

# Searchers, The (1956) movie script

by Frank S. Nugent.

Based on the novel by Alan Le May.

[More info about this movie on IMDb.com](#)

FADE IN

Behind the main title and the credits:

1 EXT. PLAINS COUNTRY - CLOSE SHOT - MOVING JUST ABOVE  
GROUND  
LEVEL - A STUDY OF HOOFPRIINTS - LATE AFTERNOON

The hoofprints are deeply etched in the ground, picking their way through scrubby desert growth. An occasional tumbleweed drifts with the light breeze across the pattern of prints; and lightly-blown soil and sand begin the work of erasing them. The CAMERA FOLLOWING the hoofprints raises slowly to:

2 EXT. PLAINS COUNTRY - LONG SHOT - LATE AFTERNOON

We see the rider now. BACK TO CAMERA, jogging slowly along -- heading down a long valley toward a still-distant ranch house with its outlying barn and corrals.

3 EXT. PLAINS COUNTRY - MED. SHOT - MOVING - LATE AFTERNOON

The CAMERA FRAMES and MOVES with the lone horseman. He is ETHAN EDWARDS, a man as hard as the country he is crossing. Ethan is in his forties, with a three-day stubble of beard. Dust is caked in the lines of his face and powders his clothing. He wears a long Confederate overcoat, torn at one pocket, patched and clumsily stitched at the elbows. His trousers are a faded blue with an off-color stripe down the legs where once there had been the yellow stripes of the Yankee cavalry. His saddle is Mexican and across it he carries a folded serape in place of the Texas poncho... Rider and horse have come a long way. The CAMERA HOLDS and PANS the rider past and we see another detail; strapped onto his saddle roll is a sabre and scabbard with a gray silk sash wrapped around it...Horse and rider pass, moving closer to the ranch as a little girl and a small dog come tearing around the corner of the house.

4 EXT. THE YARD OF THE EDWARDS RANCH - MED. SHOT - DEBBIE -  
LATE AFTERNOON

She is staring wide-eyed at the distant horseman o.s. Her little dog has seen him too and is barking excitedly. DEBBIE quickly reaches to grab the dog by the scruff of the neck, crouching over him. Debbie is 11 years old with

a piquant, memorable face.

5 EXT. THE YARD - CLOSE SHOT - DEBBIE

Here we must establish and dramatize what it is about her face that is memorable, so that if we were to see her again five or six years later, we would know it is she -- perhaps the eye color or the slant of eyebrow, or a trick of scratching bridge of nose with crooked forefinger.

6 EXT. THE EDWARDS HOUSE - MED. SHOT - AARON - LATE AFTERNOON

The ranch house is of adobe, solidly built, with a sod and cross-timbered roof, deep windows. A small gallery or porch extends across the front. AARON EDWARDS comes through the door, attracted by the dog's barking -- and then he, too, sees the approaching horseman and comes farther out -- curious but not at all apprehensive. Aaron is a lean, weathered and tired man, with a down-swept mustache; a gentler-looking man than Ethan and possibly a few years older.

As he squints off, studying the rider, his older daughter, LUCY, comes out to stand behind him. Lucy is from 16 to 18 -- a pleasant, feminine girl. She is carrying a mixing bowl with some sort of batter in it, which she now completely forgets to whip in her interest in the approaching stranger.

In the next instant MARTHA EDWARDS follows the daughter onto the porch. Martha is a still-lovely woman, although the years have etched fine wrinkles about her eyes and mouth, and work has worn and coarsened her hands. Those hands will never be idle when Martha is on scene...And now, while she shares the family's interest in the approaching horseman, she automatically notes that Lucy has forgotten her task -- and she takes the mixing bowl from her and stirs the batter.

7 EXT. YARD OF THE EDWARDS HOUSE - FULL SHOT - LATE AFTERNOON

Along the side of the house comes BEN EDWARDS, 14, with a man-sized armload of chunkwood clutched to his chest. He, too, has spotted the stranger and is all attention. So much so that he trips, but recovers his footing. He pauses to dump the wood into a woodbox by the door -- his eyes always riveted on the oncoming rider -- and then he moves toward the others, biting a splinter out of a finger. Beyond Ben, MARTIN PAULEY emerges from the barn and crosses the open ground heading toward CAMERA. Martin is somewhat under 20, a lithe, perfectly coordinated male animal, with Indian-straight hair and a white man's eyes. He is carrying bridle or other horse-gear. He looks to the family on the porch -- to see if they recognize the stranger -- then

out again. He continues, followed by Ben, toward where Debbie crouches over her dog.

8 EXT. PLAINS COUNTRY - LONG SHOT - ETHAN - LATE AFTERNOON

As he rides downslope toward the house.

THE CREDITS END.

9 EXT. THE EDWARDS RANCH - MED. CLOSE SHOT - MARTHA, LUCY, AND AARON - LATE AFTERNOON

Suddenly, Martha's eyes widen as she -- even before Aaron -- recognizes the distant rider. Her hand goes to her mouth to check the name that trembles on her lips...An instant later Aaron, too, identifies the oncoming horseman.

AARON  
(incredulous)  
Ethan?

He looks at her, frowning, then slowly steps out onto the hard ground. Martha hands the bowl back to Lucy and follows Aaron.

10 EXT. THE YARD OF THE EDWARDS HOUSE - FULL SHOT - THE GROUP

as Ethan rides in and sits his horse, looking down at them. There is a noticeable constraint on all of them. Finally:

ETHAN  
Hello, Aaron...

His eyes shift to Martha and hold. Ethan is, and always has been, in love with his brother's wife and she with him.

ETHAN  
Martha...

MARTHA  
(a bit shakily)  
Hello, Ethan.

Ethan slowly, stiffly swings out of the saddle. Aaron and Martha exchange quick glances...troubled, puzzled. Aaron pastes on an uncertain smile as Ethan comes around his horse toward their side.

AARON  
How's California?

ETHAN  
How should I know?

AARON

But Mose Harper said...

ETHAN

That old goat still creakin'  
around?...Whyn't someone bury him?

He goes to his saddle pack, begins unlacing it. Ben and Debbie have inched closer -- half-shy, half-curious. Debbie's dog begins sniffing at his heels. Ethan looks down at them - not unfriendly, just a man not used to children.

ETHAN

Ben, ain't you?

Ben nods.

ETHAN

(frowning at Debbie)  
Lucy, you ain't much bigger than  
when I saw you last.

DEBBIE

I'm Deborah!  
(pointing)  
She's Lucy.

Ethan looks in the direction of the pointing finger.

11 EXT. YARD - ANOTHER ANGLE

as Lucy steps down from the porch and approaches.

MARTHA

Lucy's going on seventeen now...

BEN

An' she's got a beau! Kisses him,  
too!

MARTHA

That's enough...Go on inside and  
help Lucy set the table...You, too,  
Deborah!

12 EXT. YARD - FULL SHOT - ANOTHER ANGLE

as Martin -- with slightly averted face -- crosses to take the bridle of Ethan's horse and lead him away.

ETHAN

(wheeling on him)  
MOMENTO!

Martin checks his stride, stares in surprise.

MARTHA

(contritely)

Martin!...Here we've been standing...Ethan, you haven't forgotten Martin?

ETHAN

Oh...Mistook you for a half-breed.

MARTIN

(levelly)

Not quite...Quarter Cherokee. The rest is Welsh...So they tell me.

ETHAN

You've done a lot of growin'...

AARON

It was Ethan found you squallin' in a sage clump after your folks was massacred...

ETHAN

(bluntly)

It just happened to be me...No need to make any more of it...

MARTIN

I'll take care of your horse for you, Uncle Ethan.

Again, he starts to lead away.

ETHAN

Hold on!

Martin stops again.

ETHAN

I'll take this...

He completes unlacing the pack and takes it -- treating it as though it contained something of value. Martin watches with a touch of resentment: Ethan doesn't trust him. Ethan turns and sees the look. He doesn't care what Martin thinks, nor does he explain. Martin leads the horse off.

MARTHA

Supper'll be ready by the time you wash up...Let me take your coat for you, Ethan.

He hesitates, then grudgingly surrenders it -- conscious of its sorry condition.

MARTHA

(smiling faintly)  
And...welcome home.

He just nods, then turns to follow Aaron around the side of the house toward the wash-up.

13 EXT. THE EDWARDS HOUSE - CLOSE SHOT - MARTHA

She stands alone, looking after Ethan -- his coat in her arms. She holds it against her breast for just a moment and her eyes are tender.

DISSOLVE TO:

14 INT. EDWARDS HOUSE - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

The family is finishing dinner -- and the scene is not quite, but almost, a still-life. Loud in the room is the pendulum tick of a Seth-Thomas clock on the mantel above the fireplace -- in which logs are burning briskly. Ben crouches near the fireplace, fascinatedly examining the scabbard and sabre Ethan has brought home from the wars. He tries to ease the blade just a bit out of its scabbard. Aaron sits at one end of the hand-hewn table, Martha at the other. At her right is Ethan, his fork scraping the last crumb off his plate. Lucy sits at her father's right and Martin at his left. Next to Martin is Debbie. In the center of the table is the sorry remnant of what was once a meal. Lucy and Martin have finished eating. Aaron is sipping his coffee, and Martha -- her own plate largely untasted -- is watching Ethan.

Ethan has shaved, changed his shirt. He straightens contentedly and every eye is on him, expectantly.

ETHAN

Good.

The clock rattles alarmingly -- the usual preliminary to its striking; and then it bangs out the strokes like a fire-alarm gong. Eight fast clangs.

AARON

Ben! Deborah! Bed!

DEBBIE

But I've got to help with the dishes.

MARTHA

Not tonight...Ben, put that sword back.

BEN

It's not a sword, ma...It's a sabre!

(moving to Ethan)

Did you kill many damYankees with  
this sabre, Uncle Ethan?

ETHAN  
(matter-of-factly)  
Some...

BEN  
How many damYankees, Uncle Ethan?

MARTHA  
Ben!...Martin, he'll sleep in the  
bunkhouse with you tonight.

Martin nods and crosses to kiss Martha good night.

MARTIN  
Good night, Aunt Martha...Uncle  
Aaron...  
(he hesitates)  
Good night, Uncle Ethan.

Ethan doesn't like being called Uncle -- as we must know  
from the quick look he shoots at Martin. But he  
acknowledges it.

ETHAN  
Night.

Ben reluctantly puts the scabbard away, turns to Ethan.

BEN  
Will you tell me tomorrow about  
the war?

AARON  
The war ended three years ago,  
boy!

BEN  
It did?...Then whyn't you come home  
before now?

MARTHA  
BEN!...Go 'long with Martin. MARCH!

As Ben reluctantly heads out with Martin, Deborah crosses  
to Ethan's side and studies him gravely.

DEBBIE  
Lucy's wearing the gold locket you  
gave her when she was a little girl...

ETHAN  
Oh?

DEBBIE

She don't wear it much account of  
it makes her neck green.

LUCY

(aghast)

Deborah!

DEBBIE

(defensively)

Well, it does...But I wouldn't care  
if you gave me a gold locket if it  
made my neck green or not.

Ethan looks at her gravely.

ETHAN

'Fraid I...

(then he remembers  
something, rises)

Wait.

He crosses to where his pack is -- a side table or something  
-- and burrows into it. Debbie is at his side.

ETHAN

How about this?

It is a gold medal or medallion -- something appropriate  
to Maximilian of Mexico -- suspended by a long multi-  
colored satin ribbon.

DEBBIE

Oh! LOOK! My gold locket!

She holds it high for mother -- and all -- to see. Martha  
takes it and reacts at its weight.

MARTHA

It's solid gold...Ethan, I don't  
think she's old enough...

ETHAN

Let her keep it...Just something I  
picked up in Mexico.

Martha reluctantly surrenders it to Debbie's eager hand.  
Aaron hasn't missed the word "Mexico" and looks sharply  
at Ethan.

DEBBIE

Oh, thank you, Uncle Ethan...

LUCY

(to Debbie)

Come along...



The two girls leave the main room. Martha and Aaron both look at Ethan -- half expecting some further explanation. He turns from them and looks into the fire. Martha begins to clear the table. Aaron gets up, takes a pipe and a spill -- lights it at the fire.

ETHAN

Passed the Todd place comin' in...  
What happened to 'em?

AARON

They gave up...went back to the  
cotton rows...So'd the Jamisons...  
Without Martha, I don't know...She  
wouldn't let a man quit.

Ethan turns and looks at her -- still busy with her dishes.

AARON

(change of tone)  
Ethan, I could see it in you before  
the war...  
(Ethan looks at him)  
You wanted to clear out!

Martha freezes in what she's doing -- listening.

AARON

And you stayed out beyond all need  
to...WHY?

Ethan can't answer, but he takes it as a challenge and almost welcomes it.

ETHAN

(hard)  
You askin' me to clear out now?

AARON

(straightening -- with  
grave dignity)  
You're my brother...You're welcome  
to stay as long as you got a mind  
to...Ain't that so, Martha?

MARTHA

(almost a whisper)  
Of course he is.

ETHAN

I expect to pay my own way...

Martha resumes her activity. Ethan crosses to his pack, reaches into it for a leather pouch, brings it back and tosses it onto the table. It lands with a resonant clink.

Both Martha and Aaron draw close to the table.

(NOTE TO WINTON HOCH: This scene should be dramatically back-lighted.)

ETHAN

There's sixty double eagles in  
there...twelve-hundred dollars.

He opens a waistline shirt button and hauls out a leather money belt and drops that on the table.

ETHAN

An' twice that in here.

He reaches into the belt and takes out a few mint-fresh gold pieces which he slides across the table.

ETHAN

...only these got the late  
Emperor Maximilian's picture on  
'em.

Martha picks up one of the gold pieces, staring at the face on the coin: the same as that on the medal -- staring sharply then at Ethan. Aaron is examining another coin with a different interest.

AARON

Mint fresh...not a mark on 'em.

He glances questioningly at Ethan.

ETHAN

So?

Aaron shrugs and crosses to a barrel chair. He raises the seat and lifts out a pair of old boots, some rags of clothing and then raises a false-bottom lid and drops pouch and money belt into it. Carefully he replaces everything. During this Ethan's attention has gone to Martha's hand, to one cut finger, its wound barely healed. He takes the hand -- gently.

ETHAN

Cut yourself?

She nods and withdraws the hand.

ETHAN

(softly)

You were always hurting about your  
hands.

She looks quickly at him and self-consciously tries to hide her hands, conscious of their work-worn appearance.

Then for a moment their eyes meet and hold -- and a world of sadness and hopelessness is in the look.

Aaron closes the seat of the barrel chair.

AARON

Time for bed...

He picks up one of the lamps and starts away toward their bedroom door. Martha looks at Ethan again. His expression is bitter.

AARON

Night, Ethan...Come 'long, Martha.

She turns obediently and follows Aaron. Ethan looks after them and waits as Aaron opens the bedroom door. Martha goes into it and Aaron follows and closes the door. Ethan crosses to the lamp on the mantel, blows it out. Only the firelight strikes his face as he stares broodingly at the closed bedroom door.

DISSOLVE TO:

15 OMITTED

16 EXT. YARD OF THE EDWARDS' HOUSE - FAINT DAWN LIGHT

Debbie's dog is barking excitedly as six horsemen slowly ride toward the house and dismount. A lamp goes on inside. The six horsemen are:

CAPTAIN, THE REVEREND SAM CLAYTON, a big man with frosty blue eyes, graying hair, a bristly full mustache and the air of grave and resolute authority. He is a minister of the Gospel with a .44 on his hip.

LARS JORGENSEN, the Edwards' neighbor, is a harried little man, Scandinavian. As we shall find out soon, he has a brisk and buxom wife and a rather astonishing brood of children.

BRAD JORGENSEN is one of these: sandy-haired, brash, amiable, impulsive. He is in his early twenties.

CHARLIE MacCORY, slightly older than Brad, is Sergeant of Company A of the Rangers. (He is also Company A.) Charlie is a taciturn, gently-spoken, competent man, clearly patterned by his association with Captain, the Rev. Sam.

MOSE HARPER is an old scout -- a walking bone-rack, yet capable of tireless feats of endurance. Some think him "tetched" yet he has managed to endure to his age during a time and in a region where few men lived to see their grandchildren. He wears a ragged dark overcoat in all weather, a narrow-brimmed hat with a feather in its band.

ED NESBY is a rancher and homesteader in his mid-thirties; resolute, honest, self-effacing; nothing picturesque or dramatic about him; just a solid citizen and a realist.

16-A INT. EDWARDS' HOME - CLOSE SHOT - MARTHA

She is at the window of her bedroom, wrapper clutched with one hand, lamp upraised in the other as she stares into the dawn to see who these callers are. We hear the heavy foot-falls of the approaching men, then a loud knock thrice repeated -- an ominous sound.

17 OMITTED

17-A INT. THE EDWARDS' - ANGLE AT DOOR

SAM'S VOICE

Aaron! Open up!...Sam Clayton!

The door is opened by Aaron -- holding a lamp and a gun. He is only partly dressed -- pants, boots, undershirt. The bar of light slashes across the faces of Sam and some of the men behind him.

AARON

Reverend...Come in!

18 INT. THE EDWARDS' HOUSE - FULL SHOT

CLAYTON

Sorry to get you out of bed so early...

(as Martha enters,  
tightening her  
wrapper)

Mornin', Sister Edwards.

MARTHA

What is it, Reverend?

CLAYTON

Lars Jorgensen claims someone bust into his corral last night and run off his best cows...

AARON

You mean those pure breds he just bought?

Jorgensen enters -- an angry little man -- closely followed by Mose Harper, who is grinning foolishly.

JORGENSEN

Next time I raise pigs, by golly!  
You never hear of anyone running  
off pigs, I bet you.

MOSE

Injuns has 'em...Caddoes or Kiowas...  
Kiowas or Caddoes.

CLAYTON

(irritably)

Caddoes!

Mose spots Martha and at once whips off his hat and makes her an exaggerated cavalier's bow.

MOSE

Respects to a charmin' lady, ma'am.  
...Respects, respects...

Ed Nesby enters.

NESBY

Mornin'...

MARTHA

Coffee's made if you...

CLAYTON

Coffee'd be fine, sister...

She heads for the stove.

MOSE

(an old man's  
whimper)

My bones is cold...

His eyes brighten as he looks toward the fire and spots a rocking chair. He shuffles toward it, plants himself and begins rocking and half-crooning to himself.

JORGENSEN

Or bumble bees, by golly... I show  
them dirty rustlers!

MOSE

(crooning)

Lookit me, old Mose Harper, rockin'  
in a rockin' chair...I'm a-goin' to  
set 'n rock, 'n rock, 'n rock, 'n  
rock...

The front door opens to admit Martin, fully dressed and armed, with Charlie MacCorry.

CLAYTON

Over here, Martin...Aaron...

Martin ranges himself next to Aaron and both face Clayton.

CLAYTON

Raise your right hands.

Martha sets out cups on the table, begins pouring the coffee. During the swearing-in, Ethan will enter the room from the inner door -- unnoticed by the other men, but not by Martha. And as the scene plays, the audience must always be conscious of the by-play of glances between Martha and Ethan as they face the prospect of being left in this house together.

CLAYTON

You are hereby volunteer privates in Company A of the Texas Rangers and will faithfully discharge the duties of same without recompense or monetary compensation -- meaning no pay!...Amen and get your shirt on, will you, Aaron.

AARON

(stubbornly)

Ain't goin' volunteerin' after rustlers without my morning coffee, Reverend...Drink your own!

CLAYTON

(sternly -- as he reaches for his cup)

From now on, call me 'Captain'!

But Ethan advances and calmly appropriates the cup Clayton is reaching for...

ETHAN

(mockingly)

Captain the Reverend Samuel Johnson Clayton!...Mighty impressive.

Clayton marks his surprise.

CLAYTON

(dourly)

Well...the prodigal brother...  
When'd you get back?

Ethan sips his coffee and doesn't answer.

CLAYTON

Haven't seen you since the surrender.  
(a pause)  
Come to think of it, I didn't see you  
at the surrender.

ETHAN

I don't believe in surrenderin'...I

still got my sabre, Reverend...never  
turned it into any ploughshare  
neither!

JORGENSEN

Is no time for kaffee-klatch while a  
man's beef is been run off.

MOSE

Injuns, Ethan...  
(taps his nose)  
Caddoes or Kiowas...Mose Harper,  
drinkin' coffee in a rockin' chair.  
...ay-eh!

Martha has left the room briefly to fetch Aaron's shirt  
and vest and stands behind him. Aaron drains his cup.

AARON

Ethan, countin' on you to look after  
things while I'm gone.

Ethan -- cup to his lips -- looks over its rim at Martha  
as Aaron starts to put on his shirt. Their eyes meet  
briefly, then she looks away. Ethan sloshes the dregs of  
his cup into the fire -- some of it spattering Mose.

ETHAN

You ain't goin'...

CLAYTON

He sure is goin'...He's sworn in.

ETHAN

(angrily)  
Well, swear him out again!...I'll go  
with you.

Martha stands submissively, with her head bent, eyes  
averted as Ethan crosses the room to get his coat, guns,  
etc. Aaron follows him.

AARON

Now, Ethan, I ain't sure...

ETHAN

Don't argue!...And stay close...  
Maybe they're rustlers...and maybe  
this dodderin' old idiot ain't so  
far wrong...

MOSE

Thankin' ye, Ethan...thankin' ye.  
Kind words...

CLAYTON

(grudgingly)  
All right...I'll swear you in...

ETHAN  
You can forget that...  
(as Sam stares)  
Wouldn't be legal anyway.

CLAYTON  
Why?  
(a pause -- then  
shrewdly)  
You wanted for a crime, Ethan?

Martha waits -- intent.

ETHAN  
You askin' as a Reverend or a  
Captain, Sam?

CLAYTON  
I'm askin' as a Ranger of the  
sovereign state of Texas.

ETHAN  
Got a warrant?

CLAYTON  
You fit a lot of descriptions.

ETHAN  
(levelly)  
I figger a man's only good for one  
oath at a time...I took mine to the  
Confederate States of America...  
(he pauses -- then)  
So did you, Reverend...

He looks past him then -- at Martha and then at Aaron.

ETHAN  
Stick close, Aaron...

He looks at Martha again...and then strides out.

19 EXT. THE EDWARDS' HOUSE -- DAWN LIGHT

As Ethan emerges he is brought to a momentary halt by sight of a couple -- Brad and Lucy -- in each other's arms, standing near the saddled horses of the posse. Clayton and Jorgensen following him out, spot the couple, who now belatedly are conscious of their audience.

JORGENSEN  
Brad!...Is no time for lolly-  
gagging...



In confusion, Lucy runs back around the side of the house as Brad -- unrepentant -- grins at his irascible old man and heads for his waiting horse. Clayton chuckles and turns toward Martha, who has followed them out.

CLAYTON

Looks like I'll be reading the lines  
over that pair before long, sister  
Edwards.

JORGENSEN

Is no time for talking weddings...  
Better say prayers for those dirty  
thieves, by golly...running off a  
man's beef...

Mose, last to emerge, bows elaborately to Martha.

MOSE

Grateful to the hospitality of yore  
rockin' chair, ma'am...

The men are mounting. Mose nimbly vaults onto the back of his horse -- which he rides bareback, with only a blanket pad.

