

BOUNTY JUMPERS

by GUY WINTHROP

as told to ALEX COX and DICK RUDE

FIFTH DRAFT

(c) 1997

NEAR KERNSTOWN, VIRGINIA, 1862 EXT DUSK

**TITLE: MARCH 1862. KERNSTOWN.
A UNION FORCE UNDER JAMES SHIELDS HAS DEFEATED
"OLD BLUE LIGHT", A.K.A. "STONEWALL", JACKSON.
TONIGHT, "OLD BLUE LIGHT" COUNTERATTACKS.**

MATTE PAINTING. 5,000 campfires signal the presence of the Army of the Potomac. The air is damp and the fires smoulder.

SHEET LIGHTNING flickers, briefly illuminating drawn-up wagons and artillery, and the thick forests of the Shenendoah Mountains beyond.

UNION ENCAMPMENT EXT DUSK

COLONEL W.W. BELKNAP rides a white horse through the camp. CAPTAIN BIERCE is at his side.

BELKNAP is 24 years old, straight-backed with a mane of yellow hair. Spare, almost frail-looking, clean-shaven save for sideburns at the curve of his jaws, he is correctly dressed in every detail.

BIERCE is almost 50 and bespectacled. He has a rubber poncho thrown over his uniform and rides a plain dun horse.

BELKNAP surveys the MEN of the 6th Illinois Volunteers trooping into camp. Their feet sink into the churned-up MUD. They are exhausted. Their weapons are slung over their shoulders or carried in their hands.

BELKNAP

The Army is cowardly tonight.

BIERCE

The Army is WET tonight, Colonel Belknap.
Wet and cold. And yes, it doesn't want
to end up like that --

He indicates a corpse lying in a pool of yellow water.

Its face and clothing are covered with mud. Several wagons have rolled over it.

BELKNAP

Disgraceful.

(calls to two passing MEN)

You! You!

The MEN turn and look up at BELKNAP on his horse. Belatedly they salute. BELKNAP points to the body.

BELKNAP

Get rid of that immediately.

The MEN are tired and emaciated. They stare at the corpse. There are corpses everywhere.

BIERCE

Do as the Colonel says!

The SOLDIERS stack their muskets and approach the body. BELKNAP and BIERCE ride on.

AHEAD OF THEM a group of men is being herded by PRIVATES with fixed bayonets. These MEN are exceptionally wretched-looking. Some are oddly-uniformed; still clad in early Union grey or gaudy clothing patterned after French zouaves.

BELKNAP reins his horse and addresses the SERGEANT IN CHARGE.

BELKNAP

Why are these men under guard?

SERGEANT

Deserters, sir.

BELKNAP's fine-featured face hardens. He gazes at each man in turn.

THUNDER RUMBLES.

BELKNAP

Nothing is more loathsome than the sight of those who have besmirched their colors on the field of honor.

(he looks at BIERCE.

BIERCE remains silent)

Shoot the lot.

SERGEANT

Begging the Colonel's pardon, but I'm under orders from Captain Peabody to conduct these men behind the lines.

BELKNAP

(his face growing red)

So they can escape again? Do as I say. Form a firing party. NOW!

SERGEANT

(saluting)

Yes, SIR!

The SERGEANT marches over to the SUTLER'S WAGON where a group of VOLUNTEERS is lined up to buy booze. Most are still clad in civilian clothes.

Above the wagon are signs saying NO LIKER SERVED TO SOLJERS and U.S. HOTEL D'GRUB.

SERGEANT

You five men! Form a firing line!
On the double!

The chosen five, grumbling, fall in. Some of them seem to be quite drunk. THUNDER.

ANGLE ON THE DESERTERS

Watching in abject terror. Among them is a private in his mid 20's - good-looking, in a weasally way. His face is scarred by Measles spots. His name is JAMES D. WOOL.

Beside him a terrified DESERTER falls to his knees.

DESERTER

Have pity, Colonel, sir! They told
us we'd be back home in a month!
I have a farm to tend, sir. And a wife.

BELKNAP turns his back on the sobbing man.

WOOL catches the eye of a member of the FIRING SQUAD.
A tough, black man in his thirties. He wears a SILVER
EARRING. ISHMAEL GOULDING. MORE THUNDER, closer now.

The first three DESERTERS are lined up before the squad.
The MAN who begged for mercy is among them.

ANGLE ON COLONEL BELKNAP AND CAPTAIN BIERCE.

BIERCE

Strictly speaking, Colonel, you don't
have the authority to execute these
fellows, villains though they be.
The proper remedy is placarding, or
tying behind a wagon --

BELKNAP

Do you propose to report me, Captain Bierce?

BIERCE

No sir I do not.

The SERGEANT looks at COLONEL BELKNAP. COLONEL BELKNAP
nods.

SERGEANT

Firing squad - present arms - fire!

A VOLLEY OF SHOTS. SIMULTANEOUS LIGHTNING.
The three DESERTERS fall dead in the mud.

BELKNAP

And the next group, Sergeant.
As quickly as you can.

WOOL is stood between two others, facing the FIRING SQUAD. Again he makes eye contact with GOULDING. GOULDING winks at him.

The FIRING SQUAD take aim with their Sharp's rifles.

A HERD OF DEER runs through the Camp.
There is a whistling sound.

The MEN turn to watch the deer - and a CANNISTER OF GRAPE AND EXPLOSIVE hits the Sutler's Wagon - blasting it apart and sending MEN and INSTRUMENTS OF WAR flying --

ANOTHER SHELL explodes nearby -- TUMULT --

CAPTAIN BIERCE is hit and falls.
COLONEL BELKNAP stares angrily at the sky.

ANGLE ON JAMES WOOL

Running through the darkness, illuminated by exploding shells and flashes of gunfire.

HIS POV -- the forest, lit white up ahead.

FOREST EXT EARLY EVENING

WOOL runs through the forest. Other MEN are running too, trying to escape the ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENT.

A PICKET rushes past him, going the other way.

PICKET

The REBS! THE REBS!

LIGHTNING illuminates GRAY UNIFORMS among the trees. Muskets crack and Minie balls fly past his ears. He turns and runs in another direction.

A SHELL strikes a tree above him. A branch falls and hits him on the head.

LATER

ANGLE ON WOOL, lying stunned by the branch.

Gray-uniformed legs run by.

LATER STILL

Rain sleet down. The sound of gunfire and explosions is further away. WOOL opens his eyes.

He sees a figure, crouching beneath the trees, amid the torrent. It is GOULDING, the soldier from the FIRING SQUAD.

A match flares as GOULDING tries to light a pipe.

Alarmed, WOOL tries to rise. The tree pins him. He blacks out again.

FOREST EXT DAWN

The chirping of birds. The woods are full of mist.

WOOL, moist with condensation, opens his eyes again. He is alone. He struggles from beneath the fallen branch and looks around.

He sees the DEBRIS of the battle - abandoned muskets, forage caps, corpses face down in a thicket.

WOOL sneezes.

FIELD EXT MORNING

WOOL emerges from the Forest and finds himself at the edge of an untended field. He sneezes again.

In the middle of the pasture, TWO FIGURES appear to be engaged in a life-or-death struggle.

One wears Union blue. The other an old coat and floppy hat.

WOOL parallels the tree line, drawing closer.

HIS POV --

GOULDING, stripping the clothes from a SCARECROW.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Watching as GOULDING pulls off his Union blue and dons the Scarecrow's clothes.

WOOL, emboldened, gives a shout.

WOOL

HO!

GOULDING, now dressed as the Scarecrow, grabs his rifle and aims it. WOOL raises his hands.

GOULDING

WHO HO?

WOOL

HO! I mean, hello!

GOULDING

What you doing, boy?

(WOOL shrugs)

Got any BACCY?

WOOL anxiously pats his pockets. He finds a half plug of Virginia tobacco, holds it up for GOULDING to see.

GOULDING beckons him with one hand, rifle at the ready.

WOOL

You have, ah, unusual taste in apparel.

GOULDING

Suits me better than that target

ye be wearing. Have ye a pipe?

WOOL

I fear not...

GOULDING

(searching him)

What's that in your pocket?

WOOL looks down at the leather-bound BOOK wilting in the breast pocket of his uniform.

WOOL

The Holy Bible. My mother gave it me.

GOULDING

Tear us out a psalm.

ANGLE ON THE BIBLE

As WOOL tears a dry page from the Book of Revelations and uses it to roll GOULDING a cigarette.

ANGLE ON WOOL AND GOULDING

Hunkered down in the middle of the field beside the remains of the scarecrow. GOULDING keeps a sharp eye on the woods.

WOOL finishes the cigarette and holds it out to him.

GOULDING

Got the Measles, don't ye, son.

WOOL

Yes, sir.

GOULDING shakes his head. He takes the cigarette and blows on it. Lights up.

GOULDING

Roll yourself one too.

WOOL rips another page out of the Book.

COUNTRY LANE EXT DAY

WOOL and GOULDING walk through the damp countryside. Gray clouds overhang the Allegheny Mountains. GOULDING carries his Sharp's rifle. Both men smoke.

WOOL

You must understand, Mr ah...
I'm not a deserter. it was a
mistake. I was on picket duty
and I heard a noise. Thought
it my duty to investigate.
The Sergeant... terrible mistake...

GOULDING field-strips his cigarette, keeping the tobacco and throwing the paper away. He jerks a thumb behind him.

GOULDING

Army's back that way.

They keep walking, GOULDING in his Scarecrow outfit, WOOL in his mud-spattered Private's uniform.

GOULDING

Best get yourself a change of clothes.

RUINED FARMHOUSE EXT DAY

At the edge of a thick wood.

GOULDING and WOOL lie in the undergrowth, eyeing it. No one seems to be around. GOULDING motions to WOOL to advance. WOOL complies uneasily.

FARMHOUSE INT DAY

The Farmhouse is less than a shell. Only one wall and the chimney are standing. The rest is matchwood, splintered and burned.

Standing amid the matchwood is a WARDROBE which the

flames have left untouched.

WOOL approaches it, opens the double doors.

There is a CORPSE inside. It wears a yellow scarf and a purple jacket. Flies buzz around. WOOL turns away in revulsion.

GOULDING pushes past him, grabs the yellow scarf --

COUNTRY ROAD EXT DAY

GOULDING and WOOL walk on. GOULDING wears the yellow scarf, knotted jauntily. WOOL is dressed in the purple jacket and old corduroy farmer's pants. He has brown boots which are too big for him. Smoke curls from their pipes.

GOULDING

How long were you in?

One year. We all enlisted following Manassas. For the first six months thereafter I was a washerboy. I washed the socks of the entire Brigade. Now I have had my fill of war.

(extends a hand)

James D. Wool from Dayton, Ohio.
And before you enquire, yes, I am one of the Ohio Wools.

GOULDING quickens his pace. His stomach rumbles.

GOULDING

I'm hungry.

TOWN EXT DAY

GOULDING and WOOL enter a small town. There are a couple of brick buildings. The UNION FLAG flies in the square.

BENEATH THE FLAGPOLE

A trestle table is set up. Decoreated with red, white and blue bunting, it bears the flags of Pennsylvania and the United States, and a sign reading, U.S. RECRUITMENT AGENCY - TO ARMS, YE SONS OF LIBERTY.

WOOL hangs back, afraid to meet the gaze of the one-eyed RECRUITMENT BROKER and the TWO UNION SOLDIERS in the Persian-style uniforms of the 114th Zouaves.

GOULDING

How much money have ye, boy?

WOOL

I have none.

GOULDING

Uh huh.

GOULDING hands him the Sharp's rifle and, to WOOL's horror, walks straight towards the RECRUITER. WOOL backs into the shadow of a Mercantile Store. He watches as GOULDING engages the BROKER in talk.

ANGLE ON THE BROKER, shaking his head.
GOULDING persists, speaking expansively.

BROKER

Son, I appreciate your desire to serve the Union. But there's no place for blacks in this man's Army. This here's a white man's fight.

GOULDING takes off his scarecrow hat and turns it in his hands. He looks down, keeping a big dumb smile on his face all the while.

GOULDING

Well, I knows that, sir. But, gosh, I'd like to... Isn't there nuthin' I can do to help?

BROKER

I hear tell they're raising a Colored Regiment in West Missouri. But I'm recruiting for the Pennsylvania Forces, and there's no way they'll take you.

GOULDING

(hanging his head)

Gosh darn it... Even though I's PART INDIAN?

The BROKER strokes the side of his face where his eye used to be. The UNION ZOUAVES listen up.

BROKER

Part Indian, do ye say?

GOULDING

Yes, sir. One quarter Cherokee.

BROKER

Hmm...

The BROKER sheaafs through the reams of paper on his wooden desk. He finds a document and reads.

BROKER

Well, this changes things. Under the Amendment Article, I AM empowered to recruit a certain number of REDSKINS to serve as SCOUTS. You a drinker, boy?

GOULDING

No, sir. I was Christian raised.

BROKER

Good. Because we don't want no drunken Injuns raisin' a ruckus in the Union Camp.

GOULDING

Won't raise no ruckus, sir, no sir.

The BROKER starts to fill out forms.

ANGLE ON WOOL, watching, aghast, from the shadows as GOULDING prepares to re-enlist.

BROKER
What's your name.

GOULDING
John Longbow, sir.

