

"BLUE EYES"

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OVER BLACK

SUPER:

"SUMMER"

FADE IN

EXT. MOUNTAIN RIDGE - DAY

Eight U.S. CAVALRY SOLDIERS are lined up on horseback, staring down to the BADLANDS below.

Their POV: Teepees are burning and bodies lie strewn about.

CLOSE ON: A pair of BLUE EYES in a weathered face- the leader, COLONEL TOM REEGAN, (45).

TOM REEGAN

This here is the worst of the worst.

He spits a gob of black snus on the ground.

TOM REEGAN

Well, ain't no other way except we ride down and face this.

EXT. VALLEY FLOOR - SAME

The Cavalrymen arrive and gaze upon the horrific sights.

THEIR POV - VARIOUS SHOTS

...A Crow Indian Warrior lies face down in the dirt. A vulture picks at his remains.

...The body of a young Crow Woman, shot in the back.

...A dead U.S. Cavalryman. Face up. Five arrows sticking out of him.

...The five Indian tents have all been burned.

...More dead bodies in every direction. A few are Cavalry, but most are Indians.

A BLOODBATH. No survivors in sight.

A YOUNG CAVALRYMAN comes running around the corner of a rocky canyon wall.

He sees Tom and his jaw drops. He fumbles out a feeble salute.

YOUNG CAVALRYMAN
Colonel Reegan, sir.

Tom's upper lip twitches with anger.

TOM REEGAN
Where is he?

YOUNG CAVALRYMAN
Who sir? Wh--

Tom cocks his rifle.

TOM REEGAN
Don't fool with me, boy.

The Young Cavalryman quivers.

YOUNG CAVALRYMAN
The Lieutenant is over here, sir.
Sir, we didn't mean--

REEGAN
The less you say right now, the better.

EXT. CANYON - MOMENTS LATER

Tom's riders approach a big teepee, the only tent that hasn't been burned.

We hear SCREAMS and LAUGHTER coming from inside.

INT. TEEPEE

LIEUTENANT JOE BEAM REEGAN, (25), is half undressed and trying to force himself onto a naked Crow woman. Her name is LEOTIE. She is just seventeen years old.

Two SOLDIERS hold her down by her arms.

JOE BEAM
Come on sweetheart. Let's go again.

Leotie spits in Joe Beam's face. She wrestles an arm free.

She punches a soldier in the nose and then claws Joe Beam's face with her nails.

Joe Beam touches the three bloody scrapes and looks at the blood on his fingertips.

He smiles.

JOE BEAM
I think I'm in love.

The soldiers laugh. She curses at him in her native tongue.

He balls his fist and winds back for a punch, when...

The Young Cavalryman runs in.

YOUNG CAVALRYMAN
It's the Colonel, sir. He's
outside!

Joe Beam takes a moment to think. He climbs off of Leotie and starts to put his clothes on.

JOE BEAM
Keep her quiet.
(calls out)
Be right there!

The Young Soldier turns to leave the tent and bumps into Tom, who enters with his gun drawn.

Tom takes in the scene. Then he looks at Joe Beam.

TOM REEGAN
What have you done, boy?

He levels his rifle at Joe Beam. Joe Beam puts his hands up.

JOE BEAM
Stay calm, Daddy.

TOM REEGAN
You're no son of mine. Not any
more.

Joe Beam holds his hand over his heart.

JOE BEAM
It ain't like that, daddy. These
Crow, see they ambushed us.

Leotie grabs what clothes she can and covers herself. She darts out of the tent.

TOM REEGAN
You think I'm stupid, boy? Most of
these Indians is shot in the back.

JOE BEAM
Daddy, I--

Tom walks closer to Joe Beam, gun pointed.

TOM REEGAN
Call me daddy again. See what
happens.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATER

Tom's Cavalrymen aim their guns on Joe Beam's wayward
soldiers.

Joe Beam is on his knees, with Tom holding the rifle on him.

Tom's POV: Leotie is way out in the distance, running towards
the surrounding mountains.

TOM REEGAN
Go fetch that squaw back. Ain't
nothing waitin' out there except
bears, wolves and enemy tribes.

Two Cavalrymen take off galloping after her.

The rest of the men begin to tie the prisoners' wrists with
twine.

TOM REEGAN
On your feet, boy.

Tom marches Joe Beam around the corner of the canyon wall,
out of sight.

EXT. CANYON / OTHER SIDE - SAME

JOE BEAM
What are you gonna do to me?

Tom looks behind him. They are alone. He sits down on a rock.

TOM REEGAN
You are no longer my son. I disavow
you. You no longer ride with the
United States Cavalry either. So
give up that uniform.

Stunned, Joe Beam starts stripping down to his underwear.

TOM REEGAN

As far as I'm concerned you died
today in this valley. If I ever see
you in my territory again, I will
shoot your eyes out.

Joe Beam is silent.

TOM REEGAN

Is that clear?

JOE BEAM

Yes da-- Yes sir.

TOM REEGAN

Now get walking and don't turn
around. I hope them mountains
swallow you up.

JOE BEAM

I'll die out here. Can't we--

Tom looks down the sight of his rifle.

Joe Beam starts walking across the valley floor, toward the
mountains.

Tom watches his son shrink into the horizon.

Joe Beam turns around and calls.

JOE BEAM

PLEASE DADDY!

BLAM!-- Tom shoots Joe Beam in the arm. Even at this
distance, we see the red spray of blood.

Joe Beam screams out. He grabs his arm and takes off running.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR

Tom's Cavalrymen have the rogue soldiers tied up in a line.

Three Cavalrymen try to restrain Leotie, but she curses and
kicks and puts up a hell of a fight.

TOM

...Is dressing the corpse of a nearby soldier in Joe Beam's
jacket, with its lieutenant's stripes.

He stands over the dead man, and points his rifle at his face.

EXT. CANYON

BLAM!-- The shot rings out and EVERYONE STOPS.

Even Leotie ceases struggling for a moment.

Tom reappears around the corner. Everyone looks at him with silent awe. (Did he just execute his own son?)

Tom approaches Leotie.

TOM REEGAN

Tell her in Crow that I will escort
her back to her village, and I will
personally speak with Chief Many-
Quills about what happened.

A TRANSLATOR speaks to her. She curses and spits in Tom's eyes.

Calm, he wipes his eyes with his thumbs and index finger.

TOM REEGAN

I know she don't care, but tell her
I am sorry. Let her know we've got
a coach up top with blankets.

The Translator repeats it and she responds.

TRANSLATOR

Sir, this is The Chief's daughter.

Tom's eyes start to well up.

TOM REEGAN

Well I guess we're going to war
then, aren't we?

EXT. PLAINS - DUSK

Tom and the Cavalry escort a COVERED WAGON across lush plains.

Behind the trees and up in the hills, CROW WARRIORS look on, carrying bows and spears and in some cases, rifles.

A painted CROW WAR-CHIEF approaches Tom.

TOM REEGAN
Tell them I am here to return the
Chief's daughter.

The Translator repeats it. The War-Chief addresses two
Warriors, who take off running.

The rest of the Warriors keep aim on the Cavalrymen.

EXT. VILLAGE - SAME

The Warriors escort the Cavalrymen into the CROW VILLAGE.

The TEEPEES are arranged in little clusters, nestled amongst
the Cottonwood trees. In the center is the biggest tent of
all-- THE CHIEF'S SKIN LODGE

A large river roars alongside the village.

CHIEF MANY-QUILLS, (40), approaches, surrounded by his
vanguard of decorated Warriors.

Leotie runs out of the wagon and hugs her father and speaks
to him emphatically in Crow.

MANY-QUILLS
You've come into the wolf's den,
Colonel.

TOM REEGAN
I'm here to apologize to you and
explain my intentions.

He takes his hat off and bows a little.

TOM REEGAN
I don't want war with you, Chief.

MANY-QUILLS
Ahh the pious white man. A white
man's words of peace mean less than
shit. Because his actions always
speak louder.

TOM REEGAN
Chief, I--

MANY-QUILLS
Your own son has--

TOM REEGAN
My son has been dealt with.

MANY-QUILLS

Dealt with?

TOM REEGAN

I left him with a hole in his head
right on that valley floor. Go see
him yourself before the buzzards
finish him.

MANY-QUILLS

You really think this changes
anything?

TOM REEGAN

I want peace between your tribe and
my town. I've written a letter to
The President demanding as much.

The Warriors tense up as he reaches into his coat. He
produces a letter.

The Chief laughs. He doesn't look at the letter.

MANY-QUILLS

A white man writes something on a
piece of paper and he thinks it
carries weight. No. You'll have no
peace. Not in this lifetime. Not
from this war that you started.

TOM REEGAN

I've changed, Chief.

The Chief clasps his daughter tightly and points at Tom.

CHIEF PEOPLE

You'll never really change.

TOM REEGAN

Let's go men. Let's ride.

The Cavalry keep tight formation as they turn around, guns
trained on The Crow.

The Crow Warriors have their bows and arrows drawn taught.

Eyes are tense. Weapons could go off at any moment, as the
Cavalry rides away.

FADE OUT

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

We PUSH IN past a sign that reads: "TOWN OF THUNDER SPRINGS.
POP 274"

We see a dirt main road with a few shops and parlors and town residents going about their business.

SUPER:

"FALL"

EXT. WATCHTOWER

Three stories up, a SOLDIER BOY on lookout picks up a spyglass.

He sees a Crow War Party is circling around a wagon train in the distance.

He cups his hands to his mouth and shouts.

SOLDIER BOY
IT'S THE CROW!

The nervous soldier blows his bugle with all his might.

INT. BARRACKS

The Cavalrymen hear the horn. Tom Reegan runs into the room.

TOM REEGAN
Defend this town with your lives!

The Men mount their horses. They burst out of the barraCks, into broad daylight.

EXT. TOWN LIMITS

The Cavalry ride out and meet The Crow head on.

Arrows pierce Cavalryman and bullets hit Crow Warriors. Men fall dead from their horses as the TWO ARMIES CLASH.

EXT. CROW VILLAGE - SAME

The villagers go about their daily business while the Warriors are away.

Leotie stands in the entry of The Chief's skin lodge. She touches her belly.

The Chief's wife, ITCHUÚA, (38), speaks to her from inside. (They speak in SUBTITLED CROW LANGUAGE.)

ITCHUÚA

You'll have to tell him soon. How will you approach him?

LEOTIE

I don't know, mother. You tell me if you have any ideas.

FADE OUT

EXT. PLAINS - DAY

Tom Reagan rides with his troops on a high pass. Fresh snow coats the ground and their coats and the brims of their hats.

SUPER:

"WINTER"

Tom looks through his spyglass.

TOM'S POV

Scanning the village below, where people are making fires and cleaning buffalo hides, trying to keep warm.

LIEUTENANT

Sir, we could hit them now, while they ain't expecting it?

Tom's spyglass lands on The Chief and Leotie, yelling at each other. She is VERY PREGNANT now.

TOM REEGAN

No. For the love of god, just let 'em have their winter.

FADE OUT

EXT. CROW VILLAGE - DAY

It is now an idyllic time of year. The grass is a lush green and the skies bright blue. Some villagers fish in the river. Others cook food in big pots over fire pits.

SUPER:

"SPRING"

INT. TENT - DAY

We're CLOSE ON Leotie as she screams and heaves with labor pains.

Her mother and some other women hold her hands and talk her through the pain.

We hear a baby's first cries and the child is held up by one of the young midwives.

MIDWIFE

A boy!

She washes the NEWBORN and hands him to his mother.

Exhausted and sweaty, Leotie holds the baby to her breast and he begins to nurse.

She smiles, tired but content.

EXT. TENT - DAY

Itchuúa stands outside the tent, holding her grandchild. Many-Quills approaches.

The baby is wrapped in blankets. She hands him to Many-Quills. (They speak in subtitled Crow.)

ITCHUÚA

A grandson.

He looks at the Newborn's face: deep olive skin, a head of thick black hair, icy blue eyes.

MANY-QUILLS

No. A devil. Skin like a Crow, but the blue eyes of a white killer. This child is a curse.

ITCHUÚA

What has become of you?

MANY-QUILLS

I am father and grandfather to all this tribe. I think with all my people in mind. No single child is more important than the whole.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Many-Quills is alone with the Newborn. He crouches down and lowers the naked infant into the cold water. The baby screams and thrashes.

He lowers him further still. Half his body is under water.

He stops. He looks the Newborn in the eyes. He hugs the baby to his chest. Many-Quills begins to cry himself.

EXT. CROW VILLAGE - LATER

The Chief approaches Leotie and Itchuúa, who are out looking for the baby.

He hands the baby to Leotie. She casts him a suspicious glance.

EXT. LOOKOUT TOWER

The Soldier Boy looks out and sees five Crow approaching on horses.

He blows his bugle again.

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

The Soldier Boy runs up to Tom Reegan.

SOLDIER BOY
Sir, Crow riders approaching.

TOM REEGUN
How many?

SOLDIER BOY
Sir. It's just The Chief, a couple warriors and a few squaws.

Tom goes to the door.

SOLDIER BOY
Sir, what should I do?

TOM REEGAN
Nothing, son. Don't do nothing.

EXT. TOWN LIMITS - DAY

Tom and four Cavalrymen ride out and meet The Chief.

Tom sees the blanketed Newborn in Leotie's arms.

INT. REEGAN LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tom holds the Newborn in his arms and sees the child's face, the cold blue eyes.

His wife SALLY, (40), gazes at the child too.

MANY-QUILLS

You can see it in his eyes. We
share blood now, Tom Reegan.

Tom thinks on it. He walks to a window and looks out.

TOM

I reckon we do.

MANY-QUILLS

This child will never be one way
nor the other. But stuck always
between our two worlds.

Tom turns back to face Many-Quills.

TOM REEGAN

Say Chief. Doesn't this makes us
blood brothers or something?

Many-Quills laughs.

MANY-QUILLS

Did you read that in some book
about Indians?

TOM REEGAN

Maybe this boy can be the basis of
a new truce. Maybe he can teach us
how to live peacefully as
neighbors.

MANY-QUILLS

You live in a dream world, Colonel.

TOM REEGAN

Well why not though? Let him go
back and forth between us. He can
learn both of our ways. We can
understand each other through him.

Many-Quills looks into the crying Newborn's eyes.

MANY-QUILLS

You really want this truce, don't you?

TOM REEGAN

I don't expect you to believe me Chief, but I'm not the same man I was. I want to see peace in my lifetime.

MANY-QUILLS

You're right. I don't believe you--

Leotie steps forward.

LEOTIE

(in Crow; subtitled)

We've got enough problems, father. If we can end this war, that would be a good thing.

Tom watches her, like he knows exactly what she's saying.

TOM REEGAN

How about it? He can live with me half the year, and you the other half. He can keep warm here in the winter, and hunt with you in the summer.

