

LYCANTHROPY

FADE IN:

EXT. VICTORIAN LONDON - NIGHT

Silence, except for the whisper of the wind.

Slivers of a FULL MOON peek out from between the clouds, a dark sky with streaks of silver.

Rising slowly into view, the spires and towers of the CITY SKYLINE stretch tall and haunting. Striking against the deathly quiet, Big Ben tolls the eleventh hour.

SHUTTERS DRAWN, no light flickers from the distant rowhouses. The world, it seems, is sound asleep.

Reaching street level, gaslight shines bleary through discomfoting fog. A pair of footsteps echo against the cobblestones.

The cold and empty streets give way to a COUPLE emerging arm in arm - MR. and MRS. CUSHING. Dressed in the appropriate attire of 19th century gentry, they stroll together, stiff but very much in love.

MR. CUSHING

So my dear, how was your day at the circus?

MRS. CUSHING
As uneventful as ever.

MR. CUSHING
I thought the animals were nice.
You never get the chance to be so,
well, so close to nature like that.
I found it quite thrilling, in its
own way.

MRS. CUSHING
So long as that's the closest we
get dear, then it's lovely.

EXT. THE DOCKS - NIGHT

Softly bobbing in port, a LARGE SAILING SHIP is being loaded in preparation. Deckhands strain carrying barrels and crates aboard. The boards creak beneath.

They give a wide berth to two UNKEMPT MEN dressed in the clothes of the American Old West. Shifty and threatening, DANIEL REMUS leans casually against a stack of cargo, while LEO CHANEY paces restlessly back and forth around him.

DANIEL looks out to sea, calm under the pale moonlight.

LEO CHANEY
I can't believe they left us
waiting.

DANIEL REMUS

Elliot and Simone wanted a bite to eat. It's a long trip. Can you blame them?

EXT. VICTORIAN LONDON - NIGHT

The Cushings brace as a sudden chill blows through. The shadows close in oppressive around them.

Half-cloaked in darkness, two hulking creatures stalk their prey unseen. A huge paw sprouted with white fur steps carefully forward. A monstrous muzzle bears its set of razor-sharp teeth. Two pairs of glowing, animal eyes.

As the clouds pass, the FULL MOON shines clear once again. It illuminates the street, revealing the creatures as TWO BLOODTHIRSTY WEREWOLVES. One brown male, one white female, their eyes goes wide, and they pounce together.

The Cushings turn and look up too late, and are devoured. Limbs are torn off and feasted on. Streams of blood run between the cobbles to a soundtrack of desperate screams and cries, brought to an end by a SICKENING CRUNCH

As noises of chewing and panting fill the night, the moon rises ever higher. The clouds drift out to sea.

SUPERIMPOSURE:

LYCANTHROPY

EXT. THE AMERICAN OLD WEST - NIGHT - A MONTH LATER

The same moon, a different sky.

The PANORAMA of cacti on dusty scrubland spans far and wide. Tumbleweeds roll lazily across. Scattered in the foreground, HERDS OF CATTLE roam and graze, all docile.

From the safety of a crackling CAMPFIRE, a number of CATTLEMEN take turns between eating from a pot of stew and keeping watch.

Everything is at peace, until-

A STARTLING CRY, a cow in distress, screaming loudly. The men jump to their feet, but manage only a few steps before the noise abruptly cuts out.

Silence resettles as clouds blot out the light, casting the plains into dull shadow.

BRIAN
What was that?

HENRY produces a tin of chewing tobacco from a pocket, and pops a pinch in his mouth without ever taking his eyes off the herd.

HENRY
I've heard some rumours...

BRIAN
What rumours?

HEATH
Would you two be quiet?

BRIAN
I just want to know about the rumours.

HEATH
Now listen up good, it's probably just Confederate scavengers, something like that.

A gentle moo sounds out before another urgent cry, then another, multiple squeals piercing the dark. Panicked, the herd kicks up dust and stampedes.

Cattle races past the men in the opposite direction, some freshly caked in blood. The men pull out their rifles.

A PRIMAL HOWL rings out through the night air. All the cattlemen turn to face it. Henry cocks his gun and assumes a wary stance.

BRIAN

What the-

HEATH

Pipe down, it's just a pack of wolves.

HENRY

How apt, considering the rumours...

Brian drops his guard, looking back to the others.

BRIAN

Once and for all, tell me what you mean with all the goddamn rumours talk.

HENRY

Rumours are that even though there's the war going on, some things have Union and Yankee soldiers, even goddamn Confederate Johnny Rebs, something's got them all scared like.

HEATH

Hogwash. I'm hearing some bullshit here I reckon.

HENRY

No way, it's true. Beasts of the night, I'm saying... Werewolves.

More howling, this time behind them, and much closer. The men spin around fast, guns in trembling hands.

