turkey" because you drape yourself in foolish colors, make silly sounds, and lose your head when the coyotes comes.

The warriors making GOBBLE SOUNDS, LAUGH at Houston. Buffalo Hump speaks, and again Anderson translates.

BILLY ANDERSON (CONT'D)

Buffalo Hump allows brown men to kill white men, and white men to kill brown men, because in the end, only the Comanche will be lord of this land, as has always been, and will forever be.

Buffalo Hump flicks his wrist, slicing the wound in Houston's chest in the shape of a crescent moon.

Houston stands fast, takes the pain, lets the blood trickle down his chest without breaking eye contact as Buffalo Hump *SPEAKS AGAIN IN COMANCHE...*

BILLY ANDERSON (CONT'D)

He says, IF the Mexicans don't kill you... he will.

Buffalo Hump withdraws his lance, bellows his WAR CRY and GALLOPS OFF - His war party falls in behind and races away.

THE RANGERS, too stressed to let out a cheer, allow themselves visible expressions of relief.

As the War party leaves, a handsome KIOWA BRAVE, YELLOW KNIFE (16) lingers a moment to wave his lance, making sure Anderson sees the THREE SCALPS dangling from it. Then, he rides away.

BILLY ANDERSON (CONT'D)

Barely sixteen years old and three scalps already.

SAM HOUSTON

Friend of yours?

The young brave rides off; Anderson's face glows with pride.

BILLY ANDERSON

His name is Yellow Knife. He's my son.

123

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SOUTHEAST TEXAS - DAY

123

MOSELY BAKER & SIDNEY SHERMAN pass whisky from coffee cups with GEORGE HOCKLEY.

MOSELY BAKER

Big Drunk can talk. But he ain't no general. Santa Anna, on the other hand--

GEORGE HOCKLEY

Boys, it's time to get behind him--

MOSELY BAKER

I'm not sayin' this 'cause I hate Houston. I'm sayin' it because I know him.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

What would you have me do?

MOSELY BAKER

Houston's gone. He put you in charge. I say you step up and take it to Santa Anna.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

I'll need to chew on that a bit, boys.

OFF HOCKLEY'S EXPRESSION, riddled with new doubts.

124

EXT. GALVESTON BAY - DAY

124

PANIC. President Burnet buzzes about his guards on the dock by a LARGE DORY. Trunks and cargo strewn.

OARSMEN CARRY THREE FRANTIC WOMEN IN BONNETS WITH PARASOLS to the boat, fighting the wind and choppy surf.

NOTE: ENTIRE SEQUENCE MAY NEED RE-WRITE FOR NEW LOCATION TBD

FLORES comes galloping up. Burnet sees A MEXICAN charging and becomes unhinged - Draws his pistol and takes aim--

PRESIDENT BURNET

My God...

(to his guards)

Prepare to defend yourselves!

MANUEL FLORES

DON'T SHOOT! I'M A TEXIAN.

President Burnett, DON'T SHOOT!

Burnet barks at his men to stand down. Catches the reins of Flores' mount, Burnet's eyes wild and anxious.

MANUEL FLORES (CONT'D)

Santanistas not far behind me, Sir.

PRESIDENT BURNET

How could they know where I'd be?

MANUEL FLORES

Your man, Francisco. He was a spy.

PRESIDENT BURNET

Was?

MANUEL FLORES

I attended to him. You gotta go NOW!

125 EXT. THE DUNES ABOVE THE DOCK - INTERCUT

125

ALMONTE arrives with his CAVALRY and ARTILLERY DETAIL - He yanks out his telescopic looking glass, looks to the dock...

ALMONTE'S TELESCOPIC POV - THE DOCK

President Burnet and his people scurry around in chaos, wade to the boat - WIND BLOWS OFF BURNET'S HAT - PAPERS and CLOTHES from a dropped trunk FLUTTER IN THE WIND--

BACK TO SCENE

CAVALRY OFFICER

Yankees always hide behind women.

ALMONTE

(to his Cavalry)

Ride right at them! Cut them off!

I want Burnet alive!

(to Artillery)

Position your cannon to fire on that boat!

INTERCUT W/PRESIDENT BURNET

Burnet plows into the surf, dives into the boat. Guards launch him into the waves, then climb in the boat, nearly capsizing it in confusion. Oarsmen bury oars in the water and dig hard with frantic strokes. To his men on the dock:

PRESIDENT BURNET

Go on, make tracks! Do not stand and fight! Long live Texas!

The remaining guards form a firing line and DISCHARGE A VOLLEY at Almonte's advancing cavalry.

Flores herds their horses to them, helps them mount up, and leads them through the dunes, away from the Mexican cavalry.

ON BURNET - At first relieved to escape the Mexican cavalry - Then, WITHERING, as ALMONTE'S CANNONEERS loaded, taking aim.

ON ALMONTE - His artillery officer makes final adjustments.

ARTILLERY OFFICER
I can drop this 8-pounder right in
President Burnet's lap, sir.

Almonte uses a TELESCOPIC GLASS to eye the dory.

TELESCOPIC POV - Sees Burnet, crimson from ranting... then
PANS to the WOMEN in fine dresses weeping inconsolably.

ARTILLERY OFFICER (CONT'D)
Fire, sir?

Almonte collapses the telescope. Takes a deep breath.

ALMONTE
Under no circumstances are you to
fire on that boat. We are
soldiers...not murderers of
frightened women. He's leaving
Texas. That's good enough.

ON THE LANDING - ALMONTE'S DRAGOONS rifle through President
Burnet's abandoned documents and debris - PAN TO THE SURF...
a tattered TEXAS FLAG drifts in the foam.

126 EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - DAY

126

One of oldest towns in Texas...everyone is fleeing Santa
Anna's army in what history calls the "Runaway Scrape."

CHAOS - Frantic people hustle through the streets, carrying
cherished possessions. Shopkeepers nail board against their
doors. Furniture, crates, buckets, clothes litter the
streets. Dust, paper and trash blows in wind.

Men frantically hook teams to wagons and carts, anything that
will roll. In the middle of the street stands strapping,
thick-chested COLE HORNFISCHER (52), a frontier wagonmaster,
who drags his heel in a line across the dirt street.

COLE HORNFISCHER
First wagon sets this side of the
line! Single file, all the way to
the Nueces River if that's what it
takes. Men, see to your spokes!
Grease them axles! Make sure them
water barrels is full to the hilt.
Pour oats to your teams and check
them shoes. We pull out for the
Sabine, and safety, in an hour. If
you ain't ready, you're on your own.

A HORSE RIDER gallops through town...

HORSE RIDER
 THE MEXICANS ARE COMING... GOLIAD'S
 FALLEN! SANTANISTAS ARE KILLING
 EVERYONE - FLEE FOR YOUR LIVES!

COLE HORNFISCHER
 Make that a half-hour!

As every wagon in town falls in Hornfischer's train, facing EAST, a lone wagon enters town, headed WEST - THE WAGON, driven by JAMES WYKOFF (40s), his austere wife PAULINE (30s) beside him, children LUCAS (10), STEPHANIE (8), and gigantic slave NATE (20s) in back - pulls up.

The family gawks at the mayhem surrounding them. Little Stephanie cradles a PUPPY in her lap.

JAMES WYKOFF
 Took everything we got to get this
 far. An' there ain't nuthin' for
 us back home.

PAULINE WYKOFF
 Told you the day we left I'd follow
 you to the ends of the earth.

127 INT. BUCKLEY'S LAND OFFICE - DAY

127

A DISTRESSED SETTLER stands before EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY (50s), an unshaven, bombastic slob who covers his sweaty body in a wool suit with a broad hat, holding court behind a BIG DESK.

DISTRESSED SETTLER
 Please, give me back three cents
 per acre. That's less'n half what I
 give for it! Not counting my
 homestead I built...

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 I have no money to give back! It's
 done been sent to Vera Cruz... You
 bought that land, legal 'n proper!
 I ain't obliged to buy it back.

DISTRESSED SETTLER
 Ain't no good to me if I'm buried
 under it.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 Fine. I got an extra wagon 'n a
 mule parked out back. I'll swap it.
 For your deed.

The Landowner hesitates only a second before he SLAPS down the official paper, signs it and stomps off. Buckley turns to CLARENCE (30s), one of THREE THUG-LIKE SLAVES near him.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY (CONT'D)

Give him the swayback and that pine wagon.

CLARENCE

Yessir, mass'a...

(tentative)

But, mass'a, the axle is cracked.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Nigger, I give you an ORDER!

128 EXT. WAGON TRAIL - FROM HARRISBURG - DAY

128

The REFUGEES who Flores helped escape the burning town of Harrisburg have been captured by a SIX-MAN MEXICAN PATROL.

The old, very young and infirm ride in the wagon, a few more trudge alongside, their hands tied together - Among the prisoners, the wounded Lane Walters, recovered enough to limp in front - A Dragoon prods Lane with his lance to go faster.

PULL BACK TO A ROCKY LEDGE ABOVE THEM...

...where LORCA spies on the Mexican Patrol and their captives - Lorca's squirming BAG OF RATTLESNAKES beside him.

129 INT. BUCKLEY'S LAND OFFICE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

129

Wykoff, Pauline, their kids enter, their slave Nate left in the wagon. Buckley, writing in his ledger, doesn't look up.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

There are no refunds.

JAMES WYKOFF

I'm here trackin' Empresario Buckley.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Then you're trackin' me. What can I do for you...

(looks sternly)

But no refunds. As I've stated...

JAMES WYKOFF

Interested in a land grant.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

(eyeballs them)

If'n ya don't mind me askin', with all the goin's on, why you here? You runnin' from the law?

JAMES WYKOFF

No sir. We just come after good farmland. Make a fresh start. But now I hear that the Mexican army's drivin' all the Americans out--

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Honest settlers have nothing to fear. President Santa Anna protects all legal land owners. It's the thievin' squatters and revolutionaries who get shot. Mostly. You swear allegiance to the Republic of Mexico?

JMES WYKOFF

For six cents an acre I surely do.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

I can grant a hundred and seventy acres for farming... But no whiskey brewin'-gun running-tobacco smugglin' or frontier riff-raffin'.

JAMES WYKOFF

No sir... I mean, yes sir.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

By law, improvements must be made timely. But you've been shot in the flanks with good luck... there's a property cleared with a sturdy cabin on it, ready to farm.

Buckley presents the same Deed executed earlier by the DISTRESSED SETTLER...

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY (CONT'D)

I can let you have it for seven and a half cents an acre. You can pay on time, cash or trade. 'Course I favor cash.

JAMES WYKOFF

Hoping to pay a percentage of my crop yield.

Buckley looks through THE WINDOW: Nate in the wagon.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 You got that blue-gum nigger
 yonder? Well damn, that sambo is
 half the down-payment right's here.

JAMES WYKOFF
 (anxious, yet politic)
 I need Nate to help plow the fields
 ...to make sure I can pays ya--

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 Awright, I'll settle for the pup...
 My little one's been naggin' for a
 doggie. It's worth two dollars down
 on this here Deed.

Young Stephanie comes unglued, tugs the puppy to her chest.

STEPHANIE
 No, Daddy! Please, mister, not my
 Tilly.

JAMES WYKOFF
 I'll pay 10% of my first year's
 yield. 20% a year afterwards.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 (false sincerity)
 I'll make an exception...but don't
 tell nobody - Special circumstance,
 because I tend to favor family men -
 But at the very least I'll need ya
 to put the nigger up as collateral.

Wykoff reluctantly nods.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY (CONT'D)
 I can also allocate another four
 hundred-forty acres for ranchin'--

JAMES WYKOFF
 Ranchin'?

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 Comes from the Spainards. Cattle
 roam free, proliferate, then sold
 on the hoof. Mexicans been doin' it
 now for pert-near a hundred years.

JAMES WYKOFF
 Farm land's all I'm after.

Buckley starts filling out papers, writes new names...

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
What religion are you?

JAMES WYKOFF
My wife's a Hardshell Baptist--

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
Mexico only recognizes those of
Catholic faith.
(salesman smile)
Bein' Catholic's not all that bad.
You ignore a priest instead of a
preacher.

JAMES WYKOFF
We'll do right by ya, Mister.

Buckley signs the deed, puts his seal on it. He passes it to
Wykoff for his signature. Buckley grins, offers a handshake.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
Welcome to Mexico.

130 EXT. NEAR GOLIAD - JACK HAYS & BIG FOOT WALLACE - DAY 130

A LIGHT RAIN has begun to fall as Jack walks beside Big Foot
on horseback. In the distance...the Goliad EXECUTION SITE.

MOSLEY BAKER (PRELAP)
Our families are alone on the roads
facing the Mexican onslaught...
Comanche... Kiowa... bandits -
while we sit here doin' NOTHIN'!

131 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SOUTHEAST TEXAS - DAY 131

It's RAINING here as well, as Baker & Sherman speak to a
GROUP OF DISGRUNTLED SOLDIERS, fervently rabble-rousing...

SUPER: "April 18, 1836 - Texan Army Camp, Southeast Texas"

SIDNEY SHERMAN
I came to fight, not run!

Which draws a HUGE CHEER from the crowd.

MOSLEY BAKER
I came for blood.

JUAN SEGUIN
 (yells over crowd)
 Patriots, listen! We must stand by
 our General! Our duty is to--

The CROWD drown him out, CHANTING "Stand and fight! Stand and Fight!" drowning him out - THE CHANT echoes over...

132 EXT. NEAR GOLIAD - JACK & BIG FOOT - DAY (RESUME) 132

Seeing the STREWN BODIES of the Goliad defenders in the mid-distance, Big Foot's brow creases with concern, and he SPURS HIS HORSE toward the Execution site. Jack follows on foot.

133 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SOUTHEAST TEXAS - DAY (RESUME) 133

Seguin, and Hockley futilely try to establish order, drowned out by the disgruntled SOLDIERS' CHANT...

GEORGE HOCKLEY
 You men are ordered to disperse!

MOSELY BAKER
 Next time Houston orders graves
 dug... It will be HIS!

OFF THE ARRIVAL OF HORSEMEN, the men turn, react, their angry CHANTING DYING OUT, replaced by a tense volatile MURMUR as--

GENERAL SAM HOUSTON AND THE RANGERS (Deaf, Karnes, Anderson, Kit, Gator, Beans, Vern, and Knowles) just returned from the horrors of Goliad and Lorca's massacre, ride into the crowd.

Houston, dismounts, strides to Baker without a word - PUNCHES him square in the jaw, picks him up...PUNCHES him again--

He then grabs Baker by the jacket, drags him to the creek--

SAM HOUSTON
 Cold water'll cool that hot head.

With a ROUNDHOUSE PUNCH, Houston knocks Baker into the creek. Sherman charges forward.

SIDNEY SHERMAN
 You can beat us... but you can't
 silence us.

The DISGRUNTLED SOLDIERS grumble, begin to push one another, mutiny imminent. A SHOT FIRES into the air... Deaf holds his rifle - The Rangers draw their weapons, stand at the ready.

DEAF SMITH
 Y'all cool down, cuz we's all
 that's left! Colonel Fannin and
 all his men are gone - Goddamnit to
 hell... Goliad is no more.

Stunned silence. Juan Seguin steps in to broker a truce.

JUAN SEGUIN
 Today is a sad day... Our brothers
 gave their lives for our cause.
 Let us not mourn but celebrate them
 and thank God they lived.

134 EXT. GOLIAD EXECUTION SITE - DAY

134

Big Foot arrives at the EXECUTION SITE, shocked by what he
 sees. He dismounts, anxiously scans the blood-drenched rows
 of DEAD TEXAS SOLDIERS - Reacting to the smell, Big Foot
 covers his nose with a bandana as we hear...

JUAN SEGUIN (O.C.)
 Fannin disobeyed orders - His army
 did not survive because of it.

As the stunned Big Foot walks around, PAN TO COLONEL FANNIN'S
 DEAD BODY... face blown off... dumped here with his men.

JUAN SEGUIN (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 Should we do the same? Fight each
 other? DISOBEY OUR GENERAL?

BACK TO TEXAN ARMY CAMP --

JUAN SEGUIN (CONT'D)
 And you, General - Will YOU lead
 your men?

Houston, emotional and raw, composes himself, walks back.

SAM HOUSTON
 I know what you think of me. I
 hear your judgment. Feel your
 scorn. And it makes me burn with
 rage to the point of hatred...
 because I know I'm the cause of
 your dissent- when our cause can
 least afford it.

The SOLDIERS' FACES reflect shock and uncertainty at their
 General's soul-baring confession. But Houston isn't
 contrite, he speaks frankly, defiant and electrifying...

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Much of what is said about me is true - I was broken when I came to Texas. I failed at my marriage. I turned my back on the people of Tennessee I had sworn to serve. I took refuge among the Cherokee, who had loved me as their own child... and I, in turn, failed them, too.

As Houston continues, his words underscore what we see at...

INTERCUT - GOLIAD

Overwhelmed, Big Foot surveys the mass slaughter as Jack catches up, stunned by the sight of the sea of dead bodies.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

I have disappointed my family, dishonored my mother, tarnished my name...shamed myself - I'll answer for all that when my time comes.

(passionately)

But I am not what I once was. And the reason is TEXAS. I was given a new life. My heart beat strong again. My head cleared. I saw a FUTURE, beckoning us.

INTERCUT - GOLIAD

Big Foot rushes among the corpses, desperately searching for his brother - FLASHES OF DEAD FACES, BULLET-RIDDLED BODIES--

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

If we have heart enough to rise TOGETHER from the ashes of the Alamo and Goliad, we owe it to the dead who fought beside us. I did not ask to be your General. Our government asked me to lead you. I now ask you to follow me East - where I know victory awaits us, in our own home country, where God Himself has willed that no tyrant will ever rule.

INTERCUT - TEXAN ARMY CAMP W/GOLIAD

Big Foot sees in the mass of bodies...HIS BROTHER SAMUEL'S ARM, wearing the SILVER BRACELET that matches his own.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

I swear by my Maker, I am prepared to die for Texas and YOU.

(MORE)

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Find it in your hearts to follow me
a little longer down this twisted,
bloody road, I'll prove it to you.

On Houston's emotional last words, we see...

AT GOLIAD...

JACK reacts to BIG FOOT - His devastated friend holds onto his dead brother Samuel - Jack kneels beside him to gently remove the Wallace family wrist cuff...hands it to Big Foot.

135 INT. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE - DAY

135

General Gaines Aide delivers a NOTE to PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON, who sits with his feet on his desk, twirling a quill pen, BREAKING it between his fingers after he reads--

ANDREW JACKSON

Damn Texans!

GENERAL GAINES' AIDE

Sir, it now seems unlikely that the
Texians will prevail--

ANDREW JACKSON

Unlikely, you say.

GENERAL GAINES' AIDE

Especially since Houston's at odds
with his officer corp.

ANDREW JACKSON

Been at odds with him myself.

He rises from his desk, crosses to a statue of a THOROUGHBRED HORSE at full gallop. Runs his hands over the animal's sinewy flanks as the officers watch his every move.

ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)

As long as I've lived, I've been a
keen judge of horseflesh. What
clinches it for me is to stare in
the horse's eyes and let him tell
me who he is.

Jackson steps away from the statue to pull down a SWORD from its place on the wall, withdraws the SHARP, GLEAMING BLADE from its scabbard, using it like a pointer to punctuate his words.

ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)

I first looked into Sam Houston's eyes at the Battle of the Horseshoe. He was 19 years old. First on the line. First on the assault. First to fall. First to be marked for death.

He slowly swings the sword, methodically thrusts & parries, almost like a Tai Chi exercise, his aides nervous...and mesmerized by the old soldier's battle moves as he speaks.

ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)

I do not propose to understand him. But if there's a way to defeat Santa Anna, the only man capable of doing it is Sam Houston--

Twirling, he whips the SWORD up, the point just short of the adam's apple of the Aide, who GASPS. Jackson grins and winks--

ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)

--except for me, of course.

136

EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DAY

136

A CRUDELY-BUILT CABIN - Raw cedar posts form a corral for livestock. Crop fields stand in weeds, surrounded by an impenetrable OAK THICKET. Wykoff climbs off their wagon.

The kids, Lucas and Stephanie, jump off to rummage around the grounds, laughing. Nate unloads trunks, sacks, barrels.

PAULINE WYKOFF

It's really ours?

James Wykoff proudly nods, taking stock of their new home and holdings, standing tall. Pauline throws her arms around her husband's neck and kisses him. Stephanie screams in joy. Runs back to her mother carrying a soiled doll.

STEPHANIE

Look what I found, Mommy!

PAULINE WYKOFF

Why, she's gorgeous. Just like you, my two baby dolls...

LUCAS (O.S.)

(from inside the house)

Come look in here... Hurry up!

137 INT. WYKOFF CABIN - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 137

Pauline and Wykoff walk in. The kids jump on a feather bed.

PAULINE WYKOFF
Lord, God. There are feather beds.

Pauline notices clothes and dishes left in place.

PAULINE WYKOFF (CONT'D)
James...isn't it strange that
someone would leave all this?

He leans against the open door, his attention lasers on:

A BROKEN SHAFT/ARROWHEAD imbedded in the wooden door facing.

JAMES WYKOFF
Don't be jinxin' us, woman. It's
bad luck to question good fortune.

Careful that no one else sees, he snatches the arrowhead and tosses it in the weeds. Concerned, he scans the dark woods.

138 EXT. TRAIL THROUGH TREE GROVE - DAY 138

MOUNTED MEXICAN SOLDIERS drive their PRISONERS, now including the COLE HORNFISHER WAGON TRAIN SURVIVORS, along with Lane Walters & the Harrisburg Refugees, all tied together, limping along, some wounded with women & children in wobbly wagons.

An EXHAUSTED TEXAS PRISONER meanders off the road - A MEXICAN SOLDIER, for fun, LANCES him in the buttocks - Laughs.

ANOTHER SOLDIER hands Cole Hornfischer a canteen...empty. Cole hands it back to the amused soldier - straggles on.

A tattered YOUNG GIRL faints from exhaustion. An ANGRY MEXICAN SOLDIER bears down on her - Lane trots over, scoops her up in his arms to carry her on down the road.

Ahead, a majestic OAK TREE, its leafy canopy shading the road - Outer limbs hanging low - A FAINT, BRIEF O.S. RATTLE that could be CICADAS as the prisoners walk under the massive oak--

--as the soldiers on horseback behind them duck their heads to clear the branches, when...a BRANCH comes ALIVE, SNAPS--

--BITING the first soldier - It's a RATTLESNAKE tethered to the branch STRIKING, BURYING ITS FANGS in the soldier's NECK!

The other soldiers react...too late--

MORE HISSING, ANGRY, RATTLING DIAMONDBACKS STRIKE the faces and bodies of the soldiers on horseback!

HORSES BUCK & JERK AROUND as panicked Mexican soldiers fend off the snakes, while other SCREAMING SOLDIERS SHOOT at the serpents or SWING THEIR SWORDS WILDLY to fend them off... one accidentally SLICING INTO a fellow soldier!

THE TEXAS PRISONERS gape in terror as--

LORCA LEAPS DOWN from the branches of his rattlesnake-booby-trapped tree - SCREAMING, he SHOOTs, HACKS, STABS the few Soldiers not already dying of snake bite in the horrible din.

LORCA turns to the stunned prisoners, that crazed look in his eyes. Lane pulls his shoulders back, defiant--but helpless.

LANE WALTERS
You gonna kill us too?

Lorca's SWINGS HIS SWORD... CUTTING Lane's binds free.

139

EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DAY

139

Wykoff sits on the front porch whittling, eyes ever alert. Through the open doorway, Pauline can be seen fussing over pots in the fireplace. Stephanie plays with her found-doll. Lucas plays with wooden toys. Nate brings in firewood.

JAMES WYKOFF
Nate, first thing we need is a root cellar. 30 paces north of the house, under that scrub oak, in the brush, hidden so the coons and coyotes can't find it.

Overhearing them, Pauline walks out on the porch...

PAULINE WYKOFF
What? With all we've got to do?

JAMES WYKOFF
My woman wants her jams and jars fresh and cool in the summer.

He slaps her ass, growls like a bear, buries his beard against her neck. Pauline blushes, loving his affection.

PAULINE WYKOFF
Not in front of the children.

Wykoff laughs...looks out at the horizon, ever vigilant.

140 EXT. TEXIAN ARMY CAMP - DAY

140

SARAH EWING digs a hole with a spade. Kisses the DRIED FLOWER (Truett's gift) and lays it in the hold. Next, she takes Yancey's lock of hair and lays it beside the flower. With tears in her eyes, she covers them up with dirt.

ANGLE - THE RANGERS - Vern looks off in the direction of Houston's tent with a mocking aside to his buddy Kit...

VERN ELWOOD

Lemme, guess, General. We're retreatin' agin today, right?

Kit chuckles as, exhausted, Houston walks into his tent...

KIT ACKLIN

All that retreatin's wore him out.
Needs a nap.

They crack up. Whittling, Billy Anderson glares at them.

141 INT. MEDICAL TENT - TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SOUTHEAST TX - DAY 141

Doc Ewing wraps the ankle of the pretty, 19 year old Rebecca Pit, who Kit helped across the river in the Runaway Scrape--

DOC EWING

It's just a sprain, not broke.

Kit stands next to Rebecca, having brought her here.

KIT ACKLIN

Told ya Doc would fix ya up.

DOC EWING

Yep, a few days, you'll be able to run away from this feller.

Rebecca smiles, twinkly eyes on the smitten Kit.

REBECCA

He was very gallant, tryin' to relieve me of my embarrassment.

KIT ACKLIN

T'weren't nothin'.

VERN saunters inside to flirt with Sarah, whispering...

VERN ELWOOD

I got an ache I'd like ya to look at -
But it'd hafta to be in private.

The young girl blushes, focuses on her work, whispers back--

SARAH EWING
I can't talk to you.

Not hearing Vern's hushed flirtation, the Doc nonetheless reacts to the lecherous Ranger lurking around his daughter.

DOC EWING
Boy, your rudeness appalls me.
Under no circumstances are you to
even LOOK at my daughter. Now 'less
you're in dire need of medical
attention, CLEAR OUTTA HERE!

VERN ELWOOD
(glares, then, exiting)
Thought this was a free country!
'Least that's what we fightin' for.

142

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SOUTHEAST TEXAS - DAY

142

Rebecca's brother Colby carries a PISTOL, keeps CLICKING the trigger mechanism as Vern exits Medical Tent.

COLBY PIT
You's a Ranger, so I reckon you
must know all about guns.

VERN ELWOOD
I know about a lotta things. Who
the hell are you?

COLBY PIT
You don't remember? Name's Colby
Pit - You 'n the Rangers swummed me
'n my sister across't the Brazos.

VERN ELWOOD
Swum half 'a Texas cross that river
(off Colby CLICKING)
You tryin' to break that pistol?

COLBY PIT
No sir, was my Daddy's. Reverend's
been keepin' care of it - So now,
me bein' of age 'n my Daddy bein'
dead, he give it to me to keep.
(clicks hammer again)
Only it don't seem to ratchet quite
right. Lock won't stand cocked.

Crossing back to the other Rangers, Karnes, Gator and Knowles drink coffee - Deaf and Anderson clean weapons. Beans cooks. Around them, troops break down tents, back gear, load wagons.

BILLY ANDERSON
Get the blacksmith to fix it.

COLBY PIT
Y'know where I can find him?

Gator winks at Anderson, points to Sam Houston's tent.

GATOR DAVIS
Snortin' in his tent like a Peach Orchard Boar.

COLBY PIT
What do I tell him?

BEANS WILKINS
Fix my damn gun, ya lazy sumbitch!

BILLY ANDERSON
Tell him you ride with the Rangers.
He hears that he'll fix your pistol
straightaway--

KNOWLES
--or know he can count on a good
ass-whoopin'!

Not keeping up with the conversation, Deaf looks to Karnes who quietly tells him. As the others cover their low chuckling, Deaf lets loose with his high-pitched CACKLE, watching Colby...

143 INT. HOUSTON'S TENT - DAY

143

Houston lies on his cot SNORING. Colby enters, stands by the cot a moment, then gives Houston a SHOVE.

SAM HOUSTON
What...what is it?

COLBY PIT
I need you to fix this here weapon.
Somethin's awry with the mechanism.

He sits up, sleepily focuses, narrows his eyes at Colby.

COLBY PIT (CONT'D)
Without delay. I'm a Ranger 'n
might be called upon to use it for
the common defense at any moment.

SAM HOUSTON
 (sticks out hand for gun)
 Give it here.

144 EXT. HOUSTON'S TENT - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 144

Exiting the tent, Colby runs into Hockley on his way in.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
 The General awake?

COLBY PIT
 (stops, blanching)
 General...? General Houston?

GEORGE HOCKLEY
 Only General we got here.

Mortified, Colby doesn't know which way to turn, looks over to see the RANGERS HOOTING & CRACKING UP! Rushes back in--

145 INT. HOUSTON'S TENT - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 145

Houston's studying Colby's gun, a panicked Colby darts in, followed by an amused Hockley - Tripping over himself...

COLBY PIT
 General Houston, I... I... I had no idea... I thought... I mean... I am bust-out sorry 'n shamefaced for disturbin' your sleep like a dumb stupid idjit 'n I am prepared to take the whuppin' I deserve, only--

Red-faced, he pauses. Houston tests the pistol's mechanism.

SAM HOUSTON
 Only what?

COLBY PIT
 Only I'd like my Daddy's gun back as he was shot down by outlaws 'n it's the only thing he left me.

SAM HOUSTON
 The pawl needs adjusting. Come back later, you'll find it serviceable.

He hears the laughing Rangers through his open tent flap. Houston stands, calls out to them.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Since you fun gentlemen seem to
have extra time on your hands, I
have an assignment for you.

146 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DAY

146

James Wykoff's and Nate's heads above the ground, shirtless, sweating, and filthy, digging the "root cellar." Stephanie and little Lucas haul the dirt with buckets into the woods.

JAMES WYKOFF

Gotta go deeper, Nate. Then hide
it like it ain't even here.

Pauline delivers a gourd of water. Wykoff throws it back, passes it to Nate, who hesitates to share the gourd. Wykoff nods, so Nate drinks, too. Wykoff studies the timber line intently, always watching.

147 EXT. WOODS - MEXICAN ARMY CAMP - DAY

147

Near the main camp, Santa Anna and Emily enjoy a picnic at a lavish table under a tree, served by Romolo... MUSICIANS PLAY a beautiful SPANISH MELODY. Santa Anna smokes an opium pipe.

SANTA ANNA

To this day it surprises me I've
become a General, let alone the
President of Mexico.

EMILY WEST

Why is that, Antonio?

SANTA ANNA

There are so many other things I'm
better suited for. I might have
become an accomplished musician.

EMILY WEST

What instrument do you play?

SANTA ANNA

I never had time to learn one.
(takes hit from the pipe)
But I'm very sensitive to all types
of music. It moves me profoundly.
I might as well have been a
painter, a sculptor, or a poet, or
a trainer of champion gamefowl--
(another hit off pipe)
(MORE)

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

--but God in his wisdom decreed I should serve my country instead.

(levels his glance at her)

So, I guess if you ask me what instrument I play best, my answer is...the human instrument...

He offers the pipe to Emily. She deflects by picking up a newspaper, admiringly flashes him the headline...

EMILY WEST

The Texas Telegraph calls you "The Napoleon Of The West?"

SANTA ANNA

So, you're a patriot now, eh? After I defeated the Spanish at Vera Cruz, the newspapers started calling me that. I have now fought and won more battles than Bonaparte. Like him, I am building an empire.

EMILY WEST

Mexico's war for independence... was that much different than what the Texians are doing?

SANTA ANNA

(irritated, snapping)

Of course! The Anglos are the invaders. I fight for the liberty of my people!

ALMONTE

(hurrying to them)

Your Excellency! You are needed!

Men and camp followers turn to watch an ODD-LOOKING MOUNTED PATROL trot across the field toward them... It's the Mexican Soldados who were ambushed with Lorca's rattlesnakes.

Frightened WHISPERS among troops & observers: "Demon!" "Ghost killer!" "El DIABLO NEGRO!" But most whisper, "LORCA..."

High on the opium, Santa Anna gapes in horror--

SANTA ANNA'S DISTORTED POV - THE DEAD MEN RIDING IN, propped up by their own lances which impale them to their saddles -- Their horribly SWOLLEN, DISFIGURED, SNAKE-BITTEN FACES and loose-limbed bodies bounce eerily toward them.

SANTA ANNA

(stifling his fear)

Get those men down from there!

TERROR sweeps through the crowd...a SOLDIER leans in to look--

A RATTLESNAKE SNAPS OUT from inside the jacket of one of the Dead Soldados to BITE DOWN ONTO THE CURIOUS SOLDIER'S FACE!

SCREAMING, the Soldier wildly flails, but the snake stays attached! Portilla RIDES IN TO SWING HIS SWORD, WHACKS the snake in two...but the snake's head stays clamped on, fangs sunk into the man's face. ONLOOKERS SHRIEK, ERUPT IN CHAOS--

Stoned, freaked-out, Santa Anna staggers back, LOSING HIS AUTHORITATIVE COMPOSURE - HIS PEOPLE YIELD GROUND TO HIM as if he's a leper. Portilla dismounts to help, Emily lends no comfort. Santa Anna looks to his officers to restore order.

ALMONTE

They're frightened, Excellency.
LORCA, they say, has risen from the dead of the Alamo and Goliad. They say his spirit comes for you and brings death to everyone around you.

PORTILLA

It's a stupid Indian legend!

Santa Anna can't break his stare on the dying man with the snake head stuck to his neck. He hears "LORCA...LORCA"...

PORTILLA (CONT'D)

I know it's a peasant superstition,
but it's taken hold--

It's taken hold on Santa Anna, too, struggling for control--

SANTA ANNA

There is NO GHOST! No DEMONS!

Portilla helps Almonte hustle Santa Anna clear of the despairing crowd. Santa Anna leans in close to Almonte's ear, his childlike expression begging for reassurance.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

It's...it's just a man...

Emily watches, her expression shows not a drop of pity.

START BY INTERCUTTING CLOSE-UPS of Jack and Big Foot somberly riding - Reflecting on the loss of Big Foot's brother and all the death at Goliad. After a long moment...

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Where you plan on headin' now?

JACK HAYS
With you, I reckon - Join up with
the Texian Army. Figure it's what
your brother Samuel would do.

The sentiment brightens Big Foot's mood, makes him smile.

WIDER ANGLE - STARTING ON BIG FOOT WALLACE

Riding his sleek, commanding horse, Big Foot looks back...

SWING TO JACK - REVEAL him riding a knock-kneed BURRO, boots
almost dragging the ground. Rather than being sentimental,
Big Foot shakes off his sadness to break his friend's balls:

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Must say, you're lookin' mighty
dignified.