20

AND OMITTED

21

22 EXT. THE EDWARDS' HOUSE -- DAWN LIGHT

as Ethan and Martin ride to join the group.

CLAYTON

Let's get on with it...

DEBBIE

WAIT!

She comes flying out of the house in her long flannel nightie and runs to Martin.

DEBBIE

Martin! Ride me as far as the well!

MARTIN

Grab hold!...

He swings her up in front of his saddle. They start away. Ethan is last to ride out. He is watching Martha. He brings a gloved hand up in a salute. She starts to raise her hand but only brings it just above her waist, a fluttering gesture with tremulous fingers. It is the last he will ever

see of her alive.

23 EXT. YARD OF THE EDWARDS' HOUSE - FULL SHOT

as the posse slowly rides out, with Ethan last. Martin reins in to let Debbie slip to the ground. Ethan passes her. Debbie stands watching the men ride away, waving at them.

AARON'S VOICE  
(calling)  
DEBORAH!

She turns and comes running back -- CAMERA PANNING -- to the little group on the porch; Ben in the door; Lucy crossing the porch; Aaron and Martha at the steps.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

24 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - POSSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Ethan and Mose are advancing at a steady walk, both men leaning slightly out of their saddles to study the terrain -- the trail they are following. Out to one side -- fifty yards distant -- is the main body of the posse: Sam, Jorgensen, Charlie, Ed, moving roughly parallel to Ethan but at a faster clip. Martin comes riding in toward Ethan from behind CAMERA.

MARTIN  
(calling)  
Uncle Ethan!

Ethan reins in -- compressing his lips at the "Uncle."  
Mose waits.

MARTIN  
Somethin' mighty fishy about this trail, Uncle Ethan...

ETHAN  
Stop callin' me 'uncle'...I ain't your uncle.

MARTIN  
Yes, sir.

ETHAN  
Don't have to call me 'sir' neither...  
Nor grampaw neither...Nor Methuselah  
neither...I can whup you to a frazzle.

Mose lets out a snickering laugh.

MARTIN  
What you want me to call you?

ETHAN

Name's Ethan...Now what's so mighty fishy about this trail?

MARTIN

Well, fust off...

He breaks and all turn at a distant hail from Jorgensen.

JORGENSEN

Look! Look!

25 OMITTED

26 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - LONG SHOT - RISE OF GROUND - BRAD

He is holding his rifle with both hands straight over his head -- and he repeats the signal until he sees they have seen him.

JORGENSEN'S VOICE

(excitedly)

Brad! He's found them...Come on!

27 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - THE POSSE WITH BRAD IN THE DISTANCE

as Jorgensen digs spurs and leads the way. The other riders follow.

28 MED. SHOT - BRAD - RISING GROUND - LATE AFTERNOON

He waits grimly until he sees them coming, then wheels his mount and takes off over the hill.

29 FULL SHOT - THE POSSE

as it comes up the rise and the men rein in on the crest. Jorgensen stares and his face mirrors shock and dismay. The other men look down into the long valley on the far side with equally grim expressions.

ETHAN

Call that young fool back!

Jorgensen doesn't even seem to hear him. Angrily Ethan whips out revolver and fires into the air. Then he swings his arm in a come-back gesture. He rides out ahead then a short distance and dismounts...and slowly the others follow.

We see now, the bodies of a few bulls stiffening in the sun. Ethan goes to the nearest one. A feathered lance is driven into it. He pulls the lance out. Mose comes over beside him.

ETHAN

(angrily)

Caddo or Kiowa, huh?...Ain't but one  
tribe uses a lance like that!

He hands the lance to Mose.

MOSE

(almost a whisper)

Ay-eh...Comanch!

Brad rides in -- shrill with anger.

BRAD

Killed every one -- an' not for  
food either...Why'd they do a  
thing like that?

ETHAN

Stealing the cattle was just to  
pull us out...This here's a murder  
raid...

(facing Jorgensen)

It shapes up to scald out either your  
place...or my brother's.

Jorgensen wilts and casts an anguished look back over  
the miles they have ridden.

JORGENSEN

Mama!...Oh please...please no...

BRAD!

And with that one word, Jorgensen calls upon his son to  
follow and they take off...fast. Ed Nesby and Charlie  
MacCorry follow. Sam Clayton pauses.

CLAYTON

Jorgensen's place is closest...If  
they're not there, we'll come  
straight on!

Then he too rides. Martin swings his horse back to where  
Ethan and Mose still are standing.

MARTIN

Well, come on!

ETHAN

Easy!

(he starts toward  
his horse)

It's forty miles, sonny...Horses can  
do with some grain and a little rest.

MOSE

Comanch generally hits at moonrise.

MARTIN

Moonrise!...It'll be midnight  
before...I ain't waitin'....!

He wheels his horse and goes tearing to catch up with the others. Ethan shrugs and stoically takes grain bag to feed his horse. Mose does the same.

MOSE

Wisht it was Caddoes...or Kiowas...  
(shakes his head)  
Comanche...

Ethan just gives him an angry look and then ruthlessly begins discarding every bit of unnecessary equipment from his saddle.

WIPE TO:

30 EXT. THE EDWARDS RANCH - WIDE ANGLE - SUNDOWN

Nothing moves. Nothing could be more tranquil. The shadows are long. A thin wisp of smoke rises from the chimney. And then Debbie's little dog trots around the side of the house out into the yard.

31 EXT. EDWARDS YARD - CLOSE SHOT - THE DOG - SUNDOWN

He comes to a standstill and his nose is working. He begins to make excited little sounds deep in his belly. Then he lies down, muzzle between his paws, watching, listening.

32 INT. THE EDWARDS HOUSE - FULL SHOT - ANGLING TOWARD THE DOOR

Debbie sits on the floor, playing with a little rag doll. The slanting blaze of the setting sun makes a brilliant area of light in which she is sitting. Beyond her, on the porch steps, Ben is squatting, whittling a piece of pine into a slingshot frame. We hear Martha and Lucy busy with the dishes. Aaron comes from behind CAMERA and stands in the doorway, absently rapping out his pipe. Near the doorway, on a wooden peg, hangs his gun, belt. He puts the pipe in his pocket and glances down at Deborah, intent on her play. He looks swiftly at where the women are busy - then stealthily eases the gun from its holster and slides it under his shirt. He hasn't made a sound and is sure he's got away with it. He clears his throat noisily and reaches for a light shotgun pegged above the door.

AARON

Think I'll see if I can pick off a

sage-hen or two, Martha...

33 INT. THE EDWARDS HOUSE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - MARTHA AND LUCY

busy at the wooden sink. Martha doesn't turn.

MARTHA  
You do that, Aaron...

AARON  
(still pleased  
with himself)  
Won't go far...

He steps out. Only then does Martha turn -- and her eyes go at once to:

34 INT. THE EDWARDS HOUSE - ANGLING TO DOOR

and FRAMING the empty holster, as Aaron pauses on the porch.

LUCY'S VOICE  
My, the days are getting shorter!

35 INT. EDWARDS HOUSE - CLOSE SHOT - MARTHA AND LUCY

as Lucy heads for the lamp.

MARTHA  
(sharply)  
Lucy!...We don't need the lamp yet...

Lucy frowns at her mother.

MARTHA  
(easily)  
Let's enjoy the dusk a while.

36 EXT. THE EDWARDS HOUSE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - AARON AND BEN  
-  
ON PORCH

Aaron is slowly scanning the terrain.

AARON  
(to Ben)  
Mind you sweep up them shavin's.

BEN  
Yes, Pa...  
(undertone -- man  
to man)  
An' if you see any sage-hens,  
I'm ready.

Aaron stares as the boy shifts a fold of blanket, or whatever, by his side -- to disclose Ethan's cavalry sabre. Aaron smiles and rubs the youngster's head, then sets out across the yard.

37 EXT. THE EDWARDS YARD - FULL SHOT - MOVING

Debbie's dog rises at Aaron's approach and joins his master as they set out across the plain.

38 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY NEAR EDWARDS HOME - MED. CLOSE SHOT - AARON

He is walking through the scrub and brush grass, every sense alive and straining. He pauses every three or four strides -- casting each quadrant in turn. Once he whips, gun ready, as a sage-hen or quail whirrs up not far from him. He smiles grimly as he watches it fly away. He keeps on.

39 EXT. THE EDWARDS HOUSE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - AT PORCH

Martha comes to stand in the doorway. Ben doesn't look at her. His eyes -- like hers -- are fixed on the figure of the man.

BEN

(quietly)

It's all right, ma...I been watchin'...  
Only I wish...

MARTHA

(quietly)

What, Ben?

BEN

I wish Uncle Ethan was here. Don't  
you, ma?

She doesn't answer. Lucy comes to the door.

LUCY

Mother, I can't see what I'm  
doing!...

MARTHA

NOT YET, LUCY!...

40 EXT. RISING GROUND - WIDE ANGLE - PAST AARON

He stands on the near slope of a rise and then gradually moves toward its summit, so that only head will be silhouetted. He drops to one knee, half-leaning against the slope and slowly looks out...The CAMERA PANS very slowly, following his careful sweep of the terrain.

The scene is entirely peaceful.

41 EXT. RISING GROUND - CLOSE SHOT - AARON

with narrowed eyes slowly scanning the ground. Suddenly the head whips right. We hear a bird's sharp call.

42 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - SKYWARD SHOT - A SMALL BIRD

It is taking flight, sweeping away in erratic arcs.

43 EXT. RISING GROUND - CLOSE SHOT ON AARON

He squints closely at the ground from which the bird had flown. Then slowly his eyes range toward the left.

44 EXT. RISING GROUND - WIDE ANGLE - PAST AARON

Across the meadow, a shadow seems to touch the grass and at once a covey of quail takes off, whirring loud. Aaron waits no longer, but slides down the slope and starts running at a crouch for the house, stopping every so often to look backward.

45 EXT. THE EDWARDS HOUSE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - MARTHA AND BEN  
-  
SUNSET

(NOTE TO W. HOCH: What J. F. has in mind for this and the following scenes is the same kind of dramatic use of red you achieved in "Yellow Ribbon" in the scene telling of Custer's defeat.)

They are standing in the ruddy glare of the sunset and Ben has Ethan's sabre in his hand. We hear Aaron coming at a run, breathing hard. Ben takes a step as though to go to him, but Martha's hand at once is on his shoulder. Aaron gains the porch.

AARON

In the house, boy...and...

He puts finger to his lips, sign for Ben to say nothing. Ben nods and goes inside. Aaron and Martha face each other, the question large on her face. Slowly he nods the confirmation of her fears, then gently propels her ahead of him through the door.

46 INT. THE EDWARDS HOUSE - FULL SHOT - SUNSET

The room is deeply shadowed except where the dull crimson of the sun through door and windows slashes the blackness. Ben is waiting and Martha turns toward Aaron as he pulls the door shut, bars it and sets the shotgun down. He takes the revolver from his waist and Martha holds it as he reaches for his gun belt.



AARON

Ben, close the shutters.

Buckling on his gun belt, he moves toward the middle of the room, looking around him, taking inventory of his resources. Lucy slowly approaches, biting a knuckle, eyes wide with fright.

LUCY

Pa?

One shutter closes and the bar of light they were standing in goes out. Martha, Aaron and Lucy are dark silhouettes now against the red beam from another window.

MARTHA

(sudden fear)

Where's Deborah?...

(calling it)

DEBORAH!

Debbie emerges from a shadowed corner into a beam of light. She is clutching her rag doll, nibbling a cookie. She holds it for them to see.

DEBBIE

I only took one, ma...Topsy was hungry.

Ben closes the shutter. And now the room is almost completely blacked out, except for the dying light filtering through the rifle ports of the closed shutters.

WIPE TO:

47 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - WIDE ANGLE SHOT - THE POSSE - DUSK

This should be an expansive view to convey the fact that the posse has split -- the main group heading for the Jorgensen place, Martin forking off to race alone for the Edwards ranch.

Coming toward and passing CAMERA is Martin, riding all out. Several hundred yards away and moving in a divergent direction are the others -- Brad and Charlie, Sam, Jorgensen and Ed Nesby. The men are not compactly bunched, but strung out, each taking his own best course and his own speed...As the riders pass and the dust of their passing, we see two other riders -- Ethan and Mose -- minute specks in the distance, possibly a mile or two behind.

48 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - MOVING SHOT - ETHAN AND MOSE - DUSK

(NOTE TO W. HOCH: What we are trying to get here is that

moment of swift transition from twilight to night; of riders briefly touched with the last colors of day and then, as they pass, becoming one with blue shadows of night.)

Ethan and Mose are holding their mounts to a jog, in marked contrast to the all-out pace of the others. The CAMERA PANS after them as the dark fingers of the night stretch across the valley. The wind begins to rise and somewhere off in the hills a coyote pack yaps.

DISSOLVE TO:

49 INT. EDWARDS - ANGLING PAST AARON AT WINDOW INTO ROOM - NIGHT

Aaron is little more than a shadowy silhouette as he peers into the night through a partly-opened shutter. Suddenly the room leaps alight as Lucy opens an inner door and enters, holding a lighted lamp. Aaron closes the shutter, spins on her angrily.

AARON

LUCY!

Martha crosses the room swiftly and blows out the lamp. In the brief moment the room has been lighted, we see that Lucy is carrying a dark shawl in one hand; that Ben is crouched at another window -- rifle ready; and that Deborah is on her feet -- standing like a child who is being dressed.

LUCY

I'm sorry...I couldn't find the shawl...

AARON

Hurry, Martha...Moon's fixin' to rise...

He cautiously swings the shutters open. A pale light filters into the room. We see Martha wrapping the shawl around Deborah.

MARTHA

(softly to the child)  
We're going to play the sleep-out game...Remember?...Where you hide out with grandma?

DEBBIE

Where's she buried?

MARTHA

And you'll go along the ditch -- very quietly -- like a...  
(her voice breaks)

DEBBIE  
Like a little mouse.

AARON  
Now!

He reaches for the child, but he has to wait for Martha's last embrace.

MARTHA  
There!...And you won't come back  
or make a sound...no matter what  
you hear? Promise!..No matter what?

DEBBIE  
I promise...Wait!

AARON  
Child, child!

DEBBIE  
Can't I have Topsy to keep me  
company?

AARON  
There's no time...

MARTHA  
Here she is, baby...Baby...

Aaron takes the child, swings her out the window.

AARON  
Down low -- go!

Martha would come to the window to look out, but Aaron bars her with an arm and draws back to the side of the window to watch her go...Outside the little dog barks a welcome and presumably starts to follow the girl. Aaron reacts.

AARON  
(hoarse whisper)  
Here dog...here!

The dog whines but obeys. Aaron continues watching the child's course -- unconsciously imitating her every run and twist...Then he smiles and we may see the brightness in the corners of his eyes.

AARON  
She reached the ditch...

He closes the shutters and turns -- and his arms go around Martha, weeping soundlessly.

AARON

She'll be all right, mother...  
she'll be all right.

50 EXT. A HILLOCK WITH TWO HEADBOARDS - MED. CLOSE SHOT - NIGHT

Nothing stirs and we hear nothing. Then, with faintest little rustle, Debbie comes snaking along the ground into the hollow between the two graves and lies there face down, pressed against Topsy. She becomes one with the earth and the stillness. And then the moonlight strikes the tips of the scrub growth and as a cloud scuds by, the moonlight reveals something glittering -- like beads. And the CAMERA from that ground-level shot RAISES quickly to:

51 CLOSE SHOT - FROM EXTREME LOW ANGLE - SCAR

The Comanche we are later to know as SCAR is painted for war -- tall, savage, mockingly looking down at what we know is the child's hiding place...And in that instant, from a dozen quarters and a dozen throats, sounds the wild yammer of the warwhoop!

DISSOLVE TO:

52- OMITTED  
53

54 EXT. RISING GROUND - MED. CLOSE SHOT - MARTIN - MOONLIGHT

He stands beside his spent and fallen horse. Its breathing is a rasping whistle. Martin tries to haul its head up. Useless. Breathing hard himself, his face ashen in the moonlight, Martin looks desperately off in the direction of the ranch. Then he jerks the rifle from its saddle scabbard -- struggling with it because it is under the horse. He freezes then -- listening...And we hear the steady beat of two horsemen approaching. Martin knows who they are and his face is alive with hope. He gets the rifle free at last and goes running toward the oncoming riders.

MARTIN

(shouting)

Ethan!...Ethan!

The CAMERA SWINGS with him and we see Ethan and Mose approaching at the same steady gait.

MARTIN

(waving)

Uncle Ethan...it's me...Martin!

Ethan doesn't slacken, nearly rides him down.

ETHAN

Out of my way!

Martin goes sprawling to his hands and knees. Mose continues without slowing.

55 EXT. RISING GROUND - ANOTHER ANGLE - PAST THE RIDERS - MOONLIGHT

MARTIN

(desperately)

Mose! Wait!...

He goes running, stumbling after the riders -- desperately calling to them...

MARTIN

Ethan!...Mose!...

And then at the crest of the rising ground, he stops -- We see in the distance the glow of a fire leading from the barns and the hayricks and the house of Aaron Edwards. Martin runs down the slope.

56 EXT. YARD AND APPROACH TO EDWARDS HOUSE - WIDE ANGLE - NIGHT

(NOTE TO W. HOCH: Here again that use of red is suggested.)

The ANGLE is past the porch uprights toward Mose and Ethan as they ride in. Little tongues of fire are licking the edges of the uprights. A few arrows, imbedded in the wood, are burning along their shafts. Beyond are the glowing ashes of the hayricks and the charred, smouldering rails of the corral. There are no bodies in evidence...The red glow of the burning is on the faces of the men as they dismount.

Ethan strides to the porch, knocking away one of the blazing arrows as he heads to the door. He stops there -- and what he sees makes the big shoulders droop, the huge frame slump. Slowly then -- and removing his hat -- he goes in. Mose shuffles to the edge of the porch and squats there and rocks back and forth, his face working and crying soundlessly with senile grief. We hear a splintered door crash from its hinges within the room and Ethan's muffled voice calling through the house:

ETHAN (o.s.)

Lucy?...Deborah? Lucy?

He strides back through the main room and out onto the porch just as Martin comes at a shambling run across the yard. Ethan takes a few steps out toward him. Martin would pass him, but Ethan grabs his arm.

ETHAN  
(harshly)  
You stay out!

Martin tries to fight his arm free.

ETHAN  
Nothing for you to see.

MARTIN  
Leggo...

Ethan turns him and drives a brutal right to his jaw. Martin goes down -- out cold. And only now do we understand how merciful the blow was as Ethan looks compassionately at the fallen figure.

ETHAN  
Don't let him go in there, Mose...

And he takes off at a stumbling run for the hilltop.

57 EXT. THE HILLOCK WITH THE TWO HEADBOARDS - FULL SHOT -  
ETHAN

as he nears the graves.

ETHAN  
(calling)  
Lucy -- Lucy!

He runs in, looking around him. He sees the little dog, dead on the ground. And then he sees a shadowed something: The shawl Debbie had worn. It is spread out, almost as though concealing a body. Fearfully he stoops and pulls it away... There is nothing there, but the shawl. He drops to his knees, his head bowed, his face tortured. The moonlight is clear on the face of the nearer headboard. It is of weathered wood and the chiselled letters on it read:

HERE LIES  
MARY JANE EDWARDS  
KILLED BY COMANCHES  
MAY 12, 1852

a good WIFE & MOTHER  
In her 41st year

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

58 EXT. THE HILLOCK - FULL SHOT - SLOWLY PANNING - DAWN  
LIGHT

The funeral is begun. In the foreground are three newly-made crosses at the head of as many open graves -- which we need not see. With head bared, Sam Clayton is concluding

his prayer. Near him stand the Jorgensen family: Mrs. Jorgensen, Lars and LAURIE -- blonde, just beginning to reach her maturity -- and a stepping-stone of tow-headed children.

CLAYTON

...and to Your keeping we commend  
the souls of Aaron...Martha...and  
Benjamin Edwards...

Mrs. Jorgensen and Laurie -- impelled by the same feminine sympathy and interest -- turn to look at Ethan and Martin. The PANNING CAMERA picks them up...Ethan standing dry-eyed, looking at the grave of Martha; Martin -- with bruised lip -- looking out across the plain.

Clayton now opens his small, well-worn Bible to a marked page.

CLAYTON

Man that is born of woman is of  
few days and full of trouble...

Ethan looks at him, angrily, impatiently.

CLAYTON

He cometh forth like a...

ETHAN

(harshly)

Amen!...Put an 'amen' to it!

CLAYTON

...like a flower and is cut down...  
Amen!

ETHAN ET AL.

Amen!

Ethan turns on his heel and walks -- CAMERA PANNING -- to where Ed Nesby has been holding the horses. Brad is already mounting. Mose is there too and Charlie MacCorry. Silhouetted against the dawn light are the rifles in each man's saddle scabbard. Clayton is right behind Ethan.

CLAYTON

Charlie--you and Brad ride point!  
...Don't get too far ahead...

The young riders spur out.

59 EXT. NEAR HILLOCK - MED. CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN AND MRS. JORGENSEN

Ethan is about to mount when Mrs. Jorgensen comes up and catches his arm.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Ethan...

(he turns impatiently)

Those girls mean as much to me as though they were my own...Maybe you don't know my Brad's been sittin' up with Lucy...and my Laurie's real fond of Martin...

Ethan glances back at where Martin and Laurie are standing.

60 ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING LAURIE AND MARTIN

The girl is looking at Martin full of compassion, tries to console him by taking his arm and squeezing it as he stares blindly at the graves and Jorgensen stolidly beginning the work of shovelling them full.

61 EXT. NEAR HILLOCK - ETHAN AND MRS. JORGENSEN AS BEFORE

Ethan looks back at her -- stone-faced.

ETHAN

(impatiently)

I'd be obliged if you'd get to the point, ma'am.

MRS. JORGENSEN

I am...I am...It's just that I know Martha'd want you to think of her boys as well as her girls...And if the girls are...dead...Ethan, don't let the boys waste their lives in vengeance!

Ethan shrugs his arm free and mounts.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Promise me, Ethan!

He ignores her and turns angrily to where Martin is.

ETHAN

(harshly)

Come on, if you're comin'...

He digs spurs and rides out with the others. Martin comes over, with Laurie a step behind. His face is set, his eyes almost unseeing.

MRS. JORGENSEN

(a heartbroken murmur)

Oh, Martin...Martin...

MARTIN

We'll find them, Mrs. Jorgensen...  
We'll find them...



He swings into his saddle. Laurie impulsively runs to his side, steps onto the toe of his stirrured boot and pulls herself up to his level to kiss him hard and full upon the mouth. He looks at her dully, as though hardly conscious of it. And she is back beside her mother. Martin rides away after the others.

MRS. JORGENSEN

(slowly)

I almost hope they don't find them!

Laurie looks at her mother and understands.

CUT TO:

61-A EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - THE SEARCHERS - EARLY MORNING LIGHT

The SEARCH THEME begins as we see the riders in turn. A series of portraits of the men.

62 CLOSE SHOT - BRAD AND CHARLIE - riding point, they come to a pause, surveying the terrain ahead. Charlie, with an arm signal, indicates he will take the left. Brad nods and he rides out to the right.

