

THE REVENANT

Screenplay by

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FADE IN:

EXT. WILDERNESS - DUSK

The warm amber light, painting the treetops. We pan across the trees and landscape, nature at it's most beautiful.

As the CAMERA CONTINUES TO PAN, the purple-blue sky is suddenly tarnished by black smoke. First a wisp, then darker.

The day seems to turn black as the CAMERA PANS down...

EXT. A VILLAGE - CONTINUOUS

A horrifying scene. Huts on fire. Black smoke. Bodies litter the ground. INDIAN MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN. As well as SOLDIERS all lying dead. The terrible conclusion to an epic struggle.

CLOSE ON A SOLDIER sitting, staring straight ahead. Piercing black eyes. A rifle across his lap. His face is bloody and smudged with soot. Unblinking...

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS HIS ARM down to his hand which rests on the chest of a LITTLE BOY. Could be Indian. Could be white.

The little boy is burned horribly, his face is black, blistered and peeling... His eyes wide open in pain and terror.

The boy coughs, and we can see that the coughing causes torturous pain. He cries, and the tears burn his face.

CLOSE ON THE SOLDIER his expression suffering with the pain of the child.

The Soldier stands. The child moans and reaches toward him.

SOLDIER
(To the child.)
It's okay.

He walks through the bodies and carnage and picks up a canteen that was laying by a dead soldier.

As he walks back toward the boy, he spots the body of an INDIAN WOMAN, lifeless at his feet. He bends down, and gently pulls her dress down over her bruised thighs. Then tenderly reaches up and pushes the hair from her face. He gently folds her arms across her chest. Pours some of the water from the canteen into his hand and washes some soot from her cheek. Stares at her face for a moment. Pain.

The child moans. The Soldier stands up and walks to him. He lifts the child's head carefully. Incredible pain. He delicately pours some water onto the child's lips. The child slurps, thirsty, then coughs. Torture. He lays the boy's head back down onto his lap.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)

I know you want this to be over. I know it. I understand. But, you don't give up. You hear me? As long as you can still grab a breath. You fight. You have to fight. What comes later, comes later. But for now you fight, and you don't stop. I'm right here. I'll be right here...

A moan from somewhere else. The Soldier looks up to see one of the other Soldiers trying to crawl.

WOUNDED SOLDIER

(Barely audible.)

Help... me... please...

The Soldier, gently lays the boy's head back on the ground and hurries over to the Wounded Soldier...

When he reaches him, he lifts his rifle and blows a part of the Wounded Soldier's head apart.

He calmly walks back to the child, places his head on his lap, feeds him some water and strokes his hair. Staring straight ahead...

THE CAMERA PANS UP INTO THE SKY

It moves across the beautiful tree tops. The smoke eventually dissipating.

Finally, it PANS DOWN through the forest and into the dense underbrush. Wild and untamed, the terrain at once beautiful and forbidding.

Eerily quiet, the thick, still air is violently pierced by shafts of the setting sun. Through this stillness, we begin to hear the sound of leaves and branches scraping against the earth.

CLOSE ON

The head of a wild boar. Now dead, the swollen tongue protrudes and the eyes are wide open, frozen in it's final expression of terror. It is being dragged. Blood coats the dirt in it's wake.

PULL BACK to reveal two young men who each hold an arm as they drag the animal through the underbrush. BRIDGER, 23, a boyish face with a determined expression, and HAWK, 14, lanky and awkward still on the other side of his manhood. Hawk's face terribly scarred from the burns he suffered as a child. They struggle with the effort of pulling the beast.

After a moment, we hear a pointed and deliberate clicking sound. The boys instantly stop in their tracks and fall dead still. The sound of a rifle being cocked...

CLOSE ON

HUGH GLASS, 55, his piercing black eyes pointed with laser like precision at something in the distance. Older and more worn, he is the soldier we saw earlier.

Never changing his focus, he reaches behind his back and pulls from his belt a swath of animal hide. He wraps it tightly and expertly around the muzzle of his rifle in the hopes of deadening the sound. He raises the rifle slowly and deliberately.

CLOSE ON

A young elk, who has spotted Glass bearing down on him. But the elk does not run. He stands frozen and staring at Glass... peaceful... waiting....

CUT TO:

EXT. MISSOURI RIVER - SIMULTANEOUS

JOHN FITZGERALD, (37), solid and thick, the STRIP OF AN OLD SCALPED SCAR runs along one side of his head. He drinks greedily from a canteen, water pouring down his face and neck...

A RIFLE SHOT IN THE DISTANCE

Fitzgerald turns his head, instantly concerned.

FITZGERALD
(To himself.)
God dammit...

He looks in one direction, then the other, as if he were searching for some kind of sign. Nothing. He turns, and we pan with him to see...

TWENTY-FIVE MEN of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, making camp along the shore... All working their hands to the bone. Controlled chaos. Some pitch squares of canvas rooftops...

others stack HUNDREDS OF BEAVER PELTS and ANIMAL FURS onto a FLATBOAT which is beached on a sandbar at the center of the river.

Fitzgerald tuns his attention back to the to the surrounding wilderness... nervous... searching.

CAPTAIN ANDREW HENRY, (28), a younger officer dressed in a buckskin jacket with long fringe, two pistols and a knife tucked neatly into his thick belt. He stands out among the rest... like an imposter pretending to be a member of some exclusive club. He sidles up next to Fitzgerald.

HENRY

What are you thinking...?

FITZGERALD

(Scanning the distance.)

I'm thinkin' he keeps shootin' that rifle off, them Arikara'll be tossin' our scalps onto that boat along with them pelts.

HENRY

(A forced bravado.)

We got thirty men who haven't eaten in almost two days. What'd you want him to do, wait for something he could strangle?

Fitzgerald casts an icy glance down at the Captain.

HENRY (CONT'D)

(Softening.)

He's the best scout I've ever seen.

FITZGERALD

Yeah. Your first is always the best, ain't it?

Fitzgerald walks away. Henry stung by the joke, looks nervously at the surroundings.

Fitzgerald calling out to some workers...

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Make sure to put 'em on the stern to keep 'em outta the sun. Else they'll turn.

The trappers nod... they're used to following his orders. He's as good as there is.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

And unload from above the bar.
That way if you left-footed sons of
bitches dump any pelts, the river
won't take 'em.

We stay with Fitzgerald as strides to a WORKER who strains to lift a large pelt on his shoulder.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

What're you, on vacation?

Fitzgerald scoops three pelts on to his shoulder, walks them to the shore and slams the skins onto the dirt.

EXT. WILDERNESS - SIMULTANEOUS

Glass stands cleaning and reloading his rifle.

GLASS

Bridger, get on over to camp. We're gonna need another pair of hands to bring this haul in.

BRIDGER

Yes, sir...

Bridger runs off. We hear a quiet but terrible squeal coming from the wheezing Elk. Hawk stares down at the poor beast, it's legs gently flailing. Glass takes a knife from his belt and tosses it at Hawk's feet.

GLASS

End it.

Hawk looks at Glass.

HAWK

Pa...?

GLASS

Don't let him suffer. Go on now. Do it.

Hawk bends down and picks up the knife. He takes a few steps toward the Elk who tries in vain to crawl away... We see the dread in Hawk's eyes.

Glass spots this, drops the rifle and marches over, snatching the knife from his son's hands. He walks deliberately behind the animal, places one knee between its shoulders pulling the head back by the antlers, and in one motion slices the young Elk across the neck.

Hawk stands horrified as the blood spills onto the ground. Tears beginning to well.

Glass takes a rag from his belt and cleans the knife blade. When he's done, he tosses the rag at Hawk.

GLASS (CONT'D)
Wipe your face before someone gets
back here.

Hawk wipes the tears away, leaving a smear of the animal's blood on his cheek.

Glass bends down to pick up his rifle. Something on the ground next to it catches his attention. He runs a finger over the dirt... touches a broken twig.

HAWK
Is there another--

Glass signs him to stay quiet. He studies the track... tries to smell something in the air. Hawk watches him, trying to hear and smell like his father, but doesn't sense anything.

And then in a flash, Glass is racing away.

HAWK (CONT'D)
Pa?

Glass just keeps running. Hawk chases after him.

GLASS - TEARING THROUGH THE WOODS...

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

HAWK - CHASING AFTER GLASS...

...but not nearly as gracefully. Hawk trips... slams to the ground... scrambles back to his feet and continues on.

EXT. CAMP - DUSK

The men building fires... laughing... enjoying themselves. BOONE on the outskirts, gathering branches. Bridger jogs in, out of breath.

BRIDGER
Hey, we need another man! We got us
an Elk and a big old boar!

The men all cheer. Happy to finally have a real meal. Boone volunteers happily, striding toward Bridger.

BOONE

Gentlemen, we're gonna have
ourselves an honest to god feast!

More cheering. As Boone approaches Bridger...

BOONE (CONT'D)

Show me the way you little turd.
(Calling to the men.)
You guys'll be lucky if there's
anything left by the time I--

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.

Bridger stares in shock. Boone stands there, frozen... confused... reaches up and grabs the bloody arrow... finally drops to his knees. And that's when another 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 (MEN AND WOMEN) 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 leader, (ELK'S TONGUE), animal bones braided into his mohawk, a NECKLACE OF HUMAN EARS around his neck, heads the attackers... pouring 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.

HORSES AND MULES break loose of their ties... taking off in every direction.

ANDERSON, 45, a trapper, 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. Anderson pours the powder, but knows he isn't going to make it in time. The Warrior leaps toward him...

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

GLASS
GET TO THE BOATS!

Fitzgerald, a skilled fighter... flips his rifle around, and swings it like a club across a WARRIOR'S head... WHACK... buries his knife into an ATTACKER'S belly.

GLASS (CONT'D)
THE BOATS, CAPTAIN!

Henry helps a TRAPPER toward the water. An arrow drives into the Trapper's leg... he goes down. Henry lifts him, but several more arrows bury in the man's back... he falls dead.

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

A WARRIOR LEAPS FROM THE SHADOWS... tackles Bridger to the shallows... pins him underwater... raises his hatchet high to slam down... just as Fitzgerald CLUBS THE WARRIOR with his rifle... drives him into the water... keeps smashing the rifle on the Warrior's head, over and over... a blind rage. Skull being crushed...

Hawk sees this, frozen in horror.

FITZGERALD
GO!

Glass grabs Hawk by his collar and drags him toward the boat... Fitzgerald and Bridger join them as they swim toward the boats. ARROWS hiss into the water all around them.

With his free hand, Glass fires his pistol... BAM... shoots an oncoming WARRIOR... turns, still dragging Hawk as they join the others... all racing toward the boat... one by one they start climbing aboard.

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.

POWAQA, one of the female warriors, straddles the dying man... grabs the Trapper by the hair, and CUTS OFF HIS LEFT EAR, then holds it up to Glass and the others, as she SCREAMS HER WAR CRY.

Glass and the men begin to shove the boat away from the sandbar. Arrows whiz past them... tearing into the wooden boat. The last of them scramble aboard as the current carries them away.

Bridger reaches over the side, pulls the frantic STUBBY BILL up onto the boat. Fitzgerald and Glass grab LONGPOLES... jamming them against the river bottom to pick up speed...

...as dozens of those valuable furs tumble over the side in the chaos... float away with the current.

Fitzgerald practically lunges over the side of the boat to retrieve one of them.

FITZGERALD

Dammit!

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 calm... the battle long over. The boat floats with the gentle current. The NINE SURVIVING TRAPPERS are scattered around the deck... Anderson digging an arrow out of MURPHY's shoulder... Fitzgerald poling on one side with Stubby Bill on the other... Glass and Hawk standing patrol with their rifles... Bridger doctoring a badly WOUNDED TRAPPER... and Henry standing at the front of the boat, staring off blankly.

The Men drift in silence... still coming to grips with what just happened.

Murphy grunts in pain. Henry walks toward Murphy and moves Anderson away. He digs the arrow out of Murphy's shoulder with surprising skill, unable to disguise the fact that he is not crazy about the sight of blood. When he's finished, he begins to apply a tourniquet to the arm.

ANDERSON

'the hell'd you learn to do that?

HENRY

Father's a doctor. Taught me a few things, I guess.

ANDERSON

And you chose this line of work instead?

HENRY

Never could stand the sight of blood.

Henry and Anderson scan the men on the boat, all bleeding one way or another. They can't help but share a laugh.

Then silence.

STUBBY BILL

(to the group)

You figure them 'Ree 'll be tailin' us?

TRAPPER 2

Soon as they finish skinin' Boone and the others.

STUBBY BILL

'Cause I ain't got much powder nor shot left.