Jack passes him without a glance. Sits on the burro upright
and proud, like he's riding a fine Tennessee thoroughbred.

JACK HAYS
I'd sooner ride on a burro than
with an ASS. He smells a whole lot
better, too.

Big Foot flicks his reins, and together they ride on.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
I will rectify the stink upon
arrival at Buckley's Way Station.

JACK HAYS
I can only hope. But I fear the
ASS will linger.

149 EXT. RANGER CAMP - DAY

149

Deaf Smith's Ranging Company -- ANDERSON, KARNES, GATOR,
KNOWLES, ACKLIN, BEANS and VERN camped.

KIT ACKLIN
So what's the big secret mission?

BILLY ANDERSON
They's no spies round here, Henry -

HENRY KARNES

We've been ordered to rendezvous
with a couple of twin sisters and
escort 'em back to camp.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Sisters.... YEEHA!

VERN ELWOOD

Finally! A task to enjoy--

ON KIT and KARNES--

Beans dishes out a meager meal of biscuits and fatback grease
as the tired men stand around him holding out empty tins.

BEANS WILKINS

That's the last of the fatback. No
more coffee, beans, flour...Jes'
swab them biscuits in the grease
and don't bother me about it.

KIT ACKLIN

Damn Injuns, this whole territory's
all hunted out.

GATOR DAVIS

We cain't go on another day without
no food--

VERN ELWOOD

Dammit, Beans, ya shoulda packed
more vittles!

GATOR DAVIS

How's Cap'n Smith expect us to do
our jobs with bellys like empty
saddlebags?

BILLY ANDERSON

Why don't you go ask him?

GATOR DAVIS

Don't mind if I do. I'll give him
a piece'a my damn mind--

BILLY ANDERSON

Keep it small, Gator. You ain't
got much to spare.

ANGLE - NOT FAR FROM CAMP - DEAF lies face down in a bed of
spring CLOVER. Gator stoops so Deaf can read his lips.

GATOR DAVIS
 You fall off your horse? Whatta ya
 doin' down here?

DEAF ignores him - rises, points his finger north, and starts walking rapidly. Gator follows until Deaf stops, lies back down in the clover, and stares at the weeds.

DEAF SMITH
 Got any biscuits?

GATOR DAVIS
 Why would I...?

DEAF SMITH
 Carry your ass back to Beans and
 fetch what biscuits he got left and
 a big stob of fire.

GATOR DAVIS
 A stob of what?

DEAF SMITH
 A piece of wood that's burnin' on
 one end, boy. Make it quick.

DEAF walks on, following his finger, the SUN beating down--

FROM THE FLARE OF THE SUN - DAY (SHORT TIME LATER)

Gator returns with a sack of biscuits and a stob of burning wood to find Deaf again lying in the clover.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 Git down here, Davis. Let me learn
 you sumthin'.

Gator, uncertain, lies down beside Deaf.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 When a bee collects his fill, he
 flies straight to the hive. I done
 watched six of 'em go. I gotta fix
 on their position.

He rises again, stares, points his finger, starts to walk rapidly north. Gator rubs his nose, shakes his head, and irritated he scurries after him carrying the fire stick.

He finds Deaf standing under a bee hive the size of a basketball dangling from an oak limb. Deaf tests the breeze, takes two steps into the wind, paws out the ground with his boot-heel.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 Make us a fire right here.

Gator gathers kindling, dead grass, sets the coals at the base of his stack, and blows the fire to live. As the flames build, Deaf piles on green grass. Billows of smoke soon engulf the hide. Bees scatter. Deaf pulls his tomahawk and carefully cuts the hive loose. He slices off the top.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 Got them biscuits?

Gator reaches in his gunny sack and hands him a biscuit. Deaf dips it in the hive, and pulls it out dripping with fresh, golden HONEY, which Deaf takes a big bite of.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 Now, take that hive back to camp
 and give it to them tittybabies.

GATOR DAVIS
 Where you goin' now?

DEAF SMITH
 Fishin'.

GATOR DAVIS
 You got a hook, line 'n pole?

DEAF SMITH
 All I need is a river...

Deaf saddles up as Gator leaves.

150 EXT. BUCKLEY WAY STATION & CANTINA - DAY

150

A way station for travelers in the middle of nowhere on the road to Victoria. O.S. DISCORDANT MUSIC PLAYS.

Approaching the rough-board building, Jack and Big Foot take note of a SIGN POSTED OUTSIDE: "NO SHOOTIN', NO CUSSIN', NO FIGHTIN' AND ABSOLUTELY NO SPITTING ON THE GODDAMN FLOOR!"

The painted notice signed by: "EMPRESARIO HAYDEN R. BUCKLEY, PROPRIETER, SURVEYOR, BOOKKEEPER, FARRIER, BARKEEPER, AND MAGISTRATE--ONLY LAW WEST OF VICTORIA EXCEPT GOD." In smaller print: "CAN SERVE AS PREACHER IN A PINCH"

151 INT. BUCKLEY WAY STATION & CANTINA - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 151

CLOSE UP--ON PEDRO, Deaf & Guadalupe's adopted child - The toddler's curious eyes watch through cracks in a board. GUADALUPE, holding onto him as they hide, peeks out as well.

THEIR POV: The teenage outlaws who robbed Jack & Big Foot - FUZZ, ROY, AND CURLS sit at a card table. TWO BODIES lie sprawled on the floor in pools of blood. Sitting on the bar, two MUSICIANS nervously play guitar and fiddle. Against the wall are THREE more terrified, bound and gagged HOSTAGES (TWO MEN and a WOMAN), travelers waylaid by the young outlaws.

AT THE CARD TABLE sits another hostage, a gagged, wide-eyed, trembling OLDER MAN (60s), bound to a chair, his arm out, palm face down on the table, fingers spread.

152 EXT. BUCKLEY WAY STATION & CANTINA - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 152

As they arrive, Jack reacts to the HORSES among those tied up at the hitch. One of them is HIS! O.S. A MAN SCREAMS.

Jack signals to Big Foot to hold...swings his leg over the burro, SLAPS its ass...it just stands there, looking at him.

From his stolen horse, Jack retrieves his knife, pistols from saddlebag, rifle from scabbard, shares weapons with Big Foot.

INTERCUT JACK & BIG FOOT with...

INSIDE - Little Pedro shifts his position. Guadalupe puts a hand to his lips to be quiet. He wraps his arms around her.

IN THE MAIN ROOM - FUZZ pulls his BOWIE KNIFE, runs his finger along its edge. Takes a big swig of a half-empty Tequila bottle - SMASHES it along with several others that lie in shards against the foot of the bar.

ROY shoves out a stack of crumpled bills, his wager. CURLS counts from her wad to match it, crosses to the woman hostage - YANKS a gold locket from her neck, tosses it in the pile.

FUZZ

Pot right?

(off Roy's & Curls' nods)

Mighty fine.

FUZZ grips his knife over the hostage's hand, sets his elbow on the table...STABS THE POINT between the fingers, IN RAPID SUCCESSION. Roy concentrates. CURLS squeals in delight.

FUZZ misses and STABS the knife through the bone of the man's finger, pinning it against the table - He SCREAMS in agony...

CURLS
 (to Roy)
 You lose! I win!

ROY
 (to Fuzz)
 Goddammit! You're too damn nervous
 for this game.

Roy pulls out his pistol - BLAM! Blows the hostage away.
 The Musicians STOP PLAYING - Off Roy's look, START UP AGAIN.

IN STORAGE ROOM - Shuddering, Pedro pees his pants, darkening
 from URINE. Guadalupe comforts her sniffing toddler as...

THE MAIN ROOM - BANG! BIG FOOT bursts the back door open -
 Roy flies at him with his knife, Big Foot CLUBS him with his
 rifle butt, down he goes. Big Foot points at Curls' wrist.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 Fetch me MY wrist cuff, bitch.

FUZZ & CURLS SHOOT at Big Foot who FIRES BACK as JACK BURSTS
 THROUGH through the front door, FIRING at Fuzz, who scrambles
 like a bobcat and CRASHES through the window. Pistols in
 each hand, CURLS FIRES one gun at Big Foot, the OTHER at Jack
 - Both men dive for cover as she scrambles out the door.

Caught in the crossfire, the TWO MUSICIANS catch bullets,
 WOUNDED, as Jack springs up to pursue the outlaws, SLIPS in
 blood, GOES SPRAWLING - Right behind him, Big Foot STUMBLES,
 falls over Jack as they HEAR O.S. HORSES GALLOPING AWAY.

BIG FOOT WALLACE (CONT'D)
 Well, goddamn. We may have gone
 about this the wrong way.

He rushes out after the fugitives - Jack stays behind to cut
 the hostages loose - One falls to his knees, hugs Hays' legs.

JACK HAYS
 No need for that...

Guadalupe carries Pedro, coming out from the storeroom.

GUADALUPE SMITH
*Gracias, gracias...*the saints sent
 you to answer our prayers -

With Jack's help, she begins to nurse the injured victims.

153 EXT. RANGER CAMP - DAY

153

Emptied honeycombs & hive discarded by the placated Rangers.
Deaf rides in to drop a big, wet squirmy sack.

DEAF SMITH
That do y'all enough to stop yer
whinin' 'n git back to work?

From the sack, THREE HUGE FISH flop out onto the grass.

BEANS WILKINS
I'll be damned.

A SNAKE crawls out of the sack beside Knowles, who YELPS.

DEAF SMITH
Must'a caught him by mistake.

Deaf pulls SASSAFRAS root clusters from his saddlebag.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
Stew this sassafras in place of
coffee. It'll clean out your livers
and make ya shit like a goose.

Deaf jerks his reins and rides off.

GATOR DAVIS
Where's he off to now?

HENRY KARNES
Scoutin'. He's a scout.

VERN ELWOOD
He just wants to beat us to them
sisters.

154 EXT. BUCKLEY WAY STATION & CANTINA - DAY

154

The FREED HOSTAGES toss a rope over a limb. Big Foot drags Roy, the punk killer/thief that Big Foot knocked out, kicking, neck veins pulsing, BAWLING like a baby, as Jack exits the way station and reacts to the hanging preparation.

JACK HAYS
What, in God's name, is your
intention?

Big Foot cinches the noose tight, Roy's face turning blue.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

I'd think it obvious, 'n pretty
sure God ain't got nuthin' to do
with this snotnose son of Satan.

Big Foot nods to the men - ROY GETS HOISTED UP - Blood and
slobber drain out of his mouth as he twitches and kicks.

Jack pulls his knife, SLICES through the rope. Roy crashes
to the ground, crying. Big Foot flares.

BIG FOOT WALLACE (CONT'D)

This is rough country, Hardcase.
Ain't but one cure in Texas for
cutthroat killin' 'n thievin'. I
got plenty of rope--

Big Foot grabs his coil of rope to string Roy up again. Jack
spins him around - SHOVES HIM HARD in the chest.

JACK HAYS

There's lynching and there's the
LAW - This is the province of the
civil authorities!

Big Foot stares, nonplused by Jack's righteous commitment.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Aw, hell, Jack, they're gonna hang
his ass anyway!

JACK HAYS

Maybe so, but we're delivering him
to the magistrate in Victoria.
(glare turns lethal)
Otherwise, you'll find me most
unaccommodating.

Big Foot shrugs, takes out his frustration on Roy, KICKS HIM.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

You'll GET what ya GAVE, ya
sonofabitch! Just a matter of when.

155

EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DAY

155

James Wykoff and Nate cover the roof of the cellar. Re-plant
brush, toss rocks and dead limbs to conceal the fresh earth.
Pauline crosses from the cabin to greet Wykoff with coffee.
He lifts her off her feet, twirls her around. Kids giggle.

JAMES WYKOFF

Let's plant us some corn.

PAULINE

--N' peas 'n taters.

LUCAS

Squash. Cucumbers.

STEPHANIE

Tomaters. Butter beans.

JAMES WYKOFF

Whatever you want.

(as kids jump for joy)

Nate, go see Empresario Buckley.

Fetch seeds and supplies. Tell him

to put it on account. Best hurry,

it'll be dark 'fore you get back.

We start plantin' come morning.

156

EXT. BUCKLEY WAY STATION & CANTINA - DAY

156

The THREE MURDERED HOSTAGES lie in a row on the porch. The other travelers ride away as Guadalupe arranges the wounded musicians into the wagon bed, adjusts blankets for comfort.

GUADALUPE SMITH

We was heading to my cousin's in

Nacogdoches, until we got waylaid--

They took everything me and my

husband saved our whole lives for.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Don't lose hope, ma'am. They stole

what was ours too, 'n we ain't

stoppin' til we get it all back.

JACK HAYS

We'll be along come morning.

(re: COVERED BODIES)

We owe these folks a Christian

burial. Inform Empresario Buckley

we're bringing in a prisoner.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Sure you don't wanna wait 'n come

with us? Roads are dangerous,

swarmin' with Mexican troops.

GUADALUPE SMITH

These people need doctoring bad.

JACK HAYS

You're a brave woman.

GUADALUPE SMITH

You remind me so much of my

husband, a good and decent man.

(MORE)

GUADALUPE SMITH (CONT'D)

(an endearing look)

Deaf Smith. He rides with the ranging companies. When you find Houston, you'll find him.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Yes'm, we'll look for him.

GUADALUPE SMITH

Tell him that Pedro and I are safe in Victoria. And please, tell him to drink his cough elixir.

JACK HAYS

I'll make a point of it, ma'am.

GUADALUPE SMITH

Bless your hearts.

She crosses herself, flicks the reins and they ride away.

157

EXT. NEAR LAVACA RIVER - DAY

157

THE RANGERS Karnes, Anderson, Beans, Gator, Vern, and Knowles, ride toward where Deaf waits beside a horse-drawn CANVAS-COVERED WAGON, grazing his horse Charmaine.

BEANS WILKINS

There's Deaf - Where's the sisters?

GATOR DAVIS

They the daughters of some big Texas politician or somethin'?

VERN ELWOOD

How old are these girls?

HENRY KARNES

Brand shiny new.

VERN ELWOOD

Young, huh? I like 'em young.

GATOR DAVIS

Vern, you like anything s'long as she's breathin'.

They pull up next to Deaf, dismount, looking around.

BEANS WILKINS

They meetin' us here?

DEAF SMITH

Who?

VERN ELWOOD

The girls!

Anderson and Karnes laugh as Deaf throws back the canvas to reveal TWO SHINY CANNONS - Karnes explains...

HENRY KARNES

Boys, meet "The Twin Sisters" - all the way from Cincinnati, Ohio.

DEAF SMITH

Y'all just missed the delegation. A doctor donated to the cause, has twin daughters they's named after.

YELLING from O.S. KIT ACKLIN rides in from a scout, hot...

KIT ACKLIN

Mexican Supply Convoy headin' this way! Right behind me!

HENRY KARNES

We best get a move-on...

BILLY ANDERSON

Hold on. What're they packin'?

KIT ACKLIN

Couldn't hardly tell. Vittles maybe...gun powder, medicine--

GATOR DAVIS

--Whiskey?

Kit shrugs "maybe" - The Rangers exchange looks.

HENRY KARNES

Let's see how fast we can get one of these "sisters" ready.

The Rangers jump in to assemble the cannon as--

OVER A RISE - THE MEXICAN CONVOY appears above them.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Oh, shit-me-a-new-asshole, HURRY!

The MEXICAN LIEUTENANT spots the Rangers below, signals his MOUNTED DRAGOONS to charge! DEAF AND KARNES raise their weapons to hold them off, as the OTHER RANGERS anxiously scramble to finish loading and LIGHT THE FUSE!

BILLY ANDERSON
Don't hit the wagon.

Gator makes an adjustment... BOOM!

158

EXT. BUCKLEY WAY STATION & CANTINA - DAY

158

One grave finished, Big Foot and prisoner Roy dig two more.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
I'm a Christian n' all, but who's
gonna know if we stuff two bodies
in one grave? This ground's
goddamn hard.

Jack drags a body over, wrapped in a sheet for burial.

JACK HAYS
God will know - We'll know. Only
one more and we're done.

Roy pauses a moment, leaning on his shovel...

BIG FOOT WALLACE
God don't give a shit - He left
Texas a long time ago...
(to Roy)
Back to work, boy! Or I'll plant
you in one of these.

Big Foot turns back to dig as Jack goes to get the last body -

THUMP! Roy CLOBBERS Big Foot in the back of the head with
his shovel, RUNS FOR IT as Big Foot keels over, knocked out!

ON ROAD BEHIND THEM - EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY & THUG/SLAVES ride
in on a wagon, stunned at seeing the graves and bodies - Off
Buckley's look, Clarence jumps off to circle around...

ROY
HELP! They tryin' to kill me...

BAM! Buckley reacts as Jack SHOTS Roy in the back - The
teenage killer drops dead. Jack looks up at Buckley--

--but before Jack can speak, Clarence blindsides him...
KNOCKING Jack unconscious.

FADE OUT.

END NIGHT TWO

PRODUCTION DRAFT: 1-15-14

TEXAS RANGERS

Night 3

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NIGHT THREE - TEXAS RANGERS

159 EXT. BUCKLEY WAY STATION & CANTINA - DAY

159

Jack, regaining consciousness, finds himself and Big Foot CHAINED to the trunk of a mesquite tree - He looks around:

Empresario Buckley supervises his thug/slaves cleaning up the mess made by the punk killer/thieves Roy, Fuzz, and Curls.

Jack turns with a questioning look to Big Foot.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Yep. He thinks we're the outlaws.
 "There's lynchin' and the law?"
 Guess which one he favors...

JACK HAYS

(calls out to Buckley)
 Saw your sign - This about us
 cussin' or spittin' on your floor?

Buckley spins around to BACKHAND Jack across the face.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

I am the law, JUDGE, jury--

JACK HAYS

I once knew a man got callouses
 from pattin' himself on the back.

Off ANOTHER SMACK, Jack recoils, looks at Big Foot, who, with fresh bruises and a bloodied lip, has already found out...

BIG FOOT WALLACE

He don't much appreciate comments
 'bout his character.

SMACK! Buckley hits Big Foot, turns to his slave-thug--

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Light 'em up, Clarence.

Clarence unfurls a python WHIP, twirls it fancily over his head...CRACK!--knocks a bug off a leaf. CRACK!--a DRAGONFLY out of the air. CRACK!--the buckle off Big Foot's belt.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY (CONT'D)

(gloats to his prisoners)
 Clarence is an artist. When I find
 my property abused and vandalized,
 hanging just ain't quite enough.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Mister, you smack me with that whip
you best not stop till I'm dead!

Off Buckley's nod, Clarence raises the whip. Jack yells--

JACK HAYS
As the LAW, you're obliged to hear
testimony in our defense!

Buckley puts up a hand to postpone Clarence's whipping.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
From who? Y'all gonna testify that
you're innocent?

JACK HAYS
We have witnesses for that.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
They've gone to Victoria.

JACK HAYS
Folks tend not to take a lawman
seriously if he murders innocents.
Kill us, ya might find yourself in
our boots.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
(scratches his chin)
Witnesses? Damn, pesky witnesses--

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Just thinkin' of you, Empresario.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
I gotta go back to Victoria for a
foreclosure. If'n I find out you're
wastin' my time, when I return, my
niggers will strap the hides off ya
til there's nothing left to hang!

JACK HAYS
Best hurry then. From a "fair man"
like you, I'd expect nothing less.

160 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SOUTHEAST TEXAS - DAY

160

Rusk and Lamar ride in tandem. As they pass the sentries at the fringe of Houston's camp, Lamar leans over for one last private parlay.

MIRABEAU LAMAR

You realize, sir, as Secretary of War, you are empowered to assume command yourself.

THOMAS RUSK

You've certainly made me aware of that, Private Lamar.

Upon seeing Rusk, the Texas government's emissary, ALL ACTIVITY STOPS - Soldiers rise to their feet. A MURMUR begins with those closest to Rusk and sweeps through ranks. Rusk greets the men, rides through them, his expression grave.

PAN ACROSS the men's expressions - Depending on their allegiance to Houston, concern...or utter contempt--

BAKER and MARTIN exchange a malignant smile...

SIDNEY SHERMAN

Rusk will dig Houston's grave now.

MOSELY BAKER

I wanna see that blowhard's face for myself when Rusk strips them patches off his shirt.

161 INT. HOUSTON'S TENT - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

161

Houston tinkers with COLBY's pistol, almost has it fully re-assembled... looks up when RUSK appears at his entrance.

SAM HOUSTON

Well, I figured if it wasn't Santa Anna causing all that racket it had to be you.

They shake hands...too formally for such good friends.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Come to relieve me, Tom?

THOMAS RUSK

It has been suggested.

SAM HOUSTON

There's a surprise. By Burnet?

THOMAS RUSK

By just about everybody, Sam.

Rusk unfurls the PETITION - Houston slaps it away.

SAM HOUSTON

Do it then, you son of a bitch, and let's be done with it.

THOMAS RUSK

(temper rising)

Give me one damn reason why I shouldn't?

SAM HOUSTON

I'd think you, of all people, would defend me.

THOMAS RUSK

I have! For weeks. But nothing changes... Actually, the situation is worse. The problem is YOU.

SAM HOUSTON

Relieve me of command, Mr. Secretary. But do not insult me. Just know whoever you put in my place is still left with untrained, undisciplined, incorrigible troops and impudent, disloyal officers.

THOMAS RUSK

(snaps back)

What do you expect? You told them you would hold at Gonzales...you didn't. That you'd fight at the Colorado...you didn't. You swore the Mexicans would never cross the Brazos... they DID!

SAM HOUSTON

I was waiting on Fannin, who kept swinging his head between two troughs like a befuddled hog - Cost me half my army!

THOMAS RUSK

President Burnet doesn't see it that way.

SAM HOUSTON

A man with all the vision of a rotten stump. What matters to me is how you see it. Do I have your trust or not?

O.S. A HUGE CHEER from outside distracts their attention.

162 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SOUTHEAST TEXAS - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 162

SOLDIERS & OTHERS IN CAMP CHEER the Rangers who ride in with the captured Mexican Convoy wagons. Deaf, Karnes, Anderson, Knowles, Gator, Kit, and Vern pass out provisions.

Knowles and Beans dole out food and blankets. Tears fill the eyes of the hungry refugees as they thank and bless the Rangers. Knowles cockily accepts the kudos with false bravado...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

All a part of Rangerin'.

Billy Anderson judiciously distributes weapons, lead balls, and powder to arm the ragged army volunteers...

DEAF SMITH

Y'all need this on the front line.

GATOR distributes bottles of LIQUOR to let them cut loose.

GATOR DAVIS

Y'all need this more.

Officers Hockley, Seguin, and others huddle around as Deaf and Ben UNCOVER the TWIN SISTERS cannon - the firepower energizing the troops. O.S. WHISTLES and CHEERS--

--as Houston walks from his tent with Rusk - All eyes track them, wondering what Rusk has decided. Sherman and Baker watch with callous eyes. Lamar buzzes around like a hornet.

MOSLEY BAKER

Houston's about to get his, and good riddance.

HOUSTON AND RUSK continue their exchange as they approach...

SAM HOUSTON

It's tragic that battlefield decisions are left to politicians, with their heads up their asses, miles from the front lines.

THOMAS RUSK

If all you have for me are excuses you leave me little choice.

SAM HOUSTON

The stench of righteousness. Would you have me fight Santa Anna with almost no chance to WIN?

THOMAS RUSK
 No....I regard you too highly.
 (points to men)
 But they would!

Houston sees Baker, Sherman and Lamar conferring.

SAM HOUSTON
 A boy stormed into my tent. Given
 my dingy surroundings, he didn't
 recognize his commanding officer
 and ordered me to repair this.

He brings out COLBY'S PISTOL - Rusk reacts to the rusty gun.

THOMAS RUSK
 That's asking a lot.

Houston points the pistol skyward, BOOM! It works perfectly.

SAM HOUSTON
 My point being that despite his
 blunder, he came to the right
 place. His FAITH, regardless that
 it was initially misplaced, will be
 rewarded none the less.

Ignoring Houston, several dissident officers salute Rusk.

MOSELY BAKER
 What are your orders, Sir?

THOMAS RUSK
 (points to Houston)
 Ask him. He's your General.

FLORES rides in on a lathered horse, exhausted and covered in
 dust, he slips from the saddle and seeks out Houston.

MANUEL FLORES
 General Houston...
 (hands him EMILY'S NOTE)
 Details of Santa Anna's plans and
 troop movements.

As men gather around him, Houston reads EMILY'S NOTE, looks
 up, galvanized - Motions Deaf over to him as he announces...

SAM HOUSTON
 Tomorrow, we march. Tonight we
 salute our Rangering Company.
 (privately to Deaf)
 Deaf, I need to send Scouts out
 tonight, three of your best riders.
 (MORE)

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

(off Deaf's nod, turns to)
Colonel Baker... Colonel Sherman.
You are ordered to serve in rear-
guard capacities, watching the
river crossings and supply lines
between this camp and Harrisburg.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

Sam, please. You will, most
likely, engage Santa Anna.

SAM HOUSTON

Most likely, I will.
(addressing entire camp)
TOMORROW WE MARCH!

A HUGE CHEER, WHOOPS & HOLLERS overrides - People raise the
bottles of stolen liquor to toast. Houston winks at Rusk as
the celebration begins - Houston pulls Flores aside...

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Miss West chose not to return?

MANUEL FLORES

Said to give you this.

Flores gives him Emily's scarf - Houston stuffs it in a
pocket. If he is moved, he shows no sign.

163 EXT. COMANCHE CAMP - DAY

163

The fiery young PIAKINI sharpens ARROW POINTS as Buffalo Hump
sits near his fire, cooking pieces of meat, surrounded by his
warriors, including YELLOW KNIFE.

IN COMANCHE - SUBTITLED...

PIAKINI

*I have no scalps. No captives to
trade for guns and powder. How am I
to win honor riding with you?*

YELLOW KNIFE

*Your fight, Piakini, is with
Maguara and the elders... Not
Buffalo Hump.*

BUFFALO HUMP

(to Piakini)
You're right. We ride.

YELLOW KNIFE

Against who?

BUFFALO HUMP
White settlers.

YELLOW KNIFE
What have they done against us?

BUFFALO HUMP
*That's your half-breed white blood
 talking, Yellow Knife--*

PIAKINI
 (with disdain)
Kiowa.

BUFFALO HUMP
*Sooner or later the settlers will
 be our enemies. Might as well
 start killing them now.*

Piakini smugly stares at Yellow Knife... who doesn't respond.

BUFFALO HUMP (CONT'D)
*You ride with Buffalo Hump,
 Kiowa... so will you.*

WAR WHOOPS as he leads the war party to mount their ponies.

164 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - NIGHT 164

Forboding darkness...wind rustles the trees..an eerie silence.

165 INT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - NIGHT 165

WYKOFF'S EYES POP OPEN. Careful not to wake his family, he springs out of bed, grabs his rifle - LISTENS - eases the shutter open on his gun port, and scans his surroundings.

WYKOFF'S POV - OUTSIDE - The twitch of an oak limb...a covey of QUAIL FLUSH. His HORSES WHINNY, prance nervously.

WYKOFF looks out. Waits. Watches. All is still. He carefully closes the shutters, bolts them tight. Checks the beams behind the front door - Rests his rifle against the wall by his bed. Two loaded pistols set nearby on a shelf.

Nate's bunk is empty--he's gone to town for seeds & supplies.

Wykoff tosses more wood on the fire. Covers his children. Climbs back into bed beside his sleeping wife.

166

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SOUTHEAST TEXAS - NIGHT

166

A GALLOWS CELEBRATION - Beans sizzles BACKSTRAP in a SKILLET. Everyone drinks, reflecting on their future. Some sit alone, scribbling letters home, others read their BIBLES. FLORES, by the fire, strums a somber melody, tries a tune in his head...

MANUEL FLORES

*"The cactus queen of... the tulip
of ol' Tennessee..."*

FLASH - IN FLORES' IMAGINATION - A vision of Emily West as he last saw her, tossing back her hair.

MANUEL FLORES (CONT'D)

*....the Yellow Rose of Texas...da
da DA DA... tee da...*

GATOR, DRUNK, steps up with his guitar. Gator watches Flores' fingers until he's got the melody down.

GATOR DAVIS

Not bad - But step it up, son!

Gator strums hard and loud, drowning out Flores, who plays along faster, Knowles joins in on Flores' HARMONICA. Slave DRUMMER carries the BEAT, the FIDDLER listens, hums along.

GATOR DAVIS (CONT'D)

Wants a chorus, don't it? Y'all
give this a twirl.

He plays the song even faster. Slowly, piece by piece, The revelers work out "The Yellow Rose Of Texas" - WHOOP their approval- and begin to dance! The glum mood shifts... the catchy melody inspiring the camp to life.

Rebecca slides in beside Kit, clapping...

VERN scoots close to SARAH. He takes a swig out of his FLASK. She watches with sensual fascination.

VERN ELWOOD

Care to partake...

She looks around, bites her lip, then looks back at Vern.

SARAH

My pa would surely forbid it.

VERN ELWOOD

I didn't ask your pa. Old enough to
make yer own decisions or ain't ya?

He slowly puts the flask in front of her, shaking it a little. She smiles, brushing her hair behind her ear.

SARAH

I've had a nip before, you know.

She takes the flask and takes a big gulp. She COUGHS.

He LAUGHS and tips the flask back up to her mouth, takes the opportunity to ogle her breasts.

DOC EWING (O.C.)

Sarah!

Sarah flinches. She looks at him sheepishly. Low...

VERN ELWOOD

Aw, hell.
(then)
Evenin', Doc.

Doc Ewing holds his hard glare on Vern.

DOC EWING

Like a word with my daughter.

Sarah wipes her chin clean and steals one last smile at Vern.

DOC EWING (CONT'D)

Thought I told you to steer clear
of that no-account!

Sarah's feeling emboldened by the whiskey.

SARAH EWING

We was just talkin' - What's so
wrong with that?

DOC EWING

Listen to me, darlin'. Like it or
not, you're not old enough to
understand certain things-

SARAH

Stop treating me like a child! I'm
of age now. Plenty girls younger
than me get married!

DOC EWING

Marriage has nothin' to do with
what that smooth-faced scalawag
wants from you!

(with disgust)

(MORE)

DOC EWING (CONT'D)
Shaves his face clean like a "boy"
to hide the DEVIL inside!

SARAH
That's what you said about that
panhandler my mama run off with--

SMACK! He backhands her across the face.

Sarah, hair thrown asunder, rubs her cheek. The Doc's as shocked by his own reflex as she is, immediately regrets it--

DOC EWING
Sarah, I...

But she's not listening, tearing on past him.

VERN watches Sarah run off, chuckles to himself and drinks.

167 INT. SANTA ANNA'S TENT - NIGHT

167

EMILY, wrapped tightly in a sheet, hair still wet from her bath, glares coldly into her own eyes--so lovely, but in this moment, they are dim. She stares at herself in the MIRROR, allowing the sheet to fall away from her taut, golden body.

Her expression tells us that she sees no hint of beauty before her. She kisses a wooden cross, clasps it between her palms - Closes her eyes in a barely audible PRAYER...

EMILY WEST
Lord, I's come to you alone, weak,
sick at heart 'n so awful stained--

She opens her eyes, looks as if she doesn't quite recognize herself, her soft voice that of an innocent slave child...

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
Why? Why you's put me in this time
'n place...when so many suffer...
(tears welling)
As a chile we had bad eatin', stale
bread n' rotten meat fed to us in
troughs like hogs... Rough, smelly
men comes to me in da dead 'a night
when I still slept with rag dolls.

Crying now, she looks up, anger rising as she accuses...

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
YOU made those men covet me! Made
me... "Beautiful?" That's a CURSE.
(MORE)

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)

A plain nigger woman lives by her labors, has some kinda home...a husban' 'n chillen' who love her... Helps her endure. Dis "beauty," it bring me plenty 'a men but not one who love me...not one who walks 'side me in this world.

She BACKHANDS Santa Anna's crystal goblet, which SHATTERS.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)

Learnin' me to read 'n write s'pose ta lift me up, make me better...
(clenches fists)
T'ain't so. My heart grow so cold, it don't feel nuthin' - I'm burnin' alive in the fire of my own rage. I don't live. I survive... I exist.

Applying her makeup, Emily begins a transformation--mascara, ...eye-liner...like a knight strapping on armor for battle.

(NOTE: Her slave dialect slowly shifts to her normal speech as she transforms herself, mirroring her personal evolution)

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)

But if my brother Jupie loved Texas enough to die for it...the least I can do is my part to liberate it.
(smearing rouge on)
No matter what it costs me, on earth, and in heaven--

Puts on elegant, glittering jewels, gifts from Santa Anna.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)

I have become what YOU made me. I do not ask for forgiveness, the worst I must do lies yet ahead.
(brushes her hair)
In the Good Book, You say there's a time to heal...and a time to kill.

Emily slips on a provocatively sexy dress.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)

I know which time it is for me. I'm askin' you for the strength to see it through. You owe me at least that much...

She stands and looks coldly at herself in the mirror. Having transformed herself into a beautiful China doll.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
 Judge me as You will... Amen.

168 EXT. ON THE PLAINS - NIGHT 168

BUFFALO HUMP rides silhouetted against the rising moon.
 Behind him, his WAR PARTY follows in single file.

169 INT. SANTA ANNA'S TENT - NIGHT 169

Santa Anna steps out of his bath into a silk robe held by Romolo. He points to a glass atomizer. Romolo mists his underarms...his manhood as EMILY ENTERS, a glowing, glamorous vision that takes Santa Anna's breath away.

SANTA ANNA
 Did you enjoy the cockfight?

Emily fixes their drinks...surreptitiously turns to pour LAUDANUM in one of them from a SILVER VIAL. Her self pity is over... She's all business now. Seductively...

EMILY WEST
 I know very little of cockfighting.
 But I can tell a champion cock by
 the look in its eye.

Santa Anna chuckles as Romolo hands him a starched shirt, and fine breeches - Getting dressed, he waxes philosophical...

SANTA ANNA
 Through the eyes, one sees into the
 heart of anything, be it beast...or
 human.

Emily delivers the drinks. He looks at her keenly.

EMILY WEST
 I don't see the point in putting
 those on.

Off Romolo's glare, Emily regards him with equal contempt.

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
 Your man is fiercely devoted to
 you. Why is he jealous of me?

She caresses Santa Anna, eyeballing and challenging Romolo. Rubbing her body against Santa Anna, she forces him onto the bed. Santa Anna's enjoying this game...her sexual control.

SANTA ANNA

He was taken by Comanches, the
squaws cut off his tongue and
sexual organ.

She ties his hands to the bedpost, has him spread-eagle in
front of her, a riding crop nearby. Santa Anna's breathless
in anticipation, his voice coming now in heated gasps...

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

He...he's never liked women since.

EMILY WEST

Then he definitely won't like this.