BROKER
Age.

GOULDING
Oh, I don't know.

BROKER
(writing)
I'll call you thirty-five.

The BROKER slides the papers over to him.

BROKER
Make your mark there. And here.

GOULDING takes the proffered Pen. He doesn't sign.

BROKER
Just go ahead and put an X.

GOULDING
I will, sir. It's... well... Ain't there a BOUNTY or a BONUS due me?

BROKER
(suspiciously)
You done this before?

GOULDING
No sir.

The BROKER is disgruntled.
One of the UNION ZOUAVES speaks up.

ZOUAVE

Tell him about the Bounty, French.
Don't think you're going to keep
it for yourself. If this brave's gonna
fight, then he's entitled like the

GOULDING

'titled to what?

BROKER

(glaring at the ZOUAVE)
All those that enlist in Colonel
Wurlitzer's Brigade of Zouaves is
entitled to one hundred dollars cash
plus an additional twelve dollars a
month. Plus fifteen dollars from
the Bounty Broker, namely me.

GOULDING grins again and signs "John Longfellow" twice in a
flowing hand. The BROKER reads his name.

BROKER

I thought you said your name was
Longbow.

GOULDING

Longbow's my Indian name.

The BROKER shrugs. He snaps his fingers. A ZOUAVE brings
over a tin box. The BROKER takes out \$115 in Union bills.
He puts \$5 in his pocket, hands the rest to GOULDING.
The ZOUAVES smile approvingly.

GOULDING heads for the SALOON.

ANGLE ON WOOL, following him in.

SALOON INT DAY

Long and narrow with a short counter at the end.

No decor of any kind. GOULDING addresses an old CHINESE WOMAN.

GOULDING

Food. Any sort of food.

(gestures eating)

A lot of it.

(mimes drinking)

And liquor.

The OLD WOMAN shouts to her DAUGHTER, who runs into the back. She pours two shots of something labelled "XXXX" into glasses and leaves the bottle. WOOL joins GOULDING at the bar.

WOOL

You appear to have a plan, although thus far I cannot fathom it.

Did they pay you?

GOULDING

Of course they paid me. You always gets something up front. Didn't they pay ye?

WOOL

No. We were volunteers, as I said.

GOULDING

You're just as clever as a Bee Keeper, ain't you? Drink up.

WOOL stares at the whiskey as if he doesn't know what to do with it. He lifts his glass and takes a tiny sip. He coughs.

GOULDING

Not like that. Like this.

GOULDING pours himself a shot and tosses it back. WOOL does likewise. He shakes but does not cough.

GOULDING

Always drink liquor quick
so you don't have to taste it.

He pours two more shots. The OLD CHINESE LADY brings bowls and chopsticks.

GOULDING

How much for a good horse?

OLD LADY

No good horse here. Bad horse cost
two hundred shins.

GOULDING

Expensive.

OLD LADY

Rebs run off stock. Federals take
rest. What there ain't, costs.

GOULDING ponders. He takes the bottle over to a table by the window. WOOL follows, bringing his glass.

ANGLE ON THE BROKER AND THE TWO ZOUAVES

Through the fly-specked window glass.

GOULDING

Why don't ye go out there and
do what I done.

WOOL

You, sir, are mad.

(pours himself another shot)

I do intend, in due course, to
return to my Regiment.

(hiccups)

But I will not - I cannot, neither
legally nor physically - serve in
two different Companies at one and
the same time.

WOOL sneezes.

GOULDING

I'm not tellin' ye to SERVE, boy.
You go out there and sign your name
and we've got ourselves a horse.

WOOL opens his mouth to speak. He shuts it again.
The CHINESE GIRL arrives, bearing Chinese food, fried eggs,
and some fried animal. GOULDING tucks into it.

WOOL

But there are two of us.

GOULDING

(eating)

We'll ride double up.

WOOL thinks. He drinks another shot. He thinks some more.

WOOL

Your proposal, as I understand it,
and I beg you will correct me otherwise,
is that you and I ENLIST together in
the service of the Union --

(hiccups)

-- in order to procure a nag --

(hiccups again)

-- and then DECAMP?

GOULDING nods. He continues eating. More food arrives.
WOOL isn't hungry any more. His mind is racing.

GOULDING motions him to eat.

WOOL leans in, conspiratorial.

WOOL

Do you do this often?

GOULDING

(mouth full)

All the time.

The TWO UNIFORMED ZOUAVES enter the Saloon.

ZOUAVE 1

Two glasses of beer, please.

OLD LADY

No intoxicating libation for soldier!

(she waves a paper at them)

County ordnance!

They shake their heads and stare at GOULDING, still busy eating, and at WOOL, lolling drunkenly in his chair.

ZOUAVE 2

(staring at GOULDING's back)

How come you served that Injun and not us?

OLD LADY

Not in uniform. I serve you, costs double.

ZOUAVE 2

But we ain't been paid in six months --

His PARTNER heads for the door. Pauses beside GOULDING.

ZOUAVE 1

Go get your necessaries.

We'll muster out in ten minutes.

The ZOUAVES rejoin the BOUNTY BROKER, who is now beckoning to a pair of THIRTEEN YEAR-OLD BOYS.

GOULDING stares fixedly at WOOL.

WOOL

I can't. It's TREASON.

GOULDING

Go.

BENEATH THE FLAGPOLE EXT DAY

WOOL stands with his hand up, as if taking an oath.

BROKER

Name.

WOOL

James... JAMIESON. Uh, Richard Jamieson.

BROKER

Where you from?

WOOL

Ohio... originally. But I've spent the last EIGHT YEARS just s... north of here.

BROKER

I'll write Ohio.

WOOL

NO! NO!

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Heading for the corral behind the Saloon.

COUNTRY ROAD EXT DAY

GOULDING and WOOL gallop past, on the same old horse.

WOOL

I can't believe that what we're doing is POSSIBLE. I never suspected... never thought it could be so EASY to commit so terrible a CRIME.

GOULDING

We ain't got away yet!

FADE IN THE SOUND OF GUNFIRE AND CANNON

from a far-off battlefield.

RAILROAD TRACKS EXT DAY

Thunder mingles with the distant crack of Muskets and the ping of rifles several miles away. GOULDING and WOOL enter frame on their old brown horse, GOULDING's Rifle across his knee.

They parallel a twisted mass of torn-up RAILROAD TRACKS.

WOOL upends the "XXXX" bottle. It's empty. He throws it away. It breaks in the forest with a crash.

WOOL

Giddy up! Giddy up!

He urges the old NAG with his knees.
The horse increases its pace a fraction.

GOULDING

Whoa. Quit doin' that.
You're gonna kill her.

GOULDING lights another Bible cigarette.

WOOL

We must make haste! They may come
after us!

GOULDING

Who? Those soldier boys in town?
(WOOL nods, looking back)
Those boys have muskets. Got me a
Breecher's Bible.

GOULDING indicates his Sharp's Rifle.

GOULDING

They won't follow us.

SALOON INT NIGHT

Crowded and loud. Through the windows we see traffic in the street, indicating a larger town.

WOOL is at the bar, drunk and babbling to a rroup of equally intoxicated COAL MINERS wearing candle-wax-coated helmets. GOULDING stands nearby, watching a CARD GAME.

WOOL

The Confederacy is like a mass of Cobwebs woven around the limbs of an INFANT GIANT! They know not that they attack a NOBLE and PUISSANT NATION, rousing herself like a STRONG MAN after SLEEP! Shaking her INVINCIBLE LOCKS!

The MINERS all cheer. SCANDANAVIANS, they understand little of what WOOL says. But they are caught up in his Fervor for the Union, and wave their shovels and picks.

WOOL

WOE, I say WOE to the Traitors who preach an Accommodation with the FOE! There can be No Compromise until the Union is restored and Jeff Davis dangles from a ROPE!

MORE CHEERS and SCANDINAVIAN SHOUTS.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Still studying the GAME OF CHANCE --

CARD PLAYER

I fold.

The PLAYER leaves the game.

GOULDING

Mind if I join you gentlemen?

PLAYERS

Not at all, sir.

WOOL jumps on the counter, haranguing the CROWD.

WOOL

Long live President Lincoln!

(cheers)

God save the ARMY OF THE POTOMAC!

(hearty cheers)

Three cheers for GENERAL McCLELLAN!

(ecstatic cheering)

SHERIFF'S OFFICE INT NIGHT

The SHERIFF sleeps in a cell with a newspaper over his face. The headline on the paper reads, "**McCLELLAN RELIEVED OF HIS COMMAND**". The SHERIFF snores.

A tap at the door. More snores. The tap becomes a HAMMERING. The SHERIFF wakes.

SHERIFF

What is it? What? WHAT? WHAT!

The HAMMERING continues. The SHERIFF stumbles out of his cell and through the office, which is decorated with handbills saying "TO ARMS! ENLIST HERE!" etc.

The SHERIFF cocks a SCATTER GUN, opens the door.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE EXT NIGHT

ISHMAEL GOULDING waits outside. He holds the reins to a horse and cart. Aboard the cart are SEVERAL SLEEPING MINERS and the inert form of JAMES D. WOOL.

GOULDING

I'm looking for the Recruiting Agent.

SHERIFF

I am he. What be they? Drunk and disorderly?

GOULDING
No, sir. Volunteers.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE INT NIGHT

GOULDING and the SHERIFF dump the last of the SCANDANAVIANS in a cell. His body lands on top of WOOL.

The SHERIFF locks the door.

SHERIFF
I don't normally recruit this late,
you know.

GOULDING
Ain't no normal in a Time of War.

The SHERIFF nods. He eyes a sheaf of DOCUMENTS.

SHERIFF
You're sure these boys all signed
these themselves?

GOULDING
Absolutely.

One of the MINERS cries out in his sleep. The SHERIFF reaches through the bars and taps him lightly with his revolver.

GOULDING
How much are they worth?

SHERIFF
I can use three of 'em for Subs.
Pays 300 shinplasters apiece.
City and County offer a bonus for
the rest. Say, fifty each. That's...

He tries to figure it, using his fingers.

GOULDING
Eleven hundred.

SHERIFF
Split two ways is...

He tries to work it out, but cannot.

GOULDING
Six hundred fifty each.

The SHERIFF tries to do the mathematics for himself.
He fails and accepts GOULDING's calculation.
He unlocks his little safe and counts out \$650.00.
The TWO MEN shake hands.

JAIL CELL INT MORNING

JAMES D. WOOL wakes up. He sees the PRISON BARS.
He moans. The MINERS snore.

WOOL
Let me go! Oh woe! Bring me an ADVOCATE!

The SHERIFF appears. He hands WOOL a tin cup of coffee
through the bars.

SHERIFF
Calm down, boy. You're not arrested.

WOOL
I'm not?

SHERIFF
No. I'm just keeping you here till the
Serjeant at Arms arrives.

WOOL turns green and spills his coffee.

SHERIFF
Vomitous, eh?
(unlocks the door)
Not in here, if you please.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE EXT DAY

The SHERIFF marches WOOL out the back door. WOOL, sweating and shaking, promptly pukes. The SHERIFF drops him on the ground.

SHERIFF

Attaboy. Better OUT than in. Army'll soon teach ye how to hold yer licker.

Piled up behind the SHERIFF'S OFFICE are big crates and tea chests marked "Property of U.S. Army" and rows of brand new axles and wagon wheels.

Someone hammers on the SHERIFF's front door.

VOICE

Sheriff! I got hominy, potatoes and hard tack! Couldn't get no condensed milk, though!

The SHERIFF abandons WOOL and returns to his office, shouting to the MAN outside the door.

SHERIFF

Don't nearly match what I got for you, Sergeant. Five Norwegians and a 'Merican!.

WOOL looks around. He sees, to his astnoishment, the old BROWN NAG tied to the back gate.

SERGEANT'S VOICE

I'll give you a thousand for 'em.

SHERIFF'S VOICE

You're pulling my leg! Look at the shoulders on that Dutch Boy! These fine Volunteers are worth 15 hunnerd!

WOOL drags himself over the gate. He crawls aboard the horse and spurs her. She stumbles away.

OPEN COUNTRY EXT DAY

WOOL clings sickly to his horse, swaying wildly, galloping out of town.

RIVER EXT DAY

WOOL rides up a stream beneath intertwined tree branches. He sees a leather book lying amid the pebbles at the water's edge.

It is his family Bible. Half of the New Testament is gone. WOOL snatches it up and spurs his old mount on.

EDGE OF THE MOUNTAINS EXT DUSK

The NAG collapses under WOOL.

The OLD HORSE breathes hard. WOOL remains in the saddle. He stares at the Mountain Range, turning from blue to purple in the evening air.

A light glimmers at the base of the Mountains.

Ignoring his horse, WOOL stars to hike towards the glow.

CAMPSITE EXT NIGHT

The campfire is almost extinguished. A good-looking black horse is tethered nearby. A roll of blankets lies bunched up beside the fire.

JAMES D. WOOL creeps very slowly into the dying firelight, carrying a large, jagged-edged ROCK.

He lifts the rock as if to dash it down --

The butt-end of a SHARP'S RIFLE enters frame and SLAMS AGAINST WOOL'S HEAD.

WOOL falls to the ground, half in the fire, half out of it. GOULDING sits down on his blanket roll and contemplates WOOL.