MANY-QUILLS

No. To be a Crow, he must learn to survive the brutal winters. You can have him and make him soft in the summertime.

TOM REEGAN

Sounds like you're saying yes, Chief.

Tom offers his hand to shake. Chief Many Quills reluctantly takes it.

MANY-QUILLS

Don't betray me, Tom Reegan. Make good on this promise.

Tom Smiles. He nods.

TOM REEGAN

I'll call him... Moses... Moses Reegan... Uniter of the tribes.

MANY-QUILLS
I'll call him 'Blue Eyes'.

INT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY

Ten children are sitting at their desks, receiving Sunday School instruction from a female TEACHER.

The CHILDREN are all Anglo, except for a 9-year-old NATIVE BOY with dark, striking features and piercing blue eyes.

The boy stares out the window at the bright summer day and the rustling trees.

TEACHER
Why do you suppose God asks Abraham
to kill his own son, only to stay
his hand at the very last moment?
Charlie?

CHARLIE ADAMS, the class clown, is turned around in his chair, threatening to punch the student behind him.

CHARLIE
(turning back around)
What? Because... God can do what he
wants. He's god, ain't he?

The kids laugh.

TEACHER
Charlie, I will paddle your hide. I
mean it. Does anyone know the
answer?

BLUE EYES stops daydreaming and raises his hand. She points at him.

BLUE EYES
It was the ultimate test of
Abraham's dedication to God. God
was proving to Satan that Job's
faith would never waver.

TEACHER
Very good, Moses.

CHARLIE
(mockingly)
"Moses".

The kids laugh again.

EXT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY

Blue Eyes walks out beyond the picket fence and onto a dirt road. Charlie and two other boys follow him.

CHARLIE
Hey you! Injun' boy!

Blue Eyes keeps walking.

Charlie wings a clump of dirt and hits him in the back of the neck.

Blue Eyes stops and turns around. Charlie holds a rock now.

CHARLIE
This one hits your head, Savage.

Blue Eyes stares back at him in anger.

WAYDE
Watch it, Charlie. That's Colonel Reegan's boy.

HENRY
I don't care who this freak belongs to. No heathen's gonna make me look a fool in Bible Study.

BLUE EYES
I didn't make you look like a fool. You did.

Charlie slings the rock. Blue Eyes side-steps it.

The other boys start laughing and join in slinging rocks. Blue Eyes blocks with his arms.

Some rocks miss. Others hit him. His eyes well up as he turns and runs.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Tom Reegan leads Blue Eyes through the forest, both of them carrying rifles.

TOM REEGAN
Don't pay those boys any mind. They're just jealous because you're smarter than they are...

Blue Eyes looks unconvinced.

TOM REEGAN
Better looking too.

At that, Blue Eyes gives a shy, awkward smile.

TOM REEGAN
 You turned the other cheek, son.
 That's the righteous path.

There's a rustle in the trees. Tom goes on the alert. He points out a rabbit.

TOM REEGAN
 (whispers)
 There. Get down, boy.

Blue Eyes gets down low. He gets the rabbit in his sights.
 He hesitates.

TOM REEGAN
 Ain't no sin in killing that
 animal. It's for our food. That's
 survival.

Tom leans down behind Blue Eyes and looks down the rifle's sight. The animal keeps grazing.

TOM REEGAN
 Take the shot, boy. Nobody hits the
 first time anyway.

HIS POV

A flock of geese takes off loudly. The nimble rabbit goes on the run.

TOM REEGAN (O.C.)
 Ah. He's spooked.

Blue Eyes follows...

BANG!-- He kills the rabbit in its tracks.

Tom is flabbergasted. He takes his hat off and stares at the kill in disbelief.

TOM REEGAN
 Good god, son! Those boys'll learn
 not to cross you.

EXT. PLAINS - DAY

We are following eight CROW HUNTERS on horseback as they chase a stampede of Bison.

Among the Hunting party are:

Blue Eyes, (16 now), and dressed in warrior regalia.

SPARROW BIRD, (16), a tomboy archer with a half-shaved head. She more than keeps up with the boys.

BROKEN HORN, the biggest and strongest, three years older than the others.

(They speak to each other in subtitled Crow language.)

The Bison gallop at top speed.

Blue Eyes levels his spear at one of the stragglers.

Then...

Broken Horn rides up and slams into him, knocking him off his horse.

BROKEN HORN
Stay out of the way, White Man!

Blue Eyes rolls out of the way of the horses galloping behind him.

Broken Horn throws a spear and kills one of the Bison.

Sparrow Bird throws her hands up and points an accusing finger at Broken Horn.

SPARROW BIRD
Idiot. Come on, Blue Eyes. Get up
off your ass.

She and Broken Horn stare each other down as Blue Eyes picks himself up.

INT. SKIN LODGE - NIGHT

Many-Quills sits on a chair made of Buffalo hide and looks at Blue Eyes, who is bruised and bloodied from his fall.

Leotie has an arm on her son's shoulder.

LEOTIE
They hurt our boy, Father.

Many-Quills thinks it over.

MANY-QUILLS

Listen to me. You were born with a unique challenge, because you are neither one race nor the other. But you were also born lucky to be my grandson. So you have a choice: I can make your problems go away for you. Or you can use these boys' taunts to motivate you and become stronger. Strive to be better than them. Use your own strength to prove them wrong.

CLOSE ON BLUE EYES

There's an anger but also a fire in his eyes as he listens to grandfather's words.

MANY-QUILLS

The choice is yours. Live in my shadow, until I'm not around to protect you anymore. Or face your demons on your own, and become your own man.

EXT. BADLANDS - DAY

Another hunt in progress. This time through thick snow.

Blue Eyes commands his horse to gallop hard and fast.

He charges past Broken Horn.

Closing in on the bison herd, he raises a bow and arrow.

He SHOOTs one bison and it falls dead. He reloads in an instant and SHOOTs another.

BLUE EYES

Get around them in a circle!

The bison escape around a bend into a narrow, rocky valley.

A warrior's horse breaks its ankle on the rocky terrain. The Warrior and the horses plummet facedown into the snow.

The other horses buck and neigh refusing to charge forward.

SPARROW BIRD

We're losing them!

Blue Eyes leaps off of his horse and runs up the side of a steep, rocky ledge. The other hunters watch him go.

The bison are disappearing as the rocky canyon gets narrow.

BLUE EYES
Spear! Now!

BROKEN HORN hurls his spear straight up to Blue Eyes.

In a single motion, he catches the spear and takes a big leap off the top of the rocky hill.

He pulls the spear back in mid air and then hurls it down.

The lance pierces the side of a bison so hard, half of it disappears inside the beast's body.

The beast's body blocks the passageway, creating a bottle neck that traps the other bison.

Blue Eyes tumbles to a rough landing on the ground below.

He's bruised and shaken. His fellow warriors look on amazed. With their weapons, they pick off the remaining bison.

From the ground, Blue Eyes sticks his hand out to Broken Horn.

BLUE EYES
Well. Aren't you going to help me
up?

Broken Horn pulls him up off the ground.

EXT. THUNDER SPRINGS MAIN STREET - DAY

We FOLLOW Blue Eyes as he rides his horse into town, passing a freshly-painted sign that reads: "CITY OF THUNDER SPRINGS. POP 4570"

Downtown Thunder Springs is alive and booming. New construction is going on everywhere. People hustle to and fro on foot, by horse and by buggy.

Blue Eyes' horse carries his equipment. His bags and his weapons, including his rifle and his Buffalo hide War-Shield

We PULL UP above the rooftops, where a railroad station and railway line are under construction.

EXT. REEGAN HOUSE - LATER

Blue Eyes rides past picket fences of big houses, each with several acres of land. He turns up the path to The Reegan House.

Tom and Sally run out to greet their grandson.

SALLY

Well, it's officially summer now.

She smiles and tears up a little as Blue Eyes dismounts and gives them both a hug.

TOM REEGAN

We miss you a ton when you're away.

Tom grabs his grandson by the shoulders and looks him up and down.

Blue Eyes has fashioned an entirely unique look for himself: Half Crow Warrior, half Victorian gentlemen.

His braided black hair hangs below the brim of a felt derby hat. His unbuttoned suit jacket reveals an intricate patchwork of Crow beads and feathered jewelry, which cover his torso instead of a traditional button-up shirt.

TOM REEGAN

Look at you. You are your own man.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

Tom Reegan stands at a podium on a stage. A crowd of hundreds watches him speak.

Behind him, a big banner reads: "MAYOR ELECT, TOM REEGAN"

Blue Eyes and Sally and a few TOWN OFFICIALS share the stage with Tom.

TOM REEGAN

Good people of Thunder Springs. I am a plain spoken man. So, if my words fall short, know that I do not take this honor you have bestowed on me lightly. As your mayor, I will strive for the same ideals that have guided my better choices in life. I believe in God's law, and I believe in giving everyone a fair shake.

TOM REEGAN

With the railroad coming through,
the times are changing fast, but we
must keep our heads on straight and
retain our sense of decency as
this boom time takes hold. I have
made peace with the tribes in this
region and I intend to keep my
promise of equal respect and--

A few 'boos' come from the crowd. Tom stumbles to continue his speech.

A HECKLER yells out.

HECKLER

Piss on you Tom Reegan. You can't
make deals with savages!

Blue Eyes goes on the alert, as do the other men on stage.

HECKLER

You're fat and soft and you ain't
the same man you once was. Look at
him, folks. Look at his boy. That's
an abomination against God. You
love heathens so much. Go marry one
and get your ass off our land!

GILL MCMASTERS, (38), the burly town sheriff, runs toward the Heckler.

The heckler raises a whisky bottle and hurls it toward the stage.

Blue Eyes stands up. He reaches for the pistol on his hip.

Tom turns his body away as the bottle SMASHES against the podium, spraying Tom with bits of glass.

Sheriff McMasters punches the heckler in the face and the man hits the ground. He kicks him in the ribs.

SHERIFF

Anyone else care to give comment?

He drags the man away by his hair, kicking and screaming.

SHERIFF

I thought not.

Blue Eyes lets out a long breath. Still tense, but relieved that the problem's dealt with.

TOM REEGAN
Everyone be calm. Men like him are
just trying to rattle people.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Old bottles and pieces of bone dangle on strings from tree branches.

Blue Eyes fires his pistol. Six rapid shots. Each bullet shatters one of these targets.

CLICK-- He's empty.

Tom Reegan sneaks up behind him, and makes pretend gun with his finger.

TOM REEGAN
You're out of bullets and I'm
coming up be--

Blue Eyes kneels down fast, pivots and lunges upward with one hand on Tom's "gun wrist" and his CROW BLADE against Tom's throat.

TOM REEGAN
--hind you.

Tom gulps.

BLUE EYES
Were you saying something?

Blue Eyes relaxes his hold and smiles.

TOM REEGAN
Christ, you nearly gave me a heart
attack.

BLUE EYES
So, you sneak up on me and then
complain I have the audacity to
defend myself?

TOM REEGAN
Yup. That's about right.
(he tugs on his lapels)
As mayor I reserve the right to
contradict myself whenever I
please.

BLUE EYES

Already drunk with power. That
didn't take long.

TOM REEGAN

Moses, I want you to consider
coming to work for me. As one of my
advisors.

The boy shakes his head.

BLUE EYES

I want to be Sheriff's deputy when
I'm in town.

TOM REEGAN

Ah son, you've got more to offer.
Book smarts I never had, and your
father-- well, they don't run in
this family.

BLUE EYES

But I want to serve justice. That
man yesterday, I should have been
the one to drag him away.

TOM REEGAN

Why? Are we talking about justice,
or revenge?

BLUE EYES

Justice. That's a lawman's job.
That's how I can keep the peace
that I was born to uphold.

TOM REEGAN

A lawman is still a gunslinger.
Once you pick up that gun, you live
by it, you kill by it, high chance
you die by it too.

BLUE EYES

You're talking about my father, but
that's not me.

TOM REEGAN

Revenge, justice. Lawman. Outlaw.
Once you've done a few killings,
all these differences get blurry.
Just think it over son. Of all the
things you could do with your life,
and they are many, is this really
the best use of your time?

(MORE)

TOM REEGAN (CONT'D)
I would be honored if you would
just follow me for a while, learn
the ins and outs of governing by
watching me. Maybe you could be on
my council, and who knows where it
could go from there. You got the
makings of a leader. The world
needs your brain son, not your gun.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Rain is pouring down, turning the street into mud.

A horse-drawn buggy bounces its way down the road. The DRIVER
sits up-top.

INT. BUGGY

Tom, Blue Eyes and Sheriff McMasters bounce up and down in
the back seats.

The TREASURER, a ruddy-faced man with a big walrus mustache,
sits facing Tom, giving him the low-down.

TREASURER
Thing is, Mayor, they gonna come
atcha from all sides. These people
want this, but those people want
that instead. You'll go crosseyed
tryin' to please 'em all, so just
push that notion out of yer mind'.
Yer gonna have to piss some people
off is what I'm sayin' to ya Tom.

TOM REEGAN
Still I aim to keep the number of
disgruntled at a healthy minimum.

Tom taps Blue Eyes and points out the window.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

The buggy comes to a halt outside a two story red brick
building, with big white letters that read: "CITY HALL".

TOM (O.C.)
There she is. Officially open for
business.

The group climb out of the buggy. Tom first and then the
rest.

The INAUGURATION DAY CROWD is massive. People have braved the poor weather to see Tom Reegan sworn in.

They hold up hand-made signs. Some of them are supportive: 'GOD BLESS YOU MAYOR REEGAN'. Some of them hostile: "NO SAVAGES HERE" and "INJUN LOVER REEGAN".

The Treasurer turns to Tom. He grins.

TREASURER

Like I said, Tom. We gonna come at you from all sides.

He pulls a SMALL DERRINGER from his waist.

He points the gun at Tom.

BLUE EYES

NO!

Blue Eyes grabs his wrist and pushes his hand away.

BLAM!-- He fires and wings Tom in the side.

Tom drops down into the mud.

Blue Eyes gets out his blade and stabs the Treasurer in the gut.

A voice calls out from somewhere in the panicking crowd.

VOICE (O.C.)

Tom Reegan you're deader'n shit!

BLAM!-- Another shot kills the buggy driver. He topples down to the mud.

Blue Eyes pulls his pistol. He and the Sheriff duck for cover.

They huddle over Tom, the buggy protecting them on one side.

BLUE EYES' POV

A GRIMEY MAN in a dark stetson hat is coming their way with a rifle.

ON BLUE EYES

He stands up and takes aim through the crowd.

BLUE EYES

Get down!

People scream and dive for cover.

BANG! BANG!-- Two shots from Blue Eyes and the Grimey Man falls dead.

BLAM!-- A bullet chews a big hole through the side of the buggy, barely missing their heads.

VOICE (O.C.)

Die Hypocrite!