Opening her mouth, Emily dives her head BELOW FRAME...and
Santa Anna's eyes roll back...

170

EXT. DEEP IN THE WOODS - LATE NIGHT

170

LIGHTNING FLASHES - A NEAR-NAKED SAVAGE IN NATIVE HEADDRESS,
turtle shell RATTLES strapped to bare ankles, a TOMAHAWK
gripped in his hand, a BLACK RACER SNAKE between his teeth--

His body coated in dried BLACK RIVER MUD, the "savage" pours
whiskey to enrage a ROARING FIRE, consumes himself in a
feverish WAR DANCE, HOWLING at the moon.

It takes us a beat to recognize...

SAM HOUSTON - His body glistening with the mud and sweat, he
SLICES the head off the snake, lets its blood drip on his
body, swigs from his bottle, CUTS seven grooves in his chest
with the tomahawk blade, and lets his BLOOD mix with the
Snake's. He chugs more whiskey, *CHANTS IN CHEROKEE*--

HE THROWS EMILY'S SCARF INTO THE FIRE, letting the smoke
purify his body and *SCREAMS IN CHEROKEE* to the black skies
and INTERMITTENT LIGHTNING - As the FLASHES REVEAL...

DEAF SMITH stands at the edge of the woods, calmly scratching
his chin at Houston's Cherokee ritual. He's seen worse.

AS HOUSTON TWIRLS AROUND THE FIRE...he STOPS - Locking eyes
with Deaf - LIGHTNING FLASHES again. Deaf looks up.

DEAF SMITH

All that thunder 'n racket n' not a
drop of rain. Don't know if I should
report to you or run like hell.

SAM HOUSTON
It's not a rain dance, it's a
purification ritual - To cleanse my
spirit, free my mind.

Houston offers him a drink. Deaf takes a swig.

DEAF SMITH
Doin' anything for ya?

SAM HOUSTON
Nothing at all.

DEAF SMITH
Coupl'a my scouts come back - Says
Santa Anna splittin' up his army...
just like your spy gal's report said.

Houston nods, goes to pour canteen water on his chest to wash
off the mud and blood, his back to Deaf...

SAM HOUSTON
DEAF! Ever miss something you've
never had and know you never will?

Not hearing, Deaf picks up a wooden stick, starts to whittle.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
Doesn't stop me from missing her.
You could have knocked me over
with a feather when I saw Emily...
(wistfully)
Now she's gone again.

Houston returns to the fire, begins to slip on his clothes.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
The most precious moments that ever
come in this world are when a woman
loves a man...just as he is.

Deaf doesn't respond, keeps whittling. Houston sighs.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
That's it in a hickory nut...

Houston takes a swig, passes the bottle. Deaf doesn't
respond, keeps whittling. Houston smiles, ironic...

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
Good thing about talking to you,
Deaf...I can tell you anything.

A BEAT. Deaf winks back. Houston laughs.

Deaf hands Houston the product of his labors--a little wooden HEART with a HOLE bored through its middle.

171 INT. WYKOFF CABIN - NIGHT 171

The family sleeps. Off NOISES OUTSIDE, Wykoff jumps out of bed - The family rouses, freezes in fear. Wykoff grabs his rifle, cocks it, opens the gun port, looks outside...

172 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS) 172

Agitated horses kick at the corral in the moonlit night.

INTERCUT - WYKOFF & FAMILY INSIDE with...

WYKOFF'S GUN PORT POV - Nothing. The horses settle down.

WYKOFF watches a moment longer. Silence. He shrugs it off, turns back to his family...a SWOOSH thru gun port...THWACK!

Wykoff's face goes blank. Pauline, Lucas, Stephanie gawk in horror as he staggers, drops his rifle...Stephanie SCREAMS!

A KIOWA ARROW sticks out her daddy's back; Wykoff staggers--

JAMES WYKOFF
RUN! THE CELLAR! HIDE!

INTERCUT - At the edge of the thicket, YELLOW KNIFE holds his bow, eying the flight of his arrow as it has just flown true.

Buffalo Hump nods approval at his young Kiowa ally, signals Piakini and the other Comanche braves to surround the cabin--

INTERCUT - INSIDE - Young Lucas grabs a rifle, pokes the barrel through the port. Stephanie beside her, Pauline rushes to her mortally-wounded husband - But Wykoff refuses to go down, pushing them away - Fading, he drops to a knee...

JAMES WYKOFF (CONT'D)
Leave me...get to...the cellar...

MORE ARROWS THWACK around the gun port - Lucas FIRES the rifle, the recoil KNOCKING the slight boy on his ass.

Buffalo Hump YELLS ORDERS IN COMANCHE; his braves swarm round the cabin - Piakini lights a TORCH - Tosses it on the roof.

173 EXT. ROAD TO WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS) 173

NATE returns from town, carrying a burlap sack, STOPS off the sight of a GOLDEN DOME OF FLAMES SWELLING in the distance.

Panicked, Nate drops the bag - SPRINTS toward the homestead, cuts off the road to take a shortcut through the woods--

174 EXT./INT. WYKOFF CABIN - NIGHT (RESUME) 174

In full attack, WARRIORS BARGE THROUGH the burning door--

Pauline, by Wykoff's body, grabs her husband's pistol, points it at the Comanches - The PISTOL SPARKS...but doesn't fire.

Lucas yanks the ramrod out of the bore...raises his rifle--

--Buffalo Hump SWINGS his tomahawk down on the boy's head, then CLUBS Pauline - ANOTHER WARRIOR SPEARS her through the ribs. Piakini aims an arrow at the SCREAMING Stephanie--

Off the THUMP of the arrow silencing the girl's screams--

INTERCUT - NATE - NEAR WYKOFF CABIN

Crazy with fear, Nate charges through the brush, BRIARS shredding his skin, sweat and blood soaking his torn clothes.

Nate stops at the edge of the homestead, sees the Comanche attack, dives back in the brush for cover - Circles wide of the WAR PARTY - Crawls through the BILLOWING SMOKE towards...

THE BACK OF THE BURNING CABIN

Backlit against the FLAMES, Buffalo Hump order his war party to re-mount, rides to the corral to gather WYKOFF'S HORSES--

STEPHANIE'S PUPPY runs YIPPING from the fire - Buffalo Hump pauses at the corral to grab an arrow, draws his bow to full length, tracks the RUNNING PUPPY, lets the arrow FLY--

The ARROW ARCS in the firelight, SKEWERS the LITTLE DOG in the neck. The puppy YELPS, DIES as Buffalo Hump turns away.

NATE - INSIDE CABIN

He fights through the FIRE, spots the bodies of Wykoff and Lucas - Stephanie with an arrow through her heart, her rag doll smoldering beside her. In shock, Nate reacts to...

MOVEMENT...a MOAN...PAULINE IS ALIVE!

Nate scoops Pauline up in his arms, dodging flames, staying low under the thick smoke towards the back door when--

--PIAKINI charges in the front, wielding a knife in search of scalps. He stoops over Wykoff's body, grabs his hair as--

--NATE, freezes, crouched behind a table in the smoke, waits until Piakini turns his back to begin scalping Wykoff--

OUTSIDE CABIN

Choking, Nate crawls out the back, holds tightly to Pauline, slow and careful not to make noise, lest Piakini sees them--

With the YELPING COMANCHES galloping around, stealing horses, or re-mounting after the attack, Nate crawls with Pauline--

TO THE HIDDEN ROOT CELLAR

Nate lays Pauline aside to pull back the cover, looks up--

YELLOW KNIFE, mounted on his rearing horse, is surprised to come upon the black man and the bleeding, unconscious woman.

NATE boldly rises to stand between Pauline and Yellow Knife, protecting her - Nate's only weapons are his FISTS as--

PIAKINI runs out of the cabin - WAVES THREE BLOODY SCALPS, gloating to Yellow Knife, but not seeing Nate behind him.

BUFFALO HUMP WHOOPS, a signal for his warriors to depart. Piakini turns, leaps onto his horse and rides off, YELPING.

As the rest of the war party disappears into the trees... Yellow Knife stares at Nate, looks at the burning cabin, then at Pauline - Nate doesn't move. Yellow Knife bows his head, partially in sorrow, but also in tribute to Nate's courage-- Then, Anderson's half-breed son WHOOPS LOUDLY, GALLOPS AWAY.

175

EXT. WHICH-WAY TREE - TEXAS CROSSROADS - MORNING

175

The Rangers ride up front near Houston, who's mounted on SARACEN, his new, enormous white stallion. Houston pauses by a huge TREE at an intersection of two roads, Rusk, Hockley and Seguin beside him, as Deaf rides back from a scout--

SAM HOUSTON

Which way?

DEAF SMITH

This road'll take you back up to
Trinity and Nacogdoches - But that
right-hand road will carry you to
Harrisburg straight as a compass.
(levels his stare)
Recollect our earlier palaver 'bout
Comanche warfare?

SAM HOUSTON

I do. No head-on assault.
(turns to troops, loudly)
To the LEFT: the Sabine River and
the safety of the United States!
To the RIGHT: Santa Anna and the
Mexican army!

THOMAS RUSK

You're leaving it to them?

SAM HOUSTON

A man fights harder if he thinks
it's his decision to do so -
Besides...
(louder)
We know which way!

--ON DOWN THE LINE, SOLDIERS pick up the call "WHICH WAY?"
"REMEMBER THE ALAMO! REMEMBER GOLIAD" as all turn RIGHT.

A DARK-SKINNED BOY (16) with a DRUM strapped around his waist,
PLAYS a DIRGE-LIKE BEAT, keeping time to the troops' slow march.

THOMAS RUSK

Step it up, boy. Something a
little more lively.

The drummer boy PICKS UP THE TEMPO, a FIFER starts playing
"Come To the Bower", a popular song of the day in taverns and
grogshops. ANOTHER FIFER & a FIDDLER trot to join in with
the other musicians, a few men sing along as they march--
*"Come to the bower I have shaded for you - Our bed shall be
roses all spangled with dew - Come to the bower with me!"*

Off a look from Houston, DEAF & KARNES kick into a run,
riding away from the army to scout ahead.

176

INT. WYKOFF ROOT CELLAR - MORNING

176

DARK w/only cracks of light around the hinged overhead doors
until Nate OPENS THEM - He looks around at the devastation,
determines that Comanches are gone, then turns back to...

PAULINE, lying unconscious. Nate tenderly removes her dress, a bottle of liquor nearby. Seems like a forbidden sexual encounter until he gently cleans her wounds with warm water.

Dabbing the liquor on a cloth, he carefully sterilizes Pauline's spear wound, moving up the bruises and cuts on her naked body to the gash on her head from Buffalo Hump's club.

177 EXT. WAGON TRACK, NEW WASHINGTON, TX - DAY

177

The MEXICAN ARMY on the move, Emily sits in the carriage with Romolo at the reins, leading THREE WAGONS carrying General Santa Anna's personal effects, his octagonal tent, bathtub, his sterling candelabra, crystal stem ware, etc.

BOTH would sooner ride with the devil than each other. Romolo glances at Emily...she sticks out her tongue.

SANTA ANNA rides his magnificent WARHORSE, the saddle gleaming with silver, his uniform glittering with medals and gold braid, Cranky, he complains to Almonte by his side...

SANTA ANNA

I am stuck in this Texas shithole,
swatting mosquitos, chasing rats.
These Texas rebels are too stupid
to know they've lost. Mother Mexico
calls to me. I mean to leave, Almonte,
the moment we crush these pirates.

Portilla, accompanied by some of his Dragoons, catches up...

PORTILLA (O.S.)

Excellency... Your Excellency!
(slows next to Santa Anna)
Our scouts report that Houston has
turned his army around to Lynch's
Ferry! He's heading this way!

ALMONTE immediately strips his leather canister from his saddlebags, pulls out his MAP, and unfurls it across the withers of his horse. He runs his finger across the paper.

ALMONTE

The plains of San Jacinto. They've
apparently halted their retreat.

SANTA ANNA

Perfect! Bait the trap.
Eventually, the rat stumbles in it.

PORTILLA

Honor and Glory are upon us!

ALMONTE

It's a good thing they've decided
to face us. But over-confidence
will not be our ally.

Santa Anna considers the implications of Houston's reversal
of tactics. Studies Almonte's map, taking charge...

SANTA ANNA

Call up dispatch riders - send for
our generals. We have preparations
to make - And they must begin NOW!

Portilla signals for SANCHEZ (30s), an athletic dispatch
rider. Santa Anna draw his sword, spurs his warhorse, and
calls back through the ranks of his men.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

MY COUNTRYMEN, REJOICE! THE ENEMY
IS COMING! My gallant children!
The victory I promised you is upon
us! The one that will carry us
back to our HOMES! VIVA MEXICO!

THE CHEERS of his soldiers crescendo as SANCHEZ sprints past--

178

EXT. LORCA'S CAMPSITE - DAY

178

On a BLUFF...sits LORCA.

LANE, COLE HORNFISHER and the other survivors that Lorca
rescued buzz about the campsite, tend fires, cook meals, fix
wagons, service weapons.

Near the heart of the camp lie stacks of captured rifles,
swords, and even an artillery piece - For Lorca's army.

LORCA, sharpening his sword, doesn't react as Lane and Cole
come up the path. They remove their hats, astonished by the
assortment of weapons, scalps and other confiscated items.

An anxious moment passes, Lorca does not acknowledge them.

COLE HORNFISHER

Beg your pardon, sir, but I give my
word to these people that I'd take
them across the Sabine.

(off Lorca's silence)

Thing is...Comanches are on the war
trail to the north of us. Mexican
army loose between the coast and
God knows where, comin' this way.

Still no response. Lorca continues to sharpen his sword.

LANE WALTERS
What do you propose we do?

Lorca's total disinterest confounds them. Trying persuasion:

COLE HORNFISCHER
We believe we're better off with
you than on our own.
(trying guilt)
If we leave you, I'm afraid these
people might die.

Lorca glares at both men in judgement. Then...

LORCA
I kill Meskins.

LANE WALTERS
Hardly a one-man job.

COLE HORNFISCHER
If we've got to die, we'd all
prefer to go down fightin'.

Another long moment of silence. Lorca finally looks up.

LORCA
My word is *absolute*.

COLE HORNFISCHER
No argument from me, you know what
you're doin'. I'm Cole Hornfisher.
This here's Lane Walters. We never
did catch your name.

Lorca returns to sharpening his sword. They are dismissed.

179

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY

179

Having just arrived at their newest campsite, the army is
unpacking, setting up tents, etc.--

ANGLE - THE RANGERS, throwing up their tents.

VERN ELWOOD
This is gettin' old.

GATOR DAVIS
I expect this will be the last time
for a while...

BILLY ANDERSON
 (miffed, snapping)
 Best set your mind to hold this
 ground--else we'll be buried under it.

ANGLE - REBECCA strokes the neck of the horse as Kit removes
 its saddle, relishing being close to Rebecca.

GAVIN (O.C.)
 Rebecca! Is that you?!

Rebecca spots someone she recognizes approaching. She shoots
 Kit a nervous glance.

GAVIN McDONOUGH (26), clean-cut, his clothes worn but nice,
 rushes in and takes her into his arms and kisses her.

GAVIN (CONT'D)
 My God! I feared you dead.

Kit watches the situation.

Gavin brushes Rebecca's hair examining her. He goes in for
 another kiss but she turns her cheek. She makes eye contact
 with Kit. Gavin sees, but still smiles.

GAVIN (CONT'D)
 Who's this?

Kit reluctantly extends his hand.

KIT ACKLIN
 Name's Kit Acklin. Ride with the
 Rangin' Company.

REBECCA
 Kit fished me and Colby outta the
 river after we separated from you.

GAVIN
 I'm obliged to you, certainly.
 Rebecca's my world.

Gavin senses the awkwardness. He sees that these two have
 become too close for his comfort.

GAVIN (CONT'D)
 Have you some further business with
 my fiance?

KIT ACKLIN
 I don't have any business with her
or you.

A tense moment... A stare down. Rebecca's distressed, to both:

REBECCA PIT
Don't, please. It's all a big
misunderstandin'.

Gavin pulls back from Kit. Kit, displeased, walks away.
Rebecca breaks away from Gavin and runs to him. They speak
urgently, but Gavin can't hear.

KIT ACKLIN
Why didn't you tell me?

REBECCA PIT
'Cause I didn't want it to be true.

Kit studies Gavin, standing with his arms across his chest.

KIT ACKLIN
Shoulda know'd I ain't that lucky.
(he looks at her)
You best go with your man.

Rebecca walks back to Gavin, who pulls her away.

Kit doesn't watch them walk away. His horse NEIGHS.

KIT ACKLIN (CONT'D)
Oh, shut it.

Kit kicks over a wooden table behind him.

180 EXT. NEAR SAN JACINTO - DAY 180

Santa Anna's COURIER, SANCHEZ, rides for dear life, PURSUED
by KARNES until they round a bend--

--where a smirking DEAF, astride his horse, points his gun.

TRAPPED, Sanchez pulls back on his reins.

181 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY 181

Houston scouts the area with Hockley, Seguin, and Sherman.

SUPER: "April 20, 1836 - SAN JACINTO, TEXAS"

Houston pulls back on his reins. Says nothing. Shades his
eyes to study the ground. Raises a hand to halt the column.

SAM HOUSTON

(points to thickets)

God gave us our battlements.
Cavalry cannot operate in such
thick woods. Cannot flank us
through the marsh. There is only
the field between us and them, the
sun at our back. If they choose to
cross it, we will pour fire from
these woods and cut them to shreds.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

Make camp in those woods, by
company. Six tents to a unit.

SAM HOUSTON

One fire each. Without exception,
all fires doused at sundown.

JUAN SEGUIN

You heard the General, and no
unnecessary talking. All men
remain as quiet as possible.

ANGLE - Col. Sherman confides privately with Thomas Rusk.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

These appear to be defensive
maneuvers.

THOMAS RUSK

Does Houston still intend to hide?

SIDNEY SHERMAN

If you believe in the power of
aggressive tactics, you've got the
wrong general.

ANGLE - Back on HOUSTON, as he rides a few paces more.

SAM HOUSTON

Position the cannon there.

(appraises the bayou)

I want sentries posted at the
Ferry. There...there...and there.
On the rise yonder, and directly
across the river. Ranging
companies to reconnoitre Santa Anna
and all his forces. Scout the
proximity of Urrea, Cos, Filisola
and Sesma's advancing armies.

182 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY (SAME TIME) 182

Only a half-mile away opposite the Texan Army, SANTA ANNA seems joyous, riding through his camp on his warhorse as Almonte, Portilla, and others follow. Santa Anna commands:

SANTA ANNA

Erect every tent we have, in plain sight, build fires in front of each one. They must burn all night. The rebels must not know we are not yet at full force.

Santa Anna studies the expanse between him and the Texans.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Construct a barricade there - rocks, brush, saddles, everything we can find - to protect the camp from a frontal assault.

INTERCUT - HOUSTON & HIS OFFICERS

BOTH OPPOSING GENERALS continue to prepare for battle...

SAM HOUSTON

Feed, water, and rest your men. Have teams forage for grass for the horses. Weapons serviced and ready to fire, blades razor sharp. Fresh powder and ball for every rifle. In addition to cannon balls, chop up horseshoes, wire, any scrap metal on hand for the Twin Sisters.

INTERCUT - SANTA ANNA & HIS OFFICERS

SANTA ANNA

Position artillery there, the Golden Standard on the knoll, and load them with grapeshot. Portilla, I want scouts in the field now - Gathering information on the enemy's position and movements.

ANGLE - HIDDEN IN THE TREES - DEAF and KARNES - Spying on Santa Anna & his officers - The Ranger scouts ease in to get a closer look - Sanchez, bound and gagged, pulled in tow.

SANTA ANNA dismounts to work alongside his men. Watches the BLACK FLAG ("No Quarter") unfurl. The buglers start to play the haunting DEGUELLO (death song of The Alamo). Santa Anna takes off his jacket to help drag logs to the barricade...his troops CHEER. MANUEL FLORES is seen working beside them.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

My brave men, I know you are tired!
But by your heroic toil you save
the life of the man next to you!
If we are ALL willing to die for
each other, we will ALL LIVE to see
our homes again! VIVA MEXICO!

CHEERS erupt, inspired by their General's leadership. Santa Anna speaks aside to Almonte.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Once the defenses are in place,
I'll attack.

UP ABOVE...DEAF & KARNES wheel around, heading back to camp.

183 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO, TX - DAY (CONTINUING) 183

The RANGERS settle around their campfire, unnerved by the haunting DEGUELLO (O.S.) heard from the Mexican lines. Spooked, Knowles looks around...

KNOWLES's POV: The BAYOU surrounding them. The WALL of trees. The SWAMP--all closing in on him.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Let's see. Trapped between the
river 'n a wall of pines. Black
flag. Devil music. A hell of a
lot of Mexicans. This seem
familiar to any 'a you yahoos?

ON KIT--as he looks around, and the realization sinks in.

KIT ACKLIN

...the... Alamo?

GATOR DAVIS

Somebody just lit Kit's lantern...

A PALL falls over the Rangers--

PAN the faces of VERN, KIT, GATOR, BEANS, KNOWLES as they soak in the gravity of their situation. Vern simmers--

VERN ELWOOD

Houston's a goddamn idjit! Told
y'all this was a lost cause...

Fed up with Vern, Anderson wheels on him, erupting...

BILLY ANDERSON

I've had a bellyfull of your bitchin'
an' whinin' an' flappin' your gums
like like some sorry tittybaby!

Vern climbs to his feet, his eyes narrow.

VERN ELWOOD

Shut me up, then, if you got the sap.

Anderson FLIES at Vern. Vern reaches for his Bowie Knife. Beans leaps between him, wraps his arm around Anderson, leads him toward his horse.

BEANS WILKINS

Let's go swab us some fresh
biscuits in warm molasses. I ain't
dyin' on an empty stomach.

Anderson angrily mounts his horse. Stirrup BREAKS. He craters to the dirt. ALL of the Rangers burst into GALLOWS HUMOR laughter except for a fuming Anderson...until he, too, breaks into a grin...chuckling. He points his finger at VERN.

BILLY ANDERSON

You...you sonovabitch, you had me
wound up there for a hitch.

The tension broken, Kit bolts up--

184

INT. MEDICAL TENT - CONTINUOUS

184

Kit flies through the tent flap to find REBECCA, setting up cots and chests of medical supplies. Kit peaks through the flap, makes sure no one's around--whispering...

KIT ACKLIN

Confidential Ranger information,
so ya can't tell nobody. But
Santa Anna's got us trapped. Ya
know what he does to his
prisoners. We need to get you and
Sarah someplace safe.

REBECCA

(frightened, but strong)
What happens to you happens to me.
I'm not going anywhere.

185 EXT. NEAR SAN JACINTO RIVER - DAY 185

HORSES THUNDER over a rise to the river, galloping hooves
SPLASHING through a shallow shoreline - REVEAL...

LORCA rides in front of at least twenty savage-looking
riders, his warrior refugees, (COLE, LANE, etc.) wielding
guns, lances, swords. They ride towards--

A small platoon of dismounted DRAGOONS taking a rest, smoke,
cat-nap - waiting for a MEXICAN SUPPLY WAGON rolling in.

A Dragoon lazily drinks from a gourd canteen, off THUNDEROUS
HOOFBEATS, looks up, eyes growing wide...drops the canteen.

SCREAMING & WHOOPING, LORCA & CO. ride in, swinging swords,
shooting guns, bearing down on the surprised Mexican Detail.

The Dragoons don't have a chance.

186 EXT. BUCKLEY WAY STATION AND CANTINA - DAY 186

Empresario Buckley rides away on his wagon, leaving his three
SLAVE THUGS to guard prisoners Jack & Big Foot, still chained
to the tree. Clarence grins, practices his WHIP CRACK.

Big Foot flinches off the intimidation, mutters to Jack...

BIG FOOT WALLACE
We're in quite the fix, ain't we?

JACK HAYS
Until he interviews the witnesses,
of course.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
He ain't gonna talk to no
witnesses.

CRACK! The whip parts Big Foot's hair.

187 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY 187

SEQUIN, DEAF, and KARNES approach HOUSTON as THE DEGUELLO
plays (O.S.). They present him with their prisoner, Sanchez,
Santa Anna's Courier.

DEAF SMITH
Our neighbor, General Houston, is
ole Santa Anna hisself.

JUAN SEQUIN

(reads Mexican dispatch)
Generals Filisola, Cos and Urrea
are enroute to join him. Cos'
troops are only hours away.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

We have to attack now before
they're reinforced!

The DEGUELLO (Music) stops for a long beat. The men look at each other, wondering what it means. Rusk darts an anxious look to Houston, expecting decisive action. Houston appears to be mulling it over when...

BOOM! A CANNON EXPLOSION from the Mexican camp RAINS DOWN GRAPESHOT on the Texans, shattering limbs from trees - Leaves drift down over frightened, bewildered men, who, along with officers scatter for cover...except for Houston, peering off.

SAM HOUSTON

That's for show, letting us know
he's here. It's not an attack.
(aside to Seguin)
But make sure I'm right.

In the confusion, Vern SHOOTs courier Sanchez. Everyone's startled by the cold blooded murder. As they turn to him...

VERN ELWOOD

He was at the Alamo.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

How you know that?

Vern reaches for the Courier's deerskin saddlebags, holds them up - Engraved printing reads: "WILLIAM BARRET TRAVIS"

188

EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY

188

SANTA ANNA personally supervises his crews as they man their HUGE CANNON (twice as big as the Twin Sisters), named the "GOLDEN STANDARD."

SANTA ANNA

You have a fix on their battery?
(enjoying this)
Castrillon, give them more to
worry about. Make sure they get
no sleep tonight.

The officer adjusts the angle of the cannon trajectory, FIRES-

INTERCUT - TEXAN CAMP

THE MEXICAN BLAST HITS near the Twin Sisters, SHRAPNEL SMACKING ALL AROUND THEM. Hockley orders the artillerymen--

GEORGE HOCKLEY
PULL 'EM BACK!

SAM HOUSTON
NOT YET! Answer the General's
greeting!

Off Hockley's signal, THE TWIN SISTERS FIRE TWO BLASTS--

INTERCUT - MEXICAN CAMP

--WHICH EXPLODE A CAISSON, SCATTER BOXES, and SPOOKS TWO MULES that buck wildly!

Santa Anna signals the withdrawal of their Golden Standard out of range.

SANTA ANNA
Excellent. Now we know. They have
at least two six-pounders and
officers who know how to fire them.

INTERCUT - TEXAN CAMP

Houston, the officers and troops remain frozen. SILENCE. Everyone waits for another cannon blast...but NOTHING.

THOMAS RUSK
He's done... made his point.

JUAN SEGUIN
Keep the regiment on high alert!

DEAF SMITH
(low aside to Houston)
What's gnawin' on ya now?

SAM HOUSTON
Ride out to Martin and Baker, order
them to return with their regiments
posthaste. We will need them.

189 EXT. NEAR SAN JACINTO RIVER - DAY

189

All the DRAGOONS are dead, slaughtered by LORCA and his followers, who pilfer the Mexican goods from their wagon.

190 EXT. TEXAS PRAIRIE - DAY 190

NATE - eyes glazed, in shock - carries PAULINE in his arms down the wagon trail towards Victoria.

191 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY 191

Galvanized, Santa Anna strides along the barricades.

SANTA ANNA

They won't attack but prepare as if they will. Send a cavalry regiment to reconnoiter.

PORTILLA

It is my honor, Sir.

He orders the buglers to again begin playing THE DEGUELLO.

192 EXT. TEXAN CAMP, SAN JACINTO, TEXAS - DAY 192

As the eerie O.S. MUSIC (*THE DEGUELLO*) resumes, Sherman storms up to Houston.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

General! Why don't we attack?

SAM HOUSTON

Because I'm not ordering one.

(before Sherman retorts)

You may reconnoiter with your cavalry after sundown, but under no circumstance are you to engage.

(turns to Rusk)

You're anxious for action, ride along with him.

Sherman glares at him a beat. Nods, seemingly mollified.

The Rangers watch quietly as Sherman gathers his troops. Without a word to the others, Kit Acklin mounts up, checks his pistols, spits on the ground.

Vern sneers as Kit rides out. He turns to Knowles.

VERN ELWOOD

Idjit. Yeah, let's just ride into Mexicoon cannons 'n get ourselves blasted into pieces they can pick off the snags! We'll be heroes fer sure. Bullshit.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Say, Vern, I dunno 'bout you...but
I ain't too keen on bein' buried in
a cigar box.

VERN ELWOOD

Don't worry about it. The
buzzards'll make quick work of
whatever's left of you.

KNOWLES checks his surroundings making sure the other Rangers
are out of earshot. Low...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

All's I'm saying is--

Vern shoots Knowles a quick look.

VERN ELWOOD

I know what you're sayin'.
(beat)
But the timin's got to be right.
An' I ain't goin' without Kit.

Knowles gives him a quick "Riiight" look and a wink.

193

EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO, TEXAS - DAY

193

Santa Anna confers with Portilla before he rides out. Emily
smiles at him, and he motions to her to join him.

SANTA ANNA

A kiss for luck?

He reaches down and sweeps her into his arms. An expression
of alarm sweeps across his face. He reaches into her jacket,
and finds Emily's SMALL PEPPERPOT PISTOL. In an instant, he
becomes a different man. He slides off the horse, points the
loaded pistol directly at her forehead, eyes frozen over.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Why do you need this? So you can
shoot me with it?

EMILY WEST

For protection, Antonio.

SANTA ANNA

Protection? You are under my
protection. No civilian, for any
reason, is allowed to carry arms in
my presence!

He BACKHANDS HER, sends her reeling to the ground, SNATCHES Emily by the throat, pulling her up. She chokes, CLAWS at his hand - When she does, Santa Anna SMACKS her again.

Emily grimaces in pain, tries to crawl away - The enraged Santa Anna goes after her, KICKS her, leans in to HIT her with his fists. Emily fends off the blows, but is no match for a man frenzied with rage.

Soldiers gape at the beating or turn away. Romolo watches with gleaming eyes. Almonte rushes to pull Santa Anna off--

An echo of the pounding of Emily's heart...O.S. HOOFBEATS!

Santa Anna's attention is diverted... He stops to listen.

EMILY, an expression we've never seen before - Composed, smiling through bloody teeth, her eyes burn with hatred--

--as the O.S. HOOFBEATS, GROW LOUDER...

194

EXT. SAN JACINTO FIELD - DAY

194

COLONEL SIDNEY SHERMAN leads his CAVALRY of about 20 TEXIAN RIDERS - among them Secretary Rusk, the firebrand Mirabeau Lamar and Kit Acklin. Sherman advances on his reconnaissance mission--but in his exuberance cannot wait until dark.

COLBY, who had Houston fix his gun, watches the Cavalry go, hurries to sneak to a line of tethered horses to STEAL ONE--

THE OPEN FIELD

Instead of moving along the shadowed treeline, Sherman leads his cavalry troop straight down the middle until--

Portilla spots them coming. Perplexed but amused, Portilla signals his Dragoons to form ranks--

INTERCUT with...

SHERMAN sees Portilla & Dragoons, grins, RAISES HIS SWORD--

SIDNEY SHERMAN
Ready weapons... CHARGE!!

They take off, SHOOTING from the saddle!

Portilla SMILES and orders cavalry to meet them head on.

TEXAN CAMP - HOUSTON

OFF THE THUNDER OF GUNFIRE, Houston immediately realizes--

SAM HOUSTON
Goddamn Sherman--!!

HOUSTON MORE RATTLED THAN ANGRY. Concern on his face. He grabs his weapons and rushes toward the battlefield--

THE OTHER RANGERS - Anderson, Beans, Gator, Vern - scoop up their rifles to scramble toward the battlefield, except for--

KNOWLES--slinking off to his horse, ready to run off, desert. A SQUAD OF GUNG-HO REGULARS ride up to him, scoop him along with them, assuming he's riding into BATTLE. Off Knowles' sickened expression--

AROUND CAMP - VARIOUS VOLUNTEERS & REGULARS

Grab weapons, hurry off behind the Rangers toward the edge of camp - Among them, a confounded, infuriated General Houston.

IN THE FIELD - THE TWO CAVALRIES CHARGE EACH OTHER

SHERMAN leads his men, Secretary of War RUSK alongside--

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
STAND DOWN! DO NOT ATTACK!!!

COLBY bounces in the saddle, barely holding onto his stolen horse, galloping onto the battlefield, yards behind Sherman--

THE MEXICAN DRAGOONS draw sabers, bear down on the Texans--

KIT AND LAMAR, the best riders with Sherman, gallop hellbent for leather into a maze of flashing sabers & lances--

ON THE MEXICAN SIDE

THE BATTERED EMILY closes her eyes - Almonte bends down to check if she's alive or dead. OFF THE O.S. GUNSHOTS--

The grinning Romolo WAGGLES HIS STUMP OF A TONGUE at her--

SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS

--CONFUSION AT THE TEXAN ARMY CAMP - Rangers, Regulars and Volunteers scramble to the edge of the battlefield, fumbling with their weapons, sharply CONTRASTING--

--THE MEXICAN ARMY CAMP - Well-drilled, seasoned INFANTRYMEN assemble in a perfect line, rifles ready.

--Portilla, joyous, leading his charge - SABERS DRAWN.

GENERAL SAM HOUSTON shouts orders (MOS) in red-faced fury--

SEGUIN and HOCKLEY try to order their battalions back as well...but no one heeds them as Texan soldiers grab weapons and rush to the edge of the battlefield to FIRE across at the distant enemy...too far away for any effect.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

(sotto voce)

Madness. Dumb bastards are about
to cost us the war...

As GUNSMOKE wafts in, he peers through his TELESCOPIC SIGHT GLASS, the insane FRENZY consuming his entire command--

HOUSTON'S TELESCOPE POV - CHAOS of the skirmish in full fever -- HIS TELESCOPIC POV PANS THE ENEMY CAMP...coming to...SANTA ANNA's personal STANDARD, waving in the wind , but then--

SOMETHING ELSE CATCHES Houston's eye...

EMILY - Bruised and battered from Santa Anna's beating.

MEXICAN CAMP - SANTA ANNA

The General-Presidente *feels* something...like a cold breeze.

He gazes across the field, raises his own TELESCOPE--

HIS TELESCOPIC POV - HOUSTON astride his white horse.

Santa Anna smiles - To himself...and Houston...

SANTA ANNA

I am waiting.

HOUSTON'S POV - SANTA ANNA, brazenly grinning.

HOUSTON

Son of a bitch.

OFF THE SOUNDS OF WAR THE TWO GENERALS stare at each other, CHAOS around them, the BLACK FLAG ("No Quarter") flapping in the wind.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE SHOT (MOVING) - GENERAL SAM HOUSTON, furious, galloping hell-for-leather, though we're so tight we don't know where--

MUTED SOUNDS - Distant battle noises...horse hooves pounding, gunshots, screams...all MUFFLED - Houston yells but we only see him mouthing... "FORM RANKS! COVER THEIR RETREAT!"