He helps himself to WOOL's tobacco, searches his own pockets for the Bible. He can't find it.

WOOL groans, semi-conscious, reacting to the flames. GOULDING drags WOOL out of the fire and goes through his pockets. He finds the Bible and tears out a page to roll a cigarette.

GOULDING

I wondered where the Good Book got to.

WOOL

(raising his head)
You... scoundrel.

GOULDING

I'd mind my language, if'n I was in your shoes.

He looks at WOOL's footwear. WOOL's boots are worn completely through. GOULDING's boots, by contrast, are hand-stitched mocassins in top condition.

WOOL

I have done naught to merit an apology.
Where is my money?

GOULDING lifts the bottle from his blankets, takes a swig. He sets it down again and stokes the fire.

GOULDING

Done nothing is right. You was supposed to get them Miners moonshined, not your damn self.

WOOL

A slight excess of enthusiasm. You owe me half their bounties, plus the entire amount you earned for me.

GOULDING

That Sheriff was an old fox. He took the lion's share of the kitty.

WOOL

Just give me half of what you got.

GOULDING

How'd you find me, anyhow?
I thought you a City boy.

WOOL

It wasn't difficult in the least. I knew you wouldn't go east for fear of Burnside's Army. South, obviously, was eliminated. North of us are the impenetrable Cumberlands. So I came West.

GOULDING

Well, ain't that right clever.
Ye college taught?

WOOL

(increasingly annoyed)
Yes, as a matter of fact, I am.
St Elsinore's Preparatory Academy
and the University of Ohio at Athens.
My MONEY, if you please.

GOULDING unpacks a bullet-making kit - a lead bar, miniature ladle and metal mould. He holds the lead bar in the fire to heat it. WOOL stares at him, waiting for a reply.

GOULDING

That money's gone.

WOOL

WHAT?

He offers WOOL a Bible cigarette. WOOL shakes his head.

GOULDING

After I enrolled you and those
Dutchmen I returned to the Red Dog
and wagered till it was all spent.

WOOL wails and falls to his knees. GOULDING waits for the
lead to melt. He reads a newspaper. It is dated April 18
1862.

GOULDING

Listen to this: "Report of the Battle
of El Picacho. Westernmost Combat of
the War to Date. Reported Loss of
Huge Shipment of Confederate Gold."

WOOL groans, shakes his head.

GOULDING

Know where El Picacho is? It's north of
Tucson, in the Arizona Territory. Got me a
place there. It's an old Spanish city, see,
and it is ALL SALOONS. Roulette and baccarat.
Stud and draw.

(belatedly)

Got me a good woman, too. Goin' back
one of these days, that's for sure.
Ye got yeself a lady, in Athens?

(WOOL continues to moan)

Cut your snivelin! You're a free man,
ain't you? Didn't I leave the horse?

A COYOTE howls nearby. Foxes answer. WOOL sobs at the
absence of his money. GOULDING puts the paper down,
scoops molten lead into the mould.

GOULDING

More'n that. Gambling's been my ruin, and no mistake.

WOOL

And have you not the slightest pang of guilt?

GOULDING

'bout what?

WOOL

Why, taking the Union's money after she freed the slaves.

GOULDING

Ain't freed 'em in Missouri yet, has she? Or in Kentucky. Only slaves Massa Lincoln's freed is in the damn South.

GOULDING spurs his horse. WOOL quickens his pace.

WOOL

But the Border States must surely follow -- once the War is won -- the man's an Abolitionist -- and a free thinker --

GOULDING reins up suddenly. WOOL bumps into his horse. GOULDING sits glaring down at him.

GOULDING

Listen up, white boy. This War ain't about freein' no Negro Slaves. It's about MAKIN' MONEY. All wars is about Makin' Money. Those that got the Most Money, WINS.

WOOL

Speaking of money, I must insist that henceforth we divide our takings fairly, and with dispatch.

GOULDING spurs his horse again.

GOULDING
Do what ye're told,
ye'll get your share.

He turns and trots away. WOOL hurries after.

WOOL
What is your name, by the by?
I feel I have a right to know,
if we are to be PARTNERS --

GOULDING looks back at him. A wind catches the prairie grass, which starts to roll in waves.

TIGHT ANGLE ON GOULDING

Off in the mountains beyond, LIGHTNING flickers.

GOULDING
Ishmael Goulding.

He gallops off. WOOL takes after him, running.

MONTAGE

GOULDING rides into another town, followed by WOOL.

WOOL and GOULDING in line to join another Regiment.
MONEY changes hands.

GOULDING and WOOL sign up again, elsewhere.

GOULDING and WOOL gallop away on two mounts.

GOULDING and WOOL march in the van of NEW RECRUITS,
led by a handsome CAPTAIN on a horse.

GOULDING and WOOL leap a fence and escape into the woods.

MORE MONEY changes hands.

WOOL climbs a telegraph pole and pretends to be a LINEMAN as CONFEDERATE TROOPS ride past. At the top of the pole sits GOULDING, reading another newspaper.

ANGLE ON HEADLINES:

**"Grant Orders Jews Expelled from Mississippi" and
"President Lincoln Declines to Pardon Indians:
38 Sioux to Hang."**

GOULDING and WOOL exort another THRONG to join up, at a Teetotalers' Meeting. WOOL leads them in "The Battle Cry of Freedom."

WOOL and GOULDING bargain with a BOUNTY BROKER as another group of VOLUNTEERS is loaded aboard a Railroad Car. Handbills give details of the FEDERAL DRAFT.

MORE MONEY passes into WOOL and GOULDING's hands.

The TWO sneak through a Temporary Hospital filled with WOUNDED MEN. They're hiding from their SERGEANT. One of the injured SOLDIERS reads a paper which reports **"President Calls For Day of Prayer and Fasting Throughout Union."**

ANGLE ON MORE MONEY, falling like a heavy-pouring constant rain.

DISSOLVE TO --

CROSSROADS EXT DAY

WOOL and GOULDING ride towards a country crossroads in the rain. Their faces are sunken in their coats. WOOL's aspect is hardened and his Measles are gone.

They halt to watch TWO WAGONS filled with ESCAPING SLAVES roll by. The Wagons are bedecked with Union Flags.

GOULDING watches them pass, in silence.

TOWN, MISSOURI EXT DUSK

The RAIN is coming down hard as GOULDING and WOOL enter another settlement. Nailed to the walls of almost every building are large handbills saying, "**CHANCE TO AVOID THE DRAFT! \$100 TO INEXPERIENCED MEN. \$400 TO VETERAN VOLUNTEERS. GOOD PAY - GOOD COMPANIONS - UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITIES FOR GLORY.**"

They eye the signs, tying up their horses.

GOULDING

Best watch our step here.

WOOL, dripping water from every inch of his body, ascends the wooden steps and enters the --

SALOON INT NIGHT

TWO WHORES sit beside a little stove. The INNKEEPER, who resembles an Undertaker, beams WOOL and GOULDING a gold-toothed smile.

INNKEEPER

What'll it be, Gentlemen?

WOOL

A bottle of your strongest.

GOULDING eyes the WHORES beside the stove. They are picking lice out of each other's hair. They smile at him.

INNKEEPER

Foul weather out.

WOOL

Certainly is.

WOOL turns and notices a PALE YOUTH peering at him through the window glass. The PALE YOUTH vanishes.

SALOON EXT NIGHT

Lightning flashes behind the two-storey Saloon. SEVERAL FIGURES race through the driving rain towards the Bar.

SALOON INT NIGHT

GOULDING and WOOL sit by the pot-bellied stove, adjacent to the WHORES. Bowls of nameless STEW sit before them.

GOULDING has his boots off and is studying his feet. He is half-way through a long and dubious story pertaining to his ancestry.

GOULDING

My father was Achmed Ben Achmed,
the African King. He was a Sultan,
actually; later he became a King.
He lead a mutiny aboard the slaver
San Dominick off Callao in, oh, 1822.
Waited till they was in sight of land
and then he strangled the Captain with
his chains. Hanged the passengers and
made the Portugee crew walk the plank.
His people, they sailed back to Africa,
but my old man figured he'd try his
future in the New World --

The SALOON DOOR bangs open and a cold wind blows in. A PROSPEROUS TOWNSMAN enters, followed by the PALE YOUTH last seen peering at WOOL through the window.

They approach GOULDING and WOOL.

TOWNSMAN

If you please --

GOULDING and WOOL tense up. WOOL's hand drifts towards the Navy Colt Revolver sticking in his boot.

TOWNSMAN

I am James McNichols Adams-Hoag.
Perhaps you've heard of me.

They shake their heads.

WOOL

Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone.
Heard of us?

TOWNSMAN

No, I can't say... uh... may I enquire
if you are both enrolled in our Great
Northern Army?

GOULDING

We're Government Employees. Map Makers --

WOOL

(simultaneously)
Telegraph linemen --

GOULDING and WOOL exchange a glance. The TOWNSMAN sits down at their table. His WEIRD SON hovers behind.

TOWNSMAN

Gentlemen, I am something of an orator
so it is in my nature to be forthright.
My son Emil is liable to be drafted.
He is a sickly boy, much beloved by
his aged Grandmother. To take him
from her side would be to doom her to
an early grave --

GOULDING

Why, that's a shame.

TOWNSMAN

Sirs, I know that as Federal Employees
engaged in an essential occupation (CONT.)

TOWNSMAN (CONT.)
 you are not required to serve in this
 Great Undertaking.

WOOL
 "Not required." Well said.
 (he sighs)
 But how some of us YEARN TO!

GOULDING kicks WOOL under the table.
 The TOWNSMAN beckons the INNKEEPER for more liquor.

TOWNSMAN
 Sir, I will pay a THOUSAND DOLLARS
 to the man who SUBSTITUTES himself
 for my Emil!

WOOL is galvanized. GOULDING kicks him again, to no avail.

WOOL
 A thousand dollars?

The door flies open and an OLD WOMAN storms in, dragging
 a very large and very fit PLOW BOY with her.

OLD WOMAN
 Get away from them, damn you!

She flies at EMIL with her stick. The TOWNSMAN jumps up
 to protect his SON. The WHORES roar with laughter.

The OLD WOMAN pushes the PLOW BOY before OUR HEROES.

OLD WOMAN
 My boy Herman here has a bad heart.
 He can't possibly go. Which one of
 you is going to SUB for him?

GOULDING
 How much you offering?

OLD WOMAN
 Eleven hundred bucks.

The door flies open and SEVERAL MORE TOWNSPEOPLE pile in, dripping wet. LIGHTNING outside.

TOWNSMAN 2
 (with twins)
 Two Thousand Greenbacks for the
 pair of you!

ANGLE ON MAN IN FALSE PREACHER OUTFIT --

PREACHER
 TWO THOUSAND FOR ONE!

ANGLE ON GOULDING AND WOOL

With Drinks and Money waving in their faces.

ANGLE ON THE WHORES.

DORMITORY INT NIGHT

Lightning illuminates Bugs running across WOOL's calico pillow. He wakes from a nightmare, looks around. One of the WHORES is snoring beside him. WOOL gets up, holding his head, hunched and stumbling.

UPPER CORRIDOR INT NIGHT

WOOL creeps along the inner Balcony of the Saloon. LIGHTNING flashes again. He looks down.

ANGLE ON A UNION SOLDIER

Sitting with a SHOTGUN in a chair beside the door.

WOOL recoils, aghast. He creeps to a window, anxious at the creaking of the wooden floor beneath his tread --

ANGLE ON TWO MORE SOLDIERS

Standing guard beside several Union horses, tethered in the street.

UPPER DORMITORY INT NIGHT

GOULDING lies with the other WHORE. TWO OLD ASIAN MEN sit, smoking, beside a lamp.

WHORE

That story you told about your daddy being a King. Any of that true?

GOULDING

A goodly portion.

WHORE

Where you headed next?

GOULDING

To serve the Union.

WHORE

Sure. Then where?

Before GOULDING can reply, WOOL bursts in, breathlessly.

WOOL

Ishmael! Rouse yourself! This place is alive with Federal troops!

GOULDING's brow furrows. He reaches for his Sharp's rifle.

UPPER BALCONY INT NIGHT

GOULDING stands looking down at the SOLDIERS gathered in the Saloon. WOOL waits behind him, on the attic stair.

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN BIERCE

One arm missing, his sleeve pinned up, talking in low tones with the INNKEEPER.

INNKEEPER

You're in luck, Captain. Two boys
done volunteered as subs last night.

BIERCE

Where are they?

INNKEEPER

Sleeping it off upstairs.

BIERCE

Well, we'll be sure to take 'em
with us, once the Colonel's done.
You got that bottle he asked for?

The INNKEEPER produces a bottle from behind the Bar.
GOULDING retreats into the shadows, where WOOL waits.

GOULDING

They ain't here just for us. Somebody
else is here. Someone important.

They watch as BIERCE climbs the stairs, bearing the bottle
and two glasses, and knocks on the door to a private room.

VOICE

Come.

Juggling his burden with his only arm, BIERCE opens the
door.

ANGLE ON COLONEL W.W. BELKNAP

Jacket off, dress shirt unbuttoned, sitting on a bed facing
a WOMAN with long, black hair.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Eyes bulging madly.

WOOL

It's him!

GOULDING

Who?

WOOL

The officer who ordered me shot.

