

THE REVENANT

by

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Based on the novel by

Michael Punke

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Revenge is an act of passion; vengeance of justice.

- Samuel Johnson

Based on a true story

THE REVENANT

FADE IN:

EXT. UPPER MISSOURI RIVER/1820'S - EVENING

ANGLE ON A SINGLE COTTONWOOD LEAF... brown and crisp...
clinging to its empty branch... the solitary sign of life on
an otherwise barren tree. *

A gust of wind... the leaf breaks free... flutters down,
landing in the slow current of the Missouri. The last leaf
of the fall, taking its final journey south.

As it floats along the surface, rising and falling with the
current, all we can hear is the river's gentle movement...
the trickle of water... the splash of timid rapids... until
DISTANT VOICES invade this world... soft at first, but
growing louder... LAUGHTER... SINGING.

And then our leaf CRASHES INTO A WOODEN BOARD... the BOW OF A
BOAT. We hear the VOICES EVEN CLEARER... MEN'S VOICES, as we
rise up the bow... see it's a FLATBOAT BEACHED ON A SANDBAR
at the center of the river.

Beyond the flatboat are the voices... TWENTY MEN of the Rocky
Mountain Fur Company, making camp along the shore... hauling
wood, building campfires, pitching squares of canvas for
makeshift rooftops. And this camp is full of life because
these are some of the first men to ever see this untouched
wilderness... men with a whole new world just waiting for
them to claim their share.

EXT. CAMP - EVENING

CAPTAIN ANDREW HENRY, (early 30's), dressed in a buckskin
jacket with long fringe... thick belt pulled tightly around
his waist with two pistols and a knife hanging from it. He
stands out among the others... like an imposter pretending to
be a member of some exclusive club. He pulls off one of his
gloves... examines the BLOOD-FILLED BLISTERS lining his palm.

From across the camp, JOHN FITZGERALD, (40's), solid and
thick... eyes of a thief, watches Henry. He nudges MACE
BOONE, (40's), made of leather and piss.

FITZGERALD

Likely got a splinter. Can't
figure what to do without Mama here
to pull it out for him.

Boone chuckles... spits in Henry's direction.

BOONE

Need a doc, Captain?

Henry looks up... sees Fitzgerald and Boone grinning at him. He slides his glove back on.

HENRY

Gather more wood.

Fitzgerald waits for Henry to turn, then gives his back an exaggerated salute.

FITZGERALD

(under his breath)

Shame my Pap was a broken down drunk. Else he could've bought me a Captain's job too.

Boone snickers. Fitzgerald stomps his boot onto a branch, easily snaps it into two easy-to-carry pieces.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

We got a plan for these fires, Captain, or are we roasting berries all the way up to Fort Union?

HENRY

Glass and the others will be back with some game, Fitzgerald. Just make sure you have the fires ready.

FITZGERALD

My supper's in the hands of a hermit nigger, a kid and a dummy. Hell, my belly feels full already.

Fitzgerald's boot CRACKS another branch... and when it does, we hear the EXPLOSION OF A GUNSHOT.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - EVENING

And a CLOUD OF SMOKE surrounding the LONG BARREL OF AN ANSTADT RIFLE.

The smoke fades, and at the other end of the rifle we see the face of HUGH GLASS, (40's), African-American, one eye still closed, as the other calmly stares down that barrel. *

VOICE (O.S.)

Shit fire, you got him, Mr. Glass!

Glass lowers the rifle, as JIM BRIDGER, (17), boyish face that looks even younger, races past with PIG GILMORE, (30's), fat and filthy, shuffling right behind.

BRIDGER (CONT'D)

Got him square as a barn door.

Glass watches Bridger and Pig trot through the trees to a fallen ELK. Glass walks calmly after them, graceful in this world... his rifle so comfortable in his hand it's like he was born with it there. Pig crouches over the dead elk... grins up at Glass.

PIG

Right where you said he'd be.

BRIDGER

But bigger than we figured. Gonna be a load to haul back to camp.

PIG

Have to split it up I reckon.

GLASS

Yep. Bridger'll take the tail, and Pig you haul the rest.

And Fitzgerald was right about Pig being a little slow, because he just nods... pulls out his knife to cut the tail off for Bridger.

Bridger and Glass exchange a smile... until Glass notices something... steps over the elk, his eyes locked on the ground beside it. He runs a finger over the dirt... touches a broken twig.

BRIDGER

Another one close by?

Glass doesn't answer... studies the track... feels the nearby brush... inhales the scent from his hand. Bridger and Pig watch him... exchange a confused glance. And then in a flash of movement, Glass is on his feet, racing away.

PIG

Hugh?

Glass just keeps running. Pig and Bridger chase after him.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP - EVENING

The men building fires... laughing... enjoying themselves.
Boone on the outskirts, gathering branches.

CUT TO:

GLASS - TEARING THROUGH THE WOODS...

...dodging trees... leaping over fallen logs... loading his
Anstadt as he runs.

BRIDGER AND PIG - CHASING AFTER GLASS...

...but not as gracefully. Bridger trips... slams to the
ground... scrambles back to his feet to continue on.

CUT TO:

BOONE - CARRYING AN ARMLOAD OF WOOD INTO CAMP...

...seeing other men playing cards. He stops along the edge
of camp, drops the wood to the ground.

BOONE

No rule says I'm the only one
that's gotta gather this shit.

The other men don't even notice. Then an ARROW WHIZZES
THROUGH THE AIR from behind Boone... THWACK... it hits him in
the back of the neck... erupts out the front of his throat.

Boone stands frozen... confused... reaches up and grabs the
bloody arrow... finally drops to his knees. And that's when
a TRAPPER looks up... sees Boone on his knees, holding that
arrow, his mouth open like a dying fish.

AND BEYOND BOONE ARE THIRTY ARIKARA WARRIORS CHARGING THROUGH
THE TREES... FEATHERS RISING FROM THE MOHAWKS SPLITTING THEIR
SHAVED HEADS... FACES PAINTED FOR BATTLE.

TRAPPER

'REE!

WHOOSH... AN ARROW SAILS INTO THE TRAPPER'S CHEST, sending
him flying backward. The camp explodes into chaos... men
YELLING... grabbing for weapons... stumbling over each other
as they duck behind trees.

HENRY - PULLING THE PISTOLS FROM HIS BELT...

...taking nervous aim at the attacking figures.

The Arikara pour into camp, arrows flying... knives and hatchets swinging. And this is a massacre... the Arikara wading through the trappers... stabbing... clubbing... scalping. This once peaceful world is filled with a sickening mix of war cries and screams of death.

Fitzgerald rises up from behind a log... aims his rifle... BOOM... takes down one of the warriors. He starts reloading as ANOTHER WARRIOR charges him... draws back his knife. Fitzgerald pours the powder, but knows he isn't going to make it in time... the warrior leaps toward him...

...BOOM... it's like the warrior hits an invisible wall... flies back to the ground, very dead. Fitzgerald spins... sees Glass and his Anstadt right behind him.

GLASS
GET TO THE BOAT!

Fitzgerald takes off... flips his rifle around, swings it like a club across a warrior's head.

GLASS (cont'd)
(to Henry)
THE BOAT, CAPTAIN!

Henry shoves a TRAPPER toward the water. An arrow drives into the trapper's leg... he goes down. Henry lifts the man to pull him into the river, but several more arrows bury in the man's back... he falls limp. Henry SCREAMS OUT... FIRES HIS PISTOLS, dropping the WARRIOR.

Bridger and Pig join Glass... splash into the river, SHOOTING back at the attacking Arikara.

A WARRIOR LEAPS FROM THE SHADOWS... tackles Bridger to the shallows. The warrior pins Bridger underwater... raises his hatchet high to slam down... just as Glass dives into him, knocking the warrior off Bridger. Glass and the warrior wrestle in the surf, until Glass finally overpowers him... stabs his knife deep into the warrior's stomach.

Bridger kneels in the shallows, frozen in shock.

GLASS (cont'd)
GO!

Pig drags Bridger to his feet... they swim toward the boat. ARROWS hiss into the water all around them. Glass pulls his pistol... BAM... shoots an oncoming warrior... spins after the others... joins them as they near the flatboat.

A final TRAPPER charges down the shore after them. SEVERAL WARRIORS pursue him.

TRAPPER

WAIT!

He aims his pistol over his shoulder as he runs... pulls the trigger... CLICK... pulls it again... CLICK. But he's too scared to stop his finger... CLICK... CLICK... CLICK... THUD... as a hatchet buries in his back. He crashes face first into the shallows.

The Arikara leader, (ELK'S TONGUE), animal bones braided into his mohawk, a NECKLACE OF HUMAN EARS around his neck, straddles the dying man. Elk's Tongue grabs the Trapper by the hair, and CUTS OFF HIS LEFT EAR, then holds it up to Glass and the others, as he SCREAMS HIS WAR CRY.

Glass and the men shove the flatboat off the sandbar as arrows dart past them... drive into the wooden boat. They scramble aboard, firing back at the Arikara, as the current carries them away. Pig reaches over the side, pulls the frantic WILLIAM ANDERSON up onto the boat. Fitzgerald and Glass grab LONGPOLES... shove them against the river's bottom to pick up speed.

Henry stands on deck, watching as Elk's Tongue yanks a DYING TRAPPER's head back by his hair to peel away his scalp.

Henry drops his eyes... can't watch. The TRAPPER'S SCREAM ECHOES OVER HIM.

EXT. MISSOURI RIVER/FLATBOAT - LATER

Quiet and dark... the battle long over. The flatboat floats with the gentle current. The NINE SURVIVING TRAPPERS are scattered around the deck... Glass digging an arrow out of WALLACE MURPHY'S SHOULDER... Fitzgerald poling on one side with Anderson on the other... STUBBY BILL VANCE and Pig standing patrol with their rifles... Bridger doctoring a badly WOUNDED TRAPPER... and Henry standing at the front of the flatboat, staring off blankly.

FITZGERALD

What's the plan, Captain?

Henry's still lost in those screams.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
 Captain! What the hell do we do
 now?

Henry snaps out of his stare... turns to the men... obviously
 doesn't have an answer.

ANDERSON
 We're just floatin' farther from
 Fort Union.

Henry's eyes instinctively look to Glass.

GLASS
 The Missouri's no good. Not if the
 'Ree's running it.

FITZGERALD
 So we just float the hell down to
 Mexico or wherever else this river
 takes us?

GLASS
 We get ourselves safe outta range
 then track another course up.

FITZGERALD
 Add weeks to the trip.

BRIDGER
 Better that than endin' up scalped
 on the side of the river.

FITZGERALD
 Shut up, boy, you don't get no say
 in this.

(back to Henry)
 And in case you hadn't noticed,
 Captain, we're twelve men short of
 what we were.

(off the badly wounded
 trapper)
 Thirteen before long.

HENRY
 I understand our situation, Mr.
 Fitzgerald. We do like Glass
 said... put some distance between
 us and the Arikara, then chart a
 course to Fort Union.

Fitzgerald MUMBLES UNDER HIS BREATH... rolls his eyes to
 Anderson. Glass gives Henry a nod.

EXT. MISSOURI RIVER/FLATBOAT - NIGHT

ANGLE ON THE BADLY WOUNDED TRAPPER... NOW DEAD...

...as hands push the body over the side of the boat. It splashes into the water... floats downstream.

We PULL BACK... see that the flatboat is beached along the bank of the river. Glass and Pig watch the body drift away.

PIG

Reckon it's better 'an lettin' the
'Ree find him... take his ears...
slice what's left all to shit.

Glass nods... steps down off the boat to Henry and the others. They're gathered around a map spread out on the ground. Henry runs his finger along a THIN BLUE LINE.

HENRY

So we hike west to the Grand, then
follow it up to Fort Union.

FITZGERALD

On foot? You got any idea how long
that's gonna take? It'll be winter
before we get there.

ANDERSON

Unless we come across a post...
trade for some horses.

GLASS

No posts that far over.

FITZGERALD

So if we do this, we do every step
with our own feet.

HENRY

We make camp here for the night,
then load supplies and head out for
the Grand at first light.

(beat)

And gather extra blankets 'cause
there won't be any fires.

More GRUMBLING from Fitzgerald and Anderson, as they move toward the cover of trees. Bridger walks up beside Glass.

BRIDGER

Thank you... for what you done back there.

GLASS

You'd have done the same for me.

BRIDGER

(nods... hopes so)
Yessir.

Glass and Bridger walk off together.

HENRY

Bridger, you and Pig take first watch.

Bridger and Pig exchange nervous glances.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Bridger on watch... sitting at the base of a tree, rifle across his lap, eyes wide, scanning the darkness. All clear. He peers back to camp... Fitzgerald, Anderson, Stubby Bill, and Murphy wrapped in blankets... passing a bottle of whiskey around. Henry is off to one side, still studying that map. Glass sits against a tree, cleaning his Anstadt rifle. Fitzgerald notices.

FITZGERALD

You treat that Anstadt sweeter than any woman, Glass.

STUBBY BILL

Never seen a woman that could stop a 'Ree from three hundred feet.

ANDERSON

I knew a particular big-breasted redhead in Boston that might come close.

The others manage a small laugh. Glass just keeps working on that rifle. Fitzgerald stands... wobbles just a bit... he's had more than his share of that whiskey. He walks to Glass with the whiskey bottle in one hand... reaches down with the other, and grabs the barrel of the Anstadt.

FITZGERALD

Lemme see what's so special 'bout this shooter of yours.

Glass holds firm... shakes his head.

GLASS

Middle of workin' on it.

FITZGERALD

Well you can stop workin' on it,
boy, and let me have a look like I
said.

Fitzgerald gives another tug, but Glass' grip only grows tighter. His eyes roll up to Fitzgerald... make it clear he isn't giving up his rifle. And they hold that stare just as hard as they're holding Glass' rifle.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

You forget your place, boy?

GLASS

Best I can tell, my place is right
where I want it... on the smart end
of my rifle.

Fitzgerald realizes the barrel he's holding is aimed right at his stomach, while Glass' hand seems suddenly very close to the trigger. But Fitzgerald's pride and that whiskey won't let him lose this tug of war... not until...

HENRY

That's enough, Fitzgerald. Go
sober up and get to sleep. If
you're passed out when we break
camp tomorrow, I leave you here.

Fitzgerald holds his glare on Glass.

MURPHY

Leave his rifle alone, Fitz. Hell,
you shoulda got a good enough look
when he saved your ass with it.

Fitzgerald throws a hard glance to Murphy.

FITZGERALD

I didn't need savin' by him or
nobody else.

The others don't respond... know to leave Fitzgerald alone when he's drunk. Fitzgerald hesitates another beat, then releases the rifle, shoving it back at Glass. He glances to Henry, and throws back a big gulp from the bottle just for spite, before staggering back to the others.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

That's the trouble with this part
of the world. No mirrors. Niggers
forget what color they are.

Glass ignores Fitzgerald... goes back to his rifle.
Fitzgerald tosses the bottle back at Anderson, then jerks his
blanket up... walks off to sleep by himself.

EXT. CAMP - LATER

Fitzgerald sleeping off that whiskey. The others snoring in
a cluster at the center of the camp. Henry lies there
awake... looks across to Glass, still sitting against the
tree, a HANDDRAWN MAP in his lap, as his eyes pierce the
darkness. Henry eases over to Glass.

HENRY

Can't sleep either?

GLASS

Never like closin' my eyes when I'm
not sure who'll be standin' over me
when I open 'em.

HENRY

I keep thinking about Boone and the
others... how maybe I should've had
us make camp further up river.

GLASS

The tracks I saw... those 'Ree had
been tailin' us for a while. They'd
have gone as far north as it took.

Henry nods... hopes that's true.

GLASS (cont'd)

You're a good man, Captain. Soon
as you realize that, these others
will too.

Henry likes hearing that... still isn't sure it's true.

HENRY

Your years trappin' and guidin' out
here... have you had much
experience with the Arikara?

GLASS

Enough to know to stay outta their
way.

HENRY

(motions to Glass' map)
But you know this country well
enough to get us past them... up to
Fort Union?

GLASS

I been here a long while. Whether
that gets us to Union or not...

Henry waits for more... doesn't get it. So he just nods and
starts back to his blanket.... stops.

HENRY

What Fitzgerald said earlier... he
doesn't speak for the rest.

GLASS

He wasn't wrong. Truth is that's
what I prefer about this country...
it's got no eye for the color of a
man's skin.

HENRY

(beat)
Try to get some sleep, Hugh.

Henry climbs back under his blanket. Glass just sits there
looking at the map.

ANGLE ON GLASS' MAP...

...primitive at best. Sketched mountains... winding blue
lines for rivers... small dots are scattered about with names
beside them... "Brazeau", "Talbot", "Union". And DOZENS OF
TRIANGLE PINE TREES have been drawn, representing the endless
wilderness.

We TIGHTEN ON THOSE TRIANGLES until we're lost in them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Thick with trees. Henry leads the men single file through
the woods. They each have a canvas sack of supplies over one
shoulder, and their rifle in their hands.

The only sound is their feet crunching the dried leaves, and
even that seems too loud as their eyes dart about, searching
for any sign of attack.

STUBBY BILL

Shouldn't we have hit the Grand by now?

HENRY

We'll reach it soon enough. Glass said to keep this course.

FITZGERALD

Glass said. So why is it I don't see him 'round nowheres then?

PIG

On account he's up ahead makin' sure it's clear, and you get to keep your ears.

Fitzgerald throws Pig an angry glance.

FITZGERALD

Or he's run off and left us.

BRIDGER

Mr. Glass wouldn't do that.

Fitzgerald GRUNTS... he's not so sure.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Glass moves slowly through the brush, almost gliding... subtle twists and turns to avoid branches and leaves... careful not to leave his scent behind. And his eyes cut through the trees as he moves... digging for any sign of movement.

He spots something at his feet... crouches down, running his finger over the SMALL ANIMAL TRACK in the dirt.

O.S. RUSTLING snaps his head up... to the TREMBLING OF BUSHES... growing harder... whatever's in there is coming toward Glass. He calmly raises his rifle... presses the stock firmly against his shoulder... closes one eye as he takes steady aim down the long barrel...

...to the shapes rumbling out of the brush... TWO BEAR CUBS playfully wrestling.