WIDER - HOUSTON rides Saracen in FRONT of a scattered advance of his out-of-control troops, trying to halt the chaos.

SUPER: April 20, 1836 - SAN JACINTO, TEXAS

Mexican Colonel Portilla & his DRAGOONS surround the gung-ho Colonel SHERMAN and his outmatched TEXAS CALVARY as--

SHERMAN'S ill-ordered assault disintegrates into a confused melee. His RIDERS FIRE muskets - Some dismount, others surround their overwhelmed leader in a doomed "last stand".

Still, the MUTED BATTLE SOUNDS continue...

TEXAS SIDE - HOUSTON gallops down the line of infantry that's about to charge, putting himself in danger to get control--

...until a sudden EXPLOSION OF SOUND...

SAM HOUSTON
HALT! COVER FIRE ONLY! DIG IN!

Swept along- by the action, KNOWLES gratefully halts, joins RANGERS DEAF, KARNES, ANDERSON, GATOR, BEANS and VERN, among the first to obey Houston and lay down COVER FIRE as--

HOUSTON CHARGES onto the BATTLEFIELD, his warhorse's chiseled muscles rippling, teeth bared in fury, through the heart of--

Portilla'S DRAGOONS - Sword raised, Houston dodges bullets and sabers, KNOCKS a lance aside, a BULLET whips past his head as he whips Saracen onward to--

--a FULL COLLISION INTO COL. SHERMAN - WHAM! Houston rides right into Sherman, kicking him to the ground! Sherman rolls clear as Houston's warhorse REARS and the General usurps COMMAND from the stunned Colonel, BOOMING--

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
FALL BACK! BACK TO OUR LINE!

SHERMAN'S CALVARY wheel back to the TEXAN FRONT LINE - Unhorsed stragglers run like hell, dodging Portilla's dragoons. A cowed Colonel Sherman runs behind as Houston herds his men to safety--

STILL ON THE BATTLEFIELD--

KIT, covering Houston, rides like a Comanche, FIRING under his mount's neck at full gallop as--

COLBY BOUNCES OFF his saddle on his ass in the open ground--

RUSK, about to be killed. when...BOOM!

LAMAR shoots one Dragoon dead, wards off others with drawn saber, spots COLBY in danger, CHARGES toward him under fire--

--YANKS Colby up on his saddle, saving his life.

FELLOW TEXANS CHEER Kit & Lamar's bravery and horsemanship. Lamar waves his hat, rides off, getting more APPLAUSE from...

THE MEXICAN SIDE - THE SOLDADOS

CHEER and react to the heroics like spectators at a soccer game, infuriating SANTA ANNA, who snaps at ALMONTE--

SANTA ANNA

That is a ruse! Pull Portilla
back! We're clapping for clowns
while their army circles behind us!
Send out the Scouts! Find them!

OFFICERS scramble to comply as Santa Anna looks off hatefully--

196

EXT. ROAD TO VICTORIA - DAY

196

On their way to meet Buckley and face (false) murder charges: JACK HAYS and BIG FOOT WALLACE ride in the back of BUCKLEY'S WAGON driven by CLARENCE, toughest of the Empresario's THUG SLAVES - the OTHER TWO lazily hold shotguns on the prisoners.

Big Foot's eyes dart about while Jack peacefully naps. The wagon hits a BUMP, distracting the guards--

Big Foot SNAPS OFF a low-hanging LIMB from an overhead tree - Before the slaves react, he JAMS it in the spokes--

WHEEL SPLINTERS, BREAKS OFF, and the WAGON COLLAPSES, dumping everyone off! The slaves flounder, scramble for their dropped guns. Big Foot scoops up a shotgun first.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

HANDS UP! Or yer brains is buzzard
bait!

The slaves reluctantly raise their hands. Rudely awakened, Jack picks himself up from the dust, yells...

JACK HAYS

What the hell you doin'?!

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Bustin' us out, what's it look
like!

JACK HAYS
What for? We're INNOCENT!

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Can't take a chance with a man like
Buckley.

JACK HAYS
We are NOT OUTLAWS. I'm not lookin'
over my shoulder the rest of my
days cause of a price on my head--

Big Foot scowls as he gathers up the dropped weapons.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
You gonna stop your yammerin' 'n
help me?

CLARENCE
Ya bes' knows, a'fore Mass'a
Buckley hangs ya, he gonna whoop
yore ass til you wanna die.

197

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY

197

Enraged, Houston RIPS the braids off Sherman's jacket.

SAM HOUSTON
The orders were NOT to engage! Your
glory-seeking insubordination
almost cost us the war!

He appends the braids & stripes to MIRABEAU LAMAR's UNIFORM,
both Sherman and newly-promoted Lamar shocked by the action.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
Back to the 2nd Infantry, Sherman!
The Cavalry now belongs to Lamar!
(wheels to Rusk)
Any objections?

Embarrassed, Rusk is as cowed as Sherman.

The other men quickly bombard Houston with questions.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
We bloodied 'em, Sam. Re-group for
counter-attack--

LAMAR
They're on the defense--

JUAN SEGUIN
Should we press forward--

Still furious, Houston silences the men with a cold look.

SAM HOUSTON
I believe one should rather die
than be betrayed. There is no
deceit in death. Betrayal is the
willful slaughter of trust.

Befuddled, the men have a hard time following his logic.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
I need to trust my commanders.

Houston turns away, leaving the men rattled and perplexed,
unsure of what he plans to do.

198 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY 198

In a stolen Mexican Uniform, FLORES sees Santa Anna walking
with his commanders and ducks back.

SANTA ANNA
ALMONTE! Dispatch!

Almonte crosses with a skinny young MESSENGER.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
Order General Cos to march through
the night. We need his
reinforcements--

Santa Anna distracted by a commotion...

EMILY on a horse, ROMOLO holding the reins trying to stop
her. SANTA ANNA strides over as she WHIPS Romolo back.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
Emily, STOP!

EMILY WEST
Kill me or let me go!

SANTA ANNA
My dear, you had a gun--

As if a perfectly reasonable excuse to viciously beat her.

EMILY WEST

Yessuh, I done deserve' a whoopin' -
But none 'a my prev'ous mass'ahs
used dey's fists - Dey all's had da
decency ta use da whip.

Taking the horse's reins, Santa Anna dismisses Romolo.

SANTA ANNA

You must understand that I'm in the
middle of a campaign--

EMILY WEST

If'n I's wanted ta kills ya--
(levelly)
I could'a done so a dozen times.

SANTA ANNA

So you could have. Under normal
circumstances, I could never hurt
you. In the heat of battle,
passions sometimes get the better
of us.

The closest he'll come to an apology - Emily softens.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

When this is over, you will be the
toast of Vera Cruz... My Yellow
Rose of Mexico.

He gently lifts her from the saddle, and Emily falls into his
arms - Over Santa Anna's shoulder, she sees FLORES... NODS at
him. Santa Anna notices, turns around to see for himself--

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Who is he?

EMILY WEST

The soldier who saved me in Harris-
burg...when I didn't have my gun

SANTA ANNA

Yes, of course...

He acknowledges Flores with a tight smile and a polite nod...
while muttering to Almonte with a cold muttered aside...

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Assign him to the barricade.

199

EXT. ROAD TO VICTORIA - NIGHT

199

Camped for the night, Jack and Big Foot sit at a CAMPFIRE near their broken wagon - Clarence and Buckley's other two slave/thugs tied up to the wagon.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Dammit, Jack, figured I was savin'
our lives.

JACK HAYS
Use your HEAD--

BIG FOOT WALLACE
I went with my gut--

JACK HAYS
Your gut lies to you! You do
realize that since we met, I've
been mugged, robbed, and almost
hanged... I swear, you're just
plain bad luck.

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS in the darkness. They raise their guns at the sound - Watching...

THEIR POV - THE SURROUNDING DARKNESS

A HUGE, MOONLIT SILHOUETTE looms toward them. Jack and Big Foot COCK their guns. What the hell...?

NATE emerges with the unconscious PAULINE in his arms, a glazed, traumatized expression on his face.

JACK HAYS (CONT'D)
Whoa there... Hey, boy!

Nate shuffles on past until his steps stagger... He DROPS to his knees, barely holding Pauline safely aloft.

Jack and Big Foot rush over to take Pauline from him. Jack carries Pauline to the wagon bed, carefully lays her on it. Nate lumbers behind him--where his mistress goes, he goes.

JACK HAYS (CONT'D)
She's been stabbed! Bad!

Big Foot tears Pauline's dress to treat her wound.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Comanche lance.

CLARENCE

Cut me loose 'n I makes her a
poultice ta heal up da wound.

Jack looks at Pauline...then back to Clarence...

JACK HAYS

Boy, you even think of running,
I'll cut you down faster'n swarmin'
hornets on sugar water.

CLARENCE

Where I be runnin' we already goin'
- Wants me ta help da lady or not?

Jack cuts Clarence loose. Clarence goes to gather herbs to
treat the injured woman.

200

INT. OFFICER'S TENT, SAN JACINTO - NIGHT

200

BY LAMPLIGHT: A mock-up of SAN JACINTO on a table showing
the lay of the land and position of the Mexican ARMY.

SAM HOUSTON

The Sisters here, take out the
barricade and shower points beyond--

Rusk, Seguin, Hockley, Baker, Sherman and Lamar watch him
move the cannon pieces. Houston then moves wood chips and
pebbles that designate the Texian command.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Line of infantry a thousand yards
wide. 1st Regiment here. Baker's
Rifles here, Sherman's regiment on
the flank--

MOSELY BAKER

(incredulous, wavering)
I vote we receive an attack.

Houston looks at Baker wryly.

SAM HOUSTON

It's not up for a vote, Mosely.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

You might reconsider. We ought not
leave the security of the woods.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

(to Baker and Sherman)
Where are the war dogs now?

SAM HOUSTON
 (back to war plan)
 Colonel Lamar's cavalry on the far
 right. Captain Seguin and his
 Tejanos man the rear-guard--

This is what a simmering Seguin was afraid of, interrupting:

JUAN SEQUIN
 Unacceptable--

SAM HOUSTON
 Understand me, Don Juan. The
 courage of you and your men is not
 in question. But there is such
 deep rooted rage towards Mexicans,
 your men may have to duck more than
 Santanista bullets.
 (pointed)
 The killing may become indiscriminate.

JUAN SEQUIN
 We are Tejanos, Texians. The blood
 of our comrades has earned us our
 place alongside you, General.
 (moves pieces for his
 company to the front)
 We insist on a front line attack,
 come what may.

SAM HOUSTON
 We need some way to distinguish
 your Tejanos from Mexican soldiers.

JUAN SEQUIN
 We'll wear goose feathers as long
 as we get to sink our teeth into
 Santa Anna's neck.

201 EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

201

THE SUN RISES behind exhausted, fatigued MARCHING MEXICAN
 TROOPS, led by their mustached commander (GENERAL COS), as
 they cross the long wooden bridge.

SUPER: April 21, 1836 - 5:45am - VINCE'S BRIDGE, SAN JACINTO

PAN TO: A napping Karnes awakens to the NOISE of the marching
 troops. He nudges Deaf, grabs a spy glass to observe the enemy.

HENRY KARNES
 Shit, looks near 'bout five hundred
 troops. Nothin' but conscripts,
 raw recruits 'n peasant farmers.

DEAF SMITH
 (takes spy glass)
 Santa Anna's cannon fodder -

HENRY KARNES
 Looks like they marched all night.

A MEXICAN PATROL has spotted them - The PATROL FIRES - Deaf
 doesn't hear the SHOTS that SMACK into trees, RICOCHET off
 rocks. Karnes stumbles back, as Deaf casually turns...

DEAF SMITH
 We best git 'fore they spot us--

OFF MORE GUNFIRE, Karnes rolls his eyes, ducks bullets and
 scrambles to MOUNT UP behind a nonchalant Deaf RIDING OFF.

202 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - MORNING

202

Worn from their all-night march, Cos' men collapse, gulp
 water Santa Anna checks in with Portilla and Almonte.

SANTA ANNA
 General Cos' troops all present and
 accounted for?

ALMONTE
 Yes, but exhausted from marching
 all night.

PORTILLA
 Now that we're reinforced, the
 rebels are unlikely to attack.

BY SANTA ANNA'S TENT - INTERCUT - EMILY, wrapped in a poncho,
 eavesdrops...as Santa Anna orders Portilla...

SANTA ANNA
 Feed and rest the men in shifts.
 (to Almonte)
 Houston's skirmish yesterday vexes
 me. It made no tactical sense.

ALMONTE
 It's crucial for the men to rest, Sir.

SANTA ANNA
 We will remain on high alert.

ALMONTE

Until Filisola or Urrea arrive?

SANTA ANNA

Yes - Then we will see if Houston runs again, or finally dies. I am tired of this war. I'm going to end it.

EMILY - Hearing enough, she slips away...

THROUGH THE CAMP - EMILY

Sneaking past SOLDIERS slumbering or consorting with CAMP WOMEN, Emily locates the soldier she's looking for, lifts her poncho, briefly revealing her NAKED BODY, climbs on top of...

FLORES, who awakens, SHOCKED, until he realizes it's Emily. She pulls her poncho over them both to secretly confide...

EMILY WEST

Tell Houston today's the day. They don't know what he's doing. They've been up all night.

MANUEL FLORES

Santa Anna seems cocksure of himself.

EMILY WEST

That's for show. He's worried - He's stalling. Now that General Cos is here, he doesn't think our army will attack.

MANUEL FLORES

Come with me, it's not safe for you.

EMILY WEST

It don't matter what happens to me ...as long as I get to see the look of defeat in that bastard's eyes. At siesta, I'll make certain Santa Anna's distracted.

Emily slips away.

203 INT. OFFICERS' TENT, SAN JACINTO - MORNING

203

DEAF reports to Houston...

DEAF SMITH

If we take out that bridge you
won't need to worry 'bout no more
Santa Anna reinforcements.

SAM HOUSTON

Risky.

A feverish Lamar, Rusk, Sherman, and Baker interrupt.

MOSELY BAKER

Goddamnit to hell, Santa Anna's
already reinforced! We had `em by
the throats--and you retreated!
We've missed the moment!

MIRABEAU LAMAR

Now they outnumber us! We gonna
wait for Urrea, too??

SIDNEY SHERMAN

A lot of men will die because of
this.

SAM HOUSTON

You boys sure change your minds a
lot.

Houston stares at them a beat, nods at DEAF, who rides
off....then Houston re-enters his tent, closing the flap.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

What the hell's that about?

They appeal to RUSK, who gives them only a vacant expression.

MOSELY BAKER

God damn him!

204

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - MORNING

204

AT THE RANGERS' CAMPSITE - Soft red light from the last of
the coals lights up Deaf's worn face. He takes a deep breath
examining his Rangers.

DEAF SMITH

Mount up.

He KICKS Anderson's feet. Anderson shoots up knife in hand.
Deaf doesn't flinch, only nods.

MOVING DOWN THE LINE - Anderson SMACKS Karnes in the chest, who KICKS Beans, who NUDGES Gator, who SLAPS Vern, who THROWS WATER on Knowles LAUGHING as he does it.

The RANGERS arm themselves to the teeth. Vern looks at an empty bedroll: Kit's.

Deaf steps outside to his horse, sees the distracted Kit.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 Leave what's ailin' you right where
 you was sittin', son.

Kit gets up and joins the Rangers as they fall in behind Deaf when he trots his horse to the front - Silently they move out.

205 EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - DAY

205

Jack, Big Foot, Nate, Clarence & thug-slaves emerge at the end of the muddy street. Pauline rides unconscious on a TRAVOIS (makeshift gurney w/two poles to one of the horses).

Unnerved by the eeriness of the abandoned town, all move carefully... A DOOR OPENS...Guadalupe steps out.

GUADALUPE
 Praise the Saints!

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 The "Saints" give us a few trials--

JACK HAYS
 We got a hurt woman here.

She rushes to help get as Big Foot looks across the street--

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 What the hell...?

He races off - Jack, Clarence & thug-slaves follow. Nate remains beside Pauline with Guadalupe.

ACROSS THE STREET - A LARGE TREE...

Empresario Buckley and a SMALL CLUTCH OF SURVIVORS surround CURLS, ON A HORSE, a NOOSE around her neck, about to be hanged.

BIG FOOT WALLACE (CONT'D)
 WAIT!

But Buckley SLAPS the horse's rump--

--leaving Curls dangling, NECK SNAPPED - Big Foot checks her wrists in vain for his stolen bracelet. Buckley's disgruntled upon seeing them, snarls...

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY

Never saw a man so anxious to run to his own hangin'.

JACK HAYS

Seems to me since you caught the real killers, we're cleared.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Where's her misfit peckerwood partner?

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

After Guadalupe Smith spotted 'em, that snotnosed mongrel shot up the town 'n took off.

(points to SCRATCHES)

This little wildcat pert-near scratched my eyes out a'fore we wrangled her.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Where's the silver wrist cuff she was wearin'?

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Was wearin' what she got on.

JACK HAYS

You question her?

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

I don't believe in a lot of palaver between catchin' 'n hangin'.

JACK HAYS

For a lawman, you possess a bewildering command of due process.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

I make no apologies for frontier justice if that's how I gotta keep MY town in order!

JACK HAYS

(looks around)

--a ghost town.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

They'll all be back soon as Santa Anna whoops Sam Houston's ass and squashes this senseless revolt.

JACK HAYS

Unlikely as that may be, you have grander troubles on the horizon.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Whatta ya mean by that?

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Let's hit the trail, Jack. We got a revolution to win 'n some whoop-ass to kick.

He takes Jack by the shirtsleeve to pull him away.

JACK HAYS

Last night, a few miles west of here, Comanches raided a homestead and massacred a family.

Buckley and the few gathered townsfolk overhearing react.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Be best we all hold up together awhile til the savages settle down.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

We prefer takin' our chances alone. This ain't the most hospitable town.

He tugs at Jack. Buckley needs them to stay but stays cagey:

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Y'know, I might'a confiscated a few things from those young brigands that might interest you.

Jack and Big Foot stop, backs turned...but attention grabbed.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

My wrist cuff?

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

No, but let's see...there's a rifle in a scabbard, saddlebags with some kinda initial...might'a been a "H."
(as if just remembering)

Oh! And that she-devil was ridin' what looks like a fine, Tennessee Thoroughbred--

JACK HAYS
That's MY horse--

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
(interrupts, the deal...)
Help us get through this, I might
recollect where I stabled her.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
Why you low-down...

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
Got no choice, boys. Necessity
requires your help.

Jack turns to Buckley, studies the few innocent folks left.

Big Foot shakes his head, "here we go again," as Buckley, the
slaves, and townspeople begin to gather around Jack.

206 INT. BUCKLEY'S LAND OFFICE - DAY 206

Guadalupe finishes sterilizing Pauline's wounds - Pauline
comes to, convulses violently. Nate grips her.

PAULINE WYKOFF
Where's my babies? James...?

Nate whispers in her ear. Pauline goes limp, then WAILS,
lapsing into the most awful, shuddering display of GRIEF.

207 EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - DAY 207

FOUR MEXICAN SENTRIES patrol the BRIDGE.

IN THE WEEDS: Deaf and Karnes snake towards them, motions...
Anderson, Gator, and Kit slip from the WEEDS into the BAYOU--
Deaf watches AIR BUBBLES split to both sides of the bridge.
Motions to Beans and Knowles to take covering positions.

Vern and Beans emerge from the bayou - A knife in his teeth,
Vern begins climbing the pylon directly under a sentry.

Anderson, bow & arrow quiver strapped on, rises in a tuft of
weeds, plucks an arrow...THUNK - NAILS the First Guard's
chest.

The SECOND GUARD jerks up his rifle, peers into the brush -
but Vern grabs his leg, yanks him into the water - Beans
grabs him, strains to HOLD HIM DOWN, the water CHURNING--

THE THIRD SENTRY races to fire at Vern...Karnes throws a TOMAHAWK, striking him in the back of his head.

DOWN BELOW, the WATER CALMS, bubbles stop - Beans lets go, and the Second Guard's body floats downstream.

THE LAST SENTRY panics - Deaf waves his arms at him. The Sentry raises his rifle...WHOOOSH another ARROW from Anderson SHOOTs THROUGH HIS THROAT... The Bridge is theirs.

208

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY

208

Baker, Sherman, and Lamar vent their resentments...

MIRABEAU LAMAR

Confound it, he's sleeping sound as a bear cub in a winter's cave.

MOSELY BACKER

With the enemy a stone's throw away!

THUNDERING HORSES APPROACH - Men scurry to grab guns--

SIDNEY SHERMAN

My God! THEY'RE ATTACKING!

LORCA and his followers THUNDER into camp like demons--bloody scalps hanging from Lorca's belt. Murmurs spread throughout the camp. "It's him!" "Angel of Death!" "LORCA!"

LORCA

Where's General Houston?

THOMAS RUSK

State your business.

LORCA

Saith Jehovah, Raise your swords with ABANDON and OUTRAGE, till the Rivers runs red with HEATHEN BLOOD--

Houston bolts from his tent to respond...

SAM HOUSTON

Amen. You'll be assigned to Colonel Lamar's command.

LORCA

I'll be assigned to no man, be clear on that. We won't ride for you. We won't ride under you.

(MORE)

LORCA (CONT'D)

But we'll kill Meskins alongside
you til every brown breathing
bastard lies dead.

JUAN SEQUIN

(low, to Houston)
You can't trust that loco, Sam.

SAM HOUSTON

When I'm ready to attack, I'll give
you a sign. Watch for it.

Lorca nods and RIDES OFF, his MEN FOLLOW.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

I'd ally with the devil himself
when I'm outnumbered.

JUAN SEQUIN

I think you just did.

209 EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - DAY

209

Rangers carry small kegs of GUN POWDER across the bridge,
attach them to pylons. Karnes strings out the fuse--

VERN ELWOOD

Now what?

BILLY ANDERSON

We wait for Houston's signal.

KIT ACKLIN

What kinda signal?

HENRY KARNES

We'll know it when we git it.

Rangers link each keg's fuse to a single MAIN FUSE, trail it
to the weeds on the bank, and then ride off from the bridge
out of sight into the surrounding brush to wait.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

How do we get back across when we
blow the damn bridge?

DEAF SMITH

We don't.

210 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY

210

FLORES, back in his own clothes, sneaks back towards camp, as a Texan Sentry FIRES - Flores DIVES out of the way, YELLS...

MANUEL FLORES
DAMMIT, it's ME, Ranger Flores!

JUAN SEQUIN
CEASE FIRE! He's one of ours!

Seguin KNOCKS the Sentry's gun aside as Flores gathers himself and runs over.

JUAN SEQUIN (CONT'D)
Flores, what news?

MANUEL FLORES
I've seen the Mexican army up close. They're worn thin, their supply lines shredded to the breaking point.

Houston comes out of his tent and walks over to them.

MANUEL FLORES (CONT'D)
Emily West says Santa Anna's forces are split. Now's the time to attack.

SAM HOUSTON
And Miss West herself?

MANUEL FLORES
She said, "tell Sam he was right all along."

211 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY

211

Santa Anna, a MAP spread out in front of him, is in tense discussion with Almonte, Portilla, and OTHER OFFICERS. ROMOLO, as always, stands near.

PORTILLA
We are in a critical situation, General. The closest reinforcements are at least another day away

ALMONTE
General Cos' men were up all night.

SANTA ANNA
(glaring)
As was I.

PORTILLA

We should not have put ourselves in a position where it matters.

SANTA ANNA

What value is that assessment now that we're here! Help me manage the situation as it is or keep your mouths shut!

ALMONTE

Sir, would it not be better to abandon this position, march back east, re-join Urrea's troops, rest, and then pursue Houston on the offensive?

PORTILLA

We have won every battle where we were the aggressor--

SANTA ANNA

Houston's entrenched, waiting for us. Let his men simmer with fear while our soldiers rest.

(considers further)

Position a crack squadron of Dragoons to protect Vince's Bridge at all costs. It's our lifeline.

Santa Anna leaves his troubled officers. EMILY watches him, her expression tells us she will SEIZE the moment. Santa Anna comes to a grove of trees. Emily picks up a basket, smooths her dress and her hair, and approaches him.

EMILY WEST

What can I do to comfort you?

SANTA ANNA

Leave me.

Emily walks deeper into the woods, spreads out the blanket, lays out bread, fruit, and a bottle of wine. Takes a seat, as if obliging him--but she glances over her shoulder.

Finally, he walks up to her.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Forgive me, my Yellow Rose, I'm beside myself that I lost my temper with you yesterday.

Emily pats the blanket beside her--well out of sight from Santa Anna's camp. She kisses him sweetly...

EMILY WEST

You are forgiven, Antonio. The best thing you can do for your men is rest.

After a moment's deliberation, Santa Anna lies down on Emily's blanket, puts his head in her lap.

OFF EMILY, watching as Santa Anna's eyes CLOSE.

212

EXT. SAN JACINTO FIELD - HOUSTON'S ARMY - DAY

212

Texas Battle FLAG (a bare-breasted woman) that says "LIBERTY OR DEATH" flutters in the afternoon breeze, held by Colby.

SUPER: "APRIL 21, 1836 - 3:30 PM - SAN JACINTO, TEXAS"

On his magnificent white warhorse Saracen, Houston rides down the line, holds up a hand high to silence his men - Then...

SAM HOUSTON

We were born to live as FREE men.
ONE MAN took that from us, ONE MAN
sent our sons and brothers to
unmarked graves, ONE MAN cast our
daughters and wives alone into
oblivion. Reduced our cherished
homes to cold ashes! Burned the
bounty of our rich fields. Taught
us suffering, hunger, and
inconsolable grief.

Houston pulls a deck of RED PLAYING CARDS from his saddle bag. Sticks one in Juan Sequin's HATBAND--to DISTINGUISH the TEJANOS from Mexican soldiers. Sequin distributes them to all his men.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Today, we avenge our dead and honor
our loved ones! United against
tyranny, TODAY WE ARE ONE!
(placing red card in hat)
WE ARE THE SONS OF TEXAS! Ready
your weapons! Unsheathe your
swords! And follow me to VICTORY!

213

EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - DAY (RESUME)

213

A MEXICAN OFFICER leads a PLATOON up to the bridge - Halts his troops - Reacting to NO GUARDS around the bridge.

Curious, he dismounts, walks toward the bridge.

Sensing something not quite right, the Officer looks around the bridge.

ON THE RANGERS--As Deaf looks up and sees the Officer on the bridge. Beyond him, his heavily-armed squadron.

DEAF SMITH

Shit.

Silently, THE RANGERS ready their weapons.

214 EXT. SAN JACINTO FIELD - DAY (RESUME)

214

As quietly as possible, the TEXAN ARMY, led by Houston (the MUSICIANS behind him) slowly advances toward the Mexican camp...

--Young Colby, carrying the Texas Flag, marches beside his General, who leans down, hands him the now repaired & polished PISTOL Colby brought to him. Colby gapes at his Daddy's gun.

--Hockley leads the artillery crew, TWO TEAMS OF MEN harnessed to the "TWIN SISTERS" straining against their burden.

--GUN CREWS carry Powder Kegs & buckets of NAILS, SCRAP METAL, pieces of HORSESHOES to re-load the CANNONS.

--Juan Seguin & his Tejanos, RED CARDS in their sombreros.

--Baker's riflemen...

--Sherman's Kentucky Infantrymen...

--Lamar proudly leads his cavalry along the tree line, eyes focused on Houston. Also watching...

FROM A SHADOWED KNOLL ABOVE - LORCA & HIS REFUGEE GUERRILLAS remain vigilant at the slow, silent advance of--

HOUSTON leading his ragtag, mud-stained, unshaven army - frontiersmen in greasy buckskins, townsmen in frock coats and top hats, U.S. Army "deserters" in partial uniforms.

Houston draws his SWORD and points it at the Mexican line...

215 EXT. NEAR MEXICAN ARMY CAMP - SECLUDED TREE - DAY (RESUME) 215

His passion PEAKED...Santa Anna, panting, rolls off Emily, who, cuddles with him, soothing him to rest...to sleep.

216 EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - DAY (RESUME) 216

The Mexican Dragoon Officer spies...

THE FUSE, connected to the powder kegs strapped to the pylons below! Not sure what it is, the Officer crosses to it...

--Anderson draws back his bow, ready to release an arrow into the snooping Officer. Deaf catches his hand - Not yet.

217 EXT. SAN JACINTO FIELD - DAY (RESUME) 217

Marching ever closer to the Mexican Camp, now within sight of the barricade, nervous Texas soldiers raise their weapons. Houston holds up a hand - Not yet - Leans in to musicians.

SAM HOUSTON

What battle songs can you play?

"We're Marching on?" "Yankee Doodle?"

Intimidated by Houston, the dark-skinned drummer whispers to Hockley who grins and turns to Houston--

GEORGE HOCKLEY

The only song they know together is that saloon song they did before -

"Come To The Bower"

SAM HOUSTON

Good enough. Start it up.

The DRUMMER pounds out the BEAT, the fifers & fiddler join in the rousing saloon song. Excited soldiers pick up their step--

--Houston out in front of his troops, horse trotting faster.

218 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO, TX - DAY 218

Most of Santa Anna's men nap, SOME ROUSE sleepily at the DISTANT TEXAS MUSIC. Two SENTRIES look across the field, squint at MOVEMENT IN THE WEEDS between the two camps.

INTERCUT - SECLUDED TREE - NEAR MEXICAN CAMP...

Santa Anna SNORES, as Emily positions pillows around his ears to keep him from hearing... EMILY pulls out her pistol.

INTERCUT - SAN JACINTO FIELD...

Houston nods Hockley to to position the bogged cannons. A crew of men puts their backs to the tongue and wheels--

INTERCUT - THE BARRICADE...

SENTRIES spot the Texans approaching, look confused, raise their rifles. One RUNS, frantically trying to rally arms--

219 EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - DAY 219

The Mexican Officer pulls up the FUSE...SIGNALS HIS MEN.

THE RANGERS - Lighting a CIGAR, Deaf reacts to the discovery.

220 EXT. SAN JACINTO FIELD - DAY 220

Within only a couple hundred yards, Houston HOLDS his army to their ADVANCE, despite SPORADIC SHOTS from the Sentries--

INTERCUTS - NOW COME FASTER...

The artilleryman takes a smoking COIL OF MATCH from the botefeux, holds it an inch from the cannon's FUSE HOLE as -

MORE MUSKET FIRE ERUPTS FROM BEHIND THE MEXICAN BARRICADE.

A COUPLE OF TEXANS FALL out of the advancing lines -

Still Houston holds, his HORSE DANCING SIDEWAYS as he draws his saber, raises and...LOWERS IT, a signal to fire...

THE TWIN SISTERS - THE MATCH COIL lights the CANNON--

--KA-BLOOM! A CANNON BALL PUNCHES THROUGH THE MEXICAN BARRICADE! The second cannon lit right after...KA-BLOOM!

SAM HOUSTON
REMEMBER THE ALAMO! CHARGE!!!

JUAN SEQUIN
REMEMBER GOLIAD! ATTACK! FIRE!

221 EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - DAY 221

VINCE'S BRIDGE - Off the THUNDER OF THE O.S. CANNON, Karnes slaps Deaf on the shoulder - Puffing on his cigar, Deaf reacts to the Mexican Officer now CUTTING THE FUSE - Deaf leaps into the saddle--

DEAF SMITH
SPUR UP!!!

He charges across the bridge, Rangers follow, GUNS FIRING!
The Officer & Dragoons fall back, take cover. Deaf sticks
his lit cigar in his HAT BAND... wades into the bayou as--

222 EXT. SAN JACINTO FIELD - DAY 222

LORCA & HIS BAND, YIPPING & SCREAMING, charge down from the
knoll to join the attack, wildly racing ahead of even Lamar's
Calvary - The first to arrive at the barricade...

LORCA LEAPS HIS HORSE INTO THE OPENING made by the cannon ball,
BUSTS THROUGH to clear a LARGER HOLE for others to follow!

The TEXAN SOLDIERS behind break into a run, FIRE THEIR
RIFLES, LAMAR & THE CALVARY CHARGE as the CANNONS ROAR--

--SANTA ANNA SNAPS AWAKE, confused by the NOISE AROUND HIM.

223 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY 223

Disoriented Mexican soldiers form muddled ranks as TEXAN
MUSKET FIRE & CANNON SHRAPNEL SHRED tents and RIP INTO them

Almonte and Portilla try to get control of the panicking
soldiers. Romolo grabs a horse.

ALMONTE
BATTLE POSITIONS! RETURN FIRE!
Where's GENERAL SANTA ANNA?!

PORTILLA
FORM RANKS! LINE UP!

ALMONTE
PREPARE THE CANNON!

Portilla catches his horse, rallying his men--

PORTILLA
SADDLE THE HORSES! COUNTERATTACK!

ROMOLO RACES THROUGH CAMP, Santa Anna's horse in tow--

ANGLE - BY SECLUDED TREE - SANTA ANNA throws on his uniform,
trying to process what's going on, confused...

SANTA ANNA
We're attacking?

EMILY WEST
You are under attack...
(mocking/raises her GUN)
(MORE)

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
 "The Napoleon of the West Done In
 By a Nigger Whore!"

She HESITATES before she pulls the trigger as ROMOLO, riding in, LEAPS in front of Santa Anna to protect him, TAKING EMILY'S BULLET for his beloved master - Romolo FALLS DEAD!

Emily ducks back to re-load as Santa Anna, his men calling for him, gathers the reins & his dignity--

SANTA ANNA
 You devil bitch! No place on earth
 is safe for you!

HE RIDES OFF before Emily can fire again.

224 EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - DAY (RESUME)

224

RANGERS PROVIDE COVER FIRE as Deaf swims toward the FUSES, Mexican Dragoon BULLETS PELTING around him. He LIGHTS THE FUSE TO EACH POWDER KEG, yells up to the Rangers--

DEAF SMITH
 GIT!

One by one, the Rangers peel off from the attack - Ride over the bridge, dismount, and take firing positions to cover the next man. Last man out, covering for the others, Anderson runs to his horse past dead Mexicans, when ONE suddenly--

--GRABS Anderson by the ankle, taking the Ranger down...shot down with an arrow but not dead, the WOUNDED SENTRY fights as--

THE FUSE on the far powder keg SIZZLES, nears its END--

Grappling, ANDERSON KICKS off the wounded man, JUMPS on his horse, WHIPS it to RACE across the bridge in time to beat--

BOOM! The first section blows. BOOM! The second. BOOM! The third, showering the Rangers with wood, water, debris, but nearly ENGULFING Anderson, who spurs his horse to LEAP as--

VINCE'S BRIDGE EXPLODES with Anderson & horse in mid-air--

THE BRIDGE COLLAPSES as Anderson's horse safely LANDS on the bank, the Dragoons now stuck on the other side of the chasm, EXCHANGING GUNFIRE with the Rangers on the San Jacinto side.