BLAM! BLAM!-- More shots ring out as more ASSASSINS close in around them.

BLAM!-- A woman gets shot to the ground, revealing the Assassin behind her.

Blue Eyes shoots him. But three more shots get fired, coming from different directions.

Blue Eyes and The Sheriff duck down again.

SHERIFF

There's three more but I can't
fuckin' see where they are!

Blue Eyes stands up.

He can make out the killer's positions only from the faint clouds of gun smoke coming from their rifles.

No clear shot.

With his pistol in one hand, he uses the other hand to hoist himself on top of the buggy.

Now he sees down over the crowd: Two more assassins closing in near him. One more farther away.

BLAM!-- He shoots one of them.

BLUE EYES

(to the sherif)

One on your far left!

The Sheriff stands up.

The assassins are ducking below the crowd.

Blue Eyes draws his blade and takes a flying forward leap off the top of the buggy. He comes crashing down through the crowd, knocking people over.

He lands and his blade goes straight through the top of an assassin's hat and comes out the bottom of his chin.

The dead Assassin's face is bug-eyed as blood drips down from the tip of the blade beneath his chin.

SCHWICK!-- Blue Eyes pulls the blade back out.

EXT. ELSEWHERE IN THE STREET

The other would-be assassin takes off running. The Sheriff chases him.

The Sheriff pushes people aside with great force. The Assassin shoots people out of his way.

BELOW THE BUGGY

Tom lies in the deep mud, clutching his bleeding ribs.

A few feet away is the Treasurer, with Blue Eyes' blade still sticking out of him. He reaches for his muddy pistol.

IN THE STREET

The Sheriff calls out.

SHERIFF
Assassin! Everyone down!

People hit the dirt. The Sheriff takes aim and...

BANG!-- Blows a hole in the Assassin's back, dropping him dead into the mud.

BELOW THE BUGGY

Tom groans on his back.

So does the Treasurer as he points the Derringer.

CRUNCH-- A Boot stomps hard on his wrist. The heel of the boot twists into his flesh.

He drops the gun in pain. He looks up and sees...

Blue Eyes is pointing a gun down at him. The Treasurer touches his belly.

BLUE EYES

Leave that blade where it is. I
need to question you before your
guts fall out.

The Sheriff runs over and points his rifle at the Treasurer.

Blue Eyes goes to Tom. He lifts his head up.

BLUE EYES

Grandpa! You still here?

Tom nods weakly, paralyzed with pain.

BLUE EYES

Oh god.

Blue Eyes cries, holding Tom in his arms.

The Sheriff scans the horizon, still in shock from what just took place.

INT. SHERIFF'S SATION - DAY

The Sheriff reads an oath and Blue Eyes repeats it with his right hand on a bible.

BLUE EYES (V.O.)

Dear Mother. I struggle to find the
words to make you understand my
choice in this moment. On the face
it will appear that my decision to
stay in Thunder Springs this winter
is me choosing one of my families
over the other...

The Sheriff pins a gold badge on Blue Eyes' lapel.

EXT. CROW VILLAGE - DAY

Crow children wash laundry in the river. They look up and sees a carriage approaching.

BLUE EYES (V.O.)

Nothing could be further from the
truth.

BLUE EYES (V.O.)
I cherish this part of the year
that has always been yours' and my
special time together...

A white messenger gets out of the buggy, holding up an envelope.

MESSENGER
For Chief Many-Quills!

A little girl grabs the letter and runs.

BLUE EYES (V.O.)
But as Tom Reegan's life hangs in
the balance, so too does the
delicate truce that has been
achieved between our Crow Nation
and the people of Thunder
Springs...

EXT. CHIEF'S TENT - DAY

Many-Quills holds the letter in his hand, and reads it to his daughter in Crow.

We hear this:

BLUE EYES (V.O.)
Tom is a good man and he will keep
to his word as long as he lives,
but his word alone cannot guarantee
peace will be upheld while he lies
ill or worse, if he goes into his
grave. That is why I must remain
here to help oversee Tom's affairs
and if I can, ensure that our peace
does not get hacked away at by the
more small-minded and hateful
element of white society. By this I
mean men just like my late
father...

Blue Eyes' mother begins to cry.

EXT. REEGAN HOUSE - DAY

Blue Eyes hoists a bucket of water up from a well. He hands the bucket to Sally.

BLUE EYES (V.O.)

I know the dead man's name is forbidden and it brings me no pleasure to bring him up, but I use his example to underscore just how serious the threat to our Crow people is at this time, and to make you understand how seriously I'm taking this matter. I miss you dearly mother. I miss you too, great Chief, as I know you will be translating this letter to mother...

INT. REEGAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Tom lies ill in bed. Blue Eyes and Sally sit beside him. Blue Eyes spoons soup into Tom's mouth.

BLUE EYES (V.O.)

All I can tell you is that I will return as soon as I can and make up for this lost time we could've spent together. And when I return, I aim to do so bringing news of a lasting peace between the residents of Thunder Springs and the Crow Nation...

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Blue Eyes and Sheriff McMasters sit at the pew.

BLUE EYES (V.O.)

Please tell the others I am thinking of them as I take on the role of Sheriff's Deputy...

A JUDGE pounds his gavel.

Two young DEPUTIES carry the Treasurer away in cuffs, cussing and screaming.

The Sheriff stands up and gesticulates and curses right back at the Treasurer, giving as good as he gets.

BLUE EYES (V.O.)
 And although I am here officially
 policing the streets and the
 alleyways of Thunder Springs, I am
 in fact patrolling against those
 who would hurt our nation or run us
 off of our land...

EXT. CROW VILLAGE - NIGHT

Chief Plenty and Blue Eyes' mother join the Chief's wife and they gather with the villagers around a big fire pit.

The chief addresses the villagers, holding the letter in his hand. Broken Horn and Sparrow Bird are among the group.

BLUE EYES (V.O.)
 I do not know if Tom will survive
 this brush with the infinite, but I
 can tell you that those who plotted
 against him have been apprehended,
 and now I keep an eye out for any
 others who might wish to follow in
 the footsteps of those wretched
 men. Mother, I love you.
 Grandfather and Chief, you are an
 inspiration to me. Be well. I will
 return to you soon. Your loving
 son, Moses Reegan... Blue Eyes.

Sparrow Bird notices something and looks upward. She holds her hand out in front of her.

The rest of the villagers start to look up too. It has begun to snow.

INT. SALOON - NIGHT

We're inside a crowded barroom on a rowdy night. Roughnecks drink and gamble and cavort with prostitutes.

We PUSH IN through all the commotion, to a table in the back where twelve MERCENARIES are drinking shots.

We HOLD on the back of a HATTED MAN's head.

There is a SUPER over the scene...

TOWN OF GIBSON, NEBRASKA

A portly mercenary named BARRETT sits across from the Hatted Man stands up and raises his glass.

BARRETT

To Mister Will Grady. The most
fearless fighter of savages The
West ever saw.

HATTED MAN

Oh stop yer pandering.

BARRETT

I will not. And I am not. Will, you
are the living embodiment - The
walking wraith of vengeance, his
gun blazin'. Here he comes,
Heathens. Ruuuun, you red faced
fuckers! Better hiiide!

The men all start to laugh. Will waves it off.

HATTED MAN

Oh hell. We all do our bit.

And now we see WILL GRADY's face. We recognize him to be Joe
Beam Reagan, but the people in this bar do not.

BARRETT

Bullshit! How many did you kill on
this ride. Bet it's more than the
rest of us put together.

Joe Beam smiles amiably. At Forty-odd, he looks handsome and
distinguished. He's going grey at the temples now.

WILL GRADY

They say you're blessed if you can
get paid to do what you love. For
me that's sending those murderous
savages straight down to the hell
they don't believe in.

There is a stump where his left arm used to be. He wears a
polished, MAHOGANY PROSTHETIC in its place.

With his good arm, Joe Beam raises his glass.

BARRETT

Hear! Hear!

The men all toss their whiskies back. They hoop and holler.

A man we'll call RED BEARD sits in the corner of the bar,
nursing a whisky, watching the group.

BARRETT

Say Will. Which bunch of Injuns is the toughest you ever come up against? Apaches? Comanches?

WILL/ JOE BEAM

Well that's an interesting question. You mean the strongest? Or the meanest?

Barrett grins.

BARRETT

Yeah.

Joe Beam sets his Smith and Wesson revolver down on the table.

WILL/ JOE BEAM

That's a hard one. Me and this peacemaker have battled all variety of savages. Take those Ute today. They weren't the toughest fighters, but underestimate 'em and they'd of eaten us for supper tonight. They're cannibals. I seen 'em do it.

Red Beard gets up and makes his way across the bar.

WILL/ JOE BEAM

Comanches are scary. They'll take your children away in the night. Rape em. Torture 'em. Worse yet, raise 'em as comanches.

Red Beard pushes through the crowd, toward Joe Beam.

WILL/ JOE BEAM

Apaches'll send twenty-five warriors to collect the scalp off just one white man, if they hate 'im enough.

Red Beard comes up beside Joe Beam.

RED BEARD

Say there Will, what about the Crow people, up Dakota way? You ever square off against them?

Joe Beam's face drops a little. He puts his hand near his gun as he slowly turns to face Red Beard.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
I'm sorry, stranger. Do I know you?

Red Beard takes his hat off in respect.

RED BEARD
My manners. Do excuse me. You do
not know me, but I know you. Hell
everyone knows you, Will.

Joe Beam thinks for a beat.

He picks up his gun and spins it around on his finger this
way and that, lightning fast, before he re-holsters it into
his belt.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
No, I ain't never hunted no Crow
Indians. I ain't never even been up
Dakota way.

Joe Beam faces his buddies again and starts to chatter.

RED BEARD
Because I heard they got themselves
an infestation of them Crow up
there in North Dakota.

Joe Beam turns back around.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
Well, I hope the good people of
North Dakota can get their Crow
situation under control.

RED BEARD
Thing is, there's a mayor up there
actually protecting them Crow. Name
of Tom Reegan. You believe that?
White man wants to hold hands with
savages, live happily ever after.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
Do you have a point to make,
stranger, or are you just flapping
your gums?

BARRETT
Take the hint, friend.

RED BEARD
Will, you wouldn't back down from a
fight with them Crow, would you?

There's laughter. Not from Joe Beam, though.

BARRETT
Shit! He's calling you out.

Joe Beam stands up fast. Glasses tip over. Voices go quiet.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
I've given you enough of my time,
stranger. Now fuck right off or my
peacemaker's coming back out and
shut you up for good.

Red Beard puts his arms up in surrender. He backs away.

REDBEARD
Again, my apologies. I should be
more sparing with my words when in
the presence of greatness.

Joe Beam watches him as he disappears back into the crowd.

BARRETT
Hey! Get us some fresh glasses over
here!

A barmaid comes running over. The festivities resume.

EXT. SALOON - LATER

A drunken Joe Beam stumbles down the dirt main-road of this
seedy MOUNTAIN TOWN. A PROSTITUTE escorts him, with an arm
around him, keeping him from tipping over.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
(slurring)
I got yer money, honey. Thanks to
those Ute.

He points to a cart, where dead bodies in white bags are
stacked up high.

She looks on, horrified. She pulls her arm away.

PROSTITUTE
Go back to your room Mr. Grady. I
think you're done for tonight.

She backs away slowly. Then she runs.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
Where you goin? Come back.

He stumbles and mumbles.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
...dumb bitch.

A voice comes out of the dark.

REDBEARD
Joe Beam Reegan!

Joe Beam turns around with a jump, like a scared deer.

Red Beard approaches him from out of the dark.

REDBEARD
Haha. I fuckin' knew it. You call
yourself Will Grady, but you's Joe
Beam Reegan. Son of Tom Reegan,
straight outta Dakota territory.

Joe Beam gets his Peacemaker out and cocks it quicker than
any sober man could.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
And you're a dead red sack of shit.

Red Beard shrinks in fear.

REDBEARD
Wait! I'm on your side, brother. I
was next to you that day, the day
your daddy done you wrong.

Joe Beam grabs Red Beard by his shirt and pulls him into an
alley.

He SLAMS him against a wall. He shoves the barrel of his gun
into Redbeard's forehead.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
What do you want? Spill the words
or I'll spill your fuckin' brains.

He grinds the barrel of his gun so hard against Redbeard's
forehead that blood starts dripping down.

REDBEARD
I was there that day. I rode U.S.
Cavalry same as you. I seen what
your daddy done. Sayin' he left you
dead in them badlands all just to
please them Indians. I known he was
lying' too.

REDBEARD

Ol' Tom Reagan didn't kill his own
boy for the sake of no damn
Indians. Plus ain't nobody seen him
do it. Everyone just took ol' Tom's
word for it.

WILL/ JOE BEAM

Alright. You figured it out. Good
for you. So what then, you been
following me like some little
female admirer?

Redbeard is cringing from the pain.

REDBEARD

I ain't here to suck your cock, Joe
Beam. I'm a hunter same as you. I
came and found you because your
daddy's been injured by assassins
and Thunder Springs is under a new
government. Which means there ain't
no one protecting them Crow Indians
no more. Which means we could get a
posse and go get them Crow and get
ourselves rich off the reward
money. Hell, there's an accountant
right here in town, works for the
land developers. He'll pay gold and
silver coins on every dead Crow we
clear out of that river valley.
People want that valley. Good white
Christians.

Joe Beam keeps the gun pressed against Redbeard's head while
he thinks. Finally, he reholsters it.

JOE BEAM

You was there that day, huh?

RED BEARD

I was. Ol' Tom done you wrong.

WILL/ JOE BEAM

My own daddy cast me out into those
badlands. A white man shouldn't of
been able to survive out there, but
I did. I found a way. I come out of
that terrain a different man.

RED BEARD

Forget the past, Joe Beam. Tom
Reegan can't stop us now.

Joe Beam pulls his pistol rapidly and shoves it into Redbeard's mouth.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
Call me Joe Beam again and I'll
fucking kill you.

He feebly tries to nod, with the gun in his mouth.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
And this is my ride. My terms. Say
you agree now.

Again he nods. He tries to speak, but it's unintelligible. Joe Beam takes the gun out.

RED BEARD
I agree. I agree!

WILL/ JOE BEAM
Well okay then. Let's go see this
accountant friend of yours.

Joe Beam pats his new friend on the back.

INT. BROTHEL ROOM - NIGHT

Barrett's fat naked body is on top of the Prostitute who abandoned Joe Beam. They heave away in the dark.

She's buried underneath his weight. He is short of breath.

Joe Beam opens the door and walks into the room. They both jump up.

BARRETT
Will, what the hell?

He rolls off of her and covers himself up with bedsheets.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
Wake the men. I'm setting up a ride
for the Big Horn Valley. Leaves
immediately.

She gets up and grabs her clothes and backs away out of the room slowly, while Joe Beam is talking. He eyes her body up and down as she leaves, but his thoughts are somewhere else.