Glass lowers the Anstadt... looks past the cubs for something else... but the woods are empty. A SUDDEN FEAR FILLS GLASS' EYES...

...he spins... right into the GIANT GRIZZLY SWINGING ITS PAW AT HIM... hitting him across the side of the neck. The animal's razor claws tear into Glass' throat, as the force sends him flying through the air.

Glass sails into a thick tree... the CRACK OF HIS LEG SNAPPING against the trunk. The rifle falls from his hand. The Grizzly lets out a massive ROAR... charges Glass. Glass crawls to the Anstadt... grabs it... has just enough time to tilt the rifle toward the bear... BOOM.

CUT TO:

HENRY - HEARING THE BLAST.

HENRY
UP AHEAD!

Henry takes off at full sprint. The other men follow.

CUT TO:

GLASS - AS THE BEAR LEAPS ON TOP OF HIM...

...tosses Glass aside with a powerful swing. Glass hits the ground with a PAINFUL THUD. He starts CRAWLING AWAY, pulling the KNIFE from his belt as the bear rises up like a giant behind him... swings... tears its claws across Glass's back, shredding deep into his flesh.

Glass is fighting for his life now... flailing with the knife... slicing it across the bear's paw as it whips past him. The wound slows the bear enough for Glass to start crawling again.

But the Grizzly doesn't give Glass the chance... ROARS... is on him in a flash, a BLUR OF CLAWS AND FANGS... tearing across Glass' head... ripping into his face... his chest.

Glass drives his knife into the bear again... deep... trying to tear through the layers of flesh to something more vital.

CUT TO:

HENRY - LEADING THE CHARGE THROUGH THE FOREST.

CUT TO:

GLASS AND THE GRIZZLY - FIGHTING THIS EPIC BATTLE...

...locked in a death grip... tumbling along the ground... trading violent blows... Glass' blade versus the Grizzly's claws and fangs... snapping small trees as they roll over them... toward the edge of a steep embankment...

... and ROLL DOWN... spinning over and over... each ROARING AT THE OTHER... Glass pounding the knife into the bear again and again as they fall... neither willing to surrender as they careen down the slope at a dizzying pace, then SLAM TO THE BOTTOM WITH A CRUNCH. And the forest falls still... Glass hidden somewhere beneath the massive animal... both deathly motionless.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Bridger's the first to reach the battleground... sees the TWO FRIGHTENED BEAR CUBS SCURRY AWAY. He follows the bloody ground and crushed underbrush to the top of the slope... looks down to the mass of flesh at the bottom.

BRIDGER

Christ Almighty.

Henry, Pig, and the others reach the edge.

HENRY

Glass!

No answer. And all they can see is the bear, so they scan the trees.

PIG

HUGH!

Still nothing. So Bridger takes off down the slope... losing his balance but rolling back to his feet. He reaches the bear... sees GLASS' MANGLED ARM STICKING OUT FROM BENEATH IT.

BRIDGER

He's down here!

Bridger uses all his strength to push the bear off, as the other men scramble down. But Bridger can't budge the massive carcass... not until Stubby Bill and Pig join in... shove the animal over, revealing the bloody mass that is Hugh Glass...

...his throat is torn wide open... scalp peeled back from just above his eyebrows, hanging off the skull...

stomach and chest a gruesome design of gashes and cuts. His right leg is snapped, the jagged bone jutting out through the skin.

Bridger's legs give out... he drops to a knee and vomits.

MURPHY

Oh, Jesus.

STUBBY BILL

He's tore to pieces.

The men stare down at Glass' corpse.

ANDERSON

Least he took that Grizz down with him.

FITZGERALD

Wished he'da done it without firing his rifle. If there wasn't no 'Ree around before, there will be now.

And that's all Pig can stand... he TACKLES FITZGERALD... they roll to the ground. And it isn't long before Fitzgerald is on top, raining punches down on Pig. Henry and Anderson grab Fitzgerald... drag him off.

HENRY

THAT'S ENOUGH!

Then somehow, GLASS GASPS... this horrible, GUTTURAL MOAN.

BRIDGER

Holy Christ, he's alive.

Henry and Bridger fall to their knees beside Glass. Glass looks up at the men, tries to focus through the blood and pain. His breathing is just a GURGLING WHEEZE... bubbles forming along the deep gashes in his throat with each gasp.

HENRY

Get me some water.

Stubby Bill tosses Henry his canteen. Henry empties it over Glass' throat... his face and scalp. The water hits the wounds and immediately transforms to blood.

BRIDGER

Oh, Jesus... Jesus.

Glass lifts a trembling hand to his throat... feels the gaping wound. His eyes widen in horror. He COUGHS... the air splashes blood up from the open wounds in his throat.

HENRY
 It's okay, Hugh.
 (pushing Glass' hand away)
 You're going to be fine.

Henry spins his head away from Glass.

HENRY (cont'd)
 (whispers)
 I need some rags before he bleeds
 out.

Pig whips a shirt from his bag... shreds it.

HENRY (cont'd)
 And your whiskey.

Pig tosses a bottle to Henry. Henry pours it over the gashes. The BURNING PAIN arches Glass... he CRIES OUT in that same horrific moan.

HENRY (cont'd)
 Hold him down, Bridger, goddammit.

Bridger throws his weight against Glass' shoulders.

HENRY (cont'd)
 The rest of you spread out... scout
 a circle around us. Fitzgerald,
 you and Anderson take west and
 north. Murphy and Mike south and
 east. Watch for anyone that
 might've heard that shot.

And for the first time, Henry seems like a leader of men... firm... in complete control... just as Glass said he would be. So the men hurry off to their positions.

PIG
 What about me, Cap?

HENRY
 Get down here and help me tie off
 these wounds best we can.

Pig shakily joins Henry in wrapping the wounds. The blood keeps seeping out, soaking the rags.

PIG
 It won't stop bleedin'.

HENRY

Shut up, Pig.
 (to Glass)
 We're fixing you up, Hugh.

Glass is like a shredded rag doll... dazed eyes staring up at them as they work on his wounds... wrapping the rags around his throat... laying his scalp back over his skull, and tying another rag around it and under his jaw to hold it in place. Bridger stares down at Glass with tears in his eyes... wipes the blood from Glass' face.

BRIDGER

I'm sorry, Mr. Glass. I'm sorry.

Henry glances down to the PUDDLE OF BLOOD spilling out over his knees... oozing out from beneath Glass.

HENRY

Roll him over... easy.

They gently push Glass onto one side, revealing DEEP, JAGGED, GASHES running across the width of Glass' back. Henry stares at the open flesh, ready to panic again... but he doesn't. Instead he looks to Pig.

HENRY (cont'd)

Get me the kit. We need to stitch his back up.

BRIDGER

What about the rest of him?

HENRY

He's losing more blood back here.
 (off the throat)
 And I don't know what to do with that yet.

Pig digs out a thick needle and spool of black thread... hands it to Henry. Henry grabs the whiskey bottle.

HENRY (cont'd)

I'm sorry for how this is about to burn, Hugh.

Henry pours the whiskey over Glass' back. And the pain must be excruciating, because Glass lets out a HORRIBLE WAIL.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Fitzgerald and Anderson standing watch together in the trees. Glass' scream erupts through the trees, and they both immediately crouch down to a knee... out of sight to anyone out there that might have heard that.

ANDERSON

They're torturin' the poor bastard.

FITZGERALD

And riskin' gettin' us killed in the process. Proper thing would be to end it for him quick.

ANDERSON

'Less he could pull through.

FITZGERALD

You seen what that grizz did to him. Shit, Glass'll be dead inside a hour. We all will be if he keeps screamin' like that.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

SERIES OF SHOTS

HENRY, BRIDGER AND PIG WORKING OVER GLASS... Bridger and Pig pressing Glass' scalp down, as Henry slides the needle and thread through the skin, suturing the wound.

HENRY CLEANING GLASS' SHREDED THROAT.

BRIDGER AND PIG HOLDING THE SCREAMING GLASS DOWN AS HENRY SNAPS GLASS' LEG BACK IN PLACE.

FITZGERALD PEERING BACK THROUGH THE TREES... to Henry doctoring Glass. Fitzgerald shakes his head in anger... turns back to the darkening forest.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Glass rests unconscious on the ground. Two branches act as a splint on his leg. A blanket covers his body... his face is like a swollen, disfigured, Frankenstein's monster... stitches of black thread holding it in place.

Henry crouches a short distance away from him, rinsing his hands under a canteen. Bridger and Pig stand beside him.

BRIDGER

What now?

HENRY

We wait. Does he have any kin you know of?

PIG

Never mentioned none.

HENRY

Go get the others. Tell 'em we're making camp here for the night.

Pig starts hustling away.

HENRY (cont'd)

And gather some wood, but make sure it's dry. We don't want much smoke when we cook that grizzly.

ANGLE ON THE MASSIVE BEAR...

...lying dead on the ground, its claws and fangs soaked with blood... Glass' blood.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

And what's left of the grizzly... its fur cut away... slabs of flesh butchered from its skeleton.

A fire burns at the center of camp... a chunk of meat roasts above the flame. The men sit around the fire... Murphy reaches up... tears a strip of meat from the roast, tossing it in his mouth. The men are silent... the pall of Glass' attack still hanging over them.

Bridger rises... walks to the Grizzly... crouches down over it, grabbing the animal's enormous paw. It dwarfs his own hand, as he examines the claws. Bridger pulls out his knife... stretches the claw out to its full length, and CUTS IT OFF AT ITS BASE. Bridger stares at it, amazed at its size... longer than his own finger.

FITZGERALD (O.S.)

What makes you think you earned a claw, boy?

Bridger turns with a start... sees Fitzgerald standing over him, meat in his hand... his lips shiny with the grease.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
You didn't take that grizz down.

BRIDGER
It ain't for me.

Bridger stands... walks over to the sleeping Glass. Pig's already crouched beside him. Bridger lifts Glass' small leather POSSIBLES BAG from beside the Anstadt rifle... drops the claw inside... throws a look back to Fitzgerald.

Pig holds his palm out just above Glass' mouth.

PIG
I can feel some air outta his mouth. Maybe Captain sealed up his throat proper, huh?
(off Bridger's silence)
Whatta you figure his odds are, Jim?

Bridger stares down at what's left of Glass.

BRIDGER
Long.

EXT. WILDERNESS - MORNING

The sun peeks over the horizon, sending an orange glow across the treetops.

EXT. CAMP - MORNING

ANGLE ON GLASS...

...unconscious but alive... his raspy breaths are weak and staggered. The SHADOWS OF MEN hover over him...

...because Henry and the others surround Glass, staring down at him.

MURPHY
What that bear did to him... I didn't expect he'd last this long.

ANDERSON

I seen a fella go a week once after
a lion jumped him. Fever finally
finished him off.

STUBBY BILL

Whatta we do, Cap?

A long beat, then...

HENRY

We give him his chance.

Henry turns and walks away.

EXT. CAMP - NIGHT

The fire has burned down to nothing. The men sleep scattered
about. Murphy stands just outside of camp, rifle ready,
keeping watch.

Glass lies there awake... eyes wide open... a living corpse.
And his breathing is just as labored as before... raspy,
blood-soaked strains.

Fitzgerald tosses and turns, listening to Glass' gurgling.

FITZGERALD

You ain't doin' him or us no
favors, Captain, lettin' him suffer
that way.

Henry's awake, but doesn't answer. He's holding his pistol
in his hand, as he stares at Glass... thinking the same thing
Fitzgerald just said. But he doesn't move... not yet.

Fitzgerald angrily wraps a blanket around his head, muffling
the sound. Bridger sits beyond him... smiles at Fitzgerald's
misery, as he attaches the BEAR CLAW TO A THIN LEATHER
STRAP... a necklace.

EXT. CAMP - MORNING

Bridger kneels over a SHIVERING GLASS, holding wet rags on
his head. Pig and Henry stand over them, watching.

Fitzgerald, Anderson, Murphy and Stubby Bill sit huddled
across camp.

ANDERSON

Fever's hit. Won't be long now.

FITZGERALD

I seen a bad one drag on days.

(to Henry)

We keep sittin' here, just gives
the 'Ree more chance to find us.

Henry doesn't answer... just keeps staring down at Glass.

BRIDGER

He's burnin', Cap. Water turns to
boil as soon as it touches him.

Henry considers this, then...

HENRY

Pig, take Anderson and scout ahead.
Grand should be just west of here.
Find us the best route.

FITZGERALD

Tryin' to buy Glass time don't make
sense for the rest of us, Captain.

HENRY

(to Pig)

Get movin'.

Pig nods... grabs his gear. He and Anderson take off out of
camp. Henry turns... walks out of range of Glass.

HENRY (cont'd)

Fitzgerald, you and Bill can start
digging a grave.

Fitzgerald rolls his eyes as he stands.

FITZGERALD

Hell, least it's a step in the
right direction.

EXT. CAMP - LATER

Fitzgerald is covered in dirt and sweat, standing knee deep
in Glass' grave.

FITZGERALD

Should do the trick.

He takes Stubby Bill's hand... pulls himself out.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

Coyotes won't dig that deep.

Pig and Anderson walk back into camp.

PIG
Found it, Cap. Right where Glass
had us headed.

ANDERSON
No more than a mile or so out.

Henry looks to Bridger, still doctoring Glass.

HENRY
We could build a litter. Haul him
with us.

ANDERSON
It's a rocky and steep goin'.

Henry looks to Pig for an honest answer.

PIG
Marshy and thick on the other side.
We could try it, but...

Pig shakes his head.

FITZGERALD
I signed on as a trapper, not a
goddamn mule.

BRIDGER
(to Henry)
Shape he's in... I don't see no way
he'd make bein' drug.

Henry nods, his mind racing for a solution. And before long,
his hand is back on that pistol. He pulls it from his belt.

The other men all drop their heads... except for
Fitzgerald... he's ready to see this end. Henry stares down
at Glass, his gun hand suddenly trembling.

HENRY
Lay that rag over his eyes, Mr.
Bridger.

BRIDGER
But, Captain.

HENRY
Do it.

Bridger hesitates, then reaches to fold the wet rag down over Glass' wide open eyes. And Glass must know what's happening, because his eyes roll up to Bridger's... his lips try to form a word... his hand digs its fingers into the dirt beside him.

CUT TO:

GLASS' POV - ON BRIDGER...

...the boy looking away as he pulls the rag over our eyes... everything goes black.

HENRY (O.S.)
Step clear, Mr. Bridger.

A LONG BEAT in the dark, waiting for that gunshot, then...

BACK TO SCENE

Henry standing over Glass... pistol aimed down. His hand shakes violently.

Pig turns away... presses his hands over his ears.

Henry struggles to steady his aim, until finally it calms... because he's thought of something else.

HENRY (cont'd)
There's a seventy dollar bonus from the Rocky Mountain Fur Company to the two men that stay with Glass... see this through. Then give him a proper burial.

BRIDGER
I'll stay with him... money or not.

PIG
Same here.

HENRY
I can't let you stay back, Pig. Without Glass, I'll need you to scout.

Henry looks to the others... they all drop their eyes... not interested.

HENRY (cont'd)
Just need one more.

FITZGERALD

Two won't stand much chance against
a party of 'Ree, Captain, and
seventy dollars won't buy me a new
setta ears.

HENRY

A hundred then.

Still nothing from the others.

BRIDGER

They can have my share too. Shit,
I'd be dead on the Missouri if it
weren't for Mr. Glass.

FITZGERALD

That case I'll hang back with the
boy. I don't mind fallin' a day or
so behind for two hundred.

HENRY

But Glass is to be cared for until.
Understood?

FITZGERALD

(motions to Bridger)

I'll let the young doctor do his
job.

Henry hesitates... doesn't like this, but knows it's the best
option left.

HENRY

The rest gather your gear.

Bridger reaches down... lifts the rag from Glass' face.
Their eyes meet... Bridger gives Glass a nod.

EXT. CAMP - LATER

Henry and the others are loaded and ready to leave. Pig
bends down over Glass.

PIG

I'll see ya at Fort Union, Hugh.

Glass's glazed eyes focus on Pig. He moves the only thing he
can... BLINKS a "yes" back at him.

HENRY
 (to Fitzgerald and
 Bridger)
 As long as necessary.

BRIDGER
 Yessir. I'll look after him.

Henry turns... leads the men into the trees... toward the
 Grand... toward Fort Union.

EXT. CAMP - NIGHT

What's left of a small fire is nothing but smoldering ash.
 Bridger crouches beside Glass, pouring a thin stream of broth
 between his lips. Fitzgerald reaches in... grabs Glass'
 Anstadt leaning against the tree.

FITZGERALD
 I'll take first watch.

BRIDGER
 You shouldn't use that.

FITZGERALD
 Trust me, kid, he ain't gonna be
 needin' it tonight.

Fitzgerald disappears into the trees.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Pig stands on a ridge, scouting a course. He waves back to
 Henry and the others. They start toward him.

EXT. CAMP - EVENING

Glass conscious on the ground... that same labored breathing.

CUT TO:

GLASS' POV - ON FITZGERALD...

...smiling down at Glass as he grabs the Anstadt, holds it
 for Glass to see... as comfortable as if it were his own.
 Then he winks, and disappears...

and we're left alone, staring up at the branches above us... the evening sky... accompanied by Glass' deathly breaths.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS/CREEK - DAY

Bridger kneels beside the stream, filling canteens.

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Fitzgerald sits bored against a tree, twisting a knife in his hands... flipping it point first into the dirt... grabbing... repeating... twist... flip... thwack. And as he does, his eyes are locked on Glass.

Finally, Fitzgerald snaps the knife from the dirt, stands, and walks over to Glass. Glass is asleep. Fitzgerald crouches down over him... eyes his red, infected wounds.

FITZGERALD

(whispers)

When are you gonna die, boy?

Fitzgerald reaches out with the blade... gently touches one of the threads holding Glass' throat together. And when he does, GLASS' EYES FLY OPEN... focus on Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald doesn't even flinch... just holds that knife tip there against Glass' throat.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

I'm nearly a week behind Henry's bunch on accounta havin' to tend to you. Be easier on us all if you'd take that last breath.

