

EXT. DENVER STREETS - EVENING -

A black Buick glides down city streets. The driver, ROMAN PHILLIPS, is tall, broad-shouldered, handsome, around twenty.

His eyes flit nervously to the rearview mirror, to his passenger in the back. HARRY LEIGHT, is small, blocky and tough, a streetbred Limey in an expensive suit. He checks the chambers of a heavy Webley service revolver and slips it back under his coat. He thinks better of it, puts it in a side pocket of the car.

ROMAN

...So...might makes right...

HARRY

No, might is right...

(He pats Roman's
shoulder.)

Stick with me, kid. You'll have
more than you ever dreamed of.

ROMAN

More what?

HARRY

More...everything.

Roman looks more unnerved than pleased. He's late reacting to another driver making a dumb move but he maneuvers around him expertly, banging on the horn and cursing. Harry smiles.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Chip off the old block, you are.

ROMAN

...Harry...uh, I was
thinking...about...things and...

HARRY

Here! Pull into the alley.

Roman swerves into the alley and stops at a gesture from Harry. Harry leans over the seat, angry.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Don't be thinking about "things"
when you're working. You'll end up
having no use for them. You'll be
dead. Now, let's go.

He gets out of the car. Roman stays put. Harry leans in the front passenger window. The paternal air has disappeared.

HARRY (CONT'D)

(threatening) Don't disappoint me,
Roman. It wouldn't sit well.

Harry heads for the back door of a speakeasy. Roman starts to follow. The DOORMAN blocks him with a massive arm.

DOORMAN

Ain't you gonna wait in the car,
kid?

Harry puts a gloved hand on the Doorman's arm.

HARRY

He has to learn the social graces
sometime.

Roman shifts uncomfortably. The Doorman scowls, unsure if it's an insult. They push past him into the smoky bar.

INT. SPEAKEASY - HARRY, ROMAN

Harry focuses on the BARTENDER. The man sees him and looks around nervously. They reach the bar. Harry stares straight at the Bartender.

BARTENDER

Harry...Mr. Leight. Good to see
you.

HARRY

Good to see you, Fred.

BARTENDER

What'll you have?

HARRY

Mr. Moran if he's around.

BARTENDER

He's on the way. Something to drink?

Harry turns around and scans the room warily. Couple of guys in the corner have hard stares. He turns back. The Bartender is pouring him a drink.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Scotch whiskey. The real thing.

Just off the boat.

HARRY

The boat comes to Denver?

The bartender laughs nervously. Harry lifts the glass, sniffs it, puts it down without drinking.

BARTENDER

Something for you, kid?

ROMAN

I'm no kid.

Roman glances at Harry nervously. But Harry is watching a man approach. Tall, rugged, tough; the owner, JIM MORAN.

MORAN

Harry. Good to see you.

HARRY

You kept me waiting, Jim.

MORAN

Ah...you know, business.

HARRY

This...is business.

Moran is looking Roman over, frisking him with his eyes.

HARRY (CONT'D)

He's with me. Roman Phillips.

Moran leans past Harry and shakes Roman's hand. He looks into his eyes, hard and scary. Roman tries to meet his stare.

MORAN

New line of work for you, Roman?

Roman tries to withdraw his hand but Moran keeps hold of it.

ROMAN

I...drive for Mr. Leight.

MORAN

So you do.

Moran looks down at Roman's hand in his. The difference is unsettling; Roman's soft, youthful hand in his enormous paw.

He looks at Harry. Harry is outwardly calm but his eyes have scaled over.

MORAN (CONT'D)

What else he do for you, Harry?

Harry's stare is response enough.

MORAN (CONT'D)

He take care of those fine English clothes?

HARRY

You do have a point to make, Jim...

MORAN

I do. It's...progress. It's the new West now, Harry. Men don't operate alone anymore.

HARRY

I started this place, Jim.

MORAN

And I'll always be grateful.

HARRY

I started you.

MORAN

But you can't stop me. We have to move on. Try this...

(He lifts a glass of whiskey.)

It's really quite good.

HARRY

It's not scotch.

MORAN

No. It's not scotch. But it is good. You see, Harry, these folks...they don't care about scotch.

They don't care about English suits...or the War. They're Americans. They like things American.

They fought for what they got. And they don't like some, well, some foreigner, with his foreign ways, comin' in here with his suit and his...boy, taking away their good money.

The crowd starts to edge away. The men in the corners stay put.

HARRY

They don't like it?

MORAN

I don't like it. I don't like your attitude.

HARRY

You don't.

MORAN

I run this place. I make it work.

Why should I pay you? For what?

Because you're so tough?

HARRY

Because I set you up and you owe me.

MORAN

I've paid you enough.

HARRY

Because I'll break you.

MORAN

Who, you and the kid?

HARRY

Just me.

MORAN

Well, okay. Let's see what you really learned in the trenches.

HARRY

You may just do that.

Moran moves back down the bar, revealing a pistol...lying between them. Harry looks at it, looks around him. It's just what they want him to do.

HARRY (CONT'D)

The kid leaves.

MORAN

You both do. You're a smart guy, Harry.

Harry looks around, looks at the kid...the crowd, the gunmen.

He picks up his homburg and puts it on. He lifts the glass, sips...

HARRY

It's not good stuff, Jim.

He turns and pushes through the crowd. Roman, red-faced with fear and embarrassment, follows him. The piano rags them out.

MORAN

(yelling)

Harry...

(Harry turns.)

Come back sometime...for a drink.

HARRY

I'll do that. Real soon.

He turns to go, followed by two gunsels.

ENTRANCE - LOBBY

Harry steps through the door first, steps to the side. As the others step through, he cold-cocks one man.

The other tries to bring his gun to bear but Roman's in the way. Harry steps around Roman and beats him unconscious with three vicious blows.

Roman is terrified.

Harry grabs their guns. The Doorman puts his hands up in silent plea. Harry smashes him in the head.

He slumps to the floor.

Roman starts to beat it out the door. Harry grabs him back.

He wedges the unconscious men in the doors, hands a gun to Roman and takes off down a side corridor fast. They take a left, through a door and come out in the alley a hundred feet down from the car.

EXT. ALLEY

Roman turns off but Harry stops him. He points to something in the alley that Roman cannot see. They sneak across in the shadows, make their way down a garbage gully and come out at the car on the other side.

Now Roman sees it; the ambush. One man with a shotgun, another with a rifle, at opposite ends of the alley behind garbage cans, zeroed on the space between the entrance and the car.

Harry tucks the gun away. He does a doughboy crawl into the shadow and up to the car from the opposite side. Roman sights his pistol on the rifleman.

THE CAR...

Harry reaches the running board and slips the door open. He crawls onto the back floor, reaches under the seat. He pulls out something black and evil - a Thompson submachine gun and two drum magazines. He slips one drum in his pocket and slaps the other one in place on the gun. He cocks it, sits up, straightens his clothes...He turns, nods to Roman.

EXT. CAR...

The door opens. The ambushers look up in surprise. Harry steps out calmly. He blasts the man with the shotgun. The shotgun goes off, blowing a hole in the car door.

Roman fires three fast shots at the rifleman from behind.

They miss close enough to get his attention. He stands up to swing around on Roman when Harry's second volley shreds him from the rear. Roman looks up. Harry is gone.

INT. LOBBY

One of the gunsels is searching for his missing gun when a burst of submachinegun fire blows him through the doorway into the saloon.

INT. SALOON

People turn in shock as Harry and the gun step in. He fires straight at them. They hit the floor as his burst goes over their heads and shatters the bar. They crawl out of the bar unharmed as, in burst after burst, he blasts the bar into kindling. His gun clicks empty..he slaps the magazine off.

Moran's head appears from behind the bar. He sees Harry reloading...He grabs the big horse pistol and comes out firing. Big, booming shots slam in beside Harry. Harry looks up. Moran firing, moving forward at him. Harry looks down, calmly clicks the new mag into place as the pistol shots whip through his clothes. One blows his hat off as Moran comes into point blank range. Harry looks up, pulls the cocking lever and blows Moran away.

He walks behind the bar. The Bartender is there, cowering.

Harry reaches past him for the money bag.

ENTRANCE

Harry, bursting out, runs into Roman, creeping in. He throws the money bag to him.

HARRY

Hold this.

EXT. ALLEY

They start for the car when screaming police cars block the alley at both ends. Harry turns on one, lets loose a stuttering blast that shatters the front patrol car, stops it dead.

HARRY

Come on.

He ducks back into the speak. Roman hesitates. On the front seat of the car, another money bag. He springs across and grabs it. He looks outside. Scattered police shots ding off the pavement. He turns, fires out the back window, then breaks for the door. It shatters behind him as he dives through.

ROMAN

Harry?!

No Harry. Spooked, he darts into the smoke-filled Speakeasy.

INT. SPEAK - ROMAN

He trips over Moran's bloodied body, turns, backs away from it.

Caught from behind, he screams, wrenches loose, swings the gun. It cracks the Bartender's head. He goes down. Roman runs through dark corridors...

ROMAN

Harry!...Harry!...Wait for me!

A door smashes open. Light streams in, blinding him. He fires at the figures. They fire back. A blast from the Thompson settles the thing. The doorway is empty. Roman dives over to Harry.

He slips on something, lands on top of him. Harry grunts in pain. Roman looks at his hands - blood.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

God, Harry!

HARRY

Shut up, kid.

ROMAN

The cops are all over...you're bleeding!

HARRY

You got the money?

He coughs up blood.

ROMAN

Jesus! Was it worth it?

HARRY

Sure it was, kid. They gotta remember!

ROMAN

Remember what?

HARRY

...One thing...

(coughs)

Nobody fucks with Harry Leight.

A volley through the doorway. Roman ducks lower. Harry frantically checks his gun and his coat pockets.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Where is it?

ROMAN

What?

HARRY

The magazine! I must've dropped it.

ROMAN

I'll find it.

Under scattered fire, he crawls back, searching the floor with his hands.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

I can't see anything.

HARRY

Hurry! They're coming.

ROMAN

I can't find it!...Here it is!

He grabs it, stands up in triumph. A cop steps through the doorway, swings a gun at Roman. Harry blasts at him.

Reciprocal fire slams around him as Roman falls back into the shadows.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Harry!

His voice draws fire. Roman gathers himself. Harry hasn't moved. Roman darts for him. The ground between them erupts.

Roman is driven back to cover.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Harry...Harry!

Harry lies there, completely still...Roman sees the shadows move closer...rustling around behind him...voices moving in.

He looks at Harry. Shots ring in close by. That decides him. He grabs the money and slips away, crawling through the dark corridors of the speak. He comes on another back exit, gathers himself, bolts for it, hits a fence...trapped.

COP

He's back here!

COP2

Block him!

Hole in the fence. Roman's coat catches. Shots whiz by above him. His coat rips away. He's through.

BACK IN THE DARK - HARRY

His eyes open.

HARRY

Kid?...Where are you, kid?...Roman?!

Where's my money?!

Footsteps and voices outside. Harry rolls over and drags himself...to...a gutter...a drainage ditch filled with water.

He slides down into it...out of sight.

INT. LAINIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

ROMAN staggers through the window. LAINIE bolts up in her bed. She screams. Roman ducks, looks in back of him, gun out. Nothing.

ROMAN

What is it?

Lainie turns on the light. She's pretty, innocent looking.

LAINIE

You.

He turns back to her, out of breath and scared.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

What is it? What's happened?

She sees the gun and the bag.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

What's that?

ROMAN

Never mind. Just get your things.

We gotta go.

She looks at him, frightened now.

LAINIE

Where? What are you talking about?

ROMAN

With me. Away.

LAINIE

...I can't just leave.

ROMAN
Why not? That's what you wanted.

LAINIE
...How can we? We have no money.

He throws the bag at her. She opens it, gasps.

LAINIE (CONT'D)
Whose is it?

ROMAN
It's ours now.

LAINIE
Harry...You took Harry's money!

ROMAN
He doesn't need it anymore.

LAINIE
He'll kill you!

ROMAN
...No he won't. He won't kill anybody. He's dead, Lainie. Harry's dead.

Lainie heaves inward at the shock.

LAINIE
You...

ROMAN
It wasn't me, it was the cops.

She stares at him, in shock.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
I have to get out of here right now.

LAINIE
...Oh my God, Roman...

Her knees are weak. He goes to her, holds her, tries to give her strength.

ROMAN
He never would've let you go. If he found out about us, he would've killed us both.

Sirens in the distance. She shudders, unable to move. Roman starts grabbing her things, stuffing them into a bag. She watches him.

LAINIE

...Where?

ROMAN

I don't know.

He pushes by her, opening a bureau, grabbing clothes...He notices a photograph hanging on the wall.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Anywhere...until I can think.

HIS POV - THE PHOTOGRAPH

A couple stands in front of a barbershop circa 1890. A sign in the background reads ELKHORN. Handwritten in the corner of the frame: To Lainie, Love Grandma and Grandpa.

ANGLE ON ROMAN

He smashes the glass with the gun handle, pulls the picture out, stuffs it in his coat.

LAINIE

Not Elkhorn...

ROMAN

Why not?

LAINIE

It's a ghost town. There's nothing there. Just dead people.

ROMAN

Perfect.

DISSOLVE...MAIN TITLES OVER...

WIND...Lulling, hypnotic..

FADE IN - YELLOW GOLD...

A pointillist mash of color...PULL BACK...It becomes a stand of Aspen. Yellow leaves blowing, losing hold, sweeping down the mountain...into the valley below...kicking up dust on Main Street...ELKHORN.

A GHOST TOWN...Dilapidated remains creak in the wind. A cliff face cuts a swath through the town. Half the buildings have dropped away...into the canyon below. The survivors slant into the abyss, flaps to the wind.

MEUNSTER'S FUNERAL PARLOR

The last solid glass in town. Through the window, a FIGURE, barely visible, swathed in purple, laid out like a corpse.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR

The "Corpse" lies on a bed, wrapped in a purple shroud. Red longjohns stick out at the neck...white beard and moustache, goldwhite hair splayed out on the pillow behind him - an OLD MAN, a Wild West Corpse - THE WIND RIVER KID.

THUD...Something heavy falls...WHOOSH...A RED GLOW washes over the body...CLANK. Metal on metal, followed by heavy footsteps.

THE KID'S EYES POP OPEN. They dart to the side - the direction of the sound.

ANGLE - OLD COAL STOVE.

The trap is open. A new log has been tossed in. A coffee pot sits on top, just placed there.

The Kid doesn't move. His eyes scan the room.

KID
...Awake...shit.

THE LOG POPS

KID (CONT'D)
Creed?...

PERK. The coffee pot is heating up. He stares at it.

KID (CONT'D)
Bastard. Where are you?

Nothing. Just wind. He pulls out a whiskey bottle, takes a slug, winces, scans the room.

KID (CONT'D)
I'm gettin' to old for this shit.

You're gettin' too dead.

He takes another pull from the bottle.

KID (CONT'D)
I told you I'll make my own goddamned coffee.

He looks around, pours in a double shot of whiskey.

KID (CONT'D)
You make it all wrong, always did.

EXT. FUNERAL PARLOR - MORNING

THE KID steps out, stopping at the edge of the porch. He checks the sky carefully then heads down into the sunlight.

He takes a sip of coffee, puts the cup down on a log and heads down the street.

A BELCH echoes...A KNIFE BLADE cuts through wood. The Kid spins around.

ADEN CREED sits on the porch of the Great Northern Hotel, draped in a deerskin capote. His huge, satiny skull shines in the sunlight.

CREED
Mornin', Younker.

The Kid tries to be angry but he's glad to see him.

KID
You're at it early.

CREED
Yup.

His blade doesn't miss a stroke. A reindeer is emerging from the wood. Creed spits on the knife, hones it. The Kid looks round like he's misplaced something.

CREED (CONT'D)
It's back there, on your log.

KID
(pissed) What?

CREED
Your coffee.

KID
Thanks. And I don't need you makin' it.

CREED
Just tryin' to help.

KID
You ain't helpin'!

CREED
You gonna be that way.

He stands up, spits into the dust, steps off the porch and ambles up toward the trees. He pauses.

CREED (CONT'D)
Better get my old Hawken rifle down, clean it up.

KID
Why?

He gestures up at the graveyard.

CREED

Scar came down last night. Not a
calmin' thing to see in the night.

I called out to him in Injun.

KID

I don't suppose he said what he
wanted.

CREED

Might have. I never did learn to
speak bear. Pawin' at the graves
though. Believe that's a bad sign
in any man's language.

The Kid grunts. Creed walks into the evergreens, fragmenting
in the sunlight, appearing and disappearing - vaporish.

KID

Damn bear's as dead as you are!

Creed merges into sunlight. The Kid's so pissed, he doesn't
see it coming. A soft whistle, an airborne missile, coming
in fast. He knows instantly but it's too late.

WHAP!!! The Kid is down, rolling in the dirt, scrambling,
then up with a rock in his hand. THE FALCON is already out
of range, screeching his victory. The Kid touches the rising
lump on his skull.

KID (CONT'D)

Damn you! Damn all of you! Damn
this whole fucking town!

MS - GRAVESTONES

Some still standing. Others in pieces, or crumbling to dust.

CU - MARKER...

Del Studer 1842 - October 17, 1869 A good friend and honest
But not too smar Killed and part et by a grizz.

The Kid squints at the marker then stops in front of Lucie
Jean Markham. Huge claw marks have ripped up the grave. He
lays his hands over them. They're huge, twice the size of
his own hands.

KID

Son of a bitch! He shot the damn
thing in eighty-eight.

CREED

(O.S.) Eighty-seven. And he weren't
no cub then.

The Kid spins around, trips over a broken marker. CREED is
sitting on his own gravestone:

ADEN CREED, MOUNTAIN MAN 1822 - July 17, 1892 Killed by Owl
Hoots

CREED (CONT'D)

Easy, Kid.