BARRETT
O- Okay. But Wi--

WILL/ JOE BEAM
Whoever comes on this hunt returns
one of two ways: As a corpse, or as
a rich man.

BARRETT
Shit. You're serious ain't 'cha.
This is the one.

Joe Beam nods as he takes another swig from the bottle.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
I've just met with an accountant
who now recognizes me as the soul
proprietor of this mission.

Barrett looks down Will's prosthetic arm. The knuckles are
adorned with small metal studs. And the metal studs are
covered in wet, red blood.

WILL/ JOE BEAM
Now get your shit and let's ride.

**(NOTE TO READER: FROM THIS POINT ON, JOE BEAM WILL BE
REFERRED TO AS "WILL GRADY" IN HIS CHARACTER CUES.)**

INT. BEDROOM - PREDAWN

Blue Eyes shaves his face with his stone blade, over a bowl
of hot water.

He hears horse hoof-steps outside. He looks out the window as
the Sheriff and two DEPUTIES ride up. The Sheriff calls up.

SHERIFF
Moses!

Blue Eyes glances over at Tom in his bed. He appears to be
asleep. He heads for the door.

TOM
Moses...

Blue Eyes turns around. Tom is laboring to try and sit up.

TOM
I need to talk to you, boy.

BLUE EYES
Now's not the time, Grandpa. I have
to go. And you need to rest.

TOM

They're gonna hang that man for attacking me.

BLUE EYES

Damn right. I'm off to see it done now.

TOM

But I'm a guilty man too.

Blue Eyes laughs nervously. He walks over to Tom.

BLUE EYES

You're mumbling, old man. Stop all this masochism for just a minute.

TOM

You don't know me. My past. I'm a sinner. I've sinned.

He takes Tom by the hand.

BLUE EYES

We're all sinners. Isn't that what you always taught me? "The lord God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him."

The Sheriff calls up.

SHERIFF (V.O.)

Moses! You coming or what?

BLUE EYES

Yep!

Tom starts to cough.

TOM

I can't keep going. Things are gonna change.

BLUE EYES

Don't even talk like that, Grandpa. You have to keep going. Thunder Springs needs its mayor. The Crow Nation needs our greatest ally.

Tom in his weak state closes his eyes again. Blue Eyes lets his hand go. He heads to the door.

EXT. REEGAN HOUSE - SAME

Blue Eyes mounts his horse and joins the Sheriff and Deputies.

SHERIFF

This prisoner is liable to say all kinds of foulmouthed things about you and Tom on his ride to the gallows. Don't let him get in your head.

BLUE EYES

His words are fleeting. His hanging today, that's for keeps.

They ride off. Dawn's light is just rising above the hills.

INT. CELL ROW - DAWN

Blue Eyes and The Sheriff approach the Treasurer in his cell.

SHERIFF

On your feet.

Blue Eyes brandishes a pair of iron cuffs.

BLUE EYES

I'm coming in there to put these on you. So grab hold of the bars and don't move.

TREASURER

Sheriff, I demand a human escort, not this filthy half-breed.

Blue Eyes draws his gun.

BLUE EYES

You can choose a bullet instead of the noose. But that's the only choice you have left.

The Treasurer grabs hold of the bars. Blue Eyes reaches through and puts the cuffs on him. They unlock his cell door and slide it open.

EXT. SHERIFF'S SATION - DAWN

Blue Eyes, The Sheriff and two DEPUTIES escort the treasurer on horses, rifles aimed.

TREASURER

That the future you want, Sheriff?
Huh? World run by Injuns and
niggers of all sorts?

SHERIFF

Shut your mouth...

The Sheriff prods him in the back of the head with his rifle.

SHERIFF

...Or you can do this death-march
with a gag in.

EXT. PLAINS - SAME

A Crow HUNTING PARTY ride quietly, single file. Up front are
Sparrow Bird and Broken Horn.

BROKEN HORN

First winter hunt without your Blue
Eyed boyfriend. How does it feel?
Are you lonely?

SPARROW BIRD

Fuck yourself.

They reach a plateau. She raises her hand up. The Hunters
stop. She rides ahead.

SPARROW BIRD

The Bison will be just over this...

A look of shock comes across her face.

SPARROW BIRD

...edge.

She stops.

She dismounts and runs to the edge, drawing her bow and
arrow.

SPARROW BIRD

Oh no no!

We PULL UP.

In the valley below are forty freshly killed bison.

Broken Horn catches up to her. His face clenches with rage.

BROKEN HORN

The Blackfeet did this. They're trying to starve us out.

Sparrow Bird squints for a better look.

SPARROW BIRD

No. We would see their arrows and spear-tips. This was somebody else.

EXT. RIVERBANK/ VILLAGE - DAWN

Leotie leads a group of YOUNG CHILDREN who are carrying pails of water from the river to the village.

The Children yelp and gossip and make a ruckus. She hears a faint rumbling and stops in her tracks.

LEOTIE

Shhh. Quiet.

She looks out to the hills as the RUMBLING SOUND gets closer and louder.

The sound is clear now: It is the gallop of horses and the voices of crazy men.

She turns to the children.

LEOTIE

You have to hide.

She drops her water buckets.

LEOTIE

Right now!

She runs toward the village's cluster of tents, where the embers of last night's fire-pits still burn.

The Villagers are beginning to run around in panic. Leotie calls out to anyone within earshot.

LEOTIE

It's a raid. Get the children safe.
Arm yourselves!

The BOUNTY HUNTERS are already entering the village on the opposite side. They are lighting Tee-Pees ON FIRE.

KA-BOOM!-- There's a big explosion. Then another. Bits of debris and human beings go flying -- These raiders are blowing the village apart by tossing STICKS OF DYNAMITE.

The men cackle and howl like animals as they wreak this havoc.

Leotie runs into the Chief's tent.

INT. CHIEF'S TENT

Many-Quills and Itchuúa are scurrying out of bed.

LEOTIE
It's an attack!

She grabs a rifle. The Chief grabs his bow and arrow.

MANY-QUILLS
(to Itchuúa)
Get yourself to safety.

EXT. VILLAGE

They emerge from the tent and see...

The Bandits tearing through the village.

Women and children run in all directions, scrambling for safety.

Bandits are SHOOTING villagers indiscriminately. Others continue blowing up teepees with their homemade explosives.

MANY-QUILLS
(Top of his lungs)
Defend this village!

Leotie takes a knee and blasts a man off of the back of his horse.

She works the rifle's bolt and then BLASTS another Bandit.

Other Villagers start to pick up weapons and fight back, but the Bandits' killing spree rages on.

Many-Quills stands and shoots with his bow - and now we see how he earned his name. He launches one arrow after another so rapidly they stick into his enemies like the defensive spikes of a porcupine.

Through the smoke and the fire comes Will Grady. Shooting Villagers with his Rifle as he walks toward Many-Quills.

He fires the rifle one-handed, spin-cocking in between each shot.

Many-Quills sends an arrow Will's way, but Will side-steps it.

A YOUNG CROW MAN with a knife jumps in Will's path and Will swats him away with his false arm, the steel knuckles knocking him down.

Will tosses his empty rifle aside and draws his peacemaker.

BANG! BANG! BANG!-- He shoots the Chief in the chest.

Leotie sees this happen.

She screams out.

EXT. RIVERBANK

The five YOUNG CHILDREN run through thick foliage, panicked, ducking beneath the limbs of the short trees.

Nearby bandits chase them, snapping twigs and breaking tree branches as they go.

The Children reach a fallen tree trunk covered by foliage and dive for cover.

They breath heavily. The oldest, a girl named TWO MOONS, (12), shushes the others.

Then...

Heavy boots crunch the gravel inches away from them.

Barrett peels back a tree branch and now he's looking right at them.

He grins as he kneels down.

BARRETT
I got younguns!

Behind him is a wagon driven by THE ACCOUNTANT. The Accountant walks over and takes a look.

ACCOUNTANT
Healthy looking bunch. We can sell them. Someone can break them and tame them and then they'll make fine slaves.

EXT. VILLAGE

Leotie fires at Will Grady, but he lifts his prosthetic arm in time to stop the bullet that was meant for his face.

He shoots back, blasting her arm with a shot that tears straight through the bone.

She runs and hides behind a teepee. Her rifle is empty. Her arm is gushing blood.

WILL

...Walks toward the teepee, taking his time.

He sees a few drops of blood on the ground. He aims at the side of the teepee. He lowers his aim to waist-height.

BANG!-- He fires through the teepee. She falls out from her hiding place. Gut-shot, she collapses to the ground.

She grits her teeth in pain. Her breath is heavy and shallow as Will approaches her.

He looks into the eyes of the woman he once savagely raped. A smile of recognition comes across his face.

WILL GRADY

You!

There is a look of shock on her face. She believed this man dead.

WILL GRADY

You're the one who ruined
everything for me!

He aims his gun down at her, point blank.

She stops struggling.

She smiles up at him. The smile drops from his face. He's taken aback. For a moment he is confused by her calm, content demeanor.

LEOTIE

(in English)

Our son will come for you.

This enrages Will.

BLAM! BLAM!-- He fires down twice.

He hears war cries and turns around.

Sparrow Bird, Broken Horn and the hunting party are now charging on horseback into the village and killing bandits right and left.

WILL GRADY

Okay, that's enough for today!

He starts running. Other Bandits follow him.

He hoists himself onto the back of another bandit's horse.

He draws another pistol and fires behind himself as they ride away.

HIS POV

The village is burning as the unlucky stragglers of his crew fight it out with the Crow Warriors.

BROKEN HORN

Sees the bandits escaping. He's about to give chase.

SPARROW BIRD

Stay here and defend the village!

He turns around and fires at a nearby bandit.

The Warriors surround the remaining bandits and start pulling them off their horses and jabbing them with lances.

They show no mercy, killing every last one of the intruders.

WILL GRADY

...and the other escapees pass a corral on their way out. Will throws one last hand-held explosive which blows the corral and the horses in it to smithereens.

WILL GRADY

Okay. Keep moving! Let's go.

EXT. MAIN STREET, THUNDER SPRINGS

The four Lawmen escort the Treasurer toward the town square, where a gallows has been erected.

Blue Eyes looks out to the hills. He's the first to see...

BILLOWS OF THICK BLACK SMOKE coming over the peaks.

BLUE EYES
Sheriff.

The Sheriff looks. His face drops. They stop in their tracks.

TREASURER
Why'd you stop? Wh--

Now the Treasurer and the Deputies see it too. The Treasurer gets a look of glee on his face.

TREASURER
Well look at that. Say, isn't that
the direction of the Crow camp?

Blue Eyes is fixated on the smoke.

BLUE EYES
Sheriff!

SHERIFF
Son, take it easy.

TREASURER
Ha ha! I guess word is out Tom's
too weak to protect his Injuns
anymore. Fellas, I go to the
gallows with a smile on my fa--

BLAM!-- Blue Eyes has his pistol out and has just shot the Treasurer in the face. No passion in the act, just tying up a loose end.

The Sheriff and The Deputies are stunned as the dead Treasurer plummets from his horse.

Blue Eyes looks back at the horizon.

BLUE EYES
No... NO!

He takes off for the hills, making his horse charge like a freight train.

EXT. ROLLING HILLS - LATER

Blue Eyes charges as fast as his horse will carry him through the fresh snow. He comes upon...

The dead bison.

Tears fill the boy's eyes as he gallops ever faster, knowing further horrors await him.

EXT. MAIN STREET

The Sheriff has his eyes on the horizon as the Deputies try to pick up the dead Treasurer.

DEPUTY
Sheriff. What do we do, sir? I
uh...

SHERIFF
God damn this. Can you clean this
up?

DEPUTY
Well sir--

SHERIFF
Can you deal with this situation or
not, son?

DEPUTY
Yes sir.

SHERIFF
I'll be back. You're in charge. You
tell my wife what's happened here.

The Sheriff leads his horse away with a gallop.

DEPUTY
O--okay.

EXT. CROW VILLAGE CENTER - DAY

Blue Eyes' horse charges across the river, up to its neck in water.

He comes up on the other side.

The Bodies on the ground and the burned tents are now in plain view. The fires still burn high.

Villagers run to-and-fro, dealing with the wounded.

Blue Eyes' SISTER runs to him and hugs him and squeezes crushingly and screams out.

SISTER

They took our children! Oh god, my
children.

Blue Eyes hugs onto her as he continues to look around. He sees the dead body of The Chief. He's dizzied by the sight of it all.

He breaks free of her embrace and runs.

BLUE EYES

Oh god, No!

He leans down over the Chief's body. The Chief wears the same stoic expression in death that he did in life. Unflappable.

Blue Eyes looks up. Women are coming out of one of the tents that still stands.

He runs over. His sister runs to intercept him.

SISTER

Blue Eyes, no. Don't go in there.
Don't--

In a trance, he pushes past her as he gets close to the tent where he sees Leotie's body at rest.

BLUE EYES

No.

A woman who is leaning over Leotie stands up and goes to the entrance. He pushes past her too.

He enters the tent.

EXT. TENT

Blue Eyes' cry rings out - A most guttural and unholy sound that the whole village hears.

EXT. HILLS

The Sheriff now comes upon the dead bison.

SHERIFF

Oh for Christ's sake.

He lights up a cigar and takes a deep drag. He continues on.

INT. TENT

Blue Eyes covers Leotie with a buffalo blanket.

He looks outside and sees Broken Horn, still covered in warpaint and blood, walking towards the tent.

Blue Eyes stands up and goes outside.

EXT. VILLAGE CENTER

Broken Horn points at Blue Eyes as he marches toward him.
(They speak in subtitled Crow.)

BROKEN HORN
Where were YOU?

Blue Eyes walks away from Broken Horn, still looking at all the carnage.

Broken Horn gives him a shove from behind.

BROKEN HORN
Eh?

Blue Eyes stumbles. He turns around.

BROKEN HORN
Well?

He lands a massive punch right on Blue Eyes' jaw.

Blue Eyes just stares at Broken Horn and wipes his bloody lip.

He turns away again. There is a crowd gathering now.

BROKEN HORN
I'll tell you where he was. He was
with his white family while white
men were killing our people.

He grabs Blue Eyes by the shirt and decks him again. Blue Eyes hangs in his grasp, bloody and smiling, his body limp as he accepts his punishment.

Sparrow Bird pulls them apart.

SPARROW BIRD
Enough!

Blue Eyes' Sister runs up again.

SISTER

Stop!

She slaps Broken Horn across the face. She shakes Blue Eyes.

SISTER

Get our children back.

He finally looks her in the eyes.

BLUE EYES

Children?

Broken Horn has his back to them. He addresses the gathered crowd.

BROKEN HORN

Tonight we ride for Thunder
Springs. We will run raids every
night. We will burn the white man
in his houses and his wagons. Until
he fears our people above all else.
Until our painted faces stalk him
even in his dreams. And then no
white man will ever hurt our Crow
Nation ever again.