Peering out into the darkness, at the back of the group, one rookie is wordlessly yanked away by a barely visible assailant.

Seconds later, the screaming starts. The group spins back at the sounds of him being torn apart, pointing their guns in its direction.

HENRY

Now do you hear that?

HEATH

More bothered I can't see it. Start shooting boys!

Flashes of gunpowder ignite as the men shoot blindly into the night.

The shots illuminate their silhouettes - we see their fear and fury as they shoot. Pistol and rifle alike, the guns click off as they fire until their bullets are spent.

They instantly fumble for their ammo pouches to start reloading.

HEATH
Keep whatever it is in your sights!

A lumbering FIGURE approaches on all fours, dark grey on a background of grey. It gives an ominous and unnatural groan.

HEATH (CONT'D)
Open fire!

The cattlemen concentrate fire at the advancing form, until what we realise is an already bloodied, shot-up cow collapses and slumps, dead, in front of them.

BRIAN
Stop! It's just a cow!

HEATH
What the fu...?

Brian edges over cautiously, and kicks the cow's corpse to check it's dead.

He turns to the others and shrugs. The group scans their pitch-black surroundings. Anything beyond ten feet blends into a dark haze.

A low growling sound comes from behind them, quietly at first but with quickly increasing volume.

HENRY
Do you hear that?

A BROWN WEREWOLF, the one from before, at least twice the size of a man, launches into a sprint of surprising speed, and strikes.

It lands on Heath, dragging him through the dust in a rolling tackle before ripping him to shreds in seconds.

The men step back in shock and confusion, struggling to finish reloading before opening fire again.

The hail of bullets tear into the werewolf as it hunches over Heath's twitching body, but they don't seem to have an effect.

Another round of clicks, guns emptied again. Only once he's finished does the creature whip around to face them.

BRIAN
Our bullets have no effect!

HENRY

Shit, it's obvious ain't it? It's because they're not silver. We need silver bullets or we're all done for.

BRIAN

Then let's run for it.

The wolf snarls and pounces again. The group scatters in all directions, those that can firing behind them as they do.

Brian and Henry lead a few others in a dash for a small ridge a short distance away. Some toss their guns to the wayside and race ahead, gasping for breath-

-before coming up to meet them from the other side, a second pair of glowing pinpoint eyes reflect from the darkness.

A second werewolf creeps forth blocking their path, this one sporting thick black fur. Its hot breath steams in the cold night.

In an instant, it grabs one of the men with its claws and bisects him in a shower of gore.

Shots and screams ring out as the men fight back, but this wolf doesn't seem phased either.

Entrails hanging from its jaws, blood dripping from its fur, the black wolf approaches like an unstoppable machine.

BRIAN

Shit, the other way.

The pair turn to run once more, but aimless, working on pure adrenaline.

Brian trips on a rock, unseen in the frenzy, landing face first in the dirt.

Looking back, the black wolf cuts another man down with a deep, jagged wound.

Hands are on Brian's arm, Henry's hands, heaving him to his feet. Brian limps, and Henry takes his weight.

As they stagger forward, a THIRD WEREWOLF descends on their flank. Its white fur, already stained with fresh blood, shines brightest in the moonlight. It looms over them, a terrifying silhouette.

Penned in, Henry and Brian cry out in fear.

The white wolf lunges towards them with its mouth wide open, salivating.

An EXTREME CLOSE UP inside, to its razor sharp teeth.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. A STEAM TRAIN IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - DAY

A long STEAM TRAIN seen from overhead, chugs interminably along its track. Thick clouds of white billow up and trail behind.

The sun shines starkly. Its baking heat ripples up from the earth. Wild frontier, scarce trees and brush, stretches beyond in all directions. There's no station nearby, this is firmly outlaw country.

In the front carriage, two soot-faced men tirelessly shovel coal into the firebox. Sweat drips from their brows, as beside them, the train driver keeps careful watch of the path ahead.

He squints, before a flash of fear comes over him, and he grasps for the emergency brake.

EXT. ON THE TRACKS - DAY

SIX COWBOYS, all grinning with their guns held aloft, sit in a row atop their horses.

A FALLEN TREE TRUNK acts as a barrier on the track.

These are the outlaws - ALEX CARVER, SAM DALE, KYLE MARKER, brothers TONY and THOMAS HAYES, and HARRY "THE HATCHET" GARRETT. Dressed in rebel attire, they're a group of dastardly rogues, but not outright villains.

They all don masks to hide their faces, expensive-looking masquerade ball masks that cover the eyes.

All apart from Harry, who wears a sack with eye holes cut out. Wherever they stole them from, it seems they only stole five.

ALEX CARVER

Okay everyone, time to follow my lead now.

SAM DALE

Right on, boss.

He spits at the dirt.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT
Same old routine as ever, ain't it?

KYLE MARKER
What else do you expect, huh? You
want to start driving the trains?