KID

Damn you! Stop sneakin' up on me
like that.

CREED

Can't be helped. Quiet sort of comes
natural to a man in my condition.

The Kid fidgets, nervous.

KID

That bear comes into Elkhorn, I'll
kill it.

CREED

He's here already. And he ain't
like me. He's still got his claws.

He'll tear down this place board by board. Won't die 'til
it's gone.

The Kid looks at him.

KID

You never did talk sense.

CREED

Weren't no point to it. You never
would listen...All these graves are
gettin' me depressed.

He heads down the hill toward town. Sunlight dances through
his body.

KID

(to himself)

That's it.

(yelling, to Creed)

You can have it, you hear! The town!
the bear! everything! I'm
leavin'!...you hear me?! I'm gone!

INT. GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL - PRESIDENT'S SUITE - NIGHT

THE KID pulls a white shirt off a hanger, shakes the dust into the room, puts it on. Then, black trousers, string tie, leather belt, black vest with red trim. He hauls his boot bag out of the wardrobe. A velvet cloth falls to the floor.

Glowing in the dim light, a .44 Colt revolver. Worn bone grips - coiled snakes smooth as piano keys.

FLASH - A Wild West Gunman whirls and draws his gun.

VOICE

(O.S.)

Strap it on, Kid.

The Kid spins. CREED is standing in the doorway.

KID

Goddamn you.

CREED

Not very friendly words from a boy to his father.

KID

Never knew him. Don't think my mother did either.

CREED

Man who brought you up - that's your father.

KID

Nobody asked you.

CREED

You were too dumb to ask. Still are.

KID

You were invited to dinner, not to watch me dress.

The Kid rewraps the gun, shoves it away.

CREED

Out of sight, out of mind, eh Kid?

Just as well. Too late for anything else.

The Kid stares at him. He pulls a coat off a hanger, shakes it and puts it on. He adjusts his tie, picks up the oil lamp and walks out. Creed steps aside for him, then follows.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM - THE KID

A half-dozen oil lamps light the scene, flames dancing inside milky glass. Table cloths glow like old gold. He strolls to his table next to the fireplace, lights a cigar. Creed walks out of the kitchen and joins him.

CREED
(wistful)
Smells great.

KID
(sipping his drink)
There's enough for two.

Creed chuckles. The Kid starts for the kitchen. A horrific ROAR stops him. CRASH!!! Wood being smashed - by something enraged. The Kid is terrified but he feels Creed's eyes on him. The eyes make him turn, move to the lobby, the front door. He opens it, sticks his head out...ROAR!!!...CRASH!!!

He flies back in, slams the door.

CREED
(whispering, close)
Scar...

He sounds as if he's right there but when the Kid turns, Creed is sitting by the fire.

KID
No bear lives that long.

ROARRRR!!! The Devil as bear. The horrible voice pounds through walls. Somewhere a building is being demolished board by board...

KID (CONT'D)
You brought him back, you bastard!

He grabs the Hawken off the wall, runs to the door.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

The town ia veiled in mist. The Kid stares into it, terrified. Then he sees it, a glowing, blood-red eye. He collapses into the shadows, his knees turned to jelly.

KID
Go away...go away...

He peers out. The eye is gone. Some sort of miracle. The Kid doesn't move...the silence lengthens...

ROAAARRR!!! Giant claws WHAP him across the head, tossing him like a rag doll.

KID (CONT'D)

Aaaiiiee!!!

A beam smashes down on him, laying him flat, protecting him.

He peers out. The Bear's abysmal jaws yaw and scream down at him, guided in by his blood-red eye.

But the attack doesn't come. The red eye fades. The jaws become the cowl of Creed's capote. The mountain man lifts the huge beam off him, helps him to his feet.

CREED

He'll be back. Grizzlies have an unforgiving nature.

KID

Shut up, damn you!...Damn you!!
(his nose twitches)
Damn!!!

HE RACES INTO THE HOTEL

INT. KITCHEN - THE KID

Smoke pours out of the oven and the top of the stove. He jerks open the oven door. Smoke engulfs him.

VOICE

(O.S.)
...It won't work, your leavin'.

Creed stands in the smoke, looking like the ghost he is.

KID

We'll see.

But Creed is gone.

KID (CONT'D)

Gotta have the last word, don't you?

CREED

(O.S.)
Sort of comes natural to a man in my condition.

KID

Bastard.

CREED

(O.S.)
That your last word?

The Kid thinks about it for a minute, then grins.

KID

Come to think of it, it is.

EXT. ELKHORN - EARLY MORNING

The barbershop has been mangled, half the front wall knocked out.

The KID turns away, climbs aboard his old Appaloosa horse and plods down Main Street. He doesn't look back.

A tinny piano beckons from Angelina's Victorian Palace. He reins in on top of Damnation Hill, twists around to look.

Angelina's laugh floats up at him.

KID

...Wolves...C'mon, horse.

DISSOLVE...

EXT. MOUNTAIN CITY

A place in transition - from 19th century mining outpost to 20th century town. The Kid's dilapidated wagon looks out of place in front of the brand new Piggly Wiggly grocery store.

Across the street, Weldon's General Store is being converted into a gas station.

THE KID emerges from the Piggly Wiggly and dumps a sack into the wagon.

KID

Well, horse, I guess we can go wherever we want. Eat our way across the whole damn country.

Across the street, LEWIS WELDON walks out of his store, sees the Kid.

WELDON

Well, I swan, if it ain't the Wind River Kid. My palms've been itchin' all day. Now, I know why.

KID

Afternoon, Lewis. Thought I'd stock up.

WELDON

You made it just in time. Snow comin'. Might not get out again.

KID
 (gesturing at the
 store)
 What's going on with your store?

WELDON
 Just sold it all at auction. Business
 is gone to dust - just like Elkhorn.

KID
 What the hell's goin' on?

WELDON
 The future. The goddamn future.

He spits a wad of tobacco and goes back inside.

The Kid takes the reins and leads the Appaloosa down the street, gazing at the busy, well-dressed townspeople. Some kids come running out of an alley and spot him.

BOY
 Hey! Hey, the spook's here! The
 spook's here!

KIDS
 Spook! Spook!

They fall over each other laughing, staring at the dilapidated wagon, the old man. The Kid ignores them, keeps walking. People stare, then look away.

MUSIC OVER - PIANO - LAUGHTER...

A FRONTIER VICTORIAN HOUSE...Girls flutter behind lace curtains. A sign says "DAISY'S FRENCH SALON".

KID
 Jesus...

He tethers the Appaloosa to the picket fence and takes a deep breath. He gazes fondly at the house, closing his eyes to prolong the sensation. When he opens them, a lovely young woman in a long dress is coming down the steps. He swings the gate open for her, doffing his hat and flashing her a lascivious grin. The girl returns the smile, flirting openly.

KID (CONT'D)
 Don't run off now. The best is yet
 to come.

But the girl is gone, transformed into a dour, middle-aged matron. Outraged, she stalks off in a huff. The Kid is confused, unnerved. Then he sees the female forms fluttering behind the curtains. He moans, races up the steps and walks in without knocking.

INT. DAISY'S

THE KID stops, stares at the women fluttering about the parlor. They turn, smile at him. He can't contain himself any longer, throws his hat into the air.

KID
Hide your women, guard your kin!
I'm...

A LOUD GASP... Suddenly, the young women are gone. THREE DOOR MATRONS with dull eyes stare at him, appalled. They all wear hair curlers and sport a layer of mud on their faces.

KID (CONT'D)
Jesus...

He backs away. DAISY emerges from a back room - a big-boned country girl who wears her fifty years easily.

DAISY
(groaning)
Oh no...

KID
(shocked)
Daisy!

She flashes a knowing smile at her customers, then snatches the Kid by the arm and herds him out through a back door.

EXT. DAISY'S

As the Kid is propelled out the door.

KID
Hey! Hey! It's me, goddamnit! The
Kid!

He grabs her by the arm, forcing her to look him in the eye.

KID (CONT'D)
Don't you recognize me?

DAISY
Shush!

She shoves him down the back steps.

KID
What in hell is wrong with you, woman?
I brought enough for a good time.
Name your price.

She looks perplexed, then incredulous. The Kid digs into his poke, pulls out two gold nuggets.

KID (CONT'D)

These ought to weigh in pretty good.

DAISY

(softening)

...You mean you ain't heard?...

KID

Heard what? Ain't heard nothin,
ain't smelled nothin, ain't touched
nothin by way of a woman since the
spring of '24, He holds out the
nuggets. Daisy looks at them, at
him, laughs.

DAISY

Oh, Jesus, ain't you the berries. I
ain't in the trade no more, Kid.

She closes his fingers around the gold.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Them days is over.

KID

What're you sayin'?

DAISY

I took me a mail order course.
Hairdressin' and such. Went into a
respectable business for myself.

The words don't register.

KID

...I brought gold...two of the best
I ever found...saved 'em just for
you.

DAISY

I'm sorry...Look, why don't you go
buy yourself a bottle. Have a good
time...dream. That's what I do...I
gotta go.

She spins around, rushes back inside. He stands there,
finally, stuffs the nuggets in his poke and walks away.

DISSOLVE...

EXT. NIGHT - FULL MOON - DAISY...

Much younger, her face glowing in the moonlight...laughing,
her hands all over THE KID.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Oh, ain't you the berries, Kid...

KID

Daisy, Daisy, look at you...

Daisy's face ages cruelly, becomes that of a local madman and hermit - LODE BENEDICT. He's wrinkled and unwashed but harmless, kind even. He smiles, takes a swig from a bottle and passes it to the Kid who is propped up against the tree.

The Kid takes a swig, passes the bottle back, looks down to Lode's cabin and, beyond it to the lights of Mountain City.

KID (CONT'D)

...I'm dyin'...I just realized it.

How'd I go this long and not see it...Seems you ought to see it comin' in snatches, not all at once like that.

He takes another pull from the bottle.

KID (CONT'D)

...It's all just gone...We're dead...We just don't know it yet.

Lode keeps smiling. The Kid slips down off the tree trunk and curls into himself.

KID (CONT'D)

...I'm scared...
(It's new to him.)
Scared...shit.

A shadow flits across his face. He looks up. A SHADOWY HULK moves away into the darkness - CREED.

KID (CONT'D)

(horrified) You can't come here!

But Creed is gone. The Kid bolts up, outraged.

KID (CONT'D)

What're you doin' here, you bastard!?
You can't come here!...You can't
come here!

Lode looks at his friend who is talking to the trees. He takes a blanket, drapes it over his shoulders.

DISSOLVE..

EXT. FOREST

THE KID wakes up on his horse, surrounded by trees. The Appaloosa stumbles. Something hard knocks against the Kid's thigh. He pulls a bottle out of his pants, looks at it for clues. None. He pops the cork with his teeth and takes a long draught.

KID
Where the hell are we?

Finally, he comes to...

KID (CONT'D)
Jesus! You're goin' back to Elkhorn,
you idiot!

He yanks the reins. The Appaloosa keeps his course.

KID

GODDAMNIT! STOP! YOU WORTHLESS SON-

of-a-bitch!

EXT. MOUNTAIN - LATE AFTERNOON

Heavy snow is falling.

KID
...You knew all along, didn't you?

The Appaloosa snorts, paws at the ground.

KID (CONT'D)
Well, you got it. Back to Elkhorn.
Just don't let it go to your head.
It's temporary.

He settles back in the saddle, takes a pull from the bottle.

KID (CONT'D)
Her soul was a ribbon that no man
could tie, Her demeanor was gentle,
her manner was shy, And I was a young
man, so brave and so bold, And I was
a roamer who yearned for the gold.
So, farewell, Lorena, It's free I
must be, Farewell, Angelina and sweet
Rosemarie...

EXT. ELKHORN - EVENING

The Appaloosa pauses on top of Damnation Hill, then picks
its way down the hill and speeds up along Main Street, heading
straight into the livery.

EXT. LIVERY - NIGHT

The Kid closes the livery door and heads up the street to
the hotel. The moon pours through a cloud. Coyotes start
yipping. The Kid looks around.

KID
...Creed?...

Nothing. He walks around to the side entrance to the hotel

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM - DARKNESS

A SCREAM splits the silent depths of the dining room. An ORANGE LIGHT is followed by a deafening EXPLOSION.

KID
Jeeeesuuussss!!!

He lunges to one side, ploughing into something. The GUN fires again and again. A chair behind him explodes. A piece of china disintegrates.

KID (CONT'D)
(screaming)
Aaiiiieeee!!!

VOICE
(high-pitched,
screaming)
Aaiiiieeee!!!

The gun fires, and fires, and fires...Then it is silent.

The lobby door flies open. A MAN carrying a lantern runs in, brandishing a revolver - ROMAN.

ROMAN
Lainie!?

The light finds LAINIE huddled in front of the fireplace.

She points at the Kid who is hiding beneath a table amidst the debris.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
Hold it right there, you bastard.

The Kid throws up his hands, shows himself slowly.

KID
Don't shoot.

Lainie starts to cry. Her hands clutch awkwardly at the .45.

LAINIE
I didn't mean to, Roman. It just went off.

Roman moves closer, holds up the lantern.

ROMAN
What the hell?...An old man. Just an old man.

The Kid studies him. He's acting tough but it's obvious he's very scared. Lainie too.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Who are you? Who sent you?

KID

Name's Kid. Wind River Kid.

ROMAN

Wind River Kid?...Kid?

He moves to Lainie, trades guns, reloads the automatic.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Well, "Kid", you're trespassin', you know that? You could get killed that way.

He snaps the magazine into place.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Cops sent you in, didn't they? They're out there waiting for a signal...aren't they?

He zigzags into the lobby, peers out.

KID

There ain't nobody out there...and I ain't trespassin'.

Roman edges back in.

KID (CONT'D)

This is my town. My town! You're the one who's trespassin'!

Roman moves to the Kid, patting him down.

ROMAN

You have a gun?

(no gun)

Hell, the cops'd have to be desperate to hire the likes of you.

(He looks at Lainie.)

Damn! We can't afford to waste bullets.

Lainie huddles in an armchair, thin and fragile.

LAINIE

It wasn't my fault, Roman. (She holds up the gun.) Here, take this one too. I don't want a gun.

Roman walks to the window, looks back at the Kid.

ROMAN

How do I know there isn't some other
old coot holed up here?

KID

'Cause I told you so. Go out there
and see. Go out and don't come back.

ROMAN

Don't get smart.

The Kid grabs his bedroll and sack.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Goin' somewhere?

KID

Puttin' up my things.

Roman intercepts him, blocking his exit to the lobby.

ROMAN

What things?

KID

My things.

Roman grabs the burlap sack, upends it. A cornucopia of
food and hard goods pours out.

ROMAN

Jesus. This is too good to be true.

LAINIE

(chiding, softly)

Roman...it's not ours.

KID

If you have to remind him, it's no
use.

ROMAN

I'm no thief! But the fact is, we
have to eat.

LAINIE

(to the Kid,
embarrassed)

We can pay you, Mr...we got money.

ROMAN

Lainie!

He glares at her, shakes the bag out. A newspaper falls
open. Roman sees it, turns the color of ash. Lainie jumps
up, runs over and looks at the front page:

HEADLINE: POLICE HUNT MOBSTER HARRY LEIGHT AFTER SHOOTOUT

A photograph shows a smiling Harry smoking a cigar.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
(horrified)
He's alive...

LAINIE
Oh my God, Roman!

The Kid walks over, looks down at the paper.

KID
Must be the original curly wolf.

He moves away, toward the side door.

ROMAN
Where are you going?

KID
I got a bed in the funeral parlor.

ROMAN
You sleep right there on the
floor...Is there a garage in this
place?

KID
So that's how you got here...I'll be
damned. There's never been a car in
Elkhorn. You're the first.

ROMAN
Where can I put it inside?

KID
Livery, I suppose. Course, that's
where my Appaloosa stays. If he
don't mind...

Roman hands Lainie the .38. She shrinks from it. He closes her hands around it, urging her with his eyes not to show weakness. He turns to the Kid as he checks the Browning and jams it in his pocket.

ROMAN
Don't get any ideas.

KID
Haven't had an idea in years.

ROMAN
Just remember, she shot once. She'll
shoot again.

Lainie clutches the gun. The door slams. Sounds of a motor grinding, the car starting.

KID
...Boy has an edge to him.

LAINIE
You don't understand...

He moves to the fireplace sags into a chair. Lainie keeps the gun on him.

KID
You mind pointing that thing somewhere else?

He gestures at the newspaper.

KID (CONT'D)
The boy shoot him?

LAINIE
No! The police. There was a shootout. He thought Harry was dead.

The side door swings open. Roman walks in, snow melting on his head, falling off his coat. He throws it across a chair, takes the .38 from Lainie and moves to the hearth. His cheeks are sunken from tension and lack of sleep.

ROMAN
(to Kid) Why don't you go to sleep.

KID
Thought I'd eat first.

LAINIE
There's pork and beans on the stove.

Roman glares at her. Lainie glares back, defiant. The Kid smiles despite himself. He follows Lainie into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Lainie stops, turns to the Kid.

LAINIE
Don't think I'm takin' sides against Roman. I just feel bad. I almost killed you.

KID
Shoot me, then give me my last meal.

In the old days, it was the other way around.

She shoves a bowl at him. He ignores it and eats right from the pot.

KID (CONT'D)
(surprised) Jesus, good
beans...molasses.

LAINIE
(flustered) ...Cookin' and sewin' is
about all I'm good for...and bein'
bad.

Nearly in tears, she rushes out. The Kid dives for the pantry, pulls out a hidden bottle and takes a long swig.

KID
Aaaahhh...

He turns to see Roman staring at him.

