



SLOW WEST

By
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BLACK SCREEN

1

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

FADE IN:

2

EXT - COLORADO FOREST - NIGHT

2

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

He begins his nightly recital, naming each constellation

JAY
Pegasus, The Great Bear, The
Dragon, Andromeda

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

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

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

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

JAY (CONT'D)
Orion's Belt

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

CUT TO:

3

EXT - SCOTLAND - DREAM FLASHBACK - WINDY BEACH - DAY

3

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

CUT TO

This was a Native camp, freshly razed to the ground
JAY leads his horse through the remains
No bodies. The dead removed
Another forest clearing
A distant gun shot startles JAY and his horse
JAY stops
Another gun shot
Then another
JAY walks slowly from his horse
More gunshots
Branches snap under foot from yonder, the sound of someone
running towards JAY
A muscular young NATIVE MAN sprints from the brush and skids
to a halt in front of JAY
Bare chested, coated in blood
Standing proud and waiting as if preparing to die by JAY'S
hand
JAY ash-grey
The young MAN blood-red
For a moment they study each other's strangeness
Another gunshot and the NATIVE MAN looks around then bolts
past JAY
More rustling and twig snapping as THREE MEN dressed as Union
soldiers emerge
TWO BOYS in dirty old Yankee uniforms and an OLDER MAN in an
officer's outfit
Guns are quickly raised to point at JAY
OFFICER
Arms abroad boy!
JAY raises his arms up
YOUNG SOLDIER 2
Red skinned or white?
The coat of ash covering JAY the source of confusion

JAY

Sir. I am British.. Scottish

The officer barks orders to his two protegés

OFFICER

Catch the savage

The two YOUNG SOLDIERS run off into the woods

JAY and the OFFICER stare at each other for a BEAT

Two muffled gunshots then silence

The OFFICER smiles, thinking the NATIVE has been killed

JAY

I am Jay Cavendish, Son of Lady
Cavendish

OFFICER lowers his rifle and walks towards JAY

OFFICER

We're all Sons of Bitches

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

This is **SILAS SELLECK**

Mid thirties, lean, fit

SILAS is dirt ingrained, only his eyes are clean

SILAS looks WILD, yet..

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

Succinct in words and action

OFFICER (CONT'D)

A grave play, boy

JAY draws his gun and points it at SILAS

JAY

Sir. Lower your pistol

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

JAY (CONT'D)

Hey !

SILAS moves up to JAY, continuing to point the gun at the OFFICER, and snatches JAY'S gun from him

SILAS points JAY'S gun at the OFFICER and pulls the trigger, but the gun is empty and clicks

The officer smiles at this, but quick as a flash, SILAS raises his own gun up and shoots the officer between the eyes

Dead before he hits the ground

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

SILAS
Clean it. Oil it

JAY fumbles the catch

SILAS walks over to the officer and crouches down

Pulls out a large knife and cuts a pouch from the officers belt

JAY looks on

JAY
What do you want?

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

JAY (CONT'D)
He was an Officer

SILAS looks through the man's pockets and finds a tin

SILAS
Wearin' a dress don't make her a lady

SILAS pockets the tin

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

SILAS moves round and removes the OFFICER'S boots and addresses JAY without looking up

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

JAY
I take care of myself

SILAS
Sure kid. You need chaperonin' and
I'm a chaperone

SILAS gets up and walks towards JAY

JAY takes a step back, still holding his gun

SILAS walks past JAY and towards JAY's horse

JAY
Safer to travel with a killer?

SILAS
That's right

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

SILAS begins to cut the bags free

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

SILAS cuts a case free and it drops to the ground

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

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

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

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

JAY reads the title

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

SILAS keeps looking at JAY

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

SILAS keeps staring

JAY (CONT'D)
..By Edward Hepple Hall

SILAS throws the book over his shoulder

SILAS
Well ho for the West

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

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

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

JAY
Until we reach a forest called
Silverghost

SILAS snatches the cash, counts it, and walks off

SILAS
Lets drift

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

CUT TO:

10 **EXT - FOREST - DAY**

10

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

JAY trots up level with SILAS

JAY
What's your name?

SILAS snaps

SILAS
Drop back, single file

JAY drops back behind SILAS

SILAS leads, JAY follows, staying single file as instructed

JAY (SHOUTS)
Why you headin' West?

SILAS does not respond

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

No response

JAY (CONT'D)

There was an accident - My girl and her father fled from Scotland, settled out West. It was all my fault

SILAS (TO HIMSELF)

Take a hint kid?