The two men hold a stare... until Fitzgerald pulls back the knife... grabs a bloodstained rag from beside them... balls it up in his fist.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

I could help ya with that if you'd like. Muzzle ya right now... end all this sufferin' quick and easy. Nobody'd ever know you give up.

Fitzgerald moves the rag over Glass' nose and mouth... holds it there, just inches above.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

You just gimme a blink if you want
me to do it.

Glass locks his eyes on Fitzgerald's... both men unblinking.

A DROP OF BLOOD hangs from the rag... finally falls... lands
on Glass' lips.

Fitzgerald almost smiles, waiting for the inevitable... as
Glass stares back, fighting the urge to blink.

Suddenly Bridger's hand clamps down on Fitzgerald's shoulder.
Fitzgerald spins... startled.

BRIDGER (O.S.)

Whatta you doin'?

Fitzgerald jumps with a start, sees it's Bridger, and is
pissed that Bridger scared him... and interrupted his
business. He rises quickly, planting his meaty hand in
Bridger's chest, and SLAMMING HIM BACK AGAINST A TREE.

FITZGERALD

Don't you ever question me, you
little piss-ant.

Fitzgerald holds Bridger pressed against the tree.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

I'd just as soon leave both you and
your nigger here to rot. 'Cept
killin' you ain't worth givin' up
your share.

(leans closer)

But that don't mean I can't be
coaxed into changin' my mind.

Bridger's scared... his eyes well up. Fitzgerald shoves him
away... the young man stumbles and falls. Fitzgerald tosses
the bloody rag at him.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

And I was just doin' your job...
cleanin' him up.

Fitzgerald grabs Glass' Anstadt, almost daring Bridger to say
something. Of course Bridger doesn't. Fitzgerald walks
toward the trees.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

Why don't ya pour some more broth
down his throat...

(MORE)

keep him a ~~Five~~ ~~another~~ ~~week~~ ~~so~~ ~~we~~
 can fall farther back. End up
 walkin' all the way to Fort Union
 on our own. 'Ree would love to
 poach on just two.

(turns to Bridger)

I promise ya, you'll look a helluva
 lot worse than Glass when they're
 done with you.

Bridger watches him disappear into the trees... wipes a tear
 from his cheek with a trembling hand.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT

From high above the trees. The world is silent... peaceful...
 until SEVERAL STARTLED CROWS shoot up from the treetops.

CUT TO:

BLACK...

...the sound of FRENZIED BREATHING.

FITZGERALD (V.O.)

(panicked whisper)

Bridger! Get your ass up!

Dim light fills the frame... then FITZGERALD'S FACE right in
 front of us.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

'Ree.

BRIDGER - SCRAMBLES UP FROM UNDER HIS BLANKET, WIPING THE
 SLEEP FROM HIS FRIGHTENED EYES.

BRIDGER

What?

FITZGERALD

Keep quiet. I was down at the
 creek... there's twenty of 'em at
 least, comin' this way.

BRIDGER

Oh, shit. Whatta we do?

FITZGERALD

We run. Now.

Fitzgerald gathers his bag, starts throwing in food and supplies. Bridger is scared out of his mind... does the same... grabs for his rifle, resting near Glass.

Bridger freezes... in his panic, he'd forgotten all about Glass. And now the wounded man's eyes stare up at him... understanding perfectly what's happening around him.

BRIDGER

What about Glass?

FITZGERALD

He's on his own, same as us.

BRIDGER

I can't leave him.

FITZGERALD

Then I'm talkin' to a dead man.

Glass gives Bridger the slightest of nods... go. But Bridger's frozen... doesn't know what to do... until Fitzgerald shoves him back to life.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

Move.

Glass reaches out a weak hand out for his Anstadt... clawing for his weapon. Bridger starts to hand it to Glass, but Fitzgerald grabs it first.

BRIDGER

What're you doin'? He needs that.

FITZGERALD

He couldn't hold it if you tarred it to his hands.

Glass strains to hold out his trembling hand for his gun. *

BRIDGER *

It's his goddamn rifle! That's all *
he's got! *

FITZGERALD *

And more than he'll need. *

Fitzgerald scoops up Glass' knife as well. *

BRIDGER
We can't leave him with nothin'.

*
*

But Fitzgerald is already sprinting away... disappearing into the trees. Glass stares after him, his once-calm eyes suddenly filled with a rage. And Bridger's frozen again, lost between duty and fear... until...

BRIDGER (cont'd)
(to Glass)
I'm sorry.

*

...and Bridger takes off into the trees.

Glass's empty hand falls back to the ground... he tries to yell out in anger, but his throat EXPLODES IN PAIN. His hand digs into the dirt... pulls him over onto his side. He flops over to his stomach... GASPS IN PAIN... then using his one good arm, drags himself over the dirt, his healthy leg pushing weakly at the ground, trying to propel him forward... a futile chase after Fitzgerald and Bridger...

*

...inch by inch... farther than he's been in days. But it's still only a few yards, and now he lies in the open... a clear target for the Arikara.

Then he spots that hole... the grave Fitzgerald dug for him. He grunts into action... grabs SEVERAL, THIN BROKEN BRANCHES from the ground, then claws forward, each movement excruciating... until finally, he reaches the hole, and ROLLS INTO IT... lands with a PAINFUL CRUNCH.

He rests there a moment, trying to regain any ounce of strength. Finally he fights through the pain... shoves the branches back up... spreading them across the hole as camouflage... a thin veil, but all that Glass has.

He lies there defenseless... INSIDE HIS OWN GRAVE. Hiding... listening for the Arikara's arrival... waiting to die.

CUT TO:

GLASS' POV - OUT OF THE GRAVE... TIGHT AND CLAUSTROPHOBIC... JUST THE NIGHT SKY THROUGH THOSE BRANCHES... AND THE SOUND OF HIS PAINFUL BREATHS.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - MORNING

Cold and grey. Fitzgerald crouches beside a small fire, warming his hands. WHISPS OF SMOKE rise into the sky.

FITZGERALD

We ran the better part of six hours. Had to gain some ground on Henry and them others.

Bridger sits at the base of a tree, not listening... staring... his mind replaying the desertion of Glass over and over. He notices the smoke.

BRIDGER

Best douse that smoke before them 'Ree spot it.

FITZGERALD

We put enough distance between us and them. And it's too damn cold to go without one.

BRIDGER

All we know, they hoofed it through the night same as us.

FITZGERALD

(shakes his head)

A dozen 'Ree can't make the time us two did.

Bridger looks back to the trees.

BRIDGER

We shouldn't a left him back there.

Fitzgerald doesn't respond. And then Bridger considers something, stares at Fitzgerald a beat, before...

BRIDGER (cont'd)

It was twenty earlier.

FITZGERALD

What?

BRIDGER

When you woke me... you said you'd spotted twenty 'Ree.

FITZGERALD

A dozen... twenty. I was a little too spooked to start countin' feathers. Hell, one 'Ree woulda been too many.

Fitzgerald empties his canteen over the fire, killing the flames. Bridger stares at the water pouring out.

BRIDGER

What was you even doin' down at the creak in the middle of the night?

(beat)

I'd already brought plenty a water.

Fitzgerald doesn't answer. Bridger tightens his grip on his rifle... slowly rises.

BRIDGER (cont'd)

Answer me.

FITZGERALD

Don't start questionin' me on accounta you feelin' guilty 'bout leavin' your nigger buddy behind.

Bridger musters up all the courage he can... aims his rifle at Fitzgerald.

BRIDGER

ANSWER ME OR I BLOW YOUR DAMN HEAD OFF!

Fitzgerald stares back at Bridger and his rifle... eyes taking in everything... a snake sizing up its prey. Then Fitzgerald stands... takes a step toward the boy.

FITZGERALD

What're you askin'? Why it was you turned your back on Glass? Why you let him die to save your own sorry skin?

(beat)

'Cause you was scared shitless, that's why.

BRIDGER

The 'Ree... did you see 'em?

(off Fitzgerald's silence)

DID YOU SEE 'EM?

FITZGERALD
 (moving closer)
 Not a one.

Bridger CRIES OUT... starts to pull the trigger, when Fitzgerald's hand flashes out, grabbing the barrel, and shoving the butt back into Bridger's face... THWACK.

The force of the blow knocks Bridger back to the ground, but Fitzgerald holds his grip on the rifle barrel... flips it around to aim it at the boy. Blood drips down Bridger's head as he stares up at his rifle pointed down.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
 I just needed to spur you on.
 Glass was dead either way. There weren't no point in us dyin' too.
 And you know that.

Fitzgerald lines the barrel up at Bridger's head... his finger tightens on the trigger.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
 So that there is the answer to your question.

And Fitzgerald PULLS THE TRIGGER... AND BRIDGER SQUEEZES HIS EYES SHUT IN FEAR... THEN CLICK. Bridger opens his eyes... sees Fitzgerald grinning down at him.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
 And the next time you aim to kill somebody, kid, best remember your gun won't fire without a flint.

Fitzgerald tosses the rifle back at Bridger, and turns away. Bridger's face flushes with rage and humiliation.

BRIDGER
 I'm goin' back for him.

FITZGERALD
 Far as we ran all night, you couldn't find Glass with dogs and a map. And I don't believe you really want to. 'Cause after leavin' him to die the first time, I doubt he'd be too happy to see you now.

Fitzgerald pulls a knife from his belt, digging up dirt to cover the fire's remains.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
And just so we're clear. If you
try to backtrack without me
knowin', or ever get so guilty you
feel the need to tell somebody.

Fitzgerald looks at Bridger... hard... evil.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
I'll have no choice but to gut you
from nuts to nose.

Fitzgerald stares his point home, then shoves the blade into
his belt, and stands.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
Now let's go.

Bridger wipes the blood from his face, then throws one last
glance behind him before following Fitzgerald.

EXT. CAMP - MORNING

Empty and quiet... no sign of life... until GLASS' HAND RISES
BETWEEN THE BRANCHES. His fingers dig into the earth,
pulling himself up from the hole... a dead man climbing out
of his own grave.

He rolls out to the ground... arches in pain when his back
hits the cold, hard surface. Glass lies there shivering,
regaining what little strength he has, then rolls over...
starts dragging himself again with that one good arm. He
makes it to the blanket... wraps it around him.

Glass rests there in the center of camp... unable to move...
his eyes scanning the surroundings... no food... no water...
and he's wide open in this clearing... an easy target for any
predator. So he grabs his Possibles bag and GUNPOWDER HORN,
and drags himself toward the cover of brush.

And every movement takes all the will Glass has... a push
with his good leg followed by a pull with his healthy arm...
inch by inch... foot by foot... sweat pouring down his face
as he finally reaches the cover of the trees... continues
on... dragging himself across the forest floor in a
desperate, hopeless crawl for survival.

But finally it's too much for Glass... the fever and pain
overwhelm him. He collapses... falls unconscious.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

ANGLE ON A SMALL BIRD...

...hopping across the ground, pecking for food. Suddenly Glass' hand shoots into frame, grabbing for the bird. But he's too slow... the tiny bird flutters out of reach.

Glass lies in the dirt, watching helplessly as it flies to a low branch. But to Glass, that bird is a world away. He's weak... dehydrated... starving. He looks at his hands... scratched and bloody from clawing his weight.

He unwraps his small, leather Possibles bag... dumps it to the ground, revealing its contents... flints, a straight razor, his map, and a LEATHER NECKLACE WITH THE SIX-INCH BEAR CLAW attached. Glass grabs the razor... cuts SEVERAL THIN STRIPS FROM THE BLANKET, and wraps them around his hands.

He shoves the rest back in the bag, and does the only thing he can do... start crawling again... push with his healthy leg... pull with his good arm.

EXT. WILDERNESS - LATER

Glass dragging himself up a steep slope... over rocks... the jagged edges catching the wounds... tearing the primitive stitching. The gashes rip wider... blood oozes down, leaving a crimson trail dripping down the rock behind him.

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT

The wind is howling through the trees. Glass lies beneath a cluster of brush... shivering... bleeding. Every aching breath creates a puff of smoke in the cold, night air. He stares into the darkness, and we...

FLASHCUT:

TO BRIDGER STARING BACK AT HIM...

BRIDGER

I'm sorry.

...then disappearing into the night with Fitzgerald.

BACK TO SCENE

Glass closes his eyes... wraps the blanket tighter around his shivering body.

EXT. MARSH - DAY

Thick with a sea of four-foot high Cattails... like miniature cornstalks. Looking down from above the marsh we see a two-foot wide path of crushed plants that reaches the center of the marsh, and stops.

We tighten on the end of the path, until we see Glass lying among the Cattails. He's sawing off one of the stalks with the straight razor... peeling away the husk, and eating the tender flesh beneath.

Mosquitoes move in clouds around him... over his face... arms. But Glass' injured body only allows him one action at a time, so the mosquitoes have their fill of him, as he gnaws on the Cattail.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Glass pulling himself along the ground... stopping to tear a FEW BERRIES from a plant, and shove them in his mouth. He flinches as he swallows. He starts to move again, but freezes... listens... RUSHING WATER.

Glass digs his fingers into the ground with new energy... pulls himself toward the sound... up over a ridge... and there it is at the bottom of the ridge...

...THE GRAND RIVER... WATER. Glass crawls down toward it.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

Glass drags himself to the river's edge, cupping handfuls of water and rubbing it over his parched lips... withstanding the pain to gulp it down.

As he does, Glass notices a FISH hovering in the shallows beside him. He makes a desperate grab for the fish, but it darts easily away.

Glass cups more water to his mouth, but with each drink, he feels the water leak from a hole in his throat... run down his neck. He leans out over the surface to check his reflection... barely recognizes the swollen, stitched-together, disfigured face staring back at him. He fights off the urge to vomit...

pulls the razor from the leather bag, and cuts more strips of blanket, soaking them in the river, then cleaning his wounds.

He runs a finger up to his shredded throat... around the open, wet hole. He cups another handful of water to his mouth... strains to swallow, then feels the liquid GURGLE OUT OF THE HOLE.

Glass shoves the cloth against the wound... tries to press the flesh together... no good. He dumps out his Possibles bag... stares at the meager contents. He picks up one of the flints... looks to the powderhorn.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - LATER

ANGLE ON A SMALL CLUMP OF DRIED GRASS...

...as Glass SPARKS one of the flints... ignites the grass. As the fire grows, Glass pours a handful of GUNPOWDER from the horn, and RUBS IT ALL OVER THE HOLE IN HIS THROAT.

He lifts several small blades of burning grass... a miniature torch. And only then do we realize what he's about to do... because he stares at the flame a beat, then raises it toward his gunpowder-covered throat.

The flame nears the black powder, and LEAPS OFF THE GRASS, igniting the powder, and SETTING GLASS'S NECK ON FIRE.

Glass falls back to the ground in agony... TRIES TO SCREAM, but his burning, shredded vocal chords won't allow him.

The gunpowder sizzles and burns... the flame spreads... Glass' flesh sears... melts. And the pain is too much for Glass... he passes out.

The smoke from his neck rises up into the blue sky... fades...

...and then the clouds begin to drift... fast... too fast... racing across the sky... day becoming night. The sun glides over the blue... dipping into the horizon... darkening, until the moon takes its place high above.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - NIGHT

ANGLE ON GLASS... looking dead beside the river, but we know he's alive because we can hear those same painful, raspy breaths.

And then we hear something else... an O.S. RATTLING, growing LOUDER... FASTER... BUZZING... until Glass' eyes flash open.

CUT TO:

GLASS' POV - ON A RATTLESNAKE COILED INCHES FROM HIS FACE.

Glass stares back in horror... has time to throw up his arm in protection as the snake STRIKES... SINKS ITS FANGS INTO HIS FOREARM. He shakes it free, but can't escape the snake's next strike... locking its jaws onto Glass' burned throat. Glass opens his mouth to scream.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

And Glass' eyes flying open in the glaring sun, as he awakens from his nightmare... looks to his arm... no snake. His hand instinctively jumps to his melted throat. No bites.

But that's when he hears it... we all do... that same RATTLING FROM HIS DREAM. Glass slowly turns his head toward the sound...

...and there's a RATTLESNAKE COILED just a few feet away. Only it isn't poised to attack Glass. It's facing the other way, its target a FIELD MOUSE, trapped against a rock.

The snake attacks, sinking its fangs into the mouse. The field mouse tumbles over... quivers as the poison runs through its body, then dies.

As Glass watches the snake begin to make a meal of the mouse, his hand grips a rock. He drags himself toward the occupied snake... raises the rock high, then SMASHES IT DOWN ON THE SNAKE'S HEAD.

Glass immediately pulls the razor from his bag, and slices off the rattlesnake's head, the field mouse still lodged halfway inside. Glass then drags the razor down the length of the snake... digs his fingers under the fresh seam, then peels the outer layer down off the rattler.

With the skin still hanging off the round tube of flesh, Glass BITES INTO THE SNAKE, tearing off a chunk of meat. He gobbles it down, slowing only to painfully swallow the food past his injured throat.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - LATER

ANGLE ON THE REMAINS OF THE SNAKE...

...the head, skin, and not much else.

GLASS - at the water's edge, drinking... touching his charred, melted throat... no leaks. He opens his Possibles bag... pulls out the GRIZZLY CLAW NECKLACE... stares at it a beat, then slips it over his head. He drags out the map... spreads it on the ground, then throws a glance around him... fingers the point on the blue line... a rough guess of his location.

ANGLE ON THE MAP...

...Fort Union at the top... hundreds of miles north. Fort Brazeau south... but not nearly as far away.

Glass gazes north up the Grand, as if he can see Fitzgerald and Bridger just ahead of him. Then he looks back down to his reflection in the water... battered and scarred. He looks to his leg... all but worthless for now... his one good arm. It's clear he's not ready to take revenge on anyone.

So Glass shoves the map back into the bag... ties it around his arm with the powderhorn and blanket, then grabs a THICK, FALLEN LOG, and rolls it into the river. Glass crawls in behind it... deeper, until the current grows strong enough to carry the weight of his mangled body downstream.

Glass drapes his healthy arm over the log, and starts floating... letting the river do the work. He watches the land move past him faster than it has in days... and without all the agony of every move.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - EVENING

The sinking sun casts an orange glow over the water. Glass floats downstream... past a HERD OF ELK grazing along the riverbank. The animals don't even notice him.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - NIGHT

Dark... the moon hidden behind clouds. A heavy mist hangs over the river. Glass is draped across the log, eyes closed... letting the slow current carry him south. But then his eyes open... because he hears something... a LOW RUMBLE.