ROMAN
Come on, you old coot.

KID
Good beans.

ROMAN
Jesus, I'm glad you liked 'em. Now,
can we go to sleep?

He blows out the lantern and walks out. The Kid follows him.

INT. DINING ROOM

Lainie is wrapped in a cocoon of blankets by the fire. The Kid sees his own bedroll across the room. He settles into it, watches Roman roll into his and blow out the lantern.

DISSOLVE...

MUFFLED VOICE - ARGUING WITH SOMEONE CU - ROMAN AND LAINIE -
ASLEEP - MORNING - DINING ROOM

The voice continues, muffled, insistent. Lainie's eyes open. She listens...looks at Roman, sneaks out of bed, tiptoes to the window, terrified. She peeks out.

POV - LAINIE - THE STREET

THE KID is talking to someone. But there is nobody there.

EXT. STREET

The Kid is standing beneath the frozen overcast, talking to CREED. Creed is bundled in a capote.

A hood obscures his face. Only his nose hooks out from the shadows, that and the bowl of his pipe.

KID

Why didn't you warn me, you bastard?!

CREED

Ain't my business to warn.

KID

No? Just what the hell is your business then?

CREED

What I'm doin'. No more, no less.

The Kid has to stop himself from hitting him.

CREED (CONT'D)

...What are you going to do about them?

KID

Nothin'. Leave. Soon as the storm lets up.

CREED

Snow's too heavy up in the Lonesome.

KID

I'll head south.

CREED

What about food?

KID

You're startin' to sound like Angelina.

CREED

You'll have to do somethin'.

KID

I'll do something, damnit!

CREED

(spitting in the snow) ...Life's harder than five card stud, ain't it?...Have to know the rules before you sit down...When you sit down, you gotta play what's dealt. You can't let someone else play the final hand and take the loss...ain't right.

KID

Aaaarrrggghhh!

He grabs a chair off the porch and hurls it at Creed. It hits him and then the wall and splinters. The Kid doubles over at the excruciating pain in his back. When he straightens, Creed is standing in the street, unperturbed.

Then he disappears.

KID (CONT'D)

That's right, disappear on me!

Behind him, a shadow in the dining room window moves.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM

LAINIE runs to their bed.

LAINIE

Roman...

ROMAN

(surfacing) ...Wha...

LAINIE

The old man...

ROMAN

What about him?

LAINIE

He's outside, talking to himself, having this big argument. Then he threw a chair. But he was alone...standing there in the rain, talking...

ROMAN

(wanting her, teasing) Call Mr.

Hearst. He'll run it on page one.

LAINIE

Roman!

ROMAN

Well, what do you want me to do?
The old man's nuts.

He slides his hand inside her blouse. She shies, pulls away. He catches her, pulls her back, nuzzles her ear.

LAINIE

(nervous) Stop...

ROMAN

Mmmm, you taste good...

LAINIE
 We haven't finished talking. (She
 pulls at the blanket.)

What if he comes back?

ROMAN
 He's so old, he probably won't know
 what we're doing.

Lainie tries to respond but she can't.

LAINIE
 ...Roman...

ROMAN
 ...Mmmm...

LAINIE
 ...Do you...do you think Harry could
 find this place?

Roman rolls off her and stares at the ceiling.

ROMAN
 Why'd you have to say that?

LAINIE
 'Cause I'm scared. I keep seeing
 his face in that photograph...I swear
 he was staring right at us. Roman...
 (She kisses him.)
 I'm sorry...

He closes his eyes. She reaches down, touches him.

LAINIE (CONT'D)
 Please...I want to...I'm not
 afraid...Roman...

He pushes her away. Lainie curls into a ball, crying.

EXT. MOUNTAIN FOOTHILLS - FROZEN GRAY DAY

A black '27 Buick comes up the hill fast but slows, groaning
 and sputtering, then slipping backwards. A brake jolts it
 to a stop.

A MAN steps out - HARRY. He starts walking up the hill.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CITY - HARRY

Walking down an empty Silverado Street.

THREE FIGURES, ghostly in the mist ahead - struggling with
 something heavy, red and white - a new model gas pump. WELDON
 and two dumb, grizzled oafs, TATE and NEWKIRK.

Harry stops in front of them. The three men settle the pump in and stare at him.

WELDON

Don't open 'til next week.

HARRY

I gotta '27 Lizzie stuck out there about a mile back.

He pulls out his wallet, places a twenty dollar bill on the pump. Tate and Newkirk stare at it. Weldon too.

WELDON

I've got parts, that's all. What's the trouble.

HARRY

I'm a businessman, not a mechanic.

WELDON

I'm afraid I can't help you. I'm just a businessman myself.

HARRY

There's no mechanic in town?

WELDON

Idaho Springs is the closest. George Underwood.

HARRY

Phone him. Tell him to come up.

WELDON

That'll take cash.

HARRY

I have money, Mr...
(looking at sign)
Weldon. What I don't have is time to waste.

WELDON

(red-faced) I'll go call him.

Weldon goes for the bill. Harry holds it back.

HARRY

I'm looking for a young couple. Came through last week. Blonde, tall kid, in his twenties. The girl is younger, pretty. Black hair. Drivin' a twenty Lizzie.

TATE

No one comes through here, Mr. Ain't
nowheres to go through to. Road
stops.

WELDON

Someone you know?

HARRY

...My...niece. She eloped with a
man the family doesn't approve of.
Her grandfather lived in some little
town up in the divide.

Weldon gapes at him as it dawns on him.

WELDON

I'll be damned. Old Malachi Johnson's
granddaughter.

Harry adds another twenty to the one in his hand.

HARRY

They've been here, have they?

WELDON

The girl stayed in the car...I figured
they'd head back to the city. Sure
weren't dressed for this place.

Harry tucks one of the twenties into Weldon's vest pocket.
Weldon looks at the other one.

WELDON (CONT'D)

Be crazy but I guess they could've
gone up there.

TATE

Jesus. Ain't nothin' in Elkhorn but
bear and coyotes.

WELDON

Kid lives there.

HARRY

What kid?

WELDON

He's a hermit. Comes down here for
supplies. Just came down last week.

HARRY

I need a car.

WELDON

Only one belongs to the mayor. He
won't rent it.

HARRY

A horse then.

WELDON

Can you ride?

Harry just glares. Weldon crumbles.

WELDON (CONT'D)

My son has one...You'll need clothes.
It's colder than a witch's tit up
there. I let you go like that,
they'll have me for murder.

Harry slams his fist into the gas pump, denting the shiny metal. Weldon jumps, then looks astonished when Harry takes out two more twenties and lays them on top of the pump, right under Tate and Newkirk's twitching noses.

HARRY

You better forget you ever saw me if
he comes back here. And you let me
know.

WELDON

Done.

Harry turns to Tate and Newkirk.

TATE

...Yeah.

EXT. WELDON'S - LATER...

HARRY is buried in rough work clothes, coat and slicker. A bedroll and provisions are strapped to the horse. Weldon hands the reins to Harry.

WELDON

You aren't back in a week, we'll
send someone after you.

HARRY

I'll be back.

He swings the horse around and heads out into the mist.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - LATER - HARRY

The road winds up the mountainside. The weather is getting colder. HARRY stops to check his watch. He jerks the reins, pulls the animal's head around and moves on.

HARRY

You should've killed me, boy!

LATER...

It's darker, the country much rougher. The trail angles back and forth in a series of switchbacks.

A SHARP, CRACKING SOUND...

The horse shies. A huge oak hangs over the trail, its trunk scarred by lightning, its branches heaving with snow and ice.

BLAM!!! The tree splits in half. Thirty feet of needled branches and ice smash onto the road, barely missing them.

Harry clutches at the horse's neck as it slips back off the edge of the trail, spinning against the weight of him, leaping over the trail below. He closes his eyes. They hurtle downhill between two pines, snap a six-foot pinion in half.

Then, he is airborne.

A monstrous pain explodes in his midsection and head. He comes to an abrupt and jarring stop, sees the horse racing homeward along the trail below. But the horse is upside down, as are the trees, the earth, the sky and Harry.

EXT. DAY - ELKHORN - GRAVEYARD

More bones lay scattered about.

CREED

(O.S.)

He's been busy.

The Kid doesn't bother to turn.

KID

Damn bear...what does he want with them?

Creed concentrates on his whittling.

CREED

Bear business.

KID

Hasn't dug up yours yet. You got some smartass answer why that is?

CREED

No.

The Kid turns around and looks down at the buildings the beast has torn apart. ROMAN is walking up the hill towards them.

KID

(it dawns) ...The graves, the town, and then me...That's it, isn't it?

He spins around. Creed is gone. A cold wind sends his wood shavings tumbling into the evergreens.

ROMAN

Hey!...Kid! I thought I told you to...

He stops short, stares down at the bones.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

You dig up those graves?

The Kid turns his back, starts down the slope. Jittery, Roman falls in beside him.

KID

Bear did it, Scar. Hated men. Still does...it's kept him alive all these years...or maybe he's dead - like Creed - dead and come back.

ROMAN

(edging away from him) Jesus!

KID

He's after this town... (turning to Roman) You're just like me, you know that. You picked the wrong place to hide.

ROMAN

(unnerved) You crazy old bugger!

He glances at the graveyard, turns, hurries after the Kid.

INT. HOTEL - ULYSSES S. GRANT SUITE - EVENING

ROMAN walks in with an armload of wood, dumps it beside the fireplace, then moves out into the hall.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - ROMAN

He moves up the stairs, exploring. Drafts from the broken windows push and suck at the flame of his candle. It goes out. Jittery, he relights it.

An ancient, irrational fear follows him down the corridor. He freezes as he enters the room at the end of the hall.

INT. ROOM - ROMAN'S POV

A pair of EYES glare at him from a corner of the darkness. His breath catches in his throat.

ROMAN

Harry!

Harry is barely visible, trussed and tied to the bureau.

HARRY

(hollow, echoing)

No one ever took anything from Harry
Leight, boy. I've killed men for a
lot less.

Harry's eyes blink. Then suddenly rise, come toward him.
Roman's arms shoot up to fend him off, his face twisted in
terror.

VOICE

(screeching) Waugh-o! Waugh-o!

Roman backs into the edge of the door. His head slams against
the wood. THE GREAT HORNED OWL veers, banks and disappears
out the open window. Roman makes himself laugh, makes himself
walk across the room. The owl had been perching on a wooden
valet's helper. He shudders, backs out of the room.

ROMAN

Jesus!

Shaky, he lights up a Lucky Strike and starts down, pausing
at the landing.

VOICE

(O.S.)

...Penny for your thoughts.

Lainie's voice drifts up from the darkness below. Roman can
see her silhouette on the wall.

ROMAN

I don't have any thoughts.

LAINIE

Maybe I didn't offer enough.

ROMAN

Maybe life doesn't offer enough.

LAINIE

Oh, la de da. Aren't you the deep
one.

ROMAN

(snapping) Don't make fun of me!

LAINIE

Then don't be like that!

ROMAN

...What's wrong?

LAINIE

...I'm scared...You haven't said a word to me all day.

ROMAN

...I love you, Lainie.

His hand beckons. She races up the stairs, weightless. He pulls her away, into the darkness.

UPSTAIRS HALL...

Lainie bolts away from him - into their room.

LAINIE

Stay there. Don't come in yet.

She shuts the door. Roman moves to it as the lock clicks shut. He tries the handle.

ROMAN

Come on, Lainie.

LAINIE

(O.S.) Just a minute!

Rustling sounds. The lock clicks open.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

(O.S.) Are you there? In front of the door?

Roman is still staring into the darkness. The door opens.

HE TURNS. LAINIE STANDS THERE IN A DEEP RED, SATIN DRESS - something some liberated beauty from a previous era might have worn.

ROMAN

Holy...where did you get that?

He moves to her. She flits away, disappearing into the darkness. She reappears again in the dressing table mirror - lifting a candle to a photograph on the wall beside it.

LAINIE

Come here. Look at this.

Roman moves to her. His hands float over the satin.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

Look.

He looks at the photograph: A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN wearing the same satin dress. TWO MEN stand on either side of her - one older, in his sixties, a sophisticated mountain man - strong

HANDSOME, CHARMING, BUT FADING. THE OTHER MAN IS YOUNGER -
early forties - handsome, cocky. CREED and THE KID thirty
years ago.

LAINIE
It must be Angelina. This must've
been her room.

ROMAN
What are you talking about? Who's
Angelina?

LAINIE
The Kid was talking to Creed about
her.

ROMAN
Who's Creed?

LAINIE
The man he was talking to, remember?
(pointing to him in
the picture)
That must be him.

ROMAN
Jesus, ghosts' gallery.

LAINIE
(dreamily) I think they both loved
her.

ROMAN
How do you know?

She puts the candle down, turns to him.

LAINIE
Just a guess...I wonder if she loved
both of them.

She laughs and whirls away from him.

LAINIE (CONT'D)
It must've been so romantic...

Roman stares at her, suddenly frightened again. She goes to
him, holds him.

LAINIE (CONT'D)
Just think, if we could go back...We'd
be free.

ROMAN
Back where?

LAINIE

In time.

Roman looks tortured.

ROMAN

Oh, God, I'm so sorry, Lainie. I had no right doing this to you.

LAINIE

(calm now, in his arms) You had no choice. I had no choice...We're tragic lovers, don't you see?...Romeo and Juliet.

ROMAN

This isn't a play. Harry's out there.

He'll kill us.

LAINIE

He'll never find us. He'll never find this place. It's protected by something. I know it.

He sees how important it is for her to believe that.

ROMAN

...Maybe. Maybe it is.

He kisses her.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

I love you. God, I love you. I'll make it right. I swear I will.

INT. MUENSTER'S FUNERAL PARLOR - NIGHT

THE KID is sound asleep, wrapped in a purple shroud. It isn't a restful sleep. His body is fighting a battle.

INT. SALOON - DREAM...

The Kid is in his forties, dressed in black, sitting at a table, watching the giant sitting across from him, mean and dirty - PAUNCH PEPPERDINE. He studies the cards fanning out from his huge fist.

PAUNCH

...Open for five dollars.

He pushes a gold piece onto the table. The Kid looks at his hand - two aces, two deuces - a winning hand. He knows he has to get rid of it.

KID

Call. Two cards.

He slides his bet across, trades his aces face down for a nine of hearts and seven of clubs. His face falls ever so slightly. Paunch takes two cards.

PAUNCH
I'll raise you ten.

KID
...I'll raise you twenty.

Pepperdine stares at him, then down at his cards.

PAUNCH
Call.

The Kid shows his deuces. Pepperdine snorts, flings down his pair of queens.

KID
Damn!

He drops his cigar into the spittoon, pushes back from the table.

KID (CONT'D)
We're even now and I ain't eaten.

Pepperdine's face turns uglier than it already is.

PAUNCH
The hell, bucko. I sat here and watched you have your way for three hours. I ain't about to watch you walk now.

KID
Sorry. I'm beat.

Pepperdine makes a guttural sound. It grows louder as the Kid walks away. It turns to a roar. The neck bulges. The lips curl back. He kicks over a table, charges across it, drawing a huge Bowie knife.

The Kid spins, draws his revolver, crouches and fires. He hits Pepperdine twice in the stomach, three times through the lungs. The last bullet strikes him square in the heart and still he keeps coming. He knocks the Kid flat on his back, burying the knife up to the hilt in the floor next to his head.

INT. MUENSTER'S - NIGHT...

The Kid wakes in a sweat, trembling. He grabs at the bottle.

When it is near-empty, he falls back onto the pillow.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

LAINIE breaks eggs into a hot skillet. THE KID walks in.

LAINIE
Roman is looking for you.

KID
Probably wants to beat me lame.

He goes for the coffee pot, grabs it, drops it fast.

LAINIE
It's hot.

He glares at her, wraps his shirt tail around the handle and pours. He takes a sip, grimaces.

KID
Jesus!...You threw out the grounds!

LAINIE
Took me an hour to scrape em out. I almost threw up.

KID
(pissed) I got two things to say to you, girl...

Lainie folds her arms across her chest, waving the spatula.

LAINIE
Oh...

KID
One, you leave them grounds in the pot. My grounds, my pot.

He stalks into pantry, finds the emergency bottle and tops off his cup. He takes a sip and starts for the door.

LAINIE
That was only one.

KID
Huh?

LAINIE
You said you had two things to tell me. That was only one.

She smiles - sweet sarcasm.

KID
Yeah...your eggs is burnt.

She spins around, staring down at the bubbling mess.

LAINIE

Damn! Damn you!

EXT. HOTEL

The Kid hears the skillet smash into the wall, smiles. He starts toward the livery, then spots CREED standing in the Aspen. The mountain man waves, Indian style, beckoning..

Roman comes out of the funeral parlor carrying the Hawken rifle. He looks angry.

ROMAN

Who were you signaling?

KID

Son-of-a-bitch wants me to follow him. I know where too.

ROMAN

(raising the gun) Who? There's no one there.

The Kid looks at the Hawken.

KID

Almighty loose with other folks' belongings, ain't you?

ROMAN

This relic?

KID

That relic'll blow a porcupine out of its quills at five hundred yards.

ROMAN

(smiling) Good thing I took it then.

The Kid reaches out and pushes the muzzle aside.

KID

It's loaded.

Roman blanches, moves his finger off the trigger.

KID (CONT'D)

You'd a known that if you weren't so damn wet behind the ears. That's a Hawken, .50 caliber. Belonged to Creed. In case you get the urge, it shoots to the left. Has a kick like a mule.

ROMAN

I can handle it.

He raises the rifle, aims at the weather vane on the livery roof. The Kid looks up, catches a glimpse of a brown speck drifting in circles above the trees.

KID

Damn!

He takes off for the livery. Roman spooks and runs after him, darting into the doorway.