Harry laughs out loud, a joke only to him.

ALEX CARVER
Goddamnit all to hell, would you
two pipe down? All of y'all
actually, especially you brothers
at the back there.

TONY HAYES
We heard you.

THOMAS HAYES
Loud and clear boss.

Screeching to a halt, the train stops just in time, mere feet from the obstacle on the tracks. The steam engine hisses violently from the effort.

As the driver pulls the cord to vent steam, the cowboys get to work, Sam and Kyle following Alex up into the train's passenger cars.

ALEX CARVER

Well, I'm glad we got here in time to catch the train, boys. Now let's get into the carriages, we've got to find where all that money is.

From the ground, Harry bows in a grandiose fashion and gestures to the driver to step down.

Terrified, the man stays stock still.

One of the fire stokers reaches for a WRENCH, but not before the Hayes brothers barge in from the other side, holding the three at gunpoint.

Tony grabs and kicks out the driver. He falls six feet and lands flat on the hard ground. The brothers laugh at the sight.

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE, FIRST CLASS - DAY

A carriage full of PASSENGERS in expensive attire, fanning themselves in the heat.

They cry out in panic when half the gang enter, weapons drawn. Women hold their children close, others clutch at their valuables.

Alex tips his hat to them and gestures with his gun to those that remain seated.

ALEX CARVER
Everybody off. This is your stop,
people.

EXT. ON THE TRACKS - DAY

Moving single file, the passengers line up in the dwindling shadow of the train.

A group of ladies tend to the fallen driver, holding his hand as he moans in pain.

The Hayes brothers, back in the safety of their saddles, stand guard, sweeping their rifle and pistol back and forth over the crowd.

The pair look bored. They whistle a jaunty tune, and spit tobacco disconsolately.

The passengers look less bored. Some weep, others look on perturbed, huddled together.

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE, MONEY ROOM - DAY

Thud! The locked door shakes.

Thud! It bulges from the impact.

Thud! The remnants of the lock skitter across the floor. The door almost comes off at the hinges under the force of Harry's broad shoulder. He, Alex, Sam and Kyle burst into the room.

A frightened BANK CLERK instantly throws down his gun and puts up his hands.

ALEX CARVER
(inhaling deeply)
Smell that boys? This is the money
room, sure enough.

BANK CLERK
You shouldn't be in here. What do
you people want?

KYLE MARKER
What a stupid question.

SAM DALE
Here's your answer, damn fool.

Sam coshes the bank clerk with the butt of his gun. The blow is harder than needed. He draws blood.

The clerk reaches up and feels the sting. He sees the blood, and stumbles for a moment, collapsing over his desk and spilling coins everywhere on his way to the floor, out for the count.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT

Woah!

ALEX CARVER

What in the name of hell are you doing? Sa-

Sam spins to meet Alex's gaze, shooting a look of absolute fury.

Alex squares up against him, sensing a power play.

SAM DALE

You almost said my name.

ALEX CARVER

But I didn't actually say it, did I?

SAM DALE

Sounded close enough to an introduction to me.

ALEX CARVER
What's your point?

Tension crackles between them.

Without looking down, Sam fires his pistol, shooting the bank clerk in the head.

No one tries to stop him, but no one looks impressed either.

SAM DALE
Well what are you all looking at?
It's not my fault. It's his, for
nearly saying my name.

ALEX CARVER
Nearly though, only nearly. I
didn't want to kill anyone unless
it's needed.

EXT. ON THE TRACKS - DAY

Growing restless, the passengers begin to whisper amongst themselves.

We CLOSE IN on two of them, a fat man and a bespectacled older gentleman.

FAT MAN

I reckon I can rush him.

OLD GENTLEMAN

Don't be such a fool, for god's sake man.

But he's already gone, edging closer and closer to Tony Hayes, using the crowd for cover.

He makes it within spitting distance, and with a last jostle into the sunlight, grabs Tony's leg and tries to pull him from his horse.

He tugs and strains with all his might, but Tony doesn't budge, his stature far too great. In fact, the outlaw seems rather amused by the attempt.

He kicks back, and the fat man falls over onto his backside, red in the face and covered in dust.

Tony observes him for a moment with some vague curiosity, but remains largely uninterested.

TONY HAYES

Sucker, what do you think you're doing? It's your time to get off.

THOMAS HAYES

Not my place to argue with my brother, so it looks like this is your stop, man. Sorry I guess.

Tony lifts up his gun and lets loose-

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE, MONEY ROOM - DAY

-a single shot.

Alex rushes to look through the window of the carriage, returning with a scowl.

Seeing it, Sam can't help but smile. Harry doesn't even look up, too busy shovelling money from crate to bag by the armful.

EXT. ON THE TRACKS - DAY

The fat man lays dead, shot straight through the head. Through the bullet hole, we see the other passengers screaming.