FITZGERALD

Let's turn this thing around, Captain... We can be back to the fort by morning.

ANDERSON

He's right. We're just floatin' farther away.

Henry, unsure, turns to Glass.

GLASS

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

FITZGERALD

So we just float the hell down to wherever the current takes us?

GLASS

We get safe outta range then hide the furs we got left, and track another course up on land. Bring mules back down for 'em.

ANDERSON

Add weeks to the trip.

BRIDGER

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

FITZGERALD

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

Bridger looks at him with timid eyes... afraid of Fitzgerald, but also respectful... the man just saved his life.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

(back to Henry)

And in case you hadn't noticed, Captain, we're eighteen men short of what we were.

(off the wounded trapper)

Nineteen before long.

HENRY

I understand our situation, Mr. Fitzgerald. But we'll do like Glass says... get some distance between us and the Arikara, then chart a course to Fort Union.

FITZGERALD

Like Glass says...

HENRY

He knows this place better than any of us. He's the company scout...

FITZGERALD

That's what I mean... He scouted us right into a pack a 'Ree. Maybe somebody should ask him what side he's on.

Fitzgerald stares at Glass who has his eye locked on the river.

EXT. WILDERNESS/FURTHER NORTH - SAME TIME

A small campfire glows in the night. A DOZEN FRENCH TRAPPERS are scattered around the camp, talking... laughing...

...enough that they don't notice the shadows silently approaching from the trees around them...

...Elk's Tongue and several of his Arikara warriors.

Finally, one of the Trappers spots Elk's Tongue... freezes in mid-sentence... as the others turn to his stare.

But this is no attack... this is a business transaction. Elk's Tongue tosses a STACK OF SCALPS at their feet... the scalps we saw them take from Glass' company earlier.

TOUSSAINT, (40's), the leader of this bunch, forces a nervous smile... throws a glance to his rifle, well out of reach.

A French INTERPRETER moderates the following...

TOUSSAINT
 (In French)
 You had a good hunt.
 (off the scalps)
 Those are all English... Americans?

Elk's Tongue listens to the interpreter, and nods.

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)
 (Pointing to the scalps.)
 No French here?

Elk's Tongue stares Toussaint down and holds out his hand. A tense beat.

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)
 (to a TRAPPER)
 Pay the savage.
 (to Elk's Tongue)
 You want to eat? You want food?

Interpreter translates. Elk's Tongue shakes his head.

The Trapper digs out some coins... blankets... liquor... gives them to Elk's Tongue's Warriors.

While this is going on, Powaga, the female warrior from earlier has gone over to one of the French horses, she rubs her hand across its mane.

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)
 Get her away from there.
 (shaking his head)
 No horses. We need them.

Powaqa, looks back at Elk's Tongue and smiles.

ELK'S TONGUE
 We'll take that one.

The interpreter translates.

TOUSSAINT
 I said no damned horses. They
 aren't part of the deal. Now tell
 that bitch to step away. I don't
 want her stink on my pony.

The interpreter hesitates, until...

ELK'S TONGUE
 (in broken French)
 It's your stink that covers our
 land.

...and everyone freezes... because Toussaint and his Men are shocked by Elk's Tongue's use of their language. And Elk's Tongue suddenly seems smarter... more dangerous... especially with the way he's looking at Toussaint right now.

ELK'S TONGUE (CONT'D)
 (still in French)
 We take two horses.

Powaqa sidles up next to Elk's Tongue, a triumphant smile toward Toussaint.

And Toussaint's pretty smart too... smart enough to see this deal has turned bad... fast... and that he and his Men don't stand a chance against Elk's Tongue's Warriors.

So Toussaint forces a thin smile... motions his Trapper back.

TOUSSAINT
 Business is business.
 (Smiling back at Powaqa.)
 Who knows. Maybe you'll pay me back
 some day.

The meeting is over and the French can only sit there and watch as Elk's Tongue's gang disappears into the night with their horses.

EXT. MISSOURI RIVER/FLATBOAT - DAY

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

Two Trappers hold him tightly on the side of the boat. Fitzgerald bends over the body and covers the dead man's eyes with his hand.

FITZGERALD

(whispering fast)

And thus do I commend thee into the arms of our Lord of earth, our Lord Jesus Christ, preserver of all mercy and reality, and the father creator.

He begins to remove the trapper's good boots and anything else on his person that might be of use, while he finishes the prayer...

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

We give Him glory as we give you into His arms in everlasting peace, to be prepared to return into the denser reality of God the father, creator of all. Amen, Amen, Amen.

He makes the sign of the cross on the dead man's forehead, then nods to the other Trappers.

They push the body over the side of the boat. It splashes into the water and gently floats away. The men watch in silence...

EXT. MISSOURI RIVER - DUSK

Glass, Henry, Fitzgerald and Anderson are huddled around a map spread out on the ground.

GLASS

We let the boat go. If the 'Ree are followin', they'll find it down river. Won't know where to begin trackin' us.

HENRY

We walk the Missouri back up along the west side?

Glass runs his finger along another THIN BLUE LINE. Its a map of America... nothing like the country we know now... just the rough outlines of a few northeastern states... other dotted territories all east of the Mississippi River...

but west, our boundaries vanish... everything is unmarked... unknown.

GLASS

Best course is to hike to the Grand, then follow it up to Fort Union.

FITZGERALD

On foot? Be winter before we get there.

ANDERSON

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

FITZGERALD

No posts that far over.

MURPHY

The whole thing on foot?

FITZGERALD

Losing the boat is a mistake, Captain. Besides, 'Ree aren't that stupid.

Henry considers this a beat, then firmly...

HENRY

We walk.

Fitzgerald turns his gaze towards the Captain's expensive boots, new and sturdy. Then at his own which are torn to shreds...

FITZGERALD

'Course we will...

Fitzgerald angrily SPITS on the ground... rolls his eyes to Anderson.

ANDERSON

What do we do with the furs?

Henry looks at Glass.

EXT. THE RIVER - LATER

Anderson, Stubby Bill, and Murphy are hiding the furs in the brush... Piles and piles of them...

Fitzgerald paces like a caged animal, watching the men ditch his valuable pelts, one by one.

FITZGERALD

(To himself.)

This ain't right. This ain't right.

(to Henry)

Those furs'll be long gone, time we get back.

HENRY

No way we can haul'em back to the fort. Not the way we're going. Arikara spread all through this territory. We're gonna need our hands free...

FITZGERALD

I'm tellin' you we're gonna lose them pelts.

HENRY

Would you rather save those hides or our own?

Fitzgerald turns and looks at Glass who sits quietly, cleaning his rifle; Hawk at his side.

FITZGERALD

Any of you boys wonder how it is them 'Ree got the dead drop on us, when Glass here was supposed to be lookin' out for that very thing?

HENRY

That's enough.

FITZGERALD

All them Pawnee buddies of his. Makes me think maybe he's gettin' a cut on all them scalps they sell to the Frenchies.

STUBBY BILL

Pawnee got as much against 'Ree as the rest of us.

FITZGERALD

Yeah? Well what about that half breed runt he calls a son? What kind of savage you think his mama was?

Hawk looks up to Fitzgerald, but Glass grabs his elbow, asking him to stay still, quiet.

ANDERSON

Take it easy, Fitz.

But Fitzgerald isn't interested in taking it easy...

FITZGERALD

I'm just sayin'... Savage is savage.

Fitzgerald runs his fingers over the scar on his head, more and more annoyed by Glass who ignores him and continues cleaning his rifle. Fitzgerald takes a swig from his FLASK.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

(To Glass.)

Look at me, old man.

(Beat.)

Stop polishing that gun and look at me when I'm talkin' to you.

MURPHY

Hey, Glass. You treat that Anstadt sweeter than any woman.

STUBBY BILL

That's 'cause there ain't no woman that can stop a 'Ree from three hundred feet.

ANDERSON

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

The others manage a nervous laugh. Glass doesn't react... just keeps working on the Anstadt. Fitzgerald walks over and grabs the barrel of the Anstadt.

FITZGERALD

I said put it down.

Glass holds firm.

GLASS

Workin' on it.

FITZGERALD

Well you can stop workin' on it, while I'm talkin' to you.

Fitzgerald gives another tug. Glass' grip only grows tighter. He glares at Fitzgerald, making it clear he isn't giving up his rifle. And they hold that stare just as hard as they're holding Glass' gun.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

You're forgetting your place, old man.

GLASS

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

Fitzgerald realizes the barrel he's holding is aimed at his stomach, while Glass' hand suddenly seems closer to the trigger. But Fitzgerald's pride won't let him lose this tug of war. Which means this is about to turn real ugly. Until...

HENRY

Move along, Fitzgerald.

Neither of them breaks eye contact. The breaking point...

HENRY (CONT'D)

That's an order, Mr. Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald, seething, reluctantly let's go of the rifle and steps away.

HENRY (CONT'D)

(To the men.)

We only have a couple of hours of decent light left. We need to start walking.

CUT TO:

The men, lined up at the river bank. Hawk and two trappers shove the raft out into the current. PAN ACROSS the stoic faces as they watch their only mode of transportation drift away. This journey is just beginning...

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

The group pushing through the shadows. It's raining, but just some drops make it through the deep forest roof. Dried leaves crunching under their boots. Glass and Henry are out front. Hawk right behind them. Henry throws a glance back to Fitzgerald, bringing up the rear with Anderson.

HENRY

You sure we made the right decision, letting that boat go? Men are worried. They're all tired and--

GLASS

The 'Ree own the river. We would've been delivering ourselves right to 'em. Any one of the tight bends up river, they would've flanked us. No getting out of that alive. This way, they want us, they're gonna have to come get us.

Henry nods. Silence.

HENRY

(nervous)

What are the chances of makin' it by 'em and getting back up to Fort Union?

GLASS

You want odds?

HENRY

Okay.

GLASS

Smart man's always gonna put his chips on the 'Ree.

Silence.

HENRY

Gimme something, Glass. I gotta lead these men, and if I don't--

GLASS

(Pointing.)

You see those mountains up there? We stay to the east and keep wide of the Grand we could cut a week off our trip. Plus, we got a better shot at avoiding the 'Ree. Land's bone dry out there. Nothing to hunt.

HENRY

Except us.

GLASS

Except us.

They share a morbid smile, then...

HENRY

How do you know all this? What the hell brought you out here to the edge of the world?

Glass looks over at Henry, his mind somewhere else for a moment, then...

GLASS

I like the quiet.

And that's Glass' way of telling Henry their conversation is over. Henry gives a little nod. The group continues through the trees.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAWN

The sun is just rising up over the horizon.

The men are scattered around, most of them still asleep.

Henry stands sipping from a canteen as he scans the distance, the mountains closer now.

Stubby Bill walks up next to him, they speak quietly.

STUBBY BILL

Shouldn't we a hit the Grand by now?

Henry offers Stubby Bill the canteen.

HENRY

We'll reach it soon enough. Glass wants us to keep on this course.

STUBBY BILL

Where is he?

HENRY

Went out at first light. Running ahead to make sure we're clear.

A pause.

STUBBY BILL

What if he's lost?

HENRY

(Taking the canteen back.)
Then we're all lost...

They stand in silence.

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...

...hits the bear, slowing the animal... but not enough to stop its attack.

CUT TO:

HENRY - HEARING THE BLAST.

HENRY
UP AHEAD!

Henry takes off at full sprint. The other men chase after. Fitzgerald pauses a moment. We can see the fear creeping into his expression. He takes a breath and then follows.

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' 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.

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, Hawk, and the others reach the edge.

HENRY

Glass!

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

HAWK

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 Hawk join in... shove the animal over, revealing the bloody mass that is Hugh Glass...

...his throat is torn wide open... stomach and chest a gruesome design of gashes and cuts. His right leg is twisted in a horrible angle.

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

Give the boy credit for takin' 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 Hawk can stand... he TACKLES FITZGERALD... they roll to the ground. Fitzgerald is about to pound Hawk when Henry and Stubby Bill drag him off.

HENRY

THAT'S ENOUGH!

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

MURPHY

Holy Christ.

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 can barely deal with the sight.

HENRY

Get me some water.

Stubby Bill tosses Henry his canteen. Henry empties it over Glass' throat... his chest. 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.

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.

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

HENRY (CONT'D)

And your whiskey.

Hawk 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.

(MORE)

HENRY (CONT'D)
 Fitzgerald, you and Anderson take
 west and north. Murphy and Bill
 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... So the men hurry off to their
 positions.

HAWK
 What about me, Cap?