Cheering from the crowd. Some raise their weapons in the air.

BLUE EYES

No!

Broken Horn turns to him.

BLUE EYES

Are you stupid?

Broken Horn tackles him and they fall to the ground,
wrestling.

BLUE EYES

We lost today. We must keep this
village safe. Seeking revenge would
only make us weaker.

Broken Horn has him pinned, winding back to punch him again.
Blue Eyes grabs his hand.

BLUE EYES

Use your head. There could be
another attack tonight. Or any
time.

Broken Horn wrangles his hand free again.

He grabs Blue Eyes by his head and sticks his thumbs into his eyes. He starts pressing down.

SPARROW BIRD

No!

SISTER

You'll kill him!

Blue Eyes grunts in pain. And then...

He flips Broken Horn over and lands a BIG PUNCH on his face. Then another one. And another.

BLUE EYES

Stop! Listen to me.

He gets up and moves away from Broken Horn. He picks his hat up off the ground.

CROWD MEMBER

We should move away. We're not safe here anymore.

BLUE EYES

No. We shouldn't run either. You all fought well. You defended our village and saved so many lives.

BROKEN HORN

Don't let him kiss your ass.

BLUE EYES

If we want to send a message, then we must hunt these men, the ones who actually attacked our people.

CROWD MEMBER

Who are your people, Blue Eyes?

BLUE EYES

If we go on killing at random, that is a losing battle. We don't have the manpower. Let's protect what we have left. And let's bring these men to justice.

Broken Horn wipes his bleeding nose. Listening now. The others are listening too.

BLUE EYES

So? What do we know about these men?

EXT. VILLAGE OUTSKIRTS - MOMENTS LATER

Blue Eyes, Sparrow Bird and a few other villagers drag the dead bodies of the bounty hunters into an open clearing. Blue Eyes and Sparrow Bird lean down and start inspecting the dead mens' clothing and pockets.

SPARROW BIRD
(in Crow; subtitled)
Mercenaries. Were they from Thunder
Springs? Don't lie Blue Eyes.

Blue Eyes nods. He is fighting to keep his composure. He pulls an explosive- a black, powdery cake from a satchel. He sifts the black residue between his fingers.

BLUE EYES
Black Powder.

He scans around, looking at the scorched black craters scattered around the village.

BLUE EYES
(in Crow; subtitled)
They used this on us?

He is trembling with anger.

BLUE EYES
They use this stuff for the
railroads. To clear the way for the
train tracks. Which way did you say
these men went?

She points.

SPARROW BIRD
Toward the Badlands.

Blue Eyes takes this in.

BLUE EYES
There's a town on the other side of
the ridge called Big Timber. A
railroad town. It was once a
logging place. Now it's a haven for
professional killers. They could
take the children there and sell
them off as slaves.

SPARROW BIRD
You know just how white men think,
don't you?

He looks at her in the eyes. He wants to retaliate, but he lets it go.

BLUE EYES
It's not too late to catch them.

EXT. VILLAGE CENTER

Blue Eyes walks toward the village where Broken Horn and the other Warriors are assembling with weapons and horses, getting ready to ride out.

BLUE EYES
Stop. Just hear me out.

They ignore him. He gets up onto his horse and rides STRAIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE of their huddle, splitting their crowd up.

The villagers watch.

BLUE EYES
Listen! If we attack Thunder Springs tonight we will start a war we can't possibly win. Our people will lose more than we already lost here today. These bandits are taking our children to the city of Big Timber, where they will be sold off as slaves. Tonight I will ride after them.

He's got their attention. He rides his horse up and down, back and forth as he speaks.

BROKEN HORN
We don't want your white man's justice.

BLUE EYES
Justice is justice. It's that simple. Give me five days. Keep peace for that long and I will return with prisoners.

He looks at his Sister.

BLUE EYES
And our children. Five days, that's all I ask.

SISTER
How will you catch them, with the head start they have?

BLUE EYES

Big Timber is five days ride over
the mountain pass, but it's only
two days if you go straight North.

Broken Horn laughs.

BROKEN HORN

That's through the Badlands. If you
don't freeze to death, the
Blackfeet will scalp your fool head
off.

BLUE EYES

Nevertheless, I'm going. Peace is
our tribe's only path to survival.
Give me five days to get justice.
If I don't return by then, go
ahead, start your raids, get your
bloody revenge.

The people are quiet.

BLUE EYES

I ride tonight. I won't sleep. I
won't eat. I will carry nothing but
water and weapons and I won't stop
until I reach Big Timber. Now...
who will ride with me?

The people are VERY quiet. Blue eyes looks at Broken Horn.

BLUE EYES

Come with me. I need the best
warrior we have.

Broken Horn looks down.

BLUE EYES

I need a scout too. Will you ride
with me Sparrow Bird?

She looks away. She says nothing.

BLUE EYES

No one, then?

More silence.

BLUE EYES

Then who needs you! I'll go alone.
Do I have my five days or not?

Broken Horn looks at Blue Eyes' Sister, at the other Warriors, at Sparrow Bird. Finally, he nods affirmative.

BLUE EYES
Alright, then. Five days.

He turns his horse around and rides away. Night is falling and snow fills the sky.

EXT. PLAINS - DUSK

Blue Eyes traverses the plains on his horse. The sharp, foreboding peaks of the Badlands draw near.

We hear the CLATTER OF HOOVES coming up behind him.

He turns and sees a distant figure approaching on horseback.

SHERIFF
(top of his lungs)
Son! Hold on a second.

The Sheriff calls again. Blue Eyes puts his finger to his mouth: 'Shhh'

The Sheriff catches up. Blue Eyes nods toward the Badlands.

BLUE EYES
Ears everywhere.

The Sheriff nods.

SHERIFF
I'll ride with you. I seen what happened. I watched it all from a safe distance.

BLUE EYES
It's not your fight, Sheriff. Go home.

Blue Eyes starts to trot ahead. The Sheriff follows.

SHERIFF
Son. If catching these outlaws keeps Thunder Springs out of an Indian war, then I figure it is my fight, and Tom's fight as well.

BLUE EYES
I'm not stopping. I won't eat. I won't sleep until I capture my mother's killer.

The Sheriff sees tears running down Blue Eyes' cheeks.

SHERIFF

That's fair son. I'll try my best
to keep up.

EXT. FOOTHILLS - NIGHT

Fresh snow coats the brims of their hats and their shoulders
and the backs of their horses.

A loud WAR CRY comes from behind them. They both look back
down the trail.

Two INDIANS approach on horseback.

The Sheriff pulls his rifle. Blue Eyes gently pushes the
rifle barrel down.

BLUE EYES

Not Blackfeet. They're Crow.

EXT. FOOTHILLS - MOMENTS LATER

Blue Eyes and the Sheriff ride back down to intercept the two
Crow on horseback: Sparrow Bird and Broken Horn.

SPARROW BIRD

Let's get our children back.

BLUE EYES

Thank you. Now both of you shut up
or we'll be scalped before we even
reach the mountains.

Broken Horn stares daggers at The Sheriff.

BLUE EYES

He's with us, Broken Horn.
Understand?

Broken Horn keeps his eyes on The Sheriff.

BROKEN HORN

As you wish... Fearless leader.

He spits on the ground and then trots his horse up ahead.

SHERIFF

Charmer.

BROKEN HORN
I speak English. Asshole.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - NIGHT

The four Riders follow a frozen river. The mighty peaks of the Big Horn mountain range surrounding them on all sides.

SHERIFF
Should we put our badges away? They
have no bearing on this job.

Blue Eyes looks and thumbs his badge.

BLUE EYES
I see it differently, Sheriff.

BROKEN HORN
Why have you come with us?

SHERIFF
I'm thinking of my family in
Thunder Springs. They don't need
war with your people.

BROKEN HORN
Don't talk to me about family. Not
today.

Broken Horn draws his rifle and The Sheriff quickly draws his six-shooter. The two men are in a stand-off.

SHERIFF
You know. Helping you seemed like
the best choice out of a bunch of
shit options, but you're making me
reconsider, friend.

Sparrow Bird draws her bow and arrow. She aims at The Sheriff. She aims at Broken Horn. She looks at Blue Eyes, what to do?

BLUE EYES
Everyone stop. Here's how this will
work. Keep your mouths shut. If you
have something to say, say it to me
and me only.

Weapons get put away and they resume the ride, single file.

Sparrow Bird rides behind Broken Horn.

SPARROW BIRD
(in Crow; subtitled)
Save your strength. You'll need it.

BLUE EYES
I said quiet.

She does a mocking, stiff-backed impression of Blue Eyes behind his back. Broken Horn smiles a little.

We see a WIDE SHOT, looking down on the Riders from a high-up cliff.

A BLACK MOCCASIN steps into frame at the cliff's edge.

CLOSE ON: a pair of eyes in the dark, then...

A Blackfeet HIGH-MOUNTAIN WARRIOR steps out of the darkness and watches the travelers pass.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAWN

Making good on the plan, the Riders have kept going straight through the night, still following the river.

They have climbed higher, and are surrounded on all sides by blinding, white snow.

The Sheriff looks baggy-eyed. The young warriors still look fresh.

BLUE EYES
You know of this one-armed man?

SHERIFF
I've heard things. Name's Will Grady. Never met him. Supposed to be a mean, mean fucker.

He lights a cigar and smiles.

SHERIFF
Still. Bullets'll work on him just as well as they work for him.

BLUE EYES
That would be letting him off too easy. I'll see my mother's killer tried and hanged for what he's done.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

The Riders are side-by-side now.

Broken Horn takes a gulp of water from a skin.

The Sheriff takes a long pull from a flask. Broken Horn looks at him.

He offers the flask to Broken Horn.

Broken Horn ignores him.

Blue Eyes reaches out and The Sheriff tosses him the flask. He guzzles brown whisky from it.

He sighs. Satisfied.

Sparrow Bird puts her hand out.

Blue Eyes throws her the flask. She takes a big pull and then wipes her mouth off and belches.

Blue Eyes smiles at her.

She hands the flask back to The Sheriff.

Broken Horn looks at The Sheriff and holds out his hand.

The Sheriff ignores him.

SHERIFF

Makes you feel all warm inside,
doesn't it, Moses?

BLUE EYES

Indeed it does.

SHERIFF

What do ya say, should I give this
charmer a sip?

BLUE EYES

It's not for me to say, Sheriff.

Broken Horn looks vexed.

Finally, The Sheriff hands the flask to him.

SHERIFF

I'm just kid--

Broken Horn tilts his head back and drains the flask into his mouth.

SHERIFF

Hey! Give that back--

BLUE EYES

No talking to each other.

Broken Horn tilts the empty flask upside down and then hands it back to The Sheriff.

The Sheriff shakes his head. Broken Horn burps loudly and rides up ahead.

WOODS POV

Someone in the woods watches The Riders pass by, taking note of their myriad rifles, blades, bows and other weapons.

EXT. WOODS

More High Mountain Warriors have gathered, hiding as the Riders pass by.

EXT. OPEN VALLEY - NOON

The sun is beating down on the Riders. The horses are slowing down. Now Everyone looks tired.

The Sheriff keeps blinking, his eyes heavy-lidded.

Blue Eyes squints at the blinding, snow-covered horizon.

HIS POV

Way off in the distance a WHITE MAN is stumbling, wearing long underwear and clutching his right arm in pain.

The man's arm is bloody.

ON BLUE EYES

He leans forward. He blinks, not believing what he's seeing.

BLUE EYES' POV

The man is gone.

SPARROW BIRD

Do you see something?

ON BLUE EYES

Coming out of it.

BLUE EYES

No. I guess not.

SPARROW BIRD

It's time to rest, Blue Eyes.

He looks straight at her.

BLUE EYES

No chance.

SPARROW BIRD

Come on. The horses need it.

Blue Eyes thinks on it. He pulls on the reigns.

BLUE EYES

We'll let the horses rest.

The Riders come to a stop and dismount and the horses drink from the stream.

The Sheriff sits down by the edge of the stream and leans against a tree.

Blue Eyes casts him a glance.

SHERIFF

Oh what? I'm restin' my horse, like you said.

Broken Horn follows suit, sitting against a nearby tree. Sparrow Bird shrugs, and then she does the same.

Blue Eyes opens his mouth, about to speak. He thinks better of it, and sits down on the ground.

SHERIFF

That's better.

The Sheriff eases back into his seated position and pulls his hat down over his eyes.

DUSK

The Riders are back at it, climbing up through the tough terrain.

Up ahead is a narrow mountain pass with craggy, steep hills on either side.

At the entrance of the pass there is a man-made scaffolding of some kind.

As the Riders draw nearer they see more of these tall wooden structures jutting up from the ground amongst the trees and the rocks and the snow.

The structures have blankets and fur hides and other sorts of decorations hanging on them.

As they get even closer, they see that between the scaffolds, are flat planks of wood carrying HUMAN BONES and rotting HUMAN REMAINS.

BLUE EYES

Stop.

The Riders stop and look at him.

BLUE EYES

Blackfeet burial site. This is hallowed land. If we ride through, we'll be marked for death.

SPARROW BIRD

The fastest way around would set us back two days.

SHERIFF

How badly do you want this Grady?

BROKEN HORN

How badly would you want your children back? Blue Eyes, what are you waiting for? Let's keep going.

SHERIFF

Didn't you just hear him say marked for death? Did that not leave an impression on you, boy?

BROKEN HORN

He's a coward. Don't let this white man lead you astray. For him, this is a bit of sport. For us it's everything.

SHERIFF

I am up here in these mountains to avoid a war.

SHERIFF

Now you want to start a different war with these Blackfeet? Then you're a fucking idiot.

Broken Horn pulls his rifle, ready to ride through.

BROKEN HORN

I only care about Crow blood. That's all that matters to me.

BLUE EYES

Stop!

SPARROW BIRD

What is it going to be?

BLUE EYES

We ride through. I don't like it either, Sheriff. But it's the only way to get there in time. If you want to turn around, you do so with my understanding and my gratitude.

The Sheriff spits his dip.

SHERIFF

In for a penny, in for a pound. Let's ride. Keep your dog on a leash though, will you?

BLUE EYES

Put it away, Broken Horn. We want peace today.

Broken Horn reholsters the Henry rifle.

SPARROW BIRD

Fast or slow?

SHERIFF

Eh?

SPARROW BIRD

We can charge through fast, which would be loud, or we can go through quietly and take forever.

BLUE EYES

We go slow. We don't step anywhere we shouldn't. Don't touch anything. Everyone understand?

BROKEN HORN
Let's go already.

The Riders go single file again as they pass the first scaffolding and enter the narrow mountain pass.

SHERIFF'S POV

At his eye-level he sees a rotting corpse, half covered by a blanket. The flesh peeling away. The bulging eyes staring out at him.