Glass looks to the river banks... too foggy to see anything clearly. The RUMBLE GROWS LOUDER. He peers ahead... too dark to see much... just ANOTHER SPLINTERED LOG floating in front of him, its one jagged branch rising up in the air.

But then THE LOG VANISHES. Glass squints through the fog, scanning the surface. But it's gone... the water's empty... that LOW RUMBLE GROWS EVEN LOUDER.

Glass looks to the water beside him... a BRANCH GLIDES PAST AT A HIGHER SPEED. And now Glass knows what's coming, but it's too late... because the world suddenly turns upside down, as Glass tumbles over the edge of a TWENTY FOOT WATERFALL.

He spirals downward... crashes into the rushing current. He's washed forward with the suddenly violent rapids. They pull him under the surface, then toss him GASPING back out.

The river carries him blindly through the mist... tossing... turning... **SLAMMING HIM INTO A HUGE BOULDER... CRACK...** he spins off, swept away headfirst... the foaming water sucking him down the rocky gauntlet. *

He tumbles over more boulders... his Possibles bag snaps loose... is lost in the raging river. Glass flips down another set of falls... sinks beneath the surface, then floats back up, as the rapids calm... spit Glass to the gentle shallows. His body drifts face-down toward shore.

And just when we're sure Glass has to finally be dead, his arm reaches up from the water... he digs his fingers into the muddy bank, and drags himself out of the river.

Glass collapses unconscious to the ground, his body shrouded in that mist.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

TIGHT ON THE LEFT SIDE OF GLASS' FACE... the right still pressed into the muddy bank. The sun beats down... then SHADOWS APPEAR... BOUNCE ACROSS HIM... something is standing over Glass.

And then a VULTURE'S HEAD DROPS INTO FRAME...

...latches its beak onto Glass' cheek... tugs at it... stretches it. Glass' eyes pop open... we PULL BACK to see THREE VULTURES surrounding Glass' body, pecking and clawing at his battered wounds.

Glass swings his good arm, knocking one of the vultures away. He tries to cry out, but only that PRIMITIVE HISS ERUPTS from his throat.

The vultures dance away from his flailing... aren't willing to give up their meal so easily... dart in for quick attacks on his flesh.

Glass grasps a branch... swings at the birds, beating them back. The vultures give up the battle... fly away.

Glass crumbles back to the ground... squints up into the sun... the SILHOUETTES OF THE VULTURES CIRCLING ABOVE HIM... waiting for him to die.

Glass looks down to his wounds, again oozing blood. He reaches for his Possibles bag... gone. Glass glances around... sees a ridge just a few hundred yards away.

At the base of the ridge, a GIANT BOULDER has broken free, creating a partial cave. Glass starts crawling toward it. And if it's possible, he looks even closer to death now than when he started this journey.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

No more than ten feet deep, but enough to hide from predators. Glass drags himself as far back in the recess as he can... collapses against the rock wall.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Glass gathers loose sticks and grass into a small pile... begins sparking rocks together to build a fire.

INT. CAVE - LATER

The fire burns beside Glass, as he TEARS A SINGLE THREAD of cloth from the tattered blanket, then feeds it through a tiny hole in a JAGGED, NEEDLE-SIZED SLIVER OF SHARPENED ROCK... a man-made needle and thread.

Glass goes to work on the open wounds of his chest... piercing his skin with the rock... wincing with pain as he tugs the thread through the fresh hole in his skin... pierces the other side of the wound, then pulls the flesh tightly together... before repeating the excruciating process all over again... pierce... pull... pierce... tighten.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - NIGHT

The moon's glow reflects off the water.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON GLASS' HAND...

...holding a small sharp stone, and SCRATCHING LETTERS INTO THE CAVE'S ROCK WALL.

WE PAN DOWN TO THE GROUND... still listening to the SCRATCHING OF THE ROCK as we glide across the dirt... reach the fire... its flame warm and strong. We TIGHTEN ON THE FIRE, until WE'RE INSIDE IT... and then WE PULL BACK...

...and we see the fire has long died away... just black ash. The O.S. SCRATCHING has silenced. We glide back across the cave floor... to Glass unconscious on the ground. And above him on the wall, we see what he had been scratching...

"Robbed and left to die by Fitzgerald and Bridger. If find eether kill for Hugh Glass"

We hold on those words a beat, then...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

DROPS OF RAIN dot the surface. THUNDER RUMBLES... the rain grows heavier.

EXT. CAVE - NIGHT

Rain pouring... gullies of water run down the ridge, spewing over the mouth of the cave. But inside, Glass doesn't stir... lying there just as we last saw him.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

Rain coming down in buckets. The river's swollen and flooded... raging.

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT

Clouds drift across the moon... the storm has ended.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Sunny and clear. A rabbit hops along... stops for a moment outside the cave. Beyond it, Glass is still sprawled on the cave floor... he must be dead. The rabbit continues on past.

INT. CAVE - DAY

TIGHT ON GLASS' FACE... as his eyes flutter open. He stares straight ahead, unmoving.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Glass crawls out of the crevice... shields his eyes from the sun, as he takes in the scene.

The river has sunk back to normal, leaving the banks battered and muddy. The water is thick and brown with all the flooded earth it pulled up.

Glass uses all his strength to rise up to his knees, then higher... onto his healthy leg. He braces himself against a tree. He's still crooked and hunched over, but for the first time since the Grizzly attack, he looks more like a man than an animal. He bends down... picks up a BROKEN TREE BRANCH.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

Glass limps along the bank, TWO BRANCHES ARE SECURED ON EACH SIDE OF HIS LEG WITH LENGTHS OF BLANKET. A homemade splint. He moves beside the BROWN WATER... along the washed-out area, searching for food. He grabs some plants... tears them from the ground to chew on the roots.

He continues on... spots a DEAD SNAPPING TURTLE drowned in the flood, frozen on its back. Glass kneels down to pick up the turtle... sniffs it. As he does, he spots something across the river... a DEER, staring back at him.

Glass slowly raises his IMAGINARY RIFLE... takes careful aim at the deer... pulls the trigger. If only he had his Anstadt.

But then the deer's head snaps... to something beyond Glass. Glass follows the animal's eyes... turns to the ridge... and the FIVE ARIKARA WARRIORS STANDING AT GLASS' CAVE.

Glass drops flat to the ground behind a tree uprooted in the flood. He looks back across the river... THE DEER IS LONG GONE.

Glass inches his head up over the tree... to the warriors now crouched outside the cave... studying the tracks.

Glass' eyes jump to the soft dirt along the river... HIS FOOTPRINTS CLEAR... an obvious trail leading right to him. He throws a glance around... nowhere to run even if he could. So he starts backing into the river on his stomach... feet-first... dragging a small branch over the tracks around him, wiping them away as he moves. And his eyes are locked on the Arikara... watching to see if they spot him.

But they haven't yet, and Glass keeps sliding backward... five feet off shore... only three feet deep in the murky water and sludge. But if he goes any further, the current will catch him... pull him into the next set of violent rapids... and make him a clear target.

The Arikara follow the tracks down from the cave.

Glass sinks neck-deep into the water... the Arikara keep coming... near the river. So Glass drops beneath the surface.

CUT TO:

UNDERWATER -

And Glass' eyes spread wide... searching the muddy water. He grabs a LARGE ROCK... rolls onto his back, and places the rock on his stomach, its weight holding him firmly to the river bottom.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

ANGLE ON THE ARIKARA WARRIORS... following Glass' tracks to the edge of the river... looking out over the brown river.

CUT TO:

UNDERWATER -

Glass pressing his head back against the bottom... staring up through the cloudy water... to the FIVE SHADOWS STANDING ONLY A FEW FEET AWAY.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - CONTINUOUS

The Arikara... unknowingly standing just above Glass... looking back to the tracks... scanning the water. But the surface is empty, and the river's too thick with mud to see anything below.

But they keep looking... and we're waiting for Glass to explode from the river, gasping for air. But he doesn't... and they keep scanning for what seems an eternity, until finally, the warriors turn... start walking back up the path.

Behind them, Glass' face inches to the surface... pulls in some oxygen... watches as they fade into the trees.

Then Glass rolls the rock away... starts moving deeper into the river... fighting the current to grab rocks and boulders... pulling himself to the other side.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Glass limps through the trees, still dripping with the muddy water of the Grand.

EXT. WILDERNESS - LATER

Glass is on his knees, desperately grabbing for a TINY FIELD MOUSE. The rodent escapes into a hole. Glass claws at the ground after it. He's starving to death.

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT

The rain beating down through the trees. Glass huddles in a cluster of bushes, trying to stay dry... shivering in the cold. He reaches out from the cover, grabbing his moccasin boot standing in the rain. He pulls it in... slurps back the rainfall that it's caught.

EXT. PRAIRIE - EVENING

Glass limps slowly across the rolling prairie. He's weak... starving... isn't going to make it much further. He drops to his hands and knees.

And then he feels something... the ground almost trembling under his hands. He watches his hands quiver with vibration. A RUMBLE BUILDS. Glass strains to hear... looks to the crest of a hill... labors up the gentle slope toward the sound.

EXT. PRAIRIE/HILL - EVENING

Glass reaches the crest... looks over the other side to a HERD OF BUFFALO THUNDERING ACROSS THE PRAIRIE.

An incredible site... hundreds of massive creatures... their hooves tearing up the earth, leaving a cloud of dust behind them. The animals are galloping back and forth... and then we see why. A PACK OF FIVE WOLVES are hunting among them.

Glass watches the wolves race among the massive animals... ducking and dodging, until they surround a lone buffalo, and drive it from the others.

The buffalo twists and turns, trying to get back to its herd, but the wolves close in... attack with power and speed... one wolf leaping onto the buffalo's back... others going after its legs... taking the mighty animal down. And then it's a frenzy, as the wolves swarm in for the kill.

Glass lies in the high grass, watching the wolves SNARL AND SNAP over the remains. And he eyes that buffalo... the closest he's been to food in days.

EXT. PLAINS - NIGHT

The five wolves rest around the downed buffalo, their snouts bloody from the meal. Suddenly, one of the wolves' heads snaps up... bares its teeth... SNARLS.

And then we see what the wolf is growling at... Glass... limping out of the shadows toward the animals, holding a BURNING SAGE BUSH IN EACH HAND... like giant FLAMING HANDS clawing in the night.

The wolves jump to their feet, unsure of what's approaching. They growl at Glass. But Glass keeps coming... doing his best to YELL... more like GROWL back at the wolves. He swings the flaming brush, tossing glowing sparks through the air.

The wolves spread out, instinctively surrounding Glass. But Glass singles out each one... charges, waving the flames... driving each wolf back.

Four of the wolves back away, but the leader holds its ground... even moves toward Glass... only a few feet away... SNARLING... bloody jaws ready to attack, but still not sure what its up against.

Glass shakes the flames at the wolf... it SNAPS AT GLASS' ARM. Glass swings the other... slams the fiery plant across the wolf's head.

The wolf YELPS... leaps back... starts to run away, but turns back... makes another charge at Glass. But Glass is ready...

throws the flaming ball of sage at the wolf, then clubs it with the other. The animal's fur begins to burn.

The frightened wolf has had enough... rolls on the ground, then spins to join the rest of its pack. They run a safe distance, then stop... keeping a watch on Glass.

Glass drags the burning sage bushes along the ground, igniting the grass and brush... creating a foot-high flaming wall between him and the wolves.

He stretches the flame into a circle, a fiery ring surrounds the fallen buffalo.

The wolves have seen enough... turn... race away from the flames.

As the grass around him burns, Glass drops the sage plants... attacks the buffalo remains, tearing away bloody chunks of flesh from the carcass, and shoving them into his mouth... a starving animal that's finally found food.

EXT. PRAIRIE - NIGHT

From high above the prairie... Glass and the buffalo at the center of that glowing ring of fire.

EXT. PRAIRIE - DAY

The wind's gusting... bending the high golden grass over on its side. Glass moves slowly across, pulling his collar up to shield his face from the cold winds. He spots something in the distant sky ahead... a THIN LINE OF BLACK SMOKE. Glass picks up his pace... hope spurring him on.

EXT. BURNED ARIKARA VILLAGE - DAY

The charred, skeletal remains of a tribe's village... just black posts where tee-pees once stood... a half-burned log lodge still smokes, sending that black line into the sky.

Glass limps through the graveyard of structures... all signs of life in this village long gone. He searches a basket... pulls out a BLANKET... wraps it around his shoulders.

INT. LODGE - DAY

Glass steps into the smoky warmth of the lodge... black and empty. He slides down to the floor... unwraps strips of roasted buffalo from what's left of his blanket.

He starts to take a bite, when SOMETHING DARTS PAST THE DOORWAY TO THE BACK ROOM. The O.S. SHUFFLING OF FEET.

Glass freezes... he isn't alone. He rises... grabs a splintered post like a spear... eases toward the doorway... raises the post to swing...

...and sees the SMALL PUPPY standing in the back room. The dog takes off around a crumbled wall. Glass follows it.

INT. LODGE/BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Glass limps across the room... turns the corner of the crumbled wall... and sees the dog slide to a stop beside an ANCIENT ARIKARA SQUAW, huddled in the corner, her bony arms outstretched in front of her in weak defense. And her eyes are SOLID WHITE... the old woman is blind. She CRIES OUT A CHANT over and over... her death chant, as she waits for this stranger to kill her.

Glass stands frozen... confused. He tries to speak, but his throat still won't let him. He crouches down in front of the old woman... reaches for her hand, but she flails him away. He grabs her again... gently... just holds it until she calms... studying the woman... her hollow face all skin and bones... she's obviously dying.

He pulls the strip of buffalo meat from his pocket... pushes it into the squaw's hand. She immediately jerks it to her mouth... and that's when Glass sees the WOMAN HAS NO TEETH... she can't eat.

Glass turns to an old pot tipped over on the floor.

EXT. BURNED ARIKARA VILLAGE - DAY

Glass carries the pot toward a nearby stream. The dog scurries out behind him... follows Glass to the water.

INT. LODGE/BACK ROOM - DAY

The pot boils over burning logs. Glass dips a cup in, pulling out a warm broth. He carries it to the squaw, still sitting in the corner... takes her hand, placing the cup in it for her. She gulps the liquid back.

Glass goes back to refill the cup. The old woman MUMBLES SOMETHING we can't understand... over and over, as Glass brings the cup back to her. He tries to ease it into her hand, but the woman pushes it away...

slides her hand up Glass' arm to his face... patting it...
MUMBLING THOSE SAME WORDS... thanking Glass.

EXT. BURNED ARIKARA VILLAGE - EVENING

Glass carries several blankets toward the lodge. The puppy trails behind him, biting at one of the corners... hanging on as Glass pulls him across the dirt.

INT. LODGE - EVENING

Glass enters the back room with the blankets... stops when he sees the old woman slumped over to the floor, her white eyes frozen open in a lifeless stare.

EXT. BURNED ARIKARA VILLAGE - NIGHT

Glass has stacked several burned posts into a crude pyre at the edge of the village. The squaw lies atop the pyre, covered in the blankets he gathered for her. Glass stands beside the pyre, a FLAMING TORCH in his hand. The puppy rests at his feet.

EXT. DISTANT RIDGE - CONTINUOUS

THREE INDIANS sit on horseback, watching Glass light the pyre... the flames rise into the night.

*
*
*

EXT. BURNED ARIKARA VILLAGE - NIGHT

Glass crouches... pets the dog, as he watches the flames spread... engulf the woman.

ANGLE ON THE GLOWING EMBERS...

...floating into the night. Beyond the sparks, we see something else... THOSE THREE INDIANS GALLOPING TOWARD THE VILLAGE... FAST.

And now Glass sees them too... knows it's too late to run, so he just stands there. But the dog's seen enough... darts away.

Glass watches the Indians ride into the village... their braided hair and dress is different than the Arikara we've seen earlier, because these are SIOUX WARRIORS, and Glass knows it.

The Sioux surround Glass on horseback... stare down at Glass. The lead warrior (YELLOW HORSE), (30's), poised and strong, points to the flaming pyre... says something to Glass.

Glass tries to answer... can't... touches his scarred throat. Yellow Horse slides gracefully off his horse. The other two warriors, (THREE FEATHERS and RUNNING FOX) do the same... close in on Glass.

Glass stands firm. Yellow Horse says something else to him. Again, Glass touches his throat... holds his jacket out from his sides... no weapons. Yellow Horse studies Glass hard... reaches out, wiping his finger down Glass' cheek, almost testing to see if the color comes off.

One of the other warriors pats Glass' hair... smiles... says something to the others. Yellow Horse and the other warrior join him, each touching Glass' hair.

Then Yellow Horse spots Glass' necklace... the grizzly claw hanging from it. He examines the enormous claw, then nods to Glass' stitching and scars.

YELLOW HORSE

Griz-lee.

Glass hears the familiar word... nods. Three Feathers pulls a WHITE SPECK from the back of Glass' neck... holds it up to Yellow Horse.

Yellow Horse jerks out his knife. Glass is confused... holds up his hand, as he takes a step back. But Three Feathers and Running Fox grab Glass... secure him... pull his jacket down off his shoulders, exposing his shirt, as Yellow Horse walks around behind Glass... raises the knife... Glass GROWLS A PLEA... but Yellow Horse slices the knife down Glass' back... just cutting open his shirt... and revealing a MASS OF WHITE WORMS... MAGGOTS... COVERING THE DEEP GASHES ON GLASS' BACK.

The three warriors exchange glances... they've obviously never seen anything like this. Glass sees their reaction... throws a nervous glance... what?

Three Feathers runs his hand across Glass' back, dragging a HANDFUL OF WORMS for Glass to see. As Glass' eyes widen in panic, Yellow Horse SLAMS THE BUTT OF HIS KNIFE against Glass' head.

The world goes dark.

EXT. SIOUX VILLAGE - NIGHT

Dozens of glowing campfires dot the prairie, along with a sea of tee-pees, their willow poles fanning against the night sky. Animal hides and painted designs decorate the various tee-pees and lodges. SIOUX CHILDREN laugh and play about the village... freeze when they hear Yellow Horse and the other riders splash across the stream.