63 THE MAIN BODY OF THE MEN, Clayton passing first, expression resolute, competent...Then Ed Nesby and old Mose, squinting at the ground as they ride, all but sniffing like an old hound dog.

63A MARTIN - Next to last in file. Finally:

63B ETHAN - His face a study of relentless purpose.

WIPE TO:

64- OMITTED.

67

68 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - BRAD AND CHARLIE - AFTERNOON

The two men are at a cairn of rocks -- their horses nearby. In the near distance, Clayton is leading the men of the search party at a fast clip toward the cairn. Charlie is standing, Brad tearing the rock cairn apart. In Charlie's hands is a Comanche head-dress of polished buffalo horn and feathers. Brad doesn't even look up as the men ride in and dismount, but continues his grim work of uncovering the buried Indian.

CLAYTON

Another one, eh?

CHARLIE

This 'un come a long way 'fore he died.

CLAYTON

Well, that's seven we can score up to your brother, Ethan.

NESBY

I don't like it.

CLAYTON

What don't you like?

NESBY

Injun's on a raid generly hides their dead so you won't know how many they've lost...If they don't care about us knowin', it only spells one thing...they ain't afraid of us followin' -- or of us catchin' up with 'em either.

ETHAN

You can back out any time, Nesby.

NESBY

Didn't say that...  
(angrily indicating  
Brad)  
What's he doin' that for...

CHARLIE

He wants to be sure...

Brad shifts another rock and looks grimly upon the face (o.s.) of the dead Comanche. Then he spits at it and stands.

BRAD

(grim)  
Let's get along...

ETHAN

(to Brad)  
Why don't you finish the job?

With that he strides to the cairn, whipping a knife out. he crouches over the body (o.s.) and with his own back concealing what he is doing, he bends to his bloody task. Sam Clayton crosses to stand behind him.

CLAYTON

(gravely)  
What good does that do?

ETHAN

By what you preach...none!

He stands now and he faces Sam.

But by what the Comanche believe --  
now he can't enter the spirit land,  
but has got to wander forever be-  
tween the winds...because I took  
his mangy scalp!

He flings the scalp down and grinds it into the dirt with his heel...He wipes clean the blade of his knife as he crosses back to his horse. The men mount (those who have dismounted) and they ride off.

DISSOLVE TO:

69 OMITTED

70 EXT. NIGHT CAMP - RAVINE - CLOSE SHOT - BRAD AND MARTIN

Brad is looking out into the night -- strain and tension in every line. Beyond them we may see some of the other men -- sitting or sprawled on the ground near a sheltered fire.

BRAD  
(a whisper)  
If only she's alive...I'll make it  
up to her... No matter what's hap-  
pened...I'll make her forget...She's  
just got to be alive...

Ethan crosses behind them carrying his blanket roll. He looks at them sourly.

ETHAN  
Get some rest!

They move off, heading for their blankets. The CAMERA HOLDS on Ethan as he rolls up his blanket and turns on his side. He fishes a miniature out of his pocket and gravely studies it by the light of the flickering little fire.

70-A CLOSE SHOT - THE MINIATURE - NIGHT

It is a picture of Martha. The CAMERA PULLS BACK to show Ethan studying it gravely, then putting it away and lying back to stare broodingly into the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

71 EXT. RIDGE TOP - CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN, BRAD, MOSE, SAM -  
SUNSET

The four faces are just over the ridge, peering at something far distant, far below.

MOSE  
Could be a buffler...

BRAD  
It's horses, I tell ya...

ETHAN  
It's them all right...

He starts to squirm down the ridge, the others following.

72 EXT. HIGH COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - THE SEARCHERS - SUNSET

Ethan's group crosses to where the other men are waiting with the horses.

ETHAN  
They're camped by the river --  
'bout twenty miles from here.  
Soon's it gets dark we'll circle  
out so's to jump 'em before day-  
break.

CLAYTON  
(slowly)  
You're right sure you want to jump  
'em, Ethan?

Martin and Brad stare at Sam -- not understanding the question. But Mose knows what he means and studiously looks into space.

ETHAN  
(touch of defiance)  
It's what we're here for, ain't it?

CLAYTON  
I thought we were trying to get the  
girls back -- alive...We jump those  
Comanches, they'll kill 'em...You  
know that!

BRAD  
(bewildered, angry)  
But...but what are we doin' then?...  
What are we supposed to do?

CLAYTON  
What I had in mind was runnin'  
off their hoss herd...A Comanche  
on foot is more apt to be willin'  
to listen...

NESBY  
That makes sense to me.

MARTIN

Yeah...

ETHAN

(angrily)

What do you know about it?...What's a quarter-breed Cherokee know about the Comanche trick of sleeping with his best pony tied right beside him...You got as much chance of stampedin' their herd as...

CLAYTON

...as you have of findin' those girls alive by ridin' into 'em... I say we do it my way, Ethan...and that's an order!

ETHAN

Yes, sir...But if you're wrong, Captain Clayton, don't ever give me another!

They look into each other's eyes a moment, then Sam turns to mount...and the others follow. Slowly then they start riding down the slope.

DISSOLVE TO:

73 EXT. FLAT GROUND, LIKE MARSH COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - THE SEARCHERS - DAWN MIST EFFECT

(NOTE: It is now planned to shoot this on sound stage.)

Fog and heavy morning mist rise from the swamp. Some cattails in the near ground. The effect is eerie, very still except for the trilling of frogs. Then, very quietly, the men emerge from the mist swirling around them. They are leading their horses. Sam looks baffled, angry. They stand still, listening -- then slowly continue.

74 EXT. FLAT GROUND - ANOTHER ANGLE - FULL SHOT - DAWN MIST (SOUND STAGE)

The mist is thinning. In the f.g. is a small blackened area -- the ashes of a campfire. The men come through the mist -- wary, vigilant. It is Mose who first spots the fire. He runs to it and drops beside and feels the ashes. The others come up around him.

MOSE

Ay-eh...They was here...

ETHAN

(to Sam)

SURE!...They WERE here...Now they're  
out there...an' waitin' to jump us!...

He looks at Clayton.

ETHAN

You got any more orders, Captain?

CLAYTON

(quietly)

Just keep goin'...

They move on, slowly.

74-A EXT. FLAT GROUND - FULL SHOT - MOVING (SOUND STAGE)

The mist is thinning as the men warily move along. Suddenly there is the faint hoot of an owl from behind and to one side...the men turn slightly, hearing it...A moment later another owl hoot, from the same side but up ahead. From the interchange of looks, we must know that the riders are aware of its significance. Mose cups hand to his mouth and he hoots in exact imitation of the other calls. Clayton glares at him.

MOSE

(in soft apology)

Jus' bein' sociable, Cap'n...

Ethan grins wryly. And now the first, faint, ruddy touch of the sun hits the slowly moving horsemen and begins to burn through the mist.

74-B EXT. NEAR RIVER - PANNING SHOT - MORNING

The CAMERA SLOWLY PANS from a sun-touched butte or crag to the file of men slowly walking their horses. An occasional shred of mist drifts by. Everything about the little cavalcade bespeaks tension, watchfulness. Suddenly -- and every man sees it at the same time -- we see a file of eight Comanches ride slowly out of a canyon at a distance, walking their horses at the same pace and on a course roughly parallel with, but slightly converging on, our group.

CLAYTON

(softly)

Keep goin'...

Brad, who has been looking up ahead, sounds a new warning.

BRAD

(tensely)

Look!

CLAYTON

Easy!

74-C EXT. CANYON COUNTRY - LONG SHOT - PAST THE SEARCHERS

Another Indian file of eight angles out of a different canyon and begins to cut in toward the group -- riding slowly, very quietly. Clayton slightly alters course, veering slightly away from the converging files, but still riding slowly. And then, from ahead but at a 100 yards, another Comanche group seems to rise out of the ground and slowly begins closing the gap.

ETHAN

(to Clayton)

If you were tryin' to surround 'em, you sure succeeded.

CLAYTON

How far's the river from here, Mose?

MOSE

I been baptized, Reverend...yes  
suh, been baptized, thank ye...

CLAYTON

Well, you better brace yourself  
for another one...YA-HEE!

And with that yell, he drives spurs and cuts sharply at an angle to the converging Indian files -- and every man is with him. In the next instant, the Comanches whoop and give chase.

74-D EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - THE CHASE

with the Ranger group short-cutting in such a way as to outstrip the Comanche horsemen in a mad dash for the river.

74-E EXT. THE RIVER'S EDGE - FULL SHOT - THE GROUP

Clayton flings his hand up in a signal to halt as the Rangers reach the bank. They rein in, wheel their horses and are reaching for the rifles as the Comanche vanguard races into view -- to find themselves opposed by seven veterans, sitting their horses, rifles at their shoulders. The charge breaks as the seven rifles bark, almost in unison -- and the Indians wheel to shelter.

CLAYTON

YA-HEE!

And once again he spins his mount and takes off, across the river, followed by the others.

74-F EXT. THE RIVER - FULL SHOT

As the men pound across.

74-G EXT. FAR BANK OF RIVER - FULL SHOT - THE GROUP

They dismount and Charlie and Nesby take the horses and run them to some place of protection as the men group around Clayton and Ethan. During this:

CLAYTON  
(shouting his orders)  
This is as good as any...Charlie,  
you and Ed take the horses...

Mose runs over and crouches beside Ethan. Beyond Ethan is Martin, then Brad...Nesby and Charlie will rejoin the group after an appropriate interval...with all the men shielded behind river boulders, etc.

75 EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - ANGLING PAST ETHAN AND MOSE WITH  
MARTIN  
AND BRAD BEYOND

Ethan and Mose are hunkered down behind some rocks, very casual and business-like as they check rifles, set out and carefully wipe cartridges.

MOSE  
(chattily)  
Minds me o' the time Joe Powers  
an' me fit us some Kiowas...

Martin is in the throes of buck-fever, wiping mouth with back of his hand, peering anxiously across the river.

MARTIN  
You think they mean to charge us,  
Uncle Ethan...?

MOSE  
...We found us an ole buffler wallow...

BRAD  
(staring across  
river)  
Criminy!

76 EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - LONG SHOT - PAST THE GROUP

On the opposite bank, we see the full force of Comanches riding into sight -- racing their mounts to the edge, then wheeling off -- jeering, taunting. Brad starts to bring up his rifle.

ETHAN



Steady, Daniel Boone! You don't want to miss...It makes them think their medicine's stronger than yours...

MOSE

Ay-eh...That's jest what I tole Joe Powers...That un's gettin' kinda sassy, ain't he, Ethan?

One Comanche rides a few yards into the water, brandishing his rifle, taunting the white men. A moment later he is joined by a second brave.

ETHAN

(grimly)

Real sassy.

He and Mose slowly bring their rifles to bear -- and then the two shots crack out almost simultaneously. And within split seconds both Comanches fall. The others race away. Sam comes charging over to Ethan and Mose.

CLAYTON

(angrily)

I didn't give any order to fire!

ETHAN

That's all right, Captain...I don't need any formal invitation to kill a Comanch...

CLAYTON

(grimly)

You got one now!

And he drops behind a rock as, with a wild whooping, the Comanche forces swing from their places of hiding and hit the river. The men open fire, all but Martin, who has frozen, staring wild-eyed at the oncoming Comanches.

77 EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - PROFILE SHOT - THE DEFENDERS

Brad, Charlie, Clayton, Nesby are snapping shot after shot. Only Martin seems out of it. Ethan shoots him a glance.

ETHAN

Slack your shoulders...Slack 'em...  
Your hands'll take care of themselves...

Some of the tension leaves Martin. Somehow his gun is in position and he is firing as fast and well as the others.

77-A EXT. THE RIVER - FULL SHOT - INDIAN CHARGE

The Comanches are coming in, crouched low over their ponies'

necks, whooping and firing. Men and horses go down, counted off by the expert marksmanship of the Texans. But they keep coming.

77-B EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - PROFILE SHOT - PAST MARTIN, ETHAN, MOSE

They drop their rifles now and pull out revolvers for close-range work. One Comanche breaks through from the side, his buffalo lance ready for the thrust. Ethan whirls and fires. The Comanche horse charges through the defense line and out and there is a muffled scream of pain from Ed Nesby.

77-C EXT. THE RIVER - WIDE ANGLE - THE INDIANS

The charge breaks and Comanches wheel left and right, racing back across the river. With magnificent horsemanship, one brave rides to an unhorsed warrior crouched in the shallows and swings him up behind. Two others, riding together, head for one of the two dead Comanches Ethan and Mose had downed on their first shots. Swinging simultaneously from their saddles, they grab the dead man and carry him off.

77-D EXT. THE RIVER'S EDGE - ANGLING PAST MOSE AND ETHAN

MOSE  
(cackling)  
There goes yer scalp, Ethan!...

Ethan snuggles his rifle to his shoulder as two other racing Comanches prepare to pick up the other dead Indian. Most of the Comanches have regained the far bank now and are racing away. The firing from the Texans has stopped.

ETHAN  
I still got one out there.

78- OMITTED  
81

82 EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - CLOSE SHOT - BEHIND ETHAN

The angle is along his rifle barrel as it beads on one of the racing Comanches trying to pick up the dead Indian. Clayton's big hand grasps the rifle barrel.

CLAYTON'S VOICE  
(quietly)  
No, Ethan.

83 EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - CLOSE SHOT - THE TWO

Ethan looks up into Clayton's face.

CLAYTON  
Let them bury their dead...

Ethan pulls the gun free and looks out across the river.

84 EXT. THE RIVER - LONG SHOT - PAST THEM

The Comanches have done their work, are riding away -- and over the saddle of one lies the limp form of the dead Indian. Ethan looks back at Sam.

ETHAN

That tears it, Reverend...From now on, you keep out...  
(mad now -- facing the others)  
All of you!...I don't want you with me...I don't need you...for what I got to do!

CHARLIE

(quietly)  
No need to shout, mister.

The CAMERA SWINGS to pick up the figure of Nesby outstretched on the ground, writhing in pain; with Charlie kneeling beside him. The men cross to stand around the fallen man.

CHARLIE

Reckon we got to go back -- Ed's shoulder is smashed -- bad!

NESBY

I can make it...just get me on a horse...

CLAYTON

No good, Ed...And Ethan's right... This is a job for a company of Rangers...or it's a job for one or two men...Right now we're too many... an' not enough...

BRAD

(facing Ethan)  
Only one way you can stop me lookin' for Lucy, mister...An' that's kill me...

MARTIN

That's how I feel, Uncle Ethan...  
(correcting the slip)  
Ethan, sir.

Ethan glares at them, but has to accept it.

ETHAN

All right...but I'm givin' the orders...You take 'em or we split up here and now...

MARTIN

(quickly)

Why, sure, Ethan...There's just the one thing we're after...finding Deborah and Lucy...

ETHAN

(grimly -- turning away)

If they're still alive...

He heads away, for his horse. Brad and Martin look at each other as the full import of Ethan's footnote strikes home. Then they head for their own horses.

85- OMITTED  
86

86-A EXT. THE RIVER - FULL SHOT

Ethan, Martin, and Brad mount. Clayton crosses to them.

CLAYTON

You boys got enough shells?

They nod.

MARTIN

Yeah...

CLAYTON

Vaya con dios.

The three re-enter the river and slowly start across, with Clayton gravely looking after them. The three riders continue across the river...and the Search Theme resumes.

DISSOLVE TO:

87 EXT. WIDE ANGLE - DESERT COUNTRY - BLAZING NOON

A region of buttes and giant rock formations; treeless, arid and seemingly reaching out to infinity. Far off we see a cloud of dust -- miles and miles off. Only the dust, nothing else. From behind CAMERA ride the three men -- Ethan, Brad, and Martin -- dust-powdered, eyes bloodshot. The three are watching that distant cloud of dust. They force their weary horses onward.

WIPE TO:

88 EXT. DESERT COUNTRY - WIDE ANGLE - LATE AFTERNOON

The ANGLE is past some spectacular butte or citadel of rock into another long reach of valley -- different from the first view of it, yet alike in its suggestion of endlessness. But now there is no cloud of dust far away -- nothing to suggest the passage of anything but time itself.

Ethan, Martin, and Brad ride into the fringe of the butte's shadow and scan the terrain ahead.

BRAD

(shrill)

They got to stop sometime...if they're human at all, they got to stop!

ETHAN

Naw...a human man rides a horse till it dies...then he goes on afoot...A Comanche comes along...gets that horse up...and rides it twenty more miles...Then he eats it.

Ethan turns to catch Martin thirstily drinking from his canteen.

ETHAN

(angrily)

Easy on that!

MARTIN

Sorry...We don't even know if Debbie 'n Lucy are with this bunch...Maybe they split up...

ETHAN

They're with 'em -- if they're still alive.

Brad wheels on him.

BRAD

You've said that enough!...Maybe Lucy's dead...maybe they're both dead...but if I hear it from you again, I'll fight ya, Mr. Edwards!

ETHAN

(an aside)

That'll be the day!...Let's ride.

WIPE TO:

89 OMITTED

89-A EXT. VALLEY AND CANYON WALL - WIDE ANGLE - THE RIDERS -

LATE AFTERNOON

(NOTE: This is the gap in the rocks near the "Medicine Country" at Monument.)

The three riders come to where the trail they have been following forks...the main horseprint track leading ahead, a lesser track heading for a narrow gap between two buttes.

MARTIN

Four of 'em cut out here...Why?

Ethan thinks he knows why. His face is bleak. But he tries to be casual.

ETHAN

I'll take a look...You keep after the others...

He turns his mount toward the gap.

MARTIN

(eagerly)

You want us to fire a shot if...

ETHAN

(disgustedly)

No...nor build bonfires...nor beat drums neither. I'll meet you on the far side.

He's still grumbling as he rides off. An abashed Martin rides ahead along the broad trail with Brad.

(NOTE: Ethan's serape, tied behind his saddle, should be clearly seen as he rides away -- not pointed up, but visible.)

WIPE TO:

90 EXT. FAR SIDE OF BUTTE - TWILIGHT

Martin and Brad, riding in a direction opposite to that in which they had taken off -- indicating their circle route -- haul up momentarily as they spot Ethan, standing beside his horse, his back to them, some distance along. They turn slightly off their course and ride out toward him.

91 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - NEAR BUTTE - TWILIGHT

Ethan turns, almost startled, as the two youths ride in. His serape is no longer behind his saddle. Ethan looks at them blankly for a minute -- as though not really seeing them.

ETHAN

Oh...it's you.

They both stare at him.

ETHAN  
(a vague gesture)  
I...uh...here's where they met up  
again...

They both can see that.

ETHAN  
(pointing)  
Trail leads off there...

They look at him and each other -- for these are clearly unnecessary remarks and doubly surprising coming from Ethan.

BRAD  
Why'd they break off?  
(no answer)  
Was there water in that canyon?

ETHAN  
Huh...? No...no water.

MARTIN  
You all right, Ethan?

ETHAN  
Huh...?  
(more like his  
usual gruff self)  
Sure I'm all right...

He goes to his horse, mounts. Martin is right beside him and he notes the missing serape.

MARTIN  
Say!...What happened to your  
blanket? Lose it?

ETHAN  
Must've...Anyway, I ain't goin' back  
to look for it...

He leads out. Brad rides up beside Martin. Again the two exchange puzzled looks. Martin shrugs and the three continue along the broad trace of the Indian ponies into the setting sun.

DISSOLVE TO:

92 EXT. NIGHT CAMP - A POCKET IN THE HILLS - TWILIGHT

Ethan crouches over a small fire built into a slit trench so that barely the glow of the flames can be seen. Beyond him

Martin is leading their unsaddled horses away. The men have come to the end of another long day. Both men look up as Brad comes over a hill slope and rides recklessly down the incline to their camp. His horse is lathered.

BRAD  
(shouting it)  
I saw her!...I saw Lucy!

Martin runs to his side as Brad slides off his mount. Ethan moves more slowly.

BRAD  
(continuing)  
They're camped 'bout two miles over...  
I was just swingin' back when I saw  
their smoke...I bellied up a ridge  
an' they was right below me...

MARTIN  
Did you see Debbie?

BRAD  
No, but I saw Lucy all right...She  
was wearin' that blue dress...an'  
she was walkin' along...

ETHAN  
(voice flat)  
What you saw wasn't Lucy.

BRAD  
It was, I tell you!

ETHAN  
What you saw was a buck wearin'  
Lucy's dress...  
(they stare at him)  
I found Lucy back there in that  
canyon...I wrapped her in my blanket  
an' buried her with m'own hands...I  
thought it best to keep it from you --  
long as I could.

He can't look at Brad or at Martin. Brad can't speak -- and then finally:

BRAD  
Did they...? Was she...?

Ethan wheels on him in shouting fury.

ETHAN  
(blazing)  
What've I got to do -- draw you a  
picture?...Spell it out?...Don't ever



ask me!...Long as you live don't ever  
ask me more!

Brad wipes his mouth with the back of his hand. He turns -- walking stiff-legged as though on stilts back to his horse. He bends his head against the saddle, as though to hide his grief. Martin turns away from him and walks back to Ethan. And in that moment, Brad mounts and takes off in the same direction from which he had ridden in.

MARTIN  
(frantically)  
BRAD!...

They run for their horses.

CUT TO:

92-A EXT. ROUGH ROLLING COUNTRY - NIGHT - MOVING - CLOSE SHOT  
- BRAD

He comes pounding down a slope, and he takes off his hat and skims it away. He rips off a neckerchief as though to relieve the rush of raging blood.

92-B EXT. THE EDGE OF A RISE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - BRAD - NIGHT

He reaches the crest and reins in. A distant firelight is on his face. He takes one moment to look down into the Comanche camp o.s. Then he has his gun out. His eyes are wild, his face wet with sweat. Then he throws back his head and he yells -- and with the yell goes charging into the camp.

92-C EXT. A RIDGE - FULL SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN - NIGHT

They rein in -- staring -- as from afar they hear Brad's yell echoing and bouncing off the canyon walls. There is nothing they can do. They hear his shouts, then the quick bark of his .44, and the angry shouts of the Comanche.

92-D EXT. COMANCHE CAMP - EXTREME CLOSEUP - BRAD - RIDING - NIGHT

His face is red with the reflected light of the fires he is passing o.s. and his eyes are alight with a crazy, savage joy. His gun cracks once, then again -- and the hammer clicks on a spent shell.

92-E EXT. COMANCHE CAMP - CLOSE SHOT - SCAR - NIGHT

He stands apart, warbow drawn and arrow notched. He releases it at his running target. We hear its impact and a high gasp of pain...and then the jubilant, yammering yells of other Comanches.

92-F EXT. A RIDGE - FULL ON MARTIN AND ETHAN AS BEFORE - NIGHT

The distant yammering of the Comanches doesn't quite drown out one stifled scream of pain; we can surmise a scalping knife was busy in the last instance of Brad's life. Martin slumps in his saddle. Ethan listens a moment, then turns to Martin.

ETHAN

Let's just hope he took some with him...

He turns his horse back the way they had come. Martin stares at him.

MARTIN

What you goin' to do?

ETHAN

Get some sleep...Tomorrow's another day...

Slowly, he rides away. Slowly, reluctantly but helpless to do otherwise, Martin follows.