HENRY KARNES
 Victory or death.

COUGHING UP dirty water, Deaf climbs up from the bayou to re-join his men, now mounting up to ride back to the battle. Knowles hesitates with a low aside to Vern...

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

I'm gettin' the hell out. Ya with me?

VERN ELWOOD

Little late for that, don't'cha think?

225 EXT. SAN JACINTO FIELD - DAY (RESUME)

225

AS THE TEXANS CONTINUE TO CHARGE...

The MEXICANS FIRE BACK - MOSELY BAKER is one of the first hit. RUSK rides over to dismount & help Baker off his horse.

MOSELY BAKER

I'll live! KEEP GOING!

A CANNON BLAST KNOCKS Houston's warhorse out from under him!

Houston recovers, looks around for another horse--

MOSELY BAKER (CONT'D)

Houston! Take mine!

Rusk helps Houston mount Baker's horse to continue the attack.

226 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO, TX - DAY

226

Soldados, blind with panic, flee. WHOOPS & SCREAMS of the raiding, havoc-wreaking Texans deafen their ears. Santa Anna charges around on his warhorse, trying get control.

SANTA ANNA

STAND AND FIGHT! FORM RANKS!!

SEVERAL TENTS FLAME UP, the SMOKE adding to the haze of smoky GUNFIRE & CANNON BLASTS - a BUCKING MULE and a NAKED MESTIZO WOMAN run past Santa Anna, who calmly shoots a TEXAN SOLDIER.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

COWARDS! HALT AND RETURN FIRE!

Santa Anna's champion chicken COOPS GET BLOWN TO SMITHEREENS. Birds and feathers fly everywhere - BENITO (18), the young bird keeper, knocked back by the blast. Terrified, Benito runs through the smoke and chaos, away from the fighting.

ANGLE - THICK OF BATTLE - INSIDE MEXICAN CAMP...

LORCA, merciless, almost effortlessly fends off attackers, HACKING through them with his sword.

Portilla - One of the few on horseback, bears down on COLE HORNFISHER, aiming his gun at Santa Anna.

WHACK! Portilla lops off Hornfisher's gun hand at the wrist! Hornfisher gapes at his GUSHING STUMP, eyes widening as Portilla SWINGS his sword for a DEATH BLOW. Nearby, LANE reacts to see Hornfisher fall over dead - Stunned for a beat.

Lorca storms over to shove a gun in Lane's hand, pushes him, a silent order for Lane to stop mourning and keep fighting.

227 EXT. REAR OF MEXICAN CAMP - THE RANGERS - DAY 227

The nine brave Rangers attack the Mexican Army from behind--

Beans, Gator, Flores, and Kit expertly control their mounts, pick out their targets and HIT THEM - Soldados fall. Anderson SHOOTS ARROWS, reloading Kiowa-style, and SHOOTING AGAIN & AGAIN, faster than the others can reload bullets.

Lagging behind his busily fighting comrades...Knowles sees his opportunity to desert - Turns his horse, GALLOPS AWAY--

Portilla sees Kit exposed, FIRES...

Kit flies off his horse, flops in the mud.

Wounded, Kit struggles up as another MEXICAN SOLDIER, seeing an easy kill, charges him with his bayonet, when--

--A RIFLE BUTT CAVES IN the soldado's head, saving Kit!

It's VERN, swinging his rifle like a club, BASHES the downed soldier's brains. Kit weakly raises up...and collapses into Vern's arms. Vern drags his friend from the fray.

NEARBY A MEXICAN SOLDIER RAISES HIS MUSKET to shoot Vern but-- --GETS CUT DOWN by Flores' knife.

228 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO, TX - DAY 228

TAKING COVER FROM THE BATTLE - EMILY reacts to...

SAM HOUSTON
EMILY...? EMILY!

Emily starts for him...but has to take cover from MORE GUNFIRE. Searching, Houston doesn't see her.

ANGLE - SEGUIN & MEXICAN OFFICER - Sword fighting, SEGUIN faces an aristocratic MEXICAN OFFICER--

MEXICAN OFFICER
Why does a Mexican Nobleman fight
for these Rebels?

JUAN SEGUIN
(a lethal THRUST)
I am Texian!

229 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO, TX - DAY 229

SECRETARY OF WAR RUSK - Charging through the camp, urging his soldiers on - Find themselves up against--

ALMONTE & A HALF-DOZEN TROOPS in a well-formed line, muskets aimed to shoot the trapped Secretary of War when suddenly--

KNOWLES, looking for a way out, turns in his saddle to look back at the battle behind him, RIDES FULL SPEED--

--INTO ALMONTE'S LINE OF SOLDIERS - Knowles' big horse KNOCKS down at least four of the men like bowling pins, causing their kill-shots at Rusk to FIRE ASKEW. Almonte and his men SCATTER to keep clear of Knowles and his rearing, out-of-control horse. In awe of Knowles' "heroics"...

THOMAS RUSK`
Damndest thing I ever saw!

230 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO, TX - DAY 230

NEARBY... Using his sword, LORCA confronts three MEXICAN SOLDIERS as other SOLDADOS charge in on his vulnerable side--

Riding in, Houston FIRES his pistol to SHOOT ONE, TOSSING his sword...which Lorca CATCHES with his left hand to STAB his other attacker with this second sword, SLASHING his opposing duelist with the sword in his right hand as--

Houston snatches a Mexican LANCE sticking up from dead soldier, SPEARS a fourth Lorca attacker - A curt nod of thanks, Lorca tosses Houston his sword back as they separate back into battle.

231 EXT. NEAR MEXICAN CAMP - EDGE OF BATTLE - DAY 231

SANTA ANNA, seeing his men routed, rides to Portilla.

SANTA ANNA

I'll find Filisola. You head west
for Urrea. We will return to crush
these infidels, cut out their
hearts, then flood the rivers with
Texian blood.

Portilla nods and they separate. Santa Anna stops short at--

ANGLE - GENERAL SAM HOUSTON

Riding through the SMOKE like an apparition. Houston stops
at the sight of Santa Anna - Draws his saber...

THE SHOWDOWN - Santa Anna smiles, raises his sword - the two
Generals spur their mounts and hurl themselves at each other.

EMILY - Rises up from hiding to observe the two facing-off.

Portilla - On his way out, sees his endangered Presidente...

BLAM! Portilla'S MUSKET BALL SLAMS through Houston'S BOOT
and into the side of his second MOUNT...which TOPPLES to the
ground, THUMPING across Houston'S wounded leg, trapping him.

LORCA AND LANE SWEEP IN - Lane rears his horse to shield
Houston while Portilla turns away from the fearsome Lorca,
who dismounts to help free Houston - Lorca gives Houston his
horse, guiding his BLOODY BOOT into the stirrup as MORE
TEXANS swarm in...

SANTA ANNA sees he's outflanked, wheels his horse, and races
away while Portilla directs his Dragoons to LAY DOWN COVER
FIRE that drives back Lorca, Houston, and Ranger pursuers--

232 EXT. SAN JACINTO FIELD - DAY 232

DEAF SMITH BASHES an attacker with his rifle stock, but his
action triggers a COUGHING SPASM so convulsive Deaf falls off
Charmaine - TWO Mexican Soldiers move in to FINISH Deaf -

Charmaine REARS, RISING UP ON HIND LEGS, KICKING OUT--

--Charmaine CRUSHES THE MEXICAN SOLDIER'S SKULL. Terrified,
the other soldado scampers away - Deaf passes out.

233 EXT. MEXICAN CAMP, BATTLEFIELD (VARIOUS) - DAY 233

ON THE BATTLEFIELD - MEXICAN SOLDIERS kneel, pleading...

MEXICAN SOLDIER

Me no Alamo! Me no Goliad!

SAM HOUSTON
They're surrendering! CEASE FIRE!

SHERMAN bashes the head of the crying Mexican, moves on.
LAMAR, wielding a BLOODY SWORD, rides past them pursuing a
fleeing Mexican soldier. A SECOND MEXICAN SOLDIER bursts from
a tent, arms raised in surrender - Lamar RUNS HIM THRU.

Portilla, riding away, catches sight of EMILY, turns to her--

An older officer (CASTRILLON - EXTRA) remains steadfast
beside his big cannon as his artillerymen cut and run.
Almonte approaches.

ALMONTE
CASTRILLON, we must surrender!

The old soldier ignores Almonte - climbs atop the barricade
to face the oncoming enemy. RUSK sees his proud defiance,
wants him alive.

THOMAS RUSK
Don't shoot him! DON'T SHOOT!

VERN and Knowles and others - BAM, BAM, BAM, BAM, BAM!
Castrillon's body shudders from a HAIL OF TEXIAN BULLETS.

SAM HOUSTON
Gentlemen, I applaud your bravery
but damn your manners! CEASE FIRE!!

In a killing frenzy, few of his men comply. Boot lacquered
in blood, his pallor deathly PALE, Houston slips from his
horse into the mud. Rangers rush to his aide - Beans and
Gator lift him up to carry him from the field, while Karnes
and Anderson provide a protective escort.

HOUSTON'S POV - A BLUR OF CHAOS, IN & OUT OF FOCUS, sees...

A MEXICAN DRUMMER BOY, LEGS BROKEN, crawls through the mud.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
DON'T! He's just a boy!

The kid's SKULL EXPLODES! As the red mist clears, REVEAL...

LORCA
Nits make lice.
(stares hard at Houston)
If Jesus Christ himself come down
from heaven today and ordered me to
stop killin' Yellerbellies--

A Mexican Soldier stumbles forward, WAVING A WHITE FLAG-

LORCA (CONT'D)
 --I would not do it.

He SHOTS the Soldier, whose flag FALLS in the mud.

ALMONTE organizes his soldiers, laying down their arms

ALMONTE
 Surrender! We SURRENDER!

THOMAS RUSK
 CEASE ATTACK! RANGERS, TAKE THESE
 PRISONERS IN THE NAME OF TEXAS!

Anderson, Karnes, and a group of Texas Soldiers take Almonte and his soldiers prisoner, saving their lives.

Beans and Gator carry Houston off the battlefield as--

REVENGE-CRAZED TEXIANS rush past them to...

234 EXT. PEGGY LAKE - END OF BATTLEFIELD - DAY 234

MEXICAN SOLDIERS, retreating from Texian pursuers, splash into the turbid water. Despairing of mercy, the Mexicans attempt to swim away, some DROWN, others SHOT by the growing number of merciless TEXANS...

JUAN SEGUIN
 MEN... Your orders are to take
 prisoners!

MIRABEAU LAMAR
 We'll take 'em... just like the
 Mexicans did.

A KILLING FRENZY...the LAKE clouds RED WITH MEXICAN BLOOD.

The last thing Houston sees before he passes out.

235 EXT. COMANCHERIA (TEXAS HILL COUNTRY) - SUNSET 235

A sinking sun glows blood-red on the horizon, casting long shadows over a COMANCHE WAR COUNCIL - Buffalo Hump advises his young braves, among them Piakini and Yellow Knife.

IN THE DISTANCE: the rooftops of Victoria. In COMANCHE...

YELLOW KNIFE
*Why take the risk of attacking them
 in their village? Be patient.*
 (MORE)

YELLOW KNIFE (CONT'D)

Catch them alone out in their fields. Easy prey.

BUFFALO HUMP

I have a vision. Burn out one family, we eliminate only a handful of white eyes. Burn their village, we discourage them all.

YELLOW KNIFE

(points at Victoria)

You see only a puddle, not the river that feeds it.

BUFFALO HUMP

I see only land, once beautiful, stolen from us and made into a festering sore.

PIAKINI

I will give my life to share in your vision.

BUFFALO HUMP

(points spear at the sky)

See the blood moon? Come daylight Victoria lies in ashes, blood and tears... We leave the whites with nothing but FEAR--

The young braves, all but Yellow Knife, WHOOP & YELL & DANCE in joyous anticipation.

236 EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - LATE DAY

236

Streets empty. Ominous. Jack crosses the street towards BUCKLEY'S LAND OFFICE.

237 INT. BUCKLEY'S LAND OFFICE - LATE DAY

237

Now packed with the fifteen or so remaining townfolks, watchful, pacing, anxious. A baby cries. A trembling finger inside a trigger guard. Shaking hand can't roll a cigarette. Nervous stares. A ticking grandfather clock.

Pauline lies on a makeshift bedroll, nursed by Guadalupe w/little Pedro curled up nearby - Nate stands by a window near Pauline, gripping a club, a knife in his belt.

Sweating behind his desk, Buckley taps his fingers, drinks, a glass and a bottle of whiskey in front of him.

PAULINE WYKOFF
I...I can't endure this a second
time.

GUADALUPE
Ssshhh.

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
No sense in gettin' all worked up.
We're ready for 'em.

PAULINE WYKOFF
That's what my husband said. You
don't know what's comin'. I do...

TOWNSMAN
I can't stand bein' cooped up in
this coffin no more!

He bolts for the door, knocking people out of his way, until
Big Foot clamps down on him and shoves him back into place.

BIG FOOT
Keep your head, mister. Otherwise,
we're all liable to lose our
scalps.

At a window, Big Foot sees Jack, opens the door, nervously
looking around as Jack enters - then SHUTS it.

JACK HAYS
Everything's set.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
Damn Injuns think we gonna lay down
for 'em got another thing comin'.

JACK HAYS
Gettin' dark. I'm gonna set up a
coupla bonfires outside.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
Send the niggahs - CLARENCE!
(to Jack)
You're too valuable.

JACK HAYS
Slaves aren't settin' on shelves
lik'a jars-a-pickles, and even if
they were, we can't afford to lose
none of them willy-nilly neither.
(to Clarence)
Just sit your ass down and stay
put.

Gratefully, Clarence sits. Jack glares at Buckley, snatches Buckley's bottle, corks it.

JACK HAYS (CONT'D)
Big Foot! Let's meander!

BIG FOOT WALLACE
What? Huh? Now you want my help?

JACK HAYS
Shhhh - Quit your yammering.

Jack cautiously looks out, then exits. Big Foot follows...

238 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - LATE DAY 238

OUR MOVING POV - MEXICAN SOLDIERS, marching by the dozens in FORMATION under ALMONTE, OVERWHELMING HOUSTON'S CAMP--

HOUSTON - Carried by Beans and Gator, his eyes half-closed, in the throes of delirium when he sees the Mexican soldiers.

SAM HOUSTON
My God, all is lost..I have failed--

DOC EWING thrusts SMELLING SALTS under his nose - Houston GASPS off the ammonia, eyes wide as officers lean in.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
Those are prisoners, General--

THOMAS RUSK
Sam - We won!

JUAN SEQUIN
You did it, sir...Texas is ours!

He clenches his red playing card in Houston's fist. Off echoing, sporadic GUNFIRE in the distance, Houston tries sit up in this makeshift triage. BLOOD streams out & around his boot from his wounded ankle, pooling in the mud below.

SAM HOUSTON
Santa Anna with them?

HENRY KARNES
No. We're huntin' him, General.

SAM HOUSTON
Take him alive - You hear me?

Doc Ewing nods to the Rangers who give Houston a sip of water, lift him onto a stretcher, and carry him off.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
Alive, Presidente-General Santa
 Anna will secure our victory--
 (fading, as they go)
 Stop gloating. We've won nothing
 without him...nothing.

239 EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - LATE DAY

239

Santa Anna rides up to the SMOKING remains of Vince's Bridge -
 Glances back at a DISTANT MOB OF SCATTERED TEXIAN SOLDIERS--

--urges his horse along the steep river bank... His horse
 STUMBLES...THROWS Santa Anna. The horse scampers away.
 Staying low, Santa Anna looks around and spots...

A SMALL CAVE OPENING

Santa Anna scoops up an armload of dried brush and crawls
 through into the cave, shoving the brush in place behind him
 to camouflage the entrance.

240 INT. SMALL CAVE - LATE DAY (CONTINUOUS)

240

A few shards of filtered light in the darkness as Santa Anna
 stoops to make his way through the cave. GALLOPING HORSES
 and TEXAS VOICES outside give him pause. He remains still
 until the outside threat passes on. Then--

A NOISE deeper in the cave - Someone or something is in here!

SANTA ANNA
 Who is there?
 (off the silence)
 I have a gun and will shoot!

SOBBING from the darkness... Santa Anna raise his gun...

Young Benito (last seen w/blown-up rooster cages) steps
 forward, hands up in surrender - Tears streak his dirty face.

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)
 Benito? You are one of the keepers
 of my champion birds, no?

BENITO
 Si, Presidente-General...my friends
 are all dead.

He slumps to a rock, sobbing. Santa Anna puts his gun away.

SANTA ANNA
I am afraid we lost many brave
friends today.

Benito stifles his sobs, sniffles as Santa Anna comforts him.

241 INT. MEDICAL TENT, SAN JACINTO - LATE DAY 241

THE SOUND of a SAW gnawing through BONE - IN LAMPLIGHT...

DOC EWING amputates the LEG of a thankfully UNCONSCIOUS
SOLDIER. Drops the pale, mangled limb in a bloody bucket.

HOUSTON's eyes flutter as Ewing turns with the bloody saw...

SAM HOUSTON
Doc, you cut off my foot?
(sudden panic, looks down)
You did...

DOC EWING
No, but your ankle's shattered.
Sepsis sets in, you'll die a slow,
miserable death.
(hands saw to Sarah)
Gotta get you to New Orleans. If
not, should you fall unconscious, I
will have it off.

SAM HOUSTON
Take my chances in New Orleans.

Among many wounded soldiers Kit lies unconscious on a cot.
His chest freshly bandaged. His breathing is shallow. A WOMAN
comes into frame and dabs his forehead with a wet cloth.

KIT's POV: BLURRY VISION finally comes to focus on Rebecca's
smiling face.

KIT ACKLIN
Thought you'd be honeymoonin' in a
Little Rock hotel by now.

She tries to wipe his forehead again but he turns his head
away from her. She dips a LADLE into a water BUCKET.

REBECCA PIT
Gavin went back to settle up his
affairs. I told him the Doc needed
my help with the wounded -- Here,
drink this.

She puts the ladle up to his mouth.

KIT ACKLIN
Ya' love him?

REBECCA PIT
Gavin's a good hearted man. Decent.
Daddy loved him. Promised me to
him years ago-

KIT ACKLIN
Answer my damn question.

Tears well up, Kit takes Rebecca's hand in his.

KIT ACKLIN (CONT'D)
You don't want what I got to give
you no way. Next bullet comes my
way might be-

REBECCA PIT
Don't say such things!

More tears start to come.

REBECCA PIT (CONT'D)
My whole life people been tellin'
me what's good for me.

KIT ACKLIN
You'd be a fool not to go with him.

REBECCA PIT
(shaking her head)
You're the fool, Kit Acklin!

She throws the rag at him and storms out.

242 EXT. SAN JACINTO FIELD - LATE DAY

242

Among the SCATTERED BODIES...one moves: Deaf, having passed
out from his attack of consumption, regains consciousness.

DEAF SMITH
Charmaine...? Charmaine!

He smiles when he sees his faithful horse grazing nearby--

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
C'mere, girl, ya saved me today--

When Charmaine tries to trot to him, Deaf's face falls. His
beloved mare LIMPS, an UGLY BREAK in her leg, crippled during
her valiant fight to protect Deaf - His eyes well with tears
when she nuzzles her nose against Deaf's face.

Stroking Charmaine, Deaf gets control...resigned to do what he must. He loads his pistol...presses it to her head.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 Sorry, ole girl...
 (COUGHING)
 Reckon we's both broke down.
 (gets control, cocks gun)
 Might see ya sooner'n ya think.

ON DEAF as...BANG! Charmaine falls O.S. Deaf sinks to his knees beside her.

243 EXT. VINCE'S BRIDGE - LATE DAY 243

Lamar and several of his Cavalrymen split up to ride along the banks with TORCHES. Lamar dismounts, holds his torch toward the mouth of the cave - Peers into the darkness...

DEEP IN THE CAVE-- Santa Anna cradles a terrified Benito, hiding from the light. A SCORPION crawls up Benito's leg. Santa Anna deftly snatches it away.

244 EXT. MEXICAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - LATE DAY 244

Rangers Karnes, Anderson, Gator, and Beans check dead bodies, search potential hiding places for the missing Santa Anna.'

Away from the others, Vern and Knowles come to Santa Anna's large, wrecked TENT, go inside...

245 INT. SANTA ANNA'S TENT - LATE DAY 245

Knowles and Vern gape at the LAVISH FURNISHINGS: Gold-trim bathtub, candelabra, silver goblets, Santa Anna's fancy duds.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
 Well chop my legs 'n call me
 Shorty! Ain't this swank.

VERN ELWOOD
 The spoils of war, son. This
 sumbitch traveled in style!

He grabs a pillowcase to cram in silver, candlesticks, etc.

VERN ELWOOD (CONT'D)
 I say we pilfer ever'thing we can
 tote 'n cut outta here tonight.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Dunno, Vern. I'm a hero now - I saved our War Secretary's life.

VERN ELWOOD

Ya fell over a bunch'a Mexicoons!

Knowles tries on Santa Anna's fancy uniform coat 'n hat.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Lookit "General Santa Annabelle!"

Vern salutes, cracks up as Knowles struts, FARTS, trips over--

A CASE OF FINE NAPOLEONIC BRANDY.

VERN ELWOOD

Eureka!

He starts pitching BOTTLES to passing soldiers, who immediately open them and pour them down even faster than Vern. As he swigs the brandy, Vern's eyes catches yet another CHEST. He rushes to open it, when he finds--

SANTA ANNA'S WAR CHEST which tips over and SPILLS MONEY BAGS. Knowles crawls over to open a couple: GOLD and SILVER!

VERN ELWOOD (CONT'D)

(breathless)

Hole---eee---shit! Mother of Jesus!

They look at each other, toast bottles of freshly opened BRANDY, and LAUGH--

246

INT. SMALL CAVE - LATE DAY

246

Santa Anna and Benito sit still in the dimly lit cavern until they hear Lamar's footsteps fade, and the soldiers ride away. Then...Santa Anna removes his boots and jacket.

SANTA ANNA

Switch uniforms with me.

Benito stares at the ground, slowly shaking his head.

BENITO

The rebels will hang whoever wears those clothes.

Santa Anna nods sympathetically, suddenly BASHES Benito on the head with a ROCK - Laying him down so blood won't stain the clothes, Santa Anna strips off the private's uniform.

247 EXT. OUTSIDE VICTORIA - LATE DAY 247

Faint light only from Buckley's Land Office, the rest of the town a dark skyline of silhouetted buildings--

Riding to the edge of town, the Comanches dismount - Using sign language, Buffalo Hump silently directs his braves to scatter out - Weapons ready, they creep in and out of the shadows along the abandoned streets, edging slowly towards...

248 INT. BUCKLEY'S LAND OFFICE - LATE DAY 248

Like a deathwatch. Big Foot peers out the window, checks his guns, powder, ammo. Buckley drinks. Nate stays by Pauline, who's tended by Guadalupe - The townfolks crammed around them, sweating, eyes fearful.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
Once't had a sister, Kiowa got her.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
They kill her?

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
Worse. They raised her up as their own. She ain't my sister no more.

TERRIFIED TOWNSMAN
Can anybody here write? I wanna do my last will and testament.

Another townsman raises his hand. The terrified man crosses to him to dictate his will on the back of a land sale poster.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
(nervously looks outside)
Where the hell's Jack?

249 EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - NIGHT (LATER) 249

Now that it's DARK, THE COMANCHES sneak into and around the town, converge on the Land Office, about to attack when...

PILES OF BRUSH in the middle of the street SPARK, BLAZE UP!

Buffalo holds up a hand to stop his war party's advance, squints at JACK'S SILHOUETTE disappearing into the DARKNESS--

THE BONFIRES now light the previously-abandoned-looking buildings, now crackling illumination to shine on...

--RIFLE BARRELS poked from the LOFT OPENINGS OF THE LIVERY.

--RIFLE BARRELS poked from a couple SECOND STORY BUILDINGS.

--RIFLE BARRELS sticking out windows all around town.

BUCKLEY'S LAND OFFICE - BIG FOOT & BUCKLEY

POINT their rifles out the windows, ready to fire. Frantic breathing, STIFLED CRIES from the terrified sequestered townsfolk - as they listen to NOISES from the O.S. COMANCHES--

AROUND TOWN - THE COMANCHES - Retreat back to their horses...

YELLOW KNIFE

Ambush?

Without a word, Buffalo Hump mounts, turns his horse, GALLOPS OFF, away from town - His braves FOLLOW as we INTERCUT...

--THE LIVERY LOFT - JACK watches the SILHOUETTED WAR PARTY ride away, this CLOSER VIEW REVEALING the RAKE and PITCHFORK HANDLES poked out the openings, looking like rifle barrels from a distance in the flickering bonfire light.

--VARIOUS OTHER WINDOWS - QUICK SHOTS - BROOM & MOP HANDLES, POOL CUES stick out, resembling gun barrels in dim firelight.

250

INT. BUCKLEY'S LAND OFFICE - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

250

Peering outside, Buckley opens the door for Jack to come back in, turning with a wide grin to the anxious townspeople.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Well I'll be damned, it worked -
Slicker'n snot on a doorknob.

A huge sigh of relief from the group, various exclamations...

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Comanches are tough on horseback,
but get 'em on foot, takes the
starch outta their breechcoats.

TERRIFIED TOWNSMAN

Praise Jesus! Thank-you God...

GUADALUPE

Thanks to the Saints!

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Saints, hell - Thank Jack Hays.

JACK HAYS
 We'll know for sure come mornin'.
 Til then, we stay vigilant.

251 INT. SANTA ANNA'S TENT, SAN JACINTO - NIGHT

251

Vern and Knowles hurrying, stuff their pockets with as much gold & silver as possible. They claw into the dirt digging a HOLE, just big enough to stash the BAGS OF SANTA ANNA'S LOOT.

VERN ELWOOD
 Goddammit! Cain't git it all now,
 gotta come back 'fore we head out!

Coins spilling from his pockets, Knowles helps Vern dig as--

HENRY KARNES (O.S.)
 Santa Anna ain't hidin' no-where
 here. Vern? Knowles? Y'in there?

Panicking, Vern and Knowles throw the MONEY BAGS into the hole...drag a RUG over it just as--

KARNES ENTERS, looking around Santa Anna's ravaged tent. Anderson, Gator & Beans follow, rummage through furnishings.

HENRY KARNES (CONT'D)
 So this is where the famous
 Presidente' slept. Fancy!

BEANS WILKINS
 (holds up posh Emily gown)
 Awful high-falutin' camp gear.

GATOR DAVIS
 Souvenirs!

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
 Spoils a' war.

BILLY ANDERSON
 Loot any of this shit, yer court-
 martialed 'n shot. It all belongs
 to the Texas Government.

Vern and Knowles awkwardly stand there, trying not to look guilty as hell - They jump on this, talk over each other...

VERN & KNOWLES
 Yeah... 'at's right, ain't our'n.
 Belongs to Texas...turn it over...

GATOR DAVIS

You two look like possums shittin'
peach seeds.

Sweating, they shrug, grunt, mumble, ease in front of their
hiding spots. Karnes goes around them to the open chest.

HENRY KARNES

Reckon Santa Anna's war chest done
been emptied out. He must'a--

CRUNCH - Karnes steps on a hole, reacts, pulls the rug back.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Santa Anna must'a buried it!

He jerks his dirt-digging hands behind his back, knocking
against his pockets...GOLD COINS CLINK to the ground. Knowles
looks sick. Bringing out the money bags, Karnes gives Vern
and Knowles accusing looks. They return weak-ass smiles.

252 EXT. SMALL CAVE - MORNING

252

Dressed in Benito's private uniform, Santa Anna pushes the
dry bush and cactus aside to squeeze out of the cave...

Still patrolling, COLBY, as surprised as Santa Anna, stiffly
swings his daddy's gun around at the Mexican General.

COLBY PIT

Surrender, Mezkin! Or I shoot you
deader'n last Tuesday!

Santa Anna sighs, raises his hands. The boy walks close to
him, pats his body and relieves him of his pistol and knife.

253 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - MORNING

253

Soldiers huddle in groups, talking, eating, resting, nursing
wounds. One by one, they stop and react to--

THE RANGERS ride into camp like the circus come to town!

Wearing Santa Anna's jewelry, medals, hats & uniforms,
Anderson, Knowles, and Vern ride alongside Karnes driving a
WAGON loaded with Santa Anna's personal valuables and money
chest.

In the back, Gator sits in the bathtub, scratching his back
with a gold scrub brush and smoking a cigar - Beans, wearing
Emily's fancy dress, stands in the wagon-bed, toasts w/a
silver goblet and waves to everyone like a queen.

254 INT. MEDICAL TENT, SAN JACINTO - MORNING

254

A busy triage for yesterday's wounded: Sarah bandages Mosely Baker. Rebecca uses a cold compress on Kit's head. Doc Ewing administers to Houston...

DOC EWING

It's opium, Sam...for the pain.

SAM HOUSTON

Quart of whiskey works just as well.

Rusk rushes in, Seguin and Hockley following.

THOMAS RUSK

(RE: Chest of GOLD)

Sam, you gotta see this...

DOC EWING

He needs to rest!

SAM HOUSTON

I need fresh air! Haul me out to that oak tree.

255 EXT. ROAD TO SAN JACINTO - MORNING

255

Unaccustomed to walking, Santa Anna perspires and breathes heavily as the young Colby energetically prods him along.

COLBY PIT

What's Santa Anna look like?

Santa Anna signals for a rest, sits on a rock to reflect:

SANTA ANNA

Very handsome, aristocratic, and powerful. His uniform is decorated with many medals and ribbons and he...has golden hair - Quite unlike mine or any normal Mexican.

LORCA (O.S.)

Stand aside, boy.

REVEAL - Alone on horseback, Lorca trains his rifle on Santa Anna. Colby aims the gun he took from Santa Anna at Lorca.

COLBY PIT

This here's my prisoner, mister, onliest one I got in this whole war. Anybody kills him, it's me.

LORCA

Then do it. Otherwise I gut-shoot
thru you to kill him. Your choice.

COLBY PIT

Mister...why would you wanna go 'n
do somethin' like that?

SANTA ANNA

I surrendered, just a common
peasant soldado - No one needs to
kill me!

Scared, Colby keeps his gun on Santa Anna, his other on Lorca
as HORSES APPROACH - Lamar & his Calvary ride up on Lorca's
stand-off with Colby - LAMAR'S GUNS pointed at Lorca, who
keeps his gun pointed at the boy in front of Santa Anna--

ON THE ARMED FOUR-WAY STAND-OFF...

FADE OUT.

END NIGHT THREE

PRODUCTION DRAFT: 1-15-14

TEXAS RANGERS

Night 4

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NIGHT FOUR - TEXAS RANGERS

256

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - OAK TREE - DAY

256

Houston lies on a pallet beneath a large oak tree by Buffalo Bayou, his ankle splinted, bloody bandages seeping - Santa Anna's treasure trove beside them as the officers debate...

GEORGE HOCKLEY

It's at least 20,000 in gold and silver, plus his personal valuables-

JUAN SEQUIN

We must give it to the People of Texas! Anyone who lost a home or--

THOMAS RUSK

Gentlemen, this discussion is moot, funds seized from the enemy belong to our newly liberated Republic!

MOSELY BAKER

What about those who gave their lives 'n all of us who liberated it!

SIDNEY SHERMAN

Ought to be distributed to the officers, make up for back pay--

Pained by his injury, Houston glances from the argument to...

Lamar's Calvary ride in behind Colby prodding his prisoner. Curiously, Mexican soldiers bow their heads, OFFICERS rise and salute Santa Anna, who ignores them, a murmur of "El Presidente" floats on the wind.

Houston turns to Karnes, points...

SAM HOUSTON

That prisoner there - Bring him to me - Flores, fetch Colonel Almonte.

Karnes goes to get Santa Anna, accompanied by Anderson - Flores and Gator get Almonte. Houston grimaces in pain.

Santa Anna and Almonte, surrounded by Lamar and the Rangers, are brought to Houston - A perplexed Colby follows. Certain that he's to be executed, Santa Anna, head bowed, is visibly shaken. Almonte reaches out to steady his General's arm. Feeling the opium, Houston smiles at Santa Anna.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
 A silk shirt with diamond studs...
 awfully elegant for a "private." I
 have seen you from afar.

Santa Anna blanches - with Benito's shirt bloodied from his
 stabbing, Santa Anna had to wear his own, dissembling...

SANTA ANNA
 You...uh...are mistaken, senor.

SAM HOUSTON
 Colonel Almonte, why do your men
 salute him?

ALMONTE
 Regretfully, I do not know all my
 soldiers.

SAM HOUSTON
 (turns to Colby)
 Execute your prisoner, soldier.

A reluctant Colby points his Daddy's pistol at Santa Anna.

COLBY PIT
 Yes, sir?

SAM HOUSTON
 Put him against the tree, so his
 brains don't splatter.

SANTA ANNA
 (scared, blurts...)
 I am General Antonio Lopez de Santa
 Anna, El Presidente of Mexico--

SAM HOUSTON
 (smiles)
 General Santa Anna, I cannot
 express how pleased I am to meet
 you.

Everyone's electrified by this revelation, MURMURS shoot thru
 the ranks, "Santa Anna! That's him!" etc., converging on them.

SANTA ANNA
 I put myself at the discretion of
 the brave General Houston. I wish
 to be treated as a General should
 be when made a prisoner of war.

Off Houston's gesture, Ewing gives opium to the trembling Santa Anna, who ingests it, closes his eyes as the drug kicks in. In shock, Colby gapes, whispers to Anderson next to him...

COLBY PIT
You mean that's...?

The word spreads fast. Angry, muttering Texans press forward. Lamar quickly takes credit for bringing him in.

MIRABEAU LAMAR
We captured Santa Anna! We must
convene a tribunal and execute him.

Baker, Sherman, and Lamar all erupt simultaneously.

MOSELY BAKER
Let's shoot 'im, Sam!

SIDNEY SHERMAN
He has to swing for what he did!

MIRABEAU LAMAR
Tie him to horses and rip him
apart! Right here! Right now!

Off the dangerous mob, Santa Anna appeals to Houston...

SANTA ANNA
The conqueror of the Napoleon of
the West is born to no uncommon
destiny. He can afford to be
generous to the vanquished.

SAM HOUSTON
You should have remembered that,
sir, at the Alamo.

SANTA ANNA
The Alamo was taken by storm! Your
defenders fought bravely but chose
to die to the very last man!

JUAN SEQUIN
You offered them no alternative.