JAY

We love each other

SILAS (TO HIMSELF)

Sure you do, kid

They ride on in silence

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

11 **EXT - SCOTTISH SAND DUNES - FLASHBACK - DAY**

11

Moody grey sky

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

JAY stands at the top of a large dune

ROSE, standing at the bottom, shouts up to JAY

ROSE

JAY! A thousand ways to die, choose one

JAY strikes a thinking pose

JAY

Bow and arrow

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

JAY pretends to be shot in the heart and falls dramatically

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

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

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

JAY places his hands on Rose's hands

ROSE smiles, but pulls away, breaking the moment, pushes JAY's head to the side

ROSE
Silly boy

ROSE jumps up

Runs up the dune, shouting

ROSE (CONT'D)
My turn

JAY looks up to the sky

12 **EXT - LIGHT FOREST - DAY**

12

JAY rides behind SILAS

Low light, long shadows

Distant echo of a pretty acapella song emanates from the trees ahead

JAY head slumped, the music stirs him from his daydream

Three AFRICAN MEN, clothed in dusty ragged Union soldier suits, sit in a circle, one in a makeshift wooden wheel chair, one on crutches, wounds from the Civil War

They sing a beautiful Congolese song. (They're Congolese)

SILAS rides straight past, JAY stops to listen

SILAS stops, grumps, spits, and turns

SILAS wolf whistles, JAY ignores

SILAS shakes his head, turns and trots off

The band smile, singing for the pleasure of singing. The song ends and the man on crutches looks up at JAY

SINGER (IN FRENCH)
Did you enjoy our music?

JAY answers in French

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

SINGER (IN FRENCH)
It's a song about love

JAY (IN FRENCH)
Love is universal, like death

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

13 **EXT - DRY LAKE, DEAD TREE, FLOWERS - DAY**

13

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

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

CUT TO:

14 **EXT - RIDGE OVERLOOKING DRIED RIVER BED - DAY**

14

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

The posse are all distinct and characterful

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

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

A Mexican woman, poncho and braids 'MARIMACHO'

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

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

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

The gang leader - PAYNE - Massive fur coat, cigar

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

CUT TO:

15

EXT - NIGHT - FOREST CAMP

15

SILAS and JAY have set up camp

JAY sits on his blanket, SILAS up against a tree

JAY throws rabbit bones from his plate into the trees

SILAS sees this

JAY lies back and looks at the stars while SILAS is filling bullet shells with fresh gunpowder

JAY

Same stars. Same moon

SILAS ignores him

JAY (CONT'D)

One day we'll be wandering 'round
that moon

SILAS ignores

JAY (CONT'D)

They'll build a railroad

SILAS keeps ignoring

JAY (CONT'D)

But a railroad up and down the
ways. A railroad to the moon. And
when we get there, first thing
we'll do is hunt the natives down

SILAS bites

SILAS

No Indians on the moon

JAY sits up

JAY

No. The natives of the moon. The
moon people

SILAS flashes JAY an incredulous look

JAY lies back down, points to stars and begins his nightly recital

JAY (CONT'D)

Pegasus, The Great Bear, The Dragon

A crackle of sticks under foot in the darkness

SILAS

Shh!

JAY shuts up

SILAS gets up, picks up rifle

JAY sits up

SILAS soldier-like, cocks rifle, moves off into the woods

JAY about to follow

SILAS (CONT'D)

Sit down

JAY obeys, and now feels more alone than he did when he was alone..

JAY brings his gun out and stays still for a BEAT

SILAS emerges from the shadows

SILAS picks up Jay's rabbit bones and throws them into the fire

SILAS (CONT'D)

This is the last time I'm gonna
clean up your shit

SILAS sits back up against the tree, places his rifle on his lap and covers himself with a blanket

SILAS' way of saying good night

JAY looks around

Wolves howl

JAY lies back and stares up at the moon and stars and slowly and quietly un-cocks his gun

16 **EXT - RIVER CUTTING THROUGH PRAIRIE - DAY**

16

Horse clops on wood as SILAS and JAY ride across a rickety bridge

CUT TO:

17 **EXT - CANYON - DAY**

17

Mid day sun beating down, the familiar red-tailed hawk screech

SILAS and JAY walk their horses up through a yellowish rocky canyon

The canyon narrows forming a pass a couple of yards wide

A buffalo has got trapped in the narrow gap and died there
 It has been picked clean of meat down to its gleaming white
 bones
 The skeleton blocks the route WEST
 JAY and SILAS approach

JAY
 Must have been winter when Rose
 passed through here

They begin to pull the heavy bones from between the rock
 JAY lifts up the skull

SILAS
 What's she like?

JAY perks up

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

SILAS
 You haven't bedded her, have you

SILAS laughs

JAY shakes his head

SILAS gestures to the buffalo rib cage

SILAS (CONT'D)
 Grab that end

JAY
 You're a brute

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

18 **EXT - ALONG BASE OF CLIFFS - DAY**

18

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

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

CUT TO:

19

EXT - OUTSIDE TRADING POST - DAY

19

SILAS and JAY ride up to the trading post

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

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

SILAS looks at the horse as he dismounts

SILAS

Tie the horses round back

JAY leads the horses round the side of the building

SILAS reaches the veranda

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

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

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

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

SILAS rips the poster from the board

SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)

Everyone knew about the bounty, except Jay. He was leading me right to it.