DISSOLVE TO:

93- OMITTED  
99

100 EXT. PLAINS COUNTRY - LOW ANGLE SHOT - DAY

A study of horseprints etched in the soil -- the mark of the passage of many horses; perhaps an eagle or turkey feather fallen from a warbonnet. And then we hear and see the approach of two plodding horses, and the dusty boots of the horsemen -- Ethan and Martin -- following the trail. The Search Theme resumes and continues over the next three shots, helping us suggest the passage of time, the change of scene.

101 EXT. PLAINS COUNTRY - LONG SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN - DAY

The two figures are little more than specks in a vastness of savage country.

WIPE TO:

102 EXT. MOUNTAIN COUNTRY - LOW ANGLE SHOT - DAY

Again we study the hooves of two horses, fighting their way up a rocky slope and past a thorn bush on which -- fluttering in the mountain wind -- is a torn scrap of scarlet cloth with a bit of beadwork or Indian decoration.

WIPE TO:

103 OMITTED

104 EXT. PLAINS COUNTRY - LOW ANGLE SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN -  
AFTERNOON

It is a portrait study of two faces -- etched by wind and privation and cold into tragic, fanatic masks. Martin has aged years in a matter of months. Falling snow flakes touch their faces and begin to rime their stubbly beards.

MARTIN  
(bitterly)  
Say it. We're beat!

ETHAN  
(slowly)  
No...our turnin' back don't change anything...not in the long run. If she's alive, she's safe...for a while...They'll keep her to raise as one of their own, 'til she's of an age to...

He turns his mount.

MARTIN  
And you think we got a chance to find her?

ETHAN  
An Injun will chase a thing til he thinks he's chased it enough...Then he quits...Same when he runs...Seems he never learns there's such a thing as a critter that might just keep comin' on...So we'll find them in the end, I promise you that...We'll find them just as sure as the turning of the earth.

FADE OUT

105 OMITTED

FADE IN

106 EXT. THE JORGENSEN HOUSE AND APPROACH - WIDE ANGLE -  
TWILIGHT

The time is spring. It is a year and a half later. The Jorgensen house is larger than the Edwards place -- of sod and logs, with a covered breezeway connecting the two separate buildings of the house: one being the keeping room, the other the sleeping quarters of

the numerous Jorgensen brood. A meadowlark breaks into his sudden song. A dog or two come barking around the side of the house as Ethan and Martin ride slowly from behind CAMERA toward the house. In that instant a lamp is lighted within the house and Lars Jorgensen comes to the door.

107 EXT. THE JORGENSEN HOUSE - FULL SHOT - NEAR DOOR - TWILIGHT

Jorgensen peers at the two men as they ride up - recognizing them, of course, but ill-prepared for the change in their appearance and full of unspoken questions. Bearing a lamp, Mrs. Jorgensen hurries out to stand beside her husband -- and her face works and tears begin to well in her eyes. Two tow-headed boys -- 13 or 14 -- come after her. Jorgensen makes a little signal with one hand, not even looking at the boys, and they hurry out to take the reins as Ethan and Martin dismount.

108 EXT. THE JORGENSEN HOUSE - MED. SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN

The passage of time has stamped Martin -- and will continue during our story more and more to stamp him -- in the image of Ethan. Now it may show only in the set of his hat or trick of standing; later it will be in his walk, in his speech (or paucity of speech). Neither man is sure of his reception. They are thinking of Brad -- dead because of their search; and Martin is thinking of Laurie. And then Mrs. Jorgensen is running across to Martin and has him in her arms as though he were her son -- saying nothing, just holding him. He stands frozen a moment and then he returns the embrace. Ethan watches a moment, then crosses to Jorgensen.

ETHAN

(to Jorgensen)

You got my letter about your son,  
Brad?

JORGENSEN

Yah...Just about this time a year  
ago...

MRS. JORGENSEN

It came the day before his...  
birthday.

JORGENSEN

The Lord giveth--the Lord taketh  
away...

Mrs. Jorgensen starts to lead the way inside. Martin hangs back.

MARTIN

I ain't fit to go indoors, miz  
Jorgensen...These clothes is...

Laurie rushes past her mother.

LAURIE

Martie!

She kisses him hard and full on the mouth -- and has  
no eyes for anyone else. Mrs. Jorgensen looks on with  
amusement. Martin is just bowled over.

MRS. JORGENSEN

(teasing)

And him probably forgettin' all  
about you!...Probably can't even  
call your name to mind.

MARTIN

(smiling)

Laurie.

And Laurie smiles triumphantly at her mother.

MARTIN

(continuing)

But I fairly forgot just how pretty  
you was...

Laurie grabs his hand then and pulls him indoors --  
and there is no further resistance from Martin.  
Mrs. Jorgensen and her husband converge then on Ethan --  
and her face is gravely questioning.

MRS. JORGENSEN

The little one?...Debbie?

Ethan shakes his head. She squeezes his arm reassuringly  
and they start indoors.

DISSOLVE TO:

109 INT. THE SPARE BEDROOM OF THE JORGENSEN'S - MED. SHOT -  
MARTIN - NIGHT

This is a room off the kitchen end of the keeping room --  
and described in the book as the "grandmother room":  
with narrow, slit-like windows, a set of single bunk  
beds, possibly a fireplace.

Martin is in a deep wooden tub, taking a hot bath,  
currying his back with a long-handled brush. Beyond  
him is the door. It opens and Martin turns casually --  
and at once stops being casual as Laurie enters and  
purposefully crosses to a stool or bench on which his

discarded clothing is scattered.

MARTIN

Hey...What you doin'...?

She picks up the shirt, puts it over one arm; she reaches for his long-handled and ragged underwear, runs a fist through a hole in its seat, clucks and shreds it into rags. During this:

MARTIN

(a yelp)

Don't go takin' that stuff...

LAURIE

Ain't worth the mendin'...

She turns and looks at him, matter of fact.

LAURIE

What you gettin' red-in-the-face for?...I have brothers, haven't I?

MARTIN

Well I ain't one of 'em!

LAURIE

I'm a woman, Martie...

(he tries to say

something but

she goes right on)

We wash and mend your dirty clothes all our lives...When you're little we even wash you....How a man can ever make out to get bashful in front of a woman I'll never know...

MARTIN

You talk like a feller might just as leave run around nekkid...

LAURIE

Wouldn't bother me...

(she heads for

the door)

I wouldn't try it in front of pa, though, was I you...

And she is laughing as she closes the door behind her.

110 INT. THE KEEPING ROOM OF THE JORGENSEN HOUSE - FULL SHOT

It is a plastered room, everything bright and shiny; a big wood-burning cookstove, above it a row of shiny copper pots; the furniture handmade and probably not too much unlike the good plain Swedish modern of today.

There should be Scandinavian accents in the decor. All told, a cheerful, warm-smelling room.

Ethan is talking as Laurie enters the room still carrying Martin's shirt, the rags of his underwear. She will wait, listening for a break in what Ethan is saying, to try to get her mother's attention. Jorgensen is sitting in his usual chair -- with his boots off, puffing his pipe more or less in tune with what Ethan is talking about. Mrs. Jorgensen is in her rocker, darning or knitting. Ethan is standing near the mantel.

ETHAN

...an' then it snowed and we lost  
the trail...No need to tell ya all  
the places we went...Fort Richardson,  
Fort Wingate an' Cobb...the Anadarko  
Agency...Trouble is we don't even  
know which band that war party belonged  
to...

Mrs. Jorgensen looks up from her darning.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Well, you did all a body could,  
Ethan.

ETHAN

I got your boy killed.

MRS. JORGENSEN

(gently)  
Don't go blamin' yourself...

JORGENSEN

(angrily)  
It's this country killed my boy!...  
Yes, by golly!

Mrs. Jorgensen stands.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Now Lars!...It so happens we be  
Texicans...We took a reachin' hold,  
way far out, past where any man has  
right or reason to hold on...Or if  
we didn't, our folks did...So we  
can't leave off without makin' them  
out to be fools, wastin' their lives  
'n wasted in the way they died...A  
Texican's nothin' but a human man  
out on a limb...This year an'  
next and maybe for a hundred more.  
But I don't think it'll be forever.  
Someday this country will be a fine  
good place to be...Maybe it needs

our bones in the ground before that  
time can come...

The speech impresses everyone but Laurie, who probably  
hasn't heard a word of it.

LAURIE

Ma!...Martie's drawers is a sight!  
Ain't fit for rags!..Would it be  
all right if we gave him some of  
Brad's things?

There is just the briefest hesitation...

MRS. JORGENSEN

Why...'course it would! They're in  
the chest...

And she leads the way briskly, with Laurie following, to  
a big chest at the far end of the room.

JORGENSEN

(rising excitedly)

By golly, the letter...In the chest,  
mama...It came for you, Ethan...  
last winter...

Ethan and Jorgensen cross together to where Mrs. Jorgensen  
is raising the top of a huge dower chest. She extracts  
a letter, wrapped in oilskin against moths.

JORGENSEN

(continuing)

Joab Wilkes of the Rangers brought  
it...

Ethan takes the letter and studies it very carefully  
before venturing to open it. Jorgensen is quite  
curious, but trying not to seem nosy. The women remain  
at the chest -- pulling out various folded garments,  
etc. Finally Ethan carefully opens it and takes  
out a letter -- dirty as to paper, crudely printed in  
pencil and with a horseshoe nail pinning a two-inch  
square snip of calico to the bottom of the sheet. He  
reads the letter with the habitual difficulty of a man  
unused to words and then he turns the letter, removes  
the nail and looks at the snip of cloth.

ETHAN

(quietly)

Mrs. Jorgensen...

She comes to him, her arms piled with clothing; and  
Laurie a step behind her, holding up a new pair of long-  
handled underwear -- measuring it with her eyes for  
holes, etc.



ETHAN

Will you look at this?

He holds out the snip of calico.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Why it's just a snip of calico...

ETHAN

You ever see it before...like mebbe  
on a dress Debbie wore?

MRS. JORGENSEN

Yes!..Yes, I remember!..Have they  
found her, Ethan?

ETHAN

No...not yet...

He takes the calico snip, places it within the letter  
and carefully pockets it. He looks broodingly into the  
fire.

ETHAN

(continuing)

...not yet...

Laurie's face is troubled as she turns from him and heads  
for the grandmother room, carrying the armful of clothes.

111 INT. THE SPARE BEDROOM - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

Martin is sitting sulkily on a cot, wrapped in a blanket.  
He glares up as Laurie enters. His feet are in his  
boots.

MARTIN

Might at least have left me my  
pants!

LAURIE

Shush!...Time for bed anyway...

(putting clothes

near him)

Likely these'll need some takin'  
in...Oh, Martie, you're that gaunted!  
...Ma's havin' a turkey for dinner  
tomorrow and...

JORGENSEN'S VOICE

(calling)

Laurie!..Come...come!

Ethan opens the door, enters.

Laurie

Yes, Pa!..Good night, Martie...  
good night, Mr. Edwards...

She wants to kiss Martie but is shy in Ethan's presence  
and hurries out.

Martin

Good night...Laurie...

Ethan

Good night...

Martin stoops to remove his boots. Ethan studies him  
and looks thoughtfully after the girl and at Martin.  
He takes the letter out of his pocket -- as though he  
meant to read it -- and then he puts it back decisively.  
He starts to undress. Martin lies back on his bunk.

Ethan

Jorgensen's been runnin' his cattle  
with my own...

Martin

(staring)

YOUR cattle?...DEBBIE'S cattle!

Ethan returns the stare without any change of expression.

Ethan

He's agreed to take you on and  
share the increase from my herd  
while I'm gone...I'll be pushin'  
on tomorrow...

Martin

I ain't stayin'...I set out lookin'  
for Debbie...I aim to keep on...

Ethan

Why?

Martin

Because she's my...my...

Ethan

She's your nothin'...She's no kin  
to you at all!

Martin

I always felt like she was...Her  
folks takin' me in, raisin' me  
like one of their own...

Ethan

That don't make 'em kin...

MARTIN

All right...I ain't got no kin...  
I'm goin' to keep lookin' that's  
all.

ETHAN

How? You got any horses, or money  
to buy 'em...You ain't even got  
money to buy cartridges...Jorgensen's  
offering you a good livin' here...

Martin throws himself back, turns his face to the wall.  
Ethan looks soberly at him -- and is sorry for the  
brutality of his words.

ETHAN

Martin...I want you to know some-  
thin'...

MARTIN

(turning -- mad as  
hell)

Yeah...you want me to know I ain't got  
no kin -- no money -- no horses --  
nothing but a dead man's clothes  
to wear!..You tole me that already...  
Now shut your head!

ETHAN

Good night.

DISSOLVE TO:

112 EXT. THE JORGENSEN HOME - WIDE ANGLE - DAWN LIGHT

It is a still scene, with the first light of day in the  
sky, a thin plume of smoke rising from the chimney.

113 INT. THE JORGENSEN KEEPING ROOM - MED. CLOSE SHOT -  
LAURIE -  
DAWN LIGHT

She is in a robe made of an Indian blanket, belted snugly  
around her waist. She wears moccasins for slippers. Her  
flannel nightgown is high at the collar and almost trails  
the floor. She is at the stove, frying bacon and eggs; a  
coffee pot is on the boil. Beyond her the door to the  
grandmother room opens and Martin comes in -- dressed in  
Brad's clothes. His eyes whip around the room. Laurie  
doesn't turn as he slowly approaches.

LAURIE

(quietly)

Ethan rode on...an hour ago.

The starch goes out of him. He walks heavily to the table and sits, slumped. She looks at him compassionately.

LAURIE

I don't know what you can do about finding Debbie that he can't...

He just shakes his head, not looking at her. She lifts the food from the skillet onto a plate and sets it before him.

LAURIE

He'll find her now, Martie...Please believe me...I know.

He shakes his head. She crosses to the stove for the coffee pot.

MARTIN

That's what scares me -- him findin' her.

Now it is her turn to stare.

MARTIN

Laurie, I've seen his eyes when he so much as hears the word 'Comanche' ...I've seen him take his knife an' ...never mind...But he's a man can go crazy wild...It might come on him when it was the worst thing could be ...What I counted on, I hoped to be there to stop him, if such thing come.

Laurie has poured his coffee. Now he sips it. She sits at the table with him.

LAURIE

(slowly)

I hoped I could hold you here...But I guess I knew...So I stole this for you...

She takes Ethan's letter from her breast and hands it to him. He takes it, puzzled, and slowly reads it aloud.

MARTIN

'I bought a small size dress off a Injun...If this here is a piece of yr chiles dress bring reward. I know where they gone...Jerem Futterman.'

Martin is on his feet.

MARTIN

(excited)  
Futterman!...He's got a little  
tradin' post on the South Fork o'  
the Brazos...Laurie, I just got  
to get me a good horse! Think  
yer pa would...

LAURIE  
Finish your breakfast...

MARTIN  
I gotta catch up with him, Laurie!

LAURIE  
(almost in tears --  
but angry)  
Go on then! Pa's in the barn  
saddlin' the Fort Worth stud...  
an' you can take the light gelding  
with the blaze...

MARTIN  
But that's Sweet-face -- your own  
good horse.

Laurie goes to the front door and throws it wide.

LAURIE  
(hysterically)  
Take it and welcome...but don't  
count on finding me here when you  
get back...I've been dallying around  
this god-forsaken wind-scour almost  
two long years waitin' for you...I  
ain't cut out to be an old maid!

MARTIN  
(miserably)  
I can't help it, Laurie...I  
just gotta catch up with Ethan...

He runs out and she slams the door, then rests her head  
against it.

113-A INT. JORGENSEN KEEPING ROOM - FULL SHOT - EARLY MORNING

Mrs. Jorgensen quietly enters the room and sees Laurie with  
head pressed against the door. She wants to offer some  
word of sympathy, but doesn't know what to say. She  
crosses to the stove to pour herself a cup of coffee. Then  
we hear the drum of horses' hooves, the sound of Martin  
riding away. Laurie flings open the door, almost as though  
to call him back.

113-B EXT. PLAINS COUNTRY AND LAKE BEFORE JORGENSEN HOUSE -  
EARLY MORNING

ANGLING from behind Laurie in the doorway as Martin, riding one horse, leading another, goes galloping away.

114 EXT. FUTTERMAN'S TRADING POST - WIDE ANGLE - DAY

A low, squat adobe structure, with a crudely lettered sign-board proclaiming it:

'JEREM. FUTTERMAN, TRADER'

There are adjacent outbuildings and corral. Four horses are tied outside, two being pack animals. A surly-looking white man or breed sits in a stool tilted back near the door, whittling with a long-bladed knife, eyeing the horses covetously. He glances aside and glares as a squaw shuffles along bearing a clumsy load of faggots on her bowed back.

MAN

Andale! Andale!

Fearfully she quickens her step. The man gets up, shoves knife into belt and heads into the post.

115 INT. FUTTERMAN'S TRADING POST - FULL SHOT - DAY

It is a grimy establishment with some dusty trade goods on shelves; a counter which serves as a bar; a few plank tables and benches.

The breed seen outside enters and crosses to a side table where another mean-looking hombre sits preparing to play a game of solitaire with a deck of limp cards.

Ethan and Martin are at a table in the center of the room, examining a dirty, rumpled child's dress -- Debbie's. Martin nods soberly in answer to Ethan's inquiring look; yes, it's hers. Both look up as FUTTERMAN crosses from the bar, carrying a whisky jug and two dirty glasses -- his fingers thrust inside the glasses. Futterman is a squaw man and a killer -- dead eyes in a white face.

FUTTERMAN

Drink?

He sets the jug down, picks up one of the glasses -- so grey and thumb-printed it is almost opaque. Both Ethan and Martin regard it with disgust. Futterman gives a slight shrug, takes the dress and starts to wipe the dirty glass with it. Martin snatches it out of his hand.

ETHAN

(harshly)

How'd you come by this?

FUTTERMAN

You said there'd be a thousand  
dollar reward.

ETHAN

That's what I said.

FUTTERMAN

You got it with you?

Ethan looks at him and beyond toward the two men.

116 INT. FUTTERMAN'S - CLOSE SHOT - THE TWO PLUG-UGLIES

The solitaire player has a card in mid-air -- frozen,  
watching. The other man has the same buzzard-watchful  
look.

117 INT. FUTTERMAN'S - FULL SHOT - THE GROUP AS BEFORE

ETHAN

Reward'll be paid when I find  
her -- an' if she's alive...

Futterman uncorks the jug, prepares to drink.

FUTTERMAN

Man's got a right to expect some  
kind o' payment...I laid out for  
the dress an' sendin' you the  
writin'...

He tilts the jug to his mouth as Ethan reaches for his  
heavy leather pouch. Futterman watches greedily as Ethan  
lets a gold piece slide out. He tosses it onto the table.

ETHAN

Twenty Yankee dollars.

Futterman puts the jug down. His hand inches -- as though  
pulled by a magnet -- toward the gold piece.

FUTTERMAN

...an' a man's time is worth  
somethin'...

Ethan's big hand clamps over Futterman's and he starts  
squeezing as a man would squeeze a lemon. Futterman's lips  
whiten.

ETHAN

Talk!

FUTTERMAN

A young buck fetched it in late  
last summer...

(Ethan eases the grip)  
Said it belonged to a captive chile  
of Chief Scar...

ETHAN  
Scar? Never heard of any Chief Scar.

FUTTERMAN  
Me neither...But this buck claimed he  
was a big war chief with the Nawyecky  
Comanches.

ETHAN  
Keep talking.

FUTTERMAN  
Scar's band was headin' north...to  
winter in at Fort Wingate...eatin'  
agency beef. That's what this buck  
said...Maybe he lied.

ETHAN  
And maybe you lie...

FUTTERMAN  
In that case you won't find her --  
and I won't get my thousand dollars.

Ethan stands. Martin follows. Martin takes the dress and  
folds it carefully.

FUTTERMAN  
(too casually)  
Stay the night if you want...  
(Ethan shakes his head)  
Cards?...A jug?...If you'd like  
some company, we got a few squaws  
on the place...

Ethan and Martin head for the door.

ETHAN  
No thanks.

The two plug-uglies stand -- mean ready to do their master's  
bidding.

FUTTERMAN  
Don't forget to come back with  
my thousand dollars.

ETHAN  
Ain't yours yet.

They leave. The CAMERA holds on Futterman as he slowly  
rubs his bruised hand. His henchmen drift toward him.



FUTTERMAN  
(slight smile)  
Bad manners...He shoulda said 'good-bye.'

DISSOLVE TO:

118 EXT. HILLY COUNTRY - MED. SHOT - ETHAN - NIGHT

They have set up camp near a cluster of cottonwoods to which the horses have been tied. One of the horses is restless, possibly nickering. Ethan strokes its neck, looking out thoughtfully into the night -- listening.

MARTIN'S VOICE  
Acts like somethin's out there.

ETHAN  
(heading toward  
campfire)  
Smells a change in the weather...

CAMERA PANS him to where Martin is spreading his blanket some little distance from the small fire.

ETHAN  
Wouldn't surprise me if we didn't  
have a frost 'fore mornin'...Here...  
(he picks up a  
saddle and puts  
it close to fire)  
Whyn't you bed down closer to the  
fire, boy?

Martin is a bit surprised as Ethan takes the blanket and spreads it near the saddle -- making the saddle serve as a pillow. Then Ethan tosses a few more heavy pieces of dry wood on the fire, making it blaze up.

MARTIN  
Hey! What's the idea...?

ETHAN  
Maybe I'm gettin' like Mose Harper  
-- my bones is cold tonight...

He spreads his own blanket as Martin wraps into his bedroll, and when Martin turns, he casually arranges the blanket to suggest it is over the figure of a man. During this:

MARTIN  
Funny...When we passed through  
Fort Wingate last winter, we didn't  
hear mention of any Nawyecky Comanche  
there...

Ethan steps back -- and studies the "dummy."

ETHAN

Not so funny...if you recollect what  
'Nawyecka' means...

MARTIN

What's that?

Ethan studies Martin's back -- the light on him -- and looks around figuring the range of fire.

ETHAN

Sorta like 'roundabout' -- like a  
man says he's goin' one place when  
he means to go just the reverse...

MARTIN

(drowsily)

Oh...

ETHAN

You all settled an' comfortable now?

Martin just grunts and snugs deeper into his blanket. Ethan nods his satisfaction -- sure Martin isn't going to change positions. Then he takes off his hat and boots and uses them to complete the dummy. He picks up his rifle then and quietly walks out of the camp.

CUT TO:

119 EXT. HILLY COUNTRY - A RAVINE OR ARROYO - FULL SHOT -  
THREE  
MEN - NIGHT

Three shadowy figures -- Futterman and his two henchmen -- are quietly dismounting, taking rifles from saddle scabbards. At a hand signal from Futterman, they quietly fan out afoot.

120 EXT. NIGHT CAMP - MED. CLOSE SHOT - MARTIN

still snug in his blankets, sound asleep; the fire burning a little lower but still shedding plenty of light on him.

121 EXT. HILLY COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - FROM BEHIND FUTTERMAN  
AND  
HIS HENCHMEN

At a crouch or crawling, the three worm their way among some rocks until they reach a slight rise looking down into the camp. Martin is asleep and next to him is Ethan's dummy, hat over its face, and the fire still burning. The two henchmen snake their rifles up to a firing position. A shot cracks...and one man is knocked flat on his face.