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

Hawk shakily joins Henry in wrapping the wounds. The blood
 keeps seeping out, soaking the rags. Henry suffers at the
 simple sight of it.

HAWK
 It won't stop bleedin'.

HENRY
 Shut up, Hawk.
 (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... wrap the rags around his
 throat... across his chest and stomach.

Bridger stares down at Glass with tears in his eyes.

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 Hawk.

HENRY (CONT'D)
 Get me the kit. We need to stitch
 his back up.

BRIDGER
 What about the rest?

HENRY

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

Hawk 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, Anderson, and Murphy standing watch together in
 another part of the woods nearby. Glass' scream erupts
 through the trees...

ANDERSON

They're torturin' the bastard.

FITZGERALD

Proper thing would be to end it for
 him quick.

MURPHY

'Less he could pull through.

ANDERSON

You seen what that grizz did.
 Glass'll be dead inside a hour.

FITZGERALD

We all will be if he keeps wailin'
 like that.

EXT. WOODS - LATER

HENRY, BRIDGER AND HAWK are WORKING OVER GLASS... Bridger and
 Hawk are pressing the skin on Glass' back together as Henry
 sutures the wound.

HENRY CLEANS GLASS' SHREDDED THROAT.

BRIDGER AND HAWK HOLD GLASS DOWN AS HENRY SNAPS GLASS' LEG
 BACK IN PLACE... the pain is too much... Glass passes out.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

FITZGERALD walks alone through the darkening forest. He is murmuring something, annoyed by the situation. He rests against a tree, taking off his hat.

Suddenly, he spots something just a few steps away. A small, indistinguishable creature that snorting and scampering among the branches. A glimpse of the fangs, covered in black fur, it is impossible to identify, which makes it even more terrifying.

Fitzgerald cannot see it properly because the thing immediately disappears.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Glass rests unconscious on the ground. Two branches act as a splint on his leg. A blanket covers his body... the stitches stretch to hold his throat together.

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

BRIDGER

What now?

HENRY

We wait.

Henry drinks some water... looks at Glass... then beyond Glass... to the bear, sprawled on the ground, its claws and fangs soaked with Glass' blood.

HENRY (CONT'D)

(to Hawk)

Go tell the others we're making camp here for the night.

Hawk hustles off.

HENRY (CONT'D)

(to Bridger)

Have the men gather wood. Dry as they can find. We don't want much smoke when we cook that grizzly.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

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 massive claws. Bridger pulls out his knife... stretches the claws out to their full length, and CUTS ONE OF THE DIGITS OFF AT ITS BASE.

FITZGERALD (O.S.)

What makes you think you earned a claw?

Bridger turns with a start... ONE OF THE CLAWS FALLS TO THE DIRT. Bridger sees Fitzgerald standing over him, meat in his hand... his lips shiny with the grease.

BRIDGER

It ain't for me.

Bridger carries another claw around Fitzgerald... to the sleeping Glass. Hawk'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.

Hawk holds his palm out just above Glass' mouth.

HAWK

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. CAMP - NIGHT

The fire has burned down to nothing. The men sleep scattered about. Murphy keeps watch just outside of camp.

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. He was thinking the same thing. But he doesn't move... not yet.

Bridger sits beyond him... attaching the BEAR CLAW TO A THIN LEATHER STRAP... a future necklace.

EXT. CAMP - DAWN

ANGLE ON GLASS...

...awake... staring upward... shivering... beads of sweat covering his face... those same, weak breaths.

CUT TO:

GLASS' POV...

...on the morning sky... the sun pouring in through the treetops... until a FIGURE steps into the bright sunlight... stands over Glass, leaning down... reaching toward him... and BECOMING HENRY.

HENRY

Lookin' better, Hugh.

Henry crouches beside Glass... squeezing Glass' hand.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Gonna be fine.

Bridger kneels on the other side of Glass... presses a WET RAG to Glass' head. Hawk stands behind him.

Fitzgerald, Anderson, Murphy and Stubby Bill sit huddled a few yards away... watching.

ANDERSON

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

MURPHY

I seen a bad one drag on days.

ANGLE ON GLASS...

...eyes still open... he can hear every word.

MURPHY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Insides shut down, flesh starts to
 spoil and turn. Ain't no way for--

HENRY (O.S.)
 Quiet, Murphy.

FITZGERALD...

...points a stick at Glass.

FITZGERALD
 (to Henry)
 Us sittin' here watchin' him die,
 only gives the 'Ree more chance to
 track us down.

Henry 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
 Murphy, take Hawk, and scout ahead.
 Grand should be just west of here.
 Find us the best route.

Murphy nods, grabs his gear. He and Hawk take off. Henry
 turns... walks over to Fitzgerald, Anderson, and Stubby Bill.

HENRY (CONT'D)
 (quietly)
 You three start digging a grave.

Fitzgerald tosses the stick away.

FITZGERALD
 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. Anderson and Stubby Bill stand over him.

FITZGERALD
 Any coyote digs that deep deserves
 the meal.

He takes Anderson's hand... pulls himself out... spots Hawk and Murphy walking back into camp.

MURPHY

Found it, Cap.

HAWK

A mile or so out.

(for Fitzgerald to hear)

Right where Pa had us headed.

HENRY

We could build a litter. Haul him with us.

ANDERSON

It's rocky and steep goin'.

Henry looks to Hawk for an honest answer.

HAWK

Marshy on the other side. We could try it...

ANDERSON

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. He turns... squints out ahead of them... their trail home. He stares at it a long beat, then lowers his hand back to that pistol... pulls it from his belt, and turns to Glass.

HENRY

Lay that rag over his eyes, Mr. Bridger.

(To Hawk.)

Sorry, kid.

The other men all drop their heads... except for Fitzgerald... he's ready to see this end.

HAWK

(Searching for an excuse.)

Wait. How do we get back without him? He's the only one knows the way.

Henry thinks... walks up to Glass and crouches next to him... then opens Glass' bag and takes out the map.

HENRY

I need your help, Hugh.

Glass blinks as if he was dreaming. Henry realizes that what he is trying to do is stupid.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry...

He returns to the others.

HENRY (CONT'D)

We'll have to find our way without him. We can't stay here forever.

(beat)

The rag, Mr. Bridger. Do it.

Bridger doesn't want to, but follows orders... reaches to fold the wet rag down over Glass' wide open eyes.

HAWK

Wait. Hang on. We can-- I don't--
We might be able to--

Stubby Bill grabs Hawk's shoulders from behind. Firmly, but not without sympathy.

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, AGONIZING BEAT in the dark, waiting for that gunshot, then...

BACK TO SCENE

Henry standing over Glass... pistol aimed down. His hand trembles slightly.

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

Bridger takes a few steps back... stares at Henry.

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

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.

HAWK

I'll stay with him.

BRIDGER

Same here... money or not.

Fitzgerald snorts a stifled laugh. Hawk shoots him a look, but even Henry knows Fitzgerald is right... Bridger and Hawk would never survive this alone.

HENRY

Is there a third?

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

FITZGERALD

Three 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.

HENRY (CONT'D)

(upset)

This man lying here is the reason we are still alive. For over a year he's saved our asses more times that I can count.

ANDERSON

We were thirty men when this all started, Captain. Now we are nine. Almost eight.

HAWK

They can have my share.

Silence.

Fitzgerald's wheels turning. Doing the math...

FITZGERALD

If Bridger feels the same, I'll lag
back with 'em. I don't mind
fallin' a day or so behind for
three hundred dollars.

Hawk looks to Bridger, who nods... so Hawk nods too.

HENRY

But Glass is to be cared for until.
Understood?

FITZGERALD

(nods 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.

Hawk reaches down... lifts the rag from Glass' face. Their
eyes meet... Hawk gives Glass a smile.

EXT. CAMP - LATER

Henry and the others are loaded and ready to leave. Henry
pulls Bridger aside.

HENRY

As long as necessary. And a proper
burial when it's time. He's earned
that.

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

EXT. CAMP - DUSK

Bridger and Hawk crouch beside Glass, changing his bandages.

Fitzgerald steps in... lifts Glass' Anstadt from beside
Glass.

FITZGERALD

I'll take first watch.

HAWK

You shouldn't touch that.

FITZGERALD

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

Glass is helpless to move... can only watch Fitzgerald disappear into the trees. His eyes drift back to the glowing embers of the dying campfire... floating up into the night sky.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

A vast plain. Anderson stands on a ridge with the map, scouting a course. He waves back for Henry and the others to follow.

EXT. CAMP - DAY

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

Hawk sitting next to his father, helpless.

A slimy snail slowly advances... the beautiful spiral of its shell. Bridger, sitting under a tree, watches the snail move through the mud and grass. With a sharpened rock he starts carving the spiral of the snail on the metal of his canteen. The sound is unbearable.

Hawk stares over at Fitzgerald.

HAWK

Why'd you stay?

FITZGERALD

Me...?

HAWK

Why?

FITZGERALD

Seems to me, you're a little too young out here you're bound to get yourself killed. You're a little too old, just the same. Well, I'm just about a little too old, kid. Three hundred bucks goes a long way toward retirement.

(MORE)

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Get myself down to Texas, get a decent piece of land and piss in the wind. Get the hell out of this god forsaken place.

Bridger watches Fitzgerald pull off his fur cap... exposes his SCAR for a moment. Fitzgerald seems caught in a grave memory. The sound of the rock scraping the metal canteen.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Yes, sir. Sunny and warm all the time. Ya sit around, watch them big ol' white clouds rollin' by. And I'm tellin' ya, them Indians down Texas way might rob ya, but they ain't gonna take your skin.

BRIDGER

(Re: the scar)

'Ree done that to you?

Fitzgerald doesn't respond, he's somewhere else until...

FITZGERALD

Cut it out with that noise. Do you want me to carve my name in your forehead?

Bridger stops carving his name on the canteen... throws the stone away. We see that he has carved the spiral of the snail on his canteen.

Fitzgerald pulls his cap back down over his face.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Hawk somewhere in the woods, setting up a small snare trap.

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Bridger and Hawk kneel on each side of Glass, easing some broth into his mouth... cleaning his wounds.

EXT. WOODS - SAME TIME

Fitzgerald stands in the shadows, taking a piss. From the corner of his eye he spots the creature he saw when he was wandering alone. A moment of fear that immediately dissipates... the creature is already gone.

Fitzgerald walks toward the space where the creature disappeared, but finds nothing. He ambles between the trees, until he comes out to the camp and finds Bridger and Hawk still feeding Glass.

FITZGERALD

There ya go, pour some more broth
down his throat... keep him alive
another week so we can fall farther
back. 'Ree would love to poach on
just three.

Fitzgerald walks past them... drops to his blanket.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

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

Bridger throws a nervous glance to Hawk, who shakes his head... *don't listen to him.*

EXT. WILDERNESS - EVENING

From high above... the sun is sinking over the trees.

EXT. WOODS/RIVER - EVENING

Bridger walks toward the rushing water, carrying empty canteens.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Hawk pulls a dead raccoon from his snare trap.

EXT. CAMP - EVENING

Fitzgerald sits bored against a tree, eyes locked on Glass...

FITZGERALD

I'm fallin' further back of Henry's
bunch on accounta tendin' to you...

(beat)

If you're ready to take the
sacrament, I can give it to you...

(beat)

What are you holding to, Glass?

Fitzgerald sits in silence as if he's waiting for an answer. Finally, he stands and walks over to Glass... crouches over him... studies Glass' red, infected wounds.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

I had a beautiful horse, a Kentucky Saddler. Fell off a cliff. Poor bastard. When I found him he looked just like you do now. I put him to sleep...

(beat)

Compassion.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS/RIVER - EVENING

Bridger kneels beside the water, filling the canteens.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Glass stares up at Fitzgerald...

FITZGERALD

Be easier on us all if you'd take that last breath, now. You hung tough. And that's somethin'. But I'm begging you, Glass. Them Arikara are gettin' close now. I can smell 'em. So can you. Think of your boy. You're going to kill him... all of us.

The two men hold a stare... until Fitzgerald finally grabs a bloodstained rag from beside them... wads it up.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

I could help ya 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.

The two men stare at each other. We can see Glass' mind racing. After a tense moment, Glass slowly and deliberately blinks.

...a sigh of relief from Fitzgerald as his eyes roll up to make sure they're alone.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
(compassionately)
Just hope the Lord'll get his ass
here quick.

Then he STUFFS THAT BLOODY RAG INTO GLASS' MOUTH.

Glass doesn't struggle, almost at peace with it... this is going to end quickly.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
And thus do I commend thee into the
arms of our Lord of earth...

Glass' body begins to involuntarily struggle. Fitzgerald has him pinned...