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

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

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

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

VICTOR tips his hat, walks off, mounts horse, rides off

SILAS SELLECK (V.O.)
 There were few of us left, men
 beyond the law

SILAS walks into the trading post

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

JAY saunters around the corner, sees VICTOR riding off

CUT TO:

20

INT - TRADING POST - DAY

20

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

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

An OLD MAN stands behind the counter

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

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

SILAS obliges, then wanders round the room checking the stock

JAY enters, closing the door behind him

SILAS
 We'll be dining

JAY wanders over to some clothes on a rail

JAY
 May I try on a suit?

STOREKEEPER
 Sure, be my guest

JAY crosses the room and enters the small changing room, pulls closed the native blanket curtain

SILAS sits down at a table in the opposite corner of the room

CHANGING ROOM

There is a filthy mirror on the wall

JAY wipes it clean with his sleeve

Looks at his disheveled reflection

SHOP FLOOR

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

STOREKEEPER (CONT'D)

Whisky?

SILAS shakes his head

SILAS

You got meat?

STOREKEEPER

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

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

CHANGING ROOM

There is a comb on a string next to the mirror

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

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

SHOP FLOOR

SILAS studies the wanted poster

CHANGING ROOM

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

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

JAY sticks his finger in the hole

SHOP FLOOR

The door swings open

A man and a woman enter

They are Swedish, a young couple, clothes dusty from travel
 They move nervously, jittery, eyes showing desperation. The
 man JOHAN is skinny. (*Ref: Shame by Bergman*)

The woman MARIA, skinny but wears so many clothes and rags
 and shawls that she looks larger

JOHAN notices SILAS and looks at MARIA with concern

SILAS keeps his eye on the man as he nervously approaches to
 the counter

JOHAN points to a blanket on a high shelf behind the
 storekeeper

JOHAN (SWEDISH ACCENT)
 Blanket please

STOREKEEPER
 Blanket, ha..

The storekeeper climbs on a stool and reaches up for a
 blanket

While his back is turned, MARIA swipes some items and places
 them in her bundle of bosom

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

SILAS alert

MARIA throws a sharp stare at JOHAN

MARIA
 Johan!

SILAS smells trouble

JOHAN brings a colt pistol from his inside jacket pocket and
 points it at the head of the storekeeper

The storekeeper raises his hands and takes a step back

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

CHANGING ROOM

Jay stock still, listens

SHOP FLOOR

STOREKEEPER

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

MARIA

Johan!

JOHAN cocks the gun

SILAS and JAY both frozen in their respective places

JOHAN

Money!!

MARIA goads JOHAN

MARIA (IN SWEDISH)

Johan! What must be done!

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

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

JOHAN is flung backwards against a post and falls down dead

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

MARIA is now hysterical

MARIA (CONT'D)

Johan!!

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

SILAS, unarmed, stares at MARIA

SILAS

Breathe

CHANGING ROOM

JAY picks up his gun from the stool

SILAS (CONT'D)

Breathe.. In.. And out

MARIA (PLEADINGLY)

Money!

CHANGING ROOM

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

SHOP FLOOR

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

SILAS
Breathe in.. And out

CHANGING ROOM

JAY breathers in and out

MARIA (O.S.)
Money !

SHOP FLOOR

SILAS
Breathe

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

MARIA (RAGING)
Money !

SILAS
In.. And out

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

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

SILAS breathes a sigh of relief, then gets up fast

SILAS (CONT'D)
Grab some provisions

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

SILAS (CONT'D)
Jay!

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

JAY collects useless items, chocolate, honey etc

21 **EXT - OUTSIDE TRADING POST - DAY**

21

JAY exits the trading post into the bright daylight

He stops abruptly

Two CHILDREN stand, hold hands, waiting for their parents

A GIRL aged ten, a little BOY aged six, blond, sweet

SILAS exits and sees the kids

SILAS (TO HIMSELF)

Shit..

SILAS shuts the door before the kids can see the fate of their parents

JAY approaches the kids

SILAS goes to fetch the horses

JAY lays all the stuff he's gathered from the shop at the feet of the kids then just stares at them

KID (SWEDISH)

Why are you sad?

SILAS reappears with the horses

SILAS

Dry your eyes kid - let's drift

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

22 **EXT - ROCKY LANDSCAPE / EDGE OF FOREST - DAY**

22

JAY and SILAS ride in silence

SILAS begins to whistle a tune - Yankee doodle..

JAY snarls, thinking SILAS is happy

CUTTING TO SILAS, we see he is putting on a brave face, holding back a tear

SILAS looks down at his hand

His hand is shaking violently. SILAS clenches into a fist

JAY

We could have taken them in

SILAS growls

JAY
 What choice do you have? A farmer,
 a fisherman!