GOULDING

I don't recall --

WOOL grabs his arm. His voice is quite loud.

WOOL

Yes you do! It was the night that we became acquaintances! That swine would have had me sent to my reward --

GOULDING

Well, we'd best figure a way out of here or you'll be rewarded now for sure.

GOULDING heads up the attic stairs. It is a tough climb for he is a big man and the stairs and upper landing are piled with metal cans that bear the label - KEIFER'S PREMIUM COAL OIL.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Frozen, on the stairs below him, staring at the cans.

ROOF EXT NIGHT

GOULDING watches WOOL slosh COAL OIL all over the flat wooden roof. He shakes his head. WOOL mutters to himself.

BEDROOM INT NIGHT

COL. W.W. BELKNAP unbuttons the corset of an exquisitely beautiful ASIAN WOMAN. She is of the same trade as GOULDING and WOOL'S WOMEN, but of a status incomparable.

BELKNAP and his MISTRESS both hold POETRY BOOKS.

Unlike BIERCE, BELKNAP is physically untouched by the War. His blond hair is longer, his features even finer.

BELKNAP

(reading)

The Gorgon was a maiden bold
Who turned to stone the Greeks of old
That looked upon her awful brow.
We dig them out of ruins now,
And swear that workmanship so bad
Proves all the ancient sculptors... mad.

BELKNAP'S MISTRESS

(reading)

How I would have them hear
In the woods of Shinoda
At an old temple
When the night is deepening
The sound of snowfall.

He closes his book, reaches out to touch her long, silken black hair. A THUDDING SOUND from the roof above.

UPPER CORRIDOR INT NIGHT

WOOL comes sliding heavily down the stairs, feverishly excited. Coal Oil drips and glitters all around.

GOULDING cautiously lights a clay pipe. He offers WOOL a match.

WOOL

Thanks, friend. FIRE! FIRE!!

So saying, he puts the match to the Coal Oil.

THE STAIRCASE AND THE WALLS ERUPT IN FLAME.

BEDROOM INT NIGHT

BELKNAP makes love to his fabulous MISTRESS. So engrossed are they, they do not hear the alarum raised, nor see the FLAMES falling through the wooden ceiling.

STREET EXT NIGHT

TOWNSPEOPLE run about with buckets or stand idly in small groups, staring at the blaze. The Saloon is engulfed by FIRE.

WOOL and GOULDING join the throng of frantic GUESTS streaming out of the Saloon. The FIRE has already spread to the roofs of the adjacent stores.

The SOLDIERS make a rush to cut the horses from the burning STABLES. No one is thinking about BOUNTY JUMPERS.

BEDROOM INT NIGHT

One-armed CAPTAIN BIERCE breaks down the door and drags the LOVERS from their burning bed. As he hustles the COLONEL and his LADY from the room, the CEILING COLLAPSES, pinning him with burning beams --

SIDE STREET EXT NIGHT

GOULDING cuts two horses from the frightened Army mounts. WOOL stands staring at the CONFLAGRATION he has caused.

GOULDING

I must hand it to you, Wool - ye be
a cold one, but ye get results!
Let's us begone!

WOOL

No, no...

GOULDING

Eh?

WOOL

I feel a cramp... It is he, the
terrible destroyer...

ANGLE ON HERMAN THE PLOW BOY

Manning a bucket chain, turning at the sound of WOOL's
hysterical voice. He taps the shoulder of the pale EMIL.

ANGLE ON GOULDING, handing WOOL the reins.

GOULDING

Man, ye're still drunk! Mount up!

WOOL

No, no! I can see him clearly!
It is he - consumption! He plans
to take me home! To take us both!

GOULDING drops the horse's tether. Seeing that WOOL has
drawn the attention of the TOWNSMEN, he whirls his mount
around.

GOULDING

Well, adios!

GOULDING spurs his horse down the alley.

WOOL, feverish and maniacal, draws his Navy Colt and
shoots GOULDING's horse out from under him.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Hitting the dirt, winded, his Sharp's Rifle flying.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Pinned to the ground by HERMAN, EMIL and the BUCKET
BRIGADE.

COUNTRY ROAD EXT DUSK

GOULDING and WOOL are marched on foot along a country road. They are IN CHAINS. They pass a convoy of wagons carrying WOUNDED UNION SOLDIERS going the other way.

PULL BACK to reveal the POSSE marching its CAPTIVES into the Union Camp. All around, SOLDIERS are felling trees for bridges, buildings, and stockades.

"A" TENT INT NIGHT

GOULDING and WOOL, still chained together, stand before the formidable SERGEANT BARGER in the quartermaster's tent.

BARGER is burly, scarred and bearded. He wears a silk scarf, knotted to hide the KNIFE WOUNDS in his neck.

Half-cured HAMS hanging from the tent pole drip blood onto BARGER's desk.

BARGER

Bounty jumpers, eh?
Just what I like.

GOULDING

I ain't no bounty jumper, sir.
This man had me held hostage.

WOOL

Sergeant, sir, we have each of us lepped the bounty many times. We BOTH burned down the Hotel, too. We are EQUALLY CULPABLE and deserve whatever punishment you choose --

SERGEANT BARGER slaps them both across the face with one blow. Their chains rattle. He glares ferociously. His eyes are completely red.

BARGER

You are less than dogs to me.

I aim to use you up.

(to his MEN)

Quarter Rations for this pair!

And no tobacco!

WOOL smirks. GOULDING struggles. They are dragged away.

ARMY CAMP EXT NIGHT

GOULDING and WOOL are chained to a Corral fence. It is cold and they shiver. They do not speak to each other. GOULDING gazes sadly at a cockfight in progress by the Sutler's tent. SOLDIERS are shouting, betting, fighting.

ACROSS FROM THE CORRAL

Past a compound filled with DISPLACED RESERVATION INDIANS and ESCAPED SLAVES UNDER GUARD, streams an undending line of WOUNDED MEN.

Those who can, walk or hobble on makeshift crutches. Those who cannot, are carried by a seemingly infinite procession of WAGONS and GUN CARRIAGES.

WOOL

It is possible...

(coughs)

Just possible... that I was impetuous in suggesting we return to the ranks of the Union. It was the burning of the building... the hideous, devilish glare of the flames... that momentarily unminded me... We were fortunate that Colonel Belknap didn't spot us.

He looks at GOULDING. GOULDING does not look at him or reply.

WOOL

You may rest easy, though, Ishmael,
assured that even now I am devising
a STRATAGEM to extricate us.

GOULDING turns and stares at him. He is several feet away
from WOOL, chained to the wooden fence.

GOULDING

Soon as these chains come off,
you're a dead man.

ARMY CAMP EXT DAY

The procession of the WOUNDED continues, raising a cloud of
dust which chokes them and everyone in their path. The sun
beats down. Buzzards circle.

GOULDING and WOOL remain chained to the Corral.

Next door, the SUTLERS are erecting a wooden building with
signs saying, "**EMBALMING TO ORDER -- FREE FROM ODOR &
INFECTON -- SPECIAL RATES FOR SERVICE MEN**".

SGT. BARGER supervises the construction.

WOOL

Sergeant! SERGEANT!
(BARGER ignores him)
SERGEANT! SIR! Permission to SPEAK!

BARGER pushes through the throng.

BARGER

What?

WOOL

Sergeant Barger, sir, I can no longer
languish a mute witness to so HIDEOUS
a scene! I beg you, sir, to let us
VOLUNTEER FOR AMBULANCE DUTY!

ANGLE ON THE WALKING WOUNDED limping through the dust.

BARGER

Want to be good now, do ye?
Well, it's too late.

WOOL

Sergeant, you are right not to trust us,
but I am in earnest. Chain me to the
Surgeon's Table if you will! I shall not
flinch. I only wish to give COMFORT to
my brothers-in-arms --
(a passing wagon hits a rock.
The WOUNDED within groan)
-- whom I so wronged.

BARGER

So - ye want to go to the HOSPITAL?

WOOL

Yes, sir, with all my heart.

BARGER starts kicking WOOL. WOOL struggles but, shackled to the fence, can't get away. He shrieks. BARGER goes on kicking.

ANGLE ON GOULDING, smiling.

NORTHERN ARKANSAS EXT DAY

MATTE PAINTING - a thick mass of MARCHING MEN stretches to a horizon of low brown hills. In the foreground are sandstone cliffs and a few pines.

The inevitable DUST CLOUD hangs over the Union Army.

WAGON ROAD EXT DAY

WOOL and GOULDING are marched along in chains, surrounded by other MISCREANTS. WOOL and some others have clapboard placards tied to them saying, "**STOLE U.S. SUPPLIES**" or

"**TEMPTED TO DESERT.**" WOOL's placard reads, "**LEPPED BOUNTY 7 TIMES.**"

CAMP EXT NIGHT

WOOL and GOULDING are shackled to a tree. WOOL has found a muddy newspaper and is reading. SGT. BARGER stands outside his "A" tent, conferring with a couple of tough-looking GERMAN QUARTERMASTERS.

WOOL

(reading)

It appears that Irish draftees in New York have rioted, that Gattling guns were turned on them, and that there are thousands dead. Also, the 54th Massachussetts Colored Infantry has been ground to a pulp at Wagner Battery.

WOOL does not see a notice on the back of the newspaper, which reads - "**POTOMAC ARMY COLONEL RELIEVED OF COMMAND; COL. W.W. BELKNAP ACCUSED OF SHOOTING REBEL PRISONERS.**"

GOULDING shifts his chains and turns his back on WOOL.

A ZOUAVE CAPTAIN rides up with his SERVANTS. He wears a red fez, blue Union jacket, baggy burgandy pants and white spats. BARGER and COMPANY salute.

ZOUAVE CAPTAIN

Barger, your cap's visor is askew. Also, your coat is buttoned only at the belt.

BARGER

Yes, sir! Sorry, sir!

ZOUAVE CAPTAIN

We engage the Enemy at crack o' dawn. I shall require sixteen Skirmishers from you at 5 a.m. on our West Flank. Correctly attired, if you please.

BARGER

Yes, sir!

The CAPTAIN canters away, followed by his RETINUE. BARGER is furious. Then he sees WOOL and GOULDING and breaks into a grisly smile...

LITTLE WOOD EXT DAWN

July, '63. Indian Territory. A portion of the Army's West Flank. Beyond the wood, the land rises steeply to a Ridge.

GOULDING, WOOL, and the other PRISONERS are unchained. Each man is given a musket with a fixed bayonet. They are then hustled to the edge of the wood.

SGT. BARGER

You men are now SKIRMISHERS. When commanded to do so, you will march in a line up to that Ridge.

He points to the Ridge.

BARGER

Do you understand?
 (nobody speaks)
 DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

A few desultory "YES SIRs."

VOICE

What's on the other side?

SGT. BARGER pulls out a long-barrelled COLT REVOLVER and clubs the QUESTIONER to the ground.

BARGER

Yours is not to ask questions!
 Yours is to OBEY! Is that CLEAR?

ALL
Yes SIR!

Far off, Bugles are heard. The thunder of ARTILLERY begins.

BEYOND THE TREE LINE EXT DAY

Shouted orders echo down the unseen line.

Spaced fifty feet apart, the SKIRMISHERS walk with measured pace towards the Ridge, their muskets held out in front of them.

ANGLE ON GOULDING AND WOOL

Marching forward, part of the long straggling line. They are followed by SGT. BARGER with his Pistol drawn.

ANGLE ON THE JAGGED RIDGE AHEAD.

The MEN start sweating as they approach the Ridge.

GOULDING
Hey, Barger. What's behind that Ridge?

BARGER
Maybe nothing. Maybe Quantrill's whole force. Twenty thousand men.

SKIRMISHER
HORSESHIT! Benito's not goin' over no Ridge!

SGT. BARGER shoots the SKIRMISHER right between the eyes. The rest of the SKIRMISHERS press on towards the Ridge.

ANGLE ON WOOL walking.

ANGLE ON GOULDING walking.

ANGLE ON BARGER, reloading his Pistol.

ANGLE ON THE RIDGE - closer, steeper, more menacing.

WOOL cracks, and gives a dervish yell. He runs towards the Ridge. OTHER SKIRMISHERS follow his example. GOULDING keeps walking at a steady pace, BARGER behind.

WOOL reaches the top of the Ridge.

HIS POV --

The far side. Wild country. There is no Army.

Below him, THREE CREEK INDIANS gallop away into a canyon. One of the BRAVES reins his horse and looks back at WOOL.

WOOL shouts and waves his musket.

GOULDING appears at WOOL's side.
BARGER is scrambling up the Ridge behind them.

ANGLE ON THE BRAVE

Aiming his bow and loosing off an ARROW --

ANGLE ON WOOL AND GOULDING

Ducking for cover.

ANGLE ON SGT. BARGER

Reaching the top of the Ridge.

The ARROW strikes him in the chest and knocks him down.

ANGLE ON THE BRAVE, ASTONISHED --

Spurring his horse into the canyon.

ANGLE ON WOOL AND GOULDING

Running for Open Country as the Union Artillery begins shelling all around.

ANGLE ON BARGER

Raising himself and aiming his long-barreled Colt. He plants a shot between WOOL's running feet. WOOL freezes. He does the same with GOULDING. GOULDING freezes, too.

BARGER grasps the ARROW which has pierced his chest.