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
...our Lord Jesus Christ, preserver
of all mercy and reality, and the
father creator...

Fitzgerald seems emotionless about this killing... almost like he's putting down a piece of livestock...

...as Glass' struggles weaken... slow... it's almost over...

...until THWACK... the butt of a rifle smacks Fitzgerald across the head... knocks him to the dirt... dazed...

...as Hawk drops down beside Glass... tries to hold his rifle on Fitzgerald as he tugs that rag out... helps Glass.

HAWK
You okay, Pa?
(screaming)
JIM! HURRY!

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS/RIVER - EVENING

Bridger still beside it. The water rushing past so loud that's all he can hear.

EXT. CAMP - EVENING

Hawk's helping Glass breathe, as Fitzgerald rises behind him.

FITZGERALD

I was just doin' your job...
helpin' to clean him up.

HAWK

No. I saw. JIM!

FITZGERALD

Shut your mouth, Hawk. 'Ree are all
around us.

And Hawk yells... and Fitzgerald is getting panicked now too... eyes darting around for 'Ree.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Shut the hell up!

Fitzgerald picks up speed... knocks the rifle from Hawk's hand, but that only makes Hawk scream louder. Fitzgerald grabs for Hawk, but Hawk pulls free...

HAWK

Keep away! I'm gonna tell Jimmy and
the Captain what you did. They'll
hang you...

...turns to the trees.

HAWK (CONT'D)

HELP! JIM!

And this has spiraled out of control... Fitzgerald makes another grab for Hawk, but Hawk swings an elbow... cracks Fitzgerald across the head... KEEPS SCREAMING...

...and Fitzgerald reacts out of instinct... panic... lunges with his knife... plants it into Hawk's stomach before he's even realized he's done it.

And Hawk GRUNTS IN PAIN... and Fitzgerald freezes... suddenly understands what he's just done.

FITZGERALD

Shit.

Hawk drops to his knees, clutching that knife.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
 Goddammit... I didn't... you stupid
 sonofabitch...

Hawk's helpless eyes focus on Glass, staring back at him.

CUT TO:

GLASS' POV...

...on Fitzgerald with the knife in his blood-soaked hands.

FITZGERALD... looks around for Bridger... eye contact with
 Glass... his mind racing.

He grabs Hawk's arms... drags him out of the camp... hides
 his body in the brush... hurries back in... slings Hawk's
 rifle deep into the trees... kicks dirt over the spilled
 blood on the ground...

Then sets his eyes back on Glass... the only witness...
 staring back. So Fitzgerald starts for him.

BRIDGER (O.S.)
 Breathin' changed?

Fitzgerald spins... sees Bridger entering camp... dropping
 the canteens. He hesitates a beat, then shakes his head.

FITZGERALD
 Hadn't noticed.

He grabs Bridger's canteen and takes a sip of water... stares
 down it, to Bridger moving over Glass... kneeling down.

Glass grips Bridger's arm... tries to speak... can barely
 open his mouth.

BRIDGER
 Easy, Mr. Glass.
 (to Fitzgerald)
 He's hot as fire.

Bridger pours some water over a rag... rests it across Glass'
 head.

BRIDGER (CONT'D)
 This'll help.
 (to Fitzgerald)
 Where's Hawk?

FITZGERALD

Figured he'd joined up with you.

Bridger shakes his head... scans the forest.

Fitzgerald just slides down against a tree... wipes the knife across the back of his leg, then starts shaving a stick with it... as he watches Glass and Bridger... deciding his next move.

EXT. CAMP - NIGHT

Glass awake... watching Fitzgerald poke at the small fire with a branch.

Bridger stands at the edge of camp, squinting out into the darkness.

BRIDGER

Hawk!

FITZGERALD

Quiet, goddammit. Bring the whole 'Ree tribe on us.

BRIDGER

What the hell happened to him?

FITZGERALD

Dummy don't know front from back half the time. You shouldn'ta let him wander out alone.

BRIDGER

He was just checkin' his snares.

Bridger walks deeper into the trees... just past that brush where Fitzgerald hid Hawk's body.

Fitzgerald watches... regrips that branch... and we notice it's been shaved to a JAGGED POINT.

But Bridger just turns back...

BRIDGER (CONT'D)

Did you go out to look for him?

FITZGERALD

(off Glass)

Already got my hands full nurse-maidin' one. No time for another.

Bridger scans the forest again, then slides down to the ground next to Glass... rocks back and forth... nervous for his friend.

Fitzgerald's eyes drift to Glass... the men hold a look.

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT

From high above the trees. The world is silent... peaceful.

CUT TO:

BLACK...

...the sound of FRENZIED BREATHING.

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

Bridger wakes in a start as Fitzgerald slams his hand over Bridger's mouth, rifle in his other hand.

FITZGERALD

'Ree.

BRIDGER - SCRAMBLES UP FROM THE TREE HE WAS LEANING...

...wipes the sleep from his eyes.

BRIDGER

What?

FITZGERALD

Keep quiet. There's twenty of 'em at least. Down at the creek, but comin' this way.

BRIDGER

Oh, shit. Whatta we do?

FITZGERALD

We run. Now.

BRIDGER

Hawk...

FITZGERALD

Not our worry no more.

BRIDGER

We can't leave him.

FITZGERALD

Probably already gutted and scalped. And if by chance he ain't, he'll find us.

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

BRIDGER

What about Glass?

FITZGERALD

He's on his own, same as you and me.

BRIDGER

We promised the Captain... I can't...

FITZGERALD

Then I'm talkin' to a dead man.

Bridger's paralysed... doesn't know what to do... until Fitzgerald shoves him back to life.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Listen to me. Them two are dead or dyin' for sure. My responsibility is to get us back to the fort. If Hawk is alive there's nothin' you can do for him if you're scalped and dead yourself. We gotta go.

Glass reaches out a weak hand out for his Anstadt. But Fitzgerald spots him and grabs it first.

BRIDGER

What're you doin'? He needs that.

FITZGERALD

He couldn't do nothin' with it if you tarred it to his hands.

Bridger just stands still.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Go pick your stuff up. Hurry.

Bridger obeys him. Fitzgerald scoops up Glass' knife as well.

BRIDGER
(holding his bag)
We can't just leave him there.

Fitzgerald thinks... finally agrees. He GRABS GLASS BY THE ANKLES and starts dragging him across the ground. Glass GROANS IN PAIN.

BRIDGER (CONT'D)
Easy...

But Fitzgerald pulls Glass to that grave he dug, and ROLLS GLASS' BODY INSIDE.

Glass hits the bottom with a painful THUD... roots and loose branches surrounding him.

FITZGERALD
Now we done what was asked of us.
(hard to Bridger)
Move.

They begin to walk off, but Bridger stops in his tracks.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
Let's go.

Bridger frozen.

BRIDGER
I can't.

Fitzgerald stares into his eyes for a moment, almost measuring his conviction.

FITZGERALD
Alright. Suit yourself. Good luck,
kid. It was nice knowin' ya.

Fitzgerald disappears into the woods.

Bridger stands there, alone for the first time. He instantly seems younger. He inches toward the grave where Glass lies and peers into it.

A noise from the woods, he looks up terrified.

Another look toward Glass. The wounds. The blood. The horrible wheezing. We can see Bridger breaking.

With sad resignation, he throws his canteen into the grave.

BRIDGER
 (to Glass)
 I'm sorry, Mr. Glass.

...and Bridger takes off into the trees.

Glass lies there helpless... INSIDE HIS OWN GRAVE.

CUT TO:

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

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - MORNING

Cold and grey. Bridger huddled beside a small fire, trying
 desperately to warm his hands. WISPS OF SMOKE rise into the
 sky.

CLOSE ON Fitzgerald's boot stomping out the fire

FITZGERALD
 No fire.

BRIDGER
 My fingers. I can't-- *It's too damn
 cold.* Anyway, we put enough
 distance between us and them 'Ree,
 didn't we?

FITZGERALD
 All we know, they hoofed it through
 the night same as us. You gotta
 stop imaginin' you and me are the
 same as them. A dozen 'Ree can
 still make twice as good time as
 us. Now, let's--

BRIDGER
 Twenty.

FITZGERALD
 What?

BRIDGER
 You said there were twenty before.

FITZGERALD
 What're you talking about?

BRIDGER

You woke me up... you said you spotted twenty 'Ree.

FITZGERALD

Twenty... A dozen... I wasn't gonna hang around that creek countin' feathers. Hell, one 'Ree is too damn many.

Fitzgerald takes a swig from his canteen.

BRIDGER

What was you even doin' down at the creek 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' that half-dead--

BRIDGER

(Aiming the rifle.)

ANSWER ME OR I BLOW YOUR DAMN HEAD OFF!

FITZGERALD

You got a short memory... Your corpse would be floatin' somewheres in the Missouri if it wasn't for me.

Bridger's finger tightens on the trigger. Then Fitzgerald stands... chin square.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

What're you askin'?

(Steps forward.)

Ask it, boy. What do you wanna know? Why you turned your back on Glass, let him die? Why you didn't wait to see if your little half-breed boyfriend was still alive?

(beat)

I'll tell you why. 'Cause you ain't a man yet. '

(MORE)

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Cause you was scared shitless,
that's why. Now put down that rifle
before I--

BRIDGER

The 'Ree... did you see 'em?
(off Fitzgerald's silence)
DID YOU SEE 'EM?

FITZGERALD

(another step)
No. Not a one.

Bridger CRIES OUT... but before he can pull the trigger, Fitzgerald snatches the barrel, and shoves the butt back into Bridger's face... THWACK... the blow knocks Bridger back to the ground, Fitzgerald maintains his grip on the rifle barrel... then flips it around to aim it at the boy. Blood trickles down Bridger's head as he stares down the barrel of his own rifle.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

I just needed to scare some sense
into you. Hawk was lost, and
Glass, god knows, was dead either
way. There weren't no point in us
waitin' around to die too.
(beat)

Way I see it, I saved your life
twice now. I oughta be God to you.

Fitzgerald lines the barrel up at Bridger's head... his
FINGER TIGHTENS ON THE TRIGGER.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

And as the good book says, "God
giveth and God taketh away".

BRIDGER SQUEEZES HIS EYES SHUT IN FEAR... Fitzgerald PULLS
THE TRIGGER... CLICK. A moment. Bridger opens his eyes to see
Fitzgerald grinning down at him.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Next time you aim to kill somebody,
boy, best remember your gun won't
fire without a flint.

Fitzgerald tosses the rifle back at Bridger, and turns away.
Bridger's face flushed with rage and humiliation... he
charges Fitzgerald from behind... tackles him to the
ground... starts pounding Fitzgerald with punches.

But it's only a moment before Fitzgerald is in control...
HEAD-BUTTING Bridger off of him... tossing him away, then
KICKING BRIDGER IN THE STOMACH once more for good measure.

Bridger lies writhing in the dirt.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Get yourself cleaned up and packed.
We got a ways to go before
nightfall.

Fitzgerald walks off. Bridger sits up, examining his rifle,
and tossing it away in frustration. There's no way he'll make
it out here alone.

EXT. CAMP - DAWN

Empty and quiet... no sign of life... until GLASS' HAND RISES
BETWEEN THE LOOSE BRANCHES. His fingers dig into the earth,
pulling himself up... 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. Lies there shivering, summoning
what little strength he has...

He starts dragging himself with his one good arm... inch by
inch... across the dirt... toward the spot where Fitzgerald
dragged Hawk's body.

He finds the boy lying under a pile of leaves, pale, eyes
still open. Glass gently lowers Hawk's eyelids. Stares at his
son's lifeless face. Tries not to swallow. Eventually laying
down next to his son. Empty.

EXT. CAMP - MORNING

Glass, where we left him, lying beside Hawk's body. An image
of a father and son who died arm in arm... Until Glass opens
his eyes... no such luck. He reaches over and caresses his
son's face one final time... then starts dragging himself
back toward the camp.

He tries to swallow a sip from Bridger's canteen but it hits
his throat like burning oil. Desperately thirsty, he takes
another sip and forces it down, but there's not much water
left in it.

He starts dragging himself across the dirt... finally makes
it to a blanket... wraps it around himself.

And there he sits, in the center of camp... unable to move... eyes scanning the surroundings... no food... no water... and he's wide open in this clearing... an easy target for any predator. Spotting the possibles bag, he removes the GUNPOWDER HORN. Eyes it for a moment. An idea. He tucks it back into the bag and begins to drag himself toward the distant cover of brush.

Ten feet might as well be ten miles. He finally reaches the cover of the trees...