ROSE's smile wiped

ROSE
 Best you leave now, Jay

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

He should not be in here

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

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

ROSE
 Under the bed

JAY shakes his head

JAY
 No

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

JAY crawls under, turns himself around to look out

ROSE's father JOHN ROSS is a big man

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

ROSE
 Daddy

JOHN ROSS
 Rose

CALUM
 Hello Rose

JAY watches from under the bed

CUT TO:

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

CUT TO:

JAY
You a writer?

WERNER
Perhaps

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

He reads the title slowly

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

JAY
Perhaps

WERNER lays the book down

WERNER
So now. East. What news?

JAY looks East

JAY
Violence and suffering, and West?

Werner looks West

WERNER
Dreams and toil

JAY
I passed though burnt remains of an
Indian camp

WERNER saddened, picks up his journal

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

Werner holds up the journal on 'literature'

WERNER (CONT'D)
This is a new world for us, also
for them

Sun setting, light fading

WERNER gets up walks towards his wagon

WERNER (CONT'D)
You must be hungry

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

He finds some bread and brings it to JAY

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

WERNER
Sorry to hear this

JAY
I escaped

WERNER hands JAY bread, sits back down

JAY takes a bite of bread

JAY (CONT'D)
Thank you

CUT TO:

33 **EXT - WERNER CAMP - NIGHT**

33

Camp surrounded by blackness

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

JAY
I killed a woman yesterday

WERNER
Part and parcel

WERNER warms his hands by the flames

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

WERNER
I'd be a lonely man if I did

WERNER shakes his head

WERNER (CONT'D)
I am no Judge nor Father

WERNER now looks devilish in the light of the flames

WERNER (CONT'D)

In a short time, this will be a
long time ago

Distant wolves howl

WERNER picks up his rifle and stands up

WERNER (CONT'D)

Camp here. Blanket?

JAY nods

JAY

Thank you

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

WERNER

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

JAY

What's your name?

WERNER

Werner

JAY

I'm Jay. Good night and thank you
Werner

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

JAY alone under the vast starry sky

34

EXT - PLAINS - DAWN

34

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

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

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

Stands up

Looks down, a chicken egg sits on a note

Picks up the egg, the note flaps along the ground

JAY runs after it, grabs the note and reads

SILAS
No. No reason

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

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

SILAS takes the money

SILAS
Sure kid

SILAS hands JAY a biscuit

SILAS (CONT'D)
Have a biscuit

JAY munches it fast

CUT TO:

37 **EXT - PLAIN - DAY** 37

SILAS and JAY ride across the plain towards a forest

CUT TO:

38 **EXT - FOREST - DAY** 38

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

JAY
That's a shame

SILAS
Is it?

We see what they are looking at

A tree has been chopped down and fallen on top of the feller,
completely squishing him

His arms stick out as if a cartoon, his flesh long gone, his
clothes disintegrating, his skeleton hand still grasps the
axe

JAY
No. No, it's not

Both men smile at each other

Nothing like someone else's misfortune to bond a friendship

JAY (CONT'D)
Charles Darwin talks of 'evolution
by natural selection'

SILAS
For our sake lets hope he's wrong

CUT TO:

39 **EXT - WOODS - DAY**

39

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

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

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

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

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

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

40

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

JAY sits on a log

SILAS approaches him while sharpening a large hunting knife

SILAS walks behind JAY holding the knife up

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

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

SILAS (CONT'D)
You hold the knife flush, against
the skin

SILAS holds the knife flush against JAY's throat

SILAS (CONT'D)
And it's a scraping motion against
the grain, not a slicing motion

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

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

JAY smiles at this

JAY
I know why you need my help

SILAS pauses..

SILAS
Oh yeah?

JAY
Yeah - You're lonely. You're a
lonely man

The truth throws SILAS for a beat

SILAS
Sure kid

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

SILAS continues to shave JAY

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

SILAS
No need to concern over me

SILAS places the blade on JAY

JAY flinches

SILAS (CONT'D)
Hold still

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

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

(MORE)

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

JAY
Where's your folks?

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

JAY
So what keeps you from joining
them?

SILAS snaps

SILAS
I dunno kid, quit askin' me shit

JAY smiles

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

JAY
I showed up? You showed up

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

A distant noise like tinkling of glasses..

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

SILAS (CONT'D)
You're done

SILAS slowly walks across camp towards the noise, gun pointed

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

We especially remember because PAYNE wears an enormous fur
coat

PAYNE is a generation older than SILAS and a generation
wilder

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

PAYNE pauses for dramatic effect, unbothered by Silas and his
gun

PAYNE holds his hands out wide as he does a balletic turn walking into the middle of the camp

Another dramatic pause, removes cigar

PAYNE
May I enter?