Tony shrugs, while Thomas looks on.

A little further down, Kyle hangs out from the gangway, waving to the brothers.

KYLE MARKER

Everybody get your act together. We are out of here.

EXT. ON THE TRACKS - DAY - LATER

The cowboys load up with MONEY, BULLION AND BONDS hanging heavy from their saddlebags.

As they mount up and start riding away, Harry turns to wave at the passengers, some crying, others seething. One stoker throws his hat to the ground in frustration.

A CLOSE UP on the train driver, clutching his side as he struggles to his feet, teeth gritted through the pain.

Swooping down from the sky, a lone vulture perches on top of the now stone-cold steam engine. Its beady eyes narrow in on the fat man's corpse.

The train driver looks up at the bird.

It meets his gaze. Almost imperceptibly, it appears to shrug back - "such is life".

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. WAGON TRAIL CAMP FIRE - DUSK

By the light of the setting sun, a WAGON TRAIN encamps for the night in a circle around a simmering bonfire.

Music and chatter fill the air, violins and harmonicas playing folk tunes that all can sing along to. Some settlers dance and twirl along in merriment around the fire, drinks in hand.

Just aside from the festivities, WADE TRAVIS, an earnest but strapping rural lad, watches from afar as HANNAH HALE, a fresh-faced young woman warms herself against the flames.

He eyes her nervously, muttering to himself, plucking up the courage to approach.

As he does, he wipes his sweaty palms on his shirt and straightens himself up.

WADE TRAVIS
Miss Hale, would you like to dance?

He holds out his hand as an offering. She inspects it as though it were a foreign object.

HANNAH HALE

(smirking)

Why, is that an American custom?

WADE TRAVIS

Sure, you just have to take my hand
and I lead you in a waltz.

She smiles, and accepts the offering. Wade leads her, giggling, over to dance with the other couples. They obviously hold each other in high esteem, and with great affection.

Sat a little across the way, an elderly couple observes the interaction closely. Dressed in the modest garb of honest, church-going pioneer folk, Hannah's parents, MAMA and PAPA HALE.

Under a frown, Mama doubles down on her cross stitch to distract herself.

MAMA HALE

Are you sure our girl Hannah is
hanging around with suitable folk
there? I don't know about these
American men, or the boys even.

Papa Hale adds another pinch of tobacco to a measly little corn cob pipe. He strikes a match to light it.

PAPA HALE

Well, she may as well try and fit
in. This is our new homeland. And
she looks like she's enjoying
herself.

MAMA HALE

That's what's worrying me, judging
by their closeness.

PAPA HALE

Oh nonsense, that young Wade Travis
is just looking out for her.

She scoffs.

MAMA HALE

Yes, I just bet he is. It's that
that has me worried.

A young boy calls out, the son of the old couple. Little
HENRY HALE, a boy of no more than ten years of age, whines
loudly.

HENRY HALE

Ma, I can't sleep!

PAPA HALE

Oh, what now?

MAMA HALE

I'll go see to him. Don't I always?

Mama Hale stands and walks toward their large wooden
carriage.

INT. HALE CARRIAGE - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Dressed in his long johns and huddled in a blanket, Henry
shouts from through the open shutters on the side of the
carriage.

Mama Hale opens up the door.

MAMA HALE

So what is it now? You're just seeking attention I bet, huh?

HENRY HALE

Mama, I heard something. It sounded like an animal.

MAMA HALE

Ignore it, it's probably just coyotes.

EXT. WAGON TRAIL CAMP FIRE - DUSK

A HOWL fills the night around the circled wagons, loud enough that the music falls silent to gauge its distance.

Everyone looks to one another for an idea of what to do, the merriment marred by people's mutual indecision and apprehension.

Brasher than the others, Papa Hale is the first to broach the silence.

PAPA HALE

Hey everyone, did you hear that?

BOB KENT, a stout man with a thick ginger beard and the look of natural leadership stands up on the seat of his wagon to address the group.

BOB KENT

Everyone, it's just animals, that's all.

Papa Hale steps forward, calling out from the steadily amassing crowd of worried settlers.

PAPA HALE
Maybe it's Apaches?

A cry or two goes up from the gathered settlers, who can't imagine anything worse.

BOB KENT
Around in these parts?

WADE TRAVIS
Apaches, Lord no.

HANNAH HALE
Is something wrong, Wade?

WADE TRAVIS
I couldn't help overhear your Pa
and Bob, that's all.

HANNAH HALE
Surely we've got nothing to worry
about, right?

A round of howls disturbs the peace further, the first met by a second, a third and a fourth. A chorus from all angles, fully surrounding the encampment.

Clearly, it's coming from multiple "coyotes".

Everyone glances about urgently. Those who remained seated are now on their feet. A panic settles on the group.