He collapses from the effort... falls unconscious.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT

From high above the forest... the tree tops sway in the breeze.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Glass sits trying desperately to unwrap the possibles bag. Not an easy task as his hands are bloody and chewed to the bone. Using his mouth for assistance, he dumps the contents to the ground... flints, Bridger's canteen, and finally... a straight razor.

He holds the razor out staring at the edge of the blade. He looks to the sky... Lifts his head slightly... Clutches the razor tighter in his grasp. Hand trembling...

Suddenly, he notices one more item pouring out of the bag...

A LEATHER NECKLACE WITH THE BEAR CLAW attached.

Finally, he exhales, and picks up the nearby blanket.

With the razor, he slashes SEVERAL THIN STRIPS FROM THE BLANKET, and wraps them around his hands.

He shoves his things back in the bag, and does the only thing he can do... continues on...

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Dried out and barren underbrush. Fitzgerald and Bridger stand on a ridge. As they look out at the land below them, the faintest of smiles cracks Fitzgerald's expression.

Below them, finally, greener foliage and random wildlife...
Hope.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Glass clawing his way along the ground... stops suddenly...
The ground below him seems to be trembling just a bit...

He digs into the ground with renewed energy... pulling
himself forward... and there it is... right in front of
him...

...THE GRAND RIVER...

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

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

Glass cups more water to his mouth, but with each drink, he
can feel some of the water leaking from the hole in his
throat... running down his neck. He pulls the razor from the
leather bag, and cuts more strips out of the blanket, soaking
them in the river, then cleaning his neck.

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...

...as we GLIDE BACK DOWN TO...

GLASS - at the water's edge, drinking... touching his charred, melted throat... no leaks. He slurps back more, then opens his Possibles bag... pulls out Bridger's canteen and fills it with water.

Then he pulls out the GRIZZLY CLAW NECKLACE... stares at it a beat, then slips it over his head.

Glass ties the bag around his arm with the powderhorn and blanket, then grabs a THICK, FALLEN LOG, and labors 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.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

Winding through the open prairie. Glass hangs onto the log... floats with the gentle current... past a HERD OF ELK grazing along the riverbank.

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Three or four Arikara stand over Glass' empty grave... studying the scene... the rags crisp with dried blood... the scattered remains of supplies... what the animals have left of Hawk's corpse in the brush. They mark the tracks Glass left into the woods and begin to follow...

EXT. GRAND RIVER - EVENING

A heavy mist hangs over the river. Glass is draped across the log, eyes closed... letting the easy current carry him southward.

A WIDE SHOT OF THE NEVER ENDING RIVER EXTENDING INTO THE DISTANCE.

EXT. FOREST - SUNSET

A beautiful deer and its fawn graze peacefully.

Suddenly a GUNSHOT EXPLODES... the deer's neck erupts in blood. It falls to the ground... sends the fawn darting around, frightened and confused.

The familiar barrel of the Anstadt rifle pointed outward. Only now the face that appears behind it is Fitzgerald's.

FITZGERALD
(Examining the rifle)
Not bad.

BRIDGER
Should I make a fire?

FITZGERALD
Not here. Carve what we can carry
and move on.

He draws his knife and heads toward the kill.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

The sun beats down... then SHADOWS APPEAR... TIGHT ON THE LEFT SIDE OF GLASS' FACE... the right still pressed into the muddy bank. 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 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 glances to 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.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

No more than ten feet deep, but enough to hide from predators. Glass slides 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... sparks the flint and starts a fire. He takes a sip of water from Bridger's canteen.

NIGHT

The moonlight reflecting off the water.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

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

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. FOREST - NIGHT

Fitzgerald gnaws on a bone from the deer THEY HUNTED DAYS AGO. Bridger doesn't eat, he gazes off, somewhere else.

FITZGERALD

Eat something.

BRIDGER

Huh?

FITZGERALD

(Holding out a piece.)

Take it. Need your strength. We're a few days off the fort and this could be the last meal you get til we're there. Eat.

BRIDGER

Don't think I can. Just don't got the taste for it.

FITZGERALD

(Moves closer. An order.)

Eat.

Bridger reluctantly grabs the meat and chews on it. It looks like he could vomit at any second. He forces it down his gully. Silence.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Listen, I know you're feelin' bad on account of us leavin' Hawk and Glass behind. I do too. I Feel rotten.

Bridger glances over at him.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Don't you eyeball me like that. You don't know. I have these dreams. I'm starin' right into-- (A beat.) I'm havin' dreams is all. But we had to do it.

BRIDGER

We coulda--

FITZGERALD

We had to do it. You don't get it. You're young. You still got these ideas about honor and-- Jesus Christ... *duty*. But the fact is, Glass is dead by now. You know it's true. And Hawk? Okay there was no way a knowin', but I couldn't take that chance. Maybe there weren't no 'Ree, but he was gone way too long. Whatever got to him was bound to get to us. And I tell you what... I still got some life in me. How 'bout you?

Bridger remains silent.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

What we done, we done to survive. Ain't no one can blame a man for surviving. What we done is between you, me and God. And I'll explain it to that somabitch when the time comes. But til then, nobody else needs to know anything about it. You understand me?

More silence from Bridger...

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

I'm gonna be seein' that kid's face for the rest of my--

BRIDGER

(Firmly.)

Hey Fitzgerald. I'm already here with you. Too late to go back now. I'm a part of it. You can stop tryin' to sell me... alright?

The two men eye each other. An understanding. Silence again.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

A small dark cockroach approaches Fitzgerald's body... climbs through his arm... his neck... and gets into one of his ears.

Fitzgerald feels the insect picking his brain and tries to shake it out. A shadow glides across him... hovers over him, as ANOTHER BUG CRAWLS ACROSS FITZGERALD'S FACE. Fitzgerald's eyes blink open... he shoots up... brushes the bug away... looks around...

...to a FIGURE DARTING THROUGH THE TREES.

FITZGERALD
(whispers)
Bridger.

Bridger IS NOT AROUND. Fitzgerald grabs the Anstadt AND THE LAST PIECE OF WOOD FROM THE CAMPFIRE STILL BURNING... eases into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Fitzgerald moves through the trees, eyes searching. He lights a torch. Everything is dark. The trunk of the trees poorly reveal themselves with the improvised torch Fitzgerald is holding.

There seems to be no sound except his steps in the mud. The trees have lost their leaves and they only look as branches with horrific forms.

Fitzgerald walks slowly... breathes heavily.

A sound comes from the top of a tree.

Fitzgerald quickly points the rifle in that direction. A deer is hanging from the tree... its lifeless eyes are wide open, reflecting the torch's flame... seeming to stare back at him. Fitzgerald almost falls to the ground... disturbed.

Fitzgerald continues on, the silence feels like the calm before the storm.

Fitzgerald discovers more deer hanging from trees. At his feet he finds yellow roots, similar to the ones he used to cover Glass. They make it harder for him to walk.

A strange sound behind him. He turns quickly and finds...

The dark, hairy creature... which instantly disappears into the woods.

Another noise. He spins again, only to come face to face with...

...Glass.

Fitzgerald fires the rifle. He sees the explosion coming out of the rifle, but doesn't hear any sound. He desperately tries to find the problem in the rifle as he shouts dumbly, but Glass suddenly spins him around, grabs his hair and begins to carve off his scalp...

Fitzgerald cries out in terror, but the only sound that comes out of his mouth is the screech of a pig that's being sacrificed.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Fitzgerald wakes up from his nightmare...

...to the scream of the pig in the distance. He scrambles up.

BRIDGER (O.S.)
Fitzgerald!

Fitzgerald is a little bit numbed by the dream. He hasn't return yet to reality.

EXT. SMALL INDIAN SETTLEMENT - DAY

Black... torched to the ground... still smoldering.

Three dirty pigs scream as if they knew the end is near. There is a fourth one, dead.

A small tribe of ARIKARA INDIANS have been massacred. Their teepees and animals just charred remains.

TWO MULES prance anxiously... pull at the ropes that secure them to trees.

Fitzgerald and Bridger stare at the scene. Fitzgerald doesn't look surprised... but Bridger wants to vomit.

BRIDGER
Who did this?

Fitzgerald gazes over the destruction.

FITZGERALD
Us.

He steps over the bodies of TWO DEAD INDIANS... both have TRIBAL STAR TATTOOS ON THEIR HANDS. He pulls a knife from one of the dead fists.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
Gather them mules.

Bridger walks past some executed Indians... begins untying the ropes of the mules.

BRIDGER
What about the pigs?

FITZGERALD
(nods)
We'll take the dead one.

Bridger doesn't understand him.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
You never know who's inside the living ones.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Glass sits propped against the cave wall, staring at the entrance.

EXT. CAVE - LATER

Glass steps 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 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 to use as a cane.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

Glass limps along the bank... beside the brown water stirred up from the flood. He moves along the washed-out area, searching for food... 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 sees 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 GONE.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Elk's Tongue picks up a piece of shredded cloth... sniffs it, then says something to the Warriors.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - DAY

Glass inches his head up over the tree... to Elk's Tongue, now outside the cave... studying the tracks.

Glass' eyes jump to the soft dirt along the river... HIS FOOTPRINTS... 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

Elk's Tongue and the others... 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 DIRT 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, Elk's Tongue turns... the Warriors follow him back toward the cave.

EVEN WHEN HE IS ALMOST FAINTING, Glass gives them a few more seconds... All the oxygen he has left... Then he quickly rolls the rock off of his stomach.

EXT. GRAND RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Glass' face inches to the surface... pulls in some oxygen.

Then he starts moving deeper into the river... fighting the current to pull himself to the other side.

He reaches shore... pulls himself up, then vanishes into the brush.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Glass sits at the base of a tree... exhausted... weak. He looks beside him, to a BIRD pecking at the ground.

Glass eyes the bird a moment, then makes a desperate grab for it...

...but isn't even close. The bird flutters safely away...

...and Glass just collapses back against the tree. He jolts up. A shooting pain runs through his shoulder.

He turns to examine it, straining to see his back,...

CLOSE ON his shoulder blade, the skin red, yellow, brown, full of puss. He takes one finger and touches it. Pain. He smells the finger. Rotten. He lowers his head...

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

A steep embankment... snow in the trees... ice building along the edges. Winter has set in.

Snow-covered peaks touch the sky in the distance.

Fitzgerald and Bridger sit atop the mules, dressed in furs... urging the two mules up the steep slope. Bridger's face has been battered by the weather... Fitzgerald's is covered in a rough beard. They look like two men lost for weeks in the wilderness.

When they finally reach the crest, what seems like a mirage in the distance...

FORT UNION

A cluster of log buildings inside a massive thirty-foot wooden fence. Outside the fence, a village of tents holds the overflow of Indians and Trappers that have come to trade for goods.

Fitzgerald and Bridger stare upon it, almost in disbelief. Bridger impulsively begins to weep.

FITZGERALD

You oughta be proud of yourself,
kid. We did it.

BRIDGER

Yeah...

Bridger inhales deeply and smiles. After a moment the smile turns cloudy. Fitzgerald clocks it.

FITZGERALD

Let it go, Bridger. We followed orders. We did the job. All we done was skip the funeral. Don't you go in there and grow a conscience, cause sure as night'll come, they'll have us swingin' on the end of a couple of ropes.

Bridger's eyes are on the fort.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Look at me.

(Bridger does.)

We did what we had to do.

Bridger nods. Then he digs his heels into the mule... rides on. CLOSE ON Fitzgerald's eyes, watching Bridger go.

EXT. FORT UNION - DAY

The Rocky Mountain Fur Company office and trading post.

A couple of small log structures... a bunkhouse for trappers... a makeshift saloon... a small chapel and dining hall.

The grounds are busy... TRAPPERS, SIOUX, all with things to trade.

Fitzgerald and Bridger ride their mules through the front gates.

INT. HENRY'S OFFICE - FORT UNION - DAY

Henry sits at his desk. Fitzgerald and Bridger stand across from him.

FITZGERALD

We figure Hawk musta wandered too far... got turned around or jumped by some 'Ree. Me and the kid hunted for him.

HENRY

There was no sign of him? No track of his whereabouts?

Fitzgerald shakes his head.

Henry lowers his head in silence, still guilty for leaving Hawk behind.

HENRY (CONT'D)
And Glass' grave?

FITZGERALD
We had those extra days so we went deeper... covered it in rocks. To keep the scavengers off him. He was buried right, Captain.

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, after Hawk disappeared I was worried 'bout savages, and ready to get movin', but Bridger here argued to stay so's he could make a cross for Glass' grave.

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

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
So that's what we did.

He 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. We were partners.