The other whirls in the direction of the shot, his rifle swinging in search of a target. A second shot splits the night and the breed falls as though hit by a giant fist... Martin is sitting up now, staring wildly around. Futterman starts to run down-slope, away from the hidden marksman, dodging between the rocks. A third shot catches him in the back and he spins and falls and rolls down the slope into the firepit camp area. Martin is on his feet now.

122 EXT. NIGHT CAMP - FULL SHOT - MARTIN

He is staring at Futterman, face down and almost at his feet. He looks around in fear at someone approaching -- hand going to his gun. Then he relaxes as Ethan casually enters the camp, bareheaded, carrying his rifle.

ETHAN

Thanks...you did just fine...

Ethan kneels beside Futterman, turns him over, reaches into his pockets -- first one, then another.

MARTIN

(dazed)

Futterman?

ETHAN

He just couldn't wait...

MARTIN

(watching him go  
through pockets)

Whatchu doin'?...

Ethan grins satisfiedly as he straightens and spins the gold piece in the air, catches it and pockets it.

ETHAN

Even got my twenty dollars back...  
We did all right.

And now Martin is getting the whole picture...and he's mad.

MARTIN

WE?...You just used me for bait --  
staked me out like a...buildin' up  
the fire...fixin' it so's...I  
coulda had my brains blowed out!

Ethan is just grinning at him -- completely unruffled, denying none of it.

MARTIN

(explosively)

Suppose you'd missed!

Ethan sobers a little, seems honestly surprised.

ETHAN  
Never occurred to me...

DISSOLVE TO:

123 EXT. THE JORGENSEN HOME - WIDE ANGLE - DAY

It is a day in early winter. Charlie MacCorry, short-coated, is galloping across the yard as Jorgensen crosses it -- carrying a load of firewood.

CHARLIE  
(calling it)  
Howdy, Mister Jorgensen...

JORGENSEN  
Charlie...

MacCorry swings off his saddle near the porch, as the door opens and Mrs. Jorgensen comes out -- shawled against the cold.

CHARLIE  
Got a letter here...

Jorgensen lets the cordwood drop...

JORGENSEN  
By golly! A letter?

CHARLIE  
For Miss Laurie...

MRS. JORGENSEN  
Come in, Charlie, come in...  
(calling inside)  
LAURIE!...My land!...Two letters  
in the one year!...

124 INT. JORGENSEN KEEPING ROOM - FULL SHOT

as Charlie enters, following Mrs. Jorgensen. Jorgensen excitedly enters and closes the door. Laurie comes in from another room. Charlie smiles and bows clumsily.

MRS. JORGENSEN  
(to Laurie)  
A letter for you, Laurie...

CHARLIE  
Yes'm...Figgered it might be the  
news you been waitin' for...so...

He hands the letter to Laurie who comes over eagerly, takes

it and studies the wrapper before opening it.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Real good o' you to ride all the way over, Charlie... Might at least say your thank you's, Laurie... Declare!

CHARLIE

No need to...

But Laurie has no interest in anything but the letter which she is reading skimmingly.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Well?

JORGENSEN

(expectantly)

Yah?

MRS. JORGENSEN

Laurie! Don't keep a body just standin'!

Laurie looks up then.

LAURIE

(impatiently)

I was just readin' to see if... Anyway, it's MY letter!

MRS. JORGENSEN

(agreeably)

'Course it is. Now let's all get comfortable an' set so's we can listen while Laurie reads her letter...

CHARLIE

(turning as if to go)

Maybe I'd better be goin'...

JORGENSEN

You stay, Charlie... After all, Charlie brought the letter, Laurie... He got a right to listen too!

Mrs. Jorgensen has been pulling and pushing chairs around and now they all take places. Jorgensen automatically reaches for his glasses on the mantel and puts them on -- even though he isn't going to read the letter. Laurie has been sneaking looks at some of the other pages.

LAURIE

(surrendering)  
Oh, all right! Well...Martin says...

JORGENSEN  
From the beginning...

LAURIE  
'Dear Miss Laury'...He spells it with  
a Y instead of an I...E...Wouldn't you  
think he'd know...

JORGENSEN  
Who cares what he spells it? Read  
the letter.

LAURIE  
Dear Miss Laury...I take pen in hand  
to let you know Ethan and me still  
are trying to catch up with them Com-  
anches the late Mister Futterman told  
us about...

She breaks off, looks up -- puzzled.

LAURIE  
The late Mister Futterman?

JORGENSEN  
That means Mister Futterman is dead,  
by golly.

MRS. JORGENSEN  
Wonder what happened to the poor man.  
Go on, Laurie.

LAURIE  
(resuming the letter)  
We cut north through Indian territory  
and...  
(her voice fades)

DISSOLVE TO:

125 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - LATE SUMMER OR FALL - ETHAN AND  
MARTIN  
(SILENT)

leading their pack animals. Martin's voice picks up the  
narration.

MARTIN'S VOICE  
Soon we was meeting up with Kiowas  
an' Wichitas an' even some Comanches  
camped by one of the agencies...

WIPE TO:

126 WIDE ANGLE - A COMANCHE ENCAMPMENT - ETHAN AND MARTIN -  
DAY  
FALL WEATHER (SILENT)

The camp is on the outskirts of a trading post. Indians watch unsmilingly from tepees, or in little clusters afoot; a few mounted braves ride on parallel courses as Ethan and Martin ride through camp toward the post.

MARTIN'S VOICE

But none of them was Nawyecky's nor claimed to know a war chief named Scar...He's the one the late Mister Futterman said had Debbie...

WIPE TO:

127 INT. APPLEBY'S TRADING POST - MED. SHOT (SILENT) - DAY

This trading post is in marked contrast to Futterman's -- being well-stocked, clean and presided over by HIRAM APPLEBY, a resolute, clean-looking man of middle years.

Ethan and Martin -- in winter garb -- are being shown a variety of trade goods, including a shoebox full of ornate ribbon rosettes, such as are awarded animals at stock fairs. Appleby is solemnly affirming the trade value of these, as well as sleeve garters, etc.

MARTIN'S VOICE

At one o' the agencies we outfitted with all kind an' manner of trade goods...figgerin' that'd make it easier for us to come an' go...You'd laugh if I told you what was our biggest seller...

WIPE TO:

128 EXT. INDIAN ENCAMPMENT - MED. CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN AND FAT INDIAN - EARLY WINTER OR FALL DAY

Ethan is ceremoniously pinning something on the stern-faced buck. It is one of the rosettes seen in the shoebox. CAMERA MOVES to an extreme CLOSEUP of the rosette. On it, in gold letters, is:

FIRST AWARD  
LARD TYPE HOG

129 EXT. INDIAN ENCAMPMENT - FULL SHOT - EARLY FALL OR WINTER DAY

As the Indian proudly steps back, we see beyond him a half dozen other braves -- all rosetted. Ethan looks them

over complacently while Martin -- to hide the smile that threatens to split his face -- bends to pick up a huge bundle of furs.

WIPE TO:

130 INT. JORGENSEN KEEPING ROOM - FULL SHOT - THE GROUP FAVORING LAURIE

reading the letter. She is at the bottom of a page.

LAURIE

'There is one other thing I got to tell you before you hear it from Ethan...How I got myself a wife'...

She stops and stares.

LAURIE

A WIFE?

She looks at them - dazed.

CHARLIE

(delightedly)

He did?

JORGENSEN

(smacking his knee --  
very happy indeed)

Good! A young man should get married early in life. Right, mama?

Mrs. Jorgensen, full of sympathy for Laurie, just glares at her husband.

JORGENSEN

Every young man should at least once...Go on, Laurie! Read!

LAURIE

(haltingly)

A little Comanche squaw - SQUAW!

And with that she crumples the letter and throws it into the fire.

MRS. JORGENSEN

(aghast)

Laurie!

Jorgensen is out of his chair and scrambling in the fireplace to recover the letter. He fetches it out, beating the sparks out. The letter is basically undamaged.



JORGENSEN

(sternly)

Is no way to treat a letter, Laurie  
...Mama maybe you better read it...

(to Charlie, proudly)

My wife was a school teacher, Charlie  
...She reads good.

Laurie snatches the letter back.

LAURIE

I'll read it...

Charlie crosses the room, picks up a guitar.

CHARLIE

(smugly)

So he married a Comanche squaw...Haw  
haw haw!

Laurie glares at him. He begins chording the guitar.

WIPE TO:

131 EXT. INDIAN ENCAMPMENT - MED. CLOSE SHOT - MARTIN AND  
"LOOK" - FALL OR EARLY WINTER - DAY

"LOOK" is somewhat under five feet tall, pigeon-toed, platter-faced and wide-eyed. Over her arm is a very handsome blanket. She is coming forward shyly toward Martin, propelled by a Comanche -- her father. Martin, with an armful of trade goods -- a few yards of bright calico, a couple of AGED SOW rosettes and some trinkets -- is indicating the blanket. Look glances shyly at her father. He shakes his head negatively. Look is disappointed. The father points to Martin's pile of trade goods. Martin bends and picks up the indicated object: it is a battered high-crowned beaver hat. The Indian grunts his approval and puts it on. Look looks relieved. Martin reaches for the blanket. Look takes a quick step backward and holds up one finger: wait! Then she runs back through the other Comanches now crowding forward.

132 EXT. INDIAN ENCAMPMENT - ANOTHER ANGLE - FULL SHOT -  
INCLUDING ETHAN

who rides in slowly, leading their pack horse and Martin's horse.

ETHAN

(quietly)

Let's go...I think I stumbled onto  
somethin'...

MARTIN

(eagerly)  
Scar?

The name registers with some of the nearer braves. There is a quick interchange of glances, frowning, hostile.

ETHAN  
(angrily)  
When are you goin' to learn to keep your mouth shut! Come on. Let's get out of here.

MARTIN  
But I just bought a good blanket.

ETHAN  
(curtly)  
Forget it...

Martin mounts and the two ride out. The Comanches stare after them suspiciously, resentfully.

133 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN - MOVING SHOT - EARLY WINTER DAY

They are riding down a slight grade beyond which (we can assume) is the Comanche camp.

ETHAN  
What I heard back there was that a band o' hostile Nawyeckas came through this way less'n two weeks ago...

MARTIN  
(excitedly)  
Think it might be...?

He breaks and both turn as Look rides over the hill on a little spotted Indian pony, with her squaw-bag slung up behind her and her blanket over the saddle. She closes the gap between them.

ETHAN  
What's she followin' for?

Look smiles shyly at Martin.

MARTIN  
Look, I changed my mind...You can keep your blanket.

He gestures for her to go back.

MARTIN  
Go on back...

She stares and then dutifully wheels her horse. Martin and Ethan face front again. Look wheels her horse again and is right with them. Martin stops - exasperated.

MARTIN

Look...you don't understand...  
(he waves her away)  
I don't want it.

Look just sits.

ETHAN

(explosively)  
YOU don't understand, ya chunkhead!  
You didn't buy any blanket! Ya  
bought her!

MARTIN

(aghast)  
What?

ETHAN

You got yourself a wife, sonny!

MARTIN

(a wail)  
Oh no! Tell her she's got to go  
back...

ETHAN

And have her whole family after our  
scalps for floutin' one o' their  
women?...No sir! Come on,  
Mrs. Pauley...

Look smiles and sets her horse in motion as Ethan moves ahead. Martin's face is a mask of comic despair as he gives up. He is mouthing the words --

MARTIN

Mrs...Pauley?

And Ethan suddenly breaks into song; to the tune of "Skip To My Lou:"

ETHAN

(singing)  
I got another gal purtier'n you  
I got another gal purtier'n you  
I got another gal purtier'n you  
Skip to my Lou, my darlin'.

DISSOLVE TO:

134 EXT. NIGHT CAMP - OPEN COUNTRY - CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN - NIGHT

Ethan is wrapped in his blanket roll, head propped by an elbow, grinning sardonically as he watches a strange ritual in the camp. The score is softly reprising "Skip to my Lou."

135 EXT. NIGHT CAMP - FULL SHOT - PAST ETHAN - NIGHT

Look is standing with her blanket folded over one arm, her head shyly downcast, not far from where Martin (back to her) is spreading his own bed roll. He sits on it then and begins pulling off his boots. He is very conscious of Ethan's watchful scrutiny. Finally he is ready. He lies back on his blanket. At once Look is at his side to spread her own blanket. Martin sits bolt upright and tugs his blanket free and wraps it protectively around him. She stares at him, puzzled.

MARTIN

Water!...  
(in Comanche)  
Pah!

She nods her understanding, hurries off to fetch a canteen. Martin glares at Ethan.

ETHAN

That's the way to train 'em. Looks like Mrs. Pauley's goin' to make you a fine beautiful wife...

MARTIN

Cut it out, will ya...

Look returns with the canteen, hands it to Martin and kneels beside him. He looks at her sympathetically.

MARTIN

Look...I wish I could explain to you.

And now Look speaks for the first time. She indicates herself.

LOOK

Look?...

Now she jabbars in Comanche and, at the appropriate time, will point to the sky and imitate a bird flying.

LOOK

Nay tzare T'sala-ta-komal-ta-name...  
unt kang-yah Look.  
(which means)  
(My father calls me Wild Goose Flying

in the Night Sky...but you call me  
'Look').

Martin looks blank, but Ethan chuckles.

ETHAN

Says her name's Wild Goose Flying in  
the Night Sky...but she'll answer to  
Look since it pleases ya...

MARTIN

(blankly)

Look?

She nods and smiles and quickly settles alongside him and  
spreads her blanket over them both. Martin recoils, plants  
his foot in the small of her back and sends her sprawling.  
Ethan busts a gut laughing. Martin jumps to his feet,  
angrily.

MARTIN

(hotly)

I don't think it's so funny...If you  
want to do some good, whyn't you ask  
her where Scar is?

Ethan stares at the girl. Her face is suddenly impassive as  
she looks from Martin to the ground.

ETHAN

(grimly)

She heard ya-all right...An' she  
knows...

He gets to his feet and he crosses to stand before her. So  
does Martin.

ETHAN

Unt osupanet cah-nay Scar?  
(meaning)  
(You know where Scar is?)

She stares sullenly, not answering.

ETHAN

You ask her!

MARTIN

Look!

(she faces him)

Scar?...

(sign talk)

Do you know where he went? And if he  
has a girl with him...a white girl --  
nai-bist pabo taibo...

She stands...She indicates Martin. She indicates herself.

LOOK  
Mah nee-koo-ur?  
(meaning)  
(Your woman?)

MARTIN  
(shaking head)  
No...not my wife...My...  
(to Ethan)  
How do you say sister?

ETHAN  
(in Comanche)  
Nami.

She looks gravely from Ethan to Martin. Then, with impassive face, she bends swiftly, picks up her blanket and walks away from them to choose her own sleeping place. The two men don't know what to make of it.

DISSOLVE TO:

136 EXT. CAMP - OPEN COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN - MORNING

It is the same scene the following morning. The men are standing above where Look had bedded for the night, looking at the ground. Clearly marked on the hard ground is a crudely drawn arrow.

MARTIN  
Beats me how she could get that pony out o' camp without neither of us hearin' a thing...

ETHAN  
She ain't goin' back to her family, that's certain...not if she took off where the arrow points.

MARTIN  
Think she means for us to follow?

ETHAN  
How should I know...She's YOUR wife!

He walks toward their horses, starts to saddle up. Martin follows.

MARTIN  
I think maybe we oughta...

ETHAN  
(hiding a grin)

Yeah, I kinda figgered you'd say  
that...Bein' a new husband and all...

And Ethan starts singing "Skip to My Lou" half under his  
breath. Martin gives him a sour side-glance and continues  
saddling.

DISSOLVE TO:

137 INT. JORGENSEN HOME - GROUP AS BEFORE - LAURIE READING -  
DAY

Mrs. Jorgensen is bringing a lighted lamp over to the  
table where Laurie is reading against the fading light  
of day. Jorgensen's pipe has gone out and he lights it.

LAURIE

Maybe she left other signs for us  
to follow but we'll never know --  
'cause it snowed all day and all  
the next week...We were heading north,  
through the buffalo country when  
something happened that I ain't got  
straight in my own mind yet...  
(her voice fades)

137-A EXT. SNOW COUNTRY - WIDE ANGLE SHOT - TWO RIDERS  
(COLORADO FOOTAGE)

The two men are picking their way through a snow-mantled  
grove. Martin's voice resumes the narration.

MARTIN'S VOICE

Ethan's always been throwing it up  
to me that I'm a quarter-breed...I  
never figgered it made much  
difference...

137-B EXT. BUFFALO HERD - WIDE ANGLE SHOT - DAY (COLO. FOOTAGE)

MARTIN'S VOICE

But this day we came on a small  
herd. We needed some meat so we  
circled 'round...

137-C EXT. THE HERD - ANOTHER ANGLE (COLO. FOOTAGE)

MARTIN'S VOICE

...and came up on 'em afoot...  
They hadn't been hunted, so it was  
no trick workin' in close.

137-D EXT. THE HERD - MARTIN AND ETHAN - DAY (COLO. FOOTAGE)

The two men walk from behind CAMERA. Ethan aims, fires  
and brings down a bull.

MARTIN'S VOICE

Ethan got a nice one on his first shot, but then he began killing one after another -- cows as well as bulls -- fast as he could fire and load...It was just a slaughter... no sense to it...

137-E EXT. THE HERD BEGINNING TO RUN (COLO. FOOTAGE)

Shots cracking out -- the terrified bawling of the bulls -- the beginning of the stampede.

137-F EXT. MED. CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN (PROCESS)

Martin strides across to where Ethan is firing.

MARTIN

Ethan, quit it!

ETHAN

(firing again)

Nine...

(another shot)

Ten!

MARTIN

What's the sense in it!

Ethan turns and swings a backhand blow which catches Martin by surprise and fells him.

ETHAN

(in a fury)

Hunger! -- Empty bellies! That's the sense in it, you Cherokee!..

He swings up his gun and fires again -- and again... as Martin stares at him from the ground.

137-G EXT. THE HERD - LONG SHOT - THE STAMPEDE (COLO. FOOTAGE)

Fear-maddened animals are swinging into full stampede fleeing the deadly marksman. Rifle shots keep cracking out.

137-H EXT. MED. CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN AS BEFORE (PROCESS)

The thunder of the hooves is receding and Ethan grimly lowers his rifle. Martin picks himself up -- still staring at Ethan as though at a madman. Ethan turns and looks at him.

ETHAN



Least, THEY won't feed any Comanches  
this winter...Killin' buffalo's as  
good as killin' Injuns in this country.

MARTIN

Peaceful tribes depend on the buffalo,  
too....

ETHAN

Ain't that too bad...If you feel  
that sorry for your kinfolk, I'm  
surprised you didn't take up with  
that squaw wife of yours...

He whips out his skinning knife and strides toward the  
dead buffalo o.s. Martin looks after him with troubled  
expression. Suddenly he hears something, borne faint  
by the wind.

MARTIN

ETHAN!

Ethan turns. Now faintly, little more than a shred of  
sound, is the distant blowing of a bugle.

MARTIN

Listen!..Hear it?...There! Ain't  
that a bugle...and firing?

Ethan stares -- and then the bugle sound repeats and the  
distant crack of shots, from long miles off.

ETHAN

(grimly)

Just hope we ain't too late...

And the two break and run for their horses.

DISSOLVE TO:

138- OMITTED

140

141 EXT. A RIVER - WIDE ANGLE - CAVALRY CROSSING WITH  
PRISONERS - DAY

MARTIN'S VOICE

(as narrator)

It was all over long before we  
got there and the soldiers was  
high-tailin' it back to the agency  
with their prisoners -- squaws  
mostly -- by the time Ethan and  
me reached the camp...

142 EXT. SNOW SLOPE - WIDE ANGLE - ETHAN AND MARTIN

Horses and riders plunge downslope through breast-high snow.

MARTIN'S VOICE

It was the Nawyecky Comanches all right -- the ones we'd been looking for all this time...

143 EXT. BURNING INDIAN VILLAGE - WIDE ANGLE - ETHAN AND MARTIN - DAY

as they ride in, passing dead horses, a few bodies of men.

MARTIN'S VOICE

Trouble of it was that the soldiers had hit when most of the fightin' men was away -- huntin' maybe... So most of the dead was old men and women an' kids...And it was in one of the tepees Ethan found her -- the little squaw who wanted me to call her Look...

Ethan has dismounted in front of one of the tepees, heads inside.

144 INT. TEPEE - FULL SHOT - DAY

as Ethan enters. A body -- Look's -- is sprawled on the ground. He crosses, turns her over. Martin enters behind him.

ETHAN

Well, you're a widower now...

MARTIN

(angrily)  
What'd the soldiers have to kill her for!..

He sees something clutched in her hand. He stoops quickly.

MARTIN

Ethan!

Ethan, who has turned indifferently to leave, pauses. Martin shows him what Look had been clutching -- Debbie's rag doll.

MARTIN

Look! It's hers, Debbie's...

Ethan snatches it, stares at it. Then he turns and runs from the tepee. Martin stares at Look's body, then

covers it with a robe.

MARTIN'S VOICE

So we knew Debbie had been in the village...What Look was doing there -- whether she'd come to warn them, or maybe to find Debbie for me... there's no way of knowing...

He turns and then slowly heads out.

145 EXT. THE TEPEE - ETHAN AND MARTIN

Ethan stands there, his expression bleak, looking at the scene. Martin joins him.

MARTIN

We gotta catch up with them yellow legs...Maybe they got her with them.

Ethan isn't thinking of that at all.

ETHAN

(harshly)  
And maybe they got Scar!

They start away -- fast.

DISSOLVE TO:

146 EXT. SNOW COUNTRY - WIDE ANGLE - THE CAVALRY AND PRISONERS - DAY

A long line stretching across the landscape -- women falling and being prodded along by their captors. From behind CAMERA ride Ethan and Martin and move to intercept the column.

147 EXT. THE COLUMN - FULL SHOT - DAY

as Ethan and Martin come closer and look at the shawled prisoners stumbling along.

148 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN - DAY

as a young OFFICER spurs out of the column and rides toward them.

OFFICER

(inquiringly)  
Yes?

ETHAN

We're looking for a girl -- a white

girl...

MARTIN

She'd be about thirteen now...

OFFICER

We got two around that age...

MARTIN

(eagerly)

Where?

OFFICER

You'll have to wait until we reach  
the agency...Fall in behind the  
column...

MARTIN

(protestingly)

But couldn't you...?

OFFICER

Sorry...

(shouting it)

Keep the column moving!..Close ranks  
there!

The officer spurs out to rejoin the column. Martin looks at Ethan, his face alive with hope. But Ethan is just looking stonily along the line of passing prisoners.

WIPE TO:

149 EXT. THE NOKONI AGENCY - WIDE ANGLE - DAY

The column of cavalry and prisoners enters the agency (COLORADO FOOTAGE). We see the dead and wounded on travois; the agency Indians watching stoically; the prisoners -- some of them -- being herded into a chapel.