Bob Kent shakes his head - "not today" - and from beneath the seat of his wagon produces a shotgun. He racks it with a satisfying sound.

BOB KENT

That's it, everybody load up.

A montage of settlers, men and women both, grabbing their guns. Cloth-wrapped rifles, half-rusted revolvers and holstered hand cannons are pulled out from most anywhere that could fit a firearm.

Some take to the heights of their wagontops, others form a circle around the fire, loading round after round into their chambers.

As the last light of the sun disappears beneath the horizon, silence falls on the encampment. After a beat, a cold breeze parts the clouds to reveal the silvery face of the moon.

With visibility fallen to almost nothing, people glance nervously this way and that. They point their weapons out into the new dark with shaking trigger fingers.

Wade holds Hannah close to him. The pair look about for possible attackers.

WADE TRAVIS

Hannah, stay by me.

HANNAH HALE

Wait! Ma and Pa are on the other side of the camp. Ma! Pa!

Papa Hale runs, as fast as an old man can, with rasping breath to Henry's carriage. His footsteps kick up dust and dirt.

His hand on the carriage door, he hears Hannah's call.

PAPA HALE

Hold tight Hannah! You just stay over there!

INT. HALE CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Papa Hale opens the carriage door with a slow creak.

Inside, Mama and Henry Hale cower together, both eyes wide, huddled under the single blanket.

Papa nods to them in an attempt of reassurance. Reaching around the doorframe, he grabs his own shotgun, concealed within a strawpile.

With a mechanical crack, he checks the chamber - it's already fully loaded.

HENRY HALE

Ma, something's wrong, isn't it? Is it the coyotes?

MAMA HALE

I'm sure the stuff of nightmares is only in our heads, dear.

Somewhere in the distance, the horses rouse up a racket, panicked thrashing, and unnatural noises that carry on the wind.

Papa watches as a trio of stallions bolt past him and away across the plains. Neighing loudly, they trail their reins behind, still attached to the wooden stake they were hitched to.

PAPA HALE

Something's definitely got the horses real spooked.

Behind him, from the depths of the shadows, an imposing, shapeless form creeps subtly along the side of the Hale

carriage.

EXT. WAGON TRAIL CAMP FIRE - NIGHT

Wade and Hannah scan the vista, looking close for any sign of movement.

WADE TRAVIS

One thing's for sure, with all the stories of the West, we should be prepared for anything.

HANNAH HALE

One time, I heard about a wagon-train starving, overcome by cannibalism. You don't think...?

Wade breaks away from the horizon, recognising the tale.

WADE TRAVIS

You mean what happened to the Donner party?

HANNAH HALE

Which party?

EXT. ENCAMPMENT OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

Against the light of the full moon, the white werewolf peers down from a ridge, overlooking the encampment.

It squares its posture, and prepares to pounce.

On the opposite side of the valley, looming atop a faraway cliff stands the black-furred werewolf.

Drool oozes from its waiting jaws.

A fourth werewolf, grey in colour, prowls low to the ground through the brush on the very outskirts. Its glowing eyes rear up in the gloom.

Its nostrils flare, smelling the stench of fear of its nearby prey.

EXT. WAGON TRAIL CAMP FIRE - NIGHT

In the flickering light of the fire, projected onto the side of the carriage, a shadow raises up a familiar claw.

INT. HALE CARRIAGE - NIGHT

The third werewolf, brown and baying for blood, SMASHES through the wooden side of the carriage, sending splinters everywhere.

He grabs Henry with both arms. Mama Hale screams in anguish as the wolf raises him to its gaping maw.

Papa Hale steps up to aim into the carriage, raising both barrels.

PAPA HALE

My boy!

The wolf rips Henry's throat out with gusto, flailing him wildly from side to side like a rabid dog with a chew toy before letting go.

The corpse cartwheels through the air, spraying blood as it flies. Mama Hale clambers over split and splintered wood after him.

PAPA HALE

Bastard!

(back to Hannah)

Hannah! Get out of here!

With its tail, the wolf sweeps Papa's legs out from under him. He falls backwards from the carriage with a thud.

His shotgun clatters uselessly to the ground.

Standing over Papa Hale, the werewolf howls mightily to the heavens.

The old man scrambles through the dirt for the dropped weapon, but the wolf is faster, bearing down to strike.

EXT. WAGON TRAIL CAMP FIRE - NIGHT

Mama Hale falls over herself running to the mutilated corpse of her son. Her sobs come thick and choking.

MAMA HALE

My boy! Henry!

In the background, chaos descends on the encampment. Hectic gunfire peppers the sounds of slaughter, the cries of children for their mothers.

HANNAH HALE

Ma, look out!

The grey werewolf POUNCES on Mama Hale, crushing and killing her instantly.

Its brown packmate emerges from the broken carriage and drops to all fours, where it eagerly devours the body of Papa Hale, blood dripping from its lips.