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

HENRY
Alright then...

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 for your courage,
honor and service.

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

HENRY (CONT'D)
Deal or no deal, you deserve
something for what you did.

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

FITZGERALD
He's beat himself up most of the
trip... wishin' he'da done more to
find Hawk... help Glass.

Fitzgerald picks up the bills.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
I'll make sure he gets this.

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

FITZGERALD
(Pocketing the cash.)
That's what I been tellin' him.

Fitzgerald exits.

INT. FORT UNION/CHAPEL - EVENING

Empty, except for Bridger curled up on a bench, sobbing.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MARSH - EVENING

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 tearing at one of the stalks with his teeth... 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.

But then he feels something... the ground almost trembling under his hands. He watches the cattails quiver with vibration. A RUMBLE BUILDS.

Glass looks to the crest of a hill... rises... starts 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.

Behind the herd, a PACK OF WOLVES FIGHT OVER A FALLEN BUFFALO.

Glass kneels 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 weeks. He stays quiet, still, watching the wolves eat his meal.

After a moment, Glass starts walking slowly toward them.

He waves branches at the wolves... trying to scare them away.

A couple of the wolves dart off into the shadows, but the other animals stand their ground... protect their kill... snarling at Glass... bloody lips trembling.

Glass CLAPS... GRUNTS... anything he can to make the wolves run. But instead one of the wolves charges Glass... growling... jaws snapping around a branch, crushing it...

...sends Glass backing away. The wolf snarls, then turns back for his meal...

...leaves Glass to slip into the shadows, knowing he has no chance against the pack.

EXT. PRAIRIE/TREES - EVENING

The starving Glass slides down among a cluster of Cottonwood trees... can only watch and hear the wolves feeding.

EXT. PRAIRIE/HILL - NIGHT

Glass sleeps in the high grass under the cottonwood trees. Darkness surrounds him.

A strange light begins to flicker against the branches... a flare that slowly grows, brightening the darkness.

Suddenly the CRY OF A WOMAN... or maybe an animal. His eyes shoot open.

...he looks up in time to see a GLOWING SHAPE darting through the trees.

Glass focuses on the shape... realizes it's a WOLF... its entire body covered in flames.

We can't be sure whether Glass is dreaming or not... until he turns... peers back out to the fallen buffalo... sees ANOTHER BURNING WOLF rolling on the ground, trying to put out its flaming fur...

...then beyond the wolf, a FIGURE... dragging a burning sage along the ground, igniting the grass and brush... creating a foot-high flaming circle around the buffalo.

Glass, hidden, stares through the dancing flames... to the Figure on the other side... still isn't sure if what he's seeing is real or not. So he rises... starts toward the flames.

He sees TWO SMOLDERING DEAD WOLVES on the ground, arrows sticking out of their bodies.

The wolves have seen enough... turn... race away from the flames... and the Figure becomes clear... an ARIKARA INDIAN... braided hair... cutting at the buffalo carcass with a SHARPENED STONE... filed into a knife-like shard.

Silence. Glass looks at him from the distance. His head filled with the noises of his empty stomach.

CLOSE ON The Indian putting small pieces of raw flesh in his mouth and chewing calmly.

Suddenly, he hears the sound of something approaching and in one graceful move, the Indian is standing... has a makeshift bow aiming a HAND-CUT ARROW at Glass.

Glass freezes. He and the Indian eye each other...

Glass spreads his arms... suppliant. The Indian can see the desperation. Glass slowly points toward the opposite side of the buffalo, then motions to his mouth.

The Indian stares back... Glass not sure if he's about to release that arrow or not. But instead, the Indian just lowers the bow... crouches back down... uses the blade on the buffalo...

...so Glass walks into the ring of flame, kneels down... tears a strip of meat from the carcass... shoves it into his mouth.

And without a word, the two men crouch across from each other... tearing away bloody chunks of flesh from the remains, and shoving them into their mouths...

EXT. PRAIRIE - DAWN

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

EXT. PRAIRIE - LATER

The charred grass forms a smoldering circle around the buffalo.

Glass and the Indian are still on opposite sides of the circle... both now just sitting... watching each other... wondering if they can trust the other...

...as they each battle exhaustion... eyes blinking... fighting to stay open.

But Glass can't do it... his eyes close.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PRAIRIE - MORNING

GLASS... as his eyes open again... He is terribly pale and clammy, beads of sweat across his head.

His POV, the Indian standing over him, holding the sharpened rock.

Glass scrambles back...

...as the Indian just stands there... then points to Glass' wounds... SAYS SOMETHING WE CAN'T UNDERSTAND... then motions to the Grizzly claw hanging around Glass' neck.

Glass nods... starts to speak, but these are the first words he's spoken since the attack, so he practically growls.

GLASS

Griz.

The Indian reaches forward and touches the claw with his hand... clearly impressed.

GLASS (CONT'D)

He came out worse than I did.

The Indian just stares back... Glass sits tentatively. He knows what these warriors are capable of. He says something in Arikara, but it must come out wrong because the Indian just cocks his head.

GLASS (CONT'D)

Guess you don't understand Pawnee,
huh?

Glass removes the necklace... holds it out to the Indian.

But the Indian shakes his head.

Glass points to the wolves... the buffalo.

GLASS (CONT'D)

(gesturing.)

Trade. For food.

The men hold a look... until the Indian takes the claw... And we notice the same STAR TATTOOS ON HIS FINGERS AS THE DEAD ARIKARAS FITZGERALD AND BRIDGER SAW... He slips the necklace over his head... a hint of a smile... but there's a lot of pain behind it.

Glass motions to the BULLET WOUNDS IN THE INDIAN'S SHOULDER AND RIBS.

GLASS (CONT'D)

Who?

The Indian hesitates a moment, then...

INDIAN

(in Arikara)

They came at night...

(MORE)

INDIAN (CONT'D)
 killed most of us... our
 children... took our women... my
 wife... burned the animals...

The Indian's speaking with passion and rage... Glass doesn't understand the words, but finally, the Indian pulls out the sharpened rock and slashes it through the air.

And the message is clear. He's after revenge.

GLASS
 (in English)
 Yeah. Me too....

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Glass and the Indian walk into some nearby trees. Tied to a stump, is a white horse with brown spots. The Indian unties the horse. He makes a clicking sound with his mouth and the horse nuzzles into him as he strokes it's mane.

EXT. WILDERNESS - LATER

The Indian and Glass ride atop the horse. SNOWFLAKES begin to float down over them.

EXT. WILDERNESS/STREAM - DAY

The ground is covered in a thin blanket of white. Glass crouches beside the stream, filling Bridger's canteen. His hands tremble as he tries to sip from it.

GLASS
 (weakly, in English)
 Be froze over before long. Likely
 already is further North.

Glass throws a glance back to the Indian who is feeding the horse some tall grass... of course not understanding a word Glass just said.

The Indian's staring at Glass' back... his jacket off... the blood from his wounds stained through the shirt... flies gathering over the bloody patches.

The Indian says something... motions to Glass' back.

GLASS (CONT'D)
 (body trembling as well)
 They tried to stitch me up.

Glass pantomimes stitching his wounds. The Indian tugs at Glass' shirt.

GLASS (CONT'D)
It ain't good.

The Indian tugs again.. until Glass lifts it... exposes his HORRIBLY INFECTED BACK... the wounds oozing and swollen.

The Indian turns his face away from the smell.

GLASS (CONT'D)
Yeah, it's spoiled. There's
medicine if I make it to Union.

The Indian moves through the trees... motions for Glass to follow.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The Indian and Glass ride trough the forest. Huge snowflakes falling all around them. Glass leans his head back, looks like he is about to fall off. But instead he opens his mouth to catch a snowflake. Then, like a child, another and another.

The Indian sees this. Smiles. Begins to do the same.

They ride catching snowflakes with their mouths like children.

Glass can't help it, he begins to laugh at the absurdity. The Indian hears this and starts laughing as well. They ride on like this...

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Glass lies on the ground in a fetal position, shivering, teeth chattering. Alone. Fever and infection taking hold.

EXT. WOODS - SIMULTANEOUS

The Indian is searching for something, kicking over branches and leaves. He spots a rotten log and moves toward it. He scrapes the soft decaying bark, rubs it between his fingers and smiles.

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

The Indian carries the rotten log toward Glass.

He drops it onto the ground. Then lifts a weak Glass to a sitting position. Glass is trembling even worse than before, barely conscious. The Indian begins to remove his shirt.

GLASS
No. C-c-cold...

The Indian pays no attention and forces the shirt off of Glass.

He rolls the log over, exposing THICK CLUSTERS OF MAGGOTS hidden in the damp wood. Glass looks at them confused. Disgusted. The Indian forces Glass face down to the dirt...

...then he drags his hand through those maggots... spreading thick handfuls of the white worms over Glass' back...

Glass moans in pain, unable to move...

The Indian uses the knife-like rock to scrape all he can from the log... pressing them deep into Glass' wounds.

Glass jolts from the pain and passes out. His face in the dirt.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

The Indian digging a shallow grave. When he's done, he rolls the unconscious Glass into it, and begins to bury him.

Glass' POV - fluttering in and out of consciousness we see glimpses of the Indian tossing more and more dirt on him, smiling...

Finally, darkness...

EXT. FOREST - EVENING

ANGLE ON GLASS' FACE eyes closed. PULL BACK to reveal that he is buried with nothing exposed but his face. Snow begins to fall again... gently awakening him.

For a moment he is disoriented. He looks around. No one.

Slowly, he begins to dig his hands through the mud that he is encased in. He pulls himself out of the ground... He stretches his arm out, holding the shoulder with the opposite hand, surprised at the absence of pain.

He looks around... No sign of the Indian.

Looks down. Hoofprints...

EXT. WILDERNESS - EVENING

Glass slowly advances along a clearing, following the horse's prints in the snow.

EXT. WILDERNESS - LATER

Glass still following the prints...

Some woods ahead, Glass cocks his head and squints, as he sees...

THE SPOTTED HORSE, tied to one of the trees, much as it was before. Glass smiles... walks toward it... looking around for his friend. No sign...

He heads closer to the horse...

The SOUND OF LAUGHTER.

Curious, he creeps toward the sound. Through some trees he spots...

The FRENCH TRAPPERS from earlier, drinking booze around a fire. Completely drunk... laughing...

Glass changes his angle, and sees...

THE ARIKARA INDIAN, hanging from a branch... lifeless. A wooden sign around his neck reads, "VOLEUR DE CHEVAL" [HORSE THIEF].

He's filled with rage, but knows there's nothing he can do. He bites down and heads stealthily toward the spotted horse.

As he gets to it, he notices another group of horses nearby.

He quietly unties the SPOTTED HORSE and is about to mount when he hears another voice. An Indian voice. Torn, he decides to investigate.

In a small clearing, fifty yards or so from the other men, he sees...

AN INDIAN GIRL, clothes torn off, tied to a tree. We can see the SAME STAR TATTOOS ON HER FINGERS... this is who the Arikara Warrior was trying to save.

Behind her, TOUSSAINT... pants at his ankles, raping her... Bloody and abused she still doesn't cry or scream, she simply repeats a phrase, almost hypnotically in Arikara...

TOUSSAINT
 (In French.)
 Shut up!

He continues to penetrate from behind until...

He feels the barrel of a gun against his temple.

Glass is holding the gun to his head. Toussaint doesn't turn, he simply looks down to the ground to see that the holster on his belt is empty.

Toussaint takes a breath as if he were about to scream. Glass cocks the gun. Toussaint thinks better of it and remains silent.

The gun still aimed at Toussaint, Glass reaches down and removes a knife from Toussaint's belt. He backs Toussaint away from the tree and cuts the Indian's ropes loose.

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)
 (In French.)
 What the hell are you doing?

Now free, the Indian Girl makes eye contact with Glass and now we can see that it is POWAQA, the warrior from earlier.

The three of them stand there, nobody moving. After a moment, GLASS tosses the knife at Powaga's feet.

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)
 No...

She stares at Glass, nods, then tentatively bends and picks up the knife.

Glass heads to the Spotted horse.

TOUSSAINT (CONT'D)
 NO!

EXT. WILDERNESS - FRENCH SOLDIERS - SIMULTANEOUS

The sound of a horrible scream. The laughing stops instantly. Everybody freezes. Some draw their guns.

Through the trees the sight of Toussaint walking toward them Zombie-like. His groin gushing blood through his hands. He drops to his knees and then the ground.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The French Trappers charge through the trees... see Glass galloping away on the spotted horse, the other horses running free behind... leaving the French Trappers without an animal to ride.