The warriors ride into the village, Glass' body tossed over the back of Three Feather's horse. The children race to them.

ANGLE ON GLASS... regaining consciousness... eyes blinking... trying to focus.

CUT TO:

GLASS' POV - FROM THE BACK OF THE HORSE...

...to the children's eager faces swarming around him... studying this strange face.

YELLOW HORSE - YELLING SOMETHING at the children... they back away from Glass... fall into line behind the riders.

Sioux MEN and WOMEN watch as the procession moves past... to a tee-pee set away from the rest... its hide walls decorated with wild lightning bolts and buffalo and vaguely human figures circling the sun.

An OLD MEDICINE MAN, gnarled and leathery, a DEAD RAVEN tied in his long hair, his naked chest painted with red and black stripes, steps out of the tee-pee. He eyes Glass, as Three Feathers and Running Fox carry him inside.

Suddenly, the Medicine Man begins CHANTING.

CUT TO:

A FLURRY OF IMAGES ACCOMPANIED BY THE MEDICINE MAN'S V.O. CHANTING...

LEATHER STRAPS SNAPPING AROUND GLASS' WRISTS AND ANKLES... stretched tight.

Glass, naked, on his stomach at the center of the tee-pee, his arms and legs outstretched, secured to wooden stakes in the ground. The white worms cover his back.

The Medicine Man... CHANTING... waving burning sticks in the air.

A THICK LIQUID BOILING IN A POT... the Medicine Man's twisted hand reaching a gourd container in... filling it with the steaming mixture.

The liquid POURING OVER GLASS' BACK.

GLASS' FACE... arched to the sky... twisted in horrible pain. He SCREAMS THAT HORRIBLE GROWLING CRY.

MORE IMAGES... even faster... the CHANTING more frantic...

A SIOUX WOMAN,(WAKI), staring down.

HANDS wiping a GREEN SLUDGE over Glass' neck... chest.

The Medicine Man dancing... chanting... shaking sticks lined with RATTLESNAKE TAILS.

The moonlight shining through the tee-pee, illuminating the images of the buffalo and dancing shapes.

Waki gently pouring fluid into Glass' mouth.

The Medicine Man holding the SEVERED HEAD OF A SNAKE... lightly sinking the fangs around the wounds on Glass' throat.

GLASS' EYES... wide open... rolling up white into his head.

AND THE CHANTING STOPS... the world goes dark.

EXT. YELLOWSTONE RIVER - DAY

Cutting through the open prairie. Snow-covered peaks touch the sky in the distance.

Fitzgerald and Bridger trudge their way across the prairie, dressed in furs. They rise up a steep slope... reach the top, and spot the cluster of log buildings inside a massive thirty-foot tall wooden fence. Fort Union.

Bridger smiles... relieved.

FITZGERALD
'Bout goddamn time.

They start down the slope. Fitzgerald grabs Bridger's arm... firmly.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
And we're understood on
everything... Glass' dyin' in his
sleep... us buryin' him like was
agreed.

Bridger doesn't respond. Fitzgerald doesn't like that.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
You're as guilty as me in leavin'
him. Don't you forget that. You
got a future up here. No sense
tossin' it away when he was as good
as dead already. Shit, all we did
was skip the funeral.

Bridger pulls his arm free... continues on.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
I won't take to givin' up that two-
hundred on accounta you gettin'
weak-kneed.

Bridger keeps walking. Fitzgerald follows behind.

INT. FORT UNION - DAY

Like a small town surrounded by a log wall. The main TRADING POST BUILDING is busy... TRAPPERS, SIOUX, all with things to trade. But most of the life is in the FORT UNION SALOON next door... crowded with customers downstairs, and just as busy in the whores' rooms upstairs.

A small village of tents rests off to the side of the buildings, holding the overflow of traffic.

INT. SALOON - DAY

Fitzgerald and Bridger enter the crowded room... squeeze their way to the bar.

FITZGERALD
Twice the folks here than when we
left.

BRIDGER
We should go see Captain Henry.

FITZGERALD
Far as we hiked... we got time for
a drink on the company's tab.

PIG (O.S.)

Jim!

They spin... see Pig, Murphy and Stubby Bill sitting at a table. Pig scrambles up... rushes to Bridger, locking him in a big bear hug.

PIG (cont'd)

You made it! I was scared the 'Ree mighta caught up to ya.

FITZGERALD

If your fat ass could get through, we didn't have no worries.

Pig glares at Fitzgerald... watches him walk to the table, joining the others.

PIG

(off Fitzgerald, to
Bridger)

Had to be a helluva long walk for you.

Bridger nods... Pig has no idea.

PIG (cont'd)

Hugh?

Bridger hesitates a beat, then just shakes his head.

PIG (cont'd)

Guess we all knowed how it would turn out. Did he suffer much more?

Another long beat, then...

BRIDGER

I hope not.

A PROSTITUTE walks down the stairs... stops on the landing, waiting for her next customer. Fitzgerald spots her... grins.

FITZGERALD

(to Bridger)

Maybe we best go see Henry, kid. I just got a itch to spend the first of my two-hundred.

The other men laugh. Not Bridger.

INT. ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY OFFICE - DAY

Henry sits at his desk. Fitzgerald and Bridger stand across from him. The others... Pig, Anderson, Murphy, and Stubby Bill crowd the room behind them.

FITZGERALD

I won't pretend to been his friend,
but I respect any man that fights
the way he done.

HENRY

And the grave?

FITZGERALD

We had those extra days so we went
deeper... covered it in rocks. To
keep the scavengers off him.

HENRY

Any sign of hostiles?

FITZGERALD

Not a one.

The words are like a punch in the gut to Bridger. He can't take the pain... opens his mouth to speak, but Fitzgerald beats him to it.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

Truth is, I was worried 'bout 'Ree,
and ready to get movin', but
Bridger here argued to stay and
make a cross for the grave.

Bridger's head snaps to Fitzgerald... don't make this worse.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

So that's what we did.

Pig reaches up... gives Bridger a pat on the back. But to Bridger, it feels like a red-hot blade.

HENRY

Glad to hear you pulled your
weight, Mr. Bridger. I knew you
would.

FITZGERALD

More than his share, Captain.

And now Fitzgerald has snared Bridger into his lie. Bridger drops his eyes to his feet.

HENRY
Speaking of shares.

Henry turns to a SAFE resting against the wall. Fitzgerald watches as Henry spins the dial... locks in the combination, then pulls the latch. The safe door swings open...

...revealing STACKS OF CASH.

Fitzgerald's eyes lock on all that money. Henry pulls out a handful... starts counting them out onto the desk.

HENRY (cont'd)
Am I to assume the agreed
arrangement didn't change?

FITZGERALD
Fortunate for me, it did not.

HENRY
Well thank you both for your
courage and honor. You have done
yourselves proud.

Fitzgerald swipes up his pile of bills. Henry drops a couple bills in front of Bridger.

HENRY (cont'd)
You're owed something for what you
did.

Bridger stares down at the bills a beat, then turns... pushes his way out of the office. Henry looks to Fitzgerald.

FITZGERALD
He's beat hisself up most of the
trip... wishin' he'da done more.

HENRY
We all saw the shape Glass was in.
There was no more to be done.

FITZGERALD
That's what I been tellin' him.

INT. BUNKHOUSE - DAY

Empty, except for Bridger curled up on his cot, sobbing.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TEE-PEE - DAY

Glass sleeps under a buffalo robe. His eyes flicker open.

CUT TO:

GLASS' POV - ON THE BUFFALO AND DANCING FIGURE DESIGNS
SHADOWED THROUGH THE TEE-PEE.

GLASS - His hand reaching up to his throat. It looks much better than we last saw. And the stitches are gone from his face, now just long, pink scars. He stiffly raises himself up... remembers his back... struggles to reach behind him... scarred but clean... no maggots.

He looks beside him... sees BUCKSKIN PANTS AND SHIRT resting on the ground... waiting for him.

EXT. TEE-PEE - DAY

ANGLE ON GLASS... dressed... pushing his way out through the flap of the tee-pee... limping out into the midday sun, and shielding his eyes. He looks like a man that hasn't seen the light of day for weeks.

Glass adjusts to the brightness... stares in wonder at the scene.

And then we see what Glass is looking at, and understand his reaction... the entire village is blanketed in snow. The Sioux VILLAGERS move about, wearing heavy skins and furs.

A WOMEN'S O.S. VOICE turns Glass...

...to WAKI, the woman from the images, walking toward him, bundled in fur. She says something else we can't understand... points to Glass' feet. Glass looks down... to his BARE FEET BURIED DEEP IN THE SNOW. He hadn't noticed.

And then Waki smiles... a sweet, pretty smile. She takes his hand... leads him back into the tee-pee.

INT. TEE-PEE - CONTINUOUS

Glass and Waki enter. She pulls a pair of moccasins from a basket... hands them to Glass.

He slips them on, then presses his fingers against his throat... almost trying to hold it all inside to make it work, then...

GLASS
(scratching and rough)
Thank you.

Waki doesn't understand... just raises a cup of liquid... says something, then touches his throat... motions for him to drink. Glass sips the drink... grimaces... shakes his head, trying to give the cup back, but Waki refuses... points at his throat, and motions for him to drink. Glass stares in the cup a beat, then gulps it back... shakes his head.

GLASS (cont'd)
Bad medicine.

Waki smiles... hands him his BEAR CLAW NECKLACE. Glass nods in thanks, then achingly lifts his arms up to slip it over his head.

GLASS (cont'd)
How long have I been here?

Waki just stares back... no idea what Glass said.

GLASS (cont'd)
You're Sioux. I only know a bit a Pawnee.

Glass stumbles through a sentence of Pawnee. Waki shakes her head... throws a jumble of Sioux back at him.

GLASS (cont'd)
The snow... my healin'.
(points to himself)
Me.
(points to the ground)
Here. How long?

Waki shakes her head again. Glass leads her outside.

EXT. SIOUX VILLAGE - CONTINUOUS

Glass points to the sun overhead, then raises both hands, fingers outstretched.

GLASS

How many suns? Ten?

Waki studies Glass... the sun... begins to understand. She nods... SAYS A WORD... holds up all ten of her fingers.

GLASS (cont'd)

Ten suns?

Then Waki closes her hands into fists... opens them again... closes them again... SAYS A DIFFERENT WORD.

GLASS (cont'd)

Christ.

Glass glances around... for the first time, notices Sioux MEN and WOMEN staring at him. Children freeze in the middle of their play... all eyes locked on Glass. TWO SMALL BOYS, (NEW MOON and LITTLE ONE), repeat the same TWO WORDS to each other...

BOYS

Tatanka Wicasa.

...over and over.

Glass stares back, unsure. Then...

YELLOW HORSE (O.S.)

Buff-A-lo Man.

Glass turns... sees Yellow Horse stepping out of a tee-pee.

YELLOW HORSE (cont'd)

(very broken english)

What call you.

(points to Glass' hair)

Fur of Buff-A-lo.

Glass touches his hair... nods... smiles. The children smile and laugh now too... repeat the words LOUDER.

GLASS

You speak English.

YELLOW HORSE

Need words trade with whites.

GLASS

Well I'm grateful for you bringing
me here... havin' them care for me.

(off Yellow Horse's nod)

Now if you could point me which way
it is you do your tradin'... with
the whites.

YELLOW HORSE

(points)

Whites. Bra-zo.

GLASS

Fort Brazeau? That's where I'm
tryin' to get. Is it far from here?

Yellow Horse doesn't understand. Glass motions into the
distance.

GLASS (cont'd)

Far? Long way?

Yellow Horse points to a horse, then holds up three fingers.

GLASS (cont'd)

Three days on horse?

Yellow Horse nods... looks to Glass' leg, and shakes his
head.

YELLOW HORSE

No walk. Hides soon.

Glass doesn't understand... until Yellow Horse points to a
ROW OF BUFFALO HIDES hanging from a line.

YELLOW HORSE (cont'd)

We trade Bra-zo.

Glass stares at the tanning hides, then down at his leg.
Finally, he nods. Yellow Horse starts walking... waves for
Glass to follow.

YELLOW HORSE (cont'd)

Come. Eat.

Yellow Horse pantomimes putting food into his mouth. Glass
follows after him. The children sneak in behind them,
giggling as they tail Glass across camp.

Glass glances back... New Moon and Little One duck behind a
tee-pee... wait for him to continue before they scoot back
out after him.

INT. CHIEF'S LODGE - NIGHT

Glass, Yellow Horse, Three Feathers, Running Fox and OTHER WARRIORS sit around a fire, eating with CHIEF RED HAWK, the Medicine Man, and several other TRIBAL ELDERS.

GLASS

The men stole my rifle.

The Sioux don't understand. Glass reaches over, taking Yellow Horse's plate.

GLASS (cont'd)

They took. They took...

Glass aims an imaginary rifle.

GLASS (cont'd)

...my rifle. My gear.

Now Yellow Horse understands... translates for the others.

GLASS (cont'd)

They left me to die. So I mean to find 'em both. Get my rifle back.

Yellow Horse translates again. Red Hawk nods, studying Glass.

Red Hawk SAYS SOMETHING to Glass... motions to the BEAR CLAW NECKLACE. Glass looks to Yellow Horse.

YELLOW HORSE

Red Hawk ask who kill griz-lee.

Glass touches his chest. Red Hawk nods, impressed. Glass points to the JAGGED SCARS running up Red Hawk's neck to a MISSING RIGHT EAR.

GLASS

Grizzly?

Red Hawk smiles... shakes his head.

RED HAWK

Arikara.

That word, Glass understands. Red Hawk rambles a long sentence in Sioux. The other members LAUGH.

YELLOW HORSE

He say Arikara take right ear of
Sioux. Left ear of whites. Not
know what they take from you.

Glass smiles along with the others. They continue their meal.

INT. TEE-PEE - NIGHT

Glass enters... sees Waki sitting on the ground, waiting for
him. A BOWL OF GREEN OINTMENT rests in her lap.

GLASS

Hello.

Waki nods... stands... motions from the bowl to Glass' shirt.
It takes a moment for Glass to understand, but then he
nods... removes his shirt.

Waki pushes Glass down to his knees... moves behind him,
gently rubbing the ointment over the scars on his back.
Glass looks to the tee-pee flap... the adorable faces of New
Moon and Little One peering inside at him.

Glass smiles... waves them in. The little boys exchange a
glance, then slide into the tee-pee.

GLASS (cont'd)

I'm Glass.

The boys just stare at him. Glass taps his chest.

GLASS (cont'd)

Glass.

Glass points to the boys, his eyes asking them their names.

NEW MOON

Mimiteh.

GLASS

Mi-mi-ta.

New Moon nods. Glass looks to the nervous, silent Little
One. New Moon nudges him.

LITTLE ONE

Ayasha.

GLASS

Hello, A-ya-sha.

Waki smiles at the boys nervousness... moves around Glass... crouches down to apply the ointment to his throat. Glass points to her.

GLASS (cont'd)

You? Name?

WAKI

Waki.

GLASS

(nods)

Waki. Nice name.

The little boys watch intently, as Waki covers Glass' scars with the ointment. Then she hands him another cup of liquid. Glass frowns... shakes his head. Waki forces the cup into his hand. Glass holds it out for the little boys, but they both just grin and shake their heads, as they step away from the cup... both know better.

Then Glass offers the drink back to Waki. She laughs... shoves it away. Glass rolls his eyes to the boys, then gulps the drink down... makes a horrible face, as if he's going to throw up... maybe even die.

New Moon and Little One burst into laughter. Even Waki joins in, as she goes back to tending to Glass' scars. While she does, New Moon reaches up... squeezes Glass' hair.

NEW MOON

Tatanka Wicasa.

Little One joins in. Glass just smiles along.

GLASS

Tatanka Wicasa.

EXT. SIOUX VILLAGE - DAY

Snow falls over Glass, as he stands outside the tee-pee, flexing his once-broken leg... putting more weight on it... testing its recovered strength.

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Suddenly, a SPEAR PLANTS INTO THE GROUND BETWEEN THEM. Glass turns, startled... sees Yellow Bear, Three Feathers, Running Fox, and several OTHER WARRIORS staring down at them.

Glass' eyes jump from the spear to the warriors, unsure. And then a smile spreads across Yellow Horse's face... he tosses a HEAVY BUFFALO HIDE to Glass.

YELLOW HORSE
Buff-A-lo Man hunt?

Glass relaxes... nods... pulls the spear from the snow.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

A world of silent white... like we're inside a giant snow-globe. The sky is emptying all the snow it has over us... pouring down... the only sound comes from the flakes hitting the already fallen snow. The pale trunks of Cottonwoods rise up from the white ground.

Then out of the white... a SHAPE APPEARS... a GIANT WOLF WALKING ON ITS HIND LEGS. But as the wolf comes closer, we see it's not a wolf at all... it's THREE FEATHERS, wearing his WOLF SKIN. He CRIES OUT... HOWLING WILDLY.

A few yards beside him, another WARRIOR is doing the same... CHANTING... beating his spear against the Cottonwoods as he walks.

GLASS - WEARING THE BUFFALO HIDE...

...walking slowly through the trees, carrying the spear. Yellow Bear is beside him... motions for Glass to spread out.

FROM ABOVE THE TREES...

...we see the fur-covered warriors are formed into a wide circle... and slowly converging... YELLING... pounding their spears... making as much noise as possible, as they tighten their ring.

POV FROM THE BRUSH...

...watching DISTANT CHANTING WARRIORS pushing through the trees. V.O. SNORTING... our POV darts sideways... charges through the brush... slides to a stop when we see Running Fox moving toward us... spins back another direction.

GLASS - MOVING THROUGH THE FOREST...

...the falling snow clinging to his face... covering the buffalo hide.

And then a MASSIVE SHAPE BLASTS through the trees ahead of him. Glass freezes, his grip tightening on the spear.

He looks to Yellow Horse, who nods... YELLS OUT, beating his spear against the trees, and motioning for Glass to do the same.

Glass is apprehensive at first... just lightly tapping his spear. But as the other warriors' chants grow, Glass gets caught up in the hunt... begins beating the trees... YELLING as loud as his throat will allow.