DOORWAY - LIVERY...

ROMAN

Who's out there?!

He leans out, searching the street for movement.

KID

Don't go out there.

He lays a hand on the boy's arm. Roman shakes it off, steps out into the street, brandishing the gun, ready for an ambush.

He never sees the FALCON, just a blur of feathers slamming into his head, screeching.

ROMAN

Jeeesus!!

He shoots straight up into the air. His feet make running motions in space. Then he pitches face down into the mud.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

God damn!!

He lunges to his feet, shoulders the Hawken, fires at the sky.

BOOOOMMMM!!!

Roman hits the mud seat first this time. The Falcon angles into a cloud and disappears.

The Kid doubles over, convulsed with laughter. Roman is dripping brown - mud on his face, in his hair, oozing out of his shirt. He grabs the Hawken and slogs back to the hotel.

The Kid disappears into the livery.

LAINIE is on the boardwalk, struggling to control her laughter. Roman oozes up the steps, stops in front of her.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

If you say anything, I'll strangle you.

He slogs past her, into the hotel. The Kid's laughter echoes from the stable. Lainie covers her mouth, rushes inside after Roman.

EXT. WILDERNESS

HARRY stumbles. His knees stab an upthrust chunk of granite.

HARRY

Shit!!

He has trouble keeping his eyes in focus and he is fighting back delirium. He sneezes, loses his footing, tumbles into a wash.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Shit! Shit-eating mountain!

He wills himself to his feet.

HARRY (CONT'D)

This is Harry Leight, goddamn you!

He grabs the automatic from his shoulder holster, fires into the dirt. He blasts a circle of pockmarks until the .45 clicks on empty. He slumps to his knees.

HARRY (CONT'D)

This is Harry Leight, you hear me!?

Harry Leight!

He pushes himself erect, stands up, falls down, stands again, roaring profanities, falling down, sneezing.

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT - HARRY...

He stumbles to his knees at the top of a rise. Below him the lights of a cabin glitter. He sneezes and falls over.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Stop it!

He manages to stand. It becomes a slow, awkward dance. For every step he takes forward, another wanders left or right.

The cabin seems to be sliding away.

He sneezes, bent double, fighting for balance, straightening at the last second, in time to crash into the door. He grabs at the latch, feels the door give way.

INT. CABIN

Two chairs pulled in front of a glowing stove. Denim legs extend from one chair. Harry collapses on the other. The MAN across from him sucks on a long-stemmed pipe.

HARRY

...I'm gonna kill that horse.

Then he faints. The .45 clatters to the floor. LODE BENEDICT nods pleasantly to his guest then gets up to close the door.

EXT. ELKHORN - FUNERAL PARLOR - MORNING

THE KID stands on the porch. He glances over at the hotel then up at the sky. No signs of life. He moves off the porch, lopez down the street and disappears into the livery.

INT. LIVERY

He begins to undo the rope holding the tires to Roman's car. A BELCH echoes like a drumroll.

CREED

(O.S.) Wolves.

The Kid ignores him. Another belch.

CREED (CONT'D)

More wolves.

KID

Okay, okay.

He steps around the car. Creed is sitting on the Appaloosa's saddle.

CREED

Owooooo...I am the ghost of Christmas future...

KID

Sure you are.

CREED

Busy, huh?... Man's always busy when he starts a new career.

KID

What's that supposed to mean?

CREED

Never knew you for a thief before.

KID

They took my food. My food, their tires. It was in the cards.

CREED

Cards, eh? Cards are old, Kid. The game's over. Don't you understand that?

KID

No. you got it wrong. The game is over for you - not me. For me,

THERE'S A WHOLE WORLD OUT THERE -

with live people in it.

CREED

As I recall, you never liked people too much. As I recall, you used 'em and walked away when they ran out of whatever it was you wanted.

KID

That's a lie.

CREED

Is it?

Creed opens his coat, unbuttons his shirt and bares his chest. Three puckered bullet holes mar his flesh.

CREED (CONT'D)

Butch and Dupree Pepperdine. You recall them?

KID

Close your shirt, Aden.

CREED

You're gonna do it to those kids...leave em stranded up here...

(no answer)

I'm not gonna let you do it. You're not walking away from this table.

KID

I don't need your advice, Aden. Who are you to tell me anything. What the hell have you ever done?

CREED

Went to Silvertip Falls. I shouldn't have had to...wouldn't have if you'd listened to me.

KID

I see now. This is about Angelina, isn't it? You're miffed cause I listened to her instead of you.

CREED

No...more disappointed. I wanted a son I could be proud of.

(MORE)

CREED (CONT'D)

I ended up with a shootist, half a dozen mens' lives under your belt. You turned out bad, Kid. Took the wrong road.

KID

(hurt, getting revenge) You wanna know what else I took.

CREED

(He slumps) No.

KID

Angelina.

CREED

You're hitting low, aren't you? I don't want to hear it.

KID

Then get out. Get out and leave me alone.

They stare at each other. Creed turns, starts to walk, stops, turns back.

CREED

When we found you, I promised myself I wouldn't fail. I ain't going to.

The Kid is suddenly tired.

KID

I ain't your kid. Just leave me be.

CREED

(walking out) ...They took your horse.

The Kid thinks he hasn't heard right. Then he streaks out, past Creed, into the corral.

EXT. CORRAL

It's empty. The Appaloosa is gone.

KID

Son-of-a-bitch!

The tracks head north towards the pass. The Kid spins around.

KID (CONT'D)

Why didn't you tell me?!

Creed is gone, displaced by sunlight.

KID (CONT'D)

Shit!

He kicks the dirt, walks back into the livery.

INT. LIVERY

The Kid stands there, staring at Roman's car.

KID

Damn car! Damn evil-smellin, ugly
heap of gopher shit!

He kicks the wheel, circles it, touches it.

KID (CONT'D)

You don't scare me.

EXT. MAIN STREET

Roman's runabout crashes through the livery doors and careens down Main Street. The Kid screams.

KID

Aaaaiiiieeeee!!!

The car clips a stanchion. The bumper rips away. The Kid clutches the wheel, paralyzed. The car begins to circle, then jumps the boardwalk, bounces off a pillar and hits the street again. He twists the wheel again, nearly flipping it over, then charges down the street toward the hotel. He pulls the wheel in time to just skim the front porch.

Suddenly, the Appaloosa appears out of the alley. ROMAN and LAINIE stare at the Kid from its back, horrified. The horse rears, dumping them on the street.

The Kid turns back to look for them. The car is driving itself, jouncing off mudholes.

KID (CONT'D)

Help!!

ROMAN

(running into the street) Get behind
the wheel! The wheel!

KID

Tell it to stop!!

ROMAN

Put your foot on the left pedal!

Left! Shove it halfway in!

The car slows as it drops into neutral.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Now the right pedal! Your right
foot on the right pedal! Down all
the way!

The Kid does as he's told. The car slows.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Now shut down the throttle! Keep
your left foot...

The engine races. The whole car shudders as the Kid pulls the throttle all the way down. The transmission drops into low gear. The car lurches. The front wheels hit the porch steps of the Saloon. The bumper smashes through the swinging doors.

INT. SALOON

The car obliterates tables and chairs. Tires blow. Steam pours out. A mirror smashes, showering the Kid with glass.

Then the whole building shudders. The supports give way and the Kid, the car and the saloon go down the slide and join the other half of the town. Only pieces of the false front remain standing.

Silence...Roman and Lainie move to the edge, look down.

LAINIE

...He's dead.

A board moves...

ROMAN

No such luck.

Lainie shoots him a look, then heads out over the edge.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Hey! What are you doing?

LAINIE

We can't just leave him there.

ROMAN

Why not? He was gonna leave.

She turns and glares at him, then scrambles down.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Jesus!

He follows her down.

THE WRECK IS SHIFTING. TIMBERS JUT AT ODD ANGLES. A TWO-BY-four timber has protected the Kid. Roman and Lainie pull him out.

LAINIE
Are you alright?

The Kid is dazed. He tries to focus.

KID
Shouldn't take a man's horse.

ROMAN
We didn't take it.

LAINIE
We just went for a ride.

KID
...Shouldn't take a man's horse.

He starts up the slide. His knees give way. Lainie grabs him. Roman sits on a timber and watches.

ROMAN
You're crazy, you hear! Nuts!

INT. HOTEL - LATER

Lather hangs in clumps on THE KID'S beard. He's sitting in a tub, digging into bristles with a straight razor. The door creaks open.

KID
Keep out! Keep out, goddamnit!

He ducks low in the water. LAINIE walks in.

LAINIE
I had three brothers. Watch your feet.

She pours the water in. The Kid jerks his knees up.

KID
Jesus!

She puts the clothes down, kicks his dirty ones out into the hall.

LAINIE
I thought Roman was pretty good about it, considering you wrecked his car.

KID

Damn thing wrecked itself. I was just along for the ride.

LAINIE

That'll make him feel better.

KID

You stole my horse.

LAINIE

We went for a ride.

KID

'Round here we got another name for that.

LAINIE

There is no around here. You're talking about a hundred years ago.

It's civilized now.

KID

Is it? Then how come you two are hidin' out up here? How come you're both scared out of your wits.

LAINIE

...That's different.

KID

Ain't different at all. When you get to be my age, you'll see it never will be.

Lainie stares at him for a moment. Then she picks up the kettle and walks to the door. She stops, turns...

LAINIE

...You're crazy...but I like you.

She goes out, closes the door.

KID

(to himself) She don't know you.

(looking around)

Ain't that right, Aden? Only because she don't know me.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER - KID

He stands in front of the fire, toweling himself dry, feeling good. He moves to the mirror and stares at himself. He holds in his stomach, turns sideways.

KID

Not bad...not bad.
 (slapping his belly)
 The body of a fifty-year-old.

He struts to the bed, whistling, finds his boots. They're cracked with mud. He searches for something to wipe them with, goes for the bedspread, hesitates, looks for something else. He stops short when he sees the wrapped mound of cloth in the wardrobe. He unwraps the cloth, picks up the belt and gun, lets his fingers play over the worn, ivory grip, then looks around suddenly.

KID (CONT'D)

(muttering) Shouldn't 've told him
 about Angelina...

He holds the belt around his waist, checks the room again.

KID (CONT'D)

You there?

Nothing. Holding the belt closed with his hands, he walks to the mirror, stares at and through himself to another Wind River Kid...

HARRY

They've been here, have they?

WELDON

The girl stayed in the car...I figured
 they'd head back to the city. Sure
 weren't dressed for this place.

Harry tucks one of the twenties into Weldon's vest pocket.

Weldon looks at the other one.

WELDON (CONT'D)

Be crazy but I guess they could've
 gone up there.

TATE

Jesus. Ain't nothin' in Elkhorn but
 bear and coyotes.

WELDON

Kid lives there.

HARRY

What kid?

WELDON

He's a hermit. Comes down here for
 supplies. Just came down last week.

HARRY

I need a car.

WELDON

Only one belongs to the mayor. He won't rent it.

HARRY

A horse then.

WELDON

Can you ride?

Harry just glares. Weldon crumbles.

WELDON (CONT'D)

My son has one...You'll need clothes.

It's colder than a witch's tit up there. I let you go like that, they'll have me for murder.

Harry slams his fist into the gas pump, denting the shiny metal. Weldon jumps, then looks astonished when Harry takes out two more twenties and lays them on top of the pump, right under Tate and Newkirk's twitching noses.

HARRY

You better forget you ever saw me if he comes back here. And you let me know.

WELDON

Done.

Harry turns to Tate and Newkirk.

TATE

...Yeah.

EXT. WELDON'S - LATER...

HARRY is buried in rough work clothes, coat and slicker. A bedroll and provisions are strapped to the horse. Weldon hands the reins to Harry.

WELDON

You aren't back in a week, we'll send someone after you.

HARRY

I'll be back.

He swings the horse around and heads out into the mist.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - LATER - HARRY

The road winds up the mountainside. The weather is getting colder. HARRY stops to check his watch. He jerks the reins, pulls the animal's head around and moves on.

HARRY

You should've killed me, boy!

LATER...

It's darker, the country much rougher. The trail angles back and forth in a series of switchbacks.

A SHARP, CRACKING SOUND...

The horse shies. A huge oak hangs over the trail, its trunk scarred by lightning, its branches heaving with snow and ice.

BLAM!!! The tree splits in half. Thirty feet of needled branches and ice smash onto the road, barely missing them.

Harry clutches at the horse's neck as it slips back off the edge of the trail, spinning against the weight of him, leaping over the trail below. He closes his eyes. They hurtle downhill between two pines, snap a six-foot pinion in half.

Then, he is airborne.

A monstrous pain explodes in his midsection and head. He comes to an abrupt and jarring stop, sees the horse racing homeward along the trail below. But the horse is upside down, as are the trees, the earth, the sky and Harry.

EXT. DAY - ELKHORN - GRAVEYARD

More bones lay scattered about.

CREED

(O.S.)

He's been busy.

The Kid doesn't bother to turn.

KID

Damn bear...what does he want with them?

Creed concentrates on his whittling.

CREED

Bear business.

KID

Hasn't dug up yours yet. You got
some smartass answer why that is?

CREED

No.

The Kid turns around and looks down at the buildings the
beast has torn apart. ROMAN is walking up the hill towards
them.

KID

(it dawns) ...The graves, the town,
and then me...That's it, isn't it?

He spins around. Creed is gone. A cold wind sends his wood
shavings tumbling into the evergreens.

ROMAN

Hey!...Kid! I thought I told you
to...

He stops short, stares down at the bones.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

You dig up those graves?

The Kid turns his back, starts down the slope. Jittery,
Roman falls in beside him.

KID

Bear did it, Scar. Hated men. Still
does...it's kept him alive all these
years...or maybe he's dead - like
Creed - dead and come back.

ROMAN

(edging away from him) Jesus!

KID

He's after this town... (turning to
Roman) You're just like me, you know
that. You picked the wrong place to
hide.

ROMAN

(unnerved) You crazy old bugger!

He glances at the graveyard, turns, hurries after the Kid.

INT. HOTEL - ULYSSES S. GRANT SUITE - EVENING

ROMAN walks in with an armload of wood, dumps it beside the
fireplace, then moves out into the hall.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - ROMAN

He moves up the stairs, exploring. Drafts from the broken windows push and suck at the flame of his candle. It goes out. Jittery, he relights it.

An ancient, irrational fear follows him down the corridor.

He freezes as he enters the room at the end of the hall.

INT. ROOM - ROMAN'S POV

A pair of EYES glare at him from a corner of the darkness.

His breath catches in his throat.

ROMAN

Harry!

Harry is barely visible, trussed and tied to the bureau.

HARRY

(hollow, echoing)

No one ever took anything from Harry
Leight, boy. I've killed men for a
lot less.

Harry's eyes blink. Then suddenly rise, come toward him. Roman's arms shoot up to fend him off, his face twisted in terror.

VOICE

(screeching) Waugh-o! Waugh-o!

Roman backs into the edge of the door. His head slams against the wood. THE GREAT HORNED OWL veers, banks and disappears out the open window.

Roman makes himself laugh, makes himself walk across the room. The owl had been perching on a wooden valet's helper.

He shudders, backs out of the room.

ROMAN

Jesus!

Shaky, he lights up a Lucky Strike and starts down, pausing at the landing.

VOICE

(O.S.)

...Penny for your thoughts.

Lainie's voice drifts up from the darkness below. Roman can see her silhouette on the wall.

ROMAN

I don't have any thoughts.

LAINIE

Maybe I didn't offer enough.

ROMAN

Maybe life doesn't offer enough.

LAINIE

Oh, la de da. Aren't you the deep one.

ROMAN

(snapping) Don't make fun of me!

LAINIE

Then don't be like that!

ROMAN

...What's wrong?

LAINIE

...I'm scared...You haven't said a word to me all day.

ROMAN

...I love you, Lainie.

His hand beckons. She races up the stairs, weightless. He pulls her away, into the darkness.

UPSTAIRS HALL...

Lainie bolts away from him - into their room.

LAINIE

Stay there. Don't come in yet.

She shuts the door. Roman moves to it as the lock clicks shut. He tries the handle.

ROMAN

Come on, Lainie.

LAINIE

(O.S.) Just a minute!

Rustling sounds. The lock clicks open.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

(O.S.) Are you there? In front of the door?

Roman is still staring into the darkness. The door opens.

HE TURNS. LAINIE STANDS THERE IN A DEEP RED, SATIN DRESS - something some liberated beauty from a previous era might have worn.

ROMAN

Holy...where did you get that?

He moves to her. She flits away, disappearing into the darkness. She reappears again in the dressing table mirror - lifting a candle to a photograph on the wall beside it.

LAINIE

Come here. Look at this.

Roman moves to her. His hands float over the satin.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

Look.

He looks at the photograph: A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN wearing the same satin dress. TWO MEN stand on either side of her - one older, in his sixties, a sophisticated mountain man - strong handsome, charming, but fading. The other man is younger - early forties - handsome, cocky. CREED and THE KID thirty years ago.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

It must be Angelina. This must've been her room.

ROMAN

What are you talking about? Who's Angelina?

LAINIE

The Kid was talking to Creed about her.

ROMAN

Who's Creed?

LAINIE

The man he was talking to, remember?
(pointing to him in
the picture)
That must be him.

ROMAN

Jesus, ghosts' gallery.

LAINIE

(dreamily) I think they both loved her.

ROMAN

How do you know?

She puts the candle down, turns to him.

LAINIE

Just a guess...I wonder if she loved both of them.

She laughs and whirls away from him.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

It must've been so romantic...

Roman stares at her, suddenly frightened again. She goes to him, holds him.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

Just think, if we could go back...We'd be free.

ROMAN

Back where?

LAINIE

In time.

Roman looks tortured.