150 INT. OFFICE OF NOKONI AGENCY - FULL SHOT - DAY

The office has been set up as a temporary army headquarters. The GENERAL is being interviewed by two Eastern newspaper CORRESPONDENTS. At a table beyond is a telegrapher, sending out a report of the victory. A pot-bellied stove supplies heat and the General is warming his hands at it, intermittently. An adjutant is rather wearily filling out a long official form. The General, for all his mudded boots remains a beau sabreur and is loosely modeled upon a certain other well-known glory hunter of the Indian wars. He wears a colonel's straps, but insists upon his brevet rank.

GENERAL

And it was clear to me the  
hostiles outnumbered us four to  
one...with all the advantage of  
terrain...

CORRESPONDENT

Four to one! What did you do,  
general?

Ethan and Martin enter, stand in the doorway.

GENERAL

(impressively)

Sir -- we charged!..Gentlemen -- and  
I hope you will quote me -- I cannot  
say too much for the courage of the  
men who followed me into that  
Cheyenne camp...

ETHAN

(blurting it)

Cheyenne! What Cheyenne?

GENERAL

(turning and  
staring)

I beg your pardon?

ETHAN

That camp you hit was Nawyecka  
Comanche...Chief Scar's bunch...

CORRESPONDENT

(fascinated)

Scar? What a wonderful name!...

GENERAL

(to his aide)

Are you getting this, Keefer?

CORRESPONDENT

(to Ethan)

How do you spell that word -- Nawyecka?

Ethan ignores him, still facing the General.

ETHAN

My name's Edwards...I'm looking for  
my niece...she was in that camp  
when you attacked...

GENERAL

(uncertain)

Well...I know there were some  
captives recovered...

MARTIN  
(bitterly)  
Four of 'em dead...so we were told...

GENERAL  
(uncomfortably)  
Unfortunately, the hostiles murdered  
them as we developed the village...

ETHAN  
Are you sure they didn't die of  
carbine shots fired by a bunch  
o' Yank bluebellies so scared they  
couldn't tell the difference between  
a Cheyenne and a Comanche?

GENERAL  
Keefer!..Put this man under arrest!

ETHAN  
That'll be the day...  
(scornfully)  
'As we developed the village'...  
Next time you develop a village,  
hit it where the fightin' men are...  
You won't get any headlines for  
killin' squaws.

Keefer coughs.

KEEFER  
Shall I show him the captives, sir?

GENERAL  
Just get him out of here!

KEEFER  
Yes sir...  
(he crosses to  
Ethan)  
This way...

151 INT. THE CHAPEL - MED. CLOSE SHOT - ANGLING TO DOOR -  
AFTERNOON

The door is opened by a guard and Ethan takes a step  
into the room -- then stops in manifest shock. Martin  
is at his heels, eager and expectant. Beyond them  
stands Keefer, grave and compassionate. There is a  
keening sound in the room -- almost an animal sound.

152 INT. THE CHAPEL - REVERSE SHOT - FULL

It is a simple log-sided room with plank benches without  
backs. Up front is a small box-like pulpit, no altar.  
Across the front of the room, set up either on benches

or on boards over saw-horses are four blanket-covered figures -- at least two being the bodies of children. Squatting on the floor near them is an elderly white woman with hair hanging loosely down her back and clad in Indian robes. Standing, facing the newcomers, is a woman who may be no more than in her mid-thirties. She is mad -- wild-eyed, frightened, with matted, unbrushed golden hair, torn garments. It is she who has been making the keening sound, the animal moans. Now she crouches at the sight of them and looks desperately for a means of escape. Two girls are asleep, heads together and backs to the door. One has light hair, like Debbie's; the other brown hair. The afternoon sun coming through a high window touches the light hair.

MARTIN

Debbie?...DEBBIE?

He has seen the light hair and starts crossing the room. Now the madwoman begins her screaming, running from side to side like a trapped animal. Ethan follows Martin into the room, Keefer behind him. Martin comes to a stop, realizing the woman is afraid of him. The two sleeping girls stir, but do not turn.

MARTIN

Don't be scared, ma'am...

The madwoman crouches behind one of the benches, looking at them with frightened eyes.

KEEFER

Just don't pay any attention to her...

Martin swallows and nods and crosses to the light-haired girl. He reaches a hand gingerly to touch her shoulder.

MARTIN

(softly)

Debbie?

At the touch, the girl is on her feet, crouching -- one hand, like a claw, drawn back to rake his face. She is unmistakably a white girl, but she is painted like a Comanche woman -- her ears red inside, streaks of paint accenting the savagery of her face. Her eyes are frightened, yet full of hate.

GIRL

Pabo-taibo!  
(White man!)

The other girl has risen almost in the same instant -- but more out of fear. She is younger, but painted like the other. She moves to stand behind the savage one.

MARTIN  
(slowly)  
No...She's not...

ETHAN  
I ain't sure...Where's that doll?

Martin stares at him, then realizes what he has in mind. He fishes the rag doll from under his coat and holds it out to the girl. She looks at it...and we may almost suspect it is rekindling a memory -- but then she spits at it. The other girl laughs. Martin turns away and he's sick.

KEEFER  
Was your niece about their age?

ETHAN  
Not far from it...

KEEFER  
Hard to realize they're white,  
isn't it...

ETHAN  
(grimly)  
They're not white any more -- they're  
Comanche!...Let's see the bodies...

Martin nerves himself for the ordeal, turns to follow.

ETHAN  
I don't need you...

Ethan and Keefer move away. As they do, the madwoman -- eyes fixed on the rag doll in Martin's hand -- begins creeping up behind him. Martin is torturedly watching Ethan and Keefer as first one blanket then another is raised -- we will never see the dead. During this:

KEEFER  
(the dispassionate  
pro)  
I'd like you to see them all...It  
might help us identify them...  
Shot in the head -- flash-burn  
range...The boy got his skull  
cracked...Here's the girl...

Martin stiffens, waiting.

ETHAN  
No...

Martin relaxes...and in that instant the madwoman has the doll in her hands. She cradles it and she croons.



Martin reaches to take it away. But she calmly sits, cradling the doll, and rocks to and fro, humming a lullaby. He can't take it. Ethan returns.

ETHAN

Well, we only got the one lead --  
Scar...And where we begin to look,  
I don't know...

KEEFER

There's one thing. We recovered  
a bushel of trinkets in that camp...  
cheap stuff...trade goods...Couldn't  
help noticing that most of it was  
Mexican...Maybe if you could talk to  
some of those Mexican traders along  
the border...What do they call  
themselves?

ETHAN

Comancheros...

KEEFER

That's the breed...Course it might  
take time.

ETHAN

Time's running out...But I'm obliged  
to you.

They leave.

CUT TO:

153 INT. JORGENSEN KEEPING ROOM - FULL SHOT - THE GROUP -  
EVENING

Laurie has reached the last page of the letter, reading it by the lamp on the table. Jorgensen is knocking out the dead ashes of his pipe. Charlie is in the shadows, a guitar in his hands -- not playing it, but occasionally softly picking a note or chord. Mrs. Jorgensen is dabbing moist eyes with a corner of her apron.

LAURIE

...so we're setting out for  
New Mexico Territory in the morning...  
I am sorry I won't be back for  
Christmas again this year...

She swallows hard, pauses a moment in her reading.

MRS. JORGENSEN

(quick sympathy)  
And you knittin' that muffler...

LAURIE  
(impatiently)  
What's the difference!

MRS. JORGENSEN  
Well, I just thought it would be  
a sin and a shame not to let  
SOMEONE get some good of it...

She looks almost too obviously at Charlie, which annoys Laurie. Laurie resumes her letter reading:

LAURIE  
(peering closely)  
There's a word crossed out...It  
looks like 'I wish' or 'I will'...  
(she gives up)  
Anyway...'I set pen aside in the hope  
you are enjoying good health and your  
folks the same...I remain, respectfully...  
(forlornly)  
yours truly, Martin Paulie.'

That's all there is. Not a cross on it. Laurie just looks at it. Jorgensen stands, pocketing his pipe, easing the crick in his back. He ceremoniously removes the spectacles and replaces them on the mantel.

JORGENSEN  
They never find that girl.

LAURIE  
(half to herself)  
Yours truly...  
(hotly)  
And he even has to write his full  
name...Martin Pauley...not even  
just Martie!...  
(she stands)  
I don't care if he never comes  
back!

She heads for the front door.

MRS. JORGENSEN  
(rising -- saying it  
without conviction)  
Now, Laurie!...

Charlie hits the guitar a little stronger. Mrs. Jorgensen looks at him -- and the matchmaker is at work.

MRS. JORGENSEN  
Charlie, you'll stay for supper?...  
Now I won't take no for an answer.

CHARLIE

Thought of saying 'no' never crossed  
my mind, Miz Jorgensen...No place  
I'd rather be than right here,  
right now.

Mrs. Jorgensen smiles and moves about her duties. Laurie  
has opened the door and is staring out wistfully...and  
Charlie begins playing and singing a verse from  
"Skip to My Lou."

CHARLIE

(singing)  
One old boot and a button shoe  
One old boot and a button shoe...

FADE OUT

FADE IN

154 EXT. DESERT COUNTRY - WIDE ANGLE - ETHAN AND MARTIN  
RIDING - DAY

The search theme is heard again as the two riders, with  
single pack horse, are heading south through New Mexico.  
It is hot country.

155 EXT. DESERT COUNTRY - CLOSE MOVING SHOT - ETHAN AND  
MARTIN  
- DAY

Their faces are sun-tanned, burned dark and dry. Gone are  
the heavy coats and clothing of their northern days. They  
do not speak, just ride -- and there is the same bleak,  
fanatic, hard look about them both. The music theme segues  
into something livelier and Mexican as we -

DISSOLVE TO:

156 EXT. A MEXICAN VILLAGE - FULL SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN -  
DAY

It is a small place -- a single dirt street, a few adobe  
houses; a few racks of dried meat; a burro with a load of  
faggots on its back being driven along by a small boy; the  
music coming from a little cantina in the middle of the  
street. Before the cantina is a bone rack of a horse,  
without a saddle -- only a blanket pad. There is some-  
thing familiar about the horse and Ethan is staring at  
it as they ride in.

157 EXT. THE CANTINA - FULL SHOT - DAY

The two men dismount, beating dust out of their clothes.  
Ethan takes another look at the sorry old nag tied outside.  
Martin pauses beside Ethan.

ETHAN

Recognize it?

Martin shakes his head. They start toward the cantina.

ETHAN

There couldn't be two like that  
in all the world...

158 INT. THE CANTINA - FULL SHOT - DAY

as Ethan and Martin enter. It is a dirt-floored room with a small bar near the door, chairs and benches along the walls. A pair of guitar players are at the far end of the room. A couple of Mexicans are playing a noisy game of dominoes, slapping the dominoes down hard...EMILIO FIGUEROA, back to the door, spurred boots across one of the tables, is sipping a drink. Emilio is a cynical, middle-aged, aristocratic-looking man in modified charro costume. Watching the domino game is ESTRELLA, lithe, sensuous, smoking a brown-paper cigarette; she is bare-foot. Behind the bar is the proprietor, dozing on his stool. Ethan takes a step into the room.

ETHAN

(loudly)

MOSE!...MOSE HARPER?

The proprietor awakens. The domino game is suspended in mid-play. Estrella turns...and from beside Emilio, previously obscured by the man's back and the big charro hat, pokes the head of old Mose. Emilio turns then to look at the newcomers.

MOSE

Ay-eh...?

He is on his feet and advancing to meet them. As he recognizes them a wide, foolish grin splits his face and his mouth opens and closes in words that won't come out. He grabs and shakes Ethan's arm, then Martin's.

ETHAN

Leggo my arm...You look mangier  
'n ever.

MOSE

Ain't been too good...No sir, not  
too good...Gettin' old, Ethan...

ETHAN

You were born old...

PROPRIETOR

(all smiles - as they

head for the bar)  
Bienvenidos, senores...Pulque?...  
tequila?...mescal?...hiskey?

ETHAN

Tequila...

MARTIN

Lo mismo.

PROPRIETOR

(beaming)

Y' par' el Viejo -- el vino del  
pais...tequila tambien!

Martin puts his back to the bar, leans elbows on it and looks around.

158A INT. THE CANTINA - ANGLING PAST MARTIN TOWARD ESTRELLA

She is giving him an appraising once-over, then signals the musicians to play. She rests her buttocks against a table and waits, her eyes challenging Martin to make a move. Emilio is watching Estrella and Martin with something akin to bored amusement.

158B INT. THE CANTINA - ANGLE AT BAR

Ethan has poured a drink for Mose, now one for himself -- leaving Martin's glass empty.

MOSE

I been helpin' ye, Ethan...I been  
lookin' all the time...

Martin turns back to the bar to take his glass. He finds it empty.

MARTIN

(to Ethan's back)

Thanks for nothin'...

He angrily throws a coin on the counter, appropriates the bottle and his glass and heads for a table closer to Estrella. Neither Ethan nor Mose seems aware of his going.

ETHAN

Well, the reward still stands...

MOSE

Don't want no money, Ethan...jus'  
a place -- a roof over m' head...a  
little grub...a bunk to sleep in...  
an' a rockin' chair by the fire...  
my own rockin' chair by a fire...

ETHAN

You help me find her, you got your  
rockin' chair...

MOSE

Swear it, Ethan?...Given word?

ETHAN

(impatiently)

Told ya, didn't I?

MOSE

(impressively)

Ethan...I found a man's seen her...  
knows where little Debbie is!

Ethan stares at him. Mose nods his reaffirmation of it.  
Then Ethan's hand locks on the old man's shoulder.

ETHAN

Who? Where is he...this man?

Mose winces under the grip. He can't speak, but he looks  
past Ethan and he points. Ethan turns. Emilio swings his  
boots off the table and slowly crosses to them. He lets  
cigarette smoke curl out of his mouth. Then he smiles.

EMILIO

I am this man, senor...Emilio  
Gabriel Fernandez y Figueroa...  
at your service...

(afterthought)

...for a price...

(he smiles)

...Always for a price...

As the men study each other, Estrella begins her dance --  
and the rhythmic click of the castanets will beat like a  
metronome. Emilio looks at the bottle on the bar, dis-  
dainfully pushes it away and imperiously signals the  
proprietor to bring something better.

EMILIO

Un otra!

159 INT. THE CANTINA - ANGLING PAST MARTIN TO ESTRELLA

He is knocking off his tequila and looking at the girl  
hungrily. She is doing her swaying dance, playing up to  
him and with unmistakable effect. He sloshes another drink  
into his glass and, never taking his eyes off her, downs it.

160 INT. THE CANTINA - FULL SHOT - ANOTHER ANGLE - THE DANCE

Beyond Estrella we see Ethan, Emilio, and Mose at the bar --  
gestures, headshakes, the entire pantomime of an inaudible

conversation. Then Ethan takes out his pouch and begins dropping gold pieces into Emilio's hand. Meanwhile, dance and dancer are achieving their purpose with Martin. And the tequila is working. He gets to his feet, a little groggily. Estrella's smile deepens and there is a clear invitation in her eyes...Ethan turns then, his deal with Emilio concluded, and he sees what is going on. He starts for Martin's table just as Martin moves out to take the girl.

ETHAN  
(tolerantly)  
Come on, Don Juan...We're on our way...

Martin tries to push him away, his eyes still on the girl.

MARTIN  
(thickly)  
Lemme alone...

ETHAN  
(taking his arm)  
You breeds are all alike -- two drinks an'...

Martin breaks free and squares off.

MARTIN  
Take yer hands off'n me...This lady an' me got some things to talk over!

Estrella ranges herself alongside of Martin and slips an arm possessively through his.

ETHAN  
(a shrug)  
Suit yourself...While you're enjoyin' your little conversation, I'll be ridin' out with Senor Fernandez here... The Comanch' medicine country ain't far...there's one camp with a chief named Cicatriz.

MARTIN  
Never heard of him...

ETHAN  
Cicatriz is Mex for Scar...an' he has a white girl in his tepee...Be seein' you...

He turns and heads out. Emilio, who has come up behind him, gives Estrella a slight smile and bow.

EMILIO

Buena suerte, Estrella...Hasta  
la vista.

He follows Ethan. Estrella swings her body close to  
Martin and lets her arms slide around his neck.

ESTRELLA

(softly)  
Tu quieres...?

Martin blinks to clear away the fog of tequila and desire.

MARTIN

(a bitter laugh)  
Sure...sure...Only not this year...

He pulls her arms away and goes lurching after the others.  
Mose catches his arm.

MOSE

'Mind Ethan 'bout my rockin' chair!

Martin continues out and Mose stands there -- his head  
rockin' as though he already were in his chair.

DISSOLVE TO:

161 EXT. (APPROACH TO THE NEEDLES MONUMENT) - A BROAD CANYON  
-  
FULL SHOT - DAY

A small pack train (nine or ten horses, six or seven men)  
winds through a canyon behind which we can see huge needles  
of rock: majestic, savage country. At the head of the  
column ride Ethan, Emilio, and Martin. Behind them come  
Emilio's cargadores -- lean, hard-bitten wiry little  
Mexicans. One leads a handsome palomino. The SOUND of  
the CASTANETS ECHOES in the musical theme.

162 EXT. CANYON - MED. SHOT - HEAD OF COLUMN - MOVING - DAY

Ethan is looking around with grim interest.

ETHAN

Medicine country, huh?

EMILIO

(slight smile)  
Medicine so strong they believe the  
feather of an eagle found here can  
guard a man against bullets...

MARTIN

(looking ahead)



If you got one handy, now's the  
time...

Ethan and Emilio both look in the direction of his glance.

163 EXT. CANYON - FULL SHOT - REVERSE ANGLE - FROM BEHIND  
RIDERS - DAY

They are turning a bend and now, ahead, we see a cordon  
of Comanches -- all armed, all quiet, all very menacing  
as they watch the approaching column. Emilio calls a  
greeting in Comanche. It gets no answer.

164 EXT. CANYON - MOVING SHOT - THE COMANCHE FACES - DAY

The CAMERA PICKS UP the faces in turn, as from the white  
men's viewpoint, as they ride slowly by.

165 EXT. COMANCHE ENCAMPMENT - FULL SHOT - DAY

One tepee stands apart from the other's -- Scar's. Beyond  
it are other tepees, the gathering of braves and some  
squaws, the drying racks for meat, etc. Emilio leads the  
way toward the central tepee. They dismount nearby and  
Emilio inclines his head toward the one tepee. Ethan and  
Martin brace themselves and wait. The flap of the tepee  
is closed.

MARTIN

(gruffly)

What are we waiting for?

Emilio cautions him with a hand gesture.

166 EXT. THE TEPEE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - DAY

The flap is thrust aside and SCAR steps out -- the same  
Comanche we had seen at the grave when Debbie was captured.  
He stands tall, arrogant, eyeing the white men with hard,  
implacable eyes. He has a robe gathered about him. Across  
his face is a scar.

EMILIO'S VOICE

Senores! This is Cicatriz!

167 EXT. INDIAN ENCAMPMENT - CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN -  
DAY

The white men's eyes are as hard as the Comanche's: this  
is the man they have long sought, the killer, the raper.  
They cannot mask the hatred they feel.

ETHAN

(slowly...at last)

Scar...It's plain to see where  
you got your name.

Scar's hand moves to the scar on his face, and a finger runs along it.

SCAR

Your name - Big Shoulders...His  
name - He Who Follows.

ETHAN

You speak pretty good American for  
a Comanche...Someone teach you?

It is a leading question and Scar knows it. He looks long at Ethan and the suggestion of a smile touches his lips. But he makes no direct answer. He looks instead to Emilio.

SCAR

(in Comanche)  
Ah-we pabbo-tie-bo ee-kee-tay?  
(Why did you bring the gringos here?)

EMILIO

(a shrug -- in  
Comanche)  
Pabbo-tie-bo kim te-moo-er.  
(The gringos want to trade.)

ETHAN

That's right...We come to trade...  
Only not out here...  
(with sign language  
accompaniment)  
I don't stand talkin' in the wind.

Emilio quickly turns and calls to one of his men. Emilio is worried.

EMILIO

(sharply)  
Miguel...caballo -- aca!

One of the Mexicans comes on the trot, leading in the palomino. Emilio makes a gesture -- giving it to Scar.

EMILIO

Co-bay tabitz-chat.  
(meaning)  
(Very fine horse.)

Scar looks at it greedily, then nods. He'll accept it. He looks at Ethan. Again that faintly contemptuous smile. He signals them to enter his tepee.

ETHAN

(to Martin)  
Stay out here.

MARTIN

Not likely.

He follows Ethan into the tepee...and a worried Emilio goes along.

168 INT. THE TEPEE - FULL SHOT

A small fire burns in the center of the lodge and a shaft of sunlight strikes in from the smoke flap at the peak. Two chunky squaws, who have been tending the fire or grinding corn in a rock pestle, scuttle to a side of the tepee. Two others, one half-grown and the other slightly taller, sit with their backs to the fire, huddled over some leather work or stitching. Both are shawled. As Scar enters, he barks a word to the squaws near the fire.

SCAR

Pie-kay! (Clear out!)  
(then he turns  
to the white men)  
Ih-card! (Sit!)

He sits on some robes, signs for them to sit opposite. Slowly they look around them.

169 INT. THE TEPEE - REVERSE ANGLE - AS FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT  
-  
THE TWO OLDER SQUAWS

They are sitting with heads averted, slightly profiled -- but clearly Indian women, broad-faced, dark of hair and skin.

EMILIO'S VOICE

His sons are dead...So his wives  
sit on the honor side of his lodge.

170 INT. THE TEPEE - ANGLING PAST ETHAN TOWARD THE TWO YOUNG  
ONES

ETHAN

(glancing at them)  
Are those his wives too?

One of the squaws turns -- and even in the shadows we see it is another Indian face. The other does not turn. Scar leans in, blocking the view.

SCAR

Two sons -- killed by white men...  
For each son, I take many scalps...  
(in Comanche)  
Mayah-kay zee-eh!...  
(Bring the lance!)

The slightly smaller of the young squaws stiffens but doesn't move. Scar glares.

SCAR  
(louder)  
MAYAH-KAY ZEE-EH!

The girl gets to her feet. Ethan and Martin watch as, still with averted face, she crosses to where a lance hangs from the tepee wall. It has several scalps on it, including one with light red hair. Slowly she carries it back. Scar never takes his eyes from the faces of the white men, savoring every moment of it. The girl extends the lance between them, so that it is like a bare blade separating two duelists. Neither Ethan nor Martin dares at first look at more than the scalp pole...Then slowly their eyes lift...and the CAMERA MOVES IN and RAISES TO:

171 INT. THE TEPEE - EXTREME CLOSE SHOT - DEBBIE

As the shawl slips back to reveal her light hair, the slant green eyes looking at them from a tanned, but still white and very beautiful face. (NOTE TO MUSIC: The SEARCH THEME should cover all the foregoing action -- but at the first clear view of DEBBIE, it ends dramatically.) Debbie's eyes hold theirs -- and then Scar's voice is heard:

SCAR  
(in Comanche)  
Pie-kay!  
(Go!)

Swiftly she straightens, takes away the scalp pole and goes back to her former place.

172 INT. THE TEPEE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - THE GROUP AS BEFORE

Scar is watching the white men like a hawk. Martin's eyes are wide and his breathing seems suspended. But Ethan is playing it like a poker player.

ETHAN  
(his voice controlled)  
I've seen scalps before...