THE WARRIORS - EYES PIERCING THROUGH THE SNOW... CHANTING... BEATING THE BUSHES.

OUR LOW POV AGAIN - RACING CHAOTICALLY THROUGH THE BRUSH...

...to Yellow Horse waving his spear... back over the snow... to Three Feathers SCREAMING... we spin again... crash through bushes, then suddenly TUMBLE... DROP THROUGH THE SNOW.

GLASS - HEARING THE ANIMAL'S WAIL...

...seeing Yellow Horse pick up his pace... start trotting forward. Glass does the same... all the hunters converging around a LARGE BLACK HOLE IN THE SNOW...

...and the ELK trapped at the bottom.

The warriors cry out victoriously... begin DRIVING THEIR SPEARS INTO THE TRAP, killing the animal.

EXT. SIOUX VILLAGE - EVENING

The elk roasts over a fire at the center of the village. Glass sits alone outside the tee-pee, using the sharp tip of the spear to carve into a small chunk of wood.

As he carves, New Moon and Little One sneak around the tee-pee behind him... watch Glass work. Glass hears them GIGGLING... doesn't react... just keeps carving... tilts the long handle of the spear as he works, tapping the side of the tee-pee, and SHAKING LOOSE A CLUMP OF SNOW DOWN ONTO THE BOYS.

The shocked boys freeze in the cold... wipe the snow from their faces to see Glass grinning at them. The little boys charge Glass, leaping onto him.

EXT. SIOUX VILLAGE - NIGHT

Glass stands at the edge of the village, carving at the wood with the spear tip, and watching the Sioux from a distance. Yellow Bear sees him... approaches, carrying his SON on his shoulders. The little boy gnaws on a strip of meat.

Yellow Horse holds out a bowl of food to Glass.

GLASS

Thank you.

YELLOW HORSE

Good hunt.

GLASS

Yes.

Glass smiles up at Yellow Horse's son.

YELLOW HORSE

You. Fam-i-lee?

GLASS

(shakes his head)

No.

YELLOW HORSE

No wom-an?

(pointing to son)

Wakayaja?

A long beat, then...

GLASS

No. Not for a long time.

Glass continues eating... watches Yellow Horse bounce the giggling little boy on his shoulders. *

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EXT. SIOUX VILLAGE - DAY

Glass steps out of his tee-pee, whittling with the spear tip. He glances up... freezes because he sees several Sioux pulling the hides from the line... rolling them to carry. *

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YELLOW HORSE (O.S.) *

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Bra-zo. *

*

Glass turns to Yellow Horse, pointing to the hides. Glass nods... looks back to the last of the hides being pulled down... doesn't seem as excited as he once might have been.

EXT. SIOUX VILLAGE - LATER

Yellow Horse and Three Feathers sit atop their horses. Three Feathers holds the reins to another horse packed with hides. An empty horse stands beside them... waiting for Glass.

Glass is leaning over to New Moon and Little One... handing them the CRUDE BUFFALO CARVING he made from the wood.

GLASS
(taps his chest)
Tatanka Wicasa.

The little boys smile. Glass nods to Waki.

GLASS (cont'd)
Thank you.

Waki nods... gives Glass a gentle hug he wasn't expecting. It takes a moment for his arms to return it. Then Glass waves to Red Hawk and the Medicine Man. They wave back... watch Glass climb onto his horse.

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Glass, Yellow Horse and Three Feathers ride out of the village.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Glass, Yellow Horse and Three Feathers ride along a high ridge, surrounded by empty snow-covered wilderness. They have the world to themselves.

EXT. CAMP - NIGHT

Glass crouches over a shallow, five-foot long hole surrounded by deep snow. The hole is filled with small fires and rocks. And he's watching Yellow Horse and Three Feathers tossing rocks into their own matching holes, then dragging the dirt back into them. Yellow Horse throws a glance back to Glass, making sure he understands.

Glass nods... pulls the dirt back in, covering the flames. He watches Yellow Horse spread a blanket over the warm ground, then does the same. He sits on the mound of dirt... leans back against a tree... feels the warmth rise up from beneath him.

He nods to Yellow Horse, who is already resting under his blanket.

GLASS

Nice.

YELLOW HORSE

(nods)

Nice.

Glass pulls the buffalo hide around himself... keeping watch.

YELLOW HORSE (cont'd)

Sleep. No Arikara.

Glass nods... but still doesn't close his eyes. Yellow Horse tosses his knife over beside Glass. Glass takes it... nods to Yellow Horse.

YELLOW HORSE (cont'd)

Me sleep.

Yellow Horse rolls over, turning his back on Glass... trusting him with the knife. Three Feathers does the same.

Glass just stares out into the night.

INT. FORT UNION/BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

Dark and quiet... except for the SNORING of a few men. Fitzgerald sleeps on his cot. A shadow glides across him... hovers over his face.

Fitzgerald's eyes blink open.

CUT TO:

FITZGERALD'S POV...

...on GLASS STANDING OVER HIM... his scarred face calm and deadly... raising a knife to drive down into Fitzgerald's chest.

FITZGERALD

No... please.

But Glass swings the blade.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - MORNING

And Yellow Horse shaking Glass awake from his dream. Glass' hand flies up, the knife gripped. But Yellow Horse grabs his arm... stops it in mid-swing... holds it until Glass realizes it was a dream... relaxes.

YELLOW HORSE

We go.

Glass calms... nods.

EXT. FORT BRAZEAU - DAY

Just a small cluster of log buildings sitting along the banks of the Missouri. Dozens of tee-pees and tents are set up outside the complex.

Glass follows Yellow Horse and Three Feathers into the camp. BEGGING INDIANS and DRUNK TRAPPERS paw at the men as they ride past, pleading for handouts.

One of the Indians grabs for the hides. Three Feathers plants his foot in the Indian's chest... shoves him back into the snow.

They continue on... climb off their horses outside the TRADING POST. Three Feathers stays to guard the hides, as Yellow Horse and Glass enter.

INT. TRADING POST - DAY

A small, dingy room lined with shelves, all stacked high with pots, pans, dry goods, whiskey, blankets, weapons... anything that can be traded. KIOWA BRAZEAU, (60's), French-Canadian, stands behind the counter... looks up when the BELL over the door RINGS... sees Yellow Horse with Glass behind.

BRAZEAU

(thick French accent)

Bon jour, Yellow Horse. You come with many hides I hope.

(off Yellow Horse's nod)

We make good trades then.

Brazeau's eyes lock on Glass... stares at him, unsure.

BRAZEAU (cont'd)

Monsieur Glass?

GLASS

Good to see you again, Mr. Brazeau.

BRAZEAU

Jesus Christ, what happened to your goddamned face?

GLASS

Had a tussle with a grizzly.

Glass shakes Brazeau's hand. Brazeau studies his face... notices the Bear Claw Necklace... smiles.

BRAZEAU

And now the grizzly, he don't look so good either, eh?

Glass shakes his head.

BRAZEAU (cont'd)

(off Yellow Horse)

You run with the Sioux these days?

GLASS

They looked after me for a spell. I'm on my way to catch back up with Captain Henry... at Fort Union. Needed to trade for some supplies on the Company's credit if I could.

BRAZEAU

Oui, of course. Anything you like.

Glass pulls down a KENTUCKY LONG RIFLE.

GLASS

We can start with this.

INT. TRADING POST - LATER

Glass is loaded with gear. He signs a ticket for Brazeau.

BRAZEAU

You can pick up the horse at the livery in the morning.

(off Glass' nod)

I wish I could give you a room for the night, but...

Brazeau looks to SEVERAL TRAPPERS standing across the room, glaring at Glass.

BRAZEAU (cont'd)
 I cannot risk the trouble of
 letting a colored stay inside.

Glass glances to the trappers... one of them spits in Glass' direction... makes some MONKEY SOUNDS... daring Glass to respond. Glass just turns away.

GLASS
 Won't be the last night I sleep on
 the ground.

Glass nods to Brazeau, then walks out.

BRAZEAU
 Take care of that face, Glass.

EXT. TRADING POST - DAY

Yellow Horse and Three Feathers sit on their horses. The other horses are now packed with new goods. Glass approaches.

GLASS
 (points to the tents)
 You stay here tonight?

Yellow Horse shakes his head... motions to the trading post... the TRAPPERS.

YELLOW HORSE
 Your people?

Glass looks back to all the white faces... trappers, drunks, prostitutes. He shakes his head.

GLASS
 No.

YELLOW HORSE
 You come then.

Yellow Horse taps his own chest... points back the way they came. Glass hesitates, almost like he's considering it... then he shakes his head again... points the opposite way.

GLASS
 Fort Union.

Yellow Horse stares at Glass a long beat, then...

YELLOW HORSE

You spend life hunting enemy.
Enemy wins.

GLASS

It will be over soon.

Then Glass pulls the Bear Claw Necklace off... hands it to Yellow Horse. Yellow Horse holds it... then proudly slides it over his head.

GLASS (cont'd)

Thank you.

Yellow Horse raises his hand in goodbye, then spins his horse and starts away. Three Feathers does the same. Glass returns it... watches them ride off.

EXT. FORT BRAZEAU - NIGHT

Glass is in the trees beyond the tents and tee-pees... crouched on the ground... dragging the dirt back over the fire and rocks. He slides up onto the mound... feels the warmth, and smiles... just a little.

EXT. FORT BRAZEAU/LIVERY STABLE - MORNING

Glass cinches up the saddle on his PAINT MARE... straps his gear onto the back.

BRAZEAU (O.S.)

Glass!

Glass peers over his horse... to Brazeau trotting toward him.

BRAZEAU (cont'd)

You are in luck, my friend. How
would you like to get paid for your
trip north?

EXT. FORT BRAZEAU - MORNING

Glass and Brazeau stand with FOUR FRENCH TRAPPERS, (CHARBONNEAU, (40's) TOUSSAINT, (40's) and the brothers, DOMINIQUE and LOUIS CATTOIRE, (both 20's), all dressed in BRIGHT RED SHIRTS with THICK SASHES and KNITTED CAPS. There's also a Scotsman, PROFESSUER, (40's), the Scottish flag painted over his eye-patch.

BRAZEAU

(to Charbonneau)

This is Hugh Glass. The man I told
you about. He knows the land
better than the natives.

CHARBONNEAU

An African. Très bon.

BRAZEAU

(to Glass)

They need a guide to the Big Horn.
That puts you just west of Fort
Union.

CHARBONNEAU

We hear the water there's thick
with Beaver.

(off Glass' nod)

Fifty dollars once we arrive.

PROFESSEUR

Minus ten for each that doesn't
survive the trip. Twenty for me.

TOUSSAINT

Scotsmen should be worth half.

Glass watches the men laugh.

BRAZEAU

Safer travel with numbers, and
fifty dollars in your pocket.

The men wait for Glass' answer, then...

GLASS

When do we leave?

Charbonneau pats Glass on the back.

CHARBONNEAU

Excellent.

EXT. FORT BRAZEAU - LATER

The men are packed and ready... climbing onto their horses.

DOMINIQUE

If I may ask, Monsieur... your
face?

Louis SCOLDS DOMINIQUE IN FRENCH. Dominique yells right back at his brother.

GLASS

Grizzly female protecting her young.

CHARBONNEAU

(smiling)

We will try to avoid those this trip, yes?

Glass nods. Louis spews more FRENCH INSULTS at Dominique, who CURSES LOUIS, then spits at him. In a flash, Louis tackles Dominique, and they roll around the feet of the horses, trading punches.

The other Frenchmen just shrug... climb onto their horses.

TOUSSAINT

Brothers.

Glass climbs onto his paint mare... leads the riders out of camp, as Dominique and Louis continue their battle behind... finally realize they've been left, and scramble up... swing onto their horses, and chase after the group.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY

Snowy and cold. Glass leads the line of riders through the snow.

EXT. FORT UNION - EVENING

But you can't tell if it's day or night through the blizzard. Fitzgerald, Pig, Anderson, Bridger, Murphy and Stubby Joe trudge through the snow in their snowshoes... finally reach the bunkhouse.

INT. BUNKHOUSE - EVENING

Anderson shoves the door closed against the wind... latches it. The men look worn and battered... wind-burnt faces, icicles in their beards.

FITZGERALD

I had enough of this cold as hell shit.

ANDERSON

What'd you figure when ya signed on outta that St. Louis whorehouse you was workin'? That you was headin' off to paradise?

Pig snorts a laugh at Fitzgerald's expense.

FITZGERALD

I tell ya what I figured, I figured I'd be somewhere the piss wouldn't freeze before I got it outta my pecker.

BRIDGER

Figured wrong.

Fitzgerald throws Bridger a glare... wants to throw more, but Bridger's returning the stare... hard... so Fitzgerald decides he'd better not push it.

FITZGERALD

Wasn't no reason to check traps in this weather. Waste a time... while Henry sits warmin' his ass on the stove in his office.

STUBBY BILL

Why don't you go tell him that, Fitz? Then start your hike back to St. Louie.

FITZGERALD

Shit, I walked up here, I got no problem walkin' back.

MURPHY

Contracted for twelve months. We all did.

FITZGERALD

Henry can shove that contract up his toasty warm ass, or I'll do it for him.

The others laugh at Fitzgerald's rambling.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

You don't think I will?

The men shake their heads. Fitzgerald grabs his gloves... starts strapping his snowshoes back on.

ANDERSON

Just give that fat little whore
you're so sweet on a couple extra
bits... she'll have you thinkin'
it's Spring already.

The men laugh as Fitzgerald walks out... leaves the door wide open for the cold wind to pour over the others. Pig scurries over, shoving it closed.

INT. ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY OFFICE - EVENING

Fitzgerald enters... looks around the empty office.

FITZGERALD

Hello? Captain?

The place is empty. Fitzgerald eyes Henry's desk... then past his desk... to the SAFE... its door CRACKED OPEN... STACKS OF MONEY visible inside.

Fitzgerald glances around... looks back to that safe.

INT. BUNKHOUSE - EVENING

Bridger lies on his cot, WRITING IN A JOURNAL. The other men sit around a table playing poker. The door blows open... in stomps Fitzgerald.

Bridger shifts his body, protecting his words from Fitzgerald's eyes.

STUBBY BILL

Back from St. Louie already?

Fitzgerald pulls off his gear... warms his hands over the stove.

FITZGERALD

Henry wasn't in.

ANDERSON

Did you look in that fat whore of yours? Cap mighta been in there.

Laughter from the others. Fitzgerald ignores them... lies down on his cot... lays his fur jacket over himself. Bridger glances at him... goes back to writing.

EXT. FORT UNION - NIGHT

Dark and quiet. The snow has stopped.

INT. BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

Fitzgerald eases up from his cot... looks around at the sleeping men.

EXT. FORT UNION - NIGHT

Fitzgerald slips out of the bunkhouse door... across the compound... toward the front gate.

MURPHY (O.S.)
Where're you headed?

Fitzgerald looks up... sees Murphy in the Blockhouse on sentry duty.

FITZGERALD
To the river, Murphy.

Murphy squints down into the shadows.

MURPHY
Fitzgerald?

FITZGERALD
I left my rifle down there... don't want it out all night.

Murphy laughs... he likes it when Fitzgerald suffers. He waves Fitzgerald out.

EXT. MISSOURI RIVER - NIGHT

Out of sight from the fort. Fitzgerald slides the ANSTADT RIFLE FROM UNDER HIS COAT... hurries down the bank... searches under the brush and snow... pulls out an OVERTURNED CANOE.

He drags it to the icy edge... slides it across the ice toward the middle of the river, where the water still hasn't frozen over. The ice CRACKS UNDER HIS FEET. Fitzgerald climbs in the canoe... pounds the ice with the oar, breaking it loose.

The current seeps through the cracks... catches the canoe, pulling it to the center of the wide river... sends Fitzgerald shooting south. He throws a glance back at the shadow of Fort Union in the distance... growing smaller.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Clear blue sky. The sun glistening off the snow-covered ground. Glass and the Frenchmen are bundled under furs, as they ride through the snowy trees.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CAMP - NIGHT

Tucked under the rooftop of trees. A small fire burns. Glass is sitting on his fire-bed, looking over a map.

The four Frenchmen are digging their own shallow holes... a lesson learned from Glass. Toussaint GROANS... tries to stretch.

TOUSSAINT

I thought we would be there by now.

CHARBONNEAU

How many more days to the Big Horn, Monsieur Glass?

GLASS

Two... maybe three.

TOUSSAINT

And then I hope to never see a horse again.

CUT TO:

PROFESSEUR - CROUCHED IN THE BRUSH...

...pants around his ankles.

PROFESSEUR

My arse hurts too much to shite.

CUT TO:

LOUIS - TOSSING ROCKS INTO HIS HOLE...

...until Dominique reaches in... grabs a few for himself.
Louis shoves Dominique away... takes the rocks back.

CUT TO:

PROFESSEUR - STILL CROUCHED IN THE BRUSH...

...face red, straining. And he's GRUNTING SO LOUD HE DOESN'T
HEAR THE ARIKARA WARRIOR RISE FROM THE SHADOWS BEHIND HIM.

CUT TO:

GLASS - STARING AT THE MAP...

...then hearing Professeur's O.S. SUDDEN MOAN. His head
flies up... he peers into the dark trees.

DOMINIQUE

(laughing)

That is a tough foe, eh,
Professeur?

Then, SWISH... SWISH... SWISH... THREE ARROWS shoot through
the silent night... plant into Dominique's chest and stomach.
He stares at them a beat, then looks to Louis.

DOMINIQUE (cont'd)

Louis?

Dominique drops to his knees.

LOUIS

Dominique!

In a flash of movement, Glass shoves his knife into his belt
and grabs his rifle.

CHARBONNEAU

SAVAGES!

A HATCHET SPINS THROUGH THE AIR... slams into Charbonneau's
chest.

GLASS

Find cover!

The world goes quiet again. Toussaint pulls his pistols...
desperately searches for a target... but the woods appear
empty.

TOUSSAINT

I don't see them.

Glass peers through the brush... sees the nervous horses pulling at the ropes securing them to the trees.

GLASS

We gotta get to the horses.