BARGER

You men... carry me...

He spits blood. GOULDING and WOOL reluctantly trudge back uphill to assist him.

ANGLE ON THE UNION SOLDIERS

Cheering now they know there is NO ENEMY, as the SHELLS burst.

ANGLE ON WOOL AND GOULDING

Carrying the wounded BARGER back to Union lines.

The cheering lessens when the SOLDIERS see that BARGER is still alive.

"A" TENT INT NIGHT

BARGER sits with his shirt off. A SURGEON bandages his wound. WOOL and GOULDING are with him. The tent is a thieves' kitchen of valuable supplies, piled high with Spencer Repeating Rifles, Army boots, bottles of European liqueurs, crates of cigars.

BARGER toys with the extracted CREEK ARROW.

BARGER

Ain't the first of these I've stopped.
Won't be the last, either. Arrow ain't
been made that can slow Barger down.

BARGER pours three glasses of whiskey, pushes two of them towards GOULDING and WOOL. Poker-faced, they wait for BARGER to drink. He glances at an Official Paper.

BARGER

I have instructions here to return you to the State Authorities so you can both stand trial for ARSON. Believe that's a HANGING CRIME.

(BARGER refills their cups)

However, there's work needs to be done. Now I'm laid-up...

(he coughs pathetically)

GOULDING

Work of what kind?

BARGER motions the SURGEON to get out.

BARGER

I have it on excellent authority that there's a wagon loaded with the finest FRENCH COGNAC not twenty miles inside the Rebel Lines. Destined for the rebel generals at Vicksburg.

WOOL

And you want us to liberate it.

BARGER

+(to GOULDING)

Catches on real fast, don't he? Should have been made a general hisself. What do you say?

GOULDING

Let me see your side arm.

SGT. BARGER looks down at his long-barreled Colt sitting in its leather holster. He grins, and hands it to GOULDING - shaking the shells out first. It is mirror-polished and exquisitely engraved.

BARGER

It's a '51. Special edition. There's only two of 'em in the entire Army. The other one belongs to Colonel Custer.

WOOL

Colonel Custer, huh?

BARGER

Yup. He's gonna be President, one of these days. So what do ye say?

GOULDING

How many people on this wagon train?

BARGER

That's the beauty of it, see.

It's just one wagon. Sutler and a couple of kids. And I'll send a man with ye, to even up the score.

(coughs, clutches his bandaged chest)
Come now, what say ye to a 50-50 share?

ANGLE ON WOOL AND GOULDING

Exchanging a glance.

WOOL pours three more shots from BARGER's bottle.

They raise their glasses in a toast.

WOOL

To success.

BARGER

To the Union.

GOULDING

To 50-50.

ANGLE ON THE FULL MOON

Huge in the night sky.

BOX CANYON EXT NIGHT

MATTE PAINTING -- a camp fire illuminates FOUR MEN in Confederate Grey standing beside a COVERED WAGON in the back of the box canyon.

The SKY is brilliant with stars.

BOX CANYON EXT NIGHT

CLOSE ANGLE ON THE GUARDS.

They are Confederate Privates in their teens.

When a WOLF howls, they jump.

Under canvas on the wagon is the unmistakable outline of a LARGE BARREL. The letters C.S.A. are branded on the flat end of the cask.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Peering down on the unsuspecting SOLDIERS from the rim of the canyon. Next to him lie a UNION QUARTERMASTER and GOULDING, meticulously cleaning a brand-new 47-inch, lever-action Spencer Repeating Rifle.

The WOLF howls again.

WOOL

This is my plan: the three of us will creep around the rim of the canyon, descending there where there appears to be a trail. One of us will crawl as close as possible to the Confederate. The other two will double back around, and take an elevated post on the rock wall. We will catch them in a crossfire, cutting them off from the wagon and obliging them to withdraw.

GOULDING flops down next to WOOL, on the canyon rim. He aims his Spencer Rifle and fires FOUR SHOTS.

ANGLE ON THE CAMPSITE

THE FOUR CONFEDERATES FALL DEAD.

QUARTERMASTER
Outstanding marksmanship!

GOULDING
Thank you.

GOULDING turns and shoots the QUARTERMASTER dead, also.

ANGLE ON WOOL, amazed.

WAGON ROAD EXT NIGHT

GOULDING drives the COGNAC WAGON west through canyon country. WOOL sits beside him, shaking his head.

WOOL
Ishmael, I declare that if you were a full-time sharpshooter, this War would be over. There would be no one left to shoot.

GOULDING
There's always someone.

WOOL pulls out a cloth-bound MAP and studies it. He takes off his Union forage cap and scratches his brow.

WOOL
We must head that way. North.

He points to a wide canyon branching into the hills. GOULDING keeps going, straight ahead.

WOOL

Are you becoming hard of hearing?
We must go that way. To Sergeant Barger.

GOULDING

Don't want to go that way. Not after
you killed his friend back there.

WOOL

I killed -- listen! This way is West.
200 miles of Arkansas. Then Texas.
The Confederacy. We may be murdered.

GOULDING

Get murdered if we go back, too.
That occur to you?

WOOL considers this. He throws his Union cap away.

GOULDING

Way I see it, best bet is to head west
to TUCSON. There's no war out there.
Just gamblers, miners, whores and drinking
men. And us here sitting on a thousand
jereboams of French Cognac.

WOOL

If you want to sell this thing, have you
considered New Orleans? New Orleans is
in Union hands.

GOULDING

Ain't no Union. Far as I'm concerned,
this war is OVER. It's gonna be laughin'
and sweet whiskey from here on --

FLIP WIPE TO --

WEST TEXAS EXT DAY

GOULDING and WOOL are chased by a TROOP OF CONFEDERATE
CAVALRY across the parched Texas desert plain.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Whipping the Mules.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Firing at their PURSUERS with his Spencer.

ANGLE ON THE CONFEDERATES

Returning fire, steadily gaining ground.

WOOL'S POV --

A wide ravine with a ROPE BRIDGE across it, supporting a narrow creaking pathway of wood planks.

WOOL slows the team and tries to direct them aboard the swaying bridge. The MULES don't want to go. GOULDING jumps off and whispers to the MULES.

ANGLE ON THE CONFEDERATES

Approaching.

ANGLE ON GOULDING AND WOOL

Edging the team across the WIDE CHASM.

GOULDING

Steady. Keep goin'. Steady.

WOOL

Whoa! Whoa!

The MULES tug on their traces. WOOL pulls on the wooden brake lever. A BULLET snaps the lever in two and the Wagon slews sideways, one of its back wheels slipping off the planks.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

He sees the Wagon slip. Realising all is lost, he starts to cut the MULES loose.

WOOL

What are you DOING?

A bullet pierces his hat. He jumps down from the canted Wagon. GOULDING cuts the last MULE loose and begins freeing the HORSES tied behind.

The ANIMALS gallop for the far side of the bridge.

GOULDING hands WOOL the reins of a horse. Another animal gets away from him.

ANGLE ON THE CONFEDERATES

Galloping down the slope towards the bridge, firing.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

On foot. WOOL gallops past him.
GOUDLING runs for the far end of the bridge.

ANGLE ON CONFEDERATE CAPTAIN

Whirling in his saddle, shouting at his MEN.

CAPTAIN

That wagon is property of the
Confederacy! Do not shoot at it!

His MEN charge on past, shooting at the wagon.

ANGLE ON THE WAGON

The RED-HOT MUSKET BALLS plow through the barrel staves and ignite the FLAMMABLE VAPORS within.

THE COGNAC WAGON EXPLODES --

-- ripping the BRIDGE in half --

-- as GOULDING hurls himself to safety on the far rim. The CONFEDERATES take pot shots from out of range. GOULDING tears a page from the Bible and prepares a cigarette.

DESERT EXT DUSK

GOULDING follows the hoof prints of two horses and several mules. He carries his Spencer Rifle.

CAMP SITE EXT DUSK

GOULDING and WOOL sit shivering beneath a star-filled sky. TWO HORSES and several MULES are tethered nearby. BUFFALO stand, sleeping or grazing, on all sides.

WOOL

Sure would be nice to have a fire.

GOULDING

Be nice to have a tot of French Cognac.

WOOL

It's not my fault the French Cognac was lost. I'd have kept going, whipping the dumb brutes to the last. You cut 'em loose.

GOULDING

Don't matter now. We're free to go our separate ways.

WOOL

What do you mean?

GOULDING

War's bound to end soon. Ye'll want to get back to Athens, see your Mamma.

WOOL

On the contrary. I intend to visit Tucson in the Arizona Territory.

GOULDING

With what resources? Got any left?

WOOL

(shakes his head)

The guards at camp relieved me of my entire fortune. You?

GOULDING

(nods)

It don't make no sense for you to go to Tucson now. It's a long way, dangerous. Better we split up, go our separate ways.

WOOL's eyes narrow. He jumps to his feet, furious.

WOOL

You still HAVE your money, don't you! Don't think you can hoodwink me! I am one of the OHIO WOOLS and if the likes of you can open a CASINO in the Arizona Territory so can I! WITH OR WITHOUT FUNDS!

GOULDING reaches for his Spencer's. WOOL grabs his Navy Colt. They aim their weapons at each other's heart. Then they have second thoughts and lower their guns.

GOULDING

Do what you want. But we ain't partners no more and that's that.

DESERT EXT HIGH NOON

WOOL and GOULDING ride through the desert, half a mile apart. Each man trails three mules. Each man takes a drink from his canteen.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Staring, narrow-eyed, at the horizon.

HIS POV --

A SHIMMERING MIRAGE OF SAHARAN PALM TREES appears.

Within it, CAMELS and MEN IN ARABIAN ATTIRE are seen.

OASIS EXT DAY

GOULDING and WOOL throw themselves down in the shade of an incongruous grove of palm trees. They and their animals drink thirstily.

There are NO CAMELS, NO ARABS.

Bare desert stretches all around.

SADDLEBACK RIDGE EXT DAY

WOOL and GOULDING ride up a narrow trail to a u-shaped saddleback which overlooks the many-colored desert plain. The narrow track forces them to ride side-by-side.

A long, straight, white WAGON ROAD stretches from East to West across the vast desert.

WOOL

(studying his map)

That'll be the Butterfield Route.
Running from El Paso to Tucson and
thence South to Guaymas and North
to the Gold Fields.

GOULDING

That ain't the Butterfield.

WOOL

It's the only road marked on the Map.

GOULDING

I've rid the Butterfield.
That ain't it.

WOOL frowns and turns the Map upside-down. GOULDING starts herding his MULES down the narrow trail towards the Road.

WOOL

The Butterfield Overland Mail Coach travels this Route once a week. Should we encounter it, we'll ride in the Lap of Luxury. The interiors of the Post Coaches are modeled after J.P. Morgan's stateroom aboard the Tycoon. There is a secret cabinet, containing liquor, and a pack of cards.

GOULDING

How the hell do you know that?
 (WOOL taps his nose)
 You don't have any money.

WOOL

(icily)
 No gentleman would refuse another gentleman a ride.

GOULDING looks back at WOOL and laughs. WOOL is in rags, caked with dust, bearded and sunblasted. He does not look like a gentleman at all.

DISSOLVE TO:

BUTTERFIELD STAGE ROUTE EXT DAY

WOOL leads the way.

The MULES are strung out in a long line between him and GOULDING, who brings up the rear.

To their right, the ground falls steeply into a great sweep of Buttes and Mesas. Canyonlands.

GOULDING glances behind him.

HIS POV --

The empty road, shimmering like water.

Suddenly the TOP OF THE BUTTERFIELD STAGECOACH appears, like a spinning toy suspended in mid-air above the road.

GOULDING squints at WOOL, then looks back --

ANGLE ON THE BUTTERFIELD STAGE

The DRIVER appears out of the heat haze, cracking his whip.

GOULDING looks forward, at WOOL.

WOOL presses on, unaware, talking to himself.

GOULDING reaches down and snaps off a SPINY OCOTILLO BRANCH. He rides up to the MULES and swipes them with it. The MULES take off, galloping down into the Canyon.

GOULDING leaps from his horse.

GOULDING

Rattler! Get the MULES!

WOOL whirls in the saddle, loses control of his horse, clings on for dear life.

WOOL

What?

GOULDING

Snake bit my horse. THE MULES!

WOOL sees the MULES scattering into the Canyon. He takes off after them.

CANYON COUNTRY EXT DAY

WOOL races into a maze of winding ravines and multicolored arroyos. He can no longer see the road.

STAGE ROAD EXT DAY

GOULDING, waiting patiently, extends a hand.
The BUTTERFIELD STAGE stops.

 GOULDING
Tucson?

 DRIVER
Twenty-seven dollars.

GOULDING reaches into his coat. He peels \$27 from a huge wad of bills.

The SHOTGUN RIDER descends and ties GOULDING's horse behind the coach.

 SHOTGUN
Seen any 'Pache?

 GOULDING
Nope.

 SHOTGUN
Well, good. They're all stirred up since the Army killed Mangas Coloradas.

He opens the door for GOULDING.

 SHOTGUN
Done soldiering, huh?

 GOULDING
I guess so.

 SHOTGUN
(nods)
I was at Ball's Bluff.
Now I'm done, as well.

He limps back to his post. GOULDING sees he has a PEG LEG.