WADE TRAVIS

Hannah, hold my hand. We have to run for it while they're preoccupied.

HANNAH HALE

But my family!

He takes her hand and jolts her away.

Blood and bits of bodies litter the route as they sprint through to the edge of the encampment, the few survivors already entering their last stand. Unseen behind them, a woman's scream is cut short by a horrifying squelch.

With his free hand Wade aims his six-shooter behind and fires away.

WADE TRAVIS

Blasted bullets, they don't even work.

Rounding one of the larger wagons, the black werewolf blocks their path, ripping the sinew from Bob Kent's neck.

The man coughs up dark blood and thrashes like a fish on dry land.

Hannah screams, and the couple swerve hard, heading outwards instead, into the wild frontier.

EXT. ENCAMPMENT OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

The sounds of commotion fade further and further as the couple race away from the camp's defenses, into the outlands.

From the top of a wagon, the white werewolf surveys for its next meal. With a low growl, it spies the pair, two retreating figures in the mid-distance.

Crouching onto its haunches, the wolf springs into an enormous leap, and gallops after Wade and Hannah as fast as a thoroughbred racehorse, streaking across a panoramic view of the American landscape.

Yard after yard, it closes the distance between them with each stride of its loping gait.

Beginning to tire from exhaustion, the young couple come into view of a wide but shallow river, complete with a frail DOCK and FISHING VESSEL.

Hope sparks across their faces as behind them, the werewolf's animal form grows larger with every passing second.

HANNAH HALE

It's gaining on us. I don't think I
can run any further.

Practically dragging Hannah beside him, Wade passes through the empty dock and down the pier. Its boards creak urgently beneath them.

Pulling a blade from his boot, Wade slashes at the boat's moorings.

Glancing behind them one last time, they jump the gap and-

-make it aboard, collapsing into a heap on the deck.

Sloshing with the strong current, the river pushes the boat downstream.

Arriving seconds too late, the werewolf swipes a clawmark into the stern as it bobs away.

Seeing the water below, it makes a guttural noise, not entirely animal, not entirely human, and refuses to jump.

Wade and Hannah, crawl to their feet and hold each other as they look back.

The stranded white wolf roars at them in anger. It paces furiously back and forth across the narrow pier, its eyes never straying from them.

Behind it, smoke still rises from the decimated camp.

EXT. SMALL RIVER BOAT - NIGHT

WADE TRAVIS
I guess it can't swim.

The couple slowly sink to their knees, finally overcome with exhaustion. Hannah pants for breath.

She holds tight to Wade's arm, and Wade returns the gesture.

A distant howl, four wolves strong, brings them to a fearful shiver.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UNION FORT GATES - NIGHT

A safe bastion in the hostile night, still newly built for the Civil War. Stone brick with twin palisade watchtowers stand astride the entrance. A lone lantern lights the gate exterior.

Regular patrols man the battlements on high, rifles slung over shoulders.

One FORT WATCHMAN in particular spots something moving out in the brush.

FORT WATCHMAN
Who goes there?

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL stands beside the soldier. They both lean over the edge to make out the approaching figures in the darkness.

Riding up with hands raised in supplication, the six outlaws enter the light, still flush with their freshly stolen loot. Alex smiles in greeting.

ALEX CARVER
We're just a bunch of riders,
tired, seeking sanctuary for the
night.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
(cautious)
Go on watchman, let them in.

Through a series of pulleys and levers, the sturdy gates open just wide enough to let them in.

The outlaws glance to each other knowingly, and ride on in.

KYLE MARKER
(hushed)
Everybody play it loose.

Captain Call descends a set of stairs to meet them, judging the new arrivals with a wary look.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
I'm Captain Christopher Call, and
you all are?

ALEX CARVER
Alex Carver, and these are my
friends. Kyle Marker, Harry
Garrett, Tony and Thomas Hayes, and
Sam Dale.

Alex holds out his hand. The Captain looks on it carefully before shaking it.

SAM DALE
Thanks for the introduction, Al-

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
Well, dismount and make yourselves
at home, on a cold night like this.

A well-groomed Union officer, OFFICER TAVE, approaches in a hurry. He salutes.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
What is it?

OFFICER TAVE
The Confederate prisoners, Captain.

The Captain rolls his eyes in expectation.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
Don't tell me, they're causing a
scene in their cells.

OFFICER TAVE
Yes sir, how did you know?

The Captain's gaze falls on the outlaws. Down the line, he
eyes each of them very closely.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
Now you know why I let you cowboys
in. Try a jailbreak, it'll almost
be worth shooting you.

Alex attempts an unconcerned laugh. It's difficult to tell
from the Captain's face if it works.

ALEX CARVER
Trust us sir, that's not what we're
here for.

The stare lingers for a moment, before the Captain steps
away, following Officer Tave across the yard to the main
cell block.