But Louis isn't interested in escaping... not without Dominique. He drags his brother over beside Glass... rambling in French for Glass to help his brother.

Toussaint is still frantically looking for the attackers, but it's like they're invisible.

TOUSSAINT

I don't see them!

GLASS

(whispers)

Quiet.

But it's too late... THREE ARIKARA WARRIORS pounce on Toussaint... begin beating and stabbing him.

Glass FIRES... sends one of the warriors flying into the bushes. Glass grabs Louis.

GLASS (cont'd)

We gotta go now!

LOUIS

NO! Dominique!

GLASS

Your brother's dead. C'mon.

Glass starts crawling through the brush toward the horses. He looks back... Louis is still huddled over Dominique. Another Arikara leaps from the shadows... Glass spins in time to shove his knife deep into the warrior's belly... drop him to the ground.

Glass rushes back to Louis... pulls him off Dominique.

GLASS (cont'd)

C'mon!

Dominique MOANS, and Louis can't leave him... crawls back crying to his brother. Glass looks up... to SEVERAL ARIKARA POURING THROUGH THE TREES TOWARD THEM... led by ELK'S TONGUE... the necklace of ears hanging around his neck.

And Elk's Tongue's eyes are locked on Glass... like he remembers him.

And this is it... Glass runs or he dies... so Glass spins... charges into the trees, leaving Louis kneeling over Dominique's corpse.

Glass reaches his horse... yanks the rope free, as LOUIS' SCREAMS RAIN OVER HIM. Glass swings up onto the horse... takes off through the forest.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Glass hanging onto the paint mare, as she gallops through the trees... the animal's nostrils spread wide, pulling in all the oxygen it can.

Glass glances back... sees SHAPES BEHIND HIM... HORSES... the Frenchmen's horses... now being ridden by Elk's Tongue and four other warriors.

Glass digs his heels into the horse, squeezing every ounce of speed from her legs... pushing her toward the clearing up ahead... throwing another glance back... then looking in front of him, and realizing it isn't a clearing at all...

...it's the edge of the world.

The paint mare explodes from the trees, then runs out of ground... because she's just galloped off the side of a cliff.

A WATERFALL tumbles down eighty feet into a frozen pool of water below... only the center of the pool is thawed.

The horse sails downward, its legs flailing for something to stand on.

Glass grips the horse's mane with one hand, just hanging on for what seems an endless fall.

The mare SLAMS LEG-FIRST INTO THE ICY SURFACE with Glass still on her back. The ice shatters... the mare SQUEALS... then sinks beneath the surface, carrying Glass with her.

CUT TO:

UNDERWATER - AND GLASS FALLING AWAY FROM THE HORSE... A CRIMSON CLOUD SPREADING IN THE WATER.

Glass loses his rifle... it floats to the bottom.

GLASS - RISING TO THE SURFACE...

...gasping for air... seeing the crippled mare squirming in the water. Glass drags himself out of the water and ice... unhurt, just shivering in the cold. He looks up...

...to Elk's Tongue and the others staring down at him from the top of the cliff... with no way to get to Glass.

Glass and the horse float down the melted, flowing center of the river... disappear around a bend. *

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT *

The frantic mare flails in the water... finally pulls herself through the splintering ice... up onto the shore... gushing blood... drags her BROKEN BACK LEG to shore... standing... falling... standing again, limping into the trees, then collapsing. *

Glass crawls after her, his entire body soaked... convulsing from the cold. He reaches the fallen horse... cuts the saddle free with his knife, and shakily pulls the blanket off... wraps it around himself. His wet clothes are already starting to stiffen in the freezing air. Glass is going to freeze to death.

He stares at the dead horse a beat, then pulls the knife back, and SLAMS IT INTO THE HORSE'S STOMACH... begins slicing the mare's belly open. His hands shake so much he can barely control the knife.

Blood and organs spill out, staining the snow. Steam rises from the remains. Glass keeps on cutting... turning his head from the smell, as he pulls out whatever doesn't ooze out on its own... emptying the carcass.

Glass peels off his wet furs, then does what we didn't think was possible... he begins crawling feet-first into the horse's hollow belly... holding its ribs up so he can slip inside... curling up... SQUISHING IN... deeper... deeper... until only his head remains outside of the horse.

Glass wraps the blanket around his face and head, then pulls the upper side of the horse's stomach down... sealing the warmth inside... doing everything he can to survive.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - MORNING

The dead horse... its fur white and icy... Glass' blanket-wrapped head still protruding from the seam in its stomach. And nothing's moving... the whole world looks frozen stiff...

...until Glass' head shifts... the CRACKING OF FROZEN FLESH, as he lifts the upper half of the belly. It's like a cocoon tearing open. He rolls out of the carcass, hitting the ground, and squinting up into the warmth of the sun.

The horse's blood covers his clothes. He slides the frozen fur back over himself, then looks around, taking in the situation... there's not much to see... his rifle gone... supplies gone... just the knife.

Glass shoves the knife into his belt, unties the snowshoes from the back of the saddle, and straps them on. He gazes up at the sun for direction, then starts walking over the snow. Alone... in the middle of nowhere... again.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY

From high above... the small shape of Glass making his way over the snowy ground... heading toward TWO DISTANT SHACKS.

EXT. FORT TALBOT - DAY

A makeshift town on the banks of the Missouri. Two ramshackle structures... the General Store and a tattered livery stable filled with horses.

INT. FORT TALBOT/GENERAL STORE - DAY

More like a saloon that sells a few supplies. A gang of TRAPPERS drink and play cards. A RUNTY MAN stands behind the counter, watching them...

...until the door blows open, and in steps Glass. He pulls the fur hat away from his face, and what a sight he is... scarred face stiff from the cold... pants stained with the mare's blood... ice frozen in his beard.

The room falls silent... everyone staring at Glass. Until TRAPPER #1 snorts a laugh. Glass limps to the counter. All eyes follow him.

GLASS
 (struggling to make his
 frozen lips move)
 I'm Hugh Glass of...

RUNTY MAN
 We don't serve niggers.

Glass stares at the Runty Man a beat, then...

GLASS
 Of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company
 on my way to Fort Union.

RUNTY MAN
 I don't care if you was with Lewis
 and Clark headed for the new world.
 We don't serve niggers.

GLASS
 All I need is a horse and enough
 supplies to...

TRAPPER
 Ice musta froze up his ears, 'cause
 he ain't listenin' to you, Cees.

GLASS
 ...to get me to Fort Union. I can
 sign a draft made good by Captain
 Henry.

The Runty Man just stares at Glass... grins a TOOTHLESS GRIN.

RUNTY MAN
 What the fuck happened to your
 face, boy? You try to slice all
 the black off?

TRAPPER #2
 Maybe we oughta help him do it
 right.

FAT TRAPPER
 Best get on your way, boy.

Glass stares back at the men for a long beat, then...

GLASS
 I'm Hugh Glass of the Rocky
 Mountain Fur Company, and all I
 need is...

RUNTY MAN
 (to the trappers)
 Do you believe this shit?

Trapper #1 and Trapper #2 pull the SKINNING KNIVES from their belts... start toward Glass.

FAT TRAPPER
 Hell, I warned ya.

GLASS
 All I need...

And that's when Trapper #1 grabs for Glass, but in a flash of movement that catches them all off-guard, Glass has his own knife pulled and JAMMED UNDER TRAPPER #1's CHIN.

Everyone freezes.

GLASS (cont'd)
 ...is a horse and enough supplies
 to get me to Fort Union.

Then Glass slides Trapper #1's PISTOL from his belt... aims it at the other men.

GLASS (cont'd)
 And this shooter here. All made
 good by Captain Henry and The Rocky
 Mountain Fur Company.

EXT. FORT TALBOT - DAY

The snow pours down on the Runty Man and the trappers, as they stand outside, rifles aimed into the distance.

RUNTY MAN
 Shoot him, goddammit!

TRAPPER #2
 I can't get a clear look.

CUT TO:

GLASS - GALLOPING AWAY ON HORSEBACK...

...with Trapper #1 sitting backward on the horse behind him. Glass has the pistol jammed into his ribs, and keeps glancing back to the men growing smaller behind him.

Finally, Glass shoves the man off the back of the horse.
Trapper #1 tumbles into the snow.

The RUMBLE OF DISTANT GUNSHOTS... too far away to reach
Glass, who just keeps racing north.

CUT TO:

THE RUNTY MAN - WATCHING GLASS ESCAPE.

RUNTY MAN
Get after the son of a bitch!

The trappers exchange glances... don't move.

TRAPPER #2
It's cold as hell, Cees.

FAT TRAPPER
And he did say to put it all on the
Rocky Mountain tab.

The Runty Man glares at the trappers.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - EVENING

Glass riding the horse at a trot through the snow.

EXT. FORT UNION - NIGHT

Thick with fog, and silent as death. The moon fights its way
through the mist, sending an eerie glow over the fort.

EXT. FORT UNION/BLOCKHOUSE - NIGHT

Stubby Bill sits dozing in a chair, his rifle across his lap.
O.S. CRUNCHING... getting louder... loud enough to nudge
Stubby Bill awake. He sits up... peers over the wall, but
can't see anything in the fog... just hears the CRUNCHING
MOVING CLOSER... FOOTSTEPS IN THE CRISP SNOW.

CUT TO:

STUBBY BILL'S POV...

...on the blanket of fog hanging in the air... that same
CRUNCHING, as a SHADOW APPEARS... growing clearer...

a FIGURE walking... leading a horse behind him... appearing out of the mist like a ghost... GLASS.

STUBBY BILL - STARES DOWN IN SHOCK...

...sure his eyes are betraying him. But then Glass looks straight up at Stubby Bill, and there's no doubt.

STUBBY BILL
Jesus Christ.

INT. BUNKHOUSE - NIGHT

Dark and quiet... just Pig's snoring rattling the silence. Suddenly the door kicks open... SLAMS into the wall... and there's GLASS' SILHOUETTE FILLING THE DOORWAY.

GROANS from the awakened men... hands moving through the dark for oil lamps... turning them bright... until the room's fully lit... and they all see Glass standing there... eyes floating across the room, searching for a target. The men just stare back at him, like they're all part of the same dream.

Except for Bridger, who's propped up in his cot like he's been waiting all night... waiting every night... for Glass to appear in that doorway. A tear slips down his young face.

BRIDGER
I'm sorry.

Glass raises the stolen pistol... aims it at Bridger. And the young man doesn't flinch... almost as if he wants to make sure Glass doesn't miss.

The other men just watch in silence, not sure what the hell's going on.

Glass holds his aim on Bridger's face... a face that's haunted him... kept him alive. *

GLASS
You took everything I had... left me to die. *

Glass walks toward Bridger, the gun still raised... each step of his feet on the wood floor is like the thud of an executioner's drum. *

Mumbling from the other men, as they watch this ghost reach Bridger... stand over him, the pistol aimed down. *

Suddenly, Henry hustles in, half-dressed from where Stubby Bill awoke him. *

HENRY
Hugh. Wait. *

But Glass isn't listening... he's locked on his target. *

GLASS
(to Bridger)
Why? *

Bridger's too frightened to answer. *

GLASS (cont'd)
WHY! *

Bridger flinches at the burst of Glass' voice. Then... *

BRIDGER
I was scared of dyin'.
(beat)
But every day since, I've wished I
had. *

Glass' finger tightens on the trigger, ready to make Bridger's wish come true. *

The rest of the bunkhouse watches this execution in wide-eyed, stone silence, afraid to move. *

GLASS
There wasn't no 'Ree that night,
was there? *

BRIDGER
(shakes his head)
But I didn't know that til later. *

ANGLE ON GLASS' EYES... frozen on Bridger.

FLASHCUT TO:

BRIDGER... IN THE CAMP THAT LAST NIGHT... STARING BACK AT THE HELPLESS GLASS.

BRIDGER
I'm sorry.

Then taking off into the trees.

FLASHCUT TO:

GLASS... STANDING OVER LOUIS AND DOMINIQUE... PULLING FOR LOUIS TO LEAVE HIS DYING BROTHER.

GLASS

C'MON!

Then Glass seeing the charging Arikara... spinning to the trees... hearing LOUIS' SCREAMS behind him.

BACK TO GLASS...

...still holding his aim on Bridger, as LOUIS' SCREAMS fade over him. But then Glass' arm sinks... he lowers his aim... throws a glance around the bunkhouse.

GLASS (cont'd)

Where's Fitzgerald and my rifle?

HENRY

Deserted two days ago. Along with about five hundred dollars of company money.

Glass turns to Henry.

HENRY (cont'd)

Helluva nice surprise, seein' you, Hugh. Let's get some coffee to warm you up.

(to Glass, but looking at Bridger)

I wanna hear what happened.

Glass looks back to Bridger... they hold a long stare, until Glass walks out.

BRIDGER

Wait. Please!

But Glass and Henry disappear, leaving Bridger alone with all those eyes burning into him. Bridger looks to Pig, but Pig just lowers his eyes... can't even look at the boy.

Bridger leaps off his cot... runs out the door.

EXT. FORT UNION/BUNKHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Bridger runs barefoot through the snow, chasing after Glass.

BRIDGER

WAIT!

Bridger grabs Glass by the arm.

BRIDGER (cont'd)

You gotta kill me for what I done to you! Please.

GLASS

You kept me alive for days. Only let me die for a second. That's better than most men would do.

BRIDGER

But you saved me. You saved me, and figured I'd do the same.

GLASS

Fear pushes us into doin' things we never thought we could. And we all gotta lay down at night with that screamin' in our heads.

Glass continues on. Bridger watches him move across the grounds. The other men are all dressed now... walking past Bridger to go hear Glass' story. And it's Bridger's turn to look at the ground in shame as they pass him.

INT. ROCKY MOUNTAIN FUR COMPANY OFFICE - NIGHT

Glass sits by the warmth of the stove, sipping coffee. Henry's behind he desk, with the other men scattered around.

GLASS

Spent the night inside that dead mare, then hiked over to Fort Talbot.

STUBBY BILL

Christ almighty.

GLASS

And you may hear from the fella there about a stoled horse and supplies charged to you.

HENRY

We'll take care of it. You should go settle in.

MURPHY

There's a couple fair whores next door that'll ease the miles on ya, scars or not.

Stubby Bill gives Murphy an elbow.

ANDERSON

Jesus, Murph.

MURPHY

I just meant I'd go roust one of
'em for ya if you wanted.

GLASS

She can take the night off, but I
wouldn't mind the use of her bed.

HENRY

(to Murphy)

Go clear out a room. The rest head
on back to bunk.

Murphy hustles out. The others move toward the door, each
stopping to shake Glass' hand, or give him a pat on the back.

PIG

I told ya I'd see ya up here. You
remember that, Hugh?

GLASS

I do, Pig. You must have a little
gypsy in ya.

Pig grins and nods.

PIG

I'll see ya in the mornin'.

Pig exits, leaving just Glass and Henry, sitting in a beat of
silence, until...

HENRY

Can I talk you outta what you're
planning?

Glass doesn't answer... just stands, placing the coffee cup
on the table.

GLASS

Thank you for what you done for
me... stitchin' me back together...
givin' me a chance.

HENRY

I'm offerin' you another right
now... to stay here... let this
thing go.

GLASS

(beat)

He thinks he let me die. But he don't know that he's the one that's kept me alive... for the chance of findin' him... makin' him pay for what he done.

HENRY

The law will make Fitzgerald pay.

Glass stares out the window... his SCARRED REFLECTION stares back at him.

GLASS

You told me once that other men didn't think like him.

(beat)

But the truth is, most do. I seen it my whole life... the looks folks give... the whisperin'. I watched my wife and son die from the fever on accounta no white doctor would care for 'em. Wasn't no different to them than if their neighbor's dog was sick.

(beat)

So I don't figure nobody's gonna care much that Fitzgerald took some dyin' nigger's rifle, and left him in the middle of nowhere.

(turns to Henry)

Do you, Captain?

Henry doesn't answer... because he knows Glass is right.

GLASS (cont'd)

I thank you for the coffee.

Glass walks out. Henry just sits there.

EXT. FORT UNION - DAY

Glass, Henry and Murphy stand by Glass' horse, as he ties off his supplies.

MURPHY

He said he was goin' to get his rifle...

And then Murphy catches himself... shrugs.

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MURPHY (cont'd)

Your rifle. But he never showed back up. The next day I figured him mighta fell in, but then Pig seen the canoe was missin'.

HENRY

And the money was gone.

GLASS

I'll make my way down river. See what turns up.

Glass pulls the cinch tight around the horse. Stubby Bill comes waddling toward them.

STUBBY BILL

The kid's gone... gear and all. Musta slipped out before light.

Stubby Bill waves Bridger's journal at them.

STUBBY BILL (cont'd)

Just left this on his bunk.

Henry takes the journal... flips it open.

HENRY

(reading)

"Every day I think about what I done. I want to tell Pig and the others the truth but am afraid what they'll think of me. I look at Fitzgerald and want to kill him but am afraid to try. I am a coward and wish he hadn't been lyin about the Ree that night. I wish they had come and kilt us both."

Glass considers the words a beat, then swings onto his horse.

GLASS

If I run across the boy, I'll send him back your way.

Glass sees Pig on horseback, trotting toward them, a big grin covering his face.

GLASS (cont'd)

Where're you headed?

PIG

With you.

HENRY
 Fitzgerald stole five hundred
 dollars from us. Rocky Mountain
 Fur Company wants him too.

Glass sees what they're doing... shakes his head.

GLASS
 I can do this on my own.

HENRY
 I know you can.

PIG
 I'm just comin' along for
 conversation.

Glass stares at the smiling Pig a beat, then allows the
 smallest of smiles himself. He pulls his horse around...
 heads for the river. Pig follows him, waving over his
 shoulder to Henry and the others.

STUBBY BILL
 You figure they'll find him, Cap?

A beat, then...

HENRY
 I'm afraid they will.

EXT. ROCK LEDGE - DAY

From above Fort Union. Our POV on Glass and Pig riding south
 along the icy river.

And then we see our POV is Bridger's... standing along the
 ledge, loaded with all his gear. He watches the riders
 another moment, then turns... hikes the opposite direction...
 leaving Fort Union behind forever.