CANYON EXT DAY

WOOL gallops away into a distant arroyo, chasing a mule.

STAGECOACH INT DAY

The COACH jolts forward. He hear the whip crack.

The interior is decrepit and dusty. GOULDING is the only passenger. He reaches out and raises the opposite seat cushion.

WITHIN are TWO DECANTERS labeled "Scotch Whiskey" and "French Cognac" - and a deck of PLAYING CARDS.

He pours a measure of COGNAC into a cut glass tumbler. Downs it in one gulp and settles back, content at last.

Idly but expertly, he starts to deal the cards...

STAGE ROAD EXT DUSK

A weary, dust-encrusted WOOL drives the recaptured MULES back out of the Canyon to the road.

He looks around. There is no sign of GOULDING or his horse.

STAGE ROAD EXT NIGHT

The STAGECOACH speeds West under the stars.

TUCSON, ARIZONA TERRITORY EXT DAY

The MAIL COACH is pulled up in front of the adobe Post Office.

Dust blows down the street. The DRIVER raps on the Coach door.

DRIVER
Tucson! Next stop, Gila Bend!

STAGE COACH INT DAY

ISHMAEL GOULDING wakes and stretches. He feels to make sure his money is still in his coat. He opens the door.

HIS POV --

THE MAIN SQUARE OF A GHOST TOWN.

All the buildings - Spanish adobe and American brick and wood - are boarded up. TWO OLD WOMEN dressed in black hurry through the dust storm towards the church.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Mystified, stepping out into the empty Square.

ANGLE ON SALOONS

All padlocked and shuttered, bearing signs which say "GONE OUT OF BUSINESS" and "NO GAMBLING". DOGS and CATS run about.

The DRIVER and the SHOTGUN carry the mail into the Post Office.

GOULDING shakes his head. He unties his horse from the Coach.

CUSHING STREET EXT DAY

GOULDING rides past rows of single-story adobes backed by huge stands of Saguaro Cactus.

His hat is pulled down and his scarf is wrapped around his face. Dust blows fiercely. Tumbleweeds fly past.

ADOBE HOUSE EXT DAY

GOULDING knocks on the door. He hears voices within.
The wind blows. The door opens.

ANGLE ON MARYAH GOULDING

35, dark, highly attractive. She wears a colorful Mexican skirt. Behind her, in the kitchen, are TWO LITTLE GIRLS.

The GIRLS stare at ISHMAEL blankly.

ISHMAEL pulls his scarf down and MARYAH realises who he is.
SHE SCREAMS.

MARYAH
ISHMAEL!!!

A BIG MEXICAN in a white shirt runs out of the kitchen, carrying the POKER. He has immaculately parted hair, a large moustache and an imperial. DIEGO VILLAREAL.

DIEGO
Quien es?

MARYAH
It's all right, Diego. This is
Ishmael. My former husband.

DIEGO & GOULDING
(in unison)
Oh.

DIEGO and GOULDING stare at each other.
DIEGO lowers the poker and extends a hand.

DIEGO
Diego Villareal Garcia.

GOULDING
Ishmael Goulding.

They shake hands.

ADOBE INT DAY

The storm rattles the shutters.

ISHMAEL sits at the big table with MARYAH and DIEGO. There is food on the table. DIEGO has one of the LITTLE GIRLS on his knee. The OTHER ONE runs around.

DIEGO solemnly pours three shots of Mescal.

DIEGO

Salud.

GOULDING

Salud.

MARYAH

Salud.

DIEGO

Where you headed?

GOULDING

Well...

(DIEGO refills his glass)

Thank you. I had a plan to set up in the gaming business here in town. Sell some liquor on the side.

DIEGO

In this town you can buy a saloon for an excellent price. But it is pointless.

GOULDING

Why?

DIEGO

There are no customers.

DIEGO reaches for a piece of pie. GOULDING notices a TATTOO on his wrist - a PRISON NUMBER. Then DIEGO's hand is again hidden by his sleeve.

GOULDING

What's goin' on here?

MARYAH

Right after the War got going, some of our leading citizenry wrote Jeff Davis a letter telling him how TUCSON was a part of the CONFEDERACY.

GOULDING

What they do that for?

MARYAH

Playing politics. It was that chucklehead Sylvester Mowry and his mining pals. They're all locked up in Yuma now.

DIEGO

The Rebels occupied this town for six weeks. Sibley's men from Fort Thorn, under Captain Hunter.

MARYAH

Want some more PIE, Ishmael?

ISHMAEL nods and takes another piece.

DIEGO

The Rebs got whipped up at Picacho Pass and took off running. Federal Troops came in and shut us down. They got a Gambling Tax now - \$100 a table. Plus a Saloon Keeper's License Fee of \$100 a month. Plus liability to seizure of your gaming devices and your liquor at any time.

GOULDING

Picacho. As I recollect... Wasn't there some story about GOLD..?

MARYAH

Are you broke, Ishmael?

(GOULDING shakes his head)

You should keep going, then. To California.

DIEGO

Not necessarily. There is still money to be made here --

MARYAH

Diego is very generous. But the fact is, Ishmael, we're in the middle of an Indian War. The Apaches kill Mexicans and Gringos

wherever they can be found. The Federal Commander's ordered all Apache men slain.

DIEGO

So, there is money. I rent out wagons and harness to the Army. They're building a Garrison here, Fort Lowell. You can find WORK --

GOULDING shivers, shocked at such a thought. DIEGO shrugs. GOULDING calls to his little DAUGHTER.

GOULDING

Hey, Sarah. Come say hello to your Poppa.

SARAH looks at him blankly, then runs to hide behind DIEGO.

MARYAH

Don't confuse the girl.

GOULDING drains his Mescal. He gets up and goes to the door. Outside, the UNION CAVALRY are riding past.

MARYAH comes and stands at his side.

MARYAH

It's five years since you ran off, Ishmael.
Things have changed.

GOULDING

(nods)

Guess I'll be going. Hotel in town?

MARYAH

The Tumacacori still has a couple beds.

GOULDING wraps his scarf around his face and opens the door. Dust blows in. It's dark outside.

ANGLE ON GOULDING THROUGH THE DOORWAY

Disappearing into the Dust Storm.

ANGLE ON MARYAH AND DIEGO, watching him go.

TUMACACORI CONCERT SALOON EXT DUSK

Lights burn within the only premises still occupied on a wooden boardwalk - a low bar which has been allowed to remain open as a place of culture, featuring MUSICIANS.

A VIOLIN screeches and GOULDING rides up.

ANGLE ON WOOL'S MULE TEAM

Tied to the hitching rail.

TUMACACORI CONCERT SALOON INT DUSK

GOULDING enters, carrying his Spencer's Rifle.

A ragged, dusty figure stands at the bar, regaling the BARTENDER.

It is JAMES D. WOOL.

WOOL

Beyond recall I was, galloping at the head of my troops, parallel with the Enemy. Scores of rifles spat at me. Our own lines surged forward in my defense. Unregardful of their own lives or their orders, our brave lads swarmed forth into the field of valor --

GOULDING slams his Rifle down on the bar.

GOULDING

Got a room?

BARTENDER

I just rented our last accommodation to the CAPTAIN here.

GOULDING looks at WOOL, alias the "Captain".
WOOL eyes GOULDING evilly, does not speak.

GOULDING

Captain, huh? He don't have any money.

BARTENDER

I traded him a week's room and full board for his mules.

GOULDING

Give me a whiskey.

The BARTENDER pours GOULDING a large shot. GOULDING takes it to a back table. WOOL leafs through a NEWSPAPER, manic.

WOOL

(reading)

It appears that President Lincoln has devised a solution to the Negro Problem. He has suggested to a group of Northern Negroes that, since the White and Black are different Species, the freed Negroes should become Voluntary Colonists and depart for Central America forthwith.

He lowers the paper, affects to notice GOULDING.

WOOL

Doesn't this man own a CASINO here?
I must have it pointed out to me.
Strange that I overlooked its no doubt
notable FACADE --

GOULDING sets down his whiskey glass. He rises, shaking with frustration and rage.

GOULDING

Let's finish this right now.

WOOL

With pleasure.

GOULDING glances at his rifle, lying on the bar.

WOOL eyes it too. He has a Colt tucked into his belt, another sticking from his right boot. The advantage is clearly his. He smiles.

WOOL

Whenever you wish.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Reaching slowly for the BOWIE KNIFE in his back pocket.

ANGLE ON SERGEANT BARGER

Pushing in through the batwing doors.

He wears civilian clothes and has shaved off his beard, revealing hideous scars. He still wears his silk scarf and his eyes are still Bright Red.

ANGLE ON THE GERMAN QUARtermasters

Following BARGER inside. They too are now civilians, heavily armed. They see WOOL and GOULDING and freeze.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Following GOULDING's gaze over his shoulder.

BARGER

What a surprise. MY FRIENDS.
Fighting over the GOLD already?

ANGLE ON WOOL AND GOULDING

Exchanging a glance. WOOL takes a step back.
GOULDING edges towards the bar.

WOOL

What Gold?

GOULDING

We ain't fighting.

BARGER takes GOULDING's arm and leads him to the bar.
The QUARTERMASTERS order drinks in German from the
affrighted BARTENDER.

BARGER

You remember Fritz and Otto, don't you?
(GOULDING shrugs)
How long you been here?
Where you headed next?

GOULDING doesn't answer. WOOL comes pushing up.

WOOL

What Gold is this.

BARGER looks from WOOL to GOULDING. He turns to the
BARMAN.

BARGER

Whiskey.

PICACHO PASS EXT DAY

FLASHBACK to a WIDE PASS through razor-pointed hills.
Puffs of smoke burst, half-way up a mountain.
A MULE TRAIN snakes its way along the desert floor.

BARGER V/O

Last year the Battle of El Picacho
got itself fought near here. The papers
made it out to be a great affair.

ANGLE ON A PLATOON OF BEARDLESS UNION SOLDIERS

taking pot shots from the high rocks at the MULE TRAIN.

BARGER V/O

All it was, of course, was farm boys
shooting at mules. But these mules,
see, was carrying GOLD from California
to the Johnny Reb Treasury in Richmond...

The MULETEERS take cover. The MULES run away.

ANGLE ON 25lb BURLAP SACKS lashed to their backs.

BARGER V/O

Officially, the mules were lost,
the money too --

MAIN SQUARE, TUCSON EXT DAY

White and empty in the baking sun.

BARGER shades his eyes and stares across the Square.
Behind him, in the shadow of a balcony, stand GOULDING,
WOOL, and the QUARTERMASTERS. FRITZ translates for OTTO.

BARGER

But I have inside information that it
isn't lost at all. A certain Union
Colonel got ahold of it, see? And it's
sitting RIGHT THERE.

ANGLE ON THE TERRITORIAL BANK BUILDING

An impressive edifice of thick-walled adobe, doors shut and windows barred.

WOOL

How much is in within?

BARGER

THREE QUARTERS OF A MILLION SHINS.

FRITZ translates the figures for OTTO. OTTO embraces FRITZ.

LIVERY STABLE INT DAY

The FIVE MEN peer from the loading door of a hay loft into the square. Below them is the TERRITORIAL BANK.

BARGER

We'll charge in soon as they open and kill everyone. We'll grab the Gold and run out. One of us'll have to hold the hosses and keep watch. We'll ride out in different directions and meet up in Mexico.

WOOL and GOULDING are stunned by the stupidity of BARGER's plan. FRITZ translates it painstakingly for OTTO. OTTO asks FRITZ a question. FRITZ translates.

FRITZ

When does the Bank open?

BARGER

(stumped)

That's... what we got to find out.

WOOL

What are you going to do if the Army shows up, Sergeant?

BARGER

I'm prepared for that. Though we're no longer in the Regular Army, Otto and Fritz and I are members of the Secret Army.

WOOL

Secret Army.

BARGER

Yes. In fact we're SPIES for a Secret Order called the True Knights of the Illuminated Crescent. We're determined to preserve the Union at all costs, see, no matter what.

BARGER and OTTO and FRITZ make secret signs.
WOOL turns in disgust and walks away.

GOULDING

Who's the Colonel at the Fort?

BARGER

That's the most beautiful part.
A nobody. Got banished out here for shootin' prisoners and incompetence by General Meade.

GOULDING

What's his name?

BARGER

W.W. Belknap.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Freezing in his tracks.

ANGLE ON COLONEL W.W. BELKNAP

In FLASHBACK ordering WOOL's death.

ANGLE ON WOOL

As he then was, pale, poxed, shivering and afraid.

ANGLE ON WOOL

As he is now. Tanned, bearded, utterly insane.

TUMACACORI CONCERT SALOON INT NIGHT

WOOL, GOULDING, BARGER, OTTO and FRITZ sit in back. A lamp hangs overhead, casting dark shadows over WOOL's eyes.

WOOL
This is my Plan.

MAIN SQUARE, TUCSON EXT DAY

VARIOUS ANGLES ON COLONEL BELKNAP

Riding a white horse, saluting officers, presenting a dark-eyed SENORITA with a rose, reviewing his troops --

He is usual attended by CAPTAIN BIERCE, one-armed, scarred by the fire in which he saved his COLONEL's life. BIERCE walks or rides behind BELKNAP, staring at his superior with a strange expression...