ROMAN

Oh, God, I'm so sorry, Lainie. I had no right doing this to you.

LAINIE

(calm now, in his arms) You had no choice. I had no choice...We're tragic lovers, don't you see?...Romeo and Juliet.

ROMAN

This isn't a play. Harry's out there.

He'll kill us.

LAINIE

He'll never find us. He'll never find this place. It's protected by something. I know it.

He sees how important it is for her to believe that.

ROMAN

...Maybe. Maybe it is.

He kisses her.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

I love you. God, I love you. I'll make it right. I swear I will.

INT. MUENSTER'S FUNERAL PARLOR - NIGHT

THE KID is sound asleep, wrapped in a purple shroud. It isn't a restful sleep. His body is fighting a battle.

INT. SALOON - DREAM...

The Kid is in his forties, dressed in black, sitting at a table, watching the giant sitting across from him, mean and dirty - PAUNCH PEPPERDINE. He studies the cards fanning out from his huge fist.

PAUNCH

...Open for five dollars.

He pushes a gold piece onto the table. The Kid looks at his hand - two aces, two deuces - a winning hand. He knows he has to get rid of it.

KID

Call. Two cards.

He slides his bet across, trades his aces face down for a nine of hearts and seven of clubs. His face falls ever so slightly. Paunch takes two cards.

PAUNCH

I'll raise you ten.

KID

...I'll raise you twenty.

Pepperdine stares at him, then down at his cards.

PAUNCH

Call.

The Kid shows his deuces. Pepperdine snorts, flings down his pair of queens.

KID

Damn!

He drops his cigar into the spittoon, pushes back from the table.

KID (CONT'D)

We're even now and I ain't eaten.

Pepperdine's face turns uglier than it already is.

PAUNCH

The hell, bucko. I sat here and watched you have your way for three hours. I ain't about to watch you walk now.

KID
 Sorry. I'm beat.

Pepperdine makes a guttural sound. It grows louder as the Kid walks away. It turns to a roar. The neck bulges. The lips curl back. He kicks over a table, charges across it, drawing a huge Bowie knife.

The Kid spins, draws his revolver, crouches and fires. He hits Pepperdine twice in the stomach, three times through the lungs. The last bullet strikes him square in the heart and still he keeps coming. He knocks the Kid flat on his back, burying the knife up to the hilt in the floor next to his head.

INT. MUENSTER'S - NIGHT...

The Kid wakes in a sweat, trembling. He grabs at the bottle. When it is near-empty, he falls back onto the pillow.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

LAINIE breaks eggs into a hot skillet. THE KID walks in.

LAINIE
 Roman is looking for you.

KID
 Probably wants to beat me lame.

He goes for the coffee pot, grabs it, drops it fast.

LAINIE
 It's hot.

He glares at her, wraps his shirt tail around the handle and pours. He takes a sip, grimaces.

KID
 Jesus!...You threw out the grounds!

LAINIE
 Took me an hour to scrape em out. I almost threw up.

KID
 (pissed) I got two things to say to you, girl...

Lainie folds her arms across her chest, waving the spatula.

LAINIE
 Oh...

KID
 One, you leave them grounds in the pot. My grounds, my pot.

He stalks into pantry, finds the emergency bottle and tops off his cup. He takes a sip and starts for the door.

LAINIE
That was only one.

KID
Huh?

LAINIE
You said you had two things to tell me. That was only one.

She smiles - sweet sarcasm.

KID
Yeah...your eggs is burnt.

She spins around, staring down at the bubbling mess.

LAINIE
Damn! Damn you!

EXT. HOTEL

The Kid hears the skillet smash into the wall, smiles. He starts toward the livery, then spots CREED standing in the Aspen. The mountain man waves, Indian style, beckoning..

Roman comes out of the funeral parlor carrying the Hawken rifle. He looks angry.

ROMAN
Who were you signaling?

KID
Son-of-a-bitch wants me to follow him. I know where too.

ROMAN
(raising the gun) Who? There's no one there.

The Kid looks at the Hawken.

KID
Almighty loose with other folks' belongings, ain't you?

ROMAN
This relic?

KID
That relic'll blow a porcupine out of its quills at five hundred yards.

ROMAN

(smiling) Good thing I took it then.

The Kid reaches out and pushes the muzzle aside.

KID

It's loaded.

Roman blanches, moves his finger off the trigger.

KID (CONT'D)

You'd a known that if you weren't so damn wet behind the ears. That's a Hawken, .50 caliber. Belonged to Creed. In case you get the urge, it shoots to the left. Has a kick like a mule.

ROMAN

I can handle it.

He raises the rifle, aims at the weather vane on the livery roof. The Kid looks up, catches a glimpse of a brown speck drifting in circles above the trees.

KID

Damn!

He takes off for the livery. Roman spooks and runs after him, darting into the doorway.

DOORWAY - LIVERY...

ROMAN

Who's out there?!

He leans out, searching the street for movement.

KID

Don't go out there.

He lays a hand on the boy's arm. Roman shakes it off, steps out into the street, brandishing the gun, ready for an ambush.

He never sees the FALCON, just a blur of feathers slamming into his head, screeching.

ROMAN

Jeeesus!!

He shoots straight up into the air. His feet make running motions in space. Then he pitches face down into the mud.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

God damn!!

He lunges to his feet, shoulders the Hawken, fires at the sky.

BOOOOMMMM!!!

Roman hits the mud seat first this time. The Falcon angles into a cloud and disappears.

The Kid doubles over, convulsed with laughter. Roman is dripping brown - mud on his face, in his hair, oozing out of his shirt. He grabs the Hawken and slogs back to the hotel.

The Kid disappears into the livery. LAINIE is on the boardwalk, struggling to control her laughter. Roman oozes up the steps, stops in front of her.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

If you say anything, I'll strangle you.

He slogs past her, into the hotel. The Kid's laughter echoes from the stable. Lainie covers her mouth, rushes inside after Roman.

EXT. WILDERNESS

HARRY stumbles. His knees stab an upthrust chunk of granite.

HARRY

Shit!!

He has trouble keeping his eyes in focus and he is fighting back delirium. He sneezes, loses his footing, tumbles into a wash.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Shit! Shit-eating mountain!

He wills himself to his feet.

HARRY (CONT'D)

This is Harry Leight, goddamn you!

He grabs the automatic from his shoulder holster, fires into the dirt. He blasts a circle of pockmarks until the .45 clicks on empty. He slumps to his knees.

HARRY (CONT'D)

This is Harry Leight, you hear me!?

Harry Leight!

He pushes himself erect, stands up, falls down, stands again, roaring profanities, falling down, sneezing.

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT - HARRY...

He stumbles to his knees at the top of a rise. Below him the lights of a cabin glitter. He sneezes and falls over.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Stop it!

He manages to stand. It becomes a slow, awkward dance. For every step he takes forward, another wanders left or right.

The cabin seems to be sliding away.

He sneezes, bent double, fighting for balance, straightening at the last second, in time to crash into the door. He grabs at the latch, feels the door give way.

INT. CABIN

Two chairs pulled in front of a glowing stove. Denim legs extend from one chair. Harry collapses on the other. The MAN across from him sucks on a long-stemmed pipe.

HARRY

...I'm gonna kill that horse.

Then he faints. The .45 clatters to the floor. LODGE BENEDICT nods pleasantly to his guest then gets up to close the door.

EXT. ELKHORN - FUNERAL PARLOR - MORNING

THE KID stands on the porch. He glances over at the hotel then up at the sky. No signs of life. He moves off the porch, lopez down the street and disappears into the livery.

INT. LIVERY

He begins to undo the rope holding the tires to Roman's car. A BELCH echoes like a drumroll.

CREED

(O.S.) Wolves.

The Kid ignores him. Another belch.

CREED (CONT'D)

More wolves.

KID

Okay, okay.

He steps around the car. Creed is sitting on the Appaloosa's saddle.

CREED

Owooooo...I am the ghost of Christmas future...

KID

Sure you are.

CREED

Busy, huh?... Man's always busy when he starts a new career.

KID

What's that supposed to mean?

CREED

Never knew you for a thief before.

KID

They took my food. My food, their tires. It was in the cards.

CREED

Cards, eh? Cards are old, Kid. The game's over. Don't you understand that?

KID

No. you got it wrong. The game is over for you - not me. For me,

THERE'S A WHOLE WORLD OUT THERE -

with live people in it.

CREED

As I recall, you never liked people too much. As I recall, you used 'em and walked away when they ran out of whatever it was you wanted.

KID

That's a lie.

CREED

Is it?

Creed opens his coat, unbuttons his shirt and bares his chest.

Three puckered bullet holes mar his flesh.

CREED (CONT'D)

Butch and Dupree Pepperdine. You recall them?

KID

Close your shirt, Aden.

CREED

You're gonna do it to those kids...leave em stranded up here...

(MORE)

CREED (CONT'D)

(no answer)

I'm not gonna let you do it. You're not walking away from this table.

KID

I don't need your advice, Aden. Who are you to tell me anything. What the hell have you ever done?

CREED

Went to Silvertip Falls. I shouldn't have had to...wouldn't have if you'd listened to me.

KID

I see now. This is about Angelina, isn't it? You're miffed cause I listened to her instead of you.

CREED

No...more disappointed. I wanted a son I could be proud of. I ended up with a shootist, half a dozen mens' lives under your belt. You turned out bad, Kid. Took the wrong road.

KID

(hurt, getting revenge) You wanna know what else I took.

CREED

(He slumps) No.

KID

Angelina.

CREED

You're hitting low, aren't you? I don't want to hear it.

KID

Then get out. Get out and leave me alone.

They stare at each other. Creed turns, starts to walk, stops, turns back.

CREED

When we found you, I promised myself I wouldn't fail. I ain't going to.

The Kid is suddenly tired.

KID

I ain't your kid. Just leave me be.

CREED

(walking out) ...They took your horse.

The Kid thinks he hasn't heard right. Then he streaks out, past Creed, into the corral.

EXT. CORRAL

It's empty. The Appaloosa is gone.

KID

Son-of-a-bitch!

The tracks head north towards the pass. The Kid spins around.

KID (CONT'D)

Why didn't you tell me?!

Creed is gone, displaced by sunlight.

KID (CONT'D)

Shit!

He kicks the dirt, walks back into the livery.

INT. LIVERY

The Kid stands there, staring at Roman's car.

KID

Damn car! Damn evil-smellin, ugly heap of gopher shit!

He kicks the wheel, circles it, touches it.

KID (CONT'D)

You don't scare me.

EXT. MAIN STREET

Roman's runabout crashes through the livery doors and careens down Main Street. The Kid screams.

KID

Aaaaiiiieeee!!!

The car clips a stanchion. The bumper rips away. The Kid clutches the wheel, paralyzed. The car begins to circle, then jumps the boardwalk, bounces off a pillar and hits the street again. He twists the wheel again, nearly flipping it over, then charges down the street toward the hotel. He pulls the wheel in time to just skim the front porch.

Suddenly, the Appaloosa appears out of the alley. ROMAN and LAINIE stare at the Kid from its back, horrified. The horse rears, dumping them on the street.

The Kid turns back to look for them. The car is driving itself, jouncing off mudholes.

KID (CONT'D)

Help!!

ROMAN

(running into the street) Get behind the wheel! The wheel!

KID

Tell it to stop!!

ROMAN

Put your foot on the left pedal!

Left! Shove it halfway in!

The car slows as it drops into neutral.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Now the right pedal! Your right foot on the right pedal! Down all the way!

The Kid does as he's told. The car slows.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Now shut down the throttle! Keep your left foot...

The engine races. The whole car shudders as the Kid pulls the throttle all the way down. The transmission drops into low gear. The car lurches. The front wheels hit the porch steps of the Saloon. The bumper smashes through the swinging doors.

INT. SALOON

The car obliterates tables and chairs. Tires blow. Steam pours out. A mirror smashes, showering the Kid with glass.

Then the whole building shudders. The supports give way and the Kid, the car and the saloon go down the slide and join the other half of the town. Only pieces of the false front remain standing.

Silence...Roman and Lainie move to the edge, look down.

LAINIE

...He's dead.

A board moves...

ROMAN

No such luck.

Lainie shoots him a look, then heads out over the edge.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
Hey! What are you doing?

LAINIE
We can't just leave him there.

ROMAN
Why not? He was gonna leave.

She turns and glares at him, then scrambles down.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
Jesus!

He follows her down.

THE WRECK IS SHIFTING. TIMBERS JUT AT ODD ANGLES. A TWO-BY-
four timber has protected the Kid. Roman and Lainie pull
him out.

LAINIE
Are you alright?

The Kid is dazed. He tries to focus.

KID
Shouldn't take a man's horse.

ROMAN
We didn't take it.

LAINIE
We just went for a ride.

KID
...Shouldn't take a man's horse.

He starts up the slide. His knees give way. Lainie grabs
him. Roman sits on a timber and watches.

ROMAN
You're crazy, you hear! Nuts!

INT. HOTEL - LATER

Lather hangs in clumps on THE KID'S beard. He's sitting in
a tub, digging into bristles with a straight razor. The
door creaks open.

KID
Keep out! Keep out, goddamnit!

He ducks low in the water. LAINIE walks in.

LAINIE

I had three brothers. Watch your feet.

She pours the water in. The Kid jerks his knees up.

KID

Jesus!

She puts the clothes down, kicks his dirty ones out into the hall.

LAINIE

I thought Roman was pretty good about it, considering you wrecked his car.

KID

Damn thing wrecked itself. I was just along for the ride.

LAINIE

That'll make him feel better.

KID

You stole my horse.

LAINIE

We went for a ride.

KID

'Round here we got another name for that.

LAINIE

There is no around here. You're talking about a hundred years ago.

It's civilized now.

KID

Is it? Then how come you two are hidin' out up here? How come you're both scared out of your wits.

LAINIE

...That's different.

KID

Ain't different at all. When you get to be my age, you'll see it never will be.

Lainie stares at him for a moment. Then she picks up the kettle and walks to the door. She stops, turns...

LAINIE

...You're crazy...but I like you.

She goes out, closes the door.

KID
 (to himself) She don't know you.
 (looking around)
 Ain't that right, Aden? Only because
 she don't know me.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER - KID

He stands in front of the fire, toweling himself dry, feeling good. He moves to the mirror and stares at himself. He holds in his stomach, turns sideways.

KID
 Not bad...not bad.
 (slapping his belly)
 The body of a fifty-year-old.

He struts to the bed, whistling, finds his boots. They're cracked with mud. He searches for something to wipe them with, goes for the bedspread, hesitates, looks for something else. He stops short when he sees the wrapped mound of cloth in the wardrobe. He unwraps the cloth, picks up the belt and gun, lets his fingers play over the worn, ivory grip, then looks around suddenly.

KID (CONT'D)
 (muttering) Shouldn't 've told him
 about Angelina...

He holds the belt around his waist, checks the room again.

KID (CONT'D)
 You there? Nothing. Holding the
 belt closed with his hands, he walks
 to the mirror, stares at and through
 himself to another Wind River Kid...

INT. HOTEL ROOM -

THE KID is middle-aged, tired and on the run. He sits on the bed. A KNOCK. He draws his gun, cocks and aims at the door.

CREED
 (O.S.) It's me, Aden.

CREED walks in - an ashen-faced man of seventy, thin-skinned.

He coughs a lot. The Kid holsters his gun.

KID
 I figured you for dust and bones by
 now.

CREED

Not yet, boy. Not yet.

KID

What do you want?

CREED

I just come to see you.

KID

Now you have. Close the door on the way out.

CREED

Come to see if all the stories I heard was true.

KID

Depends on what stories you heard.

CREED

Like you were a coldblooded shootist, a gambler and a whoremonger.

KID

(furious) Don't you judge me, old man.

CREED

Somebody has to. None more fit than me.

KID

Go to hell.

He grabs a shot glass, throws it. Creed ducks. The glass hits the wall and rolls across the floor.

CREED

They'll find you, you know. They always do.

KID

(drawing his gun) Damn you!
(aiming for his belly)
Damn you!

Creed just stares into the Kid's eyes.

CREED

I'll be around when they do.

The gun is suddenly heavy in his hand. He drops it back into the holster. Creed turns and leaves the room.

KID

I don't need you! You hear! Stay
away from me!

He grabs for the whiskey bottle on the table, knocks it off.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - THE PRESENT

The gunbelt drops to the floor as he spins to catch the bottle. But the bottle isn't there. Just the sound of it. Trembling, he kneels down and wraps the gunbelt in its cloth. Suddenly, he knows what needs to be done. He becomes calm, puts the gun down and finishes dressing.

INT. DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON

ROMAN is arranging piles of money on a table - ten piles in a neat row. LAINIE sits across from him, sipping coffee.

LAINIE

I think I like the coffee his way.

ROMAN

Yeah, pretty soon we won't have to
drink it. Just call it. It'll crawl
into our mouths on command.

He smiles to show her it's a joke.

LAINIE

...Let me go with you.

ROMAN

No. You'll be safer here.

LAINIE

What if Harry's in Mountain City?

ROMAN

I'll take my chances.

LAINIE

...I'm scared, Roman.

He gets up, walks around the table, massages her shoulders.

ROMAN

I'll only be gone a few days. Then
we'll get out of here, before it
snows again.

LAINIE

Where?

ROMAN

Anywhere. North.
(MORE)

ROMAN (CONT'D)

We can catch a bus in Idaho Springs.
Go through the pass to Boulder, catch
a train for Cheyenne or Laramie

KID

(O.S.) Don't matter which way you
go. You're gonna need help.

Roman spins around. THE KID emerges from the darkness.

He's dressed in clean clothes. The shoulder-length, white
hair makes him look like a dimestore Bill Hickock. Roman
shakes his head in disbelief.