From the crowd: "Hang 'em! Shoot 'im! Give 'im what he gave!"

SANTA ANNA
I acted under orders from my
government!

THOMAS RUSK
 You are yourself the government,
 sir. Texas formed a recognized
 government. We are not pirates.
 The rules of war applied...

A weak voice cuts through the crowd as Deaf pushes his way
 thru--

DEAF SMITH
 Fannin surrendered, with terms.

SANTA ANNA
 General Urrea had no authority to
 accept their surrender on any
 terms.

DEAF SMITH
 No matter. Still don't justify
 their slaughter.

SANTA ANNA
 I will personally have Urrea
 executed upon my return to Mexico.

The furious, sneering crowd press in closer. A lynch mob.

SAM HOUSTON
 I admire your optimism, El
 Presidente. Equal only to your
 sense of justice.

SIDNEY SHERMAN
 Why are we even talking to this
 murderer! He needs to swing!

MIRABEAU LAMAR
 Firing squad--here and now!

SAM HOUSTON
 I can't let that happen - Texas, to
 be respected, must be civilized.
 Santa Anna living can be of
 incalculable benefit to us - Santa
 Anna dead, would just be another
 dead Mexican.

ANGRY MEN ADVANCE, "Let's kill 'im! Hang the bastard!" etc.

MOSELY BAKER
 Prick bastard must PAY!

SAM HOUSTON

(over the crowd)

Then let it be so... Let us take our reparations. Open his war chest. GOLD for every man in my command!

He motions to Seguin to drag off the chest, away from him for the mob to follow the money. The officers are outraged...

MIRABEAU LAMAR

What?!? Not your decision, General. It is President Burnett's!

THOMAS RUSK

Sam, your mind is cloudy with the Doctor's pain serum. You can't...

He turns to the mutinous men, many who are still confused.

SAM HOUSTON

To all who risked their lives, equal shares! Colonel Seguin... Divvy it up!

Seguin OPENS THE CHEST to display the CACHE OF WEALTH, the men react, stunned, mesmerized by the gold & silver as--

--LORCA & HIS BAND ride in straight to Santa Anna - Lorca's men, armed to the teeth, spread out to seize the Mexican General from Houston. Lorca withdraws his sword.

LORCA

General! We're takin' him. Retribution goes hand in glove with victory - Present your prisoner.

A tense moment... Deaf steps in front of Houston and Santa Anna, then ALL the RANGERS follow suit: Colby, Karnes, Gator, Beans, Anderson, Kit, Flores, Vern... ALL EXCEPT Knowles. The Rangers have created a wall/human shield around Houston and Santa Anna. A nervous Knowles hangs back. Irritated...

BILLY ANDERSON

Knowles!

Reluctantly Knowles shuffles over to join them.

A BEAT, neither side yields - Murderous mayhem about to erupt-

LORCA

Fine by me, we end it all NOW. My only reason for living is to SLAY him

Lorca brings up his pistol to fire at Santa Anna when--

--A ROPE falls around his chest - Juan Seguin yanks Lorca off his horse. The Rangers subdue the furious, flailing Lorca.

DEAF SMITH

Ride outta here while you can.

LANE WALTERS

This man saved my life. We're not leaving without him.

SAM HOUSTON

He saved mine as well. He is a fierce warrior of uncommon valor and must be treated with dignity.

The Rangers back off. Lorca shakes off the rope, faces Houston.

LORCA

Do not fool yourself.
 (to Santa Anna)
 This man will die.
 (to everyone)
 It just remains to be seen how many of us he takes with him.

He jumps back on his horse, lashes it, rides out with his men.

257

EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - DAY

257

The street bonfires smolder. The Land Office door OPENS--

Stepping outside with some trepidation, Jack, Big Foot, Buckley, Nate, Guadalupe, Clarence, and townfolks look around the peaceful street, somewhat surprised they're still here.

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY

They'll likely be back--

JACK HAYS

Likely.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

(freaked out even more)
 You ought stay awhile longer...for the sake of the women 'n childrens.

JACK HAYS

A deal's a deal, Buckley. Fetch our belongings, we gotta get goin'.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
S'right - Me 'n Hardcase fightin'
Mexicans, not Comanches.

A COUPLE EXPRESS RIDERS tear into town FIRING GUNS in the air.

TEXAS EXPRESS RIDER
IT'S OVER! TEXAS WON! SAM
HOUSTON'S DRIVIN' THE SANTANISTAS
BACK TO MEXICO! TEXAS IS FREE!

People come outside and celebrate. Jack and Big Foot exchange a look. Jack looks crestfallen.

BIG FOOT
(incredulous)
Damn...

JACK HAYS
We missed it?

Off Jack's bemused expression.

258

EXT. MEXICAN FAMILY CAMPSITE - BESIDE RIVER - DAY

258

A TENT erected near a parked wagon - An OLDER MEXICAN MAN checks a fishing line, MIDDLE-AGED MAN with a shotgun nearby - A YOUNG MAN wields a rifle, scans environs for game to kill.

LORCA & HORDE CHARGE IN, SHOOT down the Older Man & Young Man--

The Middle-Aged Mexican BLASTS one round from his double-barrelled shotgun, Lorca IMPALES him with his SWORD before he gets off the second round. A RIFLE BARREL POKES OUT from the tent and Lorca's men UNLEASH A THUNDEROUS VOLLEY! The tent peppered with bullet holes, Lorca SLASHES through the canvas--

A MIDDLE-AGED MOTHER lies bloodied, holding the rifle. Lane and the others stare in shock - They just murdered a family.

Suddenly, a little boy, MOISES (8), bolts from a hiding spot and RUNS for his life! Lorca SCOOPS HIM UP, pulls his knife to slit the kid's throat - Lane swings his gun up at Lorca--

LANE WALTERS
NO! He's a child!

LORCA
Kill 'em all, lest they grow up ta
murder us.

In shock, tears streaking his face, Moises stares at the SCAR, on Lorca's WRIST.

LANE WALTERS

We are done killing women and children.

The rest of his band now raise their guns on their former leader.

LORCA

Take him 'n git the hell out! I aim to kill Mexicans 'n I ain't done yet!

Lane pulls Moises onto his saddle, rides away, the rest of the band following. Jaw clenched, Lorca glares at them until they're no longer in sight - Starts to turn --

BOOM! Lorca smacks down in the dirt - passes out.

The Mexican Father, bleeding to death, has rallied enough to fire his shotgun before he dies.

259

EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY

259

A FLURRY OF ACTIVITY - Army Regulars BUILD A FENCED-IN PRISON for the Mexican POWs, others DIG GRAVES. Many volunteers are PACKING UP AND RIDING OUT.

Shackled, Santa Anna watches Doc Ewing helps Houston along.

SANTA ANNA

You wanted to keep me alive - Once you are gone...these men will hang me.

SAM HOUSTON

Will Filisola and Urrea retreat if informed we hold you hostage?

SANTA ANNA

No. Their orders are to engage.

SAM HOUSTON

I recommend you countermand them.

SANTA ANNA

You may have Texas in exchange for my life.

THOMAS RUSK

President Burnet must negotiate the terms of any treaty.

260 EXT. RANGERS CAMPSITE, SAN JACINTO - DAY

260

With everyone working, Vern mounts up, starting to head out--

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Vern? You's aimed the wrong way -
We's all congregatin' back over
there to escort the General.

VERN ELWOOD

War's over for me, Knowles. Done my
duty. Had my fill of takin' orders.
Need to find me a lusty feline 'n
get hitched...but not in church.
(grins to Knowles)
You wanna ride along?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Naaa... I reckon I'm stayin' on.

Jaw dropped at Knowles' righteous transformation, Vern grins.

VERN ELWOOD

I'll be...Good luck with that shit.
(a tip of his hat)
Tell the boys I said Adios.

He jerks his reins, rides through camp...pauses to watch...

ANGLE - SARAH at the Medical Wagon with Rebecca and others
packing up as Karnes passes by--

HENRY KARNES

Y'all off to Victoria?

SARAH EWING

Yessir, my daddy's settin' up his
doctorin' office there soon as he's
back from New Orleans. Says it's
time to settle down some place.

261 EXT. TEXAN ARMY CAMP, SAN JACINTO - DAY

261

Houston takes the papers from Santa Anna, gives them to
Sequin.

SAM HOUSTON

We'll need riders to deliver these
to Urrea and Filasola right away.
(to Rusk)
Tom, ride on ahead to formalize our
agreement with Burnet.
(to officers)
(MORE)

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

George - you and Juan take charge
of the army while I'm gone.

Hockley indicates the scattered troops riding away...

GEORGE HOCKLEY

What army we have left. Most of
the volunteers think we already won
and are heading on back home.

Houston raises up from his pallet to bellow at the soldiers:

SAM HOUSTON

Nearly 8000 Mexican troops are
still out there and could attack at
any moment! REMAIN ON FULL ALERT!

JUAN SEQUIN

You get that leg healed, sir.
Texas needs you.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

We'll do our best to keep the
companies together and ready, Sam.

Houston winces in pain, Doc gives him a hit of opium. Santa
Anna is loaded into a hastily-constructed CAGE (like a
chicken coop) onto the wagon beside Houston's pallet.
Almonte is escorted to ride in the wagon.

MIRABEAU LAMAR

General Houston--

Lamar steps over to Houston, indicates a YOUNG COURIER (20s)
dressed in a BLUE AMERICAN UNIFORM--

MIRABEAU LAMAR (CONT'D)

Courier arrived from General
Gaines' camp requests an update.

Houston, smiling, looks over to Santa Ana, visibly
uncomfortable in his cage.

SAM HOUSTON

Fetch me paper and some ink.

ANGLE - OUTSIDE MEDICAL TENT

Shoulder bandaged, Kit, FILING a MEDAL exits to join the
Rangers on their escort assignment, with Rebecca following.

REBECCA PIT

Kit! You're not fit to ride yet!

As she catches up to him, Kit quickly sticks the file and Mexican gold medal into his pocket before she sees it.

KIT ACKLIN

Don't fuss - Case I need tendin'
to, Doc Ewing's comin' with the
General.

He takes her hand, scrutinizes her ring finger, looks up--

KIT ACKLIN (CONT'D)

I'll see you when I get back?

Rebecca's taken aback by his intensity, studies his eyes.

REBECCA PIT

I...I certainly hope so - If you
don't get yourself killed.

He suddenly pulls her in to him for a passionately romantic kiss...leaving her breathless as he goes to join the Rangers.

HOUSTON - Sitting up in the wagon, he watches the young lovers Kit & Rebecca, nostalgic, signals Flores - Low...

SAM HOUSTON

Any sign of Emily yet?

MANUEL FLORES

Got her revenge on Santa Anna, she
might've gone back to New Orleans.
Maybe you'll see her there.

SAM HOUSTON

Yeah... Maybe.

NEW ANGLE - DEAF SMITH

Carrying a shovel, covered in mud, he shuffles towards them - Houston & Rangers gape at their pitiful, debilitated Captain.

GATOR DAVIS

Dang, Cap'n. Ya look like somethin'
the cat dragged in that the goat
wouldn't eat. Where ya been?

DEAF SMITH

(stifles a cough, low)
Had ta cover up Charmaine..

He drops the shovel, consumed by a bad coughing fit. Flores opens his canteen to offer water, but the proud old Ranger pushes him away, stumbles to the trees to VOMIT BLOOD.

Everyone watches in pity. Houston turns to Colby.

SAM HOUSTON

The man who captured Santa Anna
oughta make a good Ranger. Your
first assignment, escort Captain
Smith back home to his wife.

COLBY PIT

Yessir! Hey, sis...sis...

Colby hurries over to Rebecca. They embrace in celebration.

DEAF SMITH

(stumbling back)
Ain't nobody fetched me a new mount
yet?!

SAM HOUSTON

You're not going, Deaf.

Deaf stops short with a sharp look at him. Then...

DEAF SMITH

Who the hell's gonna keep El
Presidente breathin' and watch over
your ass?

SAM HOUSTON

Karnes will take command.

DEAF SMITH

Jes' gonna throw me away, that it?

SAM HOUSTON

Go on home, old friend. The
Republic of Texas is grateful for
your service.

DEAF SMITH

I'll tell you when I'm done!

SAM HOUSTON

You are hereby ordered to
convalesce until further notice.

Deaf stares in fury and disbelief, SMACKS his hat against his
leg. Colby rushes over to help him. Hurting for his friend,
Karnes looks away, gruffly yells the order...

HENRY KARNES

Gotta get the General to New
Orleans and this Meskin war-lord to
his "Peace talks" - MOVE OUT!

The Rangers MOVE OUT. Rebecca blows kisses to Kit.

THE ARMY CAMP breaks up... Most heading in the opposite way from the Rangers - Among them, Sarah, and Rebecca helping WOUNDED SOLDIERS in the Medical Wagon driven by Colby -

In the back of the cart: A scowling, deathly-ill Deaf.

Vern falls in behind the entourage, eyeing Sarah.

262 EXT. PRAIRIE ROAD - DAY

262

BUZZARDS circle. O.S. FLIES buzz around dead bodies...one lands on the nose of the bloodied Lorca...who twitches, swats it away.

Grimacing in agony, Lorca raises up on one elbow...reacts to:

A BUZZARD pokes at the entrails of the Mexican Father who shot Lorca. Lorca YELLS, throws a rock to flush the buzzard--
--then painfully struggles to his feet.

263 INT. VICTORIA SHACK - DAY

263

Birds CHIRP. Sunlight pours through the window.

PAULINE'S eyes flutter open. She gathers her surroundings.

Guadalupe stirs a large pot of steaming food, HUMMING a tune.

Pauline strains to sit up straight, her face twisted in pain.

GUADALUPE

Be careful.

PAULINE

I need fresh air.

GUADALUPE

The wounds will re-open.

Pauline sticks out her hand.

PAULINE

Help me up.

Guadalupe helps the struggling Pauline to her feet.

GUADALUPE

What will you do when your strength returns? Go back to Tennessee?

PAULINE

Came here with my husbands and kids
to find a better life.

(beat)

I'll do it for them.

264

EXT. SOUTH TEXAS ROAD - DAY

264

RANGERS: Karnes, Kit, Beans, Gator, Flores, Anderson, and Knowles ride escort. Attended by Doc Ewing, Houston fights pain. Santa Anna stares back with a small, stoned smile, enjoying Houston's misery.

SANTA ANNA

Tell me. Why do the Texians revolt
against me? Mexico gave you people
so much opportunity.

SAM HOUSTON

Mexico did indeed. But YOU--

Santa Anna sighs, as if explaining to a child...

SANTA ANNA

You see a cruel, heartless dictator
instead of a leader with a singular
force of will and clarity of vision
who only did what had to be done.

SAM HOUSTON

I see a man in a chicken coop.

SANTA ANNA

I am the savior of Mexico,
defending my people from pirates
like you stealing our land.
History will sweep you aside with a
footnote.

SAM HOUSTON

Better a footnote than an entire
book of abominations.

SANTA ANNA

We are men on opposite sides, yet
we share many things...

(off Houston's silence)

Like Miss Emily West?

SAM HOUSTON

You are the author of Miss West's
need to avenge her brother--no
matter how difficult her path--

SANTA ANNA
 (laughs, relishing this)
 My, it seemed so effortless!
 Especially when she was screaming,
 "Oh, Antonio, more! MORE!"

Houston shows no reaction but for a small smile...

SAM HOUSTON
 Although I've never personally
 witnessed it, I'm told women are
 gifted at pretending that sorta
 thing.
 (a shrug)
 However, if what you say is true,
 she really must've needed "more."

He smiles and takes another tab of opium. Seething, Santa Anna sticks out his hand for his hit. Houston stops the Doc.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
 He's had enough, Doc. Let him
 wrestle with what defeat feels like.

265 EXT. PRAIRIE - LATE DAY 265

Lorca sits by a FIRE, digs out a last SHOTGUN PELLET from his bare chest, badly bleeding. Next to him, the BLADE of his Bowie knife glows red-hot from where it lays in the fire.

Lorca uses the sizzling blade to cauterize his wounds...his bloodcurdling SCREAM echoes across the prairie.

266 EXT. ROAD TO VELASCO - DAY 266

A MEXICAN COURIER rides toward Houston's transport. Karnes signals for a stop - The Rangers ready their weapons.

BILLY ANDERSON
 One of Santa Anna's Dragoons?

The rider draws closer, waving a WHITE FLAG.

HENRY KARNES
 You 'n Flores circle back around,
 see where this feller's come from.

With a nod, Anderson and Flores GALLOP off on a lateral track as the Courier pulls up his horse, waits. Beans rides out to meet him, takes the message...rides back.

BEANS WILKINS
Colonel Portilla's got Emily West.

His condition worse, a half-conscious Houston perks up...

SAM HOUSTON
She's alive...?

BEANS WILKINS
Wants to trade her for Santa Anna.

Overhearing, Santa Anna grins but acts offended, to Almonte:

SANTA ANNA
What an insult. A whore for a Chief
of State. Portilla's an idiot.

Conflicted, Houston glares at Santa Anna. Weakly...

SAM HOUSTON
Tell Portilla that the only chance
he's got to get out of Texas alive
is to immediately return Miss West
to me unharmed.

Beans writes Houston's response on back of Portilla's note, rides out to give it to the Courier. As soon as the courier departs, Houston whistles. Flores and Anderson come riding up. Houston confers aside with them.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
Follow him. Find out where they're
holding her and get her out.

PAST AN ARROYO

Flores and Anderson intercept the courier, watch him pass, and then take up his trail.

267

EXT. ROAD WEST OF THE COLORADO - DAY (LATER)

267

Flores deftly shadows the courier when the courier abruptly pulls up his reins, turns to face him.

PORTILLA'S COURIER
Think I don't know you're following
me? You think I'm stupid?

MANUEL FLORES
No. We think you're dumber than a
bucket of rocks.

Anderson springs with his BOW from hiding. Drills the courier point blank with an ARROW. Then draws his KNIFE to SCALP the courier.

MANUEL FLORES (CONT'D)

What's the need for that?

BILLY ANDERSON

You'll see--

268

EXT. VICTORIA SHACK - MORNING

268

Nate sweeps the front stoop. The dust cloud kicked up from the porch wafts over to-

JACK and BIG FOOT, sitting on a bench, fan the dust away in irritation.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Must be a sign. We oughta clear out.

JACK HAYS

One would not think it'd be this difficult to find a war.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Not when there's two of us lookin'.

Guadalupe steps through the doorway as COLBY rides up. Seeing Deaf in the CART, Guadalupe rushes to him, Pedro following... "Poppa!".

Deaf's eyes focus on his wife, a smile grows on his face, his voice a barely audible rasp:

DEAF SMITH

We did it, darlin'. Texas is ours.

Deaf passes out.

GUADALUPE SMITH

NATE... give me a hand!

Nate and Guadalupe haul Deaf inside.

Jack and Big Foot approach Colby.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

That's him, ain't it? Cap'n Smith?

COLBY

Yep. Cap'n Deaf Smith. Fresh from San Jacinto. War's won, mostly.

JACK HAYS

(to Big Foot)

Splendid. We managed to miss it-- in search of a trinket.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Ain't a trinket--

JACK HAYS

(to Colby)

We'll confer with Captain Smith before we make another move.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

He don't look much for conferrin'. If Texas does to us what it done to him and Samuel, we might oughta give Californey a shot.

Irritated, Jack plops back on the bench. Pulls his brim down low over his eyes.

269

EXT. ROAD WEST OF COLORADO RIVER - DAY

269

A MEXICAN ESCORT OF FOUR DRAGOONS (Portilla's men) ride up on the scalped courier, Comanche arrow protruding from his back. They react, nervously scanning their surroundings, as one Dragoon climbs down to inspect the courier's body.

MEXICAN DRAGOON

Comanches.....!

The Mexican escort leaves the body and gallop back the way they came.

AFTER A BEAT, FLORES and ANDERSON, rise on their horses, completely covered in DIRT, LIMBS, and BRUSH and take up their trail...

270

EXT. GALVESTON BAY - DAY

270

The "FLORA," a water-logged tub of a boat, ready to sail, fishing nets draped from the booms. Unconscious, Houston lies on a stretcher held by Doc Ewing & Knowles. Karnes and Gator confront the CAPTAIN.

HENRY KARNES

Every government boat we've tried
say they got orders to patrol for
enemy ships. You're our last hope.

GATOR DAVIS

Does Burnet want him to die?!

FLORA CAPTAIN

Look...if it were up to me, I'd
ferry the general anywhere he needs
to go - But it's not my decision.

As DECKHANDS untie the boat, Kit and Beans climb on board
behind them, unsheathing Bowie knives.

HENRY KARNES

Then we'll decide for ya--

He and Gator level their pistols at the Captain, while Kit
and Beans hold knives to the throats of the deckhands.

KNOWLES

Bet you just got a hankerin' for
some Frenchie food 'n Creole pussy.

The Rangers get Houston onboard, situate him, then Knowles,
Beans and Kit disembark. Karnes lingers a beat as the Doc
settles in next the sick General and Gator points his pistol.

GATOR DAVIS

Break wind, skipper...or whatever
it is you corncobs do 'fore I burn
a new hole in your chincy ass.

Karnes realizes the BOAT'S PULLING AWAY, takes a RUNNING LEAP
back to the dock as the schooner drifts out to sea - on its
STERN: "Flora - DAVID BURNET, PROPRIETOR"

271 INT. HACIENDA VALERO - DAY

271

EMILY, forlorn and battered, sits with PORTILLA and his men.
A cook serves tortillas, beans, and shredded chicken.

With one sweep of her arm, she KNOCKS it on the floor.

Portilla scrapes the food back on the plate with the toe of
his boot, grabs Emily by the hair and CRAMS the food down her
throat.

Emily spits out the food. Grabs a table knife and takes a
swipe at his THROAT.

Portilla catches her hand, but not before she draws blood.
He BACKHANDS her! Slams her to the floor.

EMILY WEST

They've hanged your El Presidente
by now. You can't use me for
anything.

Portilla wraps a bandana around his bleeding throat.

PORTILLA

When I know that's true, I'll use
you for my men's amusement...
before I trade you to the Comanches
for a pack mule.

EMILY WEST

Where will you go? If you're
caught in Texas they'll hang you
for Goliad. In Mexico, they'll
shoot you for San Jacinto.

Portilla SMACKS her again, and off his nod, the soldiers bind
her to the chair, and he stuffs a tortilla into her mouth.

272 EXT. HACIENDO VALERO - DAY

272

TELESCOPIC POV - SOLDADOS mill about - Portilla comes out of
a small hacienda as the Dragoons arrive, deliver Houston's
note. (MOS) Confusion turns to frustration as Portilla
storms back inside-- PAN POV...

TO WINDOW - Portilla storms in, SLAPS Emily to the ground.

REVEAL: Anderson lowers the spy glass.

BILLY ANDERSON

We're gonna need more muscle to
wrestle her outta that snake den.

273 EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - DAY

273

Anderson and Flores ride into town. Excited to see them,
Colby WHOOPS, rushes to them. Anderson's all business--

BILLY ANDERSON

Need ya to help us round up a
posse, kid - Got a rescue mission.

NEW ANGLE - Aided by Nate, the recovering Pauline practices
walking, reacts at seeing Empressario Buckley, limps to him.

PAULINE WYKOFF
Remember me, Mister?

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
Yes ma'am, unfortunate what
happened--

PAULINE WYKOFF
You sold us that place knowin' the
Comanche were runnin' loose!

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
As I recall, your husband inquired
only of the Mexican turmoil. The
subject of Injuns never come up.

She SPITS in his face.

OFF BUCKLEY'S PURE MENACING EXPRESSION--

ANGLE - GUADALUPE'S SHACK - Anderson and Flores approach
Guadalupe on the porch - She defiantly blocks the door.

GUADALUPE SMITH
Erastus is done with rangers.
Please... Let him know peace in his
final days.

BILLY ANDERSON
Yes, ma'am. We only stopped by to
say howdy 'n pay respects.

GUADALUPE SMITH
You think I don't see? There's
trouble somewhere. You want men.

She points to Colby talking to Jack, Big Foot and others.

Flores and Anderson exchange a look - Caught, admitting...

BILLY ANDERSON
There's been a kidnapping.

MANUEL FLORES
The lady who helped us whip Santa
Anna--

DEAF SMITH
You found Emily West?

They're surprised to see Deaf through the open doorway,
standing by his bed in his underwear, bare, knobby feet on
the floor - Reading their lips. Guadalupe rushes in--

274 INT. VICTORIA SHACK - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

274

Deaf's unmoved as Guadalupe tries to guide him back--

GUADALUPE SMITH
You get back in that bed!

DEAF SMITH
Gotta take a country leak, woman!
'Less you wanna mop this floor.

Flores and Anderson have followed her in, respectfully...

BILLY ANDERSON
Deaf, we ain't here to cause a
fuss.

MANUEL FLORES
Though we could use your advice--

DEAF SMITH
Don't marry a woman who can whip
ya. She'll make ya piss yourself.

Deaf grabs a bed pan, closes curtain, SOUND OF PISSING off--

DEAF SMITH (O.S) (CONT'D)
Portilla's got her, don't he? Saw
him ride off with her. I didn't say
nothin' but I figured she was dead.

He sticks his head out the curtain to see the reply...

BILLY ANDERSON
Portilla and about twenty of his
Dragoons are holdin' her in a
hacienda on the Nueces.

Deaf nods, disappears back behind the curtain, as Guadalupe joins him. Flores & Anderson hear an O.S. trunk lid opening, closing...SPURS jingling with each clump of a boot heel and--

GUADALUPE SMITH (O.S.)
Deaf, no - You walk out that door,
we both know you ain't comin' back.

The curtains part, out walks DEAF, ready to ride, Guadalupe behind him. He moves to his pistols and fills his brace.

DEAF SMITH
(to Anderson and Flores)
Fetch the horses.

Off Guadalupe's frustrated glare, the Rangers can't get out of there fast enough. Then, turning to her, gently...

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 Lupe...darlin'...I'm coughin' blood
 and fartin' dust. I can die in
 that bed watchin' all yer
 caterwaulin', or I can die as I've
 tried my damnest to live all my
 days--like a man.

Eyes welling, Guadalupe pulls down her husband's rifle.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 It's your love kept me goin' this
 long.

He kisses the tears from Guadalupe's cheek. Turns for the door - Stops, and turns back to little Pedro--

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
 Mind your chores. Be a comfort to
 your Ma. When you're old enough, I
 expect you to account for yourself.
 This ain't the end of the troubles.
 Texas is gonna need you.

275 EXT. VICTORIA SHACK - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

275

Anderson, Flores, Jack, Big Foot, and Colby, holding an extra horse, wait outside on horseback. With young Moises by his side, Lane Walters, in his blacksmith apron, talks to Flores.

LANE WALTERS
 I owe ya for savin' me 'n all those
 others at Harrisburg - So I'll shoe
 your horses 'n fix your tack free
 of charge anytime ya want... But I
 got my bellyfull of killin'...

Flores nods, understanding, as Deaf exits the house.

COLBY PIT
 Got you a new mount, Cap'n.

DEAF SMITH
 (mounting up)
 'N you think you're goin', too?

COLBY PIT
 Got strict orders to look after ya.

JACK HAYS
 Captain Smith, We're honored to
 ride with you. My name's Jack
 Hays.

DEAF SMITH
 You're the Tennessee turnip what
 saved this town from Comanches.

JACK HAYS
 This here is Big Foot Wallace.

DEAF SMITH
 (ignoring him)
 Y'all don't keep up, I ain't comin'
 back for ya - H'YAH!!

He SPURS his horse, the others scramble to catch up.

Guadalupe and Pedro watch them ride away.

276 EXT. NEAR MISSION CONCEPCION, SOUTHWEST TEXAS - DAY 276

WIND sweeps up billowing SAND...as, THROUGH A DUST STORM--

LORCA struggles against the wind, blinded by the swirling sand.
 Lost in the storm, he stops to look around for shelter, hears:

Faint MUSIC in the wind: A CHOIR OF YOUNG VOICES sing Beethoven.

277 INT. MISSION CONCEPCION - DAY 277

Ornate doors BURST OPEN. Lorca stomps in, eyes searing yet
 dead, a pistol in each hand. The BOYS CHOIR STOPS. Silence
 but for the wailing storm outside.

A handsome young COUPLE: MEXICAN MOTHER (22) & ANGLO FATHER
 (23), stand in front of a PRIEST (50s), holding their tiny
 INFANT in front of the Baptismal as the O.S. WIND HOWLS--

Everyone turns to gape - An intense HUSH... MUTTERS THROUGH
 THE CONGREGATION OF "LORCA"... UNARMED MEN step in front of
 their terrified women and children, ready for an attack.

No sound but the O.S. DUST STORM...until a stout, wizened
 Mexican woman, ABUELITA (70s) steps forward.

ABUELITA
 (to everyone)
 Christ washed the feet of lepers.

She gently pats his hands to lower his pistols.

ABUELITA (CONT'D)

Thank you for coming for this special moment in the life of my grandson.

She gestures to the pew, presses him to sit. He hesitates, slowly sits. She nods for the Priest and CHOIR to BEGIN AGAIN - The boys' VOICES drown out the wind noises outside.

Entranced by the MUSIC and RITUAL, Lorca watches the baby baptized, a moment of grace in filtered, stained-glass light.

278

EXT. NEW ORLEANS HARBOR - DAY

278

A uniformed BAND, horns, tubas, etc wide-eyed in anticipation as the CONDUCTOR taps his baton to start "COME TO THE BOWER!"

GATOR DAVIS (O.S.)

DOC! DOC! Sweet Jesus... the General's dead!

SUPER: MAY 22, 1836, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

DECK OF THE FLORA - Doc Ewing moves quickly. Gator is standing over HOUSTON, gaunt, hatless, sunburned, looks dead... Then his eyes flutter - Weakly...

SAM HOUSTON

That music... For me?

GATOR DAVIS

Thank the lord.

He tries to get up - Doc Ewing pushes him back, scolding...

DOC EWING

Stay put... Your leg's swelled up with infection, put weight on it, might explode--

SAM HOUSTON

Then you better stand back--

He struggles to get up, Gator helps prop him on the gunwale.

WIDE VIEW - THE DOCKS

PACKED with a RAUCOUS CROWD waving American & Texas flags and CHEERING WILDLY at the sight of the Texas hero - Low aside...

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Give me your hat.

DOC EWING
My hat? Why?

Houston snatches the Doc's HAT. He waves it at the crowd, who CHEER EVEN LOUDER - He THROWS THE HAT, and EVERYONE SCRAMBLES FOR THE SOUVENIR, PRETTY WOMEN SCREAM, swoon, feign fainting.

Houston turns with a grin at the slack-jawed Doc, then--
--COLLAPSES dead away into Gator's arms.

279 EXT. HACIENDA VALERO - DAY 279

Smoke billows from the chimney of the main house. Sentries walk the ramparts and horses mill around the corral.

ON A HILL OVERLOOKING the hacienda...

DEAF, ANDERSON, FLORES, JACK, BIG FOOT, and COLBY spy...

DEAF SMITH
(coughing)
Hell, I couldn't sneak up on a dead mule. I best stay here.

COLBY PIT
What if we storm the place from all sides at once... surprise 'em.

An obviously bad idea, Jack grabs a twig, draws in the dirt.

JACK HAYS
Here's somethin' that might work.

280 EXT. HACIENDA VALERO - ON THE WALLS - DAY 280

A lone SENTRY patrols the grounds.

JACK SILENTLY HAND SIGNALS--

--ANDERSON ARROWS the SENTRY, who falls, just as--FLORES SLICES the throat of the SECOND SENTRY.

281 EXT. PLAINS - NEAR HACIENDA VALERO - DAY 281

Portilla rides in with REINFORCEMENTS.

282 EXT. HACIENDA VALERO - DAY 282

--FLORES makes HOOT OWL SOUND to Jack, signaling all's clear--

--JACK crawls on the roof, throws a blanket over the chimney.

INTERCUT ACTION

--INSIDE HOUSE: SMOKE engulfs the rooms. An OLDER DRAGOON curses, throws open the windows. The other soldiers awaken, coughing. OLDER DRAGOON walks out the front to figure out what's wrong. Flores pegs him in the throat with a knife.

--DEAF sees DUST rise on the PLAINS. Grabs a telescope.

DEAF'S POV - Portilla and Dragoons! DEAF howls like a COYOTE.

--Groggy soldiers stagger out of the house, Anderson arrows them, Flores stabs them. Big Foot uses his rifle. BOOM!

--INSIDE HOUSE: A DRUNK DRAGOON, hears the shot. Holds a rag over his face, grabs a rifle, and sinks into a back room.

--OUTSIDE: Jack drops from the roof, pistol out...

--INSIDE HOUSE: Colby and Flores charge inside - They don't see ANOTHER DRAGOON come up behind them--

BOOM! Jack SHOOTS the bushwhacker. Flores grabs the traumatized Emily who manages a weak smile off...

MANUEL FLORES

You think I forgot about you?

--OUTSIDE: Big Foot rushes inside as Deaf brings the horses.

DEAF SMITH

Clear the house! Riders a'comin'!

--INSIDE HOUSE: The rooms fill with smoke.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Portilla's back! We gotta git!

Big Foot pulls a burning log from the fireplace and sets the house of fire. Jack and Flores help Emily up.

COLBY PIT

YAHOOOOO! We did it--

BOOM! Colby staggers back, off the others' looks of horror ...BLOOD oozing from Colby's chest - Big Foot BLASTS the shooter: The Drunk Dragoon from the back room...who falls.

Big Foot catches a shocked but still conscious Colby, as Flores and Jack take Emily - All exit coughing.

--OUTSIDE: Flores helps Emily onto his horse and Big Foot helps Colby onto his horse.

DEAF SMITH
Spur up! NOW!

--Portilla & REINFORCEMENTS close in on the Hacienda as--
Deaf assumes full command as the Rangers ride out.

283 EXT. NUECES RIVER - DAY 283

THE RANGERS charge through dense brush, SPLASH into the water where they leave no tracks--

SMOKE from the burning hacienda rising like Atlanta burning.

284 EXT. HACIENDA VALERO - DAY (MOMENTS LATER) 284

Portilla & men arrive as SMOKE envelopes them--

285 EXT. NUECES RIVER - FURTHER DOWN-RIVER - DAY 285

Clear of pursuit, the woozy Colby, slumped over his horse, DROPS his Daddy's pistol, which Houston had restored, in the mud.... No one notices. Deaf sees him wheezing.

DEAF SMITH
Kid needs water!

They stop - Anderson and Big Foot help Colby down.

Flores stays mounted, holding a barely conscious Emily. Jack hurries to the river to get water. Deaf cradles Colby in his arms. Not comprehending how this could happen to him...

COLBY PIT
I...wanted to do somethin' in this
life...y'know...somethin' good.