EXT. FORT TALBOT/GENERAL STORE - DAY

The Runty Man behind the counter. A few of the same Trappers
 drinking... playing cards. Just another day at Fort Talbot.

The door swings open, and a FUR-COVERED FIGURE enters.

RUNTY MAN
 We ain't got no food to spare,
 friend, if that's what you're
 lookin' for.

The figure pulls back his furs, and we see it's Fitzgerald... cold and miserable.

FITZGERALD

Then what the hell have ya got?

RUNTY MAN

Whiskey and blankets mostly.
Weather's held back deliveries.

Fitzgerald throws a glance to the Trappers.

FITZGERALD

Gimme a couple bottles then.
Goddamn ice shredded my boat. Been
walkin' for two days.

The Runty Man hands Fitzgerald the bottles. Fitzgerald pops one... gulps some down.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

How much for one of them horses out
there?

RUNTY MAN

Horses ain't cheap this time a
year.

FITZGERALD

Whatever the price, Rocky Mountain
Fur Company's good for it.

And those words stop everything. The Trappers all turn from their game. The Runty Man glares at Fitzgerald.

RUNTY MAN

You're the second son of a bitch
come in here makin' that claim.
And the first one left a bad taste.

FITZGERALD

That right? Well I don't know
nothin' about that. Just that I
need a horse.

RUNTY MAN

So did this other fella. So he
stole one... along with Lange's
pistola.

Trapper #1 nods to Fitzgerald.

FITZGERALD

Fine then, I'll pay cash for the horse. How much?

RUNTY MAN

How 'bout you pay for your friend's too.

TRAPPER #1

And my shooter.

FITZGERALD

Wasn't my friend.

Trapper #1 stands up.

TRAPPER #1

Then from where I stand, you don't got no friends at all.

The other Trappers glare at Fitzgerald. The Runty Man just grins that toothless smile of his. Fitzgerald's in a bind, and he knows it.

FITZGERALD

Yeah, okay. I'll collect from him. How much?

RUNTY MAN

How 'bout we say eighty...
(sees Fitzgerald doesn't argue)
...five.

Fitzgerald starts digging into his pocket.

FITZGERALD

You boys are leavin' me with nothin'. Better be a helluva horse.

RUNTY MAN

Pick of the litter.

The Runty Man snatches the cash.

RUNTY MAN (cont'd)

And when you see that scarred-up nigger, you tell him he'd best not show up here again.

Fitzgerald freezes... not sure he heard correctly.

FITZGERALD

When I see who?

RUNTY MAN

The black son of a bitch that
robbed me. You tell him that.

FITZGERALD

What kinda scars did this fella
have?

RUNTY MAN

All over his face. Like he'd been
took apart then pieced back
together.

(off Fitzgerald's look)

What, you don't know him?

A long beat, then...

FITZGERALD

I know him. You say he was headed
up to Union?

RUNTY MAN

That's what he told us. Seemed
real anxious to get there too.

FITZGERALD

(nods)

I'll make sure to give him the
message when I find him.

EXT. FORT TALBOT - DAY

Fitzgerald sits on the horse, staring back over the ground...
his LINE OF TRACKS LEADING THROUGH THE SNOW. He turns...
looks south, then back to the tracks.

FITZGERALD

You ain't gonna ever stop trackin'
me.

Fitzgerald digs his heels into the horse.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

So I'll find you first.

The horse takes off, right along Fitzgerald's tracks in the
snow.

EXT. MISSOURI RIVER - DAY

Thick ice along the edges, tapering to a narrow stream of flowing water at the very center.

Glass and Pig ride along the snow-covered bank.

PIG

Hugh.

Pig points. Glass follows his finger along the river... to a CANOE resting on the bank ahead. They dismount... examine the canoe... the letters "RMFC" painted on the side.

PIG (cont'd)

That's it.

Glass runs his mittened hand along the gashes in the wood.

GLASS

Ice tore it up.

Glass looks to the FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW, leading deep into the trees. He glances up to the sky... clear and blue.

GLASS (cont'd)

If the snow holds off, we'll have a good trail to track.

PIG

What's out that direction?

GLASS

Talbot and the Missouri. Doubt he'd risk the river with the 'Ree. Likely grab a horse, and cross over high... take his chances goin' east. When'd you say he skipped out?

PIG

'Bout three days ago now.

GLASS

We best pick up our pace.

They climb back onto their horses... trot into the trees.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY

Glass and Pig gallop across, their path dead on Fitzgerald's tracks.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The snow is shallow here, the ground protected by the trees. There's a black spot where a fire once burned, and footprints all over the place. Glass is off his horse, crouched, studying the site... lifting the charred chunks of wood.

PIG

You figure it was Fitzgerald camped here?

GLASS

Couple nights back. But these tracks aren't all his.

PIG

He's travelin' with somebody?

GLASS

(shakes his head)

Came in after. Prints are smooth. Mocassins.

A little bit of panic washes over Pig's face.

PIG

Oh, hell, 'Ree?

GLASS

Can't be sure.

PIG

Mocassins. Could be Sioux... Blackfoot even.

GLASS

Could be.

PIG

But you figure they're 'Ree, don't ya?

GLASS

I don't know, Pig. But whoever it is, they're a good day behind Fitzgerald.

Glass walks, leading his horse, as he follows the tracks away from camp. Pig rides after him.

GLASS (cont'd)

And they're on his trail too, so we should keep it quiet... don't let 'em know we're back here.

PIG

Maybe we oughta think on this some, Hugh. If it's 'Ree... we might be gettin' more 'an we bargained on.

Glass swings up onto his horse.

GLASS

But like you said, it could be Sioux or Blackfoot.

PIG

'Cept you figure it's 'Ree.

Glass just trots off. Pig watches him a beat, then throws a nervous glance into the trees... hurries after Glass.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CAMP - NIGHT

Glass kneels on the ground, building a fire-bed... dragging the dirt over the fire and rocks.

PIG

(whispers)

What is that?

GLASS

A trick I picked up. Helps keep the chill off.

Pig lays his hand on the mound of dirt... feels the warmth, and grins.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CAMP - LATER

ANGLE ON A MOUND OF DIRT...

...with Pig sitting on top of it, a blanket wrapped around him, holding a rifle. His eyes dart around, searching the night for any movement.

Glass sleeps nearby.

O.S. RUSTLING in the bushes straight across from Pig. He sits frozen... staring. He eases the hammer back... waits... waits... but everything is silent...

...until MORE RUSTLING... LOUDER... and Pig panics... scrambles up to his knees, but DROPS HIS RIFLE. It hits the ground... BOOM... the shot explodes into the trees.

Glass shoots up, rifle already drawn... and sees the DEER leaping away. Glass throws a look to the embarrassed Pig, who shrugs.

PIG
(still whispering)
Hammer slipped.

CUT TO:

FITZGERALD - SQUATTING BESIDE A SMALL FIRE...

...staring out into the darkness, as the GUNSHOT ECHOES OVER HIM. Fitzgerald immediately throws dirt over the flames.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CAMP - NIGHT

Glass and Pig are loaded up, back on their horses.

PIG
So much for stayin' quiet. I sure am sorry.

GLASS
We needed to pick up some time anyways.
(beat)
Just don't aim that shooter of yours in my direction.

Pig snorts a chuckle.

PIG
I'd never do that, Hugh.

The two riders disappear into the dark trees.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CLEARING - NIGHT

Glass and Pig riding across a meadow. And Pig's horse is limping badly.

PIG
I need to hold up.

Glass stops. Pig climbs down... lifts his horse's front left hoof... digs out the snow and ice.

PIG (cont'd)
Hope she didn't bust nothin'.
'Else I might have to hop up with
you for a spell.

But Glass isn't listening... he's got his head tilted back, sniffing the air.

PIG (cont'd)
Whatta ya got?

GLASS
Smoke.

Glass pulls off his mitten... licks his finger, sticking it up in the air... feeling the wind's direction. He turns his horse into the breeze... squints out into the night.

GLASS (cont'd)
Fix her up while I go take a look.

PIG
Just gimme a minute, and I'll go
too. Don't know what you'll find.

GLASS
Probably nothin'.

Glass trots off. Pig watches him ride away, then goes back to the horse's hoof.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Splinters of moonlight shoot through the pines. Glass on horseback, walking through the trees... appearing and disappearing.

He spots something in the distance... the slightest of glows. Glass eases off his horse... wraps the reins around a branch.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CLEARING - NIGHT

Pig's bent over, the horse's left front foot across one knee, as he digs at the hoof with his knife blade. The horse jumps.

PIG

Easy now.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Glass moves silently through the darkness... rifle poised to aim and fire... just like the first time we saw him, perfectly comfortable in this world.

His eyes shine in the darkness, drifting back and forth... picking up everything.

He reaches the glow... the remains of a campfire. The slightest bit of dying smoke rises into the air. Glass crouches down, studying the surround ground... HOOOF-PRINTS blended in with the other tracks.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CLEARING - NIGHT

Pig still hunched over, working on the horse's raised leg.

Then beyond Pig... under the horse's stomach, we see TWO FEET walk up on the other side of the horse... take another step closer...

...and then Pig sees them too... drops the leg, and shoots upright... sees Fitzgerald standing on the other side, leading his horse with the reins in one hand, and Glass' Anstadt in the other, ready to fire.

FITZGERALD

Helluva cold night to be out, huh,
Pig?

Pig just stares back at Fitzgerald and that rifle. His eyes drift to his own rifle, strapped onto his saddle.

Fitzgerald starts easing around the horse toward Pig.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

Whatcha huntin'?

Pig makes a grab for the rifle.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Glass running his fingers across the tracks. Suddenly an O.S. GUNSHOT EXPLODES IN THE DISTANCE. Glass spins to it... races back through the trees toward his horse.

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT

Glass at full gallop through the woods... veering between trees... ducking branches.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CLEARING - NIGHT

Glass charges from the forest... tears through the snow toward Pig's horse. He gallops around it, and there is PIG'S BODY face-up in the snow.

GLASS

Pig!

Glass hops off, rifle in hand, searching the darkness as he kneels beside Pig.

And Pig is a bloody mess... a GUNSHOT WOUND in his chest leaking out onto the snow... HIS HEAD SCALPED... LEFT EAR SLICED OFF.

GLASS (cont'd)

Jesus, no... no.

Glass stands back up, turning in a circle, as he peers into the distance around him. But there's nothing out there. Glass SCREAMS in rage.

He turns back to Pig... crouches down over him.

GLASS (cont'd)

I'm sorry I made you a part of this.

As Glass looks at Pig, he notices something... takes Pig by the chin, and tilts his head. And PIG'S RIGHT EAR HAS BEEN CUT OFF AS WELL.

Glass stares at it.

YELLOW HORSE (V.O.)

He say Arikara take right ear of Sioux. Left ear of whites. Not know what they take from you.

Glass looks back across the clearing.

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT

Glass on horseback, leading Pig's horse behind him. Pig's fur-covered body is draped over the saddle.

EXT. FROZEN RIVER - NIGHT

A thick layer of ice covers the narrow river, thinning just a bit at the center. Glass kneels near the middle, chopping at the thick ice to get to the water beneath. He makes a hole... dips his canteen down into it, glancing around into the darkness. Then he turns... starts up a slope.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CAMP - NIGHT

Glass rises up the slope to the horses tied in the trees... Pig still laying across the saddle of his horse in his bloody furs.

He moves to a SMALL FIRE flickering in the night... sits beside it, and warms his hands.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CAMP - LATER

Glass digs at the ground with his knife, building a fire-bed.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CAMP - LATER

The world is silent. The fire has burned down to nothing. Glass is wrapped in his furs, sitting on the firebed, and propped up against a tree, the rifle across his lap.

And Glass' head has slumped forward enough that all we can see is the top of his fur cap... HE'S FALLEN ASLEEP.

ANGLE ON GLASS' HORSE... it's ears suddenly perking up... reacting to something.

CUT TO:

POV FROM OUTSIDE THE CAMP...

...behind Glass... drifting slowly closer.

CUT TO:

GLASS...

...not moving... still asleep.

CUT TO:

PIG'S HORSE...

...sensing the invader... SNORTING... pulling at its rope to get a better view... shifting Pig's body on its back.

CUT TO:

FITZGERALD...

...creeping through the brush toward Glass... closer... closer... re-gripping the knife in his hand for the best feel, as he eases up behind the tree... behind Glass... stretches the knife around toward Glass' throat, then PRESSES THE TIP INTO THE FURS.

FITZGERALD

Howdy, Glass.

Fitzgerald grabs Glass by the fur hat, snapping his head back.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

Look at me when I gut you, boy.

And the eyes do look at Fitzgerald... but they aren't Glass' eyes... they're Pig's.

Fitzgerald stares at Pig's lifeless face, shocked... confused.

ANGLE ON PIG'S HORSE...

...and what we thought was Pig... MOVING... the bloody fur-covered arm reaching for the rifle on the saddle... the head raising up... it's GLASS... taking aim...

...as Fitzgerald realizes what's happened... drops the knife and SWINGS THE ANSTADT over his shoulder... spins...

...to Glass laying across the horse... rifle dead set on Fitzgerald... BOOM... BOOM... both rifles explode...

...Fitzgerald goes flying backward into the brush.

Fitzgerald's shot hits Pig's horse, sending it rearing up, tossing Glass to the ground.

But Glass is on his feet in a flash... racing across camp... grabbing his rifle from Pig's lap... charging into the brush...

...but FITZGERALD IS GONE.

Until the flash of movement behind Glass... he turns... as the butt of the Anstadt whips through the air... WHACK... clubs him across the head, sending him tumbling down the slope to the frozen river.

Fitzgerald swings the Anstadt back over his BLOODY SHOULDER, snatches up his knife, and charges down the slope to finish Glass off.

EXT. FROZEN RIVER - NIGHT

Glass lies on the ice, barely conscious. Blood oozes down his head... over his eyes. He wipes it away to see Fitzgerald barreling down toward him.

Fitzgerald dives in attack, but Glass kicks up his leg, sending Fitzgerald flying over... SLAMMING into the frozen river, his head CRACKING THE ICE.

Glass rips the knife from his belt... moves after Fitzgerald, his feet slipping and sliding under him.

Fitzgerald rises to his feet... the men charge like two wild animals... crash into each other... knives flailing.

They roll along the ice, blades glistening... slicing through furs... across flesh.

Fitzgerald thrusts his knife down... plants it through the back of Glass' hand, pinning it to the ice. Glass CRIES OUT... drops his own knife to pull Fitzgerald's out. As he does, Fitzgerald kicks Glass in the face, sending him sailing back... sliding to the center of the river.

The thin ice around him splinters... cracks. Glass looks up... sees Fitzgerald stalking toward him, HOLDING BOTH KNIVES now. Glass is trapped...

...until he pounds his elbow down on the weakened ice... it begins to give... he pounds it again and again... Fitzgerald speeds up to get to Glass in time... raises one of the knives, as Glass shatters the ice... drops beneath the surface.

Fitzgerald rushes after him, but the ice cracks under his feet, forcing him back.

CUT TO:

UNDERWATER...

...and Glass just under the ice, floating with the current. His fingers search for a hole, but there's nothing.

CUT TO:

FITZGERALD...

...making his way down the river, peering through the ice, searching for Glass. He spots something... stops... leans close to make out the shape... it's GLASS' FEET.

Then suddenly, GLASS' FIST EXPLODES THROUGH THE ICE AT FITZGERALD'S FEET... grab Fitzgerald's leg, pulling him down.

Fitzgerald crashes to the ice... it splinters around him... gives away, and he sinks into the icy water... but the ANSTADT STRAPPED AROUND HIM CATCHES ON THE ICE... holds him against the current.

Glass drags himself from the water... stands... stares down at Fitzgerald trapped in the hole... his face looking up at Glass through the ice. Glass lifts one of the fallen knives... stands over Fitzgerald.

FITZGERALD
(through the water and
ice)
Help me!
(off Glass' stare)
Glass... please!

Glass hesitates a beat, staring at him, just as he did with Bridger that night in the bunkhouse. And then Glass leans down... grabs the Anstadt to pull Fitzgerald up.

Except Glass SLICES THE STRAP OF THE ANSTADT, sending Fitzgerald floating away under the ice, as Glass holds on to the Anstadt.

CUT TO:

FITZGERALD...

...floating under the surface... pounding at the ice as he drifts, until his swinging slows... stops... his body drifts away.

EXT. FROZEN RIVER - NIGHT

Glass stands on the ice, blood dripping down his face, holding his Anstadt. He begins to tremble... not from the cold, but from finally reaching the end of this journey. His eyes begin to fill with tears...

...and then he sees ELK'S TONGUE, and SEVERAL OTHER ARIKARA WARRIORS watching him from the other side of the river.

Glass and Elk's Tongue exchange a long stare, until finally Glass SCREAMS OUT.

GLASS

I am Tatanka Wicasa! I have killed
whites and I have killed Arikara
and I have killed grizzly! AND I
WILL KILL YOU!

Elk's Tongue doesn't move... just stares back at Glass... soaked in blood and water. Then Glass CRIES OUT at the warriors again.

GLASS (cont'd)

COME ON!

But the Arikara don't attack... don't move at all... until Elk's Tongue gives Glass the SLIGHTEST OF NODS, then turns... they disappear back into the trees.

Glass watches them fade away, then collapses to his knees on the icy river... exhausted in every possible way. He begins to cry.

EXT. SIOUX VILLAGE - DAY

Yellow Horse sits outside his tee-pee, whittling on a chunk
of wood... just the way Glass once had. The BEAR-CLAW
NECKLACE dangles around his neck. New Moon and Little One
play in the snow with other children.

As they play, New Moon stops... squints into the distance,
then smiles.

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NEW MOON
Tatanka Wicasa!

Yellow Horse looks up... sees Glass riding toward the village. He smiles... looks across to Waki, stepping out of a tee-pee to see Glass approaching.

Yellow Horse stands... they start walking to Glass, as the children race through the snow after him, calling out his name.

Glass slides down off his horse, leads it toward them. The children bounce around Glass, tugging on his sleeves. Yellow Bear spots the ANSTADT RIFLE strapped to the saddle... he and Glass exchange a nod... it's finished.

Then they walk together toward the village... Glass has finally found a place he belongs... a place to go on living.

FADE OUT.

THE END