The Kid walks across the room, sets a bundle on the sideboard
and comes back to the table, stares down at the stacked bills.

KID (CONT'D)

Robbery's a funny habit for a boy
your age.

ROMAN

I ain't no boy. I'm twenty.

KID

Close enough.

He picks up a crisp fifty, holds it up to the light.

KID (CONT'D)

Pretty color.

Roman plucks it back, returns it to its pile. The Kid sits
down. Lainie looks him over.

LAINIE

Are you alright?

ROMAN

He looks better than my car.

KID

(to Lainie)

Can I have some of that?

(coffee, then to Roman)

Just one of them piles ought to buy
you a new one. You got ten.

ROMAN

You just remember that, old man. I
got them. Me and Lainie. Not you.

The Kid takes a cup from Lainie. He sips coffee, smiles.

KID

Excellent.

He suddenly sheds years, reverting to the Kid of old, the smooth-as-silk operator. Roman looks at him as if he's crazy.

The Kid winks at him.

KID (CONT'D)

Don't you agree, partner?

ROMAN

Oh, Jesus. You're really nuts, you know that.

Lainie gets up, tries to break the tension.

LAINIE

You should eat something. I'll make some bacon.

The Kid catches her hand before she can leave the table.

KID

I'm gonna need your help here.

ROMAN

(glaring at him) I think that wreck must've scrambled your brains.

KID

Hear me out. Then decide.

He guides Lainie back into her chair.

ROMAN

Yeah?

KID

You said you might go north, right?...Now, that's a good plan - except for one problem. Only way north this time of year is through the pass.

ROMAN

That's right.

KID

Right. But north what? Northeast? Northwest? Due north?...And when you get there, then what. The trail branches four ways. Three of them go through a hundred miles of wilderness. Choose wrong and you'll end up buzzard meat. Next year this time, the wind'll be blowin through your skull...

(MORE)

KID (CONT'D)

(looking at Lainie)

Sort of whistles as it sweeps through the eye sockets...which have been pecked clean...after you're dead of course.

LAINIE

Roman...

ROMAN

So, we'll go south. Around Mountain City.

KID

Where's around? Which river? What about the Plates? You ever hear of them? What about Rib Roast Valley?

This ain't no promenade.

ROMAN

And you, of course, know the way.

KID

North, south, east or west.

The Kid folds his hands on the table. He stares at Roman. Roman looks at Lainie. She's shaking.

ROMAN

...How much for this valuable service?

KID

A thousand. One of those little piles.

ROMAN

(standing up) You're nuts. You owe me a 1920 Ford, remember?

The Kid looks out the window. The wind is up. Dust swirls.

KID

...Seven-fifty. Half in advance.

Roman ignores him, kisses the top of Lainie's head.

ROMAN

I'll be back in a few days. We'll go back the way we came - through Mountain City.

LAINIE

...It isn't safe.

Roman glares at her, then sighs, giving up.

ROMAN

...Five hundred - when we say goodbye.

The Kid smiles. His hand shoots out.

KID

You got yourself a deal.

Roman takes his hand and wrenches it, holding him fast.

ROMAN

Just remember, you got your life, we got ours. Once we're out and you're paid, that's it.

He lets go, hands his .38 to Lainie, picks up the money.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

I'm going to hide this. See he doesn't follow me.

Lainie starts to say something but Roman shushes her. She takes the gun, lets him guide her to the fireplace.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

You keep your eyes on him til I'm out of sight.

The Kid turns. He can hear Roman's footsteps, the sound of the door, then silence. Lainie is frozen.

KID

...Mind if I sit?

LAINIE

No.

KID

You can relax. I ain't gonna try nothin'. Makes me nervous.

LAINIE

Me too.

KID

(sitting) Boy's a hothead. Gonna get you both in trouble. If I were him...Hey, what's the matter?

Lainie tries but can't control the tears.

LAINIE

Nothing...I don't want him to leave.

KID

(flustered) Oh...You afraid?

She looks embarrassed, nods her head up and down.

KID (CONT'D)

...Of me?

She shakes her head no. He studies her, seeing something.

KID (CONT'D)

Hey, I ain't gonna let anything happen to you.

Lainie looks at him, a pained smile on her face.

LAINIE

You don't know Harry.

KID

Don't be so sure.

Lainie looks at him, suddenly curious. The front door opens. Roman walks in.

ROMAN

(studying them) Everything all right?

LAINIE

Sure.

He takes the .38 from her, tucks it in his belt, slips his arm around her, hugs her.

ROMAN

I'm hungry. We got anything for lunch.

LAINIE

(trying to sound carefree)

Yeah.

They both watch her go.

KID

I'd never leave a girl like that all alone.

ROMAN

(he shrugs) I have no choice...Coffee?

KID

No thanks.

Roman turns to the bundle on the sideboard.

ROMAN

What's that?

KID

Nothing.

Roman walks to the sideboard.

ROMAN

Let's see what nothing looks like.

KID

Leave it alone! It doesn't concern you.

ROMAN

I don't like secrets.

He reaches for the fabric.

KID

Keep your hands off, boy!

He clutches the back of his chair, ready to use it like a club. Roman hesitates, backs off.

KID (CONT'D)

Like you said, you got your life, I got my life.

His voice is flat. Roman moves away from the sideboard.

ROMAN

Exactly...

The kitchen door swings open. Lainie walks in with a tray.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

...That horse of yours know the way to Mountain City?

KID

Better than you do...ten dollars a day.

Roman makes a face, sits. He takes a sandwich. The Kid helps Lainie with her chair.

LAINIE

Thank you.

Roman looks disgusted. He takes it out on the sandwich.

EXT. ELKHORN - PRE-DAWN

ROMAN and LAINIE stand at the end of the street. Roman holds her close for a moment. Then he is gone, climbing aboard the Appaloosa, disappearing over the hill.

Lainie brings her hand up to her cheek, savouring the feel of his flesh against her.

CUT TO:

LAINIE scrubbing the skillet, a little too hard... Sipping coffee, wandering into the dining room.

Cranking up the victrola.

Sinking to the floor in front of the window, arms settling onto the windowsill, chin falling to meet them. She gazes out at the empty street.

LAINIE'S POV...

THE KID appears on the porch. He stands there for a moment, checking the sky, then disappears down the alley. He has a bundle under his arm.

Lainie grabs her sweater and races out through the kitchen.

EXT. HOTEL

THE KID is standing between a pair of old wagons, looking around, checking for a tail. LAINIE ducks. When she stands up, he has disappeared.

He appears again, walking through the aspen. Lainie scrambles up the hill after him.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - ASPEN FOREST

LAINIE follows a faint trail through the leaves. The slope levels out.

The trees thin and there is a steadily increasing roar. She rounds a bend, stops short, ducking behind a huge pine.

The roar emanates from a thin ribbon of water that spills off a mossy shelf twenty feet above an ice-covered pool.

The clearing is bounded by pine and aspen - fifty feet across and twice as long. THE KID is standing with his back to her, ten feet from the base of the falls. The back of his coat is wet and the bundle is no longer under his arm. He is backing away from the pool, talking to himself.

KID

That's it, Aden. You got what you wanted. Now, leave me the hell alone!

He looks around, waiting for an answer. There is none.

KID (CONT'D)

I don't want to see it again.

Lainie waits until he's gone then wanders out towards the falls. The old man's footprints disappear into it. She stares at the spray, finally sees the grotto behind it.

INT. GROTTO - LAINIE

The cloth-wrapped bundle lies on a ledge at the back. She reaches for it...The ancient velvet is damp, clammy. She jerks her hand away, reaches in again and pulls it aside.

The bone handle of the gun gleams faintly. She pulls it out. It's heavy, the barrel bluish; six bullets in the chamber.

She stares at the gun, then wraps it back in the cloth, holds it over her head and ducks out of the grotto.

LATER...

LAINIE sits crosslegged in the yellow leaves. She's at the edge of the aspen grove. Elkhorn lies beneath her.

A DOOR SLAMS. Boots drum on the wooden sidewalk...

THE KID is standing in front of the barbershop. He has some kind of dull, gray cap on his head. He steps out into the middle of the street, just stands there, singing...

KID

Farewell to Lorena, It's free I must
be...

Lainie sees it - streaking down from a great height - a singleminded feathery arrow - the FALCON. She doesn't have time to warn him.

The bird slams into metal, shoots off and hits the ground hard. The Kid stumbles beneath the impact. The pot on his head flies off, reels down the street.

KID (CONT'D)

I got you that time, you feathered
devil! Hah!! I got you!!

The bird claws its way into the air as the old man hops up and down, shouting at it.

KID (CONT'D)

And don't come back! You hear!?

Don't come back!

The falcon flees on a zig zag course. Lainie heads down Main Street. The Kid disappears into the trees north of town.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT - ROMAN

Crouched before a campfire, jumping at every sound, his hand glued to the .38. The Appaloosa stands nearby, chomping grass.

ROMAN
Shut up, will you!

He lies back, cradling the gun, his eyes wide open.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - ROMAN

As he pulls up on a rise overlooking Mountain City.

ROMAN
I'll be damned. You do know the way.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CITY - ROMAN

The Appaloosa plods down Silverado Street, pulls up in front of Weldon's General Store. Roman surveys the street one last time, then goes in.

INT. WELDON'S STORE

Piled with enough goods to support a lifetime. A bell announces Roman's arrival. Weldon appears at the end of an aisle. He stops short when he sees Roman.

WELDON
Well, I'll be. It's you.

ROMAN
Yeah, it's me. So what?

Weldon unties his apron, pulls out a plug of tobacco.

WELDON
You chew?

ROMAN
No. Thanks. I'm lookin' for some mules. You know anyone who has some to sell?

WELDON
Maybe, maybe not.
(He spits into a peach tin.)
Mules, eh?

ROMAN
A pair. Three would be even better.

WELDON

Well, I'd try Joe Nusken down at the livery.

ROMAN

Thanks.

Roman goes through a pile of folded jeans, pulls out a couple of pairs that look about Lainie's size. He peels off a five dollar bill.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

This cover it?

WELDON

You've got change comin'.

Weldon fiddles with the cash register, stalling.

WELDON (CONT'D)

Here you are, fifty cents.

ROMAN

Thanks...Oh, yeah, I talked to a guy about meeting him up here. Short, husky guy, black hair...smokes a cigar.

Weldon spits into the peach tin.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Well? You see someone like that?

WELDON

No. City guy came through. Drummer sellin' parts for Nashes. He was real tall though.

ROMAN

Yeah...Where's the livery?

WELDON

Straight down Silverado. First street on your right.

He follows Roman to the door, sees the Appaloosa.

WELDON (CONT'D)

Hey, where'd you get that horse?

ROMAN

(tense) Rented him from an old geezer up in the hills. Chargin' me a tenner a day. Think I was suckered.

WELDON

Beats walkin'...Hope you find your mules.

ROMAN

Thanks.

EXT. LIVERY - DUSK - ROMAN, NUSKEN

NUSKEN is an old, laid back local. He's giving Roman lessons on how to load and unload a mule.

NUSKEN

Looks like you got the hang of it. Good thing too. A man shouldn't go out there if he ain't prepared. That other guy had it comin' to him.

ROMAN

(suddenly alert) What other guy?

NUSKEN

Some guy from Albuquerque. Lookin' for his niece and some lounge lizard she run off with.

Roman strains to sound casual.

ROMAN

I was supposed to meet someone here. You get a name?

NUSKEN

Nope. Lewis Weldon rented him a horse though Roman's heart stops.

He stares at Nusken, unnerved.

NUSKEN (CONT'D)

Turned him loose headin' north.

Horse came back without him. They found him up at Lode Benedict's place out of his head with fever. Took him over to Smith's boarding house.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CITY - NIGHT - ROMAN

The street is empty except for Roman. He sees the sign in front of Smith's Boarding House and stops.

He walks up to the house and ducks behind a hedge. Peering over it, he looks into the first two windows - the dining room - empty. He creeps further along the hedge. Inside the third window, a man is working on some books. Roman crosses the lawn in a crouch. He stops behind a tree. A light is on in the rear. He flits past another tree, stops behind the next one.

A lace curtain obscures the window. Behind it, the diffused silhouette of a man. Something dangles from his neck as he leans over. Roman edges up to the house and peers around the corner into the window. The man he had seen is bending over a bed, obscuring Roman's view.

MAN

Fever's down and your chest sounds better. A concussion like that would've killed another man. You're lucky.

Finally, he walks away from the bed. He keeps talking but Roman doesn't hear the rest. His eyes are glued to the bed itself and the man lying in it - HARRY.

DISSOLVE TO:

CU - Wild onions, meat, red chili pepper - sauteing in a heavy skillet. A dash of salt is thrown in.

KID

(O.S.) That's it - your basic Damnation Stew.

INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - THE KID AND LAINIE - NIGHT

The Kid bends over the stove. He stirs the concoction.

KID

Close, real close.

LAINIE

Close enough.

He takes a sip, then holds the spoon for Lainie.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

Mmmm, you were right about the whiskey.

KID

Gives it body.

DINING ROOM - LATER - LAINIE - THE KID...

Sitting at a table. The bowls are empty. An owl hoots. A board creaks somewhere. Laine whips around, spooked.

KID (CONT'D)

Easy, girl. Ain't no one here but us and the animals.

LAINIE

I thought maybe Roman...

KID

Hell, he only reached town yesterday.
Give him a day or so. He's comin'
back...

She slumps in her chair.

KID (CONT'D)

Where'd you hide the money?

LAINIE

(suspicious) Why?

KID

Haven't seen the likes in a while.

LAINIE

I thought you were a high rolling
gambler.

KID

Been a while, girl...Cards are like
women, you know. Got to know when
to press your luck.

LAINIE

Hah! And what a game you're playing!

KID

Game? Game? Why I've played for
stakes that make your roll look like
a Chinaman's wages. Plenty of times.
Why, I've won thousands and next
minute, lost every cent I had. I've
had me more days' and nights' worth
of pure God-almighty hellacious good
times than you got years to your
name...Tasted more sweet slidin
whiskey, went to see the elephant,
kissed the girls,...danced me more
fandangos, been hot, cold, drunk,
sober, and loved every dadblasted
minute of it.
I've...where you goin?

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK. Lainie is winding up the victrola.

She puts a record on. An instrumental. She turns.

LAINIE

I'm calling your bluff, old
man...Let's dance.

She smiles mischievously, yanks him to his feet.

KID

You're plumb loco, girl!

LAINIE
Ba ba ba bahm bahm!

She drags him to the center of the room.

KID
What the!...

LAINIE
Ba ba ba ba bahhh!

She kicks high, then crouches low, shimmies her shoulders in time to the music.

LAINIE (CONT'D)
C'mon, Wind River! Let's see your stuff!

The Kid plants his feet, refusing to move.

KID
Hell's bells, girl. I don't got the foggiest notion of what you're doin'.

Lainie grabs his hand, spins him in a circle.

LAINIE
The Charleston!

KID
What the hell's the Charleston?

Lainie kicks her heels backward, crouches with her hands on her knees and wiggles toward him.

LAINIE
This.

KID
Looks like the conniptions to me.
Aaaieeee!

He's spinning, first one way then the other. Lainie's grip is unrelenting. The band is playing hot and heavy, the beat irresistible. The Kid tries a few steps. There is no way he can follow but he isn't about to let this slip of a girl show him up. He lets out a wild, blood-curdling war whoop and jumps into the air. He kicks out with his feet and bays like a wolf. Lainie starts and jumps away.

The Kid shoots her a wicked wink and kicks over a table. He jumps the pedestal and lands in a sweeping bow in front of her.

KID (CONT'D)
Dancing, is it?
(MORE)

KID (CONT'D)

If that's what you want, little gal,
then follow the devil! Yee-ha!

He slaps his thigh and spins Lainie around. He lifts her off the ground, slaps her bottom and dances around the room.

He kicks his heels, dodges tables and leaps over chairs. He lands light as a butterfly on his toes and dances toward Lainie, who is laughing so hard she can hardly stand. She gasps as he grabs her and twirls her around. He howls. She answers with a wild yell. And they dance and laugh and dance...

The music ends and they fall, breathless, into chairs in front of the fire. They sit there in silence.

LAINIE

...Who's Angelina?

The Kid pales.

KID

Where'd you hear that name?

LAINIE

You said it to someone. You were arguing with somebody in the street. You threw a chair at him...only there was no one there.

The Kid stares at her.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

...Was she your wife?

KID

She brought me up...Later on, we were lovers.

Lainie blushes.

LAINIE

I like that.

KID

One of the advantages of being adopted.

LAINIE

(fascinated) And Creed was your father?

KID

(unnerved) You know him too, do you?

LAINIE

That's who you talk to, isn't it?

KID

(grinning) You think I'm crazy...

LAINIE

...I don't know. I guess, after a while, you have to talk to someone. The Kid can't keep up. She keeps surprising him. He wants to grab her, kiss her. Then he remembers who he is, what he looks like. He sinks into himself. The logs starts popping again. Lainie gazes into the glow.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

...It feels so late.

The Kid smiles at her.

KID

It is late.

Lainie smiles back sleepily.

LAINIE

We sure worked off that Damnation Stew.

KID

Plenty more. Be some left when your man shows up too, probably.

LAINIE

Guess I'd better go to bed.

KID

Think I'll sit awhile.

Lainie nods sleepily and takes a few steps toward the stairs.

LAINIE

Wind River?...

She stops, groping for words.

KID

Yeah?

She looks at him. He appears so friendly, so safe. A lump catches in her throat. She feels like crying.

LAINIE

(quickly) Nothing...Just good night.

KID

...Night.

Lainie walks across the room, stops, turns around and comes back. She kneels by the Kid's chair, kisses him on the cheek.

The Kid stares at her, lets his hand touch her hair, push her bangs out of her eyes.