DEAF SMITH
Hell, boy, ya done better'n good.
You's the one captured Santa Anna
hissself.

COLBY PIT
Yeah...that made my Sis proud.

Colby's eyes GLAZE OVER IN DEATH.

286 EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - DAY

286

Deaf and the RANGERS ride into town. Colby's body lies stiff across Deaf's horse.

A NUMBER OF TOWNSPEOPLE have come out to the street to see the Rangers returning. Among them...

LANE, in a heavy apron, holding hot tongs and a hammer, steps out from a BLACKSMITH SHED, eight year old Moises beside him.

VERN, drunk, seeing the Rangers, ducks back in the shadows.

Guadalupe steps out on the porch to see what the commotion is about, sees DEAF and crying for joy runs down the street.

DEAF SMITH

Enough of your slobberin', woman.
Just need a place to die.

GUADALUPE SMITH

(see Colby's body)
Oh my... Poor child - His sister
helps out at Doc Ewing's place.

Flores eases a half-conscious Emily down - To Guadalupe...

MANUEL FLORES

This is Miss Emily West. Be
obliged if you could see your way
to care for her a spell.

SARAH EWING & REBECCA PIT step out from the clinic as Jack and Big Foot, with Colby across the saddle, take off their hats.

Seeing her brother, Rebecca goes pale - Jack rushes to hold onto her as Rebecca breaks down in HYSTERICAL TEARS.

287 EXT. VICTORIA SHACK - LATE DAY

287

Sitting on Guadalupe's porch, Anderson smokes his pipe while Flores casually plays a lightning version of mumbly peg with his knife, both somber, as Jack and Big Foot step outside.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Me 'n my partner was wonderin'...
whatta we gotta do to join up with
a rangerin' company?

Anderson blows smoke, gives Flores' look, who picks up on it.

BILLY ANDERSON
It's a pretty involved process--

MANUEL FLORES
Kind of a secret, actually.

JACK HAYS
An initiation, a swearing in, what?

BILLY ANDERSON
(bluffing)
All that.

MANUEL FLORES
A sacred ritual.

BILLY ANDERSON
Ya wanna ride with us, we're off to
meet Captain Karnes who's guardin'
Santa Anna hisself.

MANUEL FLORES
We'll see if ya got what it takes.

288 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DAY

288

PAULINE prays beside three FRESH GRAVES. Nate stands behind.

Pauline's eyes survey what's left of their homestead. Bits and pieces of the furniture and dishes lie about. One chair rests intact, tipped over at the head of the table. She picks it up and scoots it back but the legs SNAP in half.

She fights back a rush of emotion and picks up her DAUGHTER'S DOLL. Half the face burnt off. She brushes the doll's hair back.

Her HUSBAND'S COAT still hangs on the wall, untouched by the flames. She buries her face in the fabric and breaks down.

289 EXT. THE INVINCIBLE (SHIP), VELASCO, TEXAS - DAY

289

Under the protection of KARNES, GATOR, BEANS, KNOWLES & KIT - Santa Anna & Almonte walk up the gangplank. Aside to Kit:

BEANS WILKINS
Rape, pillage and murder thousands,
they give ya a parade and a boat
ride home.

SUPER: June 1, 1836; VELASCO, TEXAS

A RAUCOUS CROWD, civilians & soldiers gather around as Santa Anna, relaxed, confident, sips a swig from a new bottle of OPIUM, addresses his captors: the Rangers, Burnet and Rusk.

SANTA ANNA

Friends! I have seen how brave you are in battle, how generous you are in its aftermath. You may count upon my friendship forever and you will never regret having dispensed these considerations upon me.

Behind them, a group of New Orleans GREYS (mercenaries) in full uniform and fully armed PUSH THROUGH THE CROWD.

HENRY KARNES

That's a nice tidy end to a war.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

I'm goin' to Harrisburg and stick my pecker in a pay woman.

About to step off, they get JUMPED by the overwhelming force of ARMED NEW ORLEANS GREYS. Their commander GENERAL THOMAS J. GREEN (42) sticks a gun in Karnes face...as his men SWARM over the Rangers, beating them down in the surprise ambush.

GENERAL THOMAS GREEN

Hate to get rough with Texians, but we ain't lettin' nobody get between us and that murderin' bastard.

SEEING the MOB OF GREYS STORM TOWARD HIM, Santa Anna panics, SWIGS the entire bottle of OPIUM! The Greys tackle him. One jams his fingers down Santa Anna's throat, making him VOMIT.

HENRY KARNES

And WHO the hell are you?

Green directs as his men roughly bind Santa Anna in chains.

GENERAL THOMAS GREEN

Brigadier General Thomas Green - Me 'n my company just arrived awaiting orders from General Houston.

HENRY KARNES

Houston's the one that made peace with Santa Anna!

GENERAL THOMAS GREEN

Need to hear that from the General himself. Til then, we're holding onto this goddamn "El Presidente!"

Now in chains, hauled off by the Greys, Santa Anna and Almonte get hustled down the gangplank, forced to WAVE a TEXAS FLAG, as the MOB HOOTS & LAUGHS W/CATCALLS & EPITHETS!

As the beaten-up Rangers recover, pick themselves up...

GATOR DAVIS

Nothin' worse than a bunch'a crazy-ass late-comers with guns.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Forget the whore, I need doctorin'.

290 INT. MISSION CONCEPCION - DAY 290

Pauline dips her fingers in the holy water, crosses herself, then walks into what seems to be an empty sanctuary...startled to see...

--LORCA, sitting by the altar, in PRAYER.

Pauline slides into a pew in the back so as not to disturb the wild-looking man.

--Lorca locks eyes with Pauline, who stares back at him...two lost souls connecting for one brief moment--

291 INT. SALOON (VELASCO, TEXAS) - DAY 291

Fiddles whirls. Card games in progress. Bar crowded with soldiers, frontiersman, and rowdies as--

KARNES enters with GATOR, BEANS, KNOWLES, and ANDERSON - They plop coins on the bar, get handed a bottle of whiskey.

Karnes blows the dust out of his shot glass. Knowles wipes his clean with his shirttail. Anderson bites the cork off the bottle and starts to pour.

A gambler, TIMOTHY PERKINS, in a black hat regards Gator, flares, pulls back his coattail to unstrap his PISTOL.

He places the barrel of the PISTOL against Gator's head. At the COCK Gator calmly raises his hands.

TIMOTHY PERKINS

Samuel Hester Davis! I knew that was you, you cheatin' sum'bitch!

The fiddling stops, the noise dies instantly.

Karnes brings the situation to the Rangers' attention.
Karnes slips around the back.

TIMOTHY PERKINS (CONT'D)
Don't be doin' nuthin' fool--

The other Rangers advance. Anderson pulls out his TOMAHAWK.
Beans brandishes his KNIFE and Knowles lets his PISTOL dangle
in his brace.

The man's head slowly raises. A long SILVER BLADE rests
precariously on his neck.

HENRY KARNES
Lower that iron, mister, 'fore I
shave your throat for Saint Peter.

Relieved, Gator turns around and looks the man up and down.

GATOR DAVIS
Ain't heard nobody call me Samuel
in... Quincy, right? Out of
Nawleans?

The man runs his hand over his neck to make sure he isn't cut.

TIMOTHY PERKINS
Perkins. Timothy Perkins, Baton
Rouge Parish.

Gator removes his hat and scratches his head.

GATOR DAVIS
That's right. Baton Rouge. The
Perkins brothers. The horse.

TIMOTHY PERKINS
Horse ain't the problem. It's the
forged check you bought it with.

HENRY KARNES
Now, hold on there, mister--

GATOR DAVIS
Let 'im be, Henry. He's in the
right.

Gator adjusts his hat back on his head. He pulls out his sack
and smacks the money into his palm. Timothy counts the money
and scoffs-

TIMOTHY PERKINS
This don't near get it done.

Gator digs back into his pockets and pulls out a GOLD POCKET WATCH. He looks it over one last time, opening to look inside.

Perkins snatches it out of Gator's hands and winds it up, listens to it run. He opens the watch and notices an inscription.

TIMOTHY PERKINS (CONT'D)
Who's- Maybelline?

GATOR DAVIS
My mother.

PAN the Rangers' sad expressions watching Gator relinquish a prized family heirloom.

Perkins drops all of Gator's trinkets into his hat.

TIMOTHY PERKINS
I see maybe \$150 here. I'm owed \$300. Ain't nothin' to me if he swings. Work it out with the local law--

HENRY KARNES
We are the law--

TIMOTHY PERKINS
All's I see's a bunch of gun thugs. Ain't nuthin' changes jus' cuz you cross a river. That all you got, Davis?

Karnes steps up in front of Perkins. Digs into his pocket and pulls out a SILVER KNIFE to help out his friend, admitting...

HENRY KARNES
I gotta little loose with the surveys in a land scheme myself. I wuz runnin' up in Arkansas. I wuz young once, too...

As Karnes steps away Beans walks over and pulls out some COIN and A MEXICAN OFFICER'S MEDAL.

BEANS WILKINS
That big dapple geldin' I rode a while back belonged to a fella outta Missouri. I looked better sittin' on it than he did...

Anderson steps up. He removes his necklace with a GOLD RING attached to it. He rolls it in his fingers before tossing it in the hat.

Knowles spits on the ground, starring Perkins down.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
You ain't gettin' a goddamn thing
outa me.

Perkins shakes his hat, the trinkets CLACKING about.

TIMOTHY PERKINS
The matter's settled.

HENRY KARNES
You sure?
(off Perkins' nods)
That's good.

Perkins offers his hand, but Karnes SLUGS HIM, knocking him out cold.

Gator pours Perkins a glass, sets it by his head for when he wakes up, and pours himself one.

Knowles eyes the Rangers.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
And you sons of bitches have the
gall to ride me like a wet chicken?

Beans grabs the bottle and pours him another glass.

BEANS WILKINS
'Cuz you still ten pounds'a shit in
a five pound bag, Knowles.

GATOR DAVIS
Yeah, we ain't altar boys. 'Cause
Texas don't need 'em. It's what we
do NOW that counts. 'N I know for a
fact I can count on every last one
of you miscreants. 'Cept Knowles of
course.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES
Goddamn. Can't get no slack.

Karnes lets out a long LAUGH. The scratchy FIDDLE starts up again. Card games resume.

292 INT. SANTA ANNA'S PRISON CELL - VELASCO, TEXAS - NIGHT 292

Santa Anna lies listless on a wood plank, staring blankly at the ceiling. Almonte shares his cell.

A GUN BARREL protrudes through the outside window. BOOM!

Almonte jumps at the ricochet... Santa Anna does not flinch. LAUGHTER & CAT-CALLS from outside, as sentries run off the drunk Texans. A PRIEST approaches with his head bowed.

SANTA ANNA

Save your sermons, Father--

PRIEST (PORTILLA)

Your Excellency! We must speak!

Santa Anna recognizes Colonel Portilla, outside the bars.

PORTILLA

I have failed you, Excellency.
Miss West escaped...

ALMONTE

Urrea and Filisola?

PORTILLA

South of the Rio Bravo, sir - They backed down after receiving your orders.

SANTA ANNA

Idiots! I chose my words precisely - Any fool would know I was under duress and wanted them to attack!

PORTILLA

I have only a company of Dragoons at my disposal. But give me the word, sir, and I will charge this jail even if it costs me my life.

As TEXAS SENTRIES pass, Portilla crosses himself, bows, acts as if saying a prayer for the prisoners. After they go...

SANTA ANNA

No. That would be foolhardy.
(eyes spark, a thought)
Go to the Comanche. Tell them the land west of the Colorado will forever be theirs if they free me.
Make haste.

293 INT. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE - DAY

293

AT THE DOOR, a COURIER, covered in dust and grime from the trail, hands a NOTE (the one we saw Sam Houston pen at San Jacinto) to President Jackson's AIDE. The aide crosses to Jackson's desk, and presents the dispatch. JACKSON reads, his face blossoming from a smile to ecstasy.

ANDREW JACKSON

That's Houston's handwriting, I'd know it anywhere! Fetch me a map of Texas! Be quick!

AIDES hustle to find the right map out of many, unfurl it on Jackson's desk. Jackson runs his fingers across it.

C.U. Of MAP--The ALAMO, GOLIAD, movements of Santa Anna's three-pronged assault across Texas, Houston's retreat, and also the shifting positions of US Troops in and out of EAST TEXAS. We KNOW Jackson's been watching Texas closely.

ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)

Where's San Jacinto!
(looking, pointing)
It must be here! No, here! We've got him!

CHIEF OF STAFF

Sir, caution. The international treaties.

ANDREW JACKSON

Goddamn the treaties, sir! Texas fell by conquest of her own citizens. What's a goddamn diplomat got to say about that? Get my cabinet in my house!

ON THE MAP-- as Jackson's finger finally locates SAN JACINTO. Then traces a clear path the pacific ocean.

ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)

I knew he'd do it! From sea to shining SEA!

294 INT. VIEUX CARRE (FRENCH QUARTER) NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

294

The elegant BARONESS MICAELA PONTALBA (40s) hosts a BALL in Houston's honor. His splinted leg wrapped in purple velvet, he wears a uniform customized w/garish colors. Drunk, he holds court, quoting Shakespeare, as New Orleans society pay tribute.

SAM HOUSTON

You are called plain Kate, and
bonny Kate and sometimes Kate the
curst; But Kate, the prettiest Kate
in Christendom...my super-dainty
Kate, for dainties are all Kates...

Surrounded by LOVELY YOUNG LADIES, he gulps his drink, sees a
Creole Beauty cross to him, gets lost for a moment - By rote:

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

I love her ten times more than e'er
before, my fair and virtuous Emily--

YOUNG LADY

(giggles)
You mean "Kate!"

SAM HOUSTON

Indeed, I do... Good Kate, come
and kiss me, Kate--

Focused on the Creole Beauty, he pulls her to him for a kiss.
CHEERS, APPLAUSE, CLINKING OF GLASSES, ladies all over him.

BARONESS PONTALBA

To the Hero of San Jacinto, our
gallant General Sam Houston,
liberator of Texas!

Houston smiles, acknowledges the toast, returns to carousing.

295 EXT. COMANCHERIA (TEXAS HILL COUNTRY) - DAY

295

Portilla sits on a wagon when BUFFALO HUMP rides up. His
WARRIORS, including YELLOW KNIFE and PIAKINI, remain mounted
and armed, glaring into the faces of Portilla's escort and
Comanchero traders. In SPANISH...

BUFFALO HUMP

*You speak in the name of the
Mexican Father? Though the Tejanos
hold him in chains?*

PORTILLA

*The Mexican Father hates the
Tejanos--as do the Comanche. Help
us free him.*

Portilla rips the blankets off the burros--revealing new
rifles, knives, powder, lead, hundreds of STEEL arrow tips.

PORTILLA (CONT'D)
*In return, by a new treaty with
 Mexico, this land will forever be
 Comancheria.*

He reveals casks of whiskey - Buffalo Hump smiles, and they drink together, to the WHOOPS of the warriors.

296 EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - DAY

296

The town's more active now - New settlers line up outside Buckley's land office. People working and trading.

LORCA rides in - The WHISPERS start, "It's HIM! LORCA! The demon Mexican-Killer!" Women hustle children safely away. Back from New Orleans, Doc Ewing, Rebecca, and Sarah peek out the clinic windows. Clarence and townsmen grab weapons.

Lorca takes notice of LANE who's now blacksmithing. Moises comes out of the shop, and Lane pushes him behind his body, protecting the boy as he stares Lorca down.

Buckley steps out to meet Lorca, who stops in front of him.

LORCA
 Seen a widow woman in church. Lost her family to the Comanche. Know her?

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 Mrs. Pauline Wykoff, most likely.

LORCA
 Where might she be?

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 What business do you have with her?

LORCA
 What business is that of yours?

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 Don't want no trouble here.

LORCA
 Then we want the same thing.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 Follow that road yonder. Seven miles out. Mind what I told you.

Lorca flicks the reins on his horse.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY (CONT'D)
I know who you are.

LORCA
Then you know to leave me be.

297 EXT. OROZIMBO RANCH, TEXAS - DAY

297

Santa Anna and Almonte, even more ragged than before, are chained to a large TREE. Flies & mosquitos buzz around them.

SUPER: July 21, 1836 - OROZIMBO RANCH, TEXAS

The cloudy skies open up, POURING RAIN on the prisoners.

SANTA ANNA
Is there any way you can swat this mosquito off my nose?

ALMONTE
I'm sorry, Sir. It's not possible.

SANTA ANNA
Let him drink his fill of blood, then. He can have it all.

ALMONTE
Forbear, Your Excellency. Portilla will come to save us.

SANTA ANNA
If I owned both Hell and Texas... I would rent Texas and live in Hell.

298 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DAY

298

Newly re-built cabin, a small garden close by. Pauline, Nate and Emily hoe weeds. Guadalupe hangs laundry. Pedro plays.

Emerging from the woods that surround the Wykoff land, silhouetted by the sunrise glare rides LORCA.

Seeing the rider, Pauline hurries to the house, comes back out with her shotgun. Emily herds Pedro inside, returns with a cocked pistol. Guadalupe appears, dries her hands on a rag, then picks up Deaf's rifle as--

Lorca rides up to the porch. Pauline slowly comes to recognize him as the stranger at the church.

GUADALUPE SMITH
What brings you here, Mister?

LORCA
I am corrupted by war. Unrecognizable
to myself, an ugly man--

EMILY WEST
(over)
She asked you a question.

LORCA
(to Pauline)
I feel a kinship with you.

PAULINE WYKOFF
You sayin' I'm ugly, mister?

LORCA
Madam, you are most beautiful.

PAULINE WYKOFF
(raises her shotgun)
Now I know you're lyin'.

LORCA
In your suffering, I see love. In
mine, hatred. Your pain draws
light into the world. My pain
repels it.

PAULINE WYKOFF
Pretty words. You ain't come
callin', have you? 'Cause I ain't
ready for that--

LORCA
Madam, I have nothing to offer
other than my own dismay--and a
history beyond redemption. But it
would allow me some solace if you
accept this--

He drops a leather POUCH from his saddle bag at her feet with
a CLANG - GOLD and SILVER! Stunned, but after a beat, wary--

EMILY WEST
Where'd you get that, Mister?

LORCA
What matters now is that it can't
be returned, I can't touch it, and
it must be used for good. Hence,
it's yours, to lighten your burden.

He rides off, doesn't look back.

Pauline looks at Emily and Guadalupe, who shrug - Her call.

PAULINE WYKOFF
What's your name?

Lorca pauses, unsure of how to respond... tentative.

LORCA
Tom...Tom Paxton.

He clucks his tongue to continue on, stopped by...

PAULINE WYKOFF
Well, Mr. Tom Paxton... Got a pot
of ham and beans on the coals.

GUADALUPE SMITH
But first you must clean up proper.
(to Nate)
Go fetch the shears.

299 INT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DAY (LATER)

299

Nate pours water into a TUB. Guadalupe holds SHEARS - Emily grips a STRAIGHT RAZOR. Pauline brings her husband's clothes. orca, looking lost, stands motionless, poleaxed.

GUADALUPE SMITH
Mister, you don't have nothing we
all haven't seen before. Now strip
those filthy rags and get in this
tub!

It's clear, Lorca has no choice...

300 INT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DINNER TABLE - NIGHT

300

LORCA, clean-cut, shaved and unrecognizable, has been transformed into... Tom Paxton.

LORCA
Much obliged, Mrs. Wykoff...
ladies. Mighty fine supper.

PAULINE WYKOFF
It's too late to travel, Mr.
Paxton. You can sleep in the barn.

A GUN gets shoved into Lorca's temple -

DEAF SMITH
I know you.

DEAF, frail, sickly, determined to protect his family.

GUADALUPE SMITH
Deaf! He's our guest.

PAULINE WYKOFF
We don't treat people like that in
this house...

DEAF SMITH
(stifles a cough)
He ain't people. I know who you
are.

The strain's too much for Deaf, whose eyes roll back as he starts to crumple - Lorca catches him, who carries the passed-out Deaf back to his bed. Humbly, to Pauline...

LORCA
He's not wrong. Grateful for all
you done--

He starts for the door. Pauline steps in front of him.

PAULINE WYKOFF
Whatever happened in the war don't
matter. We're all startin' over.

Lorca pauses, holds her look.

301 INT. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE - DAY

301

START ON the DRUMMING of Jackson's fingers on his desk--

PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON
I can't fault the man for a little
celebration. I was known to take a
nip or two in my halcyon days.

GENERAL GAINES' AIDE
General Houston's gone well beyond
a nip or two, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON
How would you characterize the
nature of his revelry?

GENERAL GAINES' AIDE
More like a bender, Sir. A
debauched, whore-strewn, gin-soaked
bender.

President Jackson pounds his FIST on his desk.

PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON
Lucifer with a lollypop!

GENERAL GAINES' AIDE
Well, he is being feted, Mr.
President. He's quite a celebrity.

PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON
Feted, sir! One can be feted and
attend to the business of state.
(consternation)
I've got Texas. My hands are
clean. I've avoided diplomatic
entanglements. Broken no treaties.
Everything I've hoped for is now
within my reach, and Houston leaves
it all flopping like a crappie in
the bottom of a johnboat while he
stares at the bottom of a bottle
with his hand up some floozie's
skirt!

He grabs a piece of paper, snatches his QUILL.

PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)
It's a woman, sir. With Houston,
it's always a woman. For the life
of me, they take him so very low.

He plunges the quill in the INK WELL, and hastily scribbles a
NOTE.

PRESIDENT ANDREW JACKSON (CONT'D)
Get this to General Gaines. He is
to impress two of Houston's closest
commanders--trusted friends--to go
to New Orleans, sober him up, and
fetch his arse back to Texas post
haste. In CHAINS, if that's what
it takes! By God, he will return!

He hands the aide his note, and the aide starts for the door.

GENERAL GAINES' AIDE
Of course, that is the suggestion
of his friends in the United
States. We are not involved in the
Texas Revolution.

ANDREW JACKSON
By no means whatsoever...

Off the President's withering stare.

302 INT. PAGODA ROOM, KENWORTH WHOREHOUSE - DAY

302

O.S. KNOCKS...to no response. Then...

JUAN SEQUIN (O.S.)
General? General Houston?

The door opens, and Juan Sequin pokes his head in, followed by the peering heads of THOMAS RUSK and GEORGE HOCKLEY...

JUAN SEQUIN
General...?

The SOUND of a distant O.C. piano playing 'The Deguello' through the walls...and a faint SNORING. Sequin's eyes rest on a foot and ankle, covered by blue silk pajamas, projecting from beneath the four-poster bed.

SAM HOUSTON (O.C.)
Extract me, if you'll be so kind.

Sequin stoops, takes hold of the ankle and slowly pulls Houston from beneath the bed, still somewhat inebriated.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
Every shoe-less shepherd, every
farm boy dreaming on a haystack,
every clerk with slicked-back hair
finds love...but not me.

GEORGE HOCKLEY
If it's love you're after this is
hardly the place to find it.

SAM HOUSTON
What I find here is consolation--
(peering under bed)
I left a bottle of whiskey under
there. Can you fetch it for me?

He pushes himself onto his knees. Sequin reaches under the bed and, by the ankle, pulls a lingerie-clad, heavily-made-up GIRL, who clutches a BOTTLE of whiskey to her chest.

JUAN SEQUIN
Tell Misses Kenworth to send up
some breakfast for General Houston -
and take that damn bottle with you.

THOMAS RUSK
Good morning, Sam--

The girl exits. Houston VOMITS into a bowl. Rusk grimaces.

THOMAS RUSK (CONT'D)

Now that you're in the recreational phase of your recovery, perhaps you'll attend to the business of Texas.

SAM HOUSTON

Surgeons removed twenty pieces of bone from my ankle in the business of Texas. The battle is won.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

General, your enemies conspire against you as we speak--

303 INT. PRESIDENT BURNET'S OFFICE, COLUMBIA, TEXAS - DAY 303

Burnet confers with LAMAR, SHERMAN, BAKER and a few others.

MIRABEAU LAMAR

Sir, the Mexicans failed to kill him. Houston's returned just in time for elections.

PRESIDENT BURNET

Damnit. The man retreats to "victory," transmogrifies himself by grog-house gaggle into a hero that'll sweep that villain's blackened arse into this office.

MOSELY BAKER

That's Jackson's doing. He and "Big Drunk" will single-handedly dash our dreams of an independent Texas Republic, sure as I swallow spit.

MIRABEAU LAMAR

He's always planned to suck us up into the States.

SIDNEY SHERMAN

Sir, as the President that liberated Texas, you remain in the catbird's seat. Outflank Houston--

PRESIDENT BURNET

Tell that to Santa Anna.

RESUME: PAGODA ROOM, KENWORTH WHOREHOUSE (INTERCUTTING)

GEORGE HOCKLEY
 The New Orleans Greys abducted
 Santa Anna and now plan to invade
 Mexico!

THOMAS RUSK
 Burnet doesn't foresee the
 ramifications--

SAM HOUSTON
 (still bleary, BELCHES)
 Burnet's as sharp as mashed taters.

JUAN SEQUIN
 Will President Jackson come to our
 aid?

SAM HOUSTON
 He will not. He can't admit
 another slave state into the Union,
 and recognizing our independence
 would risk civil war at home, and
 war with Mexico's allies abroad.

Slowly pulling himself together, Houston finds water to rinse
 out his mouth, spits in a spittoon, looks for clean clothes.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
 Gentlemen, Texas must go it alone.
 And that course, my friends, is the
 province of politicians. I am
 merely the military commander.

RESUME: BURNET'S OFFICE IN COLUMBIA

Burnet crumples THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION newspaper--

PRESIDENT BURNET
 We'll publicize the fact that Big
 Drunk abandoned his post with a
 wound that does not prevent him
 from boozing and whoring--while
 Texas wallows in hunger and chaos--

SIDNEY SHERMAN
 And expose his unholy affinity for
 savages.

The slandering grows to an enthusiastic frenzy - A harried
 SECRETARY (20s) has a hard time keeping up with the notes.

MOSLEY BAKER
 He speaks that heathen Cherokee
 better than our own English--

SIDNEY SHERMAN
 --Spends like a Spanish duke.
 Dresses like a French Quarter pimp--

MOSLEY BAKER
 Sullied the reputations of
 countless women...ABANDONED two
 wives!

MIRABEAU LAMAR
 And cavorts with darkies! If the
 people truly knew him as we do--

PRESIDENT BURNET
 A lot of 'em do...but don't care.
 (frustrated, POUNDS desk)
 The more men of reason and
 integrity loathe Sam Houston, the
 more our drunken populace LOVES
 him.

RESUME: PAGODA ROOM, KENWORTH WHOREHOUSE

THOMAS RUSK
 Sam, listen to reason. Texas is in
 a state of chaos!

GEORGE HOCKLEY
 You're the only man who can fix
 this, General... We lose everything
 we fought for if you won't.

SAM HOUSTON
 I have already lost everything.
 Not a word from any of you about
 the fate of Miss West?

They don't have an answer for this. Sequin leans forward--

JUAN SEQUIN
 General...you won Texas. Come home
 and take control of her before it's
 too late.

Off Houston's tormented expression...

304 EXT. OROZIMBO RANCH, TEXAS - DAY

304

SAM HOUSTON rides onto the ranch where Santa Anna and Almonte
 are still chained to the tree, guarded by NEW ORLEANS GREYS.
 With Houston, rides RUSK, SEQUIN, and HOCKLEY.

Waiting in a group, KARNES, BEANS, GATOR, ANDERSON, FLORES, KNOWLES, JACK and BIG FOOT all leap to their feet - Throw their hats in the air to welcome their resurrected General.

HENRY KARNES
HALLELUJAH! Welcome back, General!

Regarding Santa Anna's condition, dirty, unshaven, in rags and covered in bug bites, Houston shakes his head.

SAM HOUSTON
Celebrations can wait. I want those men released.

NEW ORLEANS GREY
Followed General Greene's direction under President Burnet's order, sir.

SAM HOUSTON
(to Rusk)
Burnet should stick his head up his ass and wait for the blowback - It might clear the fog in his thinking.

THOMAS RUSK
Your Commander-In-Chief, General Houston gave you an order, soldier!

The soldiers quickly unshackle Santa Anna and Almonte.

SAM HOUSTON
Please accept my sincerest apologies, El Presidente. You will have the run of this home.

THOMAS RUSK
Prepare a warm bath, new clothes, fresh meals.

SAM HOUSTON
And whatever medical care his Excellency requires in preparation for your journey.

SANTA ANNA
Journey, General? I prefer a swift execution.

SAM HOUSTON
I have arranged an invitation for you to visit Washington.

SANTA ANNA

Washington?
 (brightening)
 Andrew Jackson.
 (wheels turning, he
 finally offers his hand
 to Houston)
 You are truly a man of your word.

SAM HOUSTON

I've never faced a more powerful,
 dangerous adversary.

The two men graciously measure each other with mutual admiration, before Santa Anna looks down the road EAST from which Houston has come and now Santa Anna will go.

SANTA ANNA

Let's just see where the road takes
 us, shall we?
 (to Almonte)
 Come, Almonte.

As they move off towards the house, Houston turns to Karnes.

SAM HOUSTON

You and your rangin' company
 deliver him to General Gaines at
 the border. I'll meet you in
 Victoria after I confer with
 Burnet.

Jack walks up to offer his hand to Houston.

JACK HAYS

I'm John Coffee Hays, General
 Houston. Late of Tennessee. This
 is my associate, Big Foot Wallace.

SAM HOUSTON

Knew your father well. My deepest
 sympathies for his untimely loss.

MANUEL FLORES

They helped us rescue Miss West.

SAM HOUSTON

You...found her?
 (reacts)
 She's alive?

305 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - LATE DAY

305

Pauline rocks on the porch. Emily hands her lemonade. Sits beside her. Inside, Deaf COUGHS, O.C. Guadalupe comforts.

EMILY WEST

Another long hard day...another man dyin'...and another woman tryin' to make the best'a things 'n carry on.

Pauline turns to her with a bittersweet smile...

PAULINE WYKOFF

I followed my husband to my children's graves.

EMILY WEST

I followed my brother to his.

A silent moment - Pauline catches herself, strong again...

PAULINE WYKOFF

Tears won't bring them crops in -

EMILY WEST

I appreciate all your help. I don't wanna be no burden...

PAULINE WYKOFF

Good lord, you a burden?

EMILY WEST

My past. People talk...

PAULINE WYKOFF

Let 'em. Forget the old ways and petty judgements. This is new a country.

She reacts to see...

Empresario Buckley rides in with Clarence and his slaves/thugs. Pauline stands, waits with her arms crossed. Emily stands beside her. Nate comes in from the field.

BUCKLEY looks upon Pauline's improvements, and then spits tobacco juice on the dirt--

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY

Mrs. Wykoff. I have business with you today.

PAULINE WYKOFF

And I with you.

She retrieves Lorca's pouch and hands the coins to Buckley.

PAULINE WYKOFF (CONT'D)
 Payment in full, I'll have that
 deed.

Buckley's covetous gaze sweeps across the bounty of her
 homestead--lets the COINS fall from his palm into the dirt
 and holds up a document.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 10% was due August 1st. This is
 September. I have foreclosed.

PAULINE
 (takes the document)
 We planted late 'cause of the war!
 Just like everybody else!

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 War has no bearing on the terms.
 By law, you must vacate.
 Immediately.

PAULINE WYKOFF
 I've got a sick Ranger in that
 house. A young boy. Refugee women--

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 You should have thought of that
 before you insulted me in my place
 of business. Your land is forfeit,
 as well as the collateral with it.

Clarence and his thugs surround them. Nate steps between the
 slaves and Pauline, fists clenched--

PAULINE WYKOFF
Collateral. What collateral?

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
 Your nigger. Recollect your
 husband had no cash to put down.

PAULINE
 You can't have Nate.
 (confused, thinking fast)
 He's free! I done freed him.

No one is more surprised by the news than Nate himself.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
 Weren't the case when your husband
 assigned him to me.

A furious Guadalupe stomps up to Buckley...

GUADALUPE SMITH
My husband, Deaf Smith... Captain
of Houston's Rangers will--

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
Your husband's a lunger... a
goner... he ain't gonna do shit.

Buckley nods to his slaves, who climb out of the wagon with their clubs and ADVANCE toward Pauline. Buckley chuckles as Clarence uncoils his whip and CRACKS it above her head.

EMILY WEST
How about me, Mister?

PAULINE WYKOFF
(takes Emily's arm)
No! I won't....can't...let you--

Emily doesn't move, her forthright glare locked on Buckley.

EMILY WEST
It's all right, Mrs. Wykoff. I've
put up with worse than him.
(to Buckley)
How about it, Mister? Take me and
the money and let this go?

Buckley looks her up and down, and GRINS.

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
Two years indentured service. With
a contract. All legal-like.

He gathers the money. Emily pulls away, walks to the wagon.

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY (CONT'D)
I am constantly amazed by the
depths of the human heart. You will
have your deed. Good day.

Buckley flips the reins, the wagon w/Emily aboard rolls forward.

PAULINE WYKOFF
Don't sign nuthin', Emily! You
hear? We'll find another way!

306 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - NIGHT 306

LORCA rides in, two field-dressed deer across his saddle, a few ducks hang from his saddle...reacts as Nate rushes out.

307 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD, BARN - NIGHT 307

LORCA quietly collects his WAR CHEST as a howling WIND kicks up. Laying out his weapons, Lorca checks them, runs his finger over the edge of his sword with a maniacal stare - The WIND wailing ominously...a hand falls on Lorca's shoulder.

Lorca looks up, sees PAULINE standing in her NIGHTGOWN, the outline of her female form against the light of a BONFIRE by the barn renders an angelic grace. He sheaths his sword...

LORCA

When my boy and his family were murdered, I answered with a storm of fire and blood. I became DEATH... Buckley deserves killin' like few other men.

PAULINE WYKOFF

Romans 12:19..."Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written-

LORCA

Vengeance is *mine*, saith the Lord.

PAULINE WYKOFF

We'll find another way to save Emily.

LORCA

Have you any idea of what a man must endure who leads such a life? No, you cannot. No one can unless he lives it for himself.

He struggles with a decision - Looks into Pauline's eyes...and tosses his weapons into the fire.

LORCA (CONT'D)

I'll pay for my sins - But until Judgement Day, I won't harm another living soul. I will stay close to Miss Emily, for what little that's worth...

Lorca mounts up, pulls his duster up over his ears, and rides out into the stiff WIND.

Out of the shadows, a simple, innocent Nate, distraught, steps into the firelight.

NATE

Miss Pauline...have I done ya wrong?

PAULINE WYKOFF

Goodness, gracious, NO...

NATE

Then why you free me? Where I gonna go?

(unsettled/agitated)

I ain't needin' to be free.