Scar's eyes are mocking. He lets his robe slip back from his shoulders, revealing a bare bronzed chest on which -- glinting in the reflected firelight -- is the medallion that Ethan had given Debbie. It is suspended by a chain or rawhide string. Scar touches it.

SCAR  
This before?

Ethan smiles -- and he's still playing poker. He stands... and the others follow. Scar is puzzled.

ETHAN  
(to Emilio)  
I came to trade, not to admire  
his collection...Tell him we're  
going to pitch camp across the  
crick...Maybe we can talk trade  
tomorrow.

Scar hasn't understood all of it. He scowls and looks at Emilio.

SCAR  
(in Comanche)  
Ee-sap! Pabbo-tie-bo ee-sap!  
(He lies! The gringo lies!)

EMILIO  
(placatingly)  
Tomorrow -- manana -- 'puetze.'

Scar looks at Ethan and at Martin. He smiles slightly, and he nods his agreement.

SCAR  
Puetze!

Martin and Ethan turn to go. Only then does Debbie look swiftly at them and as swiftly away. Martin can't help but pause, but Ethan prods him toward the tepee flap.

173 EXT. THE TEPEE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - MOVING - THE THREE MEN

They emerge from the tepee and begin to walk away -- not fast, not slow, and without a side glance. Scar emerges and looks after them -- glowering. A few other Comanches begin to gather near his tepee.

EMILIO  
(urgently)  
Walk with dignity!  
(after a moment;  
lips hardly  
moving)  
If you gringo heretics have any  
prayers, say them...

MARTIN  
(transfigured)  
She's alive...Can you believe  
it, she's alive...alive...An'  
we found her...

EMILIO

(fervently)  
Please!...I, too, am alive...I  
wish to stay that way.

They reach the waiting cargadores and the pack train,  
surrounded by suspicious Comanches.

EMILIO  
(to his men)  
Vamanos!

They mount and ride out.

WIPE TO:

174 EXT. SAND DUNES NEAR NEEDLES (MONUMENT) - FULL SHOT -  
LATE AFTERNOON

Emilio is standing near his horse, talking to Ethan and  
Martin.

EMILIO  
You understand, senores...It  
is not that I am cobarde...  
cowardly...

ETHAN  
Don't apologize...You did your  
job...

Emilio nods and mounts.

EMILIO  
He knows you -- who you are --  
and why you are here...This I  
did not understand...or I would  
not...even for gold, senores...  
have led you here.

He fumbles for a pouch, holds it out to Ethan.

EMILIO  
Take it. I do not want blood  
money. Vaya con Dios!

He digs spurs and rides out. Ethan turns and looks soberly  
at Martin. We hear the rest of the riders moving away.  
Ethan and Martin cross the sand and go down slope toward  
the creek where their horses are waiting.

174-A EXT. SAND CREEK (MONUMENT) - FULL SHOT - THE TWO - DAY

MARTIN  
You figger Scar means to kill us?

ETHAN

He's got to...All these years, run-  
nin', dodgin', knowin' we were after  
him...Now we caught up...It's him or  
us.

MARTIN

Why didn't he make his move back  
there?

ETHAN

I don't know...Somethin' tied his  
hands...maybe hospitality...

He breaks and both wheel as sand slides from the top of the  
dunes. They look up.

174-B EXT. SAND DUNE - DAY

Debbie is silhouetted atop the dune, looking down at them.

MARTIN

(barely breathing  
the name)

Debbie...?

She slides down the dune to stand across the creek from them.

174-C EXT. SAND CREEK - FULL SHOT - THE THREE - DAY

Her hand cautions them to silence and against coming any  
closer.

DEBBIE

(in Comanche)

Unnt-meah!  
(Go away!)

Both men move closer. She takes a frightened step back, as  
if to run.

MARTIN

Debbie...Don't you remember me?  
I'm Martin.

She hesitates. She looks long at him.

DEBBIE

(in Comanche)

Unnt-meah!

MARTIN

(softly)

We ain't goin'! We ain't goin'  
without you, Debbie...Ethan, get  
the horses...I'll try to keep  
her talkin'...

ETHAN

(harshly)

How? She's even forgot her own language!

MARTIN

Debbie, you're comin' with us!  
Hear me?

DEBBIE

No...not now...not ever.

These have been her first words in English...and they bring new hope to Martin.

MARTIN

I don't care what they've done to you...what happened...

DEBBIE

(angrily)

They have done...nothing...They are my people...

ETHAN

Your people? They murdered your family!

DEBBIE

(reverting to Comanche)

Ee-sap!

(furiously)

White men killed them - to steal cows! I was...little...I ran away...They find me...take care of me.

MARTIN

No Debbie! That ain't what happened! They been lyin' to you...

DEBBIE

You lie! All white men lie...and kill...

MARTIN

Debbie, think back! I'm Martin... remember? Remember how I used to let you ride my horse? Tell you stories? Don't you remember me, Debbie?

DEBBIE

I remember...from always...At first I prayed to you...come and get me...



Take me home...You didn't come...

MARTIN

I've come now...

DEBBIE

These are my people...

(in Comanche)

Unnt-meah! Go! Go! Please!

ETHAN

(grimly)

Stand aside, boy...

Martin turns as Ethan slowly reaches for his gun. It takes Martin a moment to realize what he is about to do.

MARTIN

Ethan -- NO!

He moves quickly then to put himself between Ethan and the girl and in that instant there is the crack of a rifle. Ethan is hit in the leg. It goes out from under him. Martin swings and his gun is out and firing.

174-D EXT. SAND CREEK - FULL SHOT - INCLUDING THE DUNES - DAY

A mounted Comanche is on the crest of the dune above them -- rifle raised. Martin's first shot brings him down the dune in a spectacular horse-and-man fall. Debbie goes running like a deer up the creek, away from Martin; in the same instant we hear the angry yells of distant Comanches charging from the far left. Martin turns to see Debbie running away.

MARTIN

Debbie! WAIT!

Ethan is on his feet now and limping frantically toward their horses. He shoves Martin ahead of him.

ETHAN

(angrily)

Never mind her! MOVE!

They mount and take off, just as the vanguard of the attacking Comanches swings around a point of rock and comes charging toward the creek.

175 EXT. DESERT COUNTRY - WIDE ANGLE - LATE AFTERNOON

as Ethan and Martin race their horses from the creek area and down a long incline, as -- from the heights above -- a dozen or more Comanches, led by Scar, come tearing after them.

175-A EXT. DESERT COUNTRY - MED. CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN - MOVING - DAY

Ethan is swaying in his saddle, just barely hanging on, as Martin races up behind him -- driving Ethan's horse along. They swing past a huge outcrop of rock and go tearing along a vaulting wall of stone. Their hoofbeats and those of the pursuers bounce and echo off the canyon walls, and bullets whine and ricochet.

175-B EXT. CANYON COUNTRY - FULL MOVING SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN - DAY

They swing around giant boulders, up-ended like pancakes. Ethan is lurching almost out of the saddle, barely conscious. Martin spots the cave -- ahead -- and drives his mount and Ethan's toward it.

175-C EXT. THE CAVE (MONUMENT) - FULL SHOT - THE TWO - DAY

Martin pulls his horse in and swings off just as Ethan slides from his saddle. He runs toward one of the huge boulders, crouches and starts firing.

175-D EXT. CANYON COUNTRY - WIDE ANGLE ON THE COMANCHES - DAY

The Comanches are spread out but coming on fast. One goes down under Martin's fire....another is hit in the arm. He pulls up and the other Comanches wheel away from the hidden marksman.

175-E EXT. THE CAVE - FULL SHOT - MARTIN AND ETHAN

Martin runs back from his firing post toward where Ethan has fallen.

ETHAN  
(angrily)  
Go on! Get out of here while you can...

MARTIN  
(pointing to the cave)  
Over there!

Ethan turns and sees what he means. He starts dragging himself to the cave as Martin grabs the rifles from their saddle scabbards, yanks off the water canteens and then drives their horses away. Then he too runs for the shelter of the cave.

175-F EXT. THE CANYON - ANGLING FROM BEHIND MARTIN AND ETHAN

Both men are crouching, rifles ready. In the distance we

see their horses running off -- pursued by some yelling Comanches. Four or six others come into sight, heading for the cave -- moving cautiously, uncertainly -- not seeing their quarry. Then the white men open fire and the Comanches bend low over their horses' necks and clear out of there. Ethan looks grimly at Martin.

ETHAN

They'll be back...

MARTIN

We won't be here...Come on!

He gets an arm under Ethan and hauls him to his feet.

DISSOLVE TO:

175-G EXT. THE GAP IN THE CLIFF - PANNING SHOT - SUNSET

CAMERA PANS from the top of the rock chimney to where Martin is snaking his way through, carrying newly-filled water canteens. He stands there, listening and looking back the way he has come; and then, satisfied there has been no pursuit, he continues away.

176- OMITTED

181

182 INT. THE CAVE - MED. SHOT - ETHAN - HALF-LIGHT

Ethan is lying on the hard earth, perhaps cushioned with some boughs. He is half delirious. A small fire is burning. Martin enters carrying the canteens. He looks unsympathetically toward Ethan, then continues to the fire, takes a knife and starts to sterilize it. Ethan gasps, mumbles and then a word comes clear.

ETHAN

Martha...Martha!

Martin stares at him -- and now, perhaps for the first time, he is fitting pieces into the jig-saw puzzle. He shifts closer to Ethan and we see he is preparing to dig out the bullet. Ethan opens his eyes and looks at him.

MARTIN

I gotta open that leg and let  
the poison out...

He poises the knife.

ETHAN

Wait...

He fumbles in his shirt pocket, brings out a greasy folded piece of paper.

ETHAN

Just in case...Read it.

Martin sets the knife down, takes the paper, opens it and slowly reads:

MARTIN

'I, Ethan Edwards, being of sound mind and without any blood kin, do hereby bequeath all my property of any kind to Martin Pauley...'

(he stares, then)

I don't want your property....

'Sides, what do you mean no 'blood kin?' Debbie's your blood kin...

ETHAN

Not no more.

MARTIN

(angrily)

You can keep your will!

(he thrusts it back  
into Ethan's shirt)

I ain't forgettin' you was all set to shoot her yourself...What kind o' man are you, anyway.

ETHAN

(sitting up --  
eyes blazing)

She's been with the bucks! She's nothin' now but a...

Martin shoves him back onto the ground.

MARTIN

(a shout)

Shut your dirty mouth!

He gets to his feet, trembling, and stands looking down at Ethan, his fists clenched at his sides and murder in his eyes. Then his eyes rove to the knife lying on the blanket. He picks it up and he looks again at the wounded man.

MARTIN

(slowly)

I hope you die!

And he kneels again to open the wound.

DISSOLVE TO:

183 EXT. DESERT COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - ETHAN AND MARTIN - DAY

Martin is hauling an improvised travois over the ground in which, lashed by vines and some clothing, is the unconscious figure of Ethan.

184 CLOSE SHOT - MOVING - MARTIN - DAY

Eyes shadowed, whiskered, drawn -- he is an implacable figure as he drags the weary miles home. He hears a groan from Ethan o.s. He barely lets his eyes drift to the sound. He doesn't stop.

185 CLOSE SHOT - MOVING - ETHAN IN THE TRAVOIS - DAY

We see he is delirious, lips parched, strapped to the poles. The travois jolts over the ground. As he passes out of frame, the CAMERA HOLDS on the marks of the travois poles scraping across the desert.

FADE OUT

186- OMITTED

193

FADE IN

194 INT. JORGENSEN KEEPING ROOM - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

A party is in progress. Fiddler and banjo-player are playing a lively square dance for one or two sets of dancers -- ranchers, their wives and daughters. Laurie is not in evidence. At the far end of the room is a table with a punch bowl set up and a cluster of men and women about.

Jorgensen is at the door boisterously welcoming some new arrivals. Leading them into the room is Captain the Reverend Sam Clayton, with a bulky oil-skin package under his arm. With him is Charlie MacCorry, dressed in his best black suit and scrubbed until he looks raw. Behind them come three or four other competent-looking men -- Rangers all of them.

JORGENSEN

(shouting)

They're here, mama...Come in, come in...

195 INT. JORGENSEN HOME - FULL SHOT - FAVORING GROUP AT DOOR

Clayton waits for Charlie to come abreast, then hits him on the back and drives him inside.

CLAYTON

Here he is, Lars...Combed, curried 'n washed behind the ears!

Mrs. Jorgensen hurries over, beaming, to admire Charlie.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Why, Charlie, you look real handsome!

CHARLIE

(grinning)

Yes'm...scarcely reck'nize myself...

Where's Laurie?

Mrs. Jorgensen smiles and playfully pushes him toward the guests.

MRS. JORGENSEN

You'll see her soon enough....

Clayton -- and the other Rangers -- have been hanging gunbelts on pegs along the wall. Now he shakes out his parcel -- disclosing a green-black frock coat.

CLAYTON

(nodding to the music)

Say, that music sounds so good it must be sinful...

MRS. JORGENSEN

Grab a partner, reverend!

CLAYTON

Well, now, a man of my age just can't haul off and dance in cold blood...but if there's any of that wild cherry brandy of yours, Lars...

JORGENSEN

(suddenly sober)

Nooo....

(change of heart)

Yah, by golly...One jug left... I get it!

Mrs. Jorgensen glares as he heads out.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Last winter that man swore up and down there wasn't a drop left -- and me with pneumoney!...Reverend, you'd better start clergyin' again!

196 EXT. JORGENSEN HOME - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

Horses, wagons fill the yard. We can hear the lively music of the square dance. As Jorgensen opens the door and sets out toward the barn, a battered dusty trap drives in -- and on it are Martin and Ethan. Jorgensen at first doesn't recognize them.

JORGENSEN  
(hailing them)  
Hi!..You're late...hurry...

And then he sees who they are, and his jaw drops.

JORGENSEN  
(staring)  
Ethan...Martie...No, don't get down!  
...You can't come in!

They stare at him.

JORGENSEN  
The Rangers are here!

He says it as though that explains everything.

ETHAN  
What's that got to do with us?

MARTIN  
(eyeing the house)  
What's goin' on?

JORGENSEN  
(who's forgotten  
they wouldn't know)  
Why, my Laurie's getting married...

Martin throws the reins aside and jumps out. Jorgensen  
grabs his arm.

JORGENSEN  
Wait! Don't you hear me! The  
Rangers...

MARTIN  
So what?

JORGENSEN  
You been posted for murder...both  
of you...That trader fella, the  
late Mister Futterman...

Martin tries to break free.

MARTIN  
I gotta see Laurie!

JORGENSEN  
(desperately)  
Go around the side...the grandmother's  
room...I'll tell her...PLEASE!

MARTIN

You better!

He heads around the side. Ethan meanwhile has climbed stiffly down, slightly favoring his leg.

JORGENSEN

Quick...hide in the barn, Ethan...

ETHAN

Hide? Why would I?

He brushes past the little man and heads for the door.

197 INT. THE JORGENSEN HOUSE - ANGLING FROM BEHIND ETHAN

as he enters, with Jorgensen at his heels. For a moment, as he stands there, the party breezes on. Then first one, then another sees him. They gape, and the music falters and stops. Sam Clayton crosses to confront him across the width of the room. Jorgensen tries to be the easy, smiling host--and makes a very bad job of it.

JORGENSEN

Look everybody...Look who's...

He can't even finish it but stands there making flapping gestures.

198 INT. JORGENSEN ROOM - FULL SHOT - ETHAN AND SAM

-- others gaping. During the opening lines, Jorgensen will covertly back toward the door to the inner room -- Laurie's room.

ETHAN

(to all)

Evenin'...evenin' Reverend...or do I call you 'Captain'...?

CLAYTON

Came here for a wedding, Ethan...  
Until that's over, I reckon 'reverend'  
will do...

MRS. JORGENSEN

(coming forward)

And news of our little girl, Ethan?

His face contorts and his smile is twisted.

ETHAN

She's not a little girl any more.

MRS. JORGENSEN



(eyes wide)  
You've seen her!...She's alive?

ETHAN  
I've seen her...and she's alive.

Mrs. Jorgensen throws herself against his chest, sobbing.  
Ethan looks past her at Clayton. And the faces of both  
men are grim.

CUT TO:

199 INT. THE GRANDMOTHER ROOM - FULL SHOT

The room is dark. Martin is pacing, eyes constantly turning  
to the inside door. And then it opens and Laurie is  
inside, holding a lamp. She is in her bridal gown and  
very obviously trying to keep from betraying the stress  
she is under.

LAURIE  
(quietly)  
Hello, Martie....

He just stares at her -- very lovely, strangely remote.  
He suddenly is conscious of his dirty hands, his dusty,  
worn clothing.

MARTIN  
I...I wrote you a letter...Reckon  
you didn't get it...

LAURIE  
(setting the lamp  
down)  
One letter in five years...I read  
it till the paper dried up and  
the writing faded out...

MARTIN  
It wasn't much of a letter...

LAURIE  
No, it wasn't...You mighta said you  
loved me...You mighta asked me to  
wait...At least that'd have been  
something...

MARTIN  
But I allus loved you...You know  
that, without my sayin' it...I  
couldn't bring myself to ask you  
to wait...the little I had...  
not knowin' how much longer until  
we found Debbie...

LAURIE  
(breaking)  
It isn't fair...

She sinks onto the bench.

LAURIE  
(sobbing)  
It isn't fair, Martin Pauley, and  
you know it!

She begins to cry, very softly. He is beside her and his  
arm goes around her shoulder comfortingly.

MARTIN  
Don't cry, Laurie...I understand how  
it is...I'll just go 'way...

LAURIE  
(spinning on him)  
You do and I'll die, Martie...I  
will! I'll just die!

And they are kissing through her tears when the outer door  
is flung open by Charlie MacCorry. They part as he glares.

CHARLIE  
I'll thank you to leave the room,  
Laurie.

Martin stares at him, then at her.

MARTIN  
(incredulous)  
Charlie MacCorry!...You weren't  
fixin' to marry HIM??

CHARLIE  
She sure is!...An' don't think your  
comin' back is goin' to change it!

MARTIN  
As to that, I don't know, Charlie...  
We hadn't got around to talkin'  
marriage...

CHARLIE  
What right you got to be talkin'  
marriage to any decent woman...

MARTIN  
(angrily)  
If you're talkin' about that crazy  
murder charge...

CHARLIE

AND other things...Mebbe you thought  
you was gettin' away with being  
comical about that Indian wife you  
took...I bet she wasn't the first squaw  
you...

Martin swings wildly but Charlie is a wily fighter. He  
side-steps and chops Martin in the jaw and drives him  
against the wall. Laurie runs between them.

LAURIE  
Stop it! Both of you...I won't have  
any fighting in this house.

Martin gently brushes her aside.

MARTIN  
It's all right...Charlie, let's  
move outside.

CHARLIE  
I ain't wearing no gun.

Martin nods and unbuckles his gunbelt. The men head  
outside as Laurie runs to get help.

200 EXT. THE JORGENSEN HOME - BREEZEWAY

Charlie waits assuredly as Martin follows him outside.  
Martin makes a wild run, swings. The blow is neatly  
guarded by Charlie's left and countered with a crisp  
right that puts Martin down. Martin gets to his feet,  
more cautiously this time, and comes in at a crouch;  
he's fighting like an Indian, not a white man. The  
men from the wedding party come out now at a run.

CLAYTON  
(yelling)  
Sergeant MacCorry!

Charlie turns slightly and in that instant Martin springs  
and drives a straight right at his face -- almost as  
though there were a knife in the hand. MacCorry stumbles  
back into Clayton's arms.

CLAYTON  
Is this in the line of duty,  
sergeant?

CHARLIE  
(regaining his balance)  
No sir...pleasure.

CLAYTON  
In that case, give the boys room...

Martin waits at a crouch as Charlie comes in, feints his right and crosses his left. It is a hard blow but Martin recovers and waits...Charlie circles and starts to repeat. He feints his right but this time Martin springs in, ducks and -- as the left shoots out -- he grabs the wrist and throws Charlie over his head. What we are looking at, in effect, is a wrestler against a boxer.

CLAYTON

Fight fair, son...Use your fists!

ETHAN

(drily)

Comanches don't use their fists,  
reverend...Let 'em alone...

Charlie is on his feet and warily starts circling -- now trying to imitate Martin's crouch. Suddenly Martin feints a right swing and connects with a solid left -- reversing the order of business. Charlie staggers and Martin follows up with a wrestling hold, leaping behind Charlie, locking both legs around him and driving his arms upward behind his back so that his face is in the dirt and so he could -- under other circumstances -- be neatly and expeditiously scalped. With the hands locked, Martin then calmly draws a knife. He looks innocently into the aghast faces of the crowd.

MARTIN

Could scalp him...but I'll just  
count coup!

With that he releases the paralyzed arms just long enough to grab a lock of Charlie's hair and neatly snip it off. He stands then and laughs as Charlie lamely gets to his feet -- easing the tortured arms. Clayton goes to Charlie's side. Laurie moves to Martin's side.

CLAYTON

You all right, sergeant?

CHARLIE

Dunno...Seems so.

CLAYTON

Well, go get cleaned up and we'll  
proceed with the weddin'...

Charlie frowns and looks off at where Laurie and Martin are standing.

CHARLIE

Ain't goin' to be any weddin' -- not  
till we get a few things cleared  
up 'round here...

He walks rather unsteadily away leaving a thunderstruck assembly, murmurous with surprise.

WIPE TO:

201 INT. JORGENSEN KEEPING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

The last of the wedding guests is leaving: Ed Nesby carrying his bull fiddle and with his wife and daughter and two smaller children preceding him out the door. The Jorgensens stand by -- trying to put a good face on the wedding debacle. Charlie MacCorry is sitting dejectedly, studying a spot on the floor. Ethan is at the mantel. Laurie is in her room -- presumably changing out of her wedding gown. Martin is at a sink, bathing a cut on his lip. Clayton, still in his clerical coat, is near the door.

NESBY

(a grin)

Well...it was a nice weddin' party...  
considerin' no one got married...  
'Night.

JORGENSEN

Good night, Ed...

Mrs. Jorgensen puts her handkerchief to her eyes -- letting down now that the guests have gone. Jorgensen crosses to her, pats her sympathetically.

JORGENSEN

Now, mamma!...

He leads her away. Clayton faces Ethan.

CLAYTON

I got to ask you and Martin to ride  
to the State Capitol with me, Ethan.

ETHAN

This an invite to a necktie party,  
Reverend?

CLAYTON

Captain...Nope, wouldn't say that...  
Likely you had your reasons for  
killin' Futterman...Probably needed  
killin'...I'm speaking as a ranger  
now, not as a reverend...Fact that  
all three was shot in the back is the  
only thing that's raised some  
question -- that and a missin' gold  
piece known to have been on him just  
prior to his demise.

Ethan casually reaches into his pocket, takes out a gold coin and spins it.

ETHAN  
(casually)  
That so?

Martin crosses to confront Clayton.

MARTIN  
I ain't goin' to Austin, Reverend.

Charlie gets to his feet and he has his gun in his hand.

CHARLIE  
You're goin' if the captain says  
you're goin'...

CLAYTON  
Now, now...let's not grow dis-  
putatious...

Fast hoofbeats sound o.s. -- signalling the approach of a four-man cavalry detail.

CLAYTON  
(turning)  
What's that? More company?