SILAS
It's a free country

PAYNE
Try telling the natives that

PAYNE playful, SILAS wary, JAY entertained

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

JAY
We drink tea

PAYNE ignores JAY

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

PAYNE
One for you, young man

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

PAYNE pours three glasses of absinthe as he checks SILAS out

PAYNE (CONT'D)
Still not a mark on you

JAY confused

JAY
You know him ?

SILAS smiles

SILAS
Fuck yourself Payne

PAYNE smiles

PAYNE
I've tried.. Believe me I have
tried

PAYNE takes a swig of the tea JAY has poured him

PAYNE (CONT'D)
Oh.. That's damn fine coffee

JAY
It's tea

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

PAYNE
To bad times in the green hour

SILAS downs, JAY sips

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

PAYNE casually to JAY

PAYNE (CONT'D)
So you headed West ?

SILAS interrupts quick before JAY can answer

SILAS
North

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

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

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

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

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

PAYNE breaks the tension

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

JAY just shakes his head

PAYNE (CONT'D)
You born on a Sunday?

JAY
I don't know

SILAS now very alert to PAYNE's line of questioning

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

SILAS decides to cut this quick

SILAS
Easy Payne. He's just a kid

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

This saddens SILAS but pleases JAY

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

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

PAYNE made sure of that

CUT TO:

41 **EXT - CAMP BY RIVER - NIGHT**

41

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

PAYNE sits on a log watching SILAS and JAY

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

SILAS shows JAY how to spin his gun round his finger

SILAS
Spin it!

JAY tries to copy but drops the gun

The nozzle lands and sticks in the dirt

SILAS (CONT'D)
That's pretty good

A swaying JAY leans down and picks up the gun, the nozzle now
packed with mud

SILAS (CONT'D)

Get that dirt out of it.. Clean it

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

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

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

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

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

PAYNE shakes his head

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

JAY

I need to piss

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

SILAS

Away from camp!

JAY wanders into the dark

PAYNE waits a beat until JAY has gone

Stares at SILAS

PAYNE

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

PAYNE walks towards SILAS

SILAS staggers towards PAYNE

SILAS

I'm no angel

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

PAYNE

True

PAYNE helps SILAS to his feet

The men embrace

SILAS using PAYNE to balance, PAYNE holding SILAS close

PAYNE (CONT'D)

You think that's a smart play -
teaming up with him - quicker than
trackin' him - simpler

SILAS

Ain't no play about it

PAYNE

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

SILAS stays quiet

PAYNE (CONT'D)

Never was a bean-spiller was ya?
Not sober, nor liquored up, never
was

SILAS stays quiet, the men still holding each other close

PAYNE (CONT'D)

What you gonna do with two thousand
dollars?

PAYNE places both hands on SILAS' shoulders

PAYNE (CONT'D)

Come back to us

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

SILAS

I'm not like you Payne

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

CUT TO:

42

EXT - NIGHT - FOREST

42

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

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

JAY

Silas!

43

EXT - FOREST - ANOTHER CAMP - NIGHT

43

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

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

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

They all look up at JAY

THE KID, SKELLY, PEYOTE JOE, THE MINSTREL, TATTOO MAN

MARIMACHO with the TWO SWEDISH KIDS from the trading post

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

JAY

What have ye done with SILAS and
PAYNE?

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

Nudges THE KID

SKELLY

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

THE KID reluctantly obeys and sits back down in a huff

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

JAY

What have you done with the river?

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

PEYOTE JOE

They took it

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

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

JAY doesn't recognise her

JAY turns to PEYOTE JOE

JAY
Who took it?

PEYOTE JOE
Didn't see their faces

MARIMACHO sees the SWEDISH GIRL stare at JAY

MARIMACHO
Kid!

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

MARIMACHO tucks them in

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

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

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

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

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

44

EXT - WILD WEST STREET - BRIGHT HOT DAY

44

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

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

The men walk and talk

(SKELLY is still telling the story but the characters mouth the words)

BILL ALLSON (SKELLY'S V.O.)
 "I killed thirty men and countless savages, and I still ain't got me no wanted poster"

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

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

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

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

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

45 **EXT - WILD WEST STREET - DAY**

45

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

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

BILL ALLSON looking at the poster

BILL ALLSON
 Skelly!

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

CUT TO:

46 **EXT - NIGHT - POSSE CAMP**

46

THE KID
 What he say?

SKELLY
 Be a thousand by tomorrow

CUT TO:

MARIMACHO
That's a good 'un Skelly

Most agree with mumbles

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

He looks around the camp, now alarmed

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

JAY scrambles to his feet

JAY (CONT'D)
Good night - good riddance

JAY runs off into the darkness

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

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

(To the tune of *One man went to mow*)

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

53 **EXT - CAMP IN FOREST BY RIVER - NIGHT**

53

JAY returns to his own camp

PAYNE has long gone

SILAS is swaying, drunken, deep in thought

JAY (O.S.)
Silas! There's people in the woods

SILAS turns to JAY

SILAS
You love her?

JAY
Who?

SILAS snaps

SILAS
Rose!

JAY
Yes

BEAT. SILAS sways

SILAS
Then go home, kid

JAY stares at SILAS, excitement becomes anger

JAY
She's mine

SILAS
She's nobody's

A BEAT then JAY lunges at SILAS

JAY
Fighting talk

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

SILAS
Shhh!

JAY calms, sobbing

SILAS lays him down on his blanket, like a baby

JAY cries

JAY
You're always shushing me!

SILAS
Cos you're always running your
mouth off

A loud crack of thunder

JAY'S gun on the ground

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

Massive thunder crack and a flash of lightning

JAY out cold, we enter his absinthe fueled dreams

54

INT - PIONEER HOUSE - EVENING

54

A basic wooden room, walls pain'ted white, a table and chair

Nothing else, looks like a stage set

The only light source is a candle on the table

Rose sits on a chair at the table, reading a book by the candle light

Two windows on the wall behind ROSE , but instead of glass, paper, semi-transparent oiled paper

Slowly and theatrically lights fade up from outside, glowing through paper windows

JAY is slumped against the opposite wall. Rose does not see him, JAY is the sole audience to this strange 'play'

He smiles as he sees ROSE

A distant crack of thunder and SILAS enters the room from a door on the right, smiles at Rose

JAY stops smiling, looks confused, then upset

SILAS sits at the table with ROSE and starts to read a newspaper

ROSE gets up and approaches JAY (POV CAMERA), leans in and picks up.. a baby

The baby is crying

ROSE sits back down and rocks the baby

ROSE
Jay-bird, why so sad?

SILAS smiles

Suddenly rain and thunder sound

From somewhere (reality, not dream) we hear JAY shouting

JAY
Silas!!

The lights dim on the dream scene

CUT TO:

55 **EXT - DAWN - CAMP BY RIVER**

55

SILAS wakes up - (*note - the audience is led to believe this was JAY'S dream, it begins as JAY'S dream, as we cut back to reality with SILAS waking, we may presume this is also SILAS dream*)

SILAS wakes up

JAY shouting

Dawn throws light on an unexpected and chaotic state of affairs

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

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

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

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

SILAS leaps up

JAY looks for his gun

JAY

Silas! I can't find my gun

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

SILAS

Son of a Bitch!

PAYNE has stolen all their weapons

They splash around grabbing their gear

Each lightening flare reveals a fresh tableau of chaos

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

CUT TO:

56 **EXT - VAST PLAIN - MORNING**

56

A vast plain

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

JOHN nods and smiles

JOHN ROSS
Come in Kotori

CUT TO:

57 **INT - PIONEER HOME - DAY**

57

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

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

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

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

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

ROSE is now dressed in trousers and shirt, more practical,
making her look more grown up, her platted hair makes her
more 'American'

ROSE ROSS picks up a butter mould and carries it across the room

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

KOTORI enters, ROSE smiles

ROSE
Kotori

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

JOHN enters and sits down at the table with KOTORI

ROSE pours her father a cup of coffee

JOHN ROSS (SARCASTIC)
Turned out nice again

ROSE turns

KOTORI
Coffee!

ROSE turns back and pours Kotori a coffee

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

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

ROSE (CONT'D)
For Gods sake

JOHN ROSS
Language Rose

ROSE scrapes up the butter

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

They exchange smiles

CUT TO:

58 **EXT - PRETTY MEADOW - DAY**

58

Meanwhile..

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

Their drenched worldly goods are spread out on the grass

SILAS sits on his saddle and pours water from his boot

JAY wrings out his suit jacket

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

SILAS

Only thing dry's my mouth

SILAS places a soggy cigar in his mouth

JAY

My head is killing me

SILAS looks at JAY, a testing, intense look

SILAS

You remember nothing from last night?

JAY

I remember Payne.. Then rain

SILAS unravels a knotted rope

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

JAY (CONT'D)

Give me that rope

SILAS throws the rope to JAY

CUT TO:

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

To keep the rope taught they ride about fifteen feet apart

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

Both men ride in their long-johns

It is both practical and ridiculous

SILAS smiles at JAY

SILAS

Not bad kid

First compliment and JAY acts cool but smiles to himself

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

CUT TO:

59

EXT - RIDGE - DAY

59

PAYNE and his gang appear on the lip of the ridge and stop, looking down the hill

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

JAY turns to see the posse

JAY
What do they want?

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

JAY
They hunt bounty?

SILAS rummages in his saddlebag and pulls out the wanted poster

SILAS
They hunt Rose. Daddy. Blood. Money

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

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

JAY
Wanted .. Dead or ..

SILAS
Dead or dead, kid

JAY takes a BEAT to process

JAY
And I'm leading them to her

JAY passes the poster back to SILAS

JAY (CONT'D)
We'll lead them South

SILAS shakes his head

SILAS
There will be others

JAY
Others?

SILAS
Two thousand dollars entices a
certain breed of undesirable

JAY takes a good hard look at SILAS

JAY
And just what breed are you ?

SILAS thinks about striking JAY but changes his mind

He mounts his horse, looking into the forest

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

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

JAY climbs on his pony

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

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

SILAS and JAY, their horses still tied together with the
washing line, ride into the forest

60 **EXT - TOP OF THE HILL - DAY**

60

The posse watch SILAS and JAY ride into the forest

SKELLY

Ah God damn you Silas

CUT TO:

61 **INT - PIONEER HOME - DAY**

61

ROSE is clearing the table, JOHN polishes a horseshoe, KOTORI drinks his coffee

A knock at the door

JOHN signals ROSE and KOTORI to sit at the table

JOHN gets up reaches for the rifle above the door

JOHN

Who be it ?

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

VICTOR (V.O.)

Victor Self.. Reverend Victor Self

Victor has a well spoken English accent, clear and polite

JOHN lays the gun down when he hears the word 'Reverend'

VICTOR (V.O.)

Sorry to bother you, looking for a chap by the name of Parker..

JOHN opens the door to VICTOR

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

This is the sharp shooting bounty hunter, VICTOR THE HAWK

VICTOR

James Parker

JOHN takes a second to think

JOHN

No Parkers here minister, won't you come in

JOHN opens the door wide, revealing to VICTOR'S POV, ROSE, standing pointing the rifle at him

VICTOR

Sir I thank you, but decline

VICTOR nods behind JOHN

JOHN turns to see ROSE pointing the gun at VICTOR

JOHN lunges at ROSE and grabs the gun

JOHN ROSS

Rose!

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

JOHN ROSS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry minister

VICTOR smiles

VICTOR

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

JOHN ROSS

My daughter

VICTOR

Ah .. Good day sir

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

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

JOHN ROSS

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

ROSE

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

JOHN ROSS

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

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

She knows trouble is coming

ROSE turns into the house and shuts the door

CUT TO:

62

EXT - SILVER BIRCH FOREST - DAY

62

JAY and SILAS wind through the silver birch trees of Silverghost

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

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

JAY

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

SILAS responds

SILAS

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

JAY is taken aback by SILAS sudden poetic knowledge

CUT TO:

63

EXT - CLEARING IN THE SILVER BIRCH FOREST - DAY

63

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

JAY thinks he sees something move in the trees

He wanders into the middle of the clearing

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

JAY sees the movement but not the figure

JAY

Silas .. The trees are moving

SILAS turns to look but sees nothing

SILAS

It's called a hangover kid. You'll
get used to it

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

His bow is drawn and his arrow points at JAY

His tribe must be the reason why 'men come in to Silverghost
don't come out'

The arrow is released with a whizz

JAY instinctively raises his hands to cover his face

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

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

First disbelief, then panic, then pain

SILAS wanders over

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

SILAS and JAY can only watch

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

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

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

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

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

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

SILAS smiles

SILAS (CONT'D)

Nice catch

SILAS snaps the head off the arrow and pulls the remaining
arrow out

JAY yelps in pain

SILAS pats JAY on the back

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

CUT TO:

64

EXT - WHEATFIELD IN FRONT OF PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

64

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

In the middle stands a ragged scarecrow

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

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

This rifle has a sight attached for distance shooting

VICTOR gently lifts the rifle up and looks across the field

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

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

VICTOR places a bullet in the chamber of the rifle

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

The sun is beating down hard

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

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

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

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

KOTORI helps ROSE up onto the pony

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

CUT TO:

65

EXT - SILVER BIRCH FOREST - DAY

65

SILAS and JAY wind through the silver birch

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

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

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

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

JAY
I've made it

SILAS is behind JAY, still on his horse

SILAS
Are you sure that's them

JAY ignores SILAS and lets out a relieved sigh

JAY
Exactly what I imagined

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

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

JAY (CONT'D)
Hey

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

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

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

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

SILAS, behind JAY, pulls out his large hunting knife

JAY sees the knife, stops wriggling, places his head against the tree, shuts his eyes

JAY thinks Silas is about to slit his throat

JAY (CONT'D)
Do it quick

SILAS looks at JAY incredulously

SILAS
I ain't going to kill you

SILAS cuts the long end of the rope beyond the knot

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

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

SILAS grabs the back of JAY'S head

SILAS (CONT'D)
Hold still

SILAS rubs the white powder over JAY's face

JAY
What is this!