WOOL V/O
We're going to kidnap Belknap.
At the Fort. We'll use him as our
hostage, to get in the Bank.

FORT LOWELL EXT SUNSET

The substantial walls of the Union Garrison - three of them complete, the fourth still under construction and surmounted by wooden scaffolding and watchtowers.

The Flag is lowered at sunset. ANGLE ON BELKNAP, watching from the window of his second-floor Office. The sun sets. Observed by the ever-faithful BIERCE, BELKNAP coughs into a white handkerchief.

WOOL V/O

We'll kidnap the Bank President as well.
They'll be our hostages to get us and
the money out of town.

FORT LOWELL ROAD EXT DUSK

WOOL leads the COMPANY back to town. Ahead of them are the burning garbage piles that surround the Old Presidio of Tucson.

WOOL

Once we're in Mexico, we'll KILL BELKNAP.

FRITZ

What about Bank President?

OTTO draws a finger across his throat.

GOULDING

Your plan ain't gonna work without a couple
of rigs. You'll need a Teamster.

TUMACACORI CONCERT SALOON INT NIGHT

ANGLE ON DIEGO VILLAREAL

Surrounded by WOOL, BARGER, OTTO and FRITZ.
GOULDING sits across from him, smoking.

WOOL

I require two wagons. One, an open Union
rig with Army horses. The other, Covered,
and supplied with a good team. I also
require fresh mounts, five in all.

DIEGO

I can get you good mounts, and the wagons.
But not Army horses. Army doesn't use
horses to pull wagons. Uses mules -
or dromedaries.

WOOL eyes DIEGO suspiciously. FRITZ nods in agreement.

FRITZ

He's right.

WOOL

Shut up.

DIEGO

Camels'll carry twice the weight
and don't need waterin'. They also
cost more, and are in short supply.

WOOL

Mules'll do us.

GOULDING

Who's gonna take care of the Army
- Barger?

WOOL

No, Ishmael. You.

GOULDING waits for WOOL to elaborate. WOOL does not.

BARGER

I must say, it all sounds bully. I'm
apt to throw in with you, only I keep
being 'minded of a CERTAIN WAGONLOAD
of FRENCH COGNAC...

WOOL snaps his fingers at the BARMAN. The BARMAN hurries
over and refills their glasses.

WOOL

What's Past is Past. Gentlemen,
I propose a toast -- THE FUTURE!

They raise their glasses, crash them together,
drain them in a single draught.

CUSHING STREET EXT NIGHT

The lamps are still burning on MARYAH's porch.

DIEGO and GOULDING walk arm in arm towards the house.

DIEGO

I have drunk too much. What was I
supposed to..? Covered wagon.
Mules. Five mounts. What else?

GOULDING

Army rig.

DIEGO

Gracias. You know, this is a much
better town since they shut the saloons.
In the old days people were always
in fights, getting hit by wagons --

He pauses to let an ARMY OF CATS run past.

DIEGO

You don't trust the young Gringo, I hope.

GOULDING

Not at all.

DIEGO starts blowing out the lamps on MARYAH's porch.
GOULDING lights his pipe on the last one.

DIEGO

And the the one with the scars. He is muy
estupido and will probably get killed.

GOULDING

No doubt.

DIEGO
Asi es. I'll see you tomorrow.

He starts to shut his door. GOULDING rests a hand against the lintel. He produces a LEATHER WALLET from inside his coat.

GOULDING
Diego, will you hold this for me?

DIEGO takes it, looks inside. He sees a LARGE ROLL within.

DIEGO
There is a lot of money here.

DIEGO looks up. GOULDING is already walking away.

SAGUARO FOREST EXT MORNING

GOULDING rides a big horse out of the thick desert foliage at dawn. Many-armed Saguaros rise behind him. The sun appears.

PATAGONIA EXT DAY

GOULDING rides into a little foothill mining town surrounded by black tailings. He reins up outside the Telegraph Office.

FORT LOWELL ROAD EXT DAY

SERGEANT BARGER drives an open wagon through the tall grass towards the Fort. He is back in uniform, as are the QUARTERMASTERS who ride beside him. They pass WOOL, walking in the road, clad like a preacher.

TELEGRAPH OFFICE, PATAGONIA EXT DAY

GOULDING sits on the Office step, smoking his pipe.

He consults a pocket watch. He finishes his smoke and enters the Office.

COLONEL BELKNAP'S OUTER OFFICE INT DAY

The BEARDSLEE MAGNETO TELEGRAPH KEY begins to chatter. A CORPORAL transcribes the message.

Through the office windows, MEXICAN LABORERS and SOLDIERS can be seen at work on the unfinished Adobe Wall.

The CORPORAL reads the message back, his eyes widening.

CORPORAL
It's for Colonel Belknap. Indians
have raided Patagonia - in force!

FORT LOWELL PARADE GROUND EXT DAY

SERGEANT BARGER races the Mule Team through the Gates into the dusty parade square. He and the QUARTERMASTERS shout at the top of their lungs.

BARGER
INDIAN RAID! INDIAN RAID!

OTTO
INDIANNER! SCHNELL! SCHNELL!

SOLDIERS try to stop the Mules. The Mules kick down a corral, setting half-wild Army mustangs free.

BUGLES sound.

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN BIERCE

Appearing in the upper Office window.

BIERCE
What's going on?

CORPORAL

These men have been attacked by 'Paches, sir!

BARGER

Johnny Rebs, too! A war party of Rebels and
Apache Renegades! On the Patagonia Road!

COLONEL BELKNAP'S OUTER OFFICE INT DAY

The chattering telegraph key goes dead.

BIERCE

First Cavalry, Companies A & B!

More BUGLES sound. The shouts of COMPANY SERGEANTS are
heard.

BIERCE

Infantry aboard the wagons, on the double!

TELEGRAPH OFFICE, PATAGONIA INT DAY

GOULDING destroys the telegraph equipment, holding a
pistol to the TELEGRAPHER's head.

TELEGRAPHER

(terrified)

Is that the truth about the Indian Raid?
I didn't hear no shootin' --

GOULDING puts a hand to his mouth and makes a WAR WHOOP.
The TELEGRAPHER shakes.

FORT LOWELL EXT DAY

The UNION CAVALRY ride out at a full gallop, followed
by wagons packed with CALIFORNIA VOLUNTEERS.
Company Flags are bourne aloft.

PARADE GROUND EXT DAY

WOOL enters in their dust cloud. He approaches a TEAMSTER struggling with two frenzied DROMEDARIES.

WOOL

Colonel Belknap's Office! Where is it?

The TEAMSTER, barely able to control the Rearing Beasts, spits a thin black string of Tobacco Juice towards the two story adobe offices.

WOOL stares at the upper office windows, squinting, his expression furious. There is no sign of COLONEL BELKNAP.

A black ribbon hangs from the balcony. Below, TWO WORKMEN are nailing shut a ROW OF COFFINS.

COLONEL BELKNAP'S OUTER OFFICE INT DAY

The CORPORAL is seated at his desk, arguing with a BEARDED TEAMSTER. WOOL presses his face against the glass outside, looking for BELKNAP. There is no sign of him.

CORPORAL

I can't do anything without written instruction. Right now we're dealing with an Indian rebellion --

WOOL comes stamping in, followed by BARGER and FRITZ.

WOOL

Here to see Colonel W.W. Belknap.

The CORPORAL shoots him a brief glance, looking him up and down. He is plainly not interested.

CORPORAL

Wait, please.

The CORPORAL turns back to the TEAMSTER.

WOOL pulls a CUDGEL from his coat and strikes the CORPORAL with it. The CORPORAL falls like a dead weight from his chair.

BARGER vaults the desk and fells the CLERK. FRITZ lays into the TEAMSTER, who struggles but is quickly subdued.

WOOL strides purposefully towards to the door to --

BELKNAP'S INNER OFFICE INT DAY

-- throwing it open to reveal a small, white-walled chamber filled with FLOWERS. A COFFIN, packed with steaming chunks of ICE, lies on the mahogany desk.

In the COFFIN, surrounded by the cooling ice, lies the body of COLONEL BELKNAP.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Cudgel in one hand, pistol in the other, gazing open-mouthed at his hated enemy's CORPSE.

ANGLE ON BARGER

Scratching his chin and eyeing the OTHER OCCUPANTS of the room --

-- an INDIAN SCOUT with long grey hair and Sergeant's stripes

-- and a pallid, scarred, one-armed man now dressed all in black, wearing tinted spectacles -- CAPTAIN BIERCE.

The INDIAN kneels, apparently in prayer, beside the coffin. CAPTAIN BIERCE is bent over the contents of a Doctor's Bag.

NOBODY MOVES.

FRITZ peers over BARGER's shoulder at the BODY.

FRITZ

That him?

WOOL

(his voice cracking)
Yeah...

ANGLE ON BARGER

Staring at a LARGE BLACK SAFE half-buried in flowers in the corner of the room. The door is OPEN.

BARGER

SHIT!

BARGER looks inside. The SAFE is empty.

WOOL

DON'T MOVE!!

BARGER jumps. WOOL aims both his pistols at the KNEELING INDIAN SERGEANT. The INDIAN prays furiously.

WOOL

He moved. DON'T MOVE! No one's to move.

No one does move. CAPTAIN BIERCE clears his throat.

BIERCE

He is Red Crow. A simple scout. The Colonel's demise has been a dreadful blow.

WOOL approaches the COFFIN.

WOOL

What happened to him?

BIERCE

It was the Cholera.

WOOL and BARGER take a step back. BARGER bumps into FRITZ.

BARGER

Who opened this safe? What was in it?

BIERCE

I have no idea. I am an Embalmer,
gentlemen. My name is Dr Jones.

BARGER searches BIERCE's pockets. He finds nothing.
WOOL keeps a gun on RED CROW, who continues praying.
BARGER paces in a circle, revolver in one hand,
cudgel in the other.

BARGER

What to do? What to DO?

SAGUARO FOREST EXT DAY

GOULDING canters through the forest, headed for Tucson.

The land is thick with Cacti, Palo Verde and all manner
of scrub. GOULDING can't be entirely sure if there are
FIGURES ON HORSEBACK pacing him or not...

He spurs his horse.

The forest of Saguaro Cactus thins out ahead. He emerges
from it at a fast gallop, tearing across the empty plain.

THREE APACHES on U.S. CAVALRY PONIES burst out of the
Cactus groves in hot pursuit.

FORT LOWELL PARADE GROUND EXT DAY

Deserted, save for a few WORKMEN and STABLEHANDS.

TWO SENTRIES open the Gates to admit a shiny black-painted
HEARSE pulled by two piebald ponies.

SEVERAL INDIANS in City Clothes with Stovepipe Hats and
black sashes follow it into the Parade Ground.

QUARTERMASTER OTTO watches as the HEARSE approaches.

BELKNAP'S INNER OFFICE INT DAY

BARGER and FRITZ and WOOL confer in whispers. WOOL, pistols trained on BIERCE and RED CROW, keeps glancing at the body of BELKNAP, hollow-cheeked and pallid in its coffin of ice.

BARGER

I say we seize the moment. Rush the Bank.

WOOL

We have no chance of getting in without Belknap.

(eyes the empty safe)

And no idea what we'll find...

OTTO's shout is heard below.

FRITZ

(translating)

He says there is a bunch of friendlies down below. Want to come up.

BARGER goes to the window and looks out.

HIS POV --

OTTO, at the bottom of the stairs, barring the path of SEVERAL CITY-DRESSED APACHES in Top Hats and black sashes.

BARGER

Tell 'em to go away! We're CLOSED today!

WOOL helps himself to the contents of the liquor cabinet.

CAPTAIN BIERCE clears his throat a second time.

BIERCE

Those men are my Helpers. Here to remove this poor soul's last remains.

WOOL

Shut up.

BIERCE

I am a Doctor, sir. Bound by my hypocritic oath. Also there is the question of contagion --

RED CROW

Praise Jesus! Thank the Lord!

BARGER lets out a sob. Big tears course down his dirty cheeks.

BARGER

All's lost. Let's vamoose!

TUCSON CITY LIMITS EXT DAY

The APACHES chase GOULDING as far as the edge of Town, then rein their ponies and fall back.

MAIN SQUARE, TUCSON EXT DAY

GOULDING rides his salt-streaked horse into the Plaza, deserted save for a COVERED WAGON and Team standing in the shade.

DIEGO is seated in the Covered Wagon, staring at the BANK BUILDING, white and imposing, its doors still closed. He consults his pocket watch.

DIEGO

Llegan tarde.

GOULDING nods.

He urges his horse across the Square.

FORT LOWELL PARADE GROUND EXT DAY

WOOL eyes the FRIENDLY APACHES closely.

They look very similar to the HOSTILES, save for their funereal ribbons and headgear.

They smile at him. He drains the COLONEL's whiskey decanter. They carry BELKNAP's coffin along the upper balcony towards the stairs.

OTTO waters the mules while FRITZ explains to him what's happened. BARGER, still sniffing, unhitches his horse from the wagon; WOOL, thoroughly intoxicated, attempts to do likewise.

WOOL

This is a sorry end to a great enterprise.
Would that I could have killed him!

BARGER

Ay, and the money, too.

The gates are opened and GOULDING gallops into the FORT. His horse is exhausted. He jumps down, handing the reins to FRITZ.

GOULDING

Well?