The French Trappers take aim with their rifles... start firing... the gunshots like fireworks in the night.

GLASS - crouched low on the horse, as bullets whiz past him. The hard galloping of his horse makes Bridger's canteen fall tumbling to the ground.

Glass rides safely out of range, as the French Trappers can only SCREAM after him.

EXT. FORT UNION - EVENING

A blizzard. The grounds are desolate.

In the midst of the swirling snow, a figure lumbering against the wind and snow. It's Fitzgerald. He pushes his way to another building and pulls open the door.

INT. TAVERN - FORT UNION - CONTINUOUS

Warm and lively, Trappers are having fun... drinking... playing cards... Fitzgerald scans the room until he sees Henry sitting alone at a table in the corner.

Fitzgerald walks up to the bar and gets two shots of whiskey. He carries them over and places them on Henry's table.

FITZGERALD

You mind...?

Henry just nods, and Fitzgerald sits. He pushes one of the shots across to Henry.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Hell of a storm.

HENRY

(Unenthusiastically.)

Yeah.

Without waiting, Henry downs the shot.

FITZGERALD

(Lifting his.)

Okay... Well... bottoms up.

Fitzgerald downs his, and they sit in uncomfortable silence.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)
Listen, Captain. I was wonderin'
when you thought we might be
gettin' paid for the haul.

Henry finally looks over.

HENRY
What haul?

FITZGERALD
Them pelts we collected out by the--

HENRY
We didn't collect any pelts.
They're still out there. Buried
under two feet of dirt and a foot
of snow. When we do go back out
there, and get them back here so I
can actually trade them,
everybody'll get paid.

FITZGERALD
Go back out there...

HENRY
Listen Fitzgerald, I don't have the
money to pay for pelts I can't
trade...

FITZGERALD
I was hired to collect 'em, not
guard 'em. And as far as I can
tell, you got a whole safe full of
money.

HENRY
(Getting agitated.)
That's for food and supplies for
this fort. And it isn't full. It's
short about three hundred dollars.

FITZGERALD
What the hell's that supposed to
mean.

HENRY
When we get those pelts back and I
can sell them, you'll get your
money, you have my word on that.
Til then, you're gonna have to wait
like everybody else.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

Snowy and cold. Glass on horseback... climbing a steep mountain pass... the horse laboring... its ice-packed hooves slipping in the snow.

Glass climbs off... walks ahead of the horse... moving along the pass.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

We PAN ACROSS THE TREES... to Glass' horse tied to branches...

...further... past the smoldering remains of a small fire...

...then to Glass... sitting propped against a tree... furs pulled snug around him... eyes closed...

...until a SNAP sends them springing open.

But Glass doesn't flinch... he just sits there staring... listening...

...as ANOTHER DISTANT SNAP has his hand slowly tightening on the PISTOL in his lap.

Then a CLOSER SNAP... this one just behind Glass...

...has him spinning around...

...just in time to see an ARIKARA WARRIOR SWINGING A HATCHET.

Glass FIRES... blows a hole in the Warrior's chest.

Then Glass sees SEVERAL DARK SHAPES RUSHING THROUGH THE TREES TOWARD HIM. He scoops up the dead Warrior's hatchet...

...flings it through the night.

ELK'S TONGUE...

...as the hatchet BURIES IN A TREE JUST BESIDE HIS HEAD. But Elk's Tongue just keeps charging.

The dark woods suddenly ERUPT IN WAR CRIES... Arikara appear from all sides.

Glass races toward the horse as ARROWS PIERCE THE AIR ALL AROUND HIM.

He swings up onto his horse... spots ELK'S TONGUE leading the attack... the necklace of ears hanging around his neck.

Glass digs his heels into the horse's ribs. He hangs onto the spotted horse as he 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... ridden by Elk's Tongue and a DOZEN OTHER WARRIORS.

Glass whips the horse with the reins, 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 horse explodes from the trees, then runs out of ground... because she's just galloped off the side of a cliff.

The animal sails downward toward a thick forest of trees, its legs flailing for something to stand on.

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

The horse SLAMS LEGS-FIRST INTO THE TREE-TOPS with Glass still on its back. The animal SQUEALS as it smashes through the snow-covered trees, carrying Glass with him.

And the horse comes crashing through the branches... the massive limbs slowing his fall... snapping off as its body hits and twists... tosses Glass away.

Glass sails through the air... hits a slope, and tumbles down into a clearing covered with snow...

Just lies there... long enough that we're sure he has to be dead... until he rises ...he drags himself up... staring up through the trees...

...to Elk's Tongue and his Warriors peering down from the top of the cliff... with no way to get to Glass. Finally, they turn... disappear.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Glass moves shivering through the trees... soaked to the bone... clothes beginning to instantly ice over... body convulsing from the cold...

...when he finds the DEAD HORSE twisted on the forest floor.

Glass grabs the loose blanket from the snow... shakily wraps it around himself. But it's worthless in this frigid night air.

Glass is going to freeze to death.

He stares at the dead horse a beat, then pulls the sharpened stone from his bag, and SLAMS IT INTO THE HORSE'S STOMACH... begins slicing the animal's belly open.

Blood and organs spill out, staining the snow. Steam rises from the remains. Glass keeps on cutting... turning his head, 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 open 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... doing everything he can to survive.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

A beautiful day.

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 horse's 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 gazes up at the sun for direction... starts walking... again.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY

From high above, Glass making his way through the snow. A tiny figure against the expanse of white.

EXT. FORT UNION - EVENING

The gate to the fort starts to open... horses legs come into frame.

As the gate opens, we discover that on the horse sits one of the French Trappers... in terrible condition.

FRENCH TRAPPER (O.S.)
 (in French)
 I have no weapons.

INT. TAVERN - FORT UNION - EVENING

Some Trappers are drinking and talking loudly. A few prostitutes ply their trade.

The French Trapper standing, cold and wet, his nose is bleeding.

Anderson, Murphy, Bridger, Fitzgerald, Henry and other Trappers are drinking whiskey around one of the tables. They all stare at the freezing stranger.

HENRY
 Who do you work for? Where are your men?

FRENCH TRAPPER
 (in a clumsy English)
 Dead. All dead. He killed the Captain. Took our horses... Left us with nothing...

HENRY
 Arikara?

FRENCH TRAPPER
 No.

HENRY
 Then who?

FRENCH TRAPPER
 I... I don't know. Something to eat. Please...

ANDERSON
 Food costs money around here.

FRENCH TRAPPER
 I have no money.

ANDERSON
 And you got no food. See how that works?

MURPHY

Maybe you could sell us some of the
scalps you took off our buddies...

HENRY

Not now, Murphy...

The French Trapper takes a medallion, obviously something important to him, from around his neck. He drops it on the table.

FRENCH TRAPPER

It's silver.

ANDERSON

(Examining it.)

That all you got?

The French Trapper reaches onto his belt and tosses a canteen onto the table.

Bridger's eyes go wide. Fitzgerald slides his chair back.

CLOSE ON the canteen, a snail spiral carved into the side of it.

Bridger looks at Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald holds Bridger's stare for a second and then urges himself to remain calm.

FRENCH TRAPPER

It's all I have. We were three...
My friend died in the snow. Other
was...

(reliving it)

...by wolves. I saw it.

BRIDGER

(shaky)

Where did you get that?

FRENCH TRAPPER

What?

FITZGERALD

The canteen.

FRENCH TRAPPER

He dropped it... He killed
Toussaint.

HENRY

Who?

FRENCH TRAPPER
Don't know. I did not see.

BRIDGER
(to Fitzgerald)
It's Hawk... Gotta be...

TRAPPER
It could be Hawk!

The men start buzzing... an air of excitement about Hawk's survival. But Fitzgerald knows better...

Henry and Bridger look at Fitzgerald.

FITZGERALD
Could be...

ANDERSON
No, that idgit couldn't steal no horses.

HENRY
How far from here?

FRENCH TRAPPER
Food... I need--

Henry grabs the helpless Frenchman by the collar.

HENRY
How far?

FRENCH TRAPPER
10 kilometers. Northwest. Near the Yellowstone.

HENRY
(To the men.)
Get the horses saddled. Torches and supplies. Now!

They all rush out, except for Fitzgerald who lags behind staring at Bridger's canteen.

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT

A few miles outside the fort.

Torches, like fireflies, light the darkness. Henry and the Trappers, most of them on horseback, forge ahead, keeping their eye out in all directions. A determined search party.

HENRY

(To the men nearby)

When we get to the Yellowstone, we
split into--

A GUNSHOT rings out. The horses rear up. Henry gives physical signals to the other men to hold still and stay quiet. The men draw their weapons. Try to keep their horses in check.

Henry gives another signal. Two trappers ease off their horses and take flank positions. They stare ahead waiting...

ANOTHER GUNSHOT EXPLODES. The men getting nervous now... taking position...

And then against a clearing backlit by the moonlight, we see the silhouette of a man. Staggering forward.

The men take aim, ready to shoot.

The man comes closer, arms out at his sides, he drops his pistol.

CLOSE ON HENRY

HENRY (CONT'D)

(Seeing a ghost)

Glass...?

And now we see Glass coming for them. Covered in horse's blood, his eyes seem white as slate against the light of the torches.

HENRY (CONT'D)

GLASS!!!

CLOSE ON BRIDGER his face registering relief and terror at the same time.

A few trappers run to Glass and grab hold of him as he's about to fall.

CLOSE ON HENRY an expression of pure absolution, until...

HENRY (CONT'D)

(To himself.)

Fitzgerald.

He kicks his horse and flies back towards the fort.

EXT. FORT UNION/COURTYARD - NIGHT

Henry tying up his horse and immediately marching, possessed toward the bunkhouse.

INT. BUNKHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

From inside the room we see Henry kick open the door, standing in silhouette, torchlight behind him.

HENRY'S POV

The bunkhouse is empty. Fitzgerald's bunk still made. His footlocker open and empty.

Henry's eyes wide with rage. He storms out of the bunkhouse.

EXT. FORT UNION/COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

He rushes out into the middle of the courtyard. Wind howling. Henry turning like a caged animal not knowing what to do next. Something catches his attention...

The door to his office swinging open and shut with the wind.

CLOSE ON HENRY drawing his pistol from his holster. He moves toward the office.

EXT. OFFICE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Henry eases the door open with his foot while keeping the pistol cocked and ready in front of him.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The light from the torches of the courtyard shine through the office windows.

A SOUND from behind the desk.

Henry moves cautiously around the desk. Aims the gun and...

Nothing but the desk drawer opened with some papers being rustled by the breeze of the open door.

Henry breathes. Seems lost. Then...

A thought. He looks up and over at the safe.

The door to the safe opened. The safe empty. Henry seethes.

THE SOUND OF COMMOTION in the courtyard.

Henry charges out the door to see...

EXT. FORT UNION/COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

THREE TRAPPERS carrying Glass into the compound; Bridger and the other trappers behind.

Henry approaches the three trappers that carry Glass.

HENRY

Get him to the doctor.

Then, as the trappers take Glass inside, he marches straight toward Bridger and crushes his nose with the butt of his gun. Blood flies. Bridger crumbles to the floor. The other men look on, but don't dare intervene...

HENRY (CONT'D)

(Menacing)

You said he was dead...

BRIDGER

(Retreating, petrified)

He was! We... We thought he was!
Captain, I swear to God, we--

Another smash to Bridger's temple. More blood. Henry points the gun right between Bridger's eyes...

HENRY

Where is he?

BRIDGER

Who...?

HENRY

Fitzgerald. Your partner. Where is he?

BRIDGER

(Starting to cry.)

I don't know!

HENRY

Where is he?

BRIDGER

Captain, I swear to God...

Henry cocks the gun.

HENRY
Say the Lord's prayer.

BRIDGER
What?

HENRY
Do it!

Bridger crying, knows he's a dead man. He begins to mutter the Lord's prayer... searching for the words...

BRIDGER
Our Father, who... who... who...
Heaven... Forgive us our
trespasses. Forgive us our...
(Looks up)
Don't kill me, Mr. Henry...

Henry stands unmoved, about to pull the trigger...

BRIDGER (CONT'D)
Lead us not into temptation, but
deliver us... Deliver us...

Bridger breaks down completely. Henry wheels on Anderson, pointing the gun at his head.

HENRY
(To Anderson)
You guys were always talking. He
must've said something.

BRIDGER
Deliver us from evil--

HENRY
(To Bridger.)
Shut up!
(To Anderson)
Where's he headed?

ANDERSON
I don't--

HENRY
WHERE?

Fire in his eyes, he backs Anderson up. Until...