He and Jorgensen head for the door.

CLAYTON  
Kinda late getting here, aren't  
they?

A voice hails from outside.

LIEUTENANT'S VOICE  
Hello there! Captain Clayton?

202 INT.-EXT. JORGENSEN HOUSE - ANGLE AT DOOR - NIGHT

Clayton stands in the opened doorway, Jorgensen behind him, looking out. Drawn up outside is the four-man cavalry detail, led by a young and very crisp LIEUTENANT. We may or may not see the sixth man, slouched over his horse. The Lieutenant swings off and crosses.

LIEUTENANT  
Is Captain Clayton here, Reverend?

CLAYTON  
I'm Clayton.

The Lieutenant gapes at Clayton's ministerial coat.

LIEUTENANT  
(doubtfully)  
You're Captain Clayton?...

Ethan chuckles, to Clayton's very obvious annoyance.

LIEUTENANT  
(recovering, he  
salutes)  
Colonel Greenhill's compliments, sir.  
The Colonel wishes to know how soon  
you could put a company of Rangers  
in the field, fully armed and...

CLAYTON  
Hold on, son...Who's this Colonel  
Greenhill you're talking about?

LIEUTENANT  
Why Colonel Greenhill is Colonel  
Greenhill, sir...Commanding Officer,  
Fifth U.S. Cavalry...I'm Lieutenant  
Greenhill, sir.

CLAYTON  
Oh...Now what's this your pa wants  
to know?

LIEUTENANT  
My pa wants to know...Colonel Greenhill  
wants to know how soon you could  
put a company of your Rangers in  
the field, fully armed and equipped,  
for joint punitive action against  
the Comanches.

CLAYTON  
JOINT action?

LIEUTENANT  
Yes sir...We've received information  
about a band of Comanches under a  
chief named Scar...

ETHAN  
What information?

LIEUTENANT  
That maybe he's not far from here --  
holed up somewhere, waiting his  
chance to get back over the border...  
He raided north about a month ago...  
ran into more army than he bargained

for...Now he's running for cover, for keeps this time...

CLAYTON

And what makes you think he's in this territory?

LIEUTENANT

Yesterday, one of our patrols picked up a man claims he was a prisoner with Scar till only two days ago... He talks crazy but I brought him along...Says he lives here...keeps mentioning a rocking chair.

ETHAN

(half to himself)

Mose...

And then he is striding to the door, calling it:

ETHAN

MOSE!

MOSE'S VOICE

Ay-eh?...Ay-eh?...

And the old man totters in, half-supported by a trooper -- hollow-eyed, weak, almost delirious.

MOSE

Come f'r my rockin' chai'...ole Mose.

ETHAN

(shouting it)

Where's Scar, Mose...SCAR?

MARTIN

Ask him about Debbie!...Is she all right, Mose?

MOSE

My rockin' chai'...

MRS. JORGENSEN

(bustling over)

Leave the poor man be! Can't you see he's out of his mind...

She tries to lead him away, but Ethan shoves her aside and grips the old man by his arms.

ETHAN

Mose...try to remember!...You were in Scar's camp...



MOSE

Ay-eh...Made out I was crazy...  
(he giggles  
foolishly)  
Ate dirt...chewed grass...I fooled  
'em, Ethan!...an' I got away...

ETHAN

Scar! Where's he holed in?

MOSE

Seven Fingers...ay-eh...Seven...

He staggers and this time Mrs. Jorgensen won't be denied.

MRS. JORGENSEN

Now that's enough! Here...by the  
fire...What you need's a good  
bowl of soup...

She leads him away, at last to his rocker by the fire.  
During this, Ethan and Clayton have been mulling Mose's  
answer.

ETHAN

(blankly)  
Seven Fingers?

LIEUTENANT

That's what he told us...but there's  
no such place on the maps.

MARTIN

Wait a minute! Isn't that the Caddo  
name for where all those canyons  
branch on the Malapai?

MOSE

(from his rocker)  
Caddo or Kiowa...ay-eh...ay-eh...

Sam Clayton wheels on the Lieutenant.

CLAYTON

You tell your pa a company of  
Rangers -- all fourteen of 'em --  
fully armed an' equipped will be in  
the field by daylight...headin' for  
the south end of the Malapai. If  
he can catch up with us, well an'  
good...

LIEUTENANT

But...but captain, we can't possibly  
take the field tomorrow...for your  
own protection...

CLAYTON

Sonny, yonder's a passel of murderers,  
complete with Texican scalps an' white  
girl captive...You want to protect us,  
you just get out of our way...Now  
skedaddle!

The lieutenant skedaddles. Sam whirls on Martin and  
Ethan.

CLAYTON

Ethan, you an' Martin are hereby  
appointed civilian scouts -- without  
pay...Charlie, hightail it to head-  
quarters an' spread the word...

CHARLIE

Yes sir...

He leaves. Martin's hands go to his side -- recalling  
where he left his guns.

MARTIN

My guns...

He heads for the inner door to the grandmother room.

203 INT. THE GRANDMOTHER ROOM - FULL SHOT

as Martin enters and crosses to where he had dropped his  
gunbelt. Even before he reaches it, Laurie is in the  
room -- closing the door after her.

LAURIE

Martie...don't go! Not this time.

MARTIN

(staring)

You crazy?

LAURIE

It's too late...She's a woman grown  
now...

MARTIN

I got to fetch her home...

LAURIE

Fetch what home?...The leavin's of  
Comanche bucks -- sold time an' again  
to the highest bidder?...With savage  
brats of her own, most like?...

MARTIN

(shouting it)

Laurie! Shut your mouth!

LAURIE

Do you know what Ethan will do if he has a chance?...He'll put a bullet in her brain! And I tell you Martha would want him to!

MARTIN

Only if I'm dead!

He strides out past her.

204 INT. THE KEEPING ROOM - FULL SHOT

as Martin re-enters. Ethan and Sam are waiting. Martin looks hard at Ethan.

CLAYTON

You ready?

MARTIN

(eyes never leaving  
Ethan's face)

I'm ready.

As they stride out,

CUT TO:

204-A INT. JORGENSEN HOUSE - GRANDMOTHER ROOM - CLOSE SHOT -  
LAURIE - NIGHT

as she stands at the window, in her bridal gown, and sadly watches Martin again going away. Softly the score reprises -- sadly now -- "Skip to My Lou."

DISSOLVE TO:

205 EXT. MESA COUNTRY - LONG SHOT - THE RANGERS - DAWN LIGHT

A file of eighteen men and horses -- Rangers -- is walking under the shoulder of a mesa, keeping well below the skyline.

206 FULL SHOT - THE FILE OF RANGERS - DAWN LIGHT

They pass CAMERA one by one -- Sam Clayton in the lead, Martin behind him leading two horses, then the others -- grim-looking, capable men of varying ages; some with long drooping mustaches, some in need of shaves, some chewing tobacco.

207 CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN - AT RIM OF A MESA - DAWN LIGHT

He is lying prone, his hat off, squinting down into a long

reach of desert canyon at the Comanche encampment -- with tepees set up, a thin wisp of smoke rising from a fire, the horse herd penned in a draw cut off by an improvised corral of rawhide ropes.

208 EXT. THE COMANCHE ENCAMPMENT - WIDE ANGLE SHOT - DAWN LIGHT

The camp is sleeping. A dog yaps shrilly. One of the tepee flaps opens and Scar steps out. He picks up a stone or a chunk of wood and throws it. The dog yelps and runs off. Scar's air is troubled, suspicious. He heads for the horse herd. The camp sleeps on.

209 CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN - AT RIM OF A MESA - DAWN LIGHT

His face betrays a bitter inner satisfaction. He looks back along the trail as faintly we hear the approach of the Ranger company. Then he squirms back, retrieving his hat.

210 FULL SHOT - HEAD OF RANGER COLUMN - DAWN LIGHT

Sam, seeing Ethan in the near distance, raises his hand in a signal for halt and waits. Ethan scrambles down the trail to join him. He takes the reins of his horse from Martin.

ETHAN

We can get within 500 yards...there's a hogback to the south.

CLAYTON

How many, would you say?

ETHAN

(drily)

Enough to go around...I'd say about a dozen apiece...Mount 'em up!

He moves as though to mount, but Martin steps forward.

MARTIN

Wait! We go chargin' in, they'll kill her...and you know it.

ETHAN

(calmly)

It's what I'm countin' on.

Sam stares at him, but Martin isn't surprised.

MARTIN

I know you are...Only it ain't goin' to be that way...she's alive...

ETHAN

Livin' with Comanches ain't bein'  
alive...

MARTIN

(same tone)

She's alive...Better she's alive  
and livin' with Comanches than her  
brains bashed out...

CLAYTON

Now son, it's a bitter thing to say,  
but there's more than your sister  
at stake here.

ETHAN

There sure is! I'm going to tell  
you somethin'...I wasn't going to  
speak of it...But I'll tell you now.  
Did you notice them scalps strung  
on Scar's lance?

(Martin nods)

Did you see the third scalp from  
the point of the lance? Long...  
wavy hair...

MARTIN

I saw it...And don't try to tell  
me it was Aunt Martha's or Lucy's...

ETHAN

You don't remember it, but I  
remember. That was your mother's  
scalp!

Martin stares, quick disbelief in his eyes. But Ethan's  
eyes hold his and there is no doubting the truth in them.

ETHAN

I didn't want to tell you...but  
maybe it's your right to know.

CLAYTON

(quietly)

Now mount up, son...

Sam puts his hand on Martin's elbow -- as though to turn  
him to his duty. But Martin jerks the arm away.

MARTIN

It don't change it...All I'm  
askin' is a chance to sneak in  
there...an' try to get her out  
before you come chargin' in.

CLAYTON

What if you're caught?

MARTIN

It won't tell 'em anything, will it! Just a man alone...

ETHAN

I say NO!

CLAYTON

Go ahead, son...But at the first alarm, we're comin' in -- and we ain't goin' to have time to pick and choose our targets when we do...

Ethan looks long and hard at Martin, then reaches into his shirt for the folded, dirty, dog-eared paper that was his will. Slowly he tears it into shreds.

ETHAN

It's your funeral...

Martin squats and starts pulling off his boots. He glances up as Charlie MacCorry comes over, an Indian blanket in his hands. He tosses it onto Martin's shoulder.

CHARLIE

Here...you fight like a Comanch....  
Maybe this'll help ya pass as one.

Then he grins and extends his hand. Martin takes it -- and they shake as Charlie pulls him to his feet. Martin drops his hat, and then -- at a crouching run -- he heads for the distant Comanche camp.

211 FULL SHOT - FROM BEHIND CLAYTON AND ETHAN, TOWARD MARTIN

as he runs downslope under the shelter of the hogback toward the unseen camp. Clayton waves an arm at his men and starts leading out -- in a somewhat different direction.

212 FULL SHOT - THE RANGERS, FAVORING CLAYTON AND ETHAN

They are leading their horses down the slope, still under the lee of the butte, when two riders are seen approaching at a fast gallop -- Lt. Greenhill and his courier. (The latter is a bugler).

CLAYTON

What in...?

GREENHILL

(calling -- still  
distant)

Captain Clayton...Captain!

Sam whips off his hat and makes frantic signals to Greenhill to shut up. Greenhill pulls to a canter, puzzled, and rides in.

CLAYTON

(exploding)

Go on! Whyn't you have your  
bugler sound the charge while  
you're at it??

GREENHILL

(blankly)

Sir?

CLAYTON

Never mind...Your pa know you're  
out here?

GREENHILL

Yes, sir...Troop's about ten miles  
back...The Colonel sent me looking  
for you...

CLAYTON

(dismissing him)

Well you found me...Good work,  
son...Good work.

He starts away. Greenhill follows.

GREENHILL

If there's anything I can do, sir...

CLAYTON

(under his breath)

God forbid...No, son, you flog on  
back and tell your pa where we're  
at...and where he's at...

GREENHILL

But he knows THAT, sir...Can't I  
stay, sir?

CLAYTON

(reluctantly)

All right...But keep your eye on  
me, boy...I'm the hard case you're  
up against here -- not these childish  
savages...If you don't hear me  
first time I holler, you better  
read my mind...I don't aim to raise  
no two hollers on any subject at  
hand...

GREENHILL

Yes, sir...

He whips out his sabre -- to the imminent peril of Captain Sam who quickly shifts out of the way.

CLAYTON

Watch that knife, boy!

Then Sam continues away and the Rangers after him.

213 EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF COMANCHE CAMP - FULL SHOT - DAWN LIGHT

Martin runs from behind CAMERA and dodges behind a rock. The camp is still asleep, very quiet. Martin runs out from behind the rock and makes another short dash toward the camp, dropping behind a pile of blankets or other impedimenta. A dog runs out of one of the tepees, begins barking.

214 EXT. THE HORSE HERD - MED. CLOSE SHOT - SCAR

He stands with another Comanche -- inspecting the horse lines. In the near distance the dog's barking is heard -- shrill, insistent. Scar, almost like an animal, sniffs the air suspiciously. The other Comanche laughs.

COMANCHE

Tahbo.

(A rabbit.)

Scar isn't satisfied but returns to his work.

215 EXT. THE COMANCHE CAMP - ANGLE FAVORING SCAR'S TEPEE PAST MARTIN

He is staring at it -- remembering it from certain distinct decorations. The lower part of the tepee is rolled up, for better air circulation. Martin wraps Charlie's blanket around him and begins walking to the tepee.

216 EXT. THE LEE OF THE HOGBACK OR RISE - FULL SHOT - THE RANGERS

The line is drawn up, dismounted, the men checking their sidearms, tightening cinches, etc. Sam moves briskly along the line of men, then mounts his horse.

CLAYTON

The State of Texas is payin' you  
boys \$12 a month. Here's your  
chance to earn it...Now I don't  
want any foolin' around after  
scalps. We ain't got the time...  
Yankee cavalry's on its way  
here to set those Comanches free...  
We gotta beat 'em to it -- our  
way...Now mount an' guide center



on young Greenhill here. Son,  
you just follow me...And WATCH  
THAT KNIFE!

The last comes as Greenhill tries to mount, simultaneously flailing out his sabre perilously close to Clayton.

217 EXT. SCAR'S TEPEE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - MARTIN

Martin has gained the tepee, takes one quick look around, then strides in.

218 INT. SCAR'S TEPEE

as Martin enters. One robe, tossed back, shows where Scar has slept. Against one wall lie the huddled figures of two squaws. Two other figures -- one being Debbie's -- sleep in robes. Martin's eyes go to Scar's place and then rove slowly and hold on:

219 INT. TEPEE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - DEBBIE

She moves slightly so that the light strikes her fair hair. Martin kneels close to her and gently touches her shoulder, to awaken her. Her eyes open, then widen in fear. Martin quickly claps a hand over his mouth. Silently she fights him, trying to pull the hand away.

MARTIN  
(a hoarse whisper)  
Debbie...don't!

And then her fingernails rake his hand. He winces and lets go. She screams and tries to leap up. He grabs her. The other squaws wake -- begin squawking.

MARTIN  
(grimly)  
I'm takin' you whether you want  
to or not...

Debbie sees something beyond him. Her eyes widen.

DEBBIE  
(a scream)  
MARTIN!

220 INT. TEPEE - SHOOTING FROM EXTREME LOW ANGLE, AS FROM HER P.O.V. - SCAR

He looms in the flap of the tepee much as he had over the grave when he first kidnapped her. He has a scalping knife in his hand. Scar whips his arm back. Behind him we see the other Comanche -- the one from the horse herd.

221 INT. TEPEE - FULL SHOT

Martin spins and his gun is out. He fans the trigger hammer twice -- and both slugs hit Scar. As the other Comanche leaps in, Martin's gun speaks again. And then he is on his feet, catching Debbie by the arm -- un-resisting now -- and pulling her after him through the camp. Shouts and cries bespeak the awakening of the camp.

222 EXT. THE HOGBACK - FULL SHOT - THE RANGER GROUP

They are mounted and in line. The echo of a shot comes bouncing back. Clayton is facing the men. He solemnly doffs his hat and bows his head.

CLAYTON

For these Thy gifts which we are  
about to receive...

(donning his hat,  
he turns to the  
bugler)

Sound that horn, son, and Leave  
Us Go Amongst Them...YA-HEE!

And shouting the rebel yell, he leads the charge. The yell is picked up by every man and the bugler sounds the charge as though he had a regiment at his back. Lt. Greenhill -- a West Point beau sabreur in strange company -- has his sabre at the "charge."

223 FULL MOVING SHOT - ON THE CHARGE

In the swamp of men and horses, we just have time to notice that Sam is darting a somewhat worried look at Greenhill's sabre ominously close to his back. The charge is sounding, the hooves are drumming and the men are yelling the way they did when they rode with Bedford Forrest -- reins in their teeth, guns in their fists.

224 EXT. THE ENCAMPMENT - FULL SHOT - AS THE RANGERS HIT

Comanches are running from the tepees, trying to reach their horse herd as the file of Rangers knives in. The bark of hand guns is a steady sound now -- and the Comanches have never been up against such marksmen. One charging Ranger rides down a tepee. Another, with two guns drawn, scores a running double on two Indians racing toward him from opposite sides of his fast-running horse. A dodging Comanche screams as a barrel-chested roan hits him broad-side and sends him sprawling into the embers of the campfire.

225 EXT. SCAR'S TEPEE - FULL SHOT - ETHAN

He yanks his horse back to its haunches, firing at a Comanche crouched near the tepee. The charge races past him. Ethan swings off and runs to the tepee flap, whips it open and glares. A squaw comes running out at him,

knife upraised, but he knocks her sprawling with a full arm sweep. He turns and his face is a mask of frustration -- and then he freezes, seeing what he has been looking for:

226 EXT. THE INDIAN ENCAMPMENT - LONG SHOT - ETHAN'S P.O.V.

Martin is running with Debbie, trying to pull her along, while she kicks and claws and tries to break free. (They are about thirty yards from the camp proper.) Riderless horses are milling, circling. O.s. we can hear the firing, the yells.

227 EXT. SCAR'S TEPEE - FULL SHOT

Ethan remounts and heads around the side of Scar's tepee. In the distance we see Martin and Debbie. The Rangers, regrouping, are charging back through the camp, driving the Comanche horse herd.

228 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - MED. CLOSE SHOT - MARTIN AND DEBBIE

Martin hears Ethan's horse riding down at them; he turns, and Debbie pulls free and starts to run away.

MARTIN

No, Ethan! NO!

He goes running into the path of Ethan's horse.

229 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - MOVING SHOT - ETHAN

as Martin runs and grabs hold of his stirrup, trying to fight the horse to a stop. Ethan swings on him -- once, twice -- and Martin is knocked sprawling. Ethan rides on, relentlessly.

230 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - FULL SHOT - DEBBIE AND ETHAN

She is running and dodging, trying to escape the horseman. Ethan has his gun drawn. She ducks to one side and the horse goes past. Both figures are almost obscured in the dust. Ethan spins his mount and charges after her. She runs and then falls -- and he is off his horse and striding toward her.

231 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - ETHAN AND DEBBIE

Ethan is at the left of CAMERA and slightly closer to the foreground, with Debbie at the right, supine on the ground and the dust swirling around her. Ethan draws and raises his gun. The hammer goes back.

ETHAN

(quietly)

I'm sorry, girl...Shut your eyes...

The dust clears. The CAMERA MOVES slightly forward along the gun arm and HOLDS on Debbie's face -- the eyes gazing fearlessly, innocently into Ethan's. We HOLD for a long moment and then the gun lowers. Ethan slowly holsters it and walks over to her.

232 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - CLOSE SHOT - ETHAN

He looks down at her.

ETHAN  
(softly)  
You sure favor your mother...

233 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - MED. CLOSE SHOT - THE TWO

He extends his hand to her. She takes it and he helps her to her feet. And then she is against his chest and his arm goes protectingly about her. They are standing that way when Martin stumbles up -- and stares.

WIPE TO:

233-A EXT. COMANCHE CAMP - WIDE ANGLE - DAY

The line of Rangers is afoot now, each man near his horse, each man with rifle out, pumping shot after shot at the fleeting remnant of Comanches riding down the long valley with their scattered horse herd milling and criss-crossing in mid-ground...And then as the firing slackens, from afar we can hear the blare of a cavalry bugle sounding the charge: sign of the approach of Greenhill's troop.

DISSOLVE TO:

234 EXT. THE INDIAN ENCAMPMENT - FULL SHOT - FAVORING CLAYTON

It is perhaps half an hour later. Clayton is very grim of face and occasionally wincing. His trousers are down over his ankles, his shirt-tails flapping over his long-handled red underwear. Behind him Charlie MacCorry is kneeling, applying some crude first aid to Sam's rump. Beyond them some of the Rangers are readying for the move-out. Sam looks up angrily as COLONEL GREENHILL, a guidon bearer, and bugler ride in. Greenhill is a choleric man.

COLONEL  
Clayton, if you were in my command  
I'd have you courtmartialed for this!

CLAYTON  
(angrily, to MacCorry)  
Hurry it up!

COLONEL

What's the matter, sir...You wounded?  
What is it, Sergeant -- a bullet  
or an arrow?

Charlie just gapes, but Clayton -- grim-lipped -- bends a meaningful glare on someone off. Greenhill looks that way.

235 EXT. THE INDIAN ENCAMPMENT - CLOSE SHOT - LT. GREENHILL

He is standing with his sabre at salute -- looking as miserable as any shavetail would look when in disgrace. It could be that the end of the sabre has a pronounced bend.

236 EXT. THE INDIAN ENCAMPMENT - FULL SHOT - THE GROUP

Sam suddenly slaps MacCorry's hand away and grabs for his pants and pulls them up -- and around a tepee come three figures -- Ethan, Debbie, and Martin -- with Ethan holding Debbie's hand. And Sam's face is split by a grin as he tucks his shirt-tails in and goes to meet them.

DISSOLVE TO:

237 EXT. THE JORGENSEN HOUSE - CLOSE SHOT - MOSE HARPER -  
AFTERNOON

He is in a rocker on the porch. Suddenly he stares out and stops rocking. Faint in the distance, but coming closer, the clop-clop of two horses, moving at a walk. A moment later Jorgensen emerges and comes to stand beside Mose, shading his eyes and squinting against the sun, still not recognizing the distant horsemen. He is joined by Mrs. Jorgensen. And then Laurie comes out and she too stares, frowning at first, then with dawning realization. Lars and Mrs. Jorgensen also begin to guess...to suspect... and then to know. And Laurie starts to run.

238 CLOSE SHOT - MOVING WITH LAURIE

The CAMERA MOVES ahead of her as she runs blindly over the hard-packed ground, running as hard as she can toward the still unseen but nearing horsemen.

239 FULL SHOT - THE GROUP

Ethan has Debbie on the pommel of his saddle, his arm supporting her, and she is asleep. Martin is riding beside them. Laurie comes running up to stare at Ethan and at the girl. He smiles and puts a finger to his lips -- cautioning her against waking Debbie -- and then he rides by. Laurie looks then at Martin. He doesn't know whether to smile or not; he just waits. And then she is beside him and she steps onto his stirrured foot and vaults up beside him, and she kisses him just as she had on the day he left the graves to take up the search. And still holding her beside him, he rides slowly after Ethan and Debbie

toward the house.

FADE OUT

THE END