As soon as he's out of earshot, Sam lets out a sigh of
relief.

SAM DALE
Great, now what?

KYLE MARKER
We mingle.

INT. FORT CELLS - NIGHT

Captain Call and Officer Tave enter to an array of Confederate prisoners clanging empty cups against the bars of their cells.

At the opposite end, in the dankest and grimmest cell of all, the Confederate CAPTAIN JACK VENT and OFFICER DUCKEN stand looking pretty proud of themselves.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
So, how are you finding your
accommodation?

Captain Jack makes a motion, and the prisoners stop their racket.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT
As the resident Confederate
captain, this is inhospitable.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
As opposed to, or compared to,
Andersonville?

The rattling returns, this time in anger and contempt against their jailer.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
Calm down prisoners, I wouldn't
want for you to outstay your
welcome.

Jack leans in close, his face framed between the bars.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT
At this rate, that may happen
sooner than you think.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
Just keep baiting me then.

The Union Captain smiles a superior smile, and walks away,
all the way back down the row of cells.

OFFICER DUCKEN
He thinks he's better than us.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
(without looking back)
I heard that, and I am.

EXT. UNION FORT INTERIOR - NIGHT

The outlaws sit together, separate from the Union troops,
chewing on dry jerky around a modest campfire.

At the risk of growing cold, they drape their coats over the
bulging saddlebags of stolen goods.

Narrowing in, the mood is tense. Much of the group exchanges
glares amongst each other.

ALEX CARVER
Have you flipped?

SAM DALE
I take it that question was
directed at me?

KYLE MARKER
Who else, you raving idiot?

Sam furrows his brow, ignoring the slight through raw willpower.

SAM DALE

Look, I know I may have caused a screwup, but I'm not going to put up with being called an idiot.

KYLE MARKER

Well get used to being called an idiot, idiot.

Sam jumps up like a bolt, staring daggers at Kyle.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT

Sit down.

SAM DALE

What?

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT

I suggest you sit down.

Harry meets his gaze unafraid.

Concealed underneath his coat, he flashes the metal of a hatchet blade, glinting in the firelight. Relaxation time is over.

Seeing it, Alex almost jerks to his feet to stop him.

ALEX CARVER

We're not supposed to fight each other.

TONY HAYES

Thank god for that.

Thomas leans back against a log pile, grinning eagerly.

THOMAS HAYES

If we did we wouldn't know who to
side with.

SAM DALE

Considering your brains, that's
hardly surprising.

KYLE MARKER

Look everyone, I only got involved
to get enough money to rebuild what
the Union destroyed.

Alex shushes him, gesticulating to keep their voices down.

ALEX CARVER

(hushed)

We all did our bit for the
Confederates and, thank god, so far
this Captain hasn't sussed it.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT

So let's keep it that way, before I
have to live up to my nickname and
slice my way out.

At that, Sam chuckles sadistically, finally opting to retake
his place by the fire.

SAM DALE

Now I know why I occasionally like
you.

INT. FORT CELLS - NIGHT

A pair of guards stand on duty, absently watching the prisoners. Their posture loosens. Their eyes droop.

A violent rattle startles them awake.

Captain Jack clammers his cup against the bars, and laughs.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT
Hey guard, my friend just escaped
through these bars.

GUARD
So, why are you telling me?

The Captain laughs as though he can no longer hold it in.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT
To gloat!

The laughter erupts, a big belly laugh, loud and spluttering. The other prisoners start to join in, until the whole jail is pointing and laughing at them.

The guards look to the Captain, to each other, then back to the cell.

Side by side, they march decisively to the end of the corridor, keys jangling.

They enter it into the lock-

-and step into the cell, brandishing their bayonets.

OFFICER DUCKEN
Sucker.

Cloaked in the shadows behind the cell door, the officer jumps one of them with a heavy grunt. Jack dives for the other, wrestling for the keys.

EXT. UNION FORT GATES - NIGHT

Back atop the battlements, Captain Chris Call wanders the length alongside his wife HELEN CALL, a woman of warm disposition, who clearly does not belong so far away from modern comforts.

They look up and out together, watching the stars in the clouded sky, the moon hidden from view.

A wordless cry from outside the gates distracts them. It draws the watchmen's attention.

A dishevelled Wade Travis and Hannah Hale approach, him propping her up. Their clothes are stained with mud. Their eyes tell they're bone-tired.

FORT WATCHMAN
More arrivals, Captain.

WADE TRAVIS
Sanctuary, we seek sanctuary!

The Captain peers over the edge again, looking down at the couple. Clearly his suspicions are lesser than the cowboys.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
A young man and woman in distress.
Hm, now what would my wife say?

Helen leans into her husband, giving him a peck on the cheek.

HELEN CALL

She'd tell you to consider your family, since we moved here. She'll be good company.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

I'm smart enough not to argue with a woman. Open the gates for them.