BRIDGER
(A thought.)
Texas...

HENRY

What?

BRIDGER

(Recalling)

He told me when we were out there.
(recalling) "Decent piece of
land..." he said. He's Headin' to
texas.

HENRY

From here out, you're a prisoner,
charged with the crime of treason.
(To Anderson)
Take him to the cage.

ANDERSON

Captain, I think he's--

HENRY

Disobey an order and come morning
you'll be hanging right along side
of him. Now take him away.

Henry marches off. Anderson reluctantly unholsters his gun.

INT. BUNKHOUSE - FORT UNION - NIGHT

Glass sits on his bed while the Doctor applies a poultice on
Glass' back. Henry stands by the door. When the doctor seems
to be finished...

HENRY

(To the doctor)

Leave us alone, will you Danny?

DOCTOR

Sure thing.

The doctor packs and exits.

GLASS

Bridger was tellin' the truth.

HENRY

How's that?

GLASS

I was dead. Just about, anyway. He
did like Fitzgerald told him. He
was just following orders.

Henry considers this for a beat.

HENRY

What happened out there, Hugh?

GLASS

Fitzgerald killed Hawk.

(Beat.)

Stabbed him to death right in front of me... And I couldn't-- (A beat) I couldn't stop him...

HENRY

Son of a bitch...

GLASS

Where is he?

HENRY

He's gone, Hugh. Busted the safe and took off. Bridger thinks he's headed down to Texas.

(Beat.)

I'm going after him. They're getting my horse ready.

GLASS

I'm going with you.

HENRY

No. You need some rest. And something to eat.

GLASS

You'll never find him without me.

Henry digests the truth of that statement.

HENRY

If we wait til morning, he'll have a day's head start on us.

GLASS

I could catch a jackrabbit with a day's head start.

They share a determined look.

EXT. FORT UNION - DAWN

The fort, dead still at first light. Only the sound of the flag snapping in the wind.

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Glass stands naked, he takes a bucket of water and pours it over himself.

CLOSE ON HIS BACK as the water cascades over the incredible scar tissue. Steam comes off of him in the cold.

He pours another bucket onto his face. As he looks upward, dried blood is rinsed from the terrible seam in his neck.

INT. BUNKHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON GLASS strapping on the second of his new boots.

EXT. FORT UNION/COURTYARD

From a distance we see Glass emerging from the Bunkhouse and walking toward the horses.

Henry comes out of his office and walks beside Glass, neither of them speaks

EXT. FORT UNION

Glass and Henry ride. Fort Union behind them in the distance.

EXT. PRAIRIE - DAY

Snow has begun to fall. Glass is off his horse. He bends over and brushes away the new dusting of snow to expose a hoof print below it.

GLASS
Fresh as we'll find.

More tracks and now a trail. Something strikes Glass.

HENRY
What...?

GLASS
Horse is favoring it's front right leg. No way he could have ridden through the night.

Henry smiles. This is the Glass we first met... the tracker... Glass stares into the distance...

HENRY
How far ahead?

GLASS
Half day at most.

HENRY
Could be anyone... 'Ree even.

GLASS
It's him... He won't want to be
stuck too far west. And it's too
tough to cross south of here.

Glass eyes those tracks leading into the trees.

HENRY
If they aren't his, we lose him.

GLASS
(climbing back up)
They're his.

They ride into the woods along the faded tracks.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CAMP - NIGHT

Glass stands in the shadows... stares into the distance, and struggles to raise the pistol he stole from Toussaint... take aim. His arm trembles, but it's getting stronger.

Henry builds a fire-bed... dragging the dirt over the fire and rocks... spreading a blanket over the warm ground... then motions for Glass to rest on it.

Glass lies on the warm ground. Henry covers him with a fur and sits next to the fire.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY

Glass and Henry riding across a meadow. Glass stops... tilts his head back to sniff the air.

HENRY
Whatta ya got?

GLASS
Smoke.

Glass pulls some snow from his horse's mane... tosses it in the air, and watches it blow to the side.

Glass turns his horse toward the breeze... squints out into the dawn.

GLASS (CONT'D)

No more than a mile out that way.
(pulls his rifle)
I'll head in from the west... you
take the east.

HENRY

And if it's the 'Ree?

GLASS

Then we leave 'em be... meet back
up here.

Henry nods... Glass takes off at a trot. Henry veers the other direction... splitting up across the snow.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Splinters of sunlight 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 - CONTINUOUS

Henry's already off his horse... leading it through the trees... searching as he walks.

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

Glass moves silently... rifle poised to aim and fire... just like the first time we saw him, perfectly comfortable in this world.

His eyes, drifting back and forth... picking up everything.

He reaches the glow... the remains of a campfire. Toussaint and the French Trappers lie around, all dead, frozen. Rigid expressions of fear.

EXT. WILDERNESS - MORNING

Henry's horse is making too much noise with each step. He stops walking... wraps the reins around a tree... walks back around the horse...

...AND THERE'S FITZGERALD STARING AT HIM... Glass' Anstadt aimed and ready to fire.

FITZGERALD

Didn't figure an important man like yourself to be away from your stove on a morning as cold as this, Captain. You lost?

Henry just stares back at Fitzgerald and that rifle. His eyes drift to his own rifle, still strapped onto his saddle.

HENRY

I'm here to take you back to Union.

FITZGERALD

Yeah. Thing is, I'm not too crazy about that plan. I got another one.

Henry knows he's only got one chance... he makes a grab for the rifle.

EXT. FOREST - MORNING

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. FOREST - MORNING

Glass at full gallop through the woods... veering between trees... ducking branches.

EXT. WILDERNESS - MORNING

Glass charges from the forest... spots Henry's horse standing in the trees... tears through the snow toward it... leaps off the still-moving animal... hits the ground with his rifle ready...

...and sees HENRY'S BODY face-up in the snow.

Glass drops to a knee... scans the woods, as he slides over to Henry...

...and we see he's a bloody mess... a GUNSHOT WOUND in his chest leaking out onto the snow... HIS HEAD SCALPED... LEFT EAR SLICED OFF.

Glass looks up from Henry's corpse... squints out into the forest.

EXT. WILDERNESS/CLEARING - MORNING

Glass on horseback, leading Henry's horse behind him across the snow-covered meadow. Henry's fur-covered body is draped over the saddle.

EXT. FROZEN RIVER - MORNING

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 forest.

Then Glass turns... stares up a slope into the forest beyond... like he knows what's waiting for him there.

He walks to the horses, tied in the trees at the base of the slope... Henry still laying across the saddle of his horse in his bloody furs.

Glass SNAPS A STURDY BRANCH FROM A FALLEN TREE... looks back up that slope.

EXT. WILDERNESS - MORNING

OUR POV FROM DEEP IN THE FOREST...

...watching from a low angle in the brush, as Glass appears up over the distant slope... riding through the trees, with Henry draped over the horse behind.

The forest is quiet... just the CRACKING of crusty snow and branches under the horses' hooves.

Then BOOM... as the ANSTADT BARREL WE HADN'T SEEN BESIDE US FLASHES...

...and Glass tumbles off his horse.

The horses prance around nervously, then settle... and then FITZGERALD RISES FROM THE BRUSH BESIDE US... eases toward the horses, reloading the Anstadt as he moves.

He reaches Glass, face down in the snow... his furs covering him.

And Fitzgerald has that rifle aimed, ready for Glass to suddenly roll over firing...

...but Glass doesn't move. Fitzgerald nudges him with his boot, then rolls him over...

...and instead of Glass, we see HENRY'S LIFELESS FACE HIDDEN BENEATH THE FURS... and that BROKEN BRANCH sticking up along his back.

ANGLE FROM BEHIND HENRY'S HORSE...

...on the REST OF THE BRANCH RIGGED TO GLASS' SADDLE to hold Henry upright...

...and then what we thought was Henry flung over the second horse... MOVING... the bloody fur-covered arm lifting a rifle... the head rising up... it's GLASS... taking aim...

...as Fitzgerald realizes what's happened... spins with the Anstadt...

...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 wild shot hits Henry's horse, sending it rearing up, tossing Glass to the ground.

But Glass gets on his feet... reloads as he charges 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 - CONTINUOUS

Glass lies on the snow, 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 rips the knife from his belt and the men charge like two wild animals... crash into each other... knives flailing.

This battle is just as violent as Glass' bout with that Grizzly.

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 tries to kick Glass in the face. But, snatching the knife out of his hand, Glass slashes Fitzgerald's thigh deeply.

Fitzgerald falters, Glass climbs on top of him, grabbing his head with both hands. He pushes one thumb into Fitzgerald's eye. Blood explodes from the eye socket.

Fitzgerald screams. He pushes Glass away from him and punches him in the throat.

They are both tired, but continue fighting like wild animals, a pool of blood around them, until...

Glass spots Fitzgerald's knife in the snow nearby.

Glass lifts the knife... glares down... tightens his grip.

And all a bloody Fitzgerald can do is watch... wait. An ironic smile washes over his face.

FITZGERALD

Funny.

(spits some blood)

Same knife I used on Hawk...

Glass plants his knife into Fitzgerald's chest...

...but he doesn't die...

...that knife sticks out of Fitzgerald's chest, and all Fitzgerald is doing is smiling about it.

So Glass tears it free... drives it in again... THWACK. But Fitzgerald only flinches... the blood dripping down his smiling teeth. An eerie smile...

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

How many times you gonna kill me?

THWACK... A confused Glass stabs Fitzgerald again...

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

You got that knife pointed in the wrong direction.

...THWACK... THWACK... but Fitzgerald won't go down. His chest is covered in blood.

Glass CRIES OUT... pounds the blade into Fitzgerald again. And this time, Fitzgerald rises to his feet... spits some blood into the snow... turns... walks through the snow...

Glass with tears in his eyes, watches Fitzgerald walk away.

Then we slowly PAN AROUND TO GLASS... and see him Glass lying on the snow. It all happened in Glass' mind.

Glass stands, walks up to Fitzgerald... lifts the knife... enraged, about to strike...

But then he sees something in the distance... his knife frozen in mid-air...

...because ELK'S TONGUE is standing on the opposite side of the icy river, staring back at Glass. And Jesus, we thought Glass might actually make it through this... but then shapes appear on each side of Elk's Tongue... a DOZEN ARIKARA WARRIORS... all ready for another massacre.

And now Fitzgerald sees them too.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

Oh, Christ.

Glass lets the knife drop to his side...

...as his eyes drift to that ANSTADT resting a few yards away...

...but there are too many Arikara.

So Glass just lifts himself to his feet... holds his stare on Elk's Tongue...

Elk's Tongue just stares back at Glass...

A moment of silence.

Glass sees that Fitzgerald is lying, near death, on a piece of broken ice. He grabs Fitzgerald by the hair and tugs him, sending him floating into the river.

We follow Fitzgerald as he slowly floats toward the opposite side of the river.

Fitzgerald bumps into a horse's leg.

Elk's Tongue dismounts and strides straight toward him.

FITZGERALD (CONT'D)

No... JESUS NO! GLASS!

Elk's Tongue grabs Fitzgerald's hair... yanks his head back... notices the OLD SCALPED SCAR, then SCALPS ANOTHER STRIP FROM FITZGERALD'S HEAD.

Fitzgerald SCREAMS OUT... he's reliving his worst fear...

Elk's Tongue SLITS FITZGERALD'S THROAT.

Fitzgerald's head falls lifeless to the ice... the blood pooling around him.

Glass lifts the Anstadt... but doesn't try to load it... doesn't even aim it... he just cradles it in his arms...

...watches as Elk's Tongue takes Fitzgerald's ear. Then Elk's Tongue's eyes roll up to meet Glass'...

Elk's Tongue rises... slides his bounty into a pouch...

Then, without a sound, Elk's Tongue turns... he and his Warriors begin riding away from Glass... back along the river.

And as they do, we catch a glimpse of one of the RIDERS ...

...POWAQA, the INDIAN WARRIOR GLASS SAVED FROM TOUSSAINT.

Their eyes meet for only a moment, before the Girl and the Arikara vanish into the trees.

Glass drops to the snow... kneeling there... his face blank.

Then he looks to the BLOOD MATTED ON HIS FURS. He pulls the furs back from his stomach... reveals the LARGE CRIMSON STAIN SPREADING OVER HIS SHIRT.

It's Glass' blood, and there's a lot of it.

He eyes it a moment, then leans back... rests that Anstadt across his lap... staring at the beautiful landscape...

CUT TO:

POV FROM ACROSS THE RIVER...

...on Glass sitting alone in the snow, holding his Anstadt.

FADE OUT.