KID (CONT'D)

If only I'd met you forty years ago...we could've had us a time...

LAINIE

A swell time...

She rises and goes. Footsteps light on the stairs. Then silence.

FADE...

CU - THE KID - ASLEEP

SOUNDS OF A MULE BRAYING wake him. He lies there, listening.

He grabs a quilt around him, moves to the window.

EXT. HOTEL - MORNING - THE KID'S POV

ROMAN is tethering the Appaloosa to the rail in front of the hotel. Three mules trail behind him on a lead line.

LAINIE yelps and runs into the street. Roman catches her, wraps his arms around her.

LAINIE

I thought you'd never come back.

He pulls away to look at her, takes off a glove so he can touch her cheek.

ROMAN

God, I missed you.

LAINIE

Your hand is freezing.

He pulls her in again, kisses her.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - THE KID

He stares down at the two lovers, turns away.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM

THE KID is standing in front of the fire when ROMAN walks in. Roman sheds his coat and walks across the room, standing next to the Kid. The two men appraise each other, finally shake hands.

ROMAN

...H'llo.

He seems genuinely relieved to see the old man. The Kid nods. He feels the same way.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Thanks for taking care of her.

KID

Glad you made it all right. It's a tough trip. When'd you leave?

ROMAN

Yesterday...damn mules...

KID

Mules can be a trial alright.

Suddenly, they both hear Lainie behind them, humming...

ROMAN

...Uh, you think you could take 'em to the livery. I wanna talk to her...

KID

(turning away, resigned)
Sure.

ROMAN

...I bought a bottle for you. It's in the top pack on the lead mule.

The Kid looks at him. There's hope for the boy yet.

KID

I'll sleep at the funeral parlor tonight..

He disappears into the kitchen, comes back pulling his coat on. When he turns, Roman and Lainie are on their way upstairs.

EXT. HOTEL

An eerie caravan greets him as he emerges from the hotel - two mud-colored mules and a lead the color of dirty snow. The Kid is horrified.

KID
A goddamned white mule...

Outraged, he glares up at the second floor of the hotel.

KID (CONT'D)
You brought back a goddamned white
mule!

There is no answer. The Kid unties the Appaloosa, whacks him, jolting the mules into motion.

INT. LIVERY - LATER

THE KID is barely visible, stretched out, the bottle Roman brought him on his lap. The breying of a mule rouses him.

He looks around, finds the white mule staring at him.

KID
Son-of-a-bitch...

EXT. LIVERY - NIGHT

A light snow is falling as the Kid closes the livery doors. He leans against them with the bottle in his hand, takes a long, slow drought. The wind picks up, carries sounds of a piano, the same rinky-tink melody. This time it's coming from the Victorian Palace. The Kid drops the bottle and takes off.

EXT. VICTORIAN PALACE

The Kid hits the door, kicks it open and rushes in.

INT. PALACE

A fetid, musty scent assails him. He stops dead.

KID
...Angelina?

He can barely distinguish shapes, battered furniture...

KID (CONT'D)
...Angelina?!

He races across the room, pulls aside ancient curtains.

AAAARRRRRRRROOOOAAAAA000!!!

Ten feet of GRIZZLY block the doorway - red-eyed, full of primevil anger - a howling abyss, speeding to engulf him, remnants of piano wire caught in his claws.

KID (CONT'D)
Jeeesssuusss!!!

He ducks as the claws sweep over his skull and tangle in the curtains, bringing them down on top of him.

The Kid runs for the door. The Grizzly rips the curtain away, splintering the parlor door, demolishing tables and chairs as he lumbers through the front room.

EXT. VICTORIAN PALACE - NIGHT - THE KID

He races toward the hotel. The front door of the Palace explodes behind him. He pitches forward and goes down.

AN EXPLOSION from the balcony of the Hotel. The Kid rolls to the side. Blossoms of orange flame sweep over him and score into the hide of the beast. It rears up over him, then starts falling. It veers into the alley. A second later, it is thrashing through the trees and underbrush.

More scrambling - closer, right there next to him in the dark - Scar, come back for him.

KID

Go away! Go away!

VOICE

(Lainie's)

It's okay.

The Kid slumps. It's over. He can give in to the delirium.

KID

It's back...come back for me.

ROMAN

What are you talkin' about?!

KID

Creed lied. He tricked me into stayin' - hold me for that ghost.

ROMAN

That waren't no ghost.

KID

It was him.

ROMAN

Listen, you crazy old fart! If that was a ghost, how come it took bullets? How come it bled and ran off?

KID

Ask her. She's seen the graveyard.

LAINIE

That was a real bear. Everything that's happened was real. No ghosts.

The Kid stares hard at her. Roman sees a look pass between them.

ROMAN

Somethin' goin' on here I don't know about?

KID

There's always somethin' goin on you don't know about. That's a rule to live by.

Roman goes off like a flash. He grabs the Kid by his collar.

ROMAN

You toyin' with me?!

LAINIE

Roman, stop it! He didn't do anything! He's helping us!

Roman lets the Kid go, turns on her now.

ROMAN

Don't be so sure. D'you hear what he just said - there's always somethin' goin' on I don't know about.

LAINIE

He meant in general - people in general. We're not smart enough...we make mistakes.

KID

...like buyin' a goddamned white mule.

ROMAN

What's the matter with a white mule, for Chrissake!?

LAINIE

It's a gambler's ghost.

Roman looks at her strangely.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

My dad told me.

ROMAN

Well, that's all they had! What d'you want me to do, turn it down because of some old man's dumb superstition.

The Kid drifts off in his delirium.

KID

...He wants me to follow him...I
can't...I can't do it again. Get
away, Aden! I didn't ask you,
goddamnit! I didn't ask you!...

Roman and Lainie stare at him. Their faces DISSOLVE...

A steady ROAR engulfs the Kid...CASCADING WATER...

EXT. FALLS - DREAM

The Kid is crouched in deep shadow beneath a rocky overhang. TWO MEN ride into the clearing in front of the falls - big, demented-looking wolvers - BUTCH and DUPREE PEPPERDINE - Paunch's brothers, come to be avenged. They dismount cautiously, stand there, waiting, hands hovering over their guns.

The Kid sinks further into the crevice.

KID

Go away...Go away...

The two men speak. They move to their horses.

KID (CONT'D)

That's right, I'm not gonna show.
Go...go...

But the two men stop, swing around to face the falls, hands moving to their guns. CREED emerges from behind the curtain of water.

KID (CONT'D)

(under his breath) No! No! Goddamn
you, Aden!

Creed has the Hawken aimed at the Pepperdine boys.

CREED

You out there, Kid?

The Kid freezes. The Pepperdine brothers look around. Then Butch turns back to Creed.

BUTCH

Looks like the Kid couldn't make it.

CREED

Oh, he made it all right. Just wants
to surprise you - right Kid?

Dupree goes for his gun. Creed fires before he can get it out of the holster. Dupree flies backwards. Creed charges across the creek, right into Butch's gun. Three bullets slam into his chest. Another one rends his gut.

Somehow, he makes it to the other side where he caves Butch's head in with the barrel of the Hawken before he falls.

The Kid can't move. He sees Creed rub a slow hand across his eyes. He watches him die, lying there, his eyes focused on the rockface, as if he can see the Kid hiding there.

EXT. MAIN STREET - ELKHORN - PURPLE DUSK

Snowflakes fall silently in one vast curtain that muffles the KID'S ranting.

KID
(O.S.) Aden!...Aden!...

He emerges from the whiteness, brandishing the Hawken like a club.

KID (CONT'D)
You lyin bastard! Where are you?!

Creed materializes out of the gaping hole that marks the bear's exit.

CREED
Gonna club me with my own gun? Now
ain't that a hell of a fate.

KID
What do you want?

CREED
Tally sheet don't balance, Kid. I'm
callin' in what's due me.

KID
Ain't nothin' due you, damn it!

CREED
No? What about the days I would've
had left?

KID
I didn't ask for your help! Not
then and not now! I don't need
nobody! Never did.

CREED
I thought you seemed right stuck on
that girl.

KID
Leave her out of it!

CREED
Boy too. You've taken a shine to
him.

KID

You're wrong. They don't mean a thing to me.

CREED

(smiling) Now that's the Kid I know. It is dangerous bein' your friend, 'specially when there's lead flyin'.

KID

You still ain't told me what you want.

Creed steps forward, breathing snow and frozen mist.

CREED

Don't you know yet? Can't you guess the next step?

The Kid steps forward, cocking the gun.

KID

Yeah. I'm gonna send you back to perdition or wherever it is you come from.

Creed grins. He yanks open his coat, digs his fingers into the buckskin shirt and rips it open. The Kid freezes, staring at the puckered wounds.

VOICE

(O.S.) Kid...

A hand grasps the Kid's shoulder. He shrieks and swings the rifle around. A dark form ducks, digs his shoulder into the old man's belly, grabs onto the muzzle of the rifle.

VOICE (CONT'D)

It's me! Roman!

The Kid slumps. Roman pries the Hawken out of his grasp.

ROMAN

You all right?

The Kid stares at him dully, looks back at the Palace. There's nothing there.

KID

...Yeah...yeah, I'm all right.

He sags against the younger man. Roman leads him back up the street toward the hotel.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM - NIGHT

ROMAN rubs oil along the barrel of the automatic.

VOICE

(O.S.) Roman...

Roman jumps, juggles the gun. LAINIE rushes over and kisses him. He jams the automatic into his belt, hands her the .38.

ROMAN

Keep this. I'll be back in a minute.

LAINIE

Roman...what's going on?

ROMAN

(avoiding her eyes) Nothin'...we're just leaving.

LAINIE

...What about the Kid?

ROMAN

We don't need him, Lainie. He doesn't need us. We're goin' back to Denver.

LAINIE

...Harry's coming...isn't he?

Roman slumps against the doorjamb.

ROMAN

He's in Mountain City. He's laid up...but not for long.

LAINIE

Then we'll be heading right for him!

ROMAN

No. There's two ways down. He'll use the first way. We'll go the old man's way.

LAINIE

...and the Kid?

ROMAN

He stays here.

LAINIE

...to face Harry.

ROMAN

Harry doesn't give a damn about him. Why should he?

Lainie picks at a cuticle. Roman cups her chin, looks her in the eye.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

If he's with us and Harry finds us...

LAINIE

I hate it.

(pleading)

We can't do it...we just can't...

ROMAN

We have to.

KID

(O.S.) Said those same words myself
'bout thirty years ago.

The Kid appears at the bottom of the stairs.

KID (CONT'D)

Didn't think it was possible for a
man to live twice.

ROMAN

What are you talkin' about?

KID

You.

ROMAN

You really are nuts.

KID

You don't want to do that. You don't
wanna do what I did.

ROMAN

It's none of your business!

KID

Oh, it is. If ever I had a business,
it was running away.

LAINIE

What are you saying, that we should
stay?

KID

What I'm sayin' is don't run away.

LAINIE

...Even if it means dying?

KID

...If need be.

ROMAN

Easy to say when it ain't you...when
it ain't Harry.

KID

Everybody's got their devils. You gotta face them. Otherwise, they dog you, dog you without mercy...spend the rest of your days livin' with ghosts, just like me.

Roman struggles not to show fear, to hold onto his plan.

ROMAN

(to Lainie)

...We're leaving, first thing.

He starts to leave, stops, turns to the Kid.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

...I'm sorry.

KID

What for? I'd do the same thing - did.

Tears flow down Lainie's cheeks. She runs out.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

THE KID sits by the window. He peers up at the graveyard. The moon spots the markers now and then. CREED belches. Chip, chip, chip. Tiny hooves are taking form on tiny legs. He is rocking in a chair by the bed. Chip, chip, chip...The Kid gets up and walks out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The Kid creeps downstairs, opens the front door and squeezes through. There is a scuffle somewhere in the black depths of the town. He pinpoints the movement, moves toward it.

KID

Bear, the time has come. I'm callin' your hand.

Nothing.

KID (CONT'D)

...Bear!

Cold steel slams against the nape of his neck.

VOICE

Clam it.

A SHADOWY FIGURE in a gray fedora and hound's tooth overcoat. He holds a gun, motions his shorter companion to stay put, then draws in close, sticks his face right up to the Kid's - HARRY.

HARRY

Where are they?

KID

Christ, mister!

The world explodes. He's falling...the snow cushions the impact. He tries to get up. A boot settles hard on his left wrist. The face hovers over his.

HARRY

I'm going to break this one first.

Then I'll break your right one, and then your knees. Then I'll leave you. I'm not without generosity. You'll have your life for as long as you can drag yourself around...Where are they? The pressure on the Kid's wrists doubles.

NEWKIRK

(pointing) Hey! There's a light in that window.

KID

It ain't them.

He says it too quickly. Harry grins.

HARRY

(lifting his foot) Thanks. Newkirk, come with me. Tate, help the old man.

Tate grabs the Kid, hauls him to his feet.

TATE

Come on, old timer. Wouldn't want folks to think you spent the night out here.

KID

There ain't no folks.

TATE

Just ghosts, huh?

KID

That's right.

TATE

(laughing) You don't know how right you're gonna be.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT...

Harry and Newkirk move up the stairs, stop outside the Grant Suite. Harry points the Thompson machine gun at the door. Rapid gunfire turns the lock to shrapnel. He kicks open the door.

INT. GRANT SUITE

Harry levels the tommy gun at ROMAN and LAINIE.

HARRY

The girl will die first.

Roman bolts upright, grabs the gun on the bedstand, then freezes. Lainie screams.

HARRY (CONT'D)

That's right - the gun. Now, very slowly, fingers out, hand away, like a good boy.

Roman's fingers splay. His hand moves away from the automatic. Harry walks around the bed, takes the gun.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Well, well, imagine that. Now, what's my gun doing here? Get dressed.

(pointing gun at Lainie)

You first. Hurry up or I'll have Mr. Newkirk here help you.

Cowering, Lainie walks naked across the room to her clothes. Newkirk stares.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Good girl. Now, over there in the corner while your boyfriend takes a turn.

Roman dresses. Harry approaches him.

HARRY (CONT'D)

It's nice to see you again, Roman. I missed you.

He pats him on the cheek, his eyes leaden.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Why don't we go downstairs, have a little chat.

He herds them out with the gun.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

THE KID is huddled in a chair by the fire. Tate is watching over him. He has his own gun and Roman's .38.

HARRY
Lanterns! Come on!

ROMAN
Two on the mantel...Three more in
the kitchen.

HARRY
Light them.

He tosses Tate a box of matches, then points the gun at Lainie.

HARRY (CONT'D)
You. Get some coffee going, and
something to eat. Make sure it's
hot.

NEWKIRK
I'll watch her.

He grabs Lainie's arm. She yanks free and starts for the kitchen. Tate stares at her ass as she walks out. Newkirk leers over his shoulder.

NEWKIRK (CONT'D)
(to Tate) Not half as nice as she
was a few minutes ago. You missed a
real show.

He disappears into the kitchen. Tate lights another lantern.

TATE
Maybe Sim needs a little help watchin'
the doll...

HARRY
(his eyes on Roman) Shut up. Keep
your eyes on the old man.

TATE
Ah, hell, he's a helpless old geezer.

HARRY
Watch him!

TATE
Sure, sure.

Sounds filter in from the kitchen. Harry surveys the room.

ROMAN

How did you find us?

Harry turns back to him, full of contempt.

HARRY

You're stupid, you know that, Phillips? (slamming the table) Jesus Christ, you're stupid! You know how long it took me to find you? The next day. Not even twenty-four hours - I knew where you were headed.

ROMAN

I thought you were dead, Harry! You were just lyin' there!

HARRY

(smiling) It's too bad. I thought I taught you better than that.

ROMAN

(looking at the Kid) What'd you do to him?

HARRY

(laughing) Him? Not a thing. He was very cooperative. Even directed me to your room.

The Kid keeps his eyes riveted on the floor.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Didn't you?!

KID

...I`m sorry, Roman.

ROMAN

Leave him alone. He doesn't mean anything to you.

TATE

He don't mean nothin' to nobody.

He's a spook.

HARRY

Shut up. (to Roman) Where's the money?

ROMAN

...Hidden.

Harry slashes upward with the Thompson, driving the barrel into Roman's groin. He collapses, curling into a ball.

Harry places the gun on the table, takes the automatic from his pocket.

HARRY

An automatic is like a child, Roman.
It must be cared for.

ROMAN

(croaking) Go to hell. You'll never
find it. I can take anything you
dish out.

Harry yawns, glances at his fingernails.

HARRY

Maybe...but can she?

INT. KITCHEN

NEWKIRK is perched on a stool, watching LAINIE. She bends to add wood to the fire. He runs a hand across her ass.

Lainie whirls, holding a piece of firewood like a club.

LAINIE

Don't you ever do that again.

Newkirk laughs, grabs her wrist.

NEWKIRK

Honey, I don't know how you come by
that boy out there but I'd say a
little hellcat like you needs a real
man...know what I mean?

He squeezes her wrist until she drops the wood.

NEWKIRK (CONT'D)

Lucky for you it ain't too late.

LAINIE

Let me go!

NEWKIRK

Awww, honey...

He jerks her toward him. Lainie kicks the stool. The leg splinters. Newkirk pitches over. Lainie grabs for the rifle. Newkirk knocks her down. She scrambles on all fours, colliding with the stove, knocking the chimney loose. Newkirk lunges. He hits the stove. The stovepipe kicks free, dumping soot and ashes into the room. Lainie turns to run and collides with Harry.

LAINIE

Aahhh! Let me go!

Harry hauls her into the dining room.

INT. DINING ROOM

Newkirk charges out of the kitchen, covered with soot.

NEWKIRK

That bitch! Let me at her!

Tate doubles over with laughter. Harry fires a burst from the Tommy gun. Everyone freezes.