PAULINE WYKOFF

I understand. You're my slave, but it's our secret. You stay with me, like we've always done.

NATE

(relieved)

Yes'm.

308

EXT. EAST TEXAS ROAD - DAY

308

AN OMINOUS WIND SWEEPS THROUGH THE TREES as Karnes leads Santa Anna's carriage through the piney woods.

UP AHEAD - BEHIND A THICKET - Buffalo Hump motions to his warriors, including PIAKINI and YELLOW KNIFE. Portilla and his soldiers ride alongside... all UNSEEN by the Rangers.

The RANGERS, Karnes, Anderson, Beans, Gator, Flores, Knowles and Jack & Big Foot, enter the thicket and ride into shadowed DARKNESS. A quiet so eerie it spooks ANDERSON's horse.

BEANS WILKINS

Been thinking it's high time to find me a woman.

BILLY ANDERSON

How old are ya?

BEANS WILKINS

Twenty-two this year, practically an old man...

BILLY ANDERSON

A man don't have thoughts about women till he's twenty-five, a'fore then all he's got is feelings.

Beans laughs with the other Rangers.

--WHOOSH...SMACK! An arrow strikes Beans in the chest. He tugs at the arrow, tumbles, dead when he hits the ground--

--HUGE TREES CRASH in front and behind the CARRIAGE. The Rangers are TRAPPED--

They dismount, take cover. Arrows fly all around them. Flashes of INDIAN WARRIORS. Rangers aim, don't get a target.

PIAKINI flies out of the brush at Anderson - TOMAHAWK swinging. KARNES and the others look on, HELPLESS as--

--AN ARROW KNOCKS PIAKINI DEAD off his horse.

--out steps YELLOW KNIFE, who runs to his father(Anderson).

--GATOR, seeing Yellow Knife charging Anderson, takes aim. Anderson jumps out to shield his son Yellow Knife.

BILLY ANDERSON (CONT'D)
NOOOOO!!!!

--Gator fires! Yellow Knife falls. In shock, Anderson holds his dying son. The Rangers are stunned but still in a fight.

Portilla gallops in from the rear with his squad. SANTA ANNA sees him, emerges from the carriage, and takes command.

SANTA ANNA
STOP THIS! CEASE FIRE!

Buffalo Hump looks at Portilla, who signals him to stand down. Fuming, Buffalo Hump pulls back his warriors.

PORTILLA
It's your rescue, Your Excellency.
As ordered.

SANTA ANNA
Rescue? I am no longer in need of
any rescue.

PORTILLA
But, sir, I--

SANTA ANNA
--I'm going to the White House.
You have erred, tragically.

Buffalo Hump gallops in to claim PIAKINI's body, glares at Anderson, and spits on Yellow Knife's body.

The Comanches race off in disgust. Santa Anna approaches the Rangers. Karnes and Big Foot carry Beans' body...

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

There is little I can say about the actions of misguided men. I am sorry for your tragic loss.

GATOR, shaken, kneels by Anderson who cradles his son's body.

GATOR DAVIS

Couldn't see who he was, Billy.
All that commotion...

Anderson holds up his hand. Enough. He hugs Yellow Knife's body in his arms, and carries him off into the forest.

BILLY ANDERSON

Goddamn Texas--

After he's gone, the Rangers react to...

the most ferocious WAILING AND CHANTING (O.S.) as Anderson mourns his dead son in the dark of the woods.

309

EXT. WOODS - NEAR EAST TEXAS ROAD - DAY

309

Standing over a FRESH GRAVE, Karnes' holds a Bible. Knowles, Gator and Flores, bare-headed, tamp down the fresh dirt.

Jack and Big Foot put the finishing touches on a CROSS, Big Foot starting to carve a "B" (for "BEANS") - Jack stops him.

JACK HAYS

What was Beans' real name?

ON THE RANGERS' blank expressions - Gator offers...

GATOR DAVIS

Lloyd? Leonard?

MANUEL FLORES

Heard somebody say it once, ugh...?

HENRY KARNES

It was somethin' like George...
Josiah...or...Jeremiah...?

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

(goofing)

Maurice? Archibald? Benedict?
Percy?

(off their looks)

(MORE)

EPHRAIM KNOWLES (CONT'D)

Must be somethin' prissy, else why
wouldn't he use it?

BIG FOOT WALLACE

A man needs his Christian name on
his grave marker.

Silence. Nobody has any more ideas. Until...

GATOR DAVIS

He was always Beans to me.

The others murmur agreement. Jack looks back at Big Foot,
who shrugs - Then continues to carve out "B-E-A-N-S..."

310 EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - DAY

310

ABOVE THEM A BANNER READS: "ELECTION DAY IS COMING"--

FIDDLES STIR TO WHIRL AS people line up to sample dishes laid
out on a table--fried chicken and other southern specialties.

MEN swap stories, smoke pipes and handrolls, swig a little
out of the jug. Among them VERN, already drinking hard, who
seems a bit out of place. Lots of NEW ANGLO faces, settlers
pouring in, mingle - Doc Ewing, Sarah, Rebecca among crowd.

EMILY carries out food, cleans off a table. Folks in the
crowd, whisper, gossip. Buckley watches her sweat.

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY

Such a waste you won't lie on your
back rather than break it.

(Emily glares at him)

It's not like spreadin' your legs
is a trade unknown to you.

(to Clarence)

Don't you touch her with that whip.
Not one scar. She'll break soon
enough. Men'll line up out the
door to bed the mistress of Santa
Anna.

LORCA stares at Emily's toils, takes off his hat to Buckley.

LORCA

Lookin' for work - I can keep
books, once worked as a clerk--

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY

I need help with these big doin's
today.

(MORE)

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY (CONT'D)
 S'pose I can try you out tendin'
 bar. Short me so much as a nickel
 I'll hack off your hand.

Not recognizing Lorca, Buckley tosses him a soiled apron.
 Lorca ties it on, goes to assist Emily. Buckley SHOVES him.

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY (CONT'D)
 You do not, at any time, lighten
 her burden! Understood?...
 (studies Lorca)
 You look familiar. I know you?

After a conflicted beat...

LORCA
 Don't recollect. Name's Tom Paxton.

VERN, drunk, licks his palm, smooths his hair--

--slides next to Sarah with two spiked cups. Sarah, looks
 for her father, busy talking, gulps the drink. Vern grins.

NEWCOMERS in the crowd (white settlers), point to Emily - One
 says something that produces contemptuous LAUGHTER.

Taking a break in her work, Emily, hungry, steps up to the
 table, reaches for a plate - A HAND slides it away.

WOMAN WITH PLATE
 Washerwoman or not, we won't abide
 Santa Anna's whore in this town.

DOWN THE LINE - WOMEN SERVERS sneer, cover their dishes.

ANGLE - HOUSTON, KARNES, ANDERSON, FLORES, GATOR, KNOWLES,
 KIT, JACK AND BIG FOOT ride into town. As they dismount,
 Rebecca, squealing in delight, races to Kit and JUMPS into
 his arms. He twirls her about as the CROWD GOES WILD for
 Houston, who takes off his hat, waves it across the banner.

SAM HOUSTON
 God bless you all! God bless
 Texas!

As others reunion with Houston and the Rangers, a drunk Vern
 greets his old friend Kit, clutched closely with Rebecca.

KIT ACKLIN
 Rebecca, this here man saved my life!
 Thought you'd be in Paris by now.

VERN ELWOOD

Catchin' me a freighter next month.
Just sayin' my bon voyages--

He drapes his arm around Sarah, pulls her on the dance floor.

KIT ACKLIN

Careful ya don't piss off the Doc!

HOUSTON - Surrounded by admirers, across the way he sees--

EMILY, disheveled, washes dirty dishes in a tub. She catches Houston looking at her and turns away, ashamed, runs off into an alley. Houston pushes through the crowd, runs after her.

ANGLE - NEAR DOC'S OFFICE - REBECCA piles one last crate of her clothes in the WAGON. A beaming GAVIN takes her into his arms.

GAVIN

Can't turn our backs soon enough on
Texas. Just grab a few more
supplies and then we'll vamoose.

He kisses her and disappears around the corer.

KIT ACKLIN (O.S.)

Rebecca!

She wheels around to see--

KIT--hurries toward her in a panic, digs into a pocket--

KIT ACKLIN (CONT'D)

Guess it's now or never-- Got this
medal off a dead Meskin tried ta
gut me - Filed it down to this:

He shows her a perfect GOLD RING made from the medal.

REBECCA PIT

Kit, I- I was hopin' I wouldn't run
into you.

She refuses the ring, turns and tries to walk away. He grabs her arm and spins her back around.

REBECCA PIT (CONT'D)

What am I 'sposed to do, Kit?

KIT ACKLIN

Stay here with me! Like we talked
about--

She shakes free from his grip.

REBECCA PIT
If my word's good for anythin' I
gotta get on this wagon.

KIT ACKLIN
The hell you do! We belong
together.

REBECCA PIT
I don't see how--

He places his hands on her waist and pulls her close.

KIT ACKLIN
When I come to after San Jacinto,
it was your face I seen first. Then
I knew...I love you, Rebecca. And I
know you love me.

REBECCA PIT
Please, you have to let me-

KIT ACKLIN
Well, I ain't gonna. I'm sorry for
that fella. I am. But there ain't
no denyin' that you an' I were
meant to be together.

He reaches for her. Rebecca pulls back. She finally gives.
Wraps her arms around him, tears welling.

REBECCA PIT
Oh, Kit. What are we gonna do?

KIT ACKLIN
We're gonna tell 'im! Right here
and now. The rest we'll have to
figure out...

Then, her eyes grow wide and she pulls away quick. Kit turns
to see--

GAVIN--at the front of the wagon. He's pissed.

REBECCA PIT
Gavin, I-

Kit CLEARS his throat and steps up.

KIT ACKLIN
With all due respect, mister, I
love this woman. She loves me.
(MORE)

KIT ACKLIN (CONT'D)

I'll take a hell of a beatin'.
Won't lift my hand. But she ain't
gettin' on this wagon

Kit and Gavin both look at Rebecca. The weight of the
situation keeps her silent.

REBECCA PIT

Didn't mean for this to happen.
I'm sorry.

GAVIN

You love him?

REBECCA PIT

I do. With all my heart.

GAVIN

No point in takin' up with a girl
whose heart belongs to another.

The two lovers look up, eyes full of surprise. Rebecca rushes
over and hugs Gavin.

REBECCA PIT

Thank you, Gavin. I never meant to
hurt you.

GAVIN

I'd be lyin' if I said you didn't.
(to Kit)
Promised her father that I'd take
good care of her. I'm requirin' the
same of you. If'n you don't I'll
come back to Texas and settle with
you.

She kisses him one last time on the cheek, then rushes to
Kit, leaps into his arms. He lifts her up.

REBECCA PIT

Gimme that damn ring.

311 EXT. BEHIND BUCKLEY'S SALOON - DAY

311

Houston comes out to find Emily in tears.

SAM HOUSTON

Emily? My love...

EMILY WEST

Sam, no, you can't be seen with me--

Houston pulls her into his arms, kisses her. Then...

SAM HOUSTON
What have they done to you?

312 INT. BUCKLEY'S LAND OFFICE - DAY 312

Buckley bent over his desk, sorts CASH. The DOOR KICKS open. Buckley's blinded by the sun as a NOOSE falls over his head, jerked tight - He's DRAGGED over his desk out the door.

313 EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 313

Houston hauls Buckley into the street, stops the celebration - A crowd gathers... Jack, Flores, Big Foot among them.

SAM HOUSTON
You were ordered by Texas to burn this town, destroy all provisions, deny support to the enemy and to report to the army for duty. You did neither. That's treason.

EMPRESARIO BUCKLEY
(choking, tugs at rope)
I'll answer to..that...in...court--

SAM HOUSTON
You are in court, sir. A military tribunal. You have been convicted.

JACK HAYS
You remember how this goes. Not a lot of palaver 'tween catchin' and hangin'.

Houston and his men reach the gallows. Haul Buckley to his feet, toss the rope over the beam as the CROWD FOLLOWS--

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
What do you want?

Houston points across the street to the BUCKLEY HOTEL/SALOON, speaks loudly enough for everyone to hear...

SAM HOUSTON
For MISS EMILY WEST in recognition of her heroic sacrifices in capturing the tyrant Santa Anna and liberating Texas!

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
A welcome gesture. It's hers.

The snotty WOMEN's sneers turned to shock. Emily whispers in Houston's ear. Back to Buckley...

SAM HOUSTON
And the Wykoff place! Free and
clear, all money returned.

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
Done.

SAM HOUSTON
Justice is swift. Court adjourned.
(unties the noose)
The era of the empresario ended at
San Jacinto. There's new law in
this land. Your crimes will not
escape the noose a second time.

JACK HAYS
Men are thirsty after all this
fuss, General.

SAM HOUSTON
Drinks on the house, Mr. Buckley?

EMPRESSARIO BUCKLEY
Yes...yes...for the love of all
things holy, YES!

He collapses in the dirt as Houston takes Emily by the arm to
lead everyone back to the celebration - FESTIVE MUSIC RESUMES!

Houston climbs on the serving table, kicks the dishes to the
floor, stares down the rude townspeople - Then pulls Emily up
beside him - They dance in defiance and celebration to all!

314 INT. BEDROOM - EMILY'S SALOON - NIGHT

314

Houston & Emily lie naked in bed, reflective...

SAM HOUSTON
I've seen country on the Colorado
I think would do for us. Hill
country. White limestone bluffs.
Crystal springs. Buffalo walk up
and lick the salt out of your hand.

EMILY WEST

You got Texas to worry about. Me,
I'm gonna make something outta this
hotel.

SAM HOUSTON

Sell the hotel, woman. I've given
enough for Texas. I'm not letting
you go again...

Off Emily's bittersweet smile and non-committal expression...

315

EXT. VICTORIA, TEXAS - NIGHT

315

Folks drunk - KNOWLES, surrounded by a bunch of admirers,
points to a San Jacinto MEDAL he's wearing--

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

War Secretary never seen such a
hero!

(holds up medal)

For uncommon valor - I faced over a
hun'ered blazin' guns and mowed
down a dozen soldados to save the
Secretary!

Wildly drunk, VERN smirks to Flores and a sullen Anderson.

VERN ELWOOD

Why if it ain't my ole Mexicoon
chili-shitter 'n his Injun-lovin'--

ANDERSON SHOVES Vern into a wall, whips out his KNIFE, one
second from killing Vern, who's stunned by his ferocity.
With people staring, Anderson lets go of Vern, stalks away.

MANUEL FLORES

The trouble with you, Vern, is you
always make trouble.

GATOR DAVIS

Anderson lost his son. Beans was
killed, too.

VERN ELWOOD

Beans? Damn.

(somber, then LAUGHS)

Guess it's a good thing I QUIT!

He swoops Sarah off her feet to dance near lovebirds Kit and
Rebecca. Groping Sarah, Vern slides his hand to her breast--

Nearby, DOC Ewing sees Vern man-handling his daughter - Rage boiling over, he pulls his pistol, looms toward Vern--

DOC EWING
Unhand my daughter, you barbaric
ass!

Vern defiantly holds a struggling Sarah closer to him, pulls his own gun, recklessly waving it around when--

--the Doc lunges to grab Sarah away...as Vern swings his gun around...BOOM! Off the accidental discharge, they turn to...

REBECCA, the red stain on her fancy dress spreading quickly. She looks at the wound, then at KIT...then her eyes roll up and she falls, clutching her abdomen. Kit lifts her in his arms, as a horrified Doc Ewing points to a wagon.

VERN is stunned. With all the attention focused on Rebecca, Vern eases away to get his horse, CUTS ALL THE HORSES LOOSE, and RACES out of town with a herd of horses following.

ON REBECCA: Blood runs down her listless arm as Doc Ewing works frantically to save her life - Kit, in shock, and the dumbstruck Rangers stand helplessly by.

BILLY ANDERSON
Goddamn Texas.

ON REBECCA'S HAND, lying limply in a pool of her own blood, the hand-carved gold band on her ring finger splotched red.

316 EXT. COMANCHE ENCAMPMENT - DAY (ESTABLISHING) 316

Comanche encampment beside the San Saba River.

317 INT. MAGUARA'S TENT - DAY 317

Buffalo Hump joins the circle of chiefs. In the center sits Maguara who indicates Buffalo Hump should remain standing.

MAGUARA
*Remember the words we spoke when
the Mexicans and Tejanos went to
war?*

BUFFALO HUMP
I was to be the eyes of the nation.

MAGUARA
*The eyes only. Yet you returned
with fresh scalps from Tejanos.*

BUFFALO HUMP
Your words are true...

MAGUARA
*Do you not see that they are now
 masters of their land? Thousands
 more come with guns. Their chiefs
 come to make peace - Speak with
 angry eyes saying young warriors
 kill their people without cause.*

Buffalo Hump, thunderstruck, can hardly find his voice...

BUFFALO HUMP
Am I to be given up to my enemies?

MAGUARA
*Take your horses and leave my camp.
 If you return to the Comancheria,
you will die. When the time comes
 for war, I will send for you.*

318 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DAY 318

Houston arrives at Pauline's homestead, greeted by Guadalupe.

GUADALUPE SMITH
 He says he'd sooner crawl in a
 rattlesnake den than see you.
 (bittersweet smile)
 But I know better--

319 INT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - DAY (CONTINUOUS) 319

HALF-BREED the dog lies mournfully on the floor next to--

DEAF lying in his bed, cavernous, mouth gaping open, dried
 blood caked around his nose. Houston thinks he's too late,
 closes his eyes and bows his head to say a prayer when--

Deaf's eyes flutter open. Focus on Houston. Raspy, weak...

DEAF SMITH`
 Them quacks down in New Orleans at
 least saw off your damn leg?

SAM HOUSTON
 You're out of luck there.

DEAF SMITH
 I sent Lupe and Pedro away. I hold
 you in far less regard than them.

SAM HOUSTON
I never had a better scout. A
better Ranger. A better friend..

DEAF SMITH
Good thing about dyin', I don't
have to listen to all your bullshit
no more - Sit, ya ornery bastard.
Ain't time for the funeral yet.

Houston sits next to the bed, takes Deaf's hand as his dying
friend lapses into deep, rattling breaths.

DEAF SMITH (CONT'D)
Shoulda seen Anderson ride cross
Vince's Bridge. Now that was
somethin'.

320 EXT. WYKOFF HOMESTEAD - CEMETERY - SUNDOWN

320

NEW GRAVES next to the Wykoff Family plots..."COLBY PIT"...
"REBECCA PIT" - a morose Kit stands away from the others,
near his beloved's headstone, fingering her GOLD BAND...
which he slips on his pinkie as--

SAM HOUSTON
Erastus "Deaf" Smith was Texas'
first and greatest Ranger--

BY A FRESH OPEN GRAVE - Emily, Pauline, Nate, Jack, Big Foot,
Karnes, Anderson, Flores, Gator, Knowles, Doc Ewing, Sarah,
Guadalupe, in a black veil, and little Pedro listen to Houston's
eulogy. Also in attendance: RUSK, SEQUIN, and HOCKLEY.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
We'll never see the likes of Deaf
again-- He has set the mark and
standard for all who follow.

IN SHADOWS OF THE TREES some distance away, Lorca, still the
outsider, watches the ceremony. Pauline notices him as...

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)
(looks to heavens)
Thy brother... I hope the Great
Spirit gives light to your path and
clouds of sorrow never rest upon
your journey in the ever after.

SOME DISTANCE AWAY - Half-Breed, silhouetted on the horizon,
overlooking the funeral, turns & runs off into the wilderness.

The funeral over, everyone walks sadly from the grave, some socializing, some mounting up or climbing in wagons to go.

Houston walks away, holding Emily's hand, Rusk, Seguin, and Hockley anxiously herd around him...

JUAN SEGUIN

Sam, it's only twelve days to the election, everyone in Texas wants you to be the next President--

SAM HOUSTON

I'm voting for Stephen Austin.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

Austin can't beat Burnet! He was far too friendly with Santa Anna before the war!

THOMAS RUSK

Frankly, Stephen's very ill right now. If you run, he's agreed to serve as your Secretary of State.

SAM HOUSTON

What about you, Tom? You'd make an excellent President.

THOMAS RUSK

Sam, leaders with vision are few. And there's only one Sam Houston.

GEORGE HOCKLEY

Texas must establish a Republic, a currency, a banking system, ports, roadways. Earn recognition abroad--

JUAN SEGUIN

--enlist allies against Mexico... who will mostly likely invade Texas again when Santa Anna returns.

THOMAS RUSK

War is inevitable with the Indians as well - Perhaps even with the United States should our new Republic become her rival under the leadership of Burnet and his ilk.

Emily smiles politely, lets go of Houston's hand, walks away, leaving him to talk business. Houston watches her go, musing...

SAM HOUSTON

The Republic of Texas has more
trouble than a man toting a live
bobcat by its hind leg.

321 INT. EMILY'S SALOON - DAY

321

Jack leans against the bar, orders whiskey from Lorca. Jack draws a bead on the poker table, sees Big Foot's WRIST CUFF in the gambler's pile. Walks to him, points to the cuff...

JACK HAYS

I'll have that cuff. It was stolen
from a friend of mine.

GAMBLER

(reaches for his pistol)
I beg to differ...

A beat as Jack deliberates. Then sits at the table. The game begins, and Jack antes up with a thin wad of cash.

Jack pulls a SIX. Spreads his cards - TWO PAIRS. With a face of stone, the Gambler shoves the bracelet into the pot.

GAMBLER (CONT'D)

No time for faint hearts.

Jack's out of cash. Pulls off his pistols to set them in the pot. Jack spreads out his hand. Gambler reveals a FLUSH.

ON JACK HAYS--as the Gambler RAKES in the pot - But, as Jack rises, defeated, and starts to exit, stops him with...

GAMBLER (CONT'D)

Heard you rode with Deaf Smith?

JACK HAYS

I did.

The gambler grins...hands Jack back his guns. Then, with a grin, he flips him Big Foot's WRIST CUFF.

322 EXT. CAMP IN TEXAS WOODS - DAY

322

VERN, with a thousand yard stare, sits alone by a fire. Off a NOISE, Vern raises his GUN - FUZZ steps in, hands raised.

FUZZ

Honest man lookin' for a cup of
coffee...n friendly conversation.

Vern regards him coldly...then uncocks the pistol.

VERN ELWOOD
Know what them gals do in Paree?

323 INT. BEDROOM - EMILY'S SALOON - NIGHT

323

In the middle of a discussion, Emily appeals to Houston...

EMILY WEST
I won't allow you to refuse this,
Sam. It's too important.

SAM HOUSTON
Asked you to be my wife. I meant it-

Her eyes are misting, but her voice resolute...

EMILY WEST
You cannot have me for your wife
and your political career at the
same time. People will not abide
it.

SAM HOUSTON
Politics be damned. I've
sacrificed enough for Texas. I
won't leave you.

EMILY WEST
Then it's me who will make the
sacrifice.
(more tender)
I don't want to live in the public
eye. You're destined for something
grand. Just know...I will be
right there beside you...forever.

Houston doesn't budge. Adamant, Emily firmly gestures...

EMILY WEST (CONT'D)
Now go. You have an election to
win.

324 INT. EMILY'S SALOON - NIGHT

324

Lorca tends bar while TWO BARFLIES (40s) drink at the bar
with KNOWLES, all pretty wasted, recounting a legend...

BARFLY #1

A demon called "Lorca" rode in on a wave of brimstone, gutted over a hundred Mexicans - Slit 'em open 'n fed 'em their own bile.

BARFLY #2

S'right, a ghost rider who kills in the name of Satan hisself. Look 'im dead in the eye turn ya to stone.

EPHRAIM KNOWLES

Well I'M the onliest one here looked 'im square in the eye, 'n I didn't turn to stone.

(looks Lorca in the eye/no idea)

Gimme another beer, ya old goat.

LORCA

(serves beer, deadpan)
It's on the house, hero.

Houston comes downstairs, bellies up to the bar, to Lorca...

SAM HOUSTON

Have we had the occasion?

LORCA

No, sir. What'll it be?

SAM HOUSTON

Beer, cold as you have it. My friend, our paths have crossed.

LORCA

Today they damn sure did. It's an honor, sir. Tom Paxton... late of Missouri, General.

He plants a frothing mug before them. Houston knocks it back, pays...then, with another glance at him, walks out--

--As Pauline walks in, passing Houston.

PAULINE WYKOFF

Where you been hiding, Mr. Thomas Paxton? I'm makin' a dish for our Sunday supper at the church social. If I didn't know better, I'd swear you don't care for my cooking.

LORCA
 Ma'am, I'd fistfight the devil for
 a bowl of your Irish stew.

325 EXT. VICTORIA - EMILY'S SALOON - NIGHT 325

Framed in the upstairs window, Emily watches Houston ride off.

BELOW HER, Nate, Jack and Big Foot, take down the "Buckley's" sign replacing it with the NEW: "JUPITER'S HOTEL & EMPORIUM."

ACROSS THE STREET - BUCKLEY scowls at the sign...and Emily.

326 INT. WHITE HOUSE OFFICE - NIGHT 326

Decorations for the meeting: A BALD EAGLE faces the MEXICAN FLAG--a symbolic DUEL OF EAGLES. Santa Anna, in his finest uniform, across from U.S. President ANDREW JACKSON--

SUPER: THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D.C. - JANUARY 17, 1837

ANDREW JACKSON
 Of course, prudence dictated that I
 not intervene in Texas.

Santa Anna shoots him a look like "Oh, really."

SANTA ANNA
 Of course not. Interesting. Though
 Texas' newly elected President is
 Sam Houston--an officer in your
 command in the Creek War,
 Congressman in your political
 party, Governor of your home state.
 An independent spirit?

ANDREW JACKSON
 Best to view the situation as it is
 now... In the interests of a
 peaceful solution, do you think the
 Mexican Congress will cede Texas
 for a fair consideration? And by
 Texas, I mean all the land between
 the Sabine and the Pacific.

Santa Anna is galled, looks around... full of bluster.

SANTA ANNA
 I very much like your house. It
 would suit me.

ANDREW JACKSON

I admire your candor--since you came here in chains.

SANTA ANNA

A blunder, certainly. But you too erred by bringing me here, since you have obvious designs on Texas.

(off Jackson's glare)

Have I come as your prisoner? No. I am welcomed as a head of state.

ANDREW JACKSON

Forgive my presumption - The news hasn't reached you as of yet. You are no longer President of Mexico - Vice-President Farias has replaced you.

SANTA ANNA

(shaken, but dismissive)

A necessary formality until my return. Regardless, France, Italy, Germany, even England--whose troops burned this house down around you--regard Mexico as their ally.

(pointed)

You cannot have Texas, much less California, without provoking all of Europe into a war you can never win. The next time we dine, Sir, you may find yourself a guest at my table--the Napoleon of the West.

ANDREW JACKSON

Indeed. Did not Napoleon succumb to the Duke of Wellington?

SANTA ANNA

What bearing does that have?

ANDREW JACKSON

I crushed Wellington's troops at New Orleans. Should my country face a foreign threat, Sir, I myself will answer.

(offers a toast)

To peace between our nations!

A CHIME of crystal glasses, ANGRY EAGLES above, claw to claw.

327

EXT. THE ALAMO - DAY

327

A DIRGE--sung by a single, unseen woman as FLOWERS fall--

REVEAL A MASS GRAVE in the courtyard of the Alamo.

JUAN SEGUIN, in formal military uniform, carries a chest which he opens to let ashes and bone tumble into the grave, his Tejano officers & soldiers forming ranks behind him.

SAM HOUSTON (O.C.)
Deeply impressed with a sense of
responsibility, devolving on me--

328 EXT. REPRESENTATIVE HALL, COLUMBIA, TEXAS - DAY 328

Rusk, Hockley, and political and military figures stand in solemn tribute as HOUSTON makes his inauguration speech to an ENTHUSASTIC CROWD - Burnet and Lamar stand by grimacing...

SAM HOUSTON
--I cannot repress the emotion of
my heart or restrain the feeling
which my sense of obligation to my
fellow citizens has inspired. We
are only in the outset of the
campaign of liberty... A subject of
no small importance is the
situation of an extensive frontier
bordered by Indians and open to
their depredations--

329 EXT. TEXAS PRAIRIE - DAY 329

BUFFALO HUMP stands bare-chested, raising his scalp-laden lance and firing up his devoted band of YOUNG WARRIORS...

BUFFALO HUMP
*Each day, the American half-faces
swallow more of our land with an
undying hunger for MORE!*

CROSS-CUT - SAM HOUSTON'S INAUGURAL SPEECH W/BUFFALO HUMP -
Both speakers working their followers into a frenzy...

SAM HOUSTON
Treaties of peace and amity with
the Indians present themselves as
the rational grounds on which to
obtain their friendship.

BUFFALO HUMP
*Our only hope is WAR! A STORM of
fire and blood that will sweep
every last white eye into the sea
that delivered them to our land!*

INTERCUT - SAM HOUSTON'S INAUGURAL SPEECH

SAM HOUSTON

Admonished by the past, we can not
in justice disregard our national
enemies...or Santa Anna.

330 EXT. DECK OF THE PIONEER - VERA CRUZ PORT - DAY

330

The ship nears the port - Santa Anna sees the crowds gathered
on the dock, becoming more anxious and depressed...

SANTA ANNA

Make no move against them, Almonte,
when they come to execute me. I
chose to ride the whirlwind of fame
and power. I accept as fate that I
will be dashed against the rocks.

The boat docks, the gangplank lurches out, and Santa Anna
steps onto it without hesitation, chin lifted high, to face
an angry, blood-thirsty crowd.

INSTEAD, Santa Anna's greeted by deafening CHEERS FROM
ECSTATIC MEXICANS welcoming their HERO home. To Almonte:

SANTA ANNA (CONT'D)

Do not get too accustomed to home
life, Almonte. Within a year, we
will be cockfighting in Texas again.

He grins, throws up his arms in VICTORY as THE PEOPLE CHEER--

331 EXT. PLAINS - DAY

331

--SEGUE TO WAR CRIES & WHOOPING from BUFFALO HUMP'S WAR PARTY
as they SWOOP down on COVERED WAGONS, the beginnings of a
MASSACRE.

332 EXT. MISSION CONCEPCION - DAY

332

A CHURCH SUPPER - Lorca gives out LICORICE to kids (Tejano
children), among them Moises...who reacts to seeing the X-
SHAPED SCAR on LORCA'S WRIST.

Serving her Irish Stew, Pauline smiles at Lorca, who smiles
back and stands in line to await his turn.

Feeling good, he gets his bowl, samples a taste, smiles at
Pauline and nods, savoring it...when...

BOOM! A SHOT blows through Lorca's clean white shirt. He drops his bowl of stew and falls across the table, which collapses beneath him. Women SCREAM, everyone's in shock--

MOISES holds a smoking pistol - A stunned Lane slaps his empty holster and jerks the gun from Moises.

Pauline goes numb with shock as MEN converge to roughly grab the boy - A bloody hand reaches up, clutching onto him...

LORCA

Let the boy be. I make no claim
against him...

Pauline, distraught, collapses beside him - He smiles at her.

Lorca's eyes find Moises, who glares at him. Compassionately:

LORCA (CONT'D)

I understand.

Pauline sees peace in Lorca's eyes as he goes still in death under the shadow of a church cross.

333 EXT. REPRESENTATIVE HALL, COLUMBIA, TEXAS - DAY (RESUME) 333

With ceremonial flair, Houston presents his SWORD.

SAM HOUSTON

It now, sir, becomes my duty to
make presentation of this sword,
--this emblem of my past office.

Houston pauses, staring at the gleaming blade, overcome a beat by emotion...then rallies himself, holds out sword to a JUDGE--

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

I have worn it with some humble
pretensions in defense of my country
Should danger again call for my
service, I expect to resume it--
--and I will respond to that call
with my BLOOD and my LIFE!!!

THE LONE STAR FLAG UNFURLS as the CROWD CHEERS. Houston crosses to Burnet and Lamar.

SAM HOUSTON (CONT'D)

Thanks for all the publicity,
David. Folks offer me free drinks
and fresh eggs everywhere I go.

PRESIDENT BURNET

What is it about you? What kind of
spell do you hold on Texas?

SAM HOUSTON

Maybe it's because everybody here is
just like me. They see me rise in
spite of my flaws - And they know
they can too. It's not me they
celebrate, David...

(waves to CHEERING CROWD)

It's HOPE.

334 INT. EMILY'S SALOON - DAY

334

In the newly christened "JUPITER'S HOTEL & SALOON" BEER MUGS
SMASH TOGETHER in a raucous, frontier celebration! In a
gorgeous alluring gown, EMILY presides over the OPENING:

EMILY WEST

To our new President, Sam Houston!

RANGERS Karnes, Anderson, Gator, Kit, Flores, Knowles, along
with Jack and Big Foot hoist glasses. Flores makes another:

MANUEL FLORES

To the hero of San Jacinto, owner
of Jupiter's Saloon... Our Yellow
Rose of Texas.

He STRUMS his guitar, Gator joins in, Knowles plays spoons as
the crowd SINGS along: *"She's the Yellow Rose of Texas that
I am going to see - No other darky knows her, no darky only
me - Cried so when I left her, it like to broke my heart, and
if I ever find her, we nevermore will part--"*

EMILY BEAMING, blushing, tearful...can't keep from laughing.

As they're singing, Guadalupe, Doc Ewing & other townspeople
join in--

--as Jack turns to Big Foot, tossing him the WRIST CUFF...

JACK HAYS

Almost forgot...this belongs to you.

Big Foot can't believe it - Hands it back to Jack.

BIG FOOT WALLACE

Came to Texas lookin' for one
brother... 'n found another one.

A bloody, HYSTERICAL TEXAS SETTLER (30s) BURSTS inside--

HYSTERICAL SETTLER
 HELP! Comanche attack! They're
 comin' this way--

HENRY KARNES
 Rangers... SPUR UP!

Flores, Gator, Kit, Anderson, and Knowles head for the door.
 Karnes sees Big Foot and Jack hesitate.

HENRY KARNES (CONT'D)
 What're you waitin' for?

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 We ain't been sworn in.

HENRY KARNES
 Hellfire... Hold up your hands.
 You're Rangers.

BIG FOOT WALLACE
 What about the sacred ritual?

JACK HAYS
 (a wry grin, rushing out)
 Reckon we missed it.

335 EXT. STREETS OF VICTORIA - DAY

335

In an instant, all eight surviving RANGERS leap onto their horses, put their spurs to flanks and CHARGE OFF - Karnes in the lead, Jack riding up alongside, w/Big Foot, Anderson, Flores, Kit, Knowles rushing out--

On this ACTION SHOT of fury, leather, guns, grit and courage,
 Like a Remington painting...FREEZE FRAME on...

THE TEXAS RANGERS

FADE TO BLACK: