

BAD DAY AT BLACK ROCK

Written by

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Based on the story

"Bad Day At Hondo"

by Howard Breslin

SHOOTING

DRAFT

FADE IN BEFORE MAIN TITLE

BAD DAY AT BLACK ROCK

ESTABLISHING SHOT - BLACK ROCK - PART OF TOWN: FOCAL

POINT:

RAILROAD STATION

abandoned, in an extreme state of dilapidation. The structure is blistered by the resolute sun, the roof is weather-warped. Dry rot and mildew wage a relentless battle against the foundation. Between the building and the tracks is a long, somewhat narrow platform, its floorboards twisted by time, termites and the elements. The match-board overhang of the building, throwing some little shade to a portion of the platform, sags and bellies. From the overhang is appended a rectangular panel on which, in flaky paint, the town is identified:

BLACK ROCK

than the
Other, cocking the sign irregularly.

Past
The railroad tracks reach endlessly into the horizon.
with
the town on each side stretches the ocean-like prairie,
each
sand dunes rising and falling monotonously, shouldering
bruise
other toward infinity. The morning sun lays over this
wasteland of the American Southwest, a gigantic yellow
from which heat waves like bloodshot arteries spread
themselves over the poisoned sky.

from it
A small shack stands next to the station, separated
building,
by a narrow alleyway and leaning toward the larger
across
as if for support. The words POSTAL TELEGRAPH are arced
reinforced
its dusty vitrine. An old straight-backed chair,
corner
with twisted wire, is tilted against the north-west
telegraph
of the shack. In it is Mr. Hastings, the postal
He
agent, a man of middle years and exorbitant mediocrity.
receding
sits there spinelessly, fingering a wart on his
knuckle
chin and, once in a while, for variety, rubbing a
under his watery nose.

FULL SHOT - BLACK ROCK

intersects
The town is minute, dismal and forgotten, crouching in
in
isolation where the single line of railroad track
false
a secondary dirt road. The twin strips of steel glisten
stony
the fierce sunlight, fencing the dreary plain from the
Rock's
fronts of the town. In b.g. is the bluff of a black
and
mountain. Against this ancient mass the houses of Black
single street*** (See map, P.2A) are scanty in number

peeled
tin

insignificant in architecture, a conglomerate paint-modern trussed together with rusty nails and battered strips torn from signs.

nothing
nothing
the
held

The town and the terrain surrounding it have, if else, the quality of inertia and immutability -- moves, not even an insect; nothing breathes, not even wind. Town and terrain seem to be trapped, caught and forever in the sullen, abrasive earth.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

STRAIGHT SHOT - STREAMLINER

its
blasting

jarring in its power as it ramrods across the desert, diesel engines pounding. Its horn "WONKS" twice, the shatterable air.

FULL SHOT - BLACK ROCK - ANOTHER ANGLE

and
lazily
a
credits
of
best

Nothing is changed, nothing is altered. But look close you will see a small shallow current of wind sweeping across the dirt and dust of the single street. HOLD for a beat, then MAIN TITLE appears. Between the ensuing INTERCUT a series of sharp LONG SHOTS. The composition each shot has that hard, sun-beaten texture of American primitive painting -- pressurized in its simplicity -- exemplified, perhaps, by the work of Grant Wood.

EXT. SAM'S SANITARY BAR AND GRILL - ANGLE ON DOC VELIE

Black
veterinarian

assayer and notary public, mortician to the citizens of Rock who have departed to a better place, and

gentleman,
Grill.
them
glances

to its lesser animals. An elderly, somewhat untidy
he sits nonchalantly on a chair outside the Bar &
Idling with him are three or four other loafers, among
Sam, the middle-aged proprietor of the restaurant. Doc
casually at his watch; no one else moves. The hot wind
continues listlessly down the empty street.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. GARAGE - LIZ BROOKS

cotton
of
habit, at
gustiness

A tall, attractive girl of twenty in dungarees and
shirt. She stands just outside the open barn-like door
the garage, staring, from the compulsive force of
the endlessly receding tracks. The sultry wind, its
slightly increased, blows through her fine dark hair.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. PORCH OF HOTEL - COLEY TRIMBLE AND HECTOR DAVID

him a
type --
They
devil

two enormous men. HECTOR is tall, and there is about
nasty, raw-boned tautness; COLEY is more the anthropoid
long thick arms and a round, iron casing of a belly.
glance down the street, watching incuriously a dust
swirling in the wind.

its

Now the CAMERA has completed its probe of the town and
denizens. MAIN TITLE and CREDITS are completed...

CLOSE SHOT - MR. HASTINGS

against

still spineless in his chair, the chair still tilted

the
(engine
Hastings
oncoming

the shack. From o.s. and far away, we hear the horn of
streamliner -- two long "WONKS", a short and a long
whistle signal for approach to bridge crossing).
straightens up ever so slightly as he reacts to the
train.

STRAIGHT SHOT - STREAMLINER

moving at tremendous speed.

BRIDGE

three

with train barrelling toward it. The horn BLASTS --
short WONKS (engine whistle signal for stopping at next
station).

CLOSE SHOT - HASTINGS

galvanic
throws
arm

getting jerkily to his feet, as though charged by a
current. The uncharacteristic speed of his movements
the tilted chair to the station platform. He raises an
to shield his watery eyes from the sun...

HASTINGS

(almost inaudible, as
if to himself)
Stopping...?

SHOT - TRAIN

a
CAMERA
brakes
rails,
speed,

heading toward CAMERA, churning across the desert like
juggernaut. It PANS past CAMERA in a blur of speed.
SWINGS UP on a level with the great iron wheels as the
are applied. The wheels shriek agonizingly against the
kicking up cinders and a wild flurry of dust. She cuts
brakes hissing, and starts to slow down.

LONG SHOT MAIN STREET - BLACK ROCK

The SHOOTING from rear of town, toward the railroad tracks.
The townspeople step out, frowning, cautious, disturbed.
The secure ritual of the train passing through, never
stopping, has somehow, for some unknown reason, been violated.

CLOSE SHOT - DOC VELIE

leaving as his mouth tightens. His air of placidity vanishes,
his features disturbed.

CLOSE SHOT - LIZ BROOKS

eyes Her fine young face stiffens almost imperceptibly. Her
as she are coated with a vague emptiness. She seems confused
halfturns toward the hotel.

REVERSE SHOT - WHAT SHE SEES

of the Coley Trimble and Hector David, standing on the porch
might hotel. They seem tense, responding variously to what
glob be fear. Coley's nostrils flare, his flat ugly mouth
rapidly. compresses. He looks profoundly serious. Hector wipes a
of dusty sweat from the socket of an eye and blinks

CLOSE SHOT - HASTINGS

train as he stands in surprise, nervously alert, watching the
as it comes to a complete stop. His jaw droops with the
slackness of fear.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. STATION PLATFORM

of a with the train stationary before it. A sleek steel door
suitcase pullman clangs open. A colored porter carrying a

haired
associate
granite-
about
but
somber
shoulder
hand is

walks down the wrought-iron steps. He is stately, gray-
and lean, with the almost finical tidiness travelers
with trainmen. The man behind him is big-shouldered, a
like wedge of a man with calm, piercing eyes. There is
him an air of monumental dependability and quiet humor,
his eyes are those of a man who has lately lived in
familiarity with pain. His left arm hangs from his
with that lifeless rigidity of paralysis, while the
hidden in his pocket.

ANOTHER ANGLE - MACREEDY AND PORTER

distance
smiles a
dust.
the

The porter puts the suitcase on the platform. In the
the town and its people are seen staring silently,
motionlessly. The big man glances toward them. He
sad, distasteful greeting to the town, its wretched
its mean, modest buildings. The porter disappears into
train as the conductor enters scene. He turns slowly,
following Macreedy's gaze...

CONDUCTOR

(softly, staring at
the towns people)
Man. They look woebegone and far
away.

MACREEDY

(looking around)
I'll only be here twenty-four hours.

CONDUCTOR

In a place like this, it could be a
lifetime.
(turning to face
Macreedy)
Good luck, Mr. Macreedy.

engineer

Macreedy nods his thanks. The conductor signals the

blasts
begins
quite
Macreeedy
package of
free
the
cardboard
with
scrapes the
turns
walks
grapples
controls it

(o.s.) and steps on the train. The diesel's claxon
the torrid air ominously. The train slowly, smoothly,
to move, picking up speed. The cars slip past until,
suddenly, the Streamliner is gone. For a moment
watches it. Then, quite unconsciously, he takes a
cigarettes from his left hand pocket, taps the last one
of the pack, sticks it between his lips and, crumpling
empty pack, drops it beside the tracks. He takes a
book of matches, flicks it open, bends a match in half
agile fingers, and with a sure frictional motion
head against the sandpaper guard. The match flares, the
cigarette is lit. Macreeedy inhales, exhales deeply, and
to pick up his suitcase. Then he sees Hastings, who
slowly, almost painfully, to him. His Adam's apple
protestingly with his collar. After a moment he
sufficiently to talk...

HASTINGS

You for Black Rock?

MACREEEDY

(easily)

That's right.

HASTINGS

(uneasily)

There must be some mistake. I'm
Hastings, the telegraph agent. Nobody
told me the train was stopping.

MACREEEDY

(with a ghost of a
grin)

They didn't?

HASTINGS

(upset)

I just said they didn't, and they

ought to. What I -- want to know,
why didn't they?

MACREEDY

(shrugging)
Probably didn't think it was
important.

HASTINGS

Important?! It's the first time the
streamliner stopped here in four
years.

(swallowing nervously)
You being met? You visiting folks or
something? I mean, whatd'ya want?

MACREEDY

I want to go to Adobe Flat. Any cabs
available?

HASTINGS

(as if he hadn't heard
right; as if he wanted
everyone in town to
know)
Adobe Flat?!
(he gulps, recovers
slightly)
No cabs.

MACREEDY

Where's the hotel?

of a Hastings looks at him blankly. The thousand-yard stare
hypnotic glazes his features.

MACREEDY

(patiently)
I asked where's the hotel?

Hastings points.

MACREEDY

Thanks.

into With his suitcase, he cuts across a weedy path, running
stares Black Rock's single street. For a moment, Hastings
after him; then he breaks hurriedly, entering telegraph
agent's shack.

INT. POSTAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE

as Hastings, fumbling, picks up the phone...

HASTINGS

(into mouthpiece)

Hello, Pete? Now, listen...

REVERSE SHOT - MAIN STREET - BLACK ROCK

toward the
SHOOTING down the street as Macreedy slowly walks
hotel. Not a person has moved, each eye is glued on the
stranger.

platform
enveloping
The hollow rasp of Macreedy's tread on the wooden
of the "pavement" seems shatteringly loud in the
silence...

CLOSE SHOT - LIZ

as she follows the man's movement.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

CLOSE ANGLE - ON MACREEDY

following
townspeople
five or
peeling,
drunk's
as he walks along. He feels the eyes of everyone
him, glaring at him. He halts, looks around. The
continue to eye him brazenly, yet with an almost animal
incuriosity. He grins and walks on past a cluster of
six RFD mail boxes and a road sign [1], its paint
its face punctured by three or four bullets from a
pistol long ago.

SHOT - MACREEDY

farm
(which
heading toward the hotel. In b.g. is a relatively small
equipment yard compressed between a general store

the
office.
it,
legend:

Macreeedy has just passed) and the hotel just ahead. In
yard are a few tractors, and among them huddles a tiny
It is empty; the front window is thick with dust. On
etched by an anonymous, childish finger, is a skull and
crossbones. Running diagonally across is the printed

T.J. HATES J.S.

bemusement.
hotel.
engulfing
whirlpool.

Macreeedy notes the inscription with a sort of wry
He walks on, reaching the facade of the weather-beaten
A gust of wind swirls down the street, momentarily
Macreeedy and the entire area in a sudden eddying
As it subsides...

ANOTHER ANGLE - MACREEEDY

has
Macreeedy
Trimble
and
battleship.
the
jaw.
one
thick
elaborately
those
distinguished
of the

As he peers through the dust toward the dingy hotel. It
a narrow stoop and outside bay windows on each side.
mounts the hotel steps. At the top of the steps Coley
and Hector David watch him silently. Hector is large
leanly muscular, yet Coley looms over him like a
He is a gross behemoth of a man, with sharp flinty eyes
size of glistening pinpoints and a slack, oversized
Both men wear modern Western work clothes, but there is
incongruous accessory which Hector affects. Around his
wrist is a watch with a large flat face and an
tooled leather strap -- a cheap reproduction of one of
expensive Swiss timepieces which, among many
accomplishments, tells the day of the week, the month
year, the phase of the moon, etc., etc.

MACREEDY

(slowing up)
'Afternoon.

No reaction from Hector.

COLEY

(blocking doorway)
Anything I can do for you?

MACREEDY

You run this hotel?

COLEY

No.

MACREEDY

(pleasantly)
Then there's nothing you can do for
me.

He brushes past Coley and enters.

HECTOR

(turning to Coley)
Find Smith!

Coley nods and heads down the street. Hector enters the
hotel.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. HOTEL

It is a typical small town hotel, but crummier, with a
tiny lobby. Macreedy is waiting at the empty desk as Hector
strolls in, flopping his enormous bulk into a nicked and mothy
chair. He picks up a newspaper, but his eyes remain on
Macreedy. Macreedy waits patiently for the absent clerk. For a
moment, he studies the open registration ledger; his eyes rove
from the ink-splotched blotter up over the desk to one of
those World War II banners, the imitation silk now stained
and

The

faded. It depicts a shrieking eagle rampant, clutching
Flag in a claw. Under it, the legend:

"GOD BLESS AMERICA"

Near it, a tacky placard proclaims:

**DO ALL THE GOOD YOU CAN,
BY ALL THE MEANS YOU CAN,
IN ALL THE WAYS YOU CAN,
AT ALL THE TIMES YOU CAN,
TO ALL THE PEOPLE YOU CAN,
AS LONG AS EVER YOU CAN.**

Hector

young

the

softness

sugariness

uneasy

Feeling the eyes of Hector on him, Macreedy turns.
meets his gaze with bland, insolent interest. Now a
man (his name is PETE) comes out of a small room behind
the registration desk and walks up to it. There is a
softness about his regular features, a certain indefinable
sugariness about his mouth. He seems tight-lipped, for lorn and
uneasy as he faces Macreedy across the counter.

MACREEDY

(pleasantly)
I'd like a room.

PETE

All filled up.

MACREEDY

(a beat)
Got any idea where I might --

PETE

(stiffly, shaking his
head)
This is 1945, mister. There's been a
war on.

tolerance.

small

Macreedy looks at the young man with impeccable
tolerance. Without shifting his gaze, he slowly lets fall his
small suitcase. It thuds softly on the frayed carpet.

MACREEDY

I thought it ended a couple of months ago.

PETE

Yeah, but the O.P.A. lingers on.

before
firmly,
it, a
[...] on

Macreeedy looks down at the open ledger on the desk him. The clerk reaches out to close it. Gently, yet Macreeedy stops him, reopening the big book. He studies finger straying unconsciously inside his collar. He it to relieve the starchy stiffness.
Pete begins to fidget...

PETE

You don't know about the O.P.A...

MACREEDY

(without looking up)
Tell me.

PETE

Well, for establishments with less'n fifty rooms hotel keepers got to report regularly about...

His voice fades desperately.

PETE

...about tenants and... and...
registration...
(drawing himself up)
There are penalties imposed...

Again his voice trails off.

MACREEDY

(eyes still on the
ledger)
You seem to have lots of vacancies.

PETE

(uncomfortable)
Well... as I said...

runs

Macreeedy leans over the counter to a rack of keys. He

his splayed fingers over the key rack as...

MACREEDY

Lots of vacancies.

PETE

They're everyone of 'em locked up.
Some are show rooms...

MACREEDY

Yes...?

PETE

(with touching
sincerity)

...for cattle buyers, feed salesmen.
The others -- they're spoken for,
rented to cowboys, ranch hands...

(Macreedy listens
respectfully)

They pay by the month. For when they
come into town. We provide for their
every wish and comfort.

(weakly)

You understand...?

MACREEDY

Not really. But while I'm pondering
it, get a room ready. Just for
tonight.

(picking key from
rack at random)

This one.

Hector. Pete opens his mouth but no sound comes out. [...] at

CLOSE SHOT - HECTOR

glowering at Pete.

TWO SHOT - MACREEDY AND PETE

as Macreedy signs the ledger.

MACREEDY

(signing)

Sure could use a bath. Where is it?

He picks up the key.

PETE

Head of the stairs.

Macreeedy nods, reaches for the bag at his feet. Then he hesitates, looks at Hector.

MACREEEDY

I don't know just why you're interested -- but the name's Macreeedy. I'm...

(grins)

It's all in the ledger.

HECTOR

(slowly, his eyes glued to Macreeedy's stiff arm)

You look like you need a hand.

Macreeedy says nothing. The wales along his face harden.

He
disappears,

picks up his bag and climbs the stairs. As he

Hector lumbers to the desk and grabs the ledger.

HECTOR

(reading aloud)

John J. Macreeedy. From Los Angeles.

(looking up)

I wanna know everything he does, Pete. Check every call -- any mail.

PETE

(nodding)

And in the meantime...?

HECTOR

(grinning harshly)

In the meantime, I'll crowd him a little...

(looking up the stairs)

...see if he's got any iron in his blood...

As Pete bites his lower lip thoughtfully,

DISSOLVE:

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY - MACREEDY

He
shave;
steam
bath
finger
tag. He
faucet
cough
the
razor,
in a new bathrobe, before a cracked, discolored mirror.
draws a safety razor down his face, completing his
then he wipes a hand over the mirror, which clouds with
almost as fast as he can clear it. o.s., the SOUND of
water gurgling down the tub drain. He runs a tentative
inside the collar of his robe, pulling loose a price
drops it carefully into a wastebasket. He turns on the
at the sink to rinse his shaving brush. The rusty pipes
and rumble, roaring as a trickle of water arrives while
drain sucks loudly at its departure. He dries the
turns off the faucet and exits.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - ANGLE ON MACREEDY

bathrobe
like a
towel
knob. He
silently,
As he walks down the dark, narrow hall. He wears the
and slippers; a large towel is draped over his head,
prize fighter. He stops outside a door, pushes the
from his head to his neck and puts his hand on the
is about to insert the key when he tenses. Slowly,
he turns the knob and throws open the door.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

contents
sprawls
He
thick
He
Next to the door, in the corner of the small, sparsely
furnished room is Macreedy's suitcase, open, its
askew and scattered over the dusty floor. On the bed
Hector David, his gigantic body straining the springs.
lies on his back, hands clasped easily under his head,
legs crossed, his Stetson tilted over his low forehead.

moment is completely unconcerned by Macreedy's entrance. For a
Macreedy stares at him. Then...

MACREEDY

(slightly amused)
I think you have the wrong room.

HECTOR

(not budging)
You think so?

his Slowly, his eyes still on Macreedy, Hector takes off
pants elaborate wrist watch and slides it gently into his
pocket.

HECTOR

What else you got on your mind?

to be Macreedy pauses and takes in the situation. He refuses
baited.

MACREEDY

Nothing, I guess.

HECTOR

If you had a mind, boy, you'd of heard what Pete downstairs said. He said these here rooms are for us cowboys. For our every wish and comfort.

MACREEDY

And this, I guess, is yours?

HECTOR

When I'm in town. And I'm in town, as any fool can see. You see that, don't you, boy?

MACREEDY

I guess I do. Would you mind very much if I sort of...
(he gestures toward
his suitcase and
clothing)
...clean up this mess and get another room?

HECTOR

Not at all. But if you want this room real bad...

(he raises his enormous bulk to a sitting position, rubbing the knuckles of one big fist with the palm of his other hand)

...we could maybe settle your claim without all this talk.

(no answer from Macreeedy)

If a man don't claim what's rightfully his'n, he's nuthin'. What do you think?

MACREEEDY

I guess so.

HECTOR

You guess so. But still you ain't claimin' this room?

MACREEEDY

I guess not.

HECTOR

You're all the time guessin', boy. Don't you ever know anything?

MACREEEDY

One thing I know. Since I got off the train, I've been needled. Why?

HECTOR

(after a beat, slowly)

I guess I don't rightly know.

For a moment their eyes lock. Then Macreeedy goes to his suitcase and throws his clothes in it. As he goes out

the

door...

DISSOLVE TO:

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

LOAFERS

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY - FULL SHOT - SAM AND THE

They sit around, each with his own thoughts. They are generally stolid; only Sam seems nervous. He looks up eagerly as Doc Velie enters the lobby. As he joins Sam... Sam walks light for a big man, Doc.

DOC

(straight)

Who?

SAM

(irritated)

You know who!

(Doc grins impishly;

Sam's anger subsides)

What do you think, Doc?

DOC

Why ask me? He's no salesman, that's sure.

(again the impish

grin)

Unless he's peddling dynamite.

SAM

(squirming visibly)

Maybe he's a cop, or something...

DOC

Ever see a cop with a stiff arm?

SAM

(squinting thoughtfully)

Maybe his arm's all right. Maybe he's just holding tight to something in his pocket...

DOC

(scoffing)

Like what? A pistol? A stick of T-N-T?

(gleefully)

To blow up this whole mangy, miserable town!

(with sudden, almost

naive, seriousness)

Why are you so interested, Sam?

SAM

Who, me?

DOC

I mean, if I was that interested...
(his eyes look up
toward the hotel
stairs o.s.)
...I'd ask him.

Sam follows Doc's gaze...

REVERSE SHOT - WHAT THEY SEE 35X1

Macreeedy walks down the stairs. Pete looks up from the
desk.
He is about to dart behind the partition when...

MACREEEDY

Hey! Hold it!

Sam and
He walks to the desk, smiling at Pete. In b.g., Doc,
the loafers watch.

MACREEEDY

Got any cigarettes?

up
toward the
Pete studies him, then bends under the counter, coming
with a pack. Doc leaves Sam and is slowly walking
stranger, eyeing him curiously.

PETE

This is all.

pack,
Macreeedy throws the money on the desk and opens the
dexterously using the fingers of his left hand.

PETE

How long you staying?

MACREEEDY

In my new room, you mean?
(flatly)
I'm staying.

PETE

I mean, in the hotel.

MACREEDY

Just about twenty-four hours.
(sharply)
Why?

PETE

(flustered)
I... I was just askin'.

MACREEDY

(evenly)
Why? You expecting a convention?

PETE

(doggedly)
I was just askin'.

then,
and
Macreedy looks at him, inhales deeply on his cigarette
as he slowly lets the smoke out, removes the cigarette
looks at it.

MACREEDY

Stale.

starts
Now Doc is at the desk not far from Macreedy. Macreedy
out, then turns to Pete.

MACREEDY

Where can I rent a car?

PETE

I don't know.

Macreedy smiles and sighs tiredly. Then...

MACREEDY

(as to a child)
Let's put it this way -- if I had a
car and if I wanted to put gas in
it, where would I go?

PETE

(refusing to cooperate)
But you don't have a car.

DOC

(to Macreedy)
You might try the garage at the end
of the street.

his Macreedy pauses, looking at Doc, who blandly returns
stare.

MACREEDY

Thanks.

Pete, Doc nods. Macreedy smiles and walks toward the door;
Doc et al watching him. He goes out.

EXT. STREET

pulls up As Macreedy walks down hotel steps, a station wagon
fender just before him. Tied with a rope to the right front
weaves is a magnificent eight-point buck. A stain of dry blood
unmistakable an uneven course down his glossy flank from an
car; one bullet hole in his shoulder. Two men get out of the
toward of them is Coley Trimble. He sees Macreedy coming
child. him. He stands motionless in the center of the narrow
swings pavement, picking at his nose with the detachment of a
joining The other man is broad and excessively masculine as he
Coley out from behind the wheel. He walks around the car,
Coley Coley at the curb. Macreedy comes on. The man with
face, looks at the stranger with colossal indifference, as
shaven. expressionless as the soil of Black Rock. His handsome
of under a dusty hunting cap, is taut and hard and wind-
lips. In Next to Coley he stands motionless, except for the wisp
lobby smoke from a black Cuban cigarette between his thin
Macreedy, b.g., the loafers who had been ensconced in the hotel
Silence move out the door and stand on the porch. They watch
breaks Coley and Reno Smith, the handsome, taut-faced man.
soems to settle over everything. It is Macreedy who

it...

MACREEDY

(grinning wearily at
Coley)

Here we go again.

continues
the
follows

Gently he walks around Coley and Reno Smith and
down the street. Coley's eyes follow him. Smith goes up
steps of the hotel and enters the lobby. Coley quickly
him. The loafers on the porch go back inside.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY

opens

The loafers resume their familiar places as Smith walks
briskly to the clerk's desk. Pete, in anticipation,
the hotel register, places it before Smith

PETE

(deferentially,
gesturing toward the
open register)

That's all I know about him, Mr.
Smith.

eyes
the

Smith doesn't answer; he looks up thoughtfully. His
harden almost imperceptibly as he sees Coley, across
narrow room, looking out the window after Macreedy.

SMITH

(to Coley's back)

Sit down.

COLEY

(spinning to face him)

I was only...

SMITH

(interrupting)

Sit down.

resting
gigantic

Coley sits in the nearest chair. Beyond Smith, still
easily against the high counter of Pete's desk, the

comes

figure of Hector appears at the top of the stairs. He
down and joins Smith.

HECTOR

(after a pause)
Pretty cool guy.

SMITH

Doesn't push easy?

HECTOR

(frowning)
That's it -- that's just it. He pushes
too easy. Maybe we oughtta...

He hesitates as Doc Velie sidles amiably into earshot.

SMITH

What do you want, Doc?

DOC

Nothing.
(archly)
I was just wondering what all you
people were worrying about.
(Smith looks at him
coldly)
Not that I have the slightest idea.

SMITH

You wonder too much, and you talk
too much.
(pauses)
It's a bad parlay, Doc.

DOC

I hold no truck with silence.
(impishly)
I got nothing to hide.

HECTOR

(suddenly towering
over Doc)
What're you tryin' to say?

DOC

Nothing, man. It's just, you worry
about the stranger only if you look
at him...
(slowly)
...from a certain aspect.

SMITH

How do you look at him, Doc?

DOC

(firmly)

With the innocence of a fresh-laid egg.

SMITH

(after a pause)

Keep it up, Doc. Be funny. Make bad jokes.

(he starts to walk
toward the window,
Doc and Hector
following him)

And some day I'll have Coley wash out your mouth with lye.

Smith looks thoughtfully out the window.

REVERSE SHOT - WHAT HE SEES

Macreeedy, down the end of the block, saunters easily up
to Liz's garage.

EXT. LIZ'S GARAGE - FULL SHOT

Against the front of the building is parked a battered bicycle. On one of the barnlike walls a boy of nine is drawing laboriously with a piece of chalk. He puts the last flourish to a skull and crossbones identical with that seen earlier on the window of the equipment yard office. Macreeedy stops a few feet from him, waiting until the boy prints "T.J.". As he steps back to admire his handiwork...

MACREEDY

Hi, T.J.

T.J. nods. He approaches the wall, raising his chalk.

MACREEDY

This your garage?

T. J.

Nope.

MACREEDY

(a beat)

Where's the man it belongs to?

T. J.

Ain't a man.

He pauses. As Macreedy opens his mouth to interrogate further...

T. J.

Lady runs this garage.

of
mouth...
Again a pause. T.J. has just completed the final letter
the word "HATES". And again as Macreedy opens his

T. J.

She's not here.

MACREEDY

Where'd she go?

T. J.

(shrugging)

I dunno. Somewhere.

MACREEDY

When will she be back?

T. J.

I dunno. Sometime.

work,
J.S.". And again as Macreedy begins to speak...

T. J.

In about ten minutes.

MACREEDY

(with a grin)

Thanks.

completes
of

T.J. turns, pulls the bike away from the building,
a fastidious "pony express" and peddles furiously out
scene.

EXT. STREET - FULL SHOT

it.

as Macreedy, after a moment's hesitation, starts down
From the far end, at the telegraph agent's shack, a
starts running toward Macreedy. It is Hastings.

figure

INTERCUT

doesn't

down,

grins

Hastings,

between the two men. Hastings, in his concentration,
see the stranger until he is almost upon him. He slows
suddenly, awkwardly, to a self-conscious walk. Macreedy
at him, passes on, shaking his head speculatively.
with a parting glance, gallops up the hotel steps.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - FULL SHOT

with

Smith, Coley, Hector, Pete, Doc, Sam et al are still in
evidence. Smith is in a tight little group at the desk

to

Coley, Hector and Pete. Doc has taken a position at the
window, looking out. Hastings bursts in and half-runs

Smith...

ANGLE FAVORING SMITH AND HASTINGS

as the excited telegraph agent speaks.

HASTINGS

I called the Circle T. He ain't got
business there -- not if they don't
know him. Right, Mr. Smith?

Smith ignores him, thinking. Hastings breathes heavily.
Finally...

SMITH

(to Hastings)

Send a wire to Nick Gandi in Los
Angeles. Tell him to find out all he
can about John J. Macreedy. Tell him
I want to know fast. Sign my name.

Hastings nods, scribbling on a pad.

HASTINGS

What was that?

SMITH

Nick Gandi. G-A-N-D-I. Care of the
Blake Hotel.

Hastings nods and hurriedly exits.

COLEY

(after a beat)

Who's Gandi?

in Smith looks at Coley, trying to decide if the question
any way challenges his authority. He concludes not...

SMITH

He's a private detective.

(beat)

I drive to L.A. now and then.

HECTOR

(slightly worried)

He'll get us the dope?

SMITH

He'll get us anything, for twenty
bucks a day and expenses.

(Hector frowns)

Hector, you worry too fast and too
easy.

HECTOR

It's just, I don't like it.

COLEY

Maybe he's just passing through.

HECTOR

Don't bet on it. He can only mean
trouble.

SMITH

(smiles faintly)

Hector, you're jumpy as a stall horse.

HECTOR

(doggedly)

We oughtta see him... talk to him.

SMITH

(quietly)

About what?

(Hector doesn't answer)

What'll we talk to him about? The birds, the bees? The weather? The crops?

(pauses)

You tried -- where'd it get you?

HECTOR

(uncomfortably)

I only thought...

SMITH

Sure. You only thought.

COLEY

(after a beat)

What do we do?

SMITH

What do you do? You wait. Like Pete here. Right, Pete?

Pete nods, his brow furrowed uncomfortably in a frown.

SMITH

That's all you do. But while you wait... I talk to him.

At this point the brittle silence is cracked by...

DOC

(o.s.)

Hey!

Smith and those around him look off in the direction of
Doc.

DOC VELIE - AT THE WINDOW

peering out. He turns in the direction of Smith and the others.

DOC

Now what do you know?

(beaming)

Mr. Macreeedy seems to be heading for the jail.

(impishly)
Now what do you suppose he'd want to
see the Sheriff about?

Smith goes to the window, edging Doc to one side with a
shoulder. He looks out grimly.

REVERSE SHOT - WHAT HE SEES

Macreeedy, down the street, cuts up the steps of the
jail.

BACK TO SCENE

Smith staring out the window with a frown. Doc watching
him
crossing
out of the corner of his eye, a bemused expression
his puckish features.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. JAIL

and
police
and
ANGLE on Macreeedy as he enters the jail. It is small
dirty, with only a tired desk, two chairs and the usual
posters on the wall. One side leads to the cell block
Macreeedy heads for it.

both
the
his
Sheriff TIM
bleary
ANGLE from interior of cell block comprising two cells,
of which are open. A man is asleep in the lower bunk of
front cell. The keys are in the lock. Macreeedy shakes
head and starts to close the creaking cell door.

HORN, the man in the bunk, lifts his head, blinking his
eyes. He is in terrible shape.

TIM

Hold it, friend.

He manages to crawl off the bunk and out toward
Macreeedy.

TIM

(grinning)
I ain't hankerin' to get locked in
my own jail.

MACREEDY

Sorry. I thought you were a guest.

TIM

As it happens, I'm the host.

the
He walks out of the cell, Macreedy following him into
office.

SHOT - OF THE TWO

snort,
Tim breaks out a bottle of booze, starts to take a
then stops, offers it to Macreedy.

TIM

Snort?

MACREEDY

No, thanks.

TIM

Don't blame you. It's awful.

county. He
falls
He takes a belt that would incapacitate half the
finishes, smacks his lips, lays the bottle down, and
into a chair. He looks up at Macreedy.

TIM

(suddenly mean)
What're you lookin' at?

MACREEDY

(easy)
You tell me.

TIM

(after a beat, relaxing)
I ain't always this bad -- just that
last night me and my pal Doc Velie,
we did a little celebratin'. At least
I did.

MACREEDY

What were you celebrating?

TIM

(shrugs)
You name it.
(studies Macreedy)
What do you want?

MACREEDY

My name's Macreedy. I came in on the
Streamliner.

Tim studies him, trying to focus.

TIM

You what?

MACREEDY

I said I came in...

TIM

(interrupting)
You ain't from around here. Up Tucson
way -- Phoenix? Mesa? You ain't
sellin' cattle nor seed nor nothin'
like that?

MACREEDY

No.
(sighs, then distinctly
as to a child)
All I want from you is a little
information. I've got to get to a
place called Adobe Flat.

TIM

(reacts; then, tight-
lipped)
This ain't no information bureau.

Macreedy starts to say something, then stops.
Reconsidering...

MACREEDY

One thing about Black Rock --
everybody's polite. Makes for gracious
living.

TIM

Nobody asked you here.

MACREEDY

How do you know?
(he moves toward the
door, with a rueful
grin)

TIM

(starting after him)
What about Adobe Flat?

MACREEDY

I'm looking for a man named Komako.

The Sheriff reaches for his bottle. In his haste he
drops
before
it. Macreedy's hand moves quickly, catching the bottle
it hits the floor.

MACREEDY

Almost a disaster.

TIM

(sinking back in his
chair)
A fate worse'n death.
(he takes the bottle
from Macreedy)
You move fast for a crip... for a
big man.

For a moment heavy silence. Finally...

MACREEDY

What about Komako?

TIM

(slowly)
If there's no further questions...

Macreedy grins harshly and exits. Tim watches him go,
then
shaking
staring
slowly reaches for the bottle. He pauses, looks at his
hand. Then he withdraws it and just sits in the chair
blindly ahead, seeing nothing.

EXT. STREET

Frowning, deep in thought, Macreedy walks down the
dusty
street. As he reaches the hotel...

SMITH

(o.s.)

Mr. Macreedy.

meet

Macreedy stops, looks toward Smith as he walks out to
him.

MACREEDY

That's the friendliest word I've
heard since I got here.

beside

As Smith joins him, he walks on. Smith falls in step
him. GO WITH THEM.

SMITH

(grins boyishly)

My name is Smith. I own the Triple-
Bar ranch.

(holds out his hand;

Macreedy shakes it)

I want to apologize for some of the
folks in town.

MACREEDY

They act like they're sitting on a
keg.

SMITH

A keg...? Of what?

MACREEDY

I don't know. Maybe diamonds. Maybe
gunpowder.

SMITH

(disarmingly)

No. Nothing like that. We're a little
suspicious of strangers is all.
Hangover from the old days. The old
West.

MACREEDY

I thought the tradition of the old
West was hospitality.

SMITH

(with a sincere smile)

I'm trying to be hospitable, Mr.
Macreedy.

(boyishly pushes his
dusty cap back on
his head)
Going to be around for a while?

MACREEDY

Could be.

SMITH

How would you like to go hunting
tomorrow? I'd be proud to have you
as my guest.

MACREEDY

Thanks, but I'm afraid not.

SMITH

(with admirable candor)
You mean, because of your arm?
(slaps Macreedy's
shoulder in a
friendly,
understanding gesture)
I knew a man once, lost an arm in a
threshing accident. Used to hunt all
the time.

(almost too blandly)
But he was quite a man. He...
(pauses; then, with
discreet and charming
gravity)
I'm sorry. I... What I mean is -- if
there's anything I can do while you're
around...

MACREEDY

I'm looking for...
(sighs)
Never mind. Thanks, anyway.

SMITH

(quietly)
You're looking for what, Mr. Macreedy?

MACREEDY

(eyeing him)
A man named Komako.

SMITH

(no hesitation)
Komako -- Sure, I remember him --
Japanese farmer. Never had a chance.

MACREEDY

No?

SMITH

He got here in '41 -- just before Pearl Harbor. Three months later he was shipped to one of those relocation centers.

(shaking his head)

Tough.

MACREEDY

Which one did he go to?

SMITH

Who knows?

MACREEDY

You think maybe if I wrote him, the letter would be forwarded?

SMITH

I'm sure it would. Write your letter. I'll see it gets out tonight.

MACREEDY

It wouldn't be too much trouble?

SMITH

No trouble at all.

MACREEDY

Funny. Because I think it would be a great deal of trouble for you. It's been a great deal of trouble for me.

At this point they are in front of...

EXT. LIZ'S GARAGE

Macreedy stops, as does Smith. He looks keenly at Smith
as
he takes from his inner jacket pocket a half-dozen
letters...

MACREEDY

I wrote these letters to Komako. They weren't forwarded. They were returned -- address unknown.

(he smiles grimly at Smith)

So I guess there's nothing you can
do for me, after all.

o.s.
at the
silently
effort, a
jeep.

Smith opens his mouth to reply when the NOISE of a jeep
interrupts him. The jeep comes INTO SHOT. Liz Brooks,
wheel, cuts the engine and jumps out. Smith ambles
to a wall and leans against it. Liz reaches behind the
driver's seat and hoists, with both hands and some
five-gallon drum of axle grease from the floor of the
jeep. As she rests it on the rear fender...

MACREEDY

(going to her)
Need a little help?

help

The girl looks at Smith, who has made no attempt to
her.

LIZ

I can manage.

She lifts the drum to the ground.

MACREEDY

Well, I need a little help.
(she looks at him
questioningly)
I'd like to rent your jeep.

LIZ

It'll be two dollars an hour, gas
extra, and ten dollars for my time.

SMITH

(to Liz)
Aren't you going to ask him where he
wants to go?

Liz looks from Smith to Macreedy, puzzled.

SMITH

He wants to go to Adobe Flat.

seek

Liz hesitates. Macreedy notes her confusion as her eyes
Smith's for instructions. Quickly he moves in...

MACREEDY

The road's marked?

LIZ

(nodding)

Yeah. It's about six -- seven miles down...

MACREEDY

Then I won't need your time.

knowing
arm...

Macreeedy hands her a bill. She fumbles with it, not what else to do. Her eyes drift to Macreeedy's stiff

LIZ

(uneasily)

I thought you might... need a little help.

MACREEDY

I can manage.

He steps toward the jeep as...

SMITH

Liz. Do you have a license to rent cars? You could get into trouble.

MACREEDY

It's all right. I won't mention it to the Sheriff.

manipulating

He steps into jeep and, with one hand expertly the controls, drives off.

MED. SHOT - SMITH AND LIZ

Smith turns his attention to the girl...

SMITH

(slowly)

You shouldn't have done that.

LIZ

I thought it would be better if he went out there and got done with it.

(Smith looks at her sharply)

I mean, what could he find out?

frown,
hand.
For a moment Smith doesn't answer. Instead, with a half
he lifts the bill Maccreedy had given her from Liz's

SMITH

(as he studies it)
This is liable to be the hardest ten
dollars you ever earned in your life.

down
He crumples it, pokes the wad in her hand and walks off
the street as...

QUICK

DISSOLVE:

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. JAIL - FULL SHOT - DAY

bottle
Tim sits in his chair, still staring sightlessly at the
whiskey bottle. Smith enters. He looks from Tim to the
on the table, then back to Tim.

SMITH

(after a beat,
disinterestedly)
What did he want -- the stranger?

TIM

(abstractedly)
He asked about Komako.
(looking up at Smith)
You think he'll kick up a storm?

SMITH

(easily)
A storm? About what?

TIM

I don't know. All I know, I don't
want trouble around here.
(pauses awkwardly,
then)
Never again.

SMITH

Trouble? You don't know anything about Komako, now do you, Tim?

TIM

I do not. That's the point.

SMITH

The point is, what you don't know can't hurt you.

TIM

Maybe there's something I ought to know. Maybe I ought to ask you... before the stranger comes back and starts breathing down my neck.

SMITH

(a faint smile)

Tim, you're a lost ball in the high weeds. I told you a long time ago, nothing happened for you to worry about.

TIM

(stands up, facing Smith)

Thing is, I do worry. Maybe I ain't much else, but I'm sure a worrier.

(beat, then with soft emphasis)

And I'm still the law.

SMITH

Then do your job, Tim.

TIM

What is my job, Mr. Smith? Maybe I'd better find out before Macreeedy does it for me.

SMITH

(evenly)

Macreeedy'll do nothing, Tim. And neither will you.

TIM

Suppose I decide to try?

SMITH

That would be dangerous. You got the body of a hippo, Tim, but the brain

of a rabbit. Don't overtax it.

He stares harshly at the Sheriff. Tim tries unsuccessfully to meet his gaze. Then, slowly, he sits down.

TIM

(lowering his eyes,
mumbling)
Yes, Mr. Smith.

Smith slowly walks behind Tim's chair and silently, patronizingly pats the Sheriff's slack shoulder...

INT. TELEGRAPH AGENT'S OFFICE - FULL SHOT

Hastings is sitting at his desk. The telegraph ticker starts to splutter. Hastings rushes to it. He listens, and starts to scribble. Then he gulps nervously, a confused expression on his face. As the telegraph key stops as suddenly as it had begun, Hastings jumps up frantically and, holding the sheet of paper, runs out of the shack.

EXT. STREET

as he runs toward hotel.

EXT. HOTEL - LONG SHOT

Hastings runs up the steps, pausing momentarily. His jaws move, but CAMERA is too far away to pick up his obvious question. Coley gestures toward the jail; then Hastings turns and runs down the steps followed by Doc et al.

EXT. STREET - FULL SHOT

Hastings runs down the street toward the jail followed by Doc et al.

EXT. JAIL

Smith
are
the
stares
Tim, who
eyes
reading

as Hastings runs up the steps with a hobnailed clatter.
comes out to investigate, followed by Tim. Doc, et al
congregated at the foot of the steps. Hastings slaps
sheet of paper in front of Smith. Utter quiet. Everyone
at Smith, waiting for a reaction -- everyone except
stares straight ahead, seeing nothing, and Doc, whose
are locked sympathetically on Tim. Smith finishes
the wire. His face is expressionless. After a moment...

HECTOR

(to Smith)
From L.A.?

Smith doesn't answer but...

HASTINGS

Yeah! From that private detective!

HECTOR

(to Smith)
What does he say? Who is this guy?

HASTINGS

Never heard of him, that's what he
says! He checked and there's no John
J. Maccreedy. No listing -- no record --
no information. Nothing.

PETE

(quietly, after a
beat, to Smith)
Where does that leave us?

COLEY

I'll tell you where...

SMITH

Shut up!

Smith,
street.

He folds the message carefully, puts it in his pocket.
Abruptly Tim turns and disappears inside his office.
with some restraint, walks down the steps to the

MOVING SHOT - SMITH

away,
and
as he takes Coley's arm, and Pete's. The trio moves
taking a position perhaps 15 feet from Doc. Hector, Sam
Hastings move toward them.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - SMITH, COLEY AND PETE

Hastings.
In b.g. at a respectful distance are Hector, Sam and
SHOOT parallel to tracks, which disappear far into the
horizon.

The following dialogue is delivered in an undertone...

SMITH

(turning to Coley)
Now, Coley...?

COLEY

(takes a breath, then)
I think Macreeedy's a nothing. A
nobody.

SMITH

Is he?

COLEY

So there's nothing to worry about.

SMITH

Isn't there?
(a beat)
You got brains, you have.

COLEY

(squirming)
But what can he find out? That Komako
was...?
(Smith glares at him)
Suppose he finds out?

SMITH

A nobody like Macreeedy can raise a
pretty big stink. The point is...
who would miss a nobody like Macreeedy

if he just, say, disappeared? Who,
Coley?

child,
Coley is terribly preoccupied, balances himself, like a
on a steel rail.

SMITH

(exasperated)
Coley!

COLEY

(galvanized from the
rail)
Huh?

PETE

Why don't we wait...

SMITH

Wait for what?

PETE

I mean, maybe he won't find anything.
Maybe he'll just go away.

SMITH

Not Macreeedy. I know those maimed
guys. Their minds get twisted. They
put on hair shirts and act like
martyrs. They're all of 'em do-
gooders, trouble makers, freaks.

PETE

But there's no danger yet. Let's
wait and see.

SMITH

(interrupting,
appealing to Coley
as an equal)
No danger, he says. This guy's like
a carrier of small pox. Since he
arrives, there's been a fever in
this town, an infection. And it's
spreading.

(he glances from Coley
to Pete)

Hastings has been in a sick sweat,
running around, shooting off his
face. Doc, for the first time in
four years, gets snotty with me.

Liz...

(to Pete)

...your own sister -- acts like a fool.

PETE

(hotly)

She's just a kid.

SMITH

(scoffing)

Kid! She must have strained every muscle in her head to get so stupid! Renting him a jeep! And Tim -- Tim, the rum-dum. Tim suddenly decides he's gotta act like a Sheriff.

(to Coley, gesturing
at Pete)

And he says what's the danger.

Brittle silence for a moment. Then...

SMITH

(easily)

Of course, if you want to take the chance...

Pete doesn't answer.

COLEY

(grimly)

Not me.

SMITH

All right, then...

PETE

It's not all right! You're so mighty quick to kill -- he's not an animal!

SMITH

(to Coley, with mock
surprise)

Well, listen to little spitfire...

(turning slowly on
Pete)

You sniveling toad! I'm saving your neck! If I don't, who will?

PETE

(squirming)

All I said...

SMITH

Who will?! Doc? Tim? Your sister,
with the rocks in her head?

Pete is silent.

SMITH

One thing about your sister -- she's
got twice the guts you have. You're
only fit for running away.

COLEY

It's too late for that.
(belligerently, slowly,
at Pete)
He's in this, and he ain't running
no place.

There is a long, electric silence. Pete is defeated.

SMITH

(finally)
All right, then...

He pauses for emphasis. Then, as he starts to talk
again...

INT. JAIL

Tim stands facing the wall, shoulders hunched,
suffering.
Doc comes in and watches him silently, Tim turns,
facing
Doc, turns again to concentrate on a faded newspaper
photograph framed and hanging on the wall.

ANOTHER ANGLE - TIM

SHOOTING over his shoulder. Focal point: the
"photograph".
It shows a widely grinning, moderately alert and healthy
Tim
of perhaps five years ago. He is wearing, proudly, his
badge
of office, and behind him, mildly interested in the
proceedings, is Reno Smith, his erstwhile sponsor. The
heading
on the photo reads: DEPUTY SHERIFF NAMED FOR BLACK
ROCK.

MED. SHOT - TIM AND DOC

to
Tim takes the photo off the wall and, holding it, turns
face Doc...

TIM

Let Smith find himself a new boy. I
can't take it another day.

(pauses, looks at Doc)

If you're a sheriff, they gotta
respect you, otherwise you can't do
your job.

(shakes his head)

They just laugh.

DOC

I don't laugh, Tim.

TIM

Why don't you?

DOC

Cut it out, Tim.

TIM

You should!

DOC

In the name of well-adjusted manhood,
snap out of it. You're going to get
a complex or something.

TIM

Four years ago if I'd of done my
job... if I'd of checked up and found
out what happened. But I didn't!
Just like Smith figured.

DOC

What could you have found out? They
told you a story. You had to believe
it.

TIM

Do you believe it?

Doc squirms but doesn't answer.

TIM

Do you know what happened?

DOC

I don't know.
(ironically)
I lead a quiet, contemplative life.

TIM

Me, I didn't even try to find out.

(a beat)

Don't you understand?

(he taps the badge on
his chest)

When you wear that badge, you're the
Law. And when something happens,
against the Law, you're supposed to
do something about it. It's your
job.

(simply)

Me... I did nothin'. And that's what's
eatin' me. What kind of prescription
you got for that?

DOC

I don't know. I've never been able
to find one for myself.

Tim takes off his badge and throws it on the desk.

DOC

Only one thing -- don't quit, Tim.

TIM

Why not?

DOC

Maybe this feller Macreedy has the
prescription.

and They look at each other. Slowly Tim picks up his badge
pins it back on.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. DESERT ROAD

road,
Macreedy
serious
An old marker, jutting on an angle at the side of the
reads: ADOBE FLAT. Beneath it an arrow points ahead.
steers the jeep up the narrow, rutted trail between a

of enormous boulders.

ANOTHER ANGLE

flat
the
an
as he drives to the far end of the boulders, reaching a
piece of land completely surrounded by rocks. Beyond
rocks is what remains of a burned-out ranch house, and
abandoned well.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

MED. SHOT - MACREEDY

burned-out
Macreeedy
touches
removes
opening.
HEAR a
a
picture.
square
standing
among
in the wreckage. The remains of an iron bed. The
shell of a pick-up truck. Part of a stove. A morass of
bottles, all sizes and shapes, some of them broken.
halts momentarily beside the well. Reaching out he
the warped sun-beaten boards that cover the mouth. He
one, and, picking up a pebble, drops it through the
There is a long beat and then, from far, far below we
faint PLUNK (o.s.). He replaces the board and walks to
broken wall. He touches the burned out frame of a
The frame falls to the ground, leaving an un-scorched
on the surface of the wall. He goes past a solitary
stone chimney. Suddenly he halts, arrested by something
the rubble, the rottenness and the ashes.

REVERSE ANGLE - WHAT HE SEES

rectangular
Surrounded by the seared and blackened earth is a
patch of lovely wild flowers.

BACK TO MACREEDY

lined in
flower
in a
wasteland.
shielded
ridges.

studying the brightly colored flowers. His face is
thought. He stoops, gathers a few buds in his hand. He
examines them, his brow furrowed. As he slowly twirls a
between thumb and forefinger, CAMERA PANS from Macreedy
long slow arc, taking in miles and miles of barren
CAMERA RISES, TILTING UPWARD to a cliff far away and
from Macreedy's view by the intervening rocks and

EXTREME LONG SHOT - CLIFF

and on it the outline of an automobile.

MED. SHOT - THE CAR

of
below;
rise.
SLOWLY

empty. It is parked on a narrow dirt road. On one side
the road the cliff falls abruptly to the valley far
on the other, the steep, shaly outcropping continues to
For a moment CAMERA HOLDS on the car. Then it PANS
upward about fifty feet, HOLDING this time on...

PINNACLE OF CLIFF

pair

where a man is looking off toward Adobe Flat through a
of high-powered glasses. The man is Coley Trimble.

ADOBE WELLS - MACREEDY

and

Grimly he walks toward the jeep, still holding the wild
flowers. Now he pockets them, jumps into the vehicle
drives off.

THE CLIFF - COLEY

the

continues to train his glasses on Macreedy far below in
moving jeep.

THE JEEP - MACREEDY

driving steadily over rough, rocky terrain.

COLEY

big,
climbs down from the pinnacle of the cliff and enters a
powerful '36 Packard sedan.

MACREEDY

country.
shifts to low gear as the jeep presses into hilly

COLEY - IN HIS CAR

turns on the ignition.

MACREEDY - IN THE JEEP

side
curve,
as it winds along a road with the cliff rising on one
and falling off steeply on the other. He rounds a
passes an insignificant side road, drives on.

THE SIDE ROAD

Macreeedy.
The car with Coley at the wheel pulls out, follows

between
INTERCUT between the two cars, with the distance
them constantly diminishing.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. - FLAT ROAD

both
a straightaway, cutting through rocky outcroppings on
sides. Macreeedy's jeep roars by, pursued by the gaining
Packard.

CLOSE SHOT - MACREEDY IN JEEP - (PROCESS)

followed,
Coley.
For the first time he is aware that he is being
and that the man at the wheel of the big Packard is

SHOT - PACKARD

picking up tremendous speed.

EXT. - ROAD BED

declivities
whinny,

proceeding over a series of turns, inclines,
(according to location terrain). Engines roar, brakes
tires scream, skidding on the turns.

ANOTHER ANGLE - ROAD BED

within a
the
floor

as Coley overtakes Macreedy. He steers the big car
foot or two of the jeep. The terrain has steepened; on
right there is nothing between the road and the valley
far below but a few inches of soft shoulder.

come
veering

As Macreedy pulls wide on a razor turn, Coley tries to
inside him. Macreedy, fighting for control of the
jeep, succeeds in cutting him off.

CURVE IN ROAD

jeep
maneuvering

In the approach, Coley cuts sharp into the jeep. The
seems to roll with the blow, then leaps ahead,
the turn.

CLOSE SHOT COLEY IN CAR (PROCESS)

seems
the
He
ram,
kicking
the gas
sickening

Coley is flustered, his face blood-shot with fury. He
to generate an atmosphere of vicious, cruel craziness;
wild smile across his mouth is almost sensual, obscene.
floorboards the Packard. Like some monstrous battering
the heavy car smashes into the jeep's rear bumper,
the smaller vehicle jerkily ahead. Coley floorboards
pedal, again. Each time he slams into the jeep with

metal.

force, with the brutal abrasion of metal pounding

CLOSE SHOT - MACREEDY - (PROCESS)

sized
cliff

With one arm he works frantically to keep his under-car on the twisty road. He sees ahead a precipitous falling off on an impossibly sharp curve. He makes a decision...

however
road,
miraculously
halt

Just ahead the gradient is comparatively gradual, steep by normal standards. He swings the jeep off the onto the declivity. The car plunges downward, upright. Macreedy jockeys it to a whirring, shuddering in the soft sand at the bottom of a draw.

with

Macreedy turns slightly and looks up the mountain-side the road at its summit...

WHAT HE SEES: EXTREME LONG SHOT - COLEY

In
car,

standing at the edge of the road, peering down at him. b.g., the Packard. Coley turns emphatically, gets into drives off.

BACK TO MACREEDY

dust
and
becomes
tinkle

His face is caked with the sweat of his exertions and kicked up by the grinding wheels. He exhales heavily runs a shaky hand across the side of his head. He aware suddenly of a NOISE, a trickling, an unmistakable as of running water. He frowns, opens the jeep door...

MEDIUM SHOT - JEEP

NOISE

as Macreedy unlatches the hood and throws it open. The continues. Macreedy examines the engine and finds the difficulty...

INSERT - ENGINE

carburetor

focal point: the nut joining the gas line with the
has worked loose in the jouncing the car has taken.
hand Macreedy screws it tight.

With his

MEDIUM SHOT - JEEP

as Macreedy lowers the hood, re-enters jeep. He turns
on ignition. The engine fires. As he drives slowly out of
the ravine...

DISSOLVE:

EXT. BLACK ROCK - MAIN STREET CLOSE SHOT - HECTOR

apple
with
stops
his long face even more horsey than usual, with half an
in his mouth. He stands in front of the grocery store,
the baskets of fruit on the sidewalk. He looks up,
crunching.

CLOSE SHOT - SAM

a
at the window of the Bar & Grill, cleaning an ear with
toothpick. He looks out. The toothpick is motionless.

CLOSE SHOT - HASTINGS

apple
fidgeting outside his shack. He looks up. His Adam's
turns completely over.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

REVERSE SHOT - WHAT THEY SEE

He
Macreedy slowly driving the jeep toward Liz's garage.
looks neither to the right nor left.

GROUP SHOT - FAVORING SMITH AND COLEY

face
cold,
Smith

Standing on the porch of the hotel, watching. Smith's
compresses, and his eyes swivel to rest on Coley's with
contemptuous anger. Coley licks his lips uneasily.
turns and enters the hotel. Coley meekly follows.

FULL SHOT - MACREEDY

He

He brakes the jeep before the garage. No one is there.
parks the vehicle, gets out and heads down the street.

EXT. HOTEL

Coley's
ugly,
one
in
hotel.
turn
so...

Macreeedy is about to go up the steps when he sees
car at the curb. Both right fenders are creased. An
jagged break has split the front bumper almost in half,
part angling crazily toward the sky, the other drooping
the dust of the road. Smith and Coley come out of the
They stand on the porch, watching Macreeedy as he in
watches the car. They exchange a glance. Smith nods,

COLEY

Well, if it's not Macreeedy - the
world's champion road hog.

Macreeedy.

He walks down the steps to the street, joining
Smith remains on the porch.

MACREEDY

Yeah. It's a small world.

COLEY

But such an unfriendly one. Now why
did you want to crowd me off the
road?

MACREEDY

(with a slow grin)
I'm kind of sorry if I've incurred

your displeasure.

COLEY

Look what you did to my car.

MACREEDY

If there's anything I can do to make up for it...

COLEY

You ought to be careful, man -- all that one-arm driving.

MACREEDY

I'd be glad to pay the damages.

COLEY

It's a threat to life and limb.

MACREEDY

Fortunately no one was hurt.

COLEY

You could get yourself killed that way -- nosin' all over the countryside.

MACREEDY

That's the real danger, I can see that.

COLEY

Why that's pretty smart of you. How long you intend to keep it up?

MACREEDY

I'm getting out of here, right now.

Coley
like a
instructions of
his teacher.

He walks up the steps, past Smith, and into the hotel.
glances up at Smith, grinning with self-satisfaction,
small boy who has carried out perfectly the

INT. HOTEL

Macreeedy
and

The lobby empty except for Pete behind the desk.
goes to him. Pete seems elaborately occupied arranging

He

re-arranging a few file cards. Smith enters the lobby.
stands in b.g. watching Macreedy and the desk clerk.

MACREEDY

(to Pete)

Still expecting that convention?

PETE

(looking up)

What...?

MACREEDY

If you're expecting any extra cowboys,
my room is available.

PETE

You're checking out?

MACREEDY

(nodding)

Is there a train through here tonight?

PETE

Nothing till tomorrow morning. The
streamliner.

MACREEDY

I know that. How about freights?

(Pete shakes his head)

Milk train?

PETE

Tomorrow. After the streamliner.

MACREEDY

Busses?

PETE

Closest stop is Sand City -- thirty-
two miles away.

(a beat)

You're in such a hurry, you should
have never got off here.

MACREEDY

I'm inclined to agree with you.

Smith's

He turns, walks toward porch. Pete looks at Smith.
eyes follow Macreedy.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. LIZ'S GARAGE - FULL SHOT

old
car on
watching
garage

In the gloom of the lube pit, Liz's mechanic, a dirty man, is draining the oil out of the crankcase of the the rack. The girl stands beside the pit, silently the old man. Now she pauses, looks o.s. toward the open doors...

WHAT SHE SEES - MACREEDY

parked in
the
behind

entering the scene, stopping to look at Liz's jeep front of the wide doors. He turns his eyes vaguely in direction of Liz, but he doesn't see her in the shadows the car on the rack, He advances a step, pausing...

MACREEDY

Anybody home?

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

EXT. LUBE PIT - LIZ

watches

She does not answer. Instead, she silently twists the crankcase petcock, stopping the flow of oil. She

Macreeedy closely.

INT. GARAGE

and

Macreeedy again shifts his eyes to the jeep, then, with decision, he goes to a work bench, opening the drawers

rummaging among the contents.

LIZ

(o.s.)

If you're looking for the jeep key...

toward Macreedy turns as Liz comes toward him. She gestures
the open drawers.

LIZ

...it's not there...

stands Macreedy waits for her to go on. She doesn't. She
there, staring at him.

MACREEDY

(after a beat)

In that case, where do you suggest I
look?

She turns, walks back toward the lube pit.

LIZ

(over her shoulders)

The jeep's not for rent.

MACREEDY

It was, just a few hours ago.

LIZ

(flatly)

Things change.

MACREEDY

(with grim amusement)

Sure. And Smith is the kid who changes
'em.

She doesn't answer. Macreedy goes to her.

MACREEDY

Miss Brooks.

(softly)

What's the matter with this town of
yours?

LIZ

Nothing. It's none of your concern.

MACREEDY

Then why are they all so concerned
about me?

LIZ

Am I concerned?

MACREEDY

No, you're not. But...

LIZ

But what?

MACREEDY

(easily)

But it strikes me you're a little too unconcerned. So unconcerned you won't even rent me a jeep.

LIZ

(flaring)

I don't run a taxi service. I don't have a license.

MACREEDY

I wish others in this town were as scrupulously devoted to law and order as you are.

LIZ

(hotly)

Why don't you lay off! If you don't like it here, go back where you came from!

MACREEDY

Funny thing. They try to kill me, and you feel persecuted.

LIZ

I don't want to get involved.

MACREEDY

Involved in what?

LIZ

(retreating)

Whatever you're up to. Whatever happens, I've got to go on living here. These people are my neighbors, my friends.

MACREEDY

All of them?

LIZ

(slowly)

This is my town, Mr. Macreedy, like it or not. Whatever happened here,

it was long ago, now it's... it's...

MACREEDY

(evenly)

Dead and buried?

(a beat)

Whatever did happen, you don't seem to like it. Why do you stick around?

LIZ

(after a beat)

Because of my brother. Pete. He'd never leave.

MACREEDY

Didn't you ever think of going without him. You're sort of independent and he's... he's...

LIZ

Weak. I know. That's why I couldn't leave him.

MACREEDY

(softly)

What did your brother do?

LIZ

He... I...

(flaring again)

What do you care? What do you care about Black Rock?

MACREEDY

Nothing much. Only, there're not many places like this in America -- but even one is too many. Because I think something sort of bad happened here.

(frowning)

Something I can't find the handle to...

LIZ

You just think so. You don't know.

MACREEDY

This much I know -- the rule of law has been suspended in this town. The gorillas have taken over.

LIZ

You're a fine one to talk! You come in here, sneaking around, trying to steal the key to my jeep.

MACREEDY

I kind of had a notion that was the only way I could get it.

what to She opens her mouth to answer, but she doesn't know say.

MACREEDY

(simply)

Was I wrong, Miss Brooks?

For a He waits as she tries to answer, and again she can't. with moment he watches her struggle in anguished silence herself. Then he turns and goes out.

EXT. MAIN STREET - MACREEDY

hotel. walks thoughtfully down street. He comes abreast of

EXT. PORCH OF HOTEL

Macreedy where Smith is still sitting. For a moment he watches speculatively, then...

SMITH

(calling)

Mr. Macreedy.

(reasonably, as

Macreedy turns toward

him)

I'd like to ask you a few questions...

as long as you're around...

MACREEDY

(walking up steps)

I'm around all right.

He stands facing Smith on the porch, then...

MACREEDY

(with just a touch of

wryness)

You probably know that Miss Brooks

is no longer in the car rental business?

SMITH

(solemnly)

Good. I wouldn't want to see that girl get into trouble...

MACREEDY

You wouldn't?

SMITH

...what with rental permits, gas rationing... you know what I mean.

MACREEDY

Sure. I admire your sturdy sense of responsibility.

SMITH

(dismissively)

It's just, a girl like that has a future.

MACREEDY

Let's talk about my future.

SMITH

(almost slyly)

Do you have the time?

MACREEDY

I don't seem to be going any place.

He takes the other chair.

SMITH

(after a pause)

I hear you handle a jeep real well.

MACREEDY

I have a way with jeeps. A certain familiarity.

SMITH

I think I understand. You're an Army man.

(looking at Macreedy's stiff arm)

Where'd you get it?

MACREEDY

Italy.

SMITH

(sincerely)

Tough. I tried to get in myself, the day after those rats bombed Pearl Harbor.

MACREEDY

What stopped you?

SMITH

The physical. They wouldn't take me. The morning after Pearl, I was the first man in line at Marine recruiting in Sand City. And they wouldn't take me.

MACREEDY

(flatly)

Tough.

SMITH

What do you do in Los Angeles, Mr. Macreedy?

MACREEDY

I'm retired.

SMITH

You're a pretty young man...

MACREEDY

You might say I was forced into retirement.

SMITH

What were you looking for in Adobe Flat?

MACREEDY

Komako, like I told you. Like you told me, he wasn't there.

Smith laughs quietly.

MACREEDY

What's so funny?

SMITH

Nothing. It's just -- I don't believe you. I believe a man is as big as

what he seeks. I believe you're a big man, Mr. Macreedy.

MACREEDY

Flattery will get you nowhere.

SMITH

Why would a man like you be looking for a lousy Jap farmer?

MACREEDY

Maybe I'm not so big.

SMITH

Yes, you are.

(a beat; looking hard
at Macreedy)

I believe that a man is as big as the things that make him mad. Nobody around here has been big enough to make you mad.

MACREEDY

What makes you mad, Mr. Smith?

SMITH

Me...? Nothing in particular.

MACREEDY

(bemused)

I see. You're a big man, too. Only...

(calmly)

...the Japanese make you mad...

SMITH

That's different. After the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor... after Bataan...

MACREEDY

...and Komako made you mad.

SMITH

It's the same thing.

(scoffing)

Loyal Japanese-Americans -- that's a laugh. They're mad dogs. Look at Corregidor, the death march.

MACREEDY

What did Komako have to do with Corregidor?

SMITH

Wasn't he a Jap? Look, Macreedy, there's a law in this county against shooting dogs. But if I see a mad dog loose, I don't wait for him to bite me.

(exhales sharply,
shaking his head
with irritation)

I swear, you're beginning to make me mad.

MACREEDY

(calmly)

All strangers do.

SMITH

Not all. Some of 'em. When they come here snooping.

MACREEDY

Snooping for what?

SMITH

I mean, outsiders coming around, looking for something.

MACREEDY

(pressing)

For what?

SMITH

I don't know. People are always looking for something in this part of the West. To the historian, it's the "Old West." To the book writers, it's the "Wild West." To the businessmen, it's the "Undeveloped West." They all say we're backward and poor, and I guess we are.

(snorts)

We don't even have enough water.

(a beat)

But this place, to us, is our West.

(heatedly)

I just wish they'd leave us alone.

MACREEDY

Leave you alone to do what?

SMITH

(coldly)
I don't know what you mean.

MACREEDY

What happened to Komako?

SMITH

He went away, I told you. Shortly after he left, a bunch of kids got fooling around out his place. They burned it down. It was one of those things -- you know how kids are.

Macreeedy laughs quietly.

SMITH

What's funny?

MACREEDY

Nothing. Only -- I don't believe you. Any more than I believed you about the letters.

SMITH

(smiling)
You don't seem to believe anything I say.

MACREEDY

(vaguely)
Yes, I do -- about businessmen, for instance. I think a businessman would be interested in Adobe Flat.

SMITH

Why?

MACREEDY

All that land lying fallow. Could be put to some use. Like a graveyard.

(Smith opens his mouth
to speak but Macreeedy
goes on)

A historian might be interested, too. Because of the strange customs around here, such as burying cattle...

SMITH

Burying cattle...?

MACREEDY

(calmly)

Something's buried out there.

in He takes the wild flowers from his pocket, holding them
front of Smith.

MACREEDY

See these wild flowers? That means a
grave. I've seen it overseas. I figure
it isn't a man's grave or someone
would have marked it. Sort of a
mystery, isn't it?

SMITH

Sort of. Maybe you can figure it
out.

Macreeedy gets up, half turns to Smith.

MACREEDY

Maybe.

He starts down the steps.

SMITH

Why not give it a whirl?
(Macreeedy turns)
It'll help you pass the time...
(continued;
meaningfully)
...for a while.

MACREEDY

Not interested. I got other things
to do.

He turns and walks down the street.

EXT. MAIN STREET - MACREEDY

headed towards Doc's establishment. The building, which
serves Doc as home, office and laboratory, has centered on a
pane of glass:

T.R. VELIE, JR. UNDERTAKER AND VETERINARY

And in the lower right hand corner:

ASSAYER NOTARY PUBLIC

completely

A few of the peeled gold and black letters are missing.

by

David, his

unkempt

spits

The building is separated from the structure next to it an alleyway. Filling the narrow passage is Hector long massive body wedged against the wall like an monument. His little pig eyes meet Macreedy's. Hector in the dust with bland insolence.

EXT. DOC'S OFFICE - MACREEDY

walks up the steps and enters.

INT. DOC'S OFFICE

insipid

Dark and shadowy. At the far end of a hallway an light bulb burns. Macreedy goes toward it, entering...

INT. DOC'S LAB

Departed.

stained

occasion

bookcases

the

corner

other.

devoted to the care and preservation of the Dear In the center of the room is a long rectangular slab with the juices of those unfortunates who have had to rest thereon. The walls are lined with rickety jammed, not with volumes, but with the jugs and jars, chemicals and unguents of Doc's multiple callings. In a three or four neat pine boxes are stacked one on the

goldfish

enters.

Doc sits at a cluttered desk feeding a large bowl of and sipping a glass of milk. He looks up as Macreedy

DOC

Hi. Pull up a chair.

MACREEDY

(nodding)

Can I use your phone?

DOC

Help yourself.

(chuckles)

You know, you're one of the few people
who's ever been back here I can say
that to.

Macreeedy reaches for the phone book.

DOC

It's 4-2-4.

MACREEEDY

(pausing)

What's 4-2-4?

DOC

If I've got you pegged -- and I think
I have -- you're calling the State
Police. But if I was you -- and I'm
purely glad I'm not -- I'd look it
up myself.

(emphatically)

I wouldn't trust anybody around here,
including me.

Macreeedy thinks it over and comes to a swift decision.

He

checks the phone book. Then, picking up phone...

MACREEEDY

(to Doc)

Thanks.

(into receiver)

4-2-4.

INT. TELEPHONE OPERATOR'S OFFICE

a cubbyhole behind the hotel clerk's desk in the lobby.

At

the switchboard is Pete, and above him tacked on the

wall is

the sign:

SMILE

PETE

(into phone)

4-2-4...?

(he looks up)

The CAMERA PULLS BACK revealing Smith standing beside him.
two men exchange a nod.

PETE
(into phone)
Lines 're busy.
(he clicks off the
instrument)

INT. DOC'S LAB

all Macreedy slowly puts down the phone. Doc sips his milk,
He the while staring queasily over the glass at Macreedy.
puts it down, his gaze still fixed on the stranger...

DOC
(sing-song)
I know -- don't tell me -- lines all
busy. They'll be busy all day.

MACREEDY
(after a beat,
grimacing)
Don't look at me like that.

DOC
Like what?

MACREEDY
Like I'm a potential customer.

DOC
Everybody is -- and I get 'em coming
and going.

large, He goes to a topographic map hanging on the wall -- a
sections. impressive map -- faded, fly-blown and divided into

DOC
(gesturing toward it)
First I sell 'em a piece of land.
Think they farm it? Nope. They dig
for gold.

large, He moves to photograph beside the map on the wall -- a
impressive photograph of a placer mine in operation.

DOC

They rip off the top soil of ten winding hills. They sprint in here, fog-heaved with excitement, lugging nuggets, big and bright and shiny.

stone, He moves to his desk, picks up a glistening blob of resting next to an assayer's scales, and examines it...

DOC

(rhetorically)

Is it gold?

He bangs the rock down next to the scales.

DOC

It is not! Do they quit? They do not!

reproduction, He moves to a third illustration -- a colored large and impressive -- of acres upon green acres of produce in bloom; the kind of picture Southern Pacific places above its calendars.

DOC

(with theatrical gesture toward reproduction)

Then they decide to farm. Farm! In country so dry you have to prime a man before he can spit, and before you can say "Fat Sam" they're stalled, stranded and starving. They get weevil-brained and buttsprung...

hand He moves to the coffins piled in a corner and runs his down the smooth pine sides with loving tenderness.

DOC

(simply)

So I bury 'em.

(a beat, as he rejoins Macreeedy in the center of the room)

But why should I bore you with my triumphs?

MACREEDY

Yeah. I've got a problem of my own.

Doc nods; he points vaguely toward the street...

DOC

(like an old testament
prophet)

They're going to kill you with no
hard feelings.

MACREEDY

(nastily)

And you'll just sit on your hands
and let them.

DOC

Don't get waspish with me, young
feller.

MACREEDY

Sorry.

DOC

I feel for you, but I'm consumed
with apathy. Why should I mix in?

MACREEDY

To save a life.

DOC

I got enough trouble saving my own.
(he refills his glass
from a milk bottle
on the desk)

I try to live right and drink my
orange juice every day. But mostly I
try to mind my own business. Which
is something I'd advise you to do.

MACREEDY

It's a little late for that...

DOC

You can still get out of town. And
you'd better get out like a whisper.

MACREEDY

How can I?

DOC

(taking a key ring
from his pocket)
I got sort of a limousine at your
disposal.

MACREEDY

Where is it?

DOC

(tossing him the key)
Out back.

Macreeedy snares the key and walks out. Doc gets up to
follow him.

EXT. REAR OF DOC'S OFFICE

An old-fashioned hearse, with plate glass sides and
elaborate lead candelabra -- Doc's "limousine" -- is parked a few
steps from the door. Macreeedy climbs in behind the wheel as
Doc comes out and stands on the small back porch.

Macreeedy turns on the ignition switch. His foot kicks
over the starter, but the spark doesn't catch. He tries
again, then again. He pauses, frowns, as Doc comes down from
the porch and joins him.

MACREEDY

(concentrating on the
dashboard)
Won't start.

DOC

(nervously, to Macreeedy)
Something wrong?

MACREEDY

Just won't start...

Again he presses the ignition switch. Nothing. And
suddenly, in b.g., the great bulk of Hector David looms up,
leaning against the porch pillar at the corner of the alleyway.
His

there
engine

expression is almost dreamy. For a moment he stands
while Macreedy toys with the ignition and the sick
wheezes and grinds. Then he ambles up to the hearse...

HECTOR

(gratuitously)
Could be the wirin'. Why don't you
look under the hood?

MACREEDY

For that I thank you.
(pause)
How much time you think I've got
before...?

DOC

They'll wait at least till dark.
(angrily)
They'd be afraid to see each other's
faces.

MACREEDY

(slapping Doc's
shoulder lightly)
Well, so long, Doc. I can't say it's
been charming but...

DOC

Where are you going?

MACREEDY

I don't know. But I'm going on foot.

DOC

That's no good. You stray ten yards
off Main Street, and you'll be stone,
cold dead.

(offers Macreedy a
cigarette)

That's the situation, in a nut.

hand.
own. He
the

Macreedy takes the cigarette, lighting a match with one
He puts the fire to Doc's smoke and then lights his
inhales, exhales, thinking. Finally...
Macreedy gets out of the car. Hector has already opened

study
He

hood. Doc peers nervously over his shoulder. As they
the engine, Hector's horsey face appears behind them.
gestures toward the engine.

INSERT - THE ENGINE

Focal point: a hopeless snarl of ignition wires.

BACK TO SCENE

HECTOR

It's the wirin', like I said. Now
wasn't that a good guess?

pants

Slowly he takes off his wrist watch and puts it in his
pocket.

MACREEDY

(quietly)
It can be fixed.

his
ignition.

Ignoring Hector, he bends over the engine, controlling
obvious awareness that Hector has fouled up the

HECTOR

Easy. Unless, of course, this here
wire...

(reaching inside the
hood, pointing)
...got broke or something.

DOC

(suddenly, heatedly,
turning on Hector)
Do the nice little things, like keep
your big fat nose out of my business.

great
ripping the

Hector's eyes go hard. He reaches out suddenly, one
hand closing over the distributor cap. He yanks,
feed wires out of their sockets.

HECTOR

(triumphantly, holding
up the wires)
Yep. It's the wirin'.

down. He
slowly

Still gripping the wires, he walks off. Doc simmers
turns to face Macreedy, who hasn't moved. Now Macreedy
lowers the hood of the car.

DOC

(softly, after a beat)
I'm sorry, son. You got to admit, I
tried.

MACREEDY

(as if to himself)
Maybe...

DOC

Maybe what?

MACREEDY

If I can't get out of town, maybe I
can get the state cops in.

DOC

(irritably)
You tried the phone, didn't you? You
know what happened, don't you?

MACREEDY

There's another way. I'll be seeing
you, Doc.

He walks off. Doc looks after him grimly.

DOC

(calling)
I hope you'll be seeing me.

DISSOLVE:

QUICK

INT. TELEGRAPH AGENT'S OFFICE

Postal
nervously,
dew
ice. His

Macreedy stands at the high counter, writing on a
Telegraph blank. Behind the counter, watching him
is Hastings. At the agent's elbow is a big pitcher with
on the glass. It holds a pale liquid and a chunk of

takes
message
the
glazed

eyes on Macreedy, Hastings refills a glass tumbler. He
a gulp as Macreedy puts down the pencil and pushes the
toward him. Now Hastings puts down his glass, picks up
form and scans it hurriedly. He looks at Macreedy, eyes
with anxiety...

HASTINGS

You notifyin' the state po-lice?

MACREEDY

(putting a bill on
the counter)

That's what it says.

over
offers it

Hastings again refills his glass, slopping the liquid
on the counter. He picks up the glass, hesitates,
awkwardly to Macreedy.

HASTINGS

(plaintively)

Lemonade?

Macreedy shakes his head. No.

HASTINGS

(mopping his forehead)

It's hot as Billy-be-durned.

bill
gingerly

He drinks, puts down the glass. Macreedy pushes the
across the counter toward him. Hastings picks it up
then pauses...

HASTINGS

Don't you like lemonade?

MACREEDY

I never thought much about it.

HASTINGS

It don't have the muzzle velocity of
some other drinks drunk around here,
but it's good for what ails you.

MACREEDY

(after a beat)
What ails you, Mr. Hastings?

HASTINGS

Me...?

MACREEDY

Why are you so upset about...
(points)
...this wire?

HASTINGS

Me...?

MACREEDY

Are you afraid, Mr. Hastings?

HASTINGS

Me...?

(a beat, then softly)
I guess I am.
(awkwardly he puts
Maccreedy's bill back
on the counter)
But what's the use talkin'...?
(with grudging respect)
You don't know what it's like, being
scared.

MACREEDY

(not unsympathetically)
You want me to describe the symptoms?
Right this minute I'm scared half to
death.

HASTINGS

(simply)
You should be.

MACREEDY

Yeah. But not of the state police.

HASTINGS

(stonily)
Neither am I.

MACREEDY

Then what are you afraid of? The
grave at Adobe Flat? A grave nobody
marked, nobody knows anything about.

HASTINGS

That ain't it, either.

MACREEDY

Is it Smith?
(no answer)
Is it?!

HASTINGS

(squirming)
Look, Mr. Macreedy. I'm just a good
neighbor...

MACREEDY

To Smith you are. How about to Komako?

HASTINGS

(meeting Macreedy's
eyes)
I never seen Komako in my life.
Honest.

MACREEDY

(again pushes the
bill toward Hastings)
Then send that wire, and bring me
the answer. You'll do that, won't
you?

HASTINGS

(pauses, then worriedly
picking up the bill)
Yes, sir.

Macreedy turns and walks out. Hastings stands sweating,
staring hard at the message in his hand as...

QUICK

DISSOLVE:

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

INT. SAM'S BAR & GRILL

A few loafers are at the bar, draped bonelessly on high
stools. There is the usual array of bottles and glasses
aligned before a cracked, discolored mirror. In the
corner
is a jukebox. Along the opposite wall is a line of low
stools

place.
grill
toothpick.
four
STERLING

facing a counter covered with oil-cloth thumb-tacked in
Behind it is a greasy hot plate and a couple of soiled
displays -- breakfast food, soft drinks, etc. At the
counter is Sam, cleaning his finger-nails with a
At the bar, engaged in a worrisome conversation, are
loafers, FRANKLIN KROOL, WALT MURTRY, RON BENTHAM and
LENARD.

KROOL

I tell you, I won't have anything to
do with it.

MURTRY

(nodding emphatically)
Live and let live, that's what I
say.

BENTHAM

(frowning)
I don't know. I just don't know.

LENARD

(to Bentham)
You gonna brood about it? Or you
want another beer?

BENTHAM

A beer, I guess. Only...

He looks up, and something makes him hesitate...

WHAT HE SEES -- EXT. BAR & GRILL - MACREEDY

large,
stopping in front of the restaurant. On the window
rough capital letters in water paint proclaim:

SAM'S SANITARY BAR & GRILL

Macreeedy pauses, shrugs and then enters.

INT. BAR & GRILL

little
loafers

Sam is still working on his finger nails. He evidences
interest in the stranger, but at the bar in b.g. the

stiffen. Macreedy takes a stool in front of Sam.

SAM

What'll you have?

MACREEDY

What have you got?

SAM

Chili wit' beans.

MACREEDY

Anything else?

SAM

Chili wit'out beans.

Macreedy winces.

SAM

You don't like the taste, that's what they make ketchup for.

MACREEDY

In that case, I'll have it. And a cup of coffee.

enter.
The door of the Bar & Grill opens. Smith and Coley
him. They walk to Macreedy, stopping just a few feet behind

COLEY

(to Macreedy, with
menacing friendliness)
You still around? I thought you didn't
like this place.

MACREEDY

(pleasantly)
Going to, or coming from?

COLEY

Staying put.

MACREEDY

No comment.

chili in
He turns again as Sam plops an unseasonable mess of
front of him.

COLEY

(to Smith, gesturing
a thumb toward
Macreeedy)
No comment, he says. No comment, and
all the time he's got my chair.

Macreeedy smiles tiredly. He half turns toward Coley.

MACREEEDY

I always seem to be taking somebody's
place around here.

away.
squirms
Smith.

He gets up, with his chili, and sits down three stools
Coley straddles the stool Macreeedy has vacated. He
on it, his movements exaggerated. Now he spins to face

COLEY

This seat ain't comfortable.

MACREEEDY

I was afraid of that.

COLEY

I think I'd like the seat you're on.

SMITH

(to Macreeedy, mildly)
He's as changeable as a prairie fire.

MACREEEDY

(to Coley)
Suppose you tell me where to sit.

pressure
to
removing
drowned
runs

Coley opens his mouth but, realizing he has been
outmaneuvered, closes it again. The loafers in b.g. are
silent, watching. Sam, seemingly oblivious to Coley's
on Macreeedy, places a bottle of ketchup in front of the
stranger. Coley gets up slowly and walks stiff-legged
Macreeedy. He takes the bottle of ketchup and, without
the cap, upends it over Macreeedy's plate. The cap is
in a deluge of ketchup which overflows the plate and
onto the counter.

COLEY

(to Macreedy)

I hope that ain't too much.

MACREEDY

(to Smith, gesturing
toward Coley)

Your friend's a very [...] fellow.

SMITH

(nodding)

Sort of unpredictable, too. Got a
temper like a rattlesnake.

COLEY

That's me all over. I'm half hoss,
half alligator. Mess with me, I'll
kick a lung outta you. What do you
think of that?

MACREEDY

No comment.

COLEY

Talking to you is like pulling teeth.
You wear me out.

(loudly, after a beat)

You're a yellow-bellied Jap lover.
Am I right or wrong?

MACREEDY

You're not only wrong -- you're wrong
at the top of your voice.

COLEY

You don't like my voice?

MACREEDY

(again turning to
Smith)

I think your friend's trying to start
something.

SMITH

Now why-ever would he want to do
that?

MACREEDY

I don't know. Maybe he figures, needle
me enough and I'll crack. Maybe I'll
even fight back. Then he or Hector --
your other ape -- would beat me to

death and cop a plea of self-defense.

SMITH

I don't think that'll be necessary.
You're so scared now you'll probably
drown in your own sweat.

COLEY

Before that happens, couldn't I pick
a fight with you if I tied one hand
behind me...?

takes
around.
Macreeedy rises to go out. As he passes Coley, Coley
his limp left arm and spins him slowly but firmly
The two men face each other.

COLEY

If I tied both hands...?

His big
ducks,
off
his
firmly
anchoring
hand in
ear.
hard
Following
cheekbone.
face,
pain
back.
Macreeedy shakes free of Coley's grasp. Coley lunges.
right fist streaks toward Macreeedy's face. Macreeedy
weaving with the punch. He grabs Coley's belt, twisting
Coley's body. The momentum of the swing throws Coley
balance. As he goes past Macreeedy, the stranger tugs at
belt, twisting him to one side. He plants his left foot
on the toes of Coley's left boot, for a split second
Coley in place. He chops the under side of his open
a short, vicious arc that lands solidly under Coley's
With the same motion, he brings the heel of his hand
against and slightly under the tip of Coley's nose. The
cartilage shatters. Blood spills down his face.
through, Macreeedy's elbow smashes beneath Coley's
Macreeedy's arm goes past the astonished, wind-burned
finding Coley's right wrist. He jerks the wrist out and
backward. It snaps. Coley whimpers, his face twisted in
and perplexity. His body lolls forward. Macreeedy steps

right
lift.
limber
face,
of
his

He raises his right shoulder a few inches. His bent arm drives up like a piston attached to the shoulder's Fist and arm seem all one rigid piece with only the shoulder giving them motion. The fist strikes Coley's covering for a moment one side of his chin and a corner his mouth between cheekbone and jawbone. Coley shuts eyes and falls unconscious.

fall.
Smith.

Smith, a puzzled expression on his face, watches Coley He takes half a step toward him. Macreeedy looks at Smith stops. Macreeedy's face is wooden, with a trace of sullenness around the hard lines of his mouth. Working methodically, Macreeedy frisks Coley. He takes from a pocket a long, ugly knife. He snaps the spring and the four-inch blade leaps into place. He looks at the knife in his hand and then at Smith. He smiles gently, even dreamily.

MACREEEDY

(to Smith)

Wouldn't it be easier if you just waited till I turned my back?

(looking toward the loafers at the bar, then back at Smith)

Or are there too many witnesses present?

The are
closes
Macreeedy
door
scene
reactions of

Macreeedy walks slowly toward him, holding the knife. only three feet apart. Smith's hand goes to a pocket, inside over the outline of a pistol. Sam glances from to Smith to the unconscious Coley. He sidles toward the and runs out fast. (NOTE: From this point to end of INTERCUT from Macreeedy and Smith to exploit the the loafers at the bar.)

SMITH

(with effortless
ferocity)
You're still in trouble.

MACREEDY

So are you.
(Smith snorts)
Whatever happens -- you're lost.

SMITH

You got things a bit twisted...

MACREEDY

You killed Komako. Sooner or later
you'll go up for it. Not because you
killed him -- in this town you
probably could have gotten away with
it -- but because you didn't even
have the guts to do it alone. You
put your trust in guys like him...
(gesturing toward the
unconscious Coley)
...and Hector -- they're not the
most dependable of God's creatures.
Sooner or later they'll get the idea
you're playing them for saps. What'll
you do then -- peel them off, one by
one? And in the meantime if any one
of them breaks, you'll go down hard.
Because they got something on you.
Something to use when things get
tough.

Smith
With a quick motion, he tosses the knife to Smith.
catches it.

MACREEDY

And they're getting tougher every
minute.

consciously
the
like
Doc,
Coley.
He walks past Smith and goes out the door. Self-
holding the knife, Smith turns to face the loafers at
bar. They say nothing; they stare at him, through him,
a panel of ghouls. The door opens, admitting Sam and
who carries his little black medical bag. Doc looks at

DOC

(softly, full of awe)

Man... man-oh-man.

remained
in
Coley,

He goes to Coley, bending down over him. Smith has motionless as a monument. Now he doubles shut the knife in his hand. He pockets it, and without even glancing at turns quickly and goes out.

QUICK

DISSOLVE:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY

chairs.
the
the
change
the
works
Then
wiggles
sudden
one-

Doc sits deep in the battered upholstery of one of the chairs. He stares fiercely across the room at Smith who is on the couch, reading a neatly folded newspaper. Behind him at the clerk's desk, Pete is fitfully involved in a game of solitaire. At the foot of the stairs Hector is pouring into a slot machine. It whines, grinds, and clicks with rhythmic monotony, but it never seems to pay off. In the chair nearest Doc is Tim, with one of his boots off. He works hard and with some concentration, removing the other. Then he places them neatly at the foot of his chair. He wiggles his toes -- watching them with some interest. The wheeze and whir of the slot machine stops. The sudden silence turns the eyes of the men toward Hector and the one-arm bandit. They follow his gaze up the steps.

STAIRWAY - MACREEDY

the
walks down, carrying his suitcase. He goes to Pete at the clerk's desk.

MACREEDY

Anything for me?

PETE

Nothing.

MACREEDY

Any message -- a telegram?

PETE

(returning to his
cards)

Nothing.

As Macreedy turns from the desk, Doc joins him.

DOC

(to Macreedy, shrilly,
gruffly)

In case you're interested, Coley'll
live.

(glaring at Smith and
Hector)

I'm truly sorry to say.

who
Smith coolly continues to read his paper. It is Hector
turns toward Doc...

HECTOR

(to Doc, jerking a
fat hand toward
Macreedy)

Your friend's pretty tough.

DOC

Yeah. He's wicked. He defends himself
when he's attacked.

the
Doc,
for a
Macreedy ignores the exchange of words. He walks across
frayed carpet to the nearest chair and drops into it.
who has followed him, stands looking down at Macreedy
long moment. Then...

DOC

(with some irritation)

Well...? You going to just sit here
and let time run out?

MACREEDY

I'm waiting for a wire. From the

state cops.

DOC

You sent it through Hastings?
(an audible sigh)
Just don't expect an answer, if that's
the way you sent it.

MACREEDY

(looking toward the
door)
No?
(he rises)

looks
rigidly
his
gaze.
machine.
by

Doc follows his gaze as Hastings enters the lobby and
around. He sees Macreedy coming toward him. He walks
in an arc past Macreedy to Smith. He holds out a Postal
Telegraph form. Smith puts down his paper and takes it.
Macreedy, followed by Doc, goes over to Smith. Tim in
stockinged feet joins them.
Smith scans the message. He looks up to meet Macreedy's
Smith rises. Hector swaggers over from the slot
Hastings slips around the back of the couch, protected
the barricade of Hector's great body.

MACREEDY

(evenly, to Smith)
I think that's for me.
(he takes the message
from Smith's hand
and quickly glances
at it. Looking up at
Hastings)
Where's the answer?

crosses

Hastings is silent. A brittle expression of bemusement
Smith's features.

SMITH

You expect an answer -- to a wire
that's never sent?

Macreedy's mouth compresses in a harsh grin.

SMITH

What's so funny?

MACREEDY

Nothing. Just a thought --

(his eyes turn to
Hastings. Hastings
wilts)

-- a thought dazzling in its purity...

agent
Macreeedy takes a step toward Hastings. The telegraph
bounces away.

MACREEDY

(slowly)

You're in a jam, Hastings. You gave
my telegram to Smith.

DOC

(excitedly)

You warty wretch! That's a federal
offense!

MACREEDY

(to Smith)

You're in deep, too.

(grins hard)

Like I said, it's getting tougher
and tougher.

(to Tim)

Sheriff, you'd better do something
about this.

from
insolently
it
Tim hesitates, blinking his eyes worriedly, shifting
one stockinged foot to the other. Smith watches him
as he takes the message from Macreeedy and gestures with
vaguely...

TIM

(to Smith)

I reckon that's right, Mr. Smith...

HECTOR

Don't be a jerk, Tim.

TIM

(to Smith, seriously)

Divulging information -- there's a

law...

SMITH

Tim, you're pathetic.

TIM

(doggedly)

Could be. But I'm still Sheriff.

SMITH

That's the point. You're not Sheriff any more. You just lost a job, you're so pathetic.

jabs

He reaches out, clawing the badge from Tim's chest. He
it on Hector's vest.

SMITH

(to Hector)

All right, Sheriff. Take over.

DOC

You can't do that!

SMITH

Can't I? I put him in office. Now I take him out.

Macreeedy...

Hector moves his elephantine bulk within inches of

HECTOR

Now. You want to register a complaint?

Tim's

Macreeedy doesn't answer. Hector takes the message from
limp hand and tears it into little pieces.

HECTOR

To register a complaint, boy, you've got to have evidence. You got evidence?

Macreeedy doesn't answer.

HECTOR

You got a big mouth, boy, makin' accusations, disturbin' the peace. There's laws in this county protectin' innocent folks from big mouths. Why, I'd just hate to...

SMITH

(interrupting)

Hector...

(wearily)

Come on, Hector.

with
Tim
up
of
his
his
cigarette.
him,
too,
other
has so
something
for
from
out
that
fierce
silvery
has

He walks out, the new Sheriff strutting beside him, Hastings in their wake. For a moment Macreedy, Doc and stand in the center of the lobby. Pete eyes them non-committally and goes back to his solitaire. He glances now and then, moving the cards with a purposeful sort of slowness, as of a more natural swiftness restrained by preoccupation with the three men in the lobby. Macreedy is deep in thought. Abstractedly he tugs at his collar and then repeats the ritual of lighting a cigarette. Tim's shoulders are slumped. Humiliation has corroded flesh and soul. Even Doc is momentarily subdued; he feels degraded, unclean. Macreedy looks from one to the other of the good, ineffectual companions that circumstance haphazardly tossed his way. He takes a few steps to his suitcase, Doc and Tim trailing him; Doc, for want of better to do; Tim, out of his deep, inexpressible need for support. Macreedy takes an untapped bottle of whiskey from his bag. He thumbs the cork loose and holds the bottle out to Tim. Tim takes a drink.

The light on the clerk's desk goes on, and we are aware that day has gone and that night is falling. The pressing, fierce light has drained from the lobby, leaving a shadowy, silvery dreariness. The shadows have lengthened and the silver has tarnished with the darkness.

DOC

(hopefully)

It's all right, Tim. We're not licked yet.

TIM

(numbly)

Ain't we? I am.

DOC

There comes a time, Tim, when a man's just got to do something.

TIM

Not me. I'm useless, and I know it.

DOC

(imploring)

No man is useless, if he's got a friend...

lamp

Pete comes out from behind the desk, walking from one in the lobby to another, turning them on.

DOC

I'm your friend, Tim.

TIM

Then let me alone.

He hands Doc the whiskey bottle.

DOC

(jabbing at Macreeedy
with a thumb)

He's going to need you before the night is over.

them.

He downs a snort, then looks at Pete, who approaches

DOC

(contemptuously)

And all the useful men are on the other side.

grimace is

As Pete turns on the lamp behind Doc, he reacts ever so slightly to Doc's words. His almost imperceptible

he

not lost on Macreeedy. Macreeedy watches the young man as
continues to light the lamps...

TIM

(angrily)
Lemme alone, I tell ya!

Doc slams the whiskey bottle down on a nearby table.

DOC

I can't let you alone! I can't let
myself alone! Don't you understand
that?

(he turns from Tim to
Pete, who is unable
to shake his gaze.
Then, sadly, fiercely)
Four years ago something terrible
happened here. We did nothing about
it. Nothing. The whole town fell
into a sort of settled melancholy,
and the people in it closed their
eyes and held their tongues and failed
the test with a whimper.

can't

Self-consciously Pete has backed off until now he leans
against the outside of the clerk's desk. But he still
shut his ears to what Doc is saying...

DOC

Now something terrible is going to
happen again, and in a way we're
lucky because we've been given a
second chance. And this time I won't
close my eyes, I won't hold my tongue,
and if I'm needed I won't fail.

(almost harshly, again
facing Tim)
And neither will you!

Tim sighs, running a thick hand over his forehead...

TIM

I got such a headache, I'm bewildered.
I hurt all over.

MACREEEDY

I know --
(unconsciously his
right arm strays to

message the paralyzed
left)
-- pain is bewildering. I came here
bewildered, full of self-pity, afraid
to fight back.
(gesturing with his
hand to Pete)
And then your friend Smith tried to
kill me.
(the muscles around
Pete's mouth tighten)
Funny, how a man clings to the earth
when he feels there's a chance he
may never see it again.

DOC

There's a difference between clinging
to the earth...
(eyeing Tim almost
contemptuously)
...and crawling on it. You going to
stand by and watch forever?

TIM

(flatly)
I ain't gonna watch, and I ain't
gonna get into it, either.

There is a moment of crashing silence. Then...

TIM

I'm gettin' out. I'm sorry, Mr.
Macreeedy.

Again

Slowly he lumbers out of the lobby. Doc watches him go.
the benumbing silence, cut finally, unexpectedly by...

PETE

(to Doc)
You'd be smart to get out, too.

DOC

(angrily turning to
Pete)
There's too many smart guys around
here. I'm glad I'm a dummy.

PETE

You're a troublesome dummy. You're
liable to end up on your own slab...

DOC

(heatedly)

I expect to be in a lot more trouble
before I die...

PETE

Go home, Doc.

(he jerks his head
toward Macreedy, and
with mock bravado...)

He's all washed up.

MACREEDY

(grinning harshly at
him)

You think so?

bottle on
tense,
His right hand closes over the neck of the whiskey
the end table. Abstractedly fingering it, he walks with
deliberate steps toward Pete at the desk.

MACREEDY

I was washed up when I got off that
train...

He continues to advance inexorably toward Pete.

PETE

(flatly)

You shouldn' of got off.

MACREEDY

Had to. I had one last duty to perform
before I resigned from the human
race.

DOC

(quizzically)

I thought you were going to Los
Angeles, that hot-bed of pomp and
vanity. Is that resigning from the
human race?

MACREEDY

(shrugging)

L.A.'s a good jumping off place --
for the Islands, for Mexico, Central
America.

DOC

Why?

MACREEDY

(again shrugs)

I don't know. I was looking for a place to get lost, I guess.

DOC

Why?

MACREEDY

(slapping his paralyzed arm with the whisky bottle)

Because of this. I thought I'd never be able to function again.

(turning to Pete)

Thanks to your friend Smith, I found I was wrong.

He is now within a couple of yards of Pete.

PETE

(drily)

Sure. You're a man of action.

MACREEDY

(slowly)

I know your problem.

(with mounting vigor)

You'd like me to die quickly, without wasting too much of your time...

(Pete opens his mouth to say something, but Macreedy presses on)

...or silently, without making you feel too uncomfortable... or thankfully, without making your memories of the occasion too unpleasant.

For a moment Pete stares at Macreedy, terribly disturbed by the incisiveness of Macreedy's analysis. Then...

PETE

(bitterly)

My memories are so pleasant as it is...

the
turns,

In sudden frustration, Pete grabs the deck of cards on clerk's desk and slams them down hard. They scatter. He stares blankly [...] between Doc and Macreeedy.

MACREEEDY

(quietly pressing his
advantage)
What happened, Pete?

Pete doesn't answer.

DOC

Are you going to tell him -- or you
want me to?

(beat)

Smith owns Adobe Flat. He leased it
to Komako -- thought he had cheated
him, thought Komako could never even
run stock without water. There was
never any water on Adobe Flat. Komako
dug a well, by hand. He must have
went down one hundred and fifty feet.

PETE

He got water, plenty. Smith was pretty
sore. He didn't like Japs anyway.

DOC

That's an understatement.

PETE

The day after Pearl Harbor, Smith
went to Sand City.

MACREEEDY

(interrupting)
I know. To enlist. He was turned
down.

PETE

He was sore when he got back. About
ten o'clock he started drinking.

MACREEEDY

Ten o'clock in the morning.

PETE

Yeah. Hector joined him, and Coley.
Then Sam, and about nine p.m. -- me.
We were all drunk -- patriotic drunk.

We went out to Komako's for a little fun, I guess -- scare him a little.

MACREEDY

Did you know him?

PETE

We'd seen him around some, but none of us knew him. When he heard us coming, he locked the door. Smith started a fire. The Jap came running out. His clothes were burning. Smith shot him. I didn't even know Smith had a gun.

MACREEDY

Then you all got scared, buried him, kept quiet.

looks
table...
Pete nods helplessly, bowing his head. Macreedy sighs, down at the bottle in his hand, slowly puts it on the

MACREEDY

(softly)

Did Komako have any family besides his son Joe?

DOC

(puzzled)

His son...? Nobody around here knew he had a son.

MACREEDY

He had one. But he's dead, too. He's buried in Italy.

DOC

What are you doing here, Mr. Macreedy?

MACREEDY

Joe Komako died in Italy, saving my life. They gave him a medal. I came here to give it to his father.

admission,
at
Silence. Doc, realizing the enormity of Macreedy's frowns, rubs a hand across his tired eyes. Pete looks Macreedy for a long, shocked moment. He shivers.

PETE

(awfully)
God forgive me...

shot
He takes the bottle from the table and shakily pours a
glass of liquor. As he raises it to his mouth...

MACREEDY

(to Pete, harshly
guttural)
It'll take a lot of whiskey to wash
out your guts...

lips,
his
Pete is motionless, holding the glass inches from his
hypnotized by Macreedy's voice, as hard and as cold as
eyes...

MACREEDY

...And it will never help -- not
even a barrel full washes away murder!

bursts
stare
Macreedy's hand shoots out, in a short, inexorable arc,
smashing his palm across the shot glass. The whiskey
in a spray, the glass flies halfway across the room,
shattering as it lands against something solid. Pete is
stunned, Doc perplexed, at Macreedy's violence. They
at him...

brows
with
a
Macreedy's eyes are murky. The creases between the
over his nose are deep. His nostrils move in and out
his breathing. Pete and Doc regard him with growing
uneasiness. Rage comes into Macreedy's face, turning it
painful red.

MACREEDY

But maybe I'm wrong. Go on -- drink.
(scornfully)
What else is left for you?!
(mounting anger)
You're as dead as Komako, only you
don't know it!
(roaring)
You also don't know that it's not
enough to feel guilty. It's not enough

to confess. It's not enough to say,
"Forgive me, I've done wrong."

DOC

Take it easy, Maccreedy. Sit down.

MACREEDY

(turning on him)

Sit down?! Or would you rather have
me kneel, to beg his pardon for
raising a touchy subject?

Pete squirms under Maccreedy's relentless attack.

PETE

(shaking his head)

You don't have to remind me. I've
never forgotten...

MACREEDY

Well, that's mighty noble of you.
You feel ashamed -- that's noble,
too.

(in mounting crescendo)

And four years from now you'll
probably be sitting here telling
somebody else you haven't forgotten
me. That's progress -- you'll still
be ashamed but I'll be dead.

toward
Maccreedy grabs the bottle, shoving it across the table
Pete.

MACREEDY

Go on, have your drink.
(with exorbitant scorn)
You need it.

words
grimly and
plugs
Pete pushes the bottle aside, too ravaged by Maccreedy's
and his own thoughts to drink. He shakes his head
then, with sudden decision, goes to the switchboard and
in a line.

DOC

(leaning over counter,
staring at him)

What are you doing?

PETE

(into phone, ignoring
Doc)

Hello, Liz. Now listen... I... 'm
getting Macreedy out of town...

ANOTHER ANGLE - MACREEDY AND DOC

breath of
listen
jumble

as they exchange a glance. Doc takes a long, deep
relief. Macreedy frowns thoughtfully. He strains to
to Liz, but all he (and we) can hear is the staccato
of her words over the wire.

WIDER ANGLE - FAVORING PETE

he cuts Liz short...

PETE

(into phone)

I don't care about Smith! Let him
try to kill me -- I might as well be
dead as...

again...

Again Liz's voice incoherent over the phone, and

PETE

(into phone,
interrupting)

Liz, Liz... There's not much of me
left any more, but however little it
is I won't waste it!

(again Liz's voice
briefly; then...)

I'm telling you because we need your
help.

(again Liz's voice)

...No matter about the past -- you've
got to do this! You'd be saving two
lives, Liz. Macreedy's, and mine.

(again Liz answers
and...)

All right. Yeah... I've told him
everything.

comes

Slowly he replaces the phone on the switch-board. He
around from behind the desk, joining Macreedy and Doc.

PETE

(flatly)

She'll be here in five minutes.

MACREEDY

Thanks, Pete. Thanks very much.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - PETE, HECTOR AND DOC - NIGHT

Pete and Doc are nervously alert, drained of energy, waiting. Hector is downright bored. He toys with his pistol, squinting at it, twirling the barrel. Finding neither interest nor pleasure in the piece, he jams it back in his holster and strolls with exaggerated surety out on the porch.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

The congregation of loafers look up as Hector emerges. Imbued with his own bullying importance, he draws the pistol, maneuvers an extravagant pinwheel and a few other gaudy tricks. Then he sighs as boredom again takes over. He walks down the steps to catch a bit of air.

INT. LOBBY - DOC AND PETE

The disappearance of Hector (o.s.) down the street galvanizes them into action. They hurry out of the lobby toward the back of the hotel.

EXT. ALLEY - BEHIND HOTEL - NIGHT

Vague in the pallid light escaping through a few back windows. The hotel's rear door is tightly shut. Around the far corner of the street (extreme b.g.) comes the gangling body of Hector David. He walks toward CAMERA. Perhaps twenty-five yards away he stops to rest against a fence like a leaning tower.

CLOSE SHOT - HECTOR

half
bleak

His hand goes to a pocket and comes out with a crumpled pack of cigarettes. Suddenly the movement is arrested; something at the other end of the street captures his attention.

WHAT HE SEES

up to

A jeep, headlights off, slowly turns the corner, pulls the curb and parks.

BACK TO SCENE - HECTOR

a
back
toward

pockets his cigarettes and starts slowly for the jeep, quizzical frown on his horsy face. He approaches the door of the hotel, oblivious to it as he continues the jeep.

INT. REAR HALLWAY OF HOTEL - NIGHT

unshaded
To
slim
enormous
alley
reveals
alley,
Glued
Doc.
wheels
nozzle

At the far end b.g., toward the lobby, a single light bulb burns dully. A slight figure stands in f.g. one side is a narrow U-shaped alcove blanketed in heavy shadows. The features of the man in the hall and the lines of his body blend vaguely in the darkness. With care, he turns a knob and opens the door leading to the alley behind the hotel. Light thrown by the back windows reveals that the figure is Pete. The same pallid light from the glancing across the alcove, momentarily illuminates it. as close to the recessed wall as is humanly possible is Doc. He is partially shielded by one of those hotel hose wheels around which an old fire hose is wound. The heavy brass nozzle of the hose hangs from the end.

swallows
to the
with

Doc grips a twelve-inch length of lead pipe. Pete nervously and peers outside, first to the right, then left. His eyes glaze with fear, and his jaw tightens tension.

EXT. ALLEY - ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING PETE

as he stares at Hector walking toward the jeep.

PETE

(controlling his
jangled nerves)
Hector!

Hector stops, turns to face Pete. He hesitates, then...

HECTOR

Hmmmm?

to

Then, with a final glance at the jeep, Hector lumbers Pete, who disappears inside the hallway.

INT. REAR HALLWAY

door
draw
Hector
(NOTE:

as Hector enters and stops. Pete quickly closes the behind him and walks toward the lobby, attempting to Hector toward the black alcove center screen b.g. But is not to be sucked in. He glares at Pete, waiting.
The following dialogue is delivered sotto voce.)

HECTOR

What you want?

PETE

He's still in his room. Maccreedy, I mean.

HECTOR

So...? You want me to tuck him in?

PETE

I thought maybe you wanted to tell Smith.

HECTOR

(explaining something
he feels Pete already
knows)

Smith said he'd be here at midnight.
He don't want to be disturbed.

frantically
one.
He jams a cigarette in his mouth. Pete watches him
as he searches his pockets for a match. He can't find

HECTOR

You got a match?

PETE

Come on. I got some in the lobby.

suspicion.
heavy
Hector's
fingers
book
He starts to turn. Hector's pig eyes are slits of
Before Pete can move, Hector reaches out, hooking two
fingers inside a pocket of Pete's shirt. Slowly
expression changes to one of insidious cunning. His
come out of Pete's pocket, and between them is a paper
of matches.

HECTOR

I thought you didn't have a match.

Pete is unable to answer. He is scared to death.

INT. ALCOVE - DOC

armed --
pipe.
For a
care,
the
sweating with frustration. Hector is six feet away, and
too far away for Doc to risk an attack with his lead
Doc looks around vaguely, wildly, for another weapon. A
fraction of an inch from his nose is the hose wheel.
split second he hesitates. Then slowly, with infinite
he tightens the heavy brass nozzle and begins to unwind
hose.

INT. REAR HALLWAY

Now Hector is alert. He studies Pete's twitching face. Elaborately he tears a match from the pack and scratches it. It takes fire, cupped in the rampart of his big hands. It lights up the hall, and as Hector looks around he sees something through a mirror -- over his shoulder and six feet away Doc materializes out of the shadows of the alcove. As Hector whirls, going for his gun, Doc swings the hose with sudden deadly aim. It uncoils like a snake, and the brass nozzle crashes with a mighty thud across Hector's skull. Hector groans. He sinks unconscious to the floor. Doc stands there, paralyzed by his action. Pete tears toward the lobby.

INT. LOBBY

as Pete rushes in. He moves directly to the desk, leans over and presses the buzzer behind the desk three times. He turns and runs back toward the rear of the building.

INT. REAR STAIRS

as Macreedy barrels down. He pauses briefly in the hall he sees Doc still standing with the hose and the nozzle dangling like a pendulum from his hand. Their eyes lock briefly in understanding...

MACREEDY

(with a half smile)
I'll never forgive you, Doc...
(he gestures toward
Hector, out cold)
...for depriving me of that pleasure.

He heads toward the alley.

EXT. ALLEY

as Macreedy rushes out. He pauses, looking quickly right,

the
off,
falling
there,
gears,

then left. He sees a jeep parked at the curb far down
street. He runs toward it. The jeep, its headlights
starts for him. He swings onto the moving vehicle,
heavily into the seat beside Liz Brooks. He slumps
breathing heavily as the jeep, with a grinding of
cuts through the night, picking up speed.

INT. REAR HALLWAY

stare
pistol
same

as Pete joins Doc. Silently, motionlessly, the two men
for a long moment at Hector -- particularly at the
lying beside him. Then they look at each other, and the
thought seems to flash in their minds...

QUICK

DISSOLVE:

EXT. ROAD - MACREEDY AND LIZ

drives
toward

as they speed down the long empty ribbon of road. Liz
hard. Macreedy turns in the bucket seat, looking back
Black Rock.

LIZ

Sorry I can't get more out of this
heap.

Macreedy does not answer.

LIZ

(with a burst of
irritation)
We could make better time with a dog
team.

MACREEDY

(calmly)
You're doing the best you can.
(a beat)
Aren't you, Liz?