ON THE SHERIFF

He turns away, horrified. He mumbles a prayer to himself.

They weave in between more of these structures as they go. Some bodies are on wooden scaffolding, others rest on buffalo hides, suspended between the trees.

Some of the bodies are fresh. Others are ancient.

BROKEN HORN
The way it looks. It's not so
different from a Crow gravesite.

Offerings have been placed on the graves: gems, rocks and animal bones.

BLUE EYES
No. It's the same, really.

BLUE EYES' POV

He sees two bare feet sticking out from behind a grave. As he draws close he sees...

It's the WHITE MAN in long underwear again, sitting on the ground, hiding behind a grave structure. We recognize him to be a young Joe Beam Reagan, but Blue eyes does not.

Joe Beam has a big stone ax taken from one of the graves.

He bites down on a piece of wood and begins to hack into his own rotting arm, performing an amputation on himself.

ON BLUE EYES

He blinks again and the vision is gone. Sparrow Bird looks at him inquisitively.

SPARROW BIRD

What do you keep seeing, Blue Eyes?

BLUE EYES

I don't really know. I can't wait
to get out of here, though.

EXT. VALLEY - SAME

The Riders finally pass the last grave. The valley has funneled into a narrow gully with steep, craggy walls on either side.

Behind them: silent, shadowy figures draw near, weaving between the graves.

Then...

A WARCRY rings out as...

Three High-Mountain Warriors spring out from below them and attack with steel blades.

A warrior slashes Sparrow Bird's left shoulder. She goes for her pistol and shoots him.

BLUE EYES

BLACKFEET!

Two Warriors try to pull Blue Eyes down from his horse, but he clubs them both with the butt of his rifle.

BLUE EYES

MOVE!

The Riders take off galloping down the gully.

They flee single-file. The sheriff is in the rear.

SHHHH-WOOP!-- An arrow pierces The Sheriff's ribs.

The Sheriff is about to keel over. Broken Horn gets beside him and holds him upright.

SHHHH-WOOP! SHHHH-WOOP!-- More arrows bounce off the walls of the valley.

Blue Eyes turns his horse around. Eight more Blackfeet are behind them, charging on foot.

BLUE EYES

Keep moving!

He halts and fires his rifle, giving the others a chance to get ahead.

He aims for the two Archers.

BLAM!-- An archer gets blasted in the arm.

Blue Eyes ejects a cartridge.

He shoots the other archer in the shoulder.

He turns his horse around and rides to catch up with the others.

SHHHH-WOOP!-- An arrow pierces the back buttock of Broken Horn's horse. The animal bucks in pain and then stumbles.

Blue Eyes sidles up next to him. (They speak in subtitled Crow.)

BLUE EYES

Get on mine.

He shakes his head 'no'.

BROKEN HORN

Too heavy.

Up ahead, The Sheriff and Sparrow Bird look back to see what's keeping the other two.

The Sheriff levels his rifle, but can't he see past Broken Horn and Blue Eyes.

Sparrow Bird draws her bow and aims high. She fires an arrow arcing over their heads. It lands and pierces a Warrior straight through the chest.

BLUE EYES

I'm War Chief. Now get on the back of this horse!

BROKEN HORN

(laughing)

You're War Chief? Says who?

Broken Horn turns his horse around, facing the enemy.

BLUE EYES

Don't!

BROKEN HORN

Just get those kids back.

Broken Horn charges straight back toward the Blackfeet. Blue Eyes covers him, blasting the Archers with his rifle.

At least twelve Warriors are in view now, sprinting straight toward Broken Horn, singing their war-cry.

BLACKFEET WARRIOR

Get him! Don't hurt the horse!

BROKEN HORN

You want my horse? Well you can't have her.

He stops at a very narrow, rocky passage in the Gully.

We're close on Broken Horn. Arrows are whizzing by his head.

BROKEN HORN

Sorry girl.

He draws his blade and plunges it downward.

From behind, we see his horse tumble over backwards, stabbed through the head.

He jumps backward as the horse's massive body falls into position, blocking the narrow passage.

He ducks behind the horse's body.

He draws his two Henry repeating rifles, one in each hand.

Then...

He stands up blasting with both rifles, spin-cocking one while firing with the other, seamlessly alternating between the two guns.

At a speed nearing that of automatic fire, he blasts one approaching warrior after another.

BLUE EYES

Looks on in horror. He fires his rifle, to give cover.

SPARROW BIRD

Blue Eyes. We've got to keep going!

SHERIFF

Come on, Son!

He doesn't hear the others calling to him. The Sheriff rides back and grabs him by the shoulder.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
 He's buying us time son. Now let's
 use it.

Blue Eyes turns around and rides on.

ON BROKEN HORN

Out of bullets, he tosses his guns aside.

The Blackfeet are on top of him now.

He leaps up onto his horse's corpse and draws a pair of
 tomahawks.

Now he goes hand to hand, slashing and swiping his enemies
 until finally the mob overtakes him.

A Warrior clubs him in the face. We CUT on the spray of blood
 and the sound of snapping of bone.

UP AHEAD

The Riders are going full speed.

Blue Eyes turns around. He raises up his war-shield.

SHHHH-WOOP! SHHHH-WOOP!-- Two arrows pierce straight through
 the shield, stopping inches from his face.

SPARROW BIRD
 We need high ground.

BLUE EYES
 We'll climb the horses up.

The Sheriff looks down at his wound, the blood saturating his
 shirt.

SHERIFF
 Ain't happening. Leave me.

Blue Eyes looks at Sparrow bird. She nods.

BLUE EYES
 We'll hold you up.

They each grab a hold of one of the Sheriff's shoulders.

BLUE EYES
 On three. One...

Blue Eyes looks back. Warriors gaining on them.

BLUE EYES

Two...

He and Sparrow Bird looking at each other as if to say 'Are we going to pull this off?'

Then..

BLUE EYES

THREE!

They command their horses straight up the edge of the gully, holding the Sheriff from tipping over.

BLUE EYES

Make that horse go, Sheriff!

SHERIFF

Ki-Yah!

The Sheriff pulls on the reins and digs in with his spurs.

The horses reach the top of the incline. Almost vertical. About to topple over backwards.

Blue Eyes grabs his reins and The Sheriff's, and heaves with all his might.

He groans out loud in the effort.

Sparrow bird kicks her horse hard in the ribs.

SPARROW BIRD

Move you lazy bastard!

At last, they reach the top of the escarpment.

The Sheriff heaves in pain as he looks down at the arrow still sticking out of him.

He speaks in short, shallow bursts.

SHERIFF

Don't that beat all? You had to go start a war with these Blackfeet just to keep peace back home.

The Sheriff laughs. Which causes him to cry in pain.

SHERIFF

Welcome to leadership, son. Ol' Tom Reagan would understand this.

The Sheriff pats Blue Eyes on the shoulder.

The Warriors are running towards them through the gully.
Including several archers.

SPARROW BIRD

They keep calling and more keep
coming.

BLUE EYES

Same as we would do.

Blue Eyes walks closer to the ledge.

He fires two warning shots at the ground in front of the
approaching warriors.

They stop in their tracks.

He calls out.

BLUE EYES

Listen to me, please. I am the
grandson of Crow Chief Many-Quills.
We have no argument with you today,
and we meant no disrespect to your
hallowed land.

EXT. DOWN IN THE VALLEY - VARIOUS SHOTS

Warriors are listening, looking up at Blue Eyes, who holds
his rifle over his head and away from his body, as a non-
threatening gesture.

BLUE EYES

We give you our horses as a peace
offering. We only wish to pass
through here. We mean no act of
war.

We see Warriors gesturing to each with hand signals, Warriors
creeping into hidden positions.

BLUE EYES (O.C.)

It is a wicked white man who we
pursue. A bandit with only one arm
and absolutely no heart. A man who
kills Indians for money.

Two different Warriors have taken possession of Broken Horn's
twin rifles. They load them with bullets from his ammo belt.

One YOUNG WARRIOR takes off running back down the gully, retreating to somewhere.

UP ON THE LEDGE

Blue Eyes continues...

BLUE EYES

This man doesn't care who is Crow or Blackfeet or Sioux or any other kind. So perhaps today we shouldn't care either.

A Warrior has reached the top of the ledge. He pops up with Broken Horn's rifle.

SPARROW BIRD

BLUE EYES!

She slings out her bow and arrow in a single, windmill-like motion, and launches an arrow into the Warrior.

He cries out as he falls back down into the gully.

BLUE EYES

Please listen! We're just trying to pass through!

The other rifle-carrying Warrior appears, and Blue Eyes levels his rifle at him. He shakes his head 'no'.

Figures are now moving in the trees behind them.

SHERIFF

They ain't listening to a word!
They're using the time to surround us.

The three of them now form a circle, back to back, protecting from all sides.

Two archers creep through the woods behind them. The Sheriff turns fast and blasts them both.

BLUE EYES

Let's ride. Shoot anything that moves.

They giddy-up their horses and take off. The Blackfeet give chase again.

The Sheriff and Sparrow Bird ride ahead, weapons at the ready.

Blue eyes is in the rear. Firing back with his rifle, to slow the Blackfeet down.

UP AHEAD

A steep trail leads up the side of a mountain. The gully leads down into a vast valley below.

They choose to head up. Warriors leap out in front of them, blocking the trail.

Sparrow bird launches an arrow. The Sheriff fires his rifle. The Warriors dive out of the way.

The Riders go single file, as they escape up the narrow pass. The drop below them is at least a mile down.

The Sheriff almost topples off his horse.

Blue Eyes reaches out and stops his fall. He rights the sheriff on his horse yet again.

The Warriors watch as the riders disappear up the trail. A few arrows are launched, but nothing hits as Blue Eyes and the riders disappear around a bend.

INT. CAVE - DAWN

The Sheriff sleeps on the ground, bleeding into a bandage made of his own clothing. Blue Eyes inspects the wound.

Sparrow Bird sits with her back against the wall. Blue Eyes walks over and sits down next to her. He lights up cigarette. (They speak in subtitled Crow.)

SPARROW BIRD

If we climb down before sunrise, we
might get away from the Blackfeet
and still make Big Timber on time.

He takes a hit off of the cigarette and passes it to her.

BLUE EYES

We'll give him a little more time
to rally. But soon we must carry
on, with or without him.

He pauses, takes a deep breath.

BLUE EYES

Did you know today is my
seventeenth birthday?

She shakes her head 'no'.

BLUE EYES

Seventeen years of peace, because of me. And now it's all going to shit.

SPARROW BIRD

Poor old Blue Eyes. Thinks he was born to carry the world on his shoulders.

BLUE EYES

If I can't keep peace, who can?

SPARROW BIRD

You ever think maybe nobody can? That these things are bigger than just one person? Look at all the blood that has spilled in spite of your best efforts.

She hands the cigarette back to him.

BLUE EYES

Thanks. That's very encouraging.

She elbows him playfully.

SPARROW BIRD

We will carry on. I'm with you until the end. I believe in your courage. It inspires me. It inspires other people too.

She looks over at the sleeping Sheriff.

BLUE EYES

I feel like I'm on my own all the time. A half-blood. Unwanted. Untrusted by either side.

SPARROW BIRD

They're always going to try and tell you your place, but you don't ever have to listen. They told me over and over young women can't go on the hunt. Now I lead the fucking hunt.

He nods. He smiles at her.

BLUE EYES

When they try and shut us out it
only makes us try harder.

Something catches his eye. He stands up. He rushes over to the edge of the cave.

BLUE EYES

Look.

She comes over. Rings of smoke fill the predawn sky, coming up in patterns from the forest below.

They hear the sound of many drums pounding and voices chanting.

SPARROW BIRD

For us?

BLUE EYES

Saying... Peace... Safe passage.
They must know we're up here.

SPARROW BIRD

Is it a trick?

Blue Eyes looks at the wounded Sheriff.

BLUE EYES

I don't know. Stay with him.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAWN

Blue Eyes scales down the escarpment, alone. He moves quick, bounding down the rocky incline.

His POV: Blackfeet dancing, singing, banging on drums - Men, women and children.

He looks up where Sparrow Bird hides and peers out of the mouth of the cave. He nods 'yes'.

Then...

He cups his hands to his mouth and lets out a HOLLER.

One by one, the dancers stop. They look up and see him.

A decorated BLACKFEET CHIEF rides out from their camp in the forest and looks at Blue Eyes.

The Chief raises his left hand up flat.

Blue Eyes does the same.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

Blue Eyes and Sparrow Bird climb down the mountain.

Four Blackfeet men carry The Sheriff in a buffalo-hide stretcher.

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

The Blackfeet escort the group into their camp.

Everyone stops what they're doing, and stares at them as they approach.

Blue Eyes sees dead bodies on blankets - The casualties of last night's battle, being prepared for the afterlife.

Among them, he recognizes Broken Horn, his bludgeoned face is luckily turned away from Blue Eyes' view.

They reach a big tent in the middle of it all, and duck as the GUIDE escorts them in.

INT. TENT

The Chief sits on a buffalo blanket.

CHIEF

English?

Blue Eyes nods.

The chief motions for Blue Eyes and Sparrow Bird to sit down too.

CHIEF

It's an honor to meet you.
Understand you are my guests, and
not my prisoners.

A MAIDEN hands them warm, steaming drinks.

Blue Eyes looks around the room. Suspicious.

A beat...

The Chief bursts out laughing.

CHIEF
(barely able to talk)
Yo-- you think--

He's crying now. Holding his splitting sides.

He just keeps belly-laughing.

CHIEF
He thinks-- it's---

Snot actually launches out of his nose.

CHIEF
We've got an army of Warriors out
there and you think we'd try to
poison you!

He's laughing hard. He has very few teeth left.

He regains his composure. He tries to sip his tea, but he
just starts laughing all over again.

He settles.

CHIEF
Ahhh... Thank you for that. It's
been so tense around here, with you
killing all my men and everything.

Blue Eyes sips his tea.

BLUE EYES
What about my warrior?

CHIEF
Indeed. Very sad. I heard he fought
like ten men.

He points at Sparrow Bird.

I heard she fought like twelve. Your warrior will receive a
hero's funeral. Your white friend is receiving our best
medicine.

BLUE EYES
Why this kindness Chief, between us
old enemies?

The Chief nods toward the Young Blackfeet Warrior who ran
away down the gully during the battle.

CHIEF

He came with tales of mighty Crow Warriors on a suicide mission through our Blackfeet territory. My ears perked up. Then I heard the leader of these Crow has Blue Eyes like ice. I think, ah so it's the famous half-Crow who made peace with the white man. Him, I must meet.

The Chief's eyes narrow. We PUSH IN close.

CHIEF

Then I hear the most interesting part of the tale... This Blue Eyed Crow is looking for a bandit with only one arm.

INT. MEDICINE TENT

The Sheriff is naked as a medicine man cauterizes his wound with a steaming hot poker. The flesh sizzles.