WOOL

Belknap is dead of the Cholera. There is a safe, but naught within.

GOULDING

Figure it's still at the Bank?

BARGER

(sobbing again)
Money...

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Staring at the STRANGE PARTY carrying the COFFIN down the stairs - the APACHE PALLBEARERS are supervised by RED CROW and one-armed CAPTAIN BIERCE.

GOULDING

Who's that?

WOOL

Who?

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN BIERCE

Shouting at the PALLBEARERS, straining on the groaning stairs, bent almost double by the weight of the CASKET.

WOOL

Oh, that - that's his doctor...

GOULDING

No it ain't. That be his ass-sniffin' Captain. Now what do you suppose --

ANGLE ON FRITZ & OTTO

Riding up with the Mule Team. OTTO says something to FRITZ in German. FRITZ laughs and replies in German, too.

WOOL

(irritated by OTTO's cackling)
Stop laughing, you damned Kraut!

FRITZ

Otto makes joke. He says, THE CASKET IS SO HEAVY, IT MUST HAVE ALL THE GOLD INSIDE.

ANGLE ON WOOL, GOULDING AND BARGER

Turning slowly from FRITZ to the PALLBEARERS, half way down the creaking wooden stairs.

They DRAW THEIR GUNS and run for the staircase, BLASTING.

ANGLE ON THE PALLBEARERS

On the stairs. TWO ARE HIT BY BULLETS. The OTHERS dive for cover, dropping the COFFIN.

WOOL shoots RED CROW.

The COFFIN crashes through the stair rail and lands on top of the HEARSE, where it breaks open.

BELKNAP'S UNIFORMED LEGS slide out, followed by a sluice of ice and SEVERAL CLINKING 25lb BURLAP BAGS...

BEDLAM IN THE PARADE GROUND.

The CONSTRUCTION WORKERS run for cover as WOOL, GOULDING, BELKNAP and the QUARTERMASTERS shoot it out with JONES and the APACHES.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Emptying his Rifle, ducking behind a scaffold to reload.

ANGLE ON WOOL AND BELKNAP

Sheltering behind the Wagon as the Mules pull it towards the stairs.

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN BIERCE

Yelling at the PALLBEARERS in Apache.

ANGLE ON A PALLBEARER

Darting out and grabbing TWO OF THE BURLAP BAGS.

ANGLE ON BARGER

Shooting him. Shouting to WOOL --

BARGER

The reins! Get the reins!

ANGLE ON WOOL

Crouching behind the rolling wagon, reaching for the REINS which trail in the dust.

ANGLE ON RED CROW

Wounded, pulling himself up and drawing a bead on WOOL's feet, squeezing the trigger.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Grabbing the reins. He is shot in the leg. He falls, dropping his decanter, screaming and cursing, pulling the Mules around.

THE WAGON CRASHES AGAINST THE HEARSE.

THE COFFIN TOPPLES OFF THE HEARSE INTO THE WAGON.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Firing to cover WOOL.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Clinging to the reins. Bullets fly past him. An ARROW whistles by. FRITZ jumps in the wagon.

FRITZ

I help you, Wool --

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN BIERCE

Shooting FRITZ in the head.

FRITZ's body tumbles off the Wagon as BARGER leaps aboard.

BARGER

Give me the reins, lad!

WOOL does so. ANOTHER PALLBEARER jumps aboard the Wagon. OTTO shoots him off. BARGER whips the Mules.

BARGER
Hyah! GIDDY UP!

The Wagon rolls out, leaving WOOL and OTTO in the open, exposed to the APACHE's fire. OTTO runs after it. WOOL falls.

OTTO
Wait, Barger! WAIT!!

OTTO gets an ARROW in the neck. He keeps on running.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Pinned down by arrows and rifle fire, behind the wooden scaffold.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Dragging himself into a drainage ditch, he finds the fallen Decanter upright, liquor still within.

ANGLE ON THE APACHES

Loosing ARROWS after the Wagon.

ANGLE ON OTTO

Struck by several ARROWS, falling.

ANGLE ON BARGER

Disappearing through the Gates.

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN BIERCE

Mounting a Cavalry pony. TWO PALLBEARERS fire burning arrows through the office windows. OTHERS jump aboard ponies, ride with BIERCE through the Gates...

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Pulling a passing APACHE from his horse --

ANGLE ON WOOL

In the ditch, gibbering, drinking.

Hoofbeats. A shadow falls across him. WOOL looks up --

HIS POV -- GOULDING

On horseback, extending a hand. WOOL takes it. GOULDING pulls him aboard his mount, turns and gallops for the unfinished wall. They vault it, WOOL still clinging to the Decanter.

OUTSIDE THE FORT EXT DAY

GOULDING and WOOL land in a clatter of dislodged adobe bricks and timber. GOULDING wheels his horse towards the south, after the retreating dust cloud of BIERCE and the RENEGADES.

DIEGO hails him from the buckboard of his Covered Wagon.

GOULDING rides back, lowers WOOL into the Wagon. Then he speeds south, slapping his horse's flanks with his sombrero.

DIEGO follows in the Covered Wagon.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Bouncing painfully in the back.

Behind them, the FORT has begun to BURN.

NOGALES ROAD EXT DAY

BARGER urges the Mule Team south.

The road lies dead straight ahead of him. He keeps turning and looking back.

ANGLE ON THE BROKEN COFFIN

BELKNAP's dead feet are hooked over a siding board. Water from the melting ice sloshes into the hot dust.

To the right, a Wagon Road trails away into the foothills.

ANGLE ON BARGER

Looking back again, he sees the cloud of dust that he's been dreading. Yelling at the Mules, he takes the Wagon Road towards the hills. The tail gate of the wagon jars open and SEVERAL BAGS OF GOLD FALL OUT.

BARGER jams on the wooden Handbrake.

COVERED WAGON INT DAY

DIEGO whips the team, following GOULDING's dust trail.

WOOL is thrown about, alternately drinking and cursing.

DESERT BASIN EXT DAY

JONES and the RENEGADES gallop in a wide phalanx toward the foothills, following BARGER's tracks.

DESERT RIDGE EXT DAY

GOULDING crests a ridge of red rock.

HIS POV --

BARGER'S WAGON struggling through the Sand Dunes, BIERCE and the APACHES fanning out through sandy foothills to cut him off.

NOGALES ROAD EXT DAY

DIEGO watches as GOULDING disappears behind the jagged ridge.

The sky beyond the ridge is yellow with dust.

DIEGO reins the horses to a halt.

WOOL

Why are you stopping?

DIEGO

Big storm coming in.

WOOL

'tis but a cloud.

DIEGO

The storm is following.
This rig won't make it.

DIEGO hears a "click" behind his head. He turns and sees WOOL pointing his Navy Colt Revolver at him.

WOOL

No backsliding now. PROCEED.

DIEGO sighs. He climbs down from the buckboard seat and hands WOOL the reins. WOOL struggles into the seat and takes them, dragging his bloodsoaked leg.

WOOL

You Mexicans will never amount to anything. Want to know why? Because you have no Gumption. I know you laugh at us. You call us "Gringos". All this country used to belong to you. Whose is it now?

DIEGO gazes at the bone-dry BADLANDS over which BLACK STORM CLOUDS have formed. Lightning flickers.

DIEGO
It's all yours.

WOOL
That's right. Don't you forget it!

WOOL releases the brake and whips the animals.
A wind blows up, tugging at the canvas overhead.

The COVERED WAGON rolls away into the sand.

DIEGO watches for a minute. Then the blowing dust begins to sting his eyes. He pulls his hat down, tugs his collar up, and starts the long walk back to Town.

SAND DUNES EXT DAY

Dust swirls thickly around BARGER, as he puts his back against the Wagon, pushing it through a drift of sand. He yells unintelligible obscenities at his Mules.

He hears a whistling sound. He looks up.

An ARROW flies out of the sandstorm and lodges in his chest.

BARGER looks down at it and roars in anger.

BARGER
SAVAGES!!!

ANOTHER ARROW whistles past. ANOTHER FOLLOWS.

SAND DUNES EXT DAY

GOULDING hears BARGER shouting. He spurs his mount towards the sound. He hears the swish of arrows. He halts. Dust is a brown wall all around.

COVERED WAGON EXT DAY

WOOL whips the Mules blindly forward.

He can see nothing.

Lighting flashes overhead, followed by an almost instantaneous CRASH OF THUNDER.

DRY ARROYO EXT DAY

Its brittle plant life swaying wildly in the furious wind. A long thin trickle of rainwater flows the length of the dry arroyo. There is a ROARING SOUND.

Off screen, BARGER screams.

SAND DUNES EXT DAY

The dust storm abates suddenly.

LARGE RAINDROPS start to fall.

Over a ridge comes a horrible apparition --

BARGER, pinned by a dozen Apache arrows to his rig. Not dead, hardly alive, BARGER curses and grips the reins.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Surging up over the ridge after him. DOWNPOUR.

There is a RIFLE CRASH.

GOULDING's horse falls. GOULDING hits the sand running.

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN BIERCE

Leaping up and yelling to the APACHES, racing after GOULDING, down out of the Dunes.

ANGLE ON THE COVERED WAGON

Driven by WOOL, wild-eyed, his face contorted into a mad grimace.

ANGLE ON BARGER'S WAGON

Wheels dragging in sand and mud, sliding sideways into a once-dry arroyo - now the RAGING WATERS of a FLASH FLOOD.

ANGLE ON BARGER

One hand still free, firing his Pistol.

ANGLE ON CAPTAIN BIERCE

Drawing a bead on GOULDING.

ANGLE ON WOOL

In the Covered Wagon, descending like a Mad Angel borne by wings of flapping canvas. He aims his Navy Colt and fires, shooting BIERCE through the heart.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Leaping into the rapids.

ANGLE ON BARGER

Spinning wildly around.

ANGLE ON THE COFFIN

Falling from the WAGON as it overturns.

ANGLE ON ARROWS

Slicing the canvas over WOOL's head.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Diving head first from his seat into the Torrent.

ANGLE ON COLONEL BELKNAP'S CORPSE

Popping up out of the spray to greet WOOL before being swept away.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Clambering aboard the spinning, sinking Wagon, seizing the LAST REMAINING BAGS OF GOLD.

ANGLE ON WOOL

Swimming hard for the Wagon, trying to grab one of the BAGS from GOULDING's hands --

ANGLE ON THE WAGON

Overturning, pitching GOULDING and WOOL into the torrent.

ANGLE ON APACHES

Firing arrows from the river bank.

ANGLE ON GOULDING AND WOOL

Disappearing beneath the FAST-FLOWING STREAM.

DESERT EXT DAWN

The Sun shines gloriously on a profusion of desert wildflowers.

The air is crystal clear.

NOGALES ROAD EXT MORNING

DIEGO walks back towards Town.

He has been walking all night and is dog-tired.

HIS POV --

A 25lb BURLAP BAG lying in the road.

The GOLD DUST has all blown away, but LARGE NUGGETS of the PRECIOUS METAL twinkle brightly in the morning sun.

DIEGO bends and shovels the GOLD into the bag.

He drops the bag inside his shirt.

DIEGO walks on, WHISTLING CHEERFULLY.

CRANE UP TO RED FLOWERS

Growing on the tips of the Saguaros, feeding HUMMINGBIRDS.

MEXICO EXT MORNING

CRANE DOWN FROM MORE SAGUARO FLOWERS

To a small adobe desert town.

GOULDING sits in the shade drinking a cup of coffee.

He watches as a WRETCHED FIGURE limps in out of the BADLANDS. Mud-spattered, bloodstained, feverish, exhausted: JAMES D. WOOL. WOOL collapses in the shade.

WOOL

The gold.

GOULDING

It's gone.

WOOL

But we know where it is!

GOULDING

So do the 'Paches.

He sits in silence. WOOL lies there.

A COLUMN OF MEN ON HORSEBACK approaches.

ANGLE ON THE LEADER OF THE COLUMN

Dressed in an elaborate dress uniform of his own devising, with much braid and many medals, and an ostrich feather protruding from his hat.

ANGLE ON GOULDING

Tapping WOOL on the shoulder as the COLUMN pulls up.
A COUPLE of dubious SOLDIERS enter the Mexican store.

GOULDING
Buenos dias, General.

ANGLE ON THE MAGNIFICENTLY-UNIFORMED MAN.

MAN
Hello to you. Americans?

ANGLE ON WOOL

Turning around and looking up at him.

WOOL
That's right. But this is Mexico.

MAN
I know. I am Commodore Ferrie, en route to liberate Guaymas. In need of a few trustworthy men.

GOULDING
What ye paying?

FERRIE
\$22.08 a week, plus bonuses.

GOULDING
In advance.

FERRIE

Of course.

WOOL

What about a Veterans' Bonus? We served
in the Army of the Potomac.

FERRIE

I'll give ye fifty dollars.

GOULDING

Each.

FERRIE

Y'all are Freemasons, aren't ye?

WOOL

Ay ay, sir. And Knights of the
Illuminated Crescent!

FERRIE

Well said! FIFTY DOLLARS APIECE!

WOOL and GOULDING exchange a glance.

WOOL rises. GOULDING puts down his coffee cup.

COMMODORE FERRIE motions to his SERGEANT AT ARMS to pay
them their MONEY, and they join the van...

F I N I S