LIZ

Don't expect too much from me.

MACREEDY

(dryly)

Don't worry, I won't.

LIZ

(quickly)

I mean, people have always expected things from me. You know why? Because I'm pretty. Well, that's not enough.

MED. SHOT - JEEP

crossroad.
little
with
moment

with Liz and Macreedy as she cuts sharply into a
She drives skillfully over the knotty road which is
more than a trail. Her lovely features are distorted
her discontent and the ache for attention. After a
she gives voice to her fantasy...

LIZ

(softly)

Maybe I could have been something --
a model, or something.

(glancing at him)

You don't believe that.

MACREEDY

Yes I do.

LIZ

Well, I don't, really. I'm a dime a
dozen.

MACREEDY

That I don't believe.

LIZ

I'm too little and too late.

MACREEDY

It's never too late.

LIZ

I lack the muscle.

MACREEDY

(frowning)

Why is muscle so important?

LIZ

(cynically)

Oh, you're the brainy type.

(harshly)

Did it take brains to rough up Coley?
Whatever you did to Hector, you didn't
do it with brains. How'd you get
Pete to change his mind?

MACREEDY

Not with muscle.

LIZ

And not with brains, either. He's a
pushover for a muscle man.

MACREEDY

I'm beginning' to think it runs in
the family.

(looking at her hard)

You think strength is in the width
of a man's shoulders.

He does not catch the glance she darts him; his extreme
awareness is anchored not to the girl at his side but

to the

terrain ahead.

LIZ

I'd sure have liked to see you tangle
with Reno Smith.

MACREEDY

He wasn't around when I left... Maybe
I will yet.

each

His eyes strain to sweep the country -- each boulder,

shadow are

outcropping, each stunted tree. But substance and

blurred and fuzzy in the dark night, black on black.

OUT

Sequence omitted from original script.

ANOTHER ANGLE - JEEP

with Macreedy and Liz as it winds to the far end of the

Solid
yet
terrain...
Macreeedy

boulders on a trail that drops off into a flat basin.
forms loom up in the darkness; they are unrecognizable,
Macreeedy senses some tense familiarity with the
He frowns. Suddenly Liz brakes the jeep -- so sharply
lurches forward in the seat.

MACREEEDY

(alert, expectant)
What's this?

LIZ

(vamping nervously)
We need water...
(she turns off engine,
pulling ignition key
from its lock)
...radiator's overheating.

face

She moves away from Macreeedy to get out of the jeep. He
reaches across quickly, gripping her arm. She turns to
him, disturbed by his hardness of jaw and eye...

LIZ

Leggo! Leggo of me!

like
throwing
grave

Suddenly they are hit by a blinding pair of headlights
[...] The beams cut jaggedly through the night,
into sharp immediate relief the lava rocks, the broken
windmill, the gutted house, the litter-strewn, unmarked
at Adobe Flat.

the

Liz throws away the ignition key. Macreeedy bails out of
jeep, still holding the girl.

CLOSE TWO SHOT - LIZ AND MACREEEDY

in
rifle

as they fall to the earth. Macreeedy pins her down. Then
quick succession, four emphatically loud SHOTS from a
squirt into the shale around them.

MACREEEDY

(harshly, through his
teeth)

You're stupid, Liz. You're a fool.
If he finishes me, he's got to finish
you.

the
the
down
a
with
grave.
them
away.
smashes
dirt
He
blind.
Macreedy...

He looks up blindly into the headlights glaring from
granitic high ground some 60 yards away. His grip on
girl's shoulder is like a steel trap. He pushes her
beside Komako's grave, hugging the side of the jeep as
SHOT rips the gravel at their feet. Pulling the girl
him, he takes cover in the slight concavity of the
The jeep is between them and the headlights -- between
and the source of the gunfire. Liz struggles to break
Suddenly bullets kick up a storm around him. A bullet
into the flowers, exploding tiny cruel fragments of
into Macreedy's face. He gasps in pain, releasing Liz.
rubs his eyes as if to convince himself that he is not
Liz breaks from the grave. Now, five yards from

LIZ

(calling toward the
headlights)
Smitty! Smitty!

SMITH'S VOICE

(o.s.)
I'm here, honey. Just head for the
car.

Liz half turns, facing Macreedy with a vicious smile...

LIZ

(an almost bantering
voice)
So long, Macreedy.

She starts toward the headlights.

GO WITH LIZ

enormous She reaches the foot of the rocky ridge, with the two eyes on top. She begins to climb, up... up...

SMITH

(o.s.)

Just a few more steps, honey.

five She is almost at the top; a vertically sheer rock about feet high separates her from it. She looks up at Smith, towering over her at the edge of the precipice. He holds his rifle almost languorously.

LIZ

(breathlessly)

Get him! Get him now!

SMITH

(easily)

First things first, honey.

The girl is frightened by the menace in Smith's voice.

LIZ

(unsure, reaching out her hand)

Help me up, Smitty.

SMITH

You were going to help me, Liz.

(she looks at him quizzically)

I still need your help.

LIZ

(confused)

I did what you said...

SMITH

You two started out in a car. That's the way you'll end up. Over a cliff, burning.

(she tries to interrupt him, but he goes on...)

You can blame that on Macreeedy, too. He said I had too many witnesses.

LIZ

(dry whisper)

But why me? Why start with me?

SMITH

I got to start with somebody.

Liz. Her
crazily

He brings the rifle down, aiming almost casually at eyes go wide. She steps back, spins around, running down the steep incline.

LIZ

(yelling wildly)

Macreeedy! Macreeedy!

down the
corner
in her

A SHOT rings out. She falls forward, rolling slowly embankment. She lies there. Blood trickles from the of her pretty mouth. A rattling noise rises from deep throat, and then subsides.

Holding
sharply
the
at

In the silence the outline of Reno Smith emerges. his rifle at the ready, his silhouette illuminated in the twin beams of light, he climbs down the side of cliff. He looks toward the jeep and Macreeedy, not once the girl at his feet.

LIZ

(sadly, almost
reproachfully)

You shouldn't have done that...

with

Smith pays no attention to her. He advances inexorably rifle held at his hip. He fires at Macreeedy.

EXT. GRAVE

His

Macreeedy wipes the last of the fragments from his eyes. face is still streaked with dirt and shale. He turns, searching for something, anything, to fight back with.

Then

narrow,
crawls
bullet
ricocheting
sound.
familiar

he remembers... Stiffening, his body set, his eyes
he moves purposefully toward the front of the jeep and
under it. Again Smith opens up on him. Bullet after
pours into the confined space, nicking the wall,
off the jeep with a frightening, fluttery, wheezing
The firing stops again and in the silence we HEAR a
TRICKLE, as in running water...

EXT. RANCH - SMITH

the

re-loads his rifle. Stiffly, he starts slowly down over
rocks toward his unarmed victim...

MACREEDY

with
With a
the
screws
collar.
free
the
bottle's

He has unscrewed the nut and unconnected the gas line
the carburator. A spurt of gasoline is running out.
quick motion he picks up an empty whisky bottle from
litter-strewn earth. He fills it with gasoline, quickly
the nut back on. Now he sweeps his necktie free of his
Holding it with his teeth, he tears the felt lining
from its silk face. He twists half the lining inside
bottle, knotting the other end securely around the
neck, leaving a long strand dangling.

EXT. RANCH - CLOSE SHOT - SMITH

rifle,

moving rigidly toward the hole. He stops, levels his
fires.

EXT. GRAVE - MACREEDY

the

pinned down in the direct line of fire. The burst of
rifle stops.

EXT. RANCH - SMITH

carefully,
not more than twenty-five yards away, advancing
rifle at the ready.

EXT. GRAVE - MACREEDY

of the
the
hard and
The
with
sharp
ignite.
on
lights a match, placing the flame to the dangling end
tie. It catches. He flings himself to his feet and with
same motion whips the fiery bottle like a football,
straight toward Smith. Smith fires once, fast and wild.
bottle crashes against the rocks at his feet and bursts
a shattering explosion. Smith screams as the razor-
slivers rip his flesh. In a puff of flame, his clothes
He drops the rifle and goes down, squirming frantically
the black ashy ground.

EXT. RANCH - FULL SHOT

shovels
fire.
through
favoring Macreedy as he tears out of the hole. He hurls
himself at Smith. Wooden-faced, almost dreamy-eyed, he
the ashy dirt over Smith's prone chest, putting out the
Smith struggles halfway to his feet. Macreedy grabs his
shoulder, helping him up. Smith looks at Macreedy
eyes bleary with fear and pain and shock.

SMITH

(through his teeth)
Go ahead -- kill me. Now.

MACREEDY

I'd like to kill you now, but you
caused too much pain to die quickly.
(a beat)
You'll be tried in a court of law.
You'll be convicted by a jury. Then
you'll die.

head
He drives his right fist against Smith's chin. Smith's

on
hard.
snaps back as far as it can go and then wobbles to rest
his chest. He collapses. Macreedy blows out his breath
He staggers to Liz. As he bends over her...

DISSOLVE:

EXT. BLACK ROCK - DAY (DAWN)

empty
tarp,
the
inches
jeep
He
Liz's jeep, driven by Macreedy, rolls slowly down the
main street of the sleeping town. Behind him, under a
the body of the girl lies lifeless across the seat. On
seat beside him is Smith's rifle, the balance a few
from Macreedy's elbow. On the right front fender of the
Smith sits precariously, his shirt scorched and ragged.
He wears a sullen expression of pained indifference.

first in
In b.g., as the jeep passes, isolated lights go on,
Doc's house, then in two or three others. Macreedy is
oblivious to them.

EXT. JAIL - CLOSE SHOT - A MAN

corner of
to
long,
almost completely hidden, looks out grimly from a
the jail window. Protruding through the bars, swiveling
follow the progress of the jeep down the street, is the
ugly muzzle of a rifle.

EXT. MAIN STREET - JEEP

and
to
as Macreedy pulls up to the curb in front of the jail
cuts the ignition. He grabs the rifle, and steps around
Smith.

MACREEDY

(tonelessly, prodding
Smith off the fender
with his rifle)

Hands behind your head.

Smith complies.

EXT. JAIL

opens.
carrying
silence.
rifle,

as Macreedy marches Smith up the steps. The jail door
A man emerges, wearing a Mackinaw over his vest and
a rifle. It is Tim. For a moment Macreedy eyes him in
His gun finger tightens on the rifle in his hand. Tim's
too, is at the ready...

MACREEDY

(after a beat)

Am I going to have trouble with you?

TIM

Nope. But I sure thought the situation
was going to be like reversed. I
thought I was going to have trouble...

(nodding sharply in
Smith's direction)

...with him. I'll take care of him.

MACREEDY

(still hesitating)

Just as you took care of his buddies?

TIM

Just as I took care of his buddies.
Me, an' Doc, and Pete...

The SOUND of running feet padding along the dirt road
increases on SOUND TRACK. Macreedy turns slightly, to
see
steps
the
Doc huffing toward him. The older man climbs the jail
and comes to an abrupt halt, his eyes going from one to
other of the two men in the stand-off.

DOC

(to Macreedy)

It's all right, Macreedy...

silver-
He pulls Tim's Mackinaw to one side, revealing the
plated star pinned at the breast.

DOC

Old Tim here's got his badge back.

his,
Macreeedy,
Macreeedy,
Macreeedy swings his rifle from Tim to Smith. Tim lowers
stepping to one side, allowing Smith, covered by
to enter the jail. He goes in, Doc following. Pete sits
silently at Tim's desk.

INT. JAIL

other,
In one of the two cells are Coley and Hector. In the
Sam and Hastings.

MACREEDY

(looking around)
Well. The gang is all here.

TIM

I thought I'd take one last whack at
my job. Even if Smith killed me for
it.

MACREEDY

(jerking his head
toward Smith)
Put him in with Hastings.

goes to
Tim turns his key in the cell door. Macreeedy tiredly
Pete at the desk.

MACREEDY

Your sister's outside, Pete.

his
Pete rises. Macreeedy halts him momentarily, gripping
arm...

MACREEDY

(flatly)
She's dead.

shoulder
it
harshly...
Pete walks dazedly out the door. Tim grabs Smith's
and propels him roughly through the cell door. He slams
hard. As the clatter of the iron door reverberates

DISSOLVE:

EXT. HOTEL - BLACK ROCK - DAY

in the
Doc
door
lighting

The townspeople, with Doc f.g., are gathered silently
street, staring sadly, dumbly at the hotel before them.
wears a dark business suit, neat and conservative. The
opens (o.s.) and the people look up, their eyes
with expectancy.

WHAT THEY SEE

For a
people
stream-
watching
immediately
silent,

Macreeedy comes out of the door, carrying his suitcase.
moment he pauses, looking at the uplifted faces of the
in the street. In the distance we HEAR the horn of a
liner. Macreeedy goes down the steps, skirts the
crowd and heads for the railroad station. Almost
Doc falls in step with him. The townspeople, still
trail after them

MOVING SHOT - MACREEEDY AND DOC

pass,
entered

in f.g., the townspeople behind them. In b.g., as we
we see the main street just as we saw it when Macreeedy
town a few short hours ago.

MACREEEDY

(walking, after a
beat, to Doc)
Tim knows where to find me if I'm
needed.

Doc nods. He blinks and frowns...

MACREEEDY

What's on your mind, Doc?

DOC

Nothing. Only... about that medal.
Can we have it?

MACREEDY

"We...?" Can who have it?

DOC

We.

(indicating the
townspeople, with a
vague wave of his
hand)

Us.

MACREEDY

Why?

DOC

Well, we need it, I guess. It's
something we can maybe build on.
This town is wrecked, just as bad as
if it was bombed out. Maybe it can
come back...

MACREEDY

Some towns come back. Some don't. It
depends on the people.

as do
A NOISE o.s. attracts Macreedy's attention. He turns,
Doc and the townsmen.

WHAT THEY SEE

Smith,
escort
Tim's
member
IN HIS
have
his arm
In front of the jail, each of them handcuffed, are
Coley, Hector, Sam and Hastings. Tim and four cops
them to two State Police cars which are parked beside
old sedan and another car (presumably belonging to a
of the press). The newspaperman (WITHOUT A PRESS CARD
HAT) stands to one side with Pete. Pete as well as Tim
changed clothes; they look clean and trim. Coley has
in a sling. Hector's hat hides the bandage on his head.

BACK TO SCENE

with
pulls
Macreedy resumes walking toward the abandoned station,
Doc at his side and the people behind him. The train
in.

DOC

(still pressing)
That medal would help.

pauses,
Doc.
the
hands it
Macreedy is silent. He walks on, to the platform. He
looking at the people silently in his wake and then at
He takes a black velvet-covered box from his pocket --
box containing the medal -- looks at it, and slowly
to Doc.

DOC

Thanks, Macreedy. Thanks for
everything.

after
him.
Macreedy turns and exits from SHOT. The people look

EXT. PLATFORM

as Macreedy boards the train.

EXT. STREET

the
prisoners. The people move silently toward the train.
The cars in front of the jail U-turn and start off with

EXT. TRAIN

out.
Macreedy is at the passageway. Slowly the train moves

INT. PASSAGEWAY OF TRAIN

is
seen behind them and the people standing there. In the
distance, Tim's car recedes.
Macreedy and a conductor stand at the doorway. The town

CONDUCTOR

(curiously)

What's the excitement? What happened?

MACREEDY

A shooting.

CONDUCTOR

I knew it was something. First time
a streamliner stopped here in four
years.

MACREEDY

Second time.

He walks into the train.

LONG SHOT - TRAIN

gathering speed, diminishing, far, far into the
horizon.

FADE

OUT:

THE END

NOTES

Note from page [9]: (1) The sign should be of whatever
type
is feasible and compatible to terrain, emphasizing the
remoteness of Black Rock. It should list three cities
with
arrows pointing in the proper directions:

SAND CITY 32 MILES
PHOENIX 156 MILES