EXT. MEDICINE TENT

The Blackfeet villagers hear The Sheriff SCREAM OUT like a dying cat.

INT. CHIEF'S TENT

BLUE EYES

Is that--

CHIEF

Your white man is being healed.

BLUE EYES

What do you know about me and this bandit?

BLUE EYES' POV

The Chief and everything else in the tent is going out of focus.

He looks down at his cup.

He looks up at Sparrow bird. She is staring around in a daze.

CHIEF

You already know the truth. You've been carrying it around your whole life. Right there in your blood.

Blue eyes and Sparrow Bird are starting to fall unconscious.

BLUE EYES

(slurring)

What are you?

He looks at his cup.

BLUE EYES

What is--

The Chief grins and shrugs.

CHIEF

This? Its to help with your vision. You are a born fighter, boy -- grandson of Tom Reegan, the Indian Killer.

BLUE EYES

N-- no. Tom is a good-- a good ma-- He's a good--

CHIEF

Is he?

EXT. PLAINS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A cavalry troop rides with a gallop as they pursue a band of mounted Indians, maybe Sioux.

The Cavalry fire their rifles, shooting the Indians in the back, sending them flying off of their horses.

CHIEF (V.O.)

Tom Reegan killed his share of Indians...

We see YOUNGER TOM REEGAN, firing his rifle repeatedly as the Indians flee.

CLOSE ON

A Warrior as Tom's bullet pierces his chest and he screams out and falls from his horse.

CHIEF (V.O.)
...Back before he picked up his
white man's bible and found his
white God.

THEN...

The surviving Indians are all rounded up as prisoners. The Cavalry aim their rifles. Tom yells the order and...

BLAM! BLAM!-- We focus on the Soldiers as they open fire.

CHIEF (V.O.)
Tom did the job they paid him to
do. They don't make someone a
colonel unless he... distinguishes
himself.

INT. CHIEF'S TENT - PRESENT

Blue Eyes and Sparrow Bird are lying down. Eyes almost closed as they listen.

CHIEF
Isn't that the funny thing. There's
only so much we can know about the
generations before us, because we
didn't see them in their day. Tom
Reegan, the god-fearing man of
peace is a late-arrival. Everyone
in your life, even your fellow
Crow, made a pact to keep you from
knowing the other Tom. Letting you
believe this lie was the price they
were willing to pay for their
truce.

BLUE EYES
You're the li-- the liar.

CHIEF
I heard a story Tom Reegan put a
bullet through his own son's head,
just to defend the honor of The
Crow Indians.

The Chief looks up at the Young Warrior.

CHIEF
Did you ever hear that one?

The Young Warrior laughs.

YOUNG WARRIOR

Yes. Yes, I heard that one too.
That's a good one.

CHIEF

Us Blackfeet know a different
story.

Blue Eyes has a look in his eyes of recognition. He already knows what's about to come next. He's seen it.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Joe Beam Reagan sits on the ground. There are two dead Blackfeet Warriors next to him.

On the ground is a blood-soaked rock he has used to bash the two Warriors in the head.

He picks up one of their steel knives.

He bites down on a leather strap. He groans and cries as he begins to AMPUTATE HIS OWN ARM.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

Joe Beam Reagan, now one-armed, wanders through the woods.

He wears the clothing stolen off one of the Warriors he killed.

His face now has the Blackfeet warpaint pattern. His disguise is convincing from a distance.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

He comes upon two horse-mounted Blackfeet Warriors. They look in his direction.

They speak to him in Blackfeet dialect as he draws closer. They` are offering him help.

He flashes them his blue eyes and then...

THWACK! THWACK!-- He kills them both with his Tomahawk.

One of the Warriors has a rifle in his saddle. Joe Beam takes the weapon and runs away from the scene.

INT. CHIEF'S TENT - PRESENT

Blue Eyes tries to sit up, but he's too woozy.

BLUE EYES
You're lying!

He tries to get up off the ground but collapses again.

CHIEF
He kept himself alive for weeks
that way. He's a survivor, your
father is. He killed many of our
Warriors. Just like you did
yesterday.

The Chief stands up.

CHIEF
Like father, like son, like father
like son, like father...

He leans over Blue Eyes.

CHIEF
And the other half of you is Crow.
So, you're no great friend of the
Blackfeet on either side, are you?
I have a question. Will you be like
them? Or will you pick your own
path? Think about it. I await your
answer.

The Chief leaves the tent. Blue Eyes and Sparrow Bird lie
sprawled out on the floor. Blue Eyes looks at her. She is
unconscious. His eyes blink and then close.

EXT. CHIEF'S TENT - LATER

Sparrow Bird looks sick and pale as she waits outside the
tent.

We can hear the sound of someone puking inside.

Blue Eyes emerges from the tent, stumbling, hunched over with
sickness.

BLUE EYES
What the hell did he give us?

The Young Blackfoot Warrior runs up in haste.

YOUNG WARRIOR
Come see your friend. Now.

INT. MEDICINE TENT

The Chief and a MEDICINE MAN are standing over The Sheriff, who is lying on the floor with blankets.

The Chief looks at Blue Eyes, concerned.

CHIEF
His wounds will claim him.

Blue Eyes leans down to The Sheriff. The Sheriff is pale and sweaty and shaking.

SHERIFF
They did what they could for me. It ain't down to them.

BLUE EYES
You can rally.

SHERIFF
I'm killed, son. You finish the job now. You and her. I got a family in Thunder Springs counting on you to keep peace.

Blue Eyes nods.

SHERIFF
Promise me!

Blue Eyes is quiet. Holding something back.

BLUE EYES
They lied to me.

SHERIFF
What? Who, boy?

BLUE EYES
Everyone. They lied about Tom. And Tom, he lied about my father. I've been kept in the dark.

SHERIFF
Oh for Christ's-- This ain't about Tom. It ain't about you either. It's bigger than you. It's about preventing a war that nobody wants.

BLUE EYES

Not nobody.

SHERIFF

Well nobody should want it, anyway.

The Sheriff looks around the tent. The Indian faces surrounding him. He starts to laugh, even though it hurts.

SHERIFF

They're gonna bury me up here like an Indian. Up in that graveyard made of sticks. Don't that just beat all.

He laughs more and then begins to cough badly.

SHERIFF

Finish this job, boy. Look at all the sacrifice it's taken to get here.

BLUE EYES

I'll finish the job. I promise.

SHERIFF

Make him keep good on that.

SPARROW BIRD

I will.

The Sheriff nods appreciatively.

SHERIFF

Son, your future is unwritten. But I see the potential for greatness in you. Now go. Let me die quietly, thinking of my wife and my girls.

Sparrow Bird walks over and puts her hand on his heart.

SPARROW BIRD

Brave. Man.

Blue Eyes and Sparrow Bird leave the tent.

EXT. MEDICINE TENT

Blue Eyes and Sparrow Bird approach The Blackfeet Chief.

BLUE EYES

I need to catch the man who has caused all this suffering, be he my father or not. I need passage, Chief. Whatever you want in exchange, let me know. You want peace, I will grant it. You want to share our hunting ground, our horses? It's done. Name your terms and I will swear a blood oath today.

CHIEF

I believe you mean what you say. You may go on your way. Go get this man. Undo the brutality that your father and his father have caused, and let our two peoples live side by side in peace.

Blue Eyes draws a blade. He cuts a line down the palm of his hand. Blood seeps out.

He hands the blade to The Chief. The Chief slices his palm with even more vigor than Blue Eyes did.

They shake hands.

BLUE EYES

Peace.

CHIEF

Peace.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Blue Eyes and Sparrow Bird ride their horses across a mountain ridge. Their saddlebags are loaded with rifles, bows, blades and shields.

There is a forested valley below them, where smoke billows up from distant, hidden chimneys.

SPARROW BIRD

Big Timber. We'll be there by sundown.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Will Grady's convoy makes its way along a mountain trail through the woods.

Men on horseback ride in front of and behind the convoy's centerpiece: a big COVERED WAGON.

We PUSH IN on the covered wagon, through the opening in back.

INSIDE THE WAGON

The Crow children are seated on benches, guarded by bounty hunters.

A BANDIT WITH SILVER BOTTOM TEETH sits with the children, a coiled bullwhip in his hand.

SILVER-TOOTHED BANDIT
We're about to be there. Now you
kiddies know what happens if you
get out of line.

A SCRUFFY BANDIT with teeth like rotten corn kernels looks at him.

SCRUFFY BANDIT
They don't know what the fuck yer
sayin'.

The Silver-Toothed Bandit raises up the whip and shows it to the kids.

SILVER-TOOTHED BANDIT
They certainly know what the fuck
this means.

The children recoil. Two Moons cringes and touches her back, where we see tender, fresh lash wounds.

The children hug each other in fear.

SILVER-TOOTHED BANDIT
That's real good. You're learnin'
who is in charge.

The Scruffy Bandit is smoking a cigarro. He pulls out a ball of black powder from a satchel and holds it in front of the kids faces. He holds his cigarro just inches from the explosive.

The children cower in fear. He smiles as he taunts them.

SCRUFFY BANDIT
Ka-boom! Haha. They sure remember
this.

The Wagon hits a bump. The cigarro almost lights the wick.

The Silver-toothed bandit grabs the cigarro away from him.

SILVER-TOOTHED BANDIT
Are you soft in the fuckin' head.
You're gonna blow us all up.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Will Grady sits up top, driving the wagon. Barrett rides next to him.

BARRETT
Accountant has us at seventy-five confirmed kills plus those five juvenile slaves... Well what I'm sayin' is, congratulations to us both. We're gonna be rich.

WILL GRADY
I keep thinking about what she said.

BARRETT
Who, Will?

WILL GRADY
That squaw. She looked me in the eye and said 'our son will be seeing you'. She said it in English too.

BARRETT
I can't believe you're dwelling on this. She was trying to get in your head, Will. Talkin' some Indian magic horse shit that don't mean nothin' in real life. 'Our son'. Come on now. You ain't got a son.

WILL GRADY
I guess you're right. Still, gave me the shivers you know? The way she said it, I mean. There I am about to kill this bitch and she's smiling like she's got something over me.

Barrett bursts out laughing.

BARRETT

You'll feel at ease when you've got
cash in hand and them there
juveniles is on a train to
California. Missionaries out there
paying good money to raise them up
as slaves, teach 'em christianity.
Will, do you think it's possible to
turn a savage into a Christian?

Will clutches the reins.

WILL GRADY

Why you askin' me? What are you
gettin' at? See if I'm goin' soft?
You wanna fuckin' try me? Huh?

BARRETT

Will, I'm just talkin--

WILL

Well you talk too god damn much.
You know that?

The convoy enters the city limits. The streets of BIG TIMBER are a muddy mess. The buildings decrepit. There are numerous saloons with prostitutes outside, beckoning passers by. These are the only women in sight. There are desperados all over, drunk, angry, they give the evil eye to any newcomers.

The convoy stops at a saloon called 'THE SIRENS' SONG'

Will and Barrett dismount. The Accountant steps down from his wagon and approaches them.

ACCOUNTANT

Mr. Grady, I'm directly off to get
your money. It'll take some time to
divide it all up. I trust you can
amuse while you await my swift
return.

A couple of prostitutes are already calling to them and blowing kisses.

WILL GRADY

We'll be fine.

ACCOUNTANT

And the children--

WILL GRADY

They stay with me. Once I see the
money you can have the juveniles.

ACCOUNTANT

Fair enough.

They shake hands.

Will's men guard the wagon on all sides as Will and Barrett enter the saloon.

INT. SIREN'S SONG

They enter through the swinging doors. The room is populated with more seedy, destitute characters. A loud and raucous place. There's a piano player in the corner banging out an uptempo shanty.

Will and Barrett get some looks as they walk up to the BARTENDER.

BARRETT

What do we drink around here?
Whisky?

BARTENDER

That's right. We got two different
kinds--

BARRETT

A round of the better kind is on
us! We're celebratin'.

There's a big holler from the locals.

WILL GRADY

You're an idiot.

Will scans the room nervously. Checking the balconies. The exits. He leans in to Portly.

WILL GRADY

We ain't in the clear yet. These
men will cut your throat out for
the kind of money coming our way.
If you don't learn to shut up--

BARRETT

Sorry, Will. I get it.

The Bartender pours their shots. Will turns to the room. He raises his glass and smiles.

WILL GRADY

Here. Here.

Another group howl fills the room as they all toss their whiskey shots back.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

Blue Eyes finishes tying the horses to a tree.

Sparrow Bird stands high up on a tree limb, looking down over the rooftops of Big Timber.

Blue Eyes calls up to her. (They speak in Crow language with subtitles.)

BLUE EYES

We'll go the rest of the way on
foot. Silent.

Sparrow Bird points down to the four Bounty Hunters guarding the wagon beside the saloon.

SPARROW BIRD

They're just sitting there. Waiting
for their money, I guess. We're
dead. You realize that, right?

Blue Eyes reaches down into the wet, muddy ground and picks up clumps of gooey, black clay.

BLUE EYES

No, no. We'll take it one step at
time.

He smears the mud on his face and limbs.

EXT. CITY LIMITS - NIGHT

Blue Eyes and Sparrow Bird emerge from the trees, their arms and faces camouflaged with thick black mud.

Two DRUNKS stumble behind a building and both start to take a piss.

They move silently behind the Drunks, and run into an alley beside the building.

EXT. OFFICE - NIGHT

The office is on a quiet side street. The sign outside reads "SHELBY LAND CO."

The Accountant and two ARMED ESCORTS emerge carrying bags of cash. They attach the loot to their horses' saddles.

They mount up and make their way up the dark side-road.

SHHHH-WOOP!-- An arrow hits an escort right in the throat. He falls from his horse, instantly dead and lands in the soft mud.

ACCOUNTANT

Louis!

SHHHH-WOOP!-- An arrow pierces straight through the other escort's skull. A nearly silent kill.

The Accountant pulls his pistol. He jumps down from his horse and hides against its body. He looks around frantically in the dark.

ACCOUNTANT

If your aim is to rob me, I can
work with you.

Blue Eyes' hand comes out of the dark and grabs his arm and twists it until he drops his gun. He starts to howl, but Blue Eyes' other hand covers the Accountant's mouth, restraining him.

BLUE EYES

Look up.

Sparrow Bird is kneeling on a sloped rooftop, an arrow loaded in her bow, and pointed right at him.

BLUE EYES

Make another sound and you're dead.
Understand?

The Accountant nods.

BLUE EYES

You'll pay no blood money to Will
Grady. Not now or ever.

The Accountant nods again.

BLUE EYES

I'm going to let my hand down. If
he let's out even a squeak, kill
him.

Sparrow Bird gives a slight nod as she tightens the pull on her bow.

Blue Eyes takes his hand away.

BLUE EYES
How many men is he with?

Sparrow Bird lets out a quiet whistle. The Drunks are walking on the main road outside the alley.