HARRY

That's better.

He shoves Lainie into a chair.

HARRY (CONT'D)

You, sit down and shut up. You, Tate, fix the stove. Take the old man with you. Have him do the cooking.

TATE

(grabbing the Kid) Come on, you old fart.

INT. KITCHEN - DAWN

THE KID dumps a handful of grounds into the coffee pot, then starts the bacon. Tate sprawls in a chair, rifle aimed loosely at the Kid.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

Harry sits across the table from Lainie, Roman and the Kid, sipping his coffee. Tate stomps in, heads for the fire.

TATE

(shivering) Snow's getting hard as ice.

HARRY

The horses?

TATE

We'll have to wrap their legs so they don't get cut up.

HARRY

Do it.

Harry moves around the table to stand behind Roman. Roman closes his eyes. Lainie seeks out his knee with her own. He jerks involuntarily. Harry's Tommy gun comes to rest on the nape of his neck.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Looks like another day, Roman, another chance. I can't allow more than one a day...capice?

(He makes his point
with the gun.)

...Where's the money?

Roman doesn't answer. The gun presses harder.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Newkirk...take the little tart upstairs.

NEWKIRK

(his grin widening) ...Are you serious?

HARRY

If you have to ask, maybe Tate ought to go first. What do you think, Phillips? Who should get her first?

NEWKIRK

Wait a minute!

He moves to Lainie. Tate cuts him off, snickering.

TATE

First is fine with me.

ROMAN

Son-of-a-bitch!

HARRY

(to Roman) No opinion then...

(to Lainie)

What about you, Lainie? Which one you want first? The big one or the little one?

It's all Lainie can do to keep from screaming.

LAINIE

Please...please, Harry, I didn't mean...

HARRY

Tell you what...they'll flip a coin.

Loser holds her down. I'll stay here and keep an eye on the very brave and bold Mr. Phillips...unless, of course, he wants to watch, in which case, we'll make a regular party out of it.

ROMAN

Stop it! Stop it!

HARRY

Ah, the voice of reason.

He sneezes, blows his nose, pops a losenge in his mouth.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Where's the money?

ROMAN

Lainie and the old man, they go free.

HARRY

Take the girl upstairs.

ROMAN

You let one of those apes touch her, I'll see you in hell before you ever touch that money. You can tear this place apart. You won't find it.

NEWKIRK

Uh, maybe...

HARRY

Upstairs!

TATE

...If he don't talk, we done all this for nothin'. Shit on that.

Rage surges through Harry. He controls it only with great effort.

HARRY

Okay, Phillips, if it makes you feel better, I concede this battle. I'll take the war.

ROMAN

Two horses...a two hour head start.

LAINIE

No!! I'm not leaving you!

ROMAN

(nudging the Kid) Help me, goddamnit.

KID

He's made his choice. You got no call to undercut him.

HARRY

(to Newkirk) Take them to the barn. Give them the old man's horse and one of the mules Romeo here bought.

Newkirk grabs Lainie by the arm, points the gun at the Kid.

NEWKIRK

Come on, Dora. You too, spook.

LAINIE

Roman, no! Please! I don't want to...

ROMAN

Go on, damnit!

(to Harry)

I want to see them ride out. Alone.

HARRY

Anything else!?

Newkirk shoves Lainie out the door, then the Kid.

EXT. HOTEL MORNING

Lainie is sobbing. She nearly falls down the steps. The Kid grabs her arm.

KID

Don't throw him off now. He's makin' a hell of a play.

LAINIE

But he's...

KID

Ssshhh!

NEWKIRK

Move!

He jabs the Kid with the rifle. Lainie turns, sees Roman through the window, hunched over in his chair, the tommy gun pressed against his neck.

NEWKIRK (CONT'D)

Ain't nothin' back there for you, sweetheart. 'Course, you want to slow up later, I know a man with five thousand dollars who wouldn't be such a bad deal for a little thing like you.

Lainie suddenly catches her breath, turns to the Kid.

LAINIE

(whispering) Slow down.

KID

(pulling her along) No!

LAINIE

Aahh!

She stumbles. Newkirk puts the rifle to her back.

NEWKIRK

Get up.

LAINIE

Don't hurt me...

NEWKIRK

You don't get up and move, I will.

Lainie grabs the Kid's hand, struggles to her feet. The Kid lifts the plank bar from the barn doors, swings them open. Lainie stops abruptly, turns to Newkirk.

NEWKIRK (CONT'D)

You're askin' for it, girlie. You ask for it again, you might get it.

LAINIE

(smiles, seductively) ...I had an idea.

KID

Jesus...Look, mister, she's...

He stops dead, seeing what Lainie had obviously seen before - a brown speck in the sky - rapidly growing, on a direct flight path, right at them. Newkirk looks around, nervous.

LAINIE

The two of us could take the money. I'll split it with you.

NEWKIRK

(spitting) Forget it, Dora.

LAINIE

It's so easy. We could take the horses the back way to the bank. They'll..

NEWKIRK

(his eyes lighting up) The bank. That's rich, honey.

LAINIE

We'll be rich.

NEWKIRK

Yeah, but I like to eat my cake without worryin' about gettin' it all down my gullet. Mr. Leight ain't the forgivin' type, is he? Sorry, Dora.

LAINIE

I'm not.

Newkirk is confused by her odd reply.

KID

Now!

The Kid and Lainie drop to the ground. Newkirk has only a second to wonder before the giant hawk slams into the back of his head. WHAP!

NEWKIRK

Yeeooooowww!!!

The rifle flies from his hands. Lainie grabs it, swings it like a club, coming down hard on Newkirk's skull. His eyes roll back in his head.

KID

Nice hit. Come on. Let's get out of here.

Lainie stares at him in disbelief.

KID (CONT'D)

This ain't playtime!...Here, give me that damn gun!

He pulls her inside the barn door.

LAINIE

Let go of me! I'm going back for Roman!

KID

Oh no you ain't!...Against those two monsters!...We got a chance to get out of here - to survive! You understand!?

LAINIE

...So, what's stopping you!? Go!

She looks at him with contempt. He peeks around the door.

LAINIE (CONT'D)

Well?

KID

Nothing.

He walks into the blackness of the barn.

KID (CONT'D)

Nothing at all.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM

Sweat trickles down the side of Roman's nose. He flexes, trying to find an easier way to sit.

HARRY
(suddenly) Tie him up.

ROMAN
You said I could watch them ride out.

HARRY
You will...See what's keeping them.

Tate swaggers toward Roman.

TATE
Newkirk's probably gettin' himself a piece of that tart before he puts her on a horse. Be just like the son-of-a-bitch to...

He stops dead in his tracks...

LAINIE is standing in the doorway, the rifle leveled at Tate.

Some instinct causes Harry to swing around. Roman leaps, slams his fist into the side of Tate's head. In the same motion, he hurls his chair at Harry - just as the tommy gun goes into action.

The burst of fire catches the chair in midair. Splinters and ricocheting slugs whine through the air but the chair slams into Harry. It knocks him off balance and the gun out of his hand.

Lainie squeezes the trigger but the rifle won't fire. Roman leaps at Tate as Harry goes for his automatic. Roman knocks Lainie into the kitchen. Harry's last three rounds rip the wooden sill.

ROMAN
Stay down!

He pushes her to the side and rolls after her.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
Out! Out!

He pushes her out the back door.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY - ROMAN AND LAINIE

The crust on the snow breaks and slows them as they run.

Roman cuts to the right, then to the left... right again, sticking to the cover of the ancient wagons that litter the back of the hotel.

Harry appears in the doorway, cuts loose with a new clip.

The rounds clip ice off the wagons and bury themselves in the snow. The gun clicks on empty.

ROMAN

Now!

He races up the slope, Lainie at his heels. They reach the trees and dive for cover just ahead of the first new rounds from the .45. Laine collapses against a fallen tree.

LAINIE

(breathless) It wouldn't fire! The gun wouldn't fire!

ROMAN

(shaking) Doesn't matter. Just being there was enough.

He tries to work the pump but the slide is clogged with soot.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

The idiot never cleaned it!

(pulling her up)

Come on. We have to hide 'til the sun sets.

LAINIE

...I know a place.

She moves up the hillside. Roman looks behind them. A line of craters in the snow mark their path up to that point.

ROMAN

Try not to break the crust.

They move up the hill, holding to tree trunks for support, trying not to put any weight on the snow.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Where's the old man?

LAINIE

I think he ran...He's gone.

INT. HOTEL KITCHEN

NEWKIRK staggers in. TATE is playing with a broken tooth. HARRY is inspecting the tommy gun, cursing under his breath, his control gone.

NEWKIRK

You ain't gonna believe this...

HARRY

Fuck what happened! It doesn't interest me!

The magazine has snapped off at the base. Harry throws the gun, pulls a spare clip for the automatic from his pocket, starts jamming cartridges in.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Tate has an extra revolver. Take it and let's go. We'll see if you two morons can hunt any better than you can walk.

They file out the back door and move up the slope, following the tracks until they disappear.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Which one of you is the best tracker?

TATE

Me, I guess.

HARRY

(to Newkirk)

You, in front where I can see you.

Let's go.

INT. HAYLOFT - LIVERY

THE KID crouches behind the pile of hay until Harry is out of sight, then scrambles down and jumps on the Appaloosa.

EXT. ELKHORN

The Kid dismounts in front of the Great Northern Bank, disappears inside.

INT. BANK

The Kid stands there, looking around. His eyes light on the safe. He races around the teller's cages, grabs the vault handle and pulls. The huge door swings open. He rushes in, kneels beside a pile of old papers, scatters them wildly.

KID

Oh, sweet...

He stops, horrified, stares down at the bag of money and the gun that lies beside it - his gun.

CREED

(O.S.) Pick it up!

KID
(hoarse) You did this...

CREED
(shrugs) Maybe...maybe not.

The Kid backs up until his foot hits the bag of money. Creed stands there, staring. The Kid bends at the knees and gropes for the handle.

KID
I didn't ask them to come here...Besides, they got away. I seen 'em running up the hill.

His hand touches the gun instead of the money bag. He jerks it away as if the metal were hot.

KID (CONT'D)
They have a gun. He won't catch them.

CREED
(puffing on his pipe) 'Course not.

KID
What do you want from me, damnit!?

CREED

NOTHIN', YOU JUG-HEADED SON-OF-A-bitch! I never wanted anything...

CREED
...I've just been hangin' around, waitin' 'til the time was ripe.

Now, it is...but seein' as you're too damn dumb to see it, I'm callin' it to your attention.

KID
(unnerved) ...What are you talkin' about?

CREED
...A chance...the chance...no doubt the last one you'll get.

KID
I don't need a chance. I got a whole bagful right here.

CREED
All that money won't buy the kind of chance I'm talkin' about...You know that same as I do.

KID
 (turning white)
 ...You can't ask me to do that...You
 don't know...

CREED
 (shaking his head) I ain't askin'.

You are. You are. You've been askin' for 35 years.

KID
 No...that ain't true.

CREED
 Listen, goddamnit! If you've never
 listened in your life, listen now!

The Kid stares at Creed, down at the gun, back at Creed.

KID
 (finally) ...I'm afraid,
 Aden...afraid...

CREED
 (nodding, understanding) ...You're
 also the Wind River Kid as I recall.

EXT. FALLS - GROTTO - DAY - ROMAN/LAINIE

Huddled against the rockface, peering out, terrified.

HARRY
 (O.S.) I don't give a damn! They
 can't get far. They're not dressed
 for this.

They're barely visible. TATE is kneeling by the stream.

NEWKIRK and HARRY are crossing it, approaching the falls.

TATE
 They came this way.

He rises, walks out onto the ice drifts.

TATE (CONT'D)
 ...Could've gone across the ice, I
 suppose.

HARRY
 You could've missed where they turned
 off, too.

TATE
 Not likely...You may not have much
 of an opinion of me, Mr.

(MORE)

TATE (CONT'D)

Leight, but when it comes to huntin',
I'm a natural. I ain't missed
nothin'.

A breeze sets the aspen chattering. Newkirk hangs back, keeping an eye on the trees. He edges along the shoreline, trying to quell the squeak of his boots on the crusted snow. Harry is halfway to the falls. He stops, looks back at Tate. Tate stops, kneels down.

TATE (CONT'D)

(softly) ...I told you...
(pointing at the ground)
They came through here...headed
straight for the falls.

A new breeze stirs the aspen. Clumps of snow fall from weighted branches, skitter across the ice. Harry sees without seeing, his attention riveted on the falls.

HARRY

Credit where credit's due, Tate.
Let's see just how much.

He raises the Browning, points it toward the falls.

VOICE

(O.S.)
Pepperdine!

LAINIE

(recognizing the voice)
Oh my God!

THE KID steps out of the trees, walks toward the pond. His gun is belted in place, high on his waist, hung for a cross draw. He seems a different person. There is no hesitation now, no doubt. He is THE WIND RIVER KID.

KID

You been lookin' for me, Pepperdine?

Harry stares in amazement. The old man appears not to notice Tate or Newkirk yet Harry has the strangest sensation that the old codger is aware of everything that lives or moves in the clearing.

The Kid stops at the edge of the pond. His hand hovers near the grip of his navy Colt. Harry cocks the automatic.

HARRY

You crazy old fart.

He starts to fire.

ROMAN

(emerging from the falls) No!

Distracted for a fraction of a second, Harry glances to his left. Newkirk and Tate have no such excuse.

The Kid moves with deadly economy. The gun is holstered, then it fills his hand, rising and bucking. Harry staggers.

Astonished, he sinks to one knee. To his right, Newkirk is raising his revolver. The Kid pivots and fires again...

A red mist blossoms from Newkirk's face. He arches backwards through the air. The Kid is already spinning to his left.

A bullet sears his cheek.

That is the extent of Tate's stomach for the fight - one shot. He turns to run. The Kid fires a third time...

Tate trips over a log, his spine smashed. His head breaks through the crusted snow. The softer stuff beneath the surface fills his mouth and stifles his scream. At the same time, Newkirk lands in a clump of bushes. Blood masks the remains of his face. Snow from the branches above settle on him and turn crimson.

Harry rises, cursing, charges toward the Kid. He fires as he runs, crashing through the ice, roaring through the shallows. The Kid doesn't flinch as the rounds furrow the ground around him. He aims and fires...and comes up empty.

Harry keeps firing. Then he stumbles, hit. Blood blooms from his chest. He goes on firing but he is no longer aiming.

The Kid looks at Roman. Roman's gun is smoking. He thumbs back the hammer as he watches Harry swivel toward him and collapse beneath the water, then struggle back to his feet.

The water is just below his knees. Water runs from his head and drips from his vest. His left arm hangs useless. His hat is gone, floating upside down. He holds his right hand palm upward. It's empty. He looks at Roman.

HARRY

(dazed) ...I dropped my gun...

ROMAN

That's too damn bad.

He fires again, shoots Harry through the heart. The gangster is slammed backward by the force of the bullet. He sits down in water up to his chest, then settles over onto his side.

QUIET...

Roman, Lainie and The Kid stare at the carnage.

CU - GRAVE MARKER

MARKER

Harry Leight Born? Died October 8,
1927 He dropped his gun.

PULL BACK...

EXT. GRAVEYARD - THE KID, ROMAN, LAINIE

There are three new graves on the hillside. The Kid and Roman are filling in the last one. Lainie sits astride one of the dead mens' horses, waiting for them to finish. The three mules Roman bought are tethered to the horses.

KID

I'm glad you're takin' that white mule.

ROMAN

He didn't want to stay. Told me old gunfighters are the ghosts of white mules.

The Kid has to smile at that. There's hope for the boy.

KID

Remember to muffle their hooves.
And walk 'em through town after one in the morning. Don't sell 'em til you get to Idaho Springs. Don't nobody need to know who they belonged to.

Roman extends his hand. The Kid shakes it solemnly.

ROMAN

Thanks.

KID

Thanks yourself. ...You take care.
Roman mounts his horse and trots away, not waiting for Lainie.

The Kid keeps his eyes on her. Tears are streaming down her cheeks. She starts to dismount. The Kid motions her to stop.

KID (CONT'D)

You get down from there, it'll be hell for both of us...You got your man waitin'.

LAINIE

But...

The Kid grabs his cap and slaps it across her horse's rump.

The beast whinnies and leaps away.

KID

Don't forget me!

Lainie holds onto the saddle for dear life.

LAINIE

I love you!!

The Kid watches her disappear.

EXT. ELKHORN - DAY

Two old men sitting on a porch.

ADEN CREED puffs on his longstemmed clay pipe. THE KID rocks next to him, enjoying the sun and the warm Chinook winds.

CREED

Chinooks'll trick you. Get the blood runnin'. Man leaves his cold-weather gear behind. Then, behind the Chinook comes another norther. Lots of men been frozen reaching for a mule.

The Kid goes on cleaning his gun.

CREED (CONT'D)

Where you gonna put it?

KID

Over the fireplace, next to the Hawken.

(Creed nods.)

...I heard the bear last night.

CREED

Some things don't change.

KID

I don't care. Let him come.

(He rocks for a moment.)

...Is it gonna hurt when it comes?

CREED

No...easy as eating sugared peaches...I'll be there.

KID

...Thanks.

Creed nods, keeps puffing on his pipe.

KID (CONT'D)

About Angelina...it was only once -
my first time at that...I wasn't so
good...

CREED

Forget it. What's a petal plucked
from the flower of womanhood among
friends...

KID

But...

CREED

You talk to much, always did.

He pulls the cowl of his capote forward. Only his nose and
the bowl of his pipe stick out.

KID

I talk too much? I talk too much?!
Why you...

PULL BACK...TO THE FALCON'S EYE VIEW...

Two old men sitting on a porch, goin' at each other.

THE END

Rachel Singer Registered WGA,w