SILAS
Stops the sun burning you up

JAY rages

JAY
I'll protect Rose or die trying

SILAS turns and walks to his horse

SILAS
That's what I'm afraid of

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

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

JAY throws himself into a rage

JAY wriggles, dribbles

Begins to rub the rope up and down the back of the tree

SILAS (CONT'D)

Rose..

Another burst in the paper window below the eye hole and a gun barrel seductively slides out

SILAS holds his hands up and takes a step back and another

SILAS (CONT'D)

Easy .. I'm a friend

ROSE's eye moves, she was looking at SILAS, now her gaze shifts to something behind and to the left of SILAS

The barrel of the gun also shifts round away from SILAS

SILAS turns to see what ROSE now looks and aims at

It is VICTOR in the field. And he is aiming his rifle at SILAS

VICTOR shoots

SILAS is hit on the shoulder and falls to the ground

ROSE's eye disappears from the hole on the paper window

SILAS struggles to his feet and scrambles round the left hand side of the house and falls

VICTOR quickly reloads

SILAS slumps against the wall of the house

VICTOR can still see SILAS' legs sticking out

VICTOR shoots SILAS in the leg

SILAS gasps and shuffles along the wall so he is completely out of sight

VICTOR again reloads

The scarecrow, about twenty feet behind VICTOR, is made of a cross of wood, with a ragged coat and a large hat

VICTOR aims his rifle, waiting for SILAS to reappear

The scarecrow lifts its head and lowers its arms

It is PAYNE, now wearing the hat of the scarecrow

PAYNE casually walks towards VICTOR and shoots him in the back

VICTOR falls down dead

PAYNE takes aim high

ROSE turns

ROSE
Kotori!

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

SILAS is slumped behind the wall to ROSE's left

SILAS starts to sing and ROSE hears through the wall

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

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

94 **EXT - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY** 94

SILAS strikes a match and lights his cigar

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

95 **INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY** 95

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

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

96 **EXT - RIGHT SIDE OF THE HOUSE - DAY** 96

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

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

97 **INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY** 97

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

JAY sees that his love ROSE has just mistakenly shot him, reels back against the back wall and slumps down

ROSE does not recognise JAY, the last person she would expect to run through the door, and JAY's face white with powder from the birch tree

ROSE has presumed he is another of PAYNE'S men

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

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

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

Blood drips out of his mouth

JAY tries to call out to ROSE but he cannot talk

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

JAY looks over to her

KOTORI returns to the room

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

He sits next to ROSE and hands her the rifle

ROSE places her hand on his

ROSE
Until civilisation arrives

KOTORI leans in and kisses ROSE on the cheek

JAY looks gutted

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

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

JAY winces in pain

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

ROSE cocks the rifle, looks out of the window and aims

98

EXT - FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY

98

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

The flaming arrow arcs and lands in the dry wheat

The wheat quickly burns and the fire spreads rapidly

ROSE keeps aiming out the window, waiting

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

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

ROSE fires, shooting him dead

MARIMACHO appears, ROSE fires and shoots her dead

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

99

INT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY

99

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

ROSE

Kotori

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

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

She looks directly at JAY for the first time

JAY tries to speak

JAY (WHISPER)

Rose

ROSE sees JAY

ROSE

Jay

JAY sheds a single tear

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

JAY smiles at ROSE and places his hand on hers

ROSE begins to softly cry

Jay
ROSE (CONT'D)

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

Silly boy
ROSE (CONT'D)

JAY tries to talk but cannot

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

ROSE turns to look

PAYNE stands at the door

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

ROSE slowly cocks the gun as PAYNE talks

PAYNE
Turn around Rose

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

It's over
PAYNE (CONT'D)

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

PAYNE lifts his gun to ROSE

Doesn't hurt
PAYNE (CONT'D)

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

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

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

ROSE sobs and lowers her head

100

EXT - SIDE OF HOUSE - DAY

100

SILAS struggles to his feet

101 **EXT - PIONEER HOUSE - DAY**

101

ROSE sits in front of JAY

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

SILAS

Jay

SILAS slumps down on his knees next to ROSE

They both look at JAY and not at each other

SILAS removes his hat

SILAS (CONT'D)

He loved you with all his heart

ROSE

His heart was in the wrong place

SILAS

His spirit was true

JAY dead, we hold him for a beat

PAYNE dead and we hold on him for a beat

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

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

MARIMACHO lies dead on the grass

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

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

THE KID lies dead next to the house

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

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

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

JOHN ROSS lies dead by the fence

MARIA THE SWEDE lies dead in the trading post

JOHAN lies dead in a pool of blood in the trading post

THE STOREKEEPER lies dead behind the counter in the trading post

The Indian slaying old OFFICER lies dead on the forest floor

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

End of montage of the dead

102 **EXT - PLAIN WITH PIONEER HOUSE SITTING PRETTY IN THE SUN** 102

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SILAS turns, exits frame, black screen

THE END