She lowers herself down like a cat, out of sight.

Blue Eyes puts his own darkly camouflaged body in front of the Accountant's, hiding them both in the shadows.

The chattering Drunks pass without noticing.

BLUE EYES
How many men? Inside the saloon and out.

TREASURER
He has ten left. The rest were killed in the Crow raid.

BLUE EYES
Good. You're going to help us kill the rest of them.

ACCOUNTANT
I will do no such--

BLUE EYES
Shut up. And by the way, this is going to hurt.

He clenches his fist and DECKS the accountant in the face. He falls over into the mud.

Sparrow Bird jumps down from the rooftop and kicks him in the ribs while Blue Eyes keeps punching his face.

INT. SALOON - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: Will Grady's timepiece, which reads pm.

WILL GRADY
Where the hell is this accountant?

Will Grady slams the timepiece closed and puts it back in his pocket.

Barrett sits drinking and smoking with one prostitute on either side of him.

BARRETT
You have got to relax, Will.

EXT. SALOON - NIGHT

Snow has begun to fall.

Four men guard the wagon, including the Silver-Toothed Bandit with the whip, The Scruffy Bandit and two other YOUNG BOUNTY HUNTERS.

YOUNG BOUNTY HUNTER
Them younguns is makin' a
commotion. Prolly need to piss and
shit hard by now..

SILVER-TOOTHED BANDIT
Too fuckin' bad.

The Bounty Hunters shiver and stomp their feet to keep warm.

Then...

The Accountant comes running up the road in a panic. He has two black eyes and a busted, bloody lip. He holds his ribs in pain.

ACCOUNTANT
Oh god! Help. I've been beaten and
robbed.

SILVER-TOOTHED BANDIT
Say what?

ACCOUNTANT
Bandits. They hurt me and took the
money. They rode out of town.

SILVER-TOOTHED BANDIT
Fuck. Go get Will... Now!

YOUNG BOUNTY HUNTER
Yes sir.

INT. SALOON

The Young Bandit bursts through the door.

YOUNG BOUNTY HUNTER
Will! The accountant's been robbed!
Bandits are escaping with our
money.

Will Grady has his pistol out before the utterance is even complete.

WILL GRADY
That don't sound right.

OUTSIDE

Two men guard the front of the wagon.

SHHHH-WOOP!-- An arrow kills one of them. Sparrow Bird steps out of the shadows, into the road.

The other guard points his rifle.

SHHHH-WOOP!-- She's too fast. She kills him too.

BEHIND THE WAGON

SILVER-TOOTHED BANDIT
What's going on? God damn this!

He moves toward the front of the wagon.

Blue Eyes comes running from the side of the saloon, and leaps forward, stabbing his knife into the bandit's back.

Blue Eyes stands back as the man staggers and then collapses like a falling pine.

The children start to scream.

TWO MOONS
Blue Eyes!

Blue Eyes shushes them.

UP FRONT

Sparrow Bird hops up into the driver's seat.

INT. SALOON

Will Grady and Barrett make their way toward the saloon doors.

They look outside. They see the wagon.

Will steps closer. He sees a dead Bounty Hunter on the ground, just as the wagon takes off.

WILL GRADY
It's an Ambush!

The wagon pulls away, revealing...

The bruised and bloody Accountant, standing in the road.

WILL GRADY
Stop that wagon!

Will, Barrett and the others step out on the saloon porch and take aim at the wagon.

BLAM!-- The Young Bounty Hunter gets shot in the back. He collapses against Will.

Barrett and will pivot left, toward where the shot came from.

Blue Eyes is coming their way. Barrett takes aim at him.

BLAM! BLAM!-- He and Blue Eyes fire at each other at the same time. Barrett goes down.

Will has his wooden arm around the gut-shot Young Bounty Hunter, holding him up, using his body as a shield. Will aims at Blue Eyes and they fire at each other.

Blue Eyes's shot hits The Young Bounty Hunter. Will's shot hits Blue Eyes in the shoulder. Blue Eyes falls onto his back.

Lying on the ground, Blue Eyes aims for Will.

BLAM!-- He blows a chunk of wooden splinters off of the prosthetic as Will dives back into the saloon for cover.

Blue Eyes tosses his rifle down into the snow, and draws his two matched revolvers.

He stands back up and heads once more toward the saloon.

INSIDE

Will Grady inspects his prosthetic. The wood chipped and obliterated at the point of impact.

He leans his back against the wall, shoving a new magazine into his repeating rifle.

WILL GRADY
Whoever's out there. I got more
lives than you do, pussycat.
(MORE)

WILL GRADY (CONT'D)
I've been dead already. Didn't
slow me down one iota.

A Mercenary moves slowly into the doorway, peeking around the side of the door frame, to look outside.

WILL GRADY
No get down you--

BLAM!-- A bullet pierces straight through the doorframe and hits the mercenary in the face.

OUTSIDE

Barrett crawls on his belly. Bleeding in the snow. He goes for his gun.

BLAM!-- Blue Eyes shoots the life out of him.

BLUE EYES
That was your last man, Joe Beam
Reegan! Now come out and face me.

INSIDE

Will looks around the room. The locals are hiding behind tables, their guns drawn.

WILL GRADY
Oh, so we go back a ways, do we?
Who is this? You know me, but I
don't know you.

BLUE EYES (O.C.)
My Christian name is Moses Reegan,
but I go by my tribal name, Blue
Eyes. Now if you're finished
stalling come face me.

Will peeks his head up to the window.

Blue Eyes sees him and BLASTS.

He ducks down. The window glass shatters all over him.

WILL GRADY
So it's true. I do have an Indian
son.

BLUE EYES (O.C.)
He's about to be an orphan.

Will looks around the saloon. His men are dead. The locals are still ducking for cover.

WILL GRADY

Listen up, roughnecks. You all know who I am. Well I'm laying' down two thousand in silver coin to every man who helps me rush this son of a bitch right now.

BLUE EYES (O.C.)

If you join him you die with him.
That's a promise.

Some men shake their heads no. Four different ROUGHNECKS look at each other and then nod agreement.

The others run up stairs or keep hiding under tables.

WILL GRADY

Alright. Get in them windows and try and get a shot.

WILL GRADY

I just bought a whole new posse.
How many are out there with you, boy?

BLUE EYES (O.C.)

The whole fucking Crow Nation is behind me.

Will laughs.

WILL GRADY

Maybe in spirit, boy. But in the flesh, I fear you are all alone.
Town sherif'll be rollin' up on you soon anyhow.

OUTSIDE

Blue Eyes smiles to himself.

BLUE EYES

Don't count on it.

EXT. BIG TIMBER SHERIFF'S STATION - NIGHT

A LOCAL MAN bangs on the door repeatedly.

LOCAL MAN
 Sheriff. All hell's breaking loose
 at the saloon. Where are you?

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION

The Sheriff and four deputies are hog-tied on the ground in separate jail cells. Gagged, squirming.

INSIDE THE TAVERN

WILL GRADY
 Well, what's your move, son. We
 gonna sit here and talk all night
 look schoolgirls?

BLUE EYES (O.C.)
 This is my move, Joe Beam. I'm
 stalling you.

Will whispers to the men.

WILL GRADY
 Oh fuck this. On three we rush him.

The men get ready with their pistols and rifles.

WILL GRADY (CONT'D)
 One...

VARIOUS SHOTS - QUICK CUTS

MAIN STREET...

Sparrow Bird runs down the Main Street. Her breath heaving as she hauls ass at top speed.

She draws her bow and and arrow.

SALOON...

The men close in around the doorway.

WILL GRADY
 Two...

MAIN STREET...

Blue Eyes waits with his pistols drawn.

Sparrow Bird gets close. Her arrow's head is wrapped in soaked black cloth.

WOODS...

The children hide in the bushes, near where Blue Eyes and Sparrow bird's horses are tied.

A young girl holds up the empty satchel with black powder residue on it.

YOUNG GIRL
What did they use this for?

MAIN STREET...

Sparrow Bird runs toward Blue Eyes. He strikes a match on his belt buckle.

She pulls back the arrow.

SALOON...

Will Grady is about to kick through the saloon door.

WILL GRADY
Three...

CLOSE ON THE ARROW

Blue Eyes's match lights the wrapped cloth up in flames.

WE FOLLOW the Flaming arrow as it streaks through the air, through the saloon window.

WOODS...

She holds up an empty bullet casing.

TWO MOONS
To blow them up.
(she opens her arms wide)
You know? KA--

SALOON...

--BOOM!-- The whole front end of the saloon explodes. Two men go flying out the front door.

INSIDE THE SALOON

Will and the others are blown backwards. They are full of wood and debris and bleeding badly.

Blue Eyes walks into the BURNING ROOM. Flames blazing all around. He blasts the two dying posse members, putting them out of their misery.

Two men on the upstairs balcony aim pistols at him. He shoots one of them. Sparrow Bird is close behind him. She kills the other one with an arrow.

Blue Eyes closes in on Will Grady, who is spitting and cussing and crying out in pain.

WILL GRADY

Boy you're just pig ignorant. Tom's been handed papers to sign clearing you off that land. If he wasn't gonna sign them already, I fuckin' proved to him that he'd better.

He spits blood onto the ground. Blue Eyes gets closer.

Will gets his pistol.

BLAM!-- He hits Blue Eyes in the leg. Blue Eyes collapses.

WILL GRADY

Tom has sealed your fate, boy. So even if you kill me. You still lose.

He laughs and spits up more blood. Blue Eyes is crawling towards him.

WILL GRADY

Go on then. Finish this. But look me in the eyes. See it? You're a killer too. You ain't no better than me. I'll see you in hell, boy. Fuck yo--

ON BLUE EYES

As he plunges down with his knife. A spray of blood hits him in the face.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. THUNDER SPRINGS MAIN STREET - DAY

A clear winter day. The usual hustle and bustle.

Blue Eyes rides his horse into town. The townsfolk look at him with shock.

He's dirty from head to toe. His eyes are bloodshot. His face is now adorned with Crow war paint.

The Sheriff's Deputy approaches.

Blue Eyes's horse stops to drink some water. Blue Eyes tips his flask back, pouring water into his own mouth.

DEPUTY

It really is you! Is the Sheriff
with you?

Blue Eyes just stares at the clean-cut kid. He gets something out of his pocket and throws it at the Deputy's feet.

The kid picks it up. It's the Sheriff's badge, stained with blood.

The kid looks up at Blue Eyes in disbelief.

BLUE EYES

I suppose you'll be sheriff now. Be
a good one.

The kid looks frightened of Blue Eyes. This is not the same young man who rode away just a few days ago. He is transformed.

Blue Eyes rides on. The Deputy calls after him.

DEPUTY

But... I... Wha-what happened out
there, Moses?

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Blue Eyes rides past the church house, he hears a sermon in progress.

INT. CHURCH

Sally Reegan sings with the congregation. She looks out of the corner of her eyes as Blue Eyes passes.

She stops singing and thinks it over. It couldn't be him, so she starts singing again.

INT. REEGAN KITCHEN

Tom Reegan is dressed in a gown. He pours himself a cup of coffee.

He climbs up the stairs slowly with a limp. Each step pains him.

INT. BEDROOM

Tom enters the room. He leaves the door open behind him. As he gets into bed he notices something.

Outside the window, Blue Eyes's horse is tied to the fence.

Tom looks confused. Somehow the door is squeaking closed again behind him.

He turns around. The door is closed, revealing Blue Eyes, sitting in a chair in the corner of the room.

BLUE EYES

Hello Tom.

Tom gasps. He puts a hand on the nightstand to keep himself from tipping over.

TOM REEGAN

Moses? You scared the hell out of me.

BLUE EYES

Call me Blue Eyes. That's my name.

Tom sits down on the bed without taking his eyes off of his grandson.

TOM REEGAN

O-Okay. Whatever you say. You look like death, boy.

BLUE EYES

It's in your best interest to think of me that way. As Death. Did you sign the document yet?

TOM REEGAN

What document?

Blue Eyes gets out his pistol.

BLUE EYES

I've loved you Tom, but I'll shoot you in the heart if you lie to me.

Tom looks down at the ground.

TOM REEGAN

I see. So that's how it is?

Tom reaches for his dresser drawer.

Blue Eyes takes aim.

TOM REEGAN

I'm getting the document, boy. You think I'm crazy?

He reaches in the drawer and pulls out an official document.

TOM REEGAN

I been thinking about what to do. I ain't signed it yet.

BLUE EYES

Tear it up right now.

TOM REEGAN

I'm thinking of the future. This paper promises you good land. It ensures your safety.

BLUE EYES

It's just another step towards wiping us out. Just another trick.

TOM REEGAN

Many-Quills is dead. How much longer do you think I'm gonna last? Then you'll be negotiating with cutthroats, son. Land-grabbers and Cutthroats.

BLUE EYES

My people will face the future on
our own terms, not on yours.

TOM REEGAN

Your people, huh?

BLUE EYES

That's right. Now tear the document
up or I'll shoot you.

Tom reluctantly rips up the document.

BLUE EYES

You'll keep the peace Tom. You'll
defend our right to our own land.
My purpose on Earth is to make you
keep that promise.

Blue Eyes stands up and goes to the door.

BLUE EYES

I hope we never see each other
again. Because if we do, it'll be
as enemies on a battlefield.

INT. STAIRCASE

Blue Eyes walks down the stairs. Tom calls after him.

TOM REEGAN (O.C.)

Son! Son don't do this. Come back.
Moses I love you son, I--

Blue Eyes slams the front door behind him.

EXT. CROW VILLAGE - DUSK

Blue Eyes rides into the village. He dismounts his horse.
Sparrow Bird and the children watch him draw near.

He throws off his derby hat, onto the ground. He takes off
his jacket and throws it away.

Sparrow Bird slowly walks toward him and they exchange a
look, unspoken but brimming with possibilities: They have
been through hell and back together and they are now bound
together for life - As Warriors, as leaders, as friends, and
as lovers, perhaps...

They walk side by side toward the other Crow Villagers.

The Villagers gather around them in a circle. (They speak in subtitled Crow.)

VILLAGER
Welcome back... Chief Blue Eyes.

VILLAGERS
(in unison)
CHIEF BLUE EYES!

Blue Eyes looks around at The Villagers. They await his command.

And he begins to march toward the foothills and the tribe all follow him and Sparrow Bird.

Coming over the hill we see the BLACKFEET tribe, marching behind their Chief, joining the Crow as they all reach...

A CROW CEMETERY

Indeed it is much like the Blackfeet cemetery, with it's graves made of tall scaffolds.

And we PULL UP above the villagers and all the fire pits and the village teepees and the river off in the distance.

And we continue to PULL UP until we see...

Joe Beam Reagan's decapitated head sitting atop a tall spear.

And we HOLD on Joe Beam's piercing blue eyes.

FADE OUT.