The gates open up a few feet, allowing Wade and Hannah to stagger inside.

Behind them, back in the darkness, a restless breeze rolls through the open plains. Bugs chirp. The dirt scrunches underfoot.

FOUR MORE approach the gates. Their clothes are torn and speckled with blood, though oddly they don't seem to be injured.

Leo Chaney and Daniel Remus we recognise. The other two must be their friends, ELLIOT and SIMONE RABE.

FORT WATCHMAN

Who goes there?

Suspensions flared, Captain Call returns slowly to the ledge. He peers over once again.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

I don't believe this. Who else?

EXT. UNION FORT INTERIOR - NIGHT

Wade and Hannah stumble their way through the yard, the latter seeming to barely hold it together. In the light, some of the dirt is actually coloured closer to blood.

Hannah takes one look at her hands and breaks down in hysterics.

HANNAH HALE

Help us, they slaughtered my family!

WADE TRAVIS

Wolves it was, werewolves of folklore. They massacred our wagon train.

Helen Call comes from behind to greet them.

HELEN CALL

My, you must mean Apaches.

Hannah screams in surprise.

Wade puts himself in between the two, getting up in Helen's face.

WADE TRAVIS

Listen to me, we're not delusional. You're not listening!

Union officers quickly restrain Wade with his hands behind his back. The young man resists, but can do nothing to break free.

HELEN CALL

That's all right. He's just stressed.

The continued commotion causes more soldiers to get involved. Helen escorts them as they lead Hannah inside.

With a firm hand, Wade is blocked from following, sequestered to the yard despite his protestations.

A little ways off, the outlaws' petty arguments have faded.

They watch the incident with intrigue.

KYLE MARKER

Did you see that?

ALEX CARVER

A massacre, he said. Apaches in these parts.

INT. JENNY'S ROOM INSIDE THE FORT - NIGHT

Creature comforts atop bare boards - plump pillows and stuffed toys, far more civilised than the rest of the fort.

JENNY CALL, the Captain's beautiful daughter, sits at a painted dresser. She combs her long blonde hair in the mirror.

In the reflection, she spots something, or someone, by her open window. Something like a human face in the darkness.

She pauses nervously, waiting, watching.

JENNY CALL

Whoever you are, I know you're there.

Perched on a post outside, Sam Dale sneaks another peek into the girl's second storey bedroom.

As he does, he overextends himself, and his foot slips. His grip fails him, and he lands hard on the ground.

Cursing under his breath, Sam rubs his tailbone and bruised ego.

EXT. UNION FORT INTERIOR - NIGHT

The four most recent new arrivals saunter in, oozing confidence despite their tattered appearance.

Footsteps sounding over the creak of the closing gate, Captain Call walks over to greet them.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

So who are you four, walking around on foot?

Elliot scratches at his beard, something more than stubble, but less than could be called impressive.

ELLIOT RABE

Name's Elliot Rabe. We're on foot because it would appear a pack of wolves got to our horses while we made camp.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

And the others?

ELLIOT RABE

This here's Daniel Remus, Leo Chaney, and Simone Rabe, my wife.

Simone moves to stand beside her husband, wrapping a slender arm around his waist.

The Captain raises an eyebrow.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
A female hunter?

She seems to take his disbelief and responds to it with disdain.

SIMONE RABE
A woman has to work for a living.

INT. SPARE ROOM INSIDE THE FORT - NIGHT

A mostly barren room aside from an army cot and a rickety chair.

Hannah is helped inside by a pair of burly Union officers. She has fallen largely despondent, keeping her eyes to the floor.

Helen and Jenny Call stand together in the doorway, observing as the men put Hannah down to rest.

A thick woollen blanket is brought in and lain on top of her.

JENNY CALL
Who is she?

HELEN CALL
She's called Hannah. A hysterical man brought in with her says they survived a massacre.

A CLOSE UP on Jenny - there's the comings of tears there, a real sympathy.

Their job done, the troops nod to Helen as they pass her on their way back out.

JENNY CALL

Who did it?

Unprompted, Hannah springs back upright, throws the blanket ahead at an unseen foe and cries out in terror --

HANNAH HALE

Werewolves!

Just as suddenly, the woman falls faint, and lays back down with a mutter, back to being unresponsive.

The outburst shakes Jenny.

JENNY CALL

Well, I guess that answers that.

EXT. UNION FORT INTERIOR - NIGHT

Still obscured by the clouds above, the moon beams down only a thin ribbon of light or two onto the fort.

Kicking uselessly at the dirt, Wade Travis ambles around the fort interior.

Eventually, seeking warmth on his bones, he nears the now-smouldering fire shared by the outlaws. The six speak in hushed whispers.

As he approaches, their conversation stops dead. All eyes turn to him.

WADE TRAVIS

Excuse me, I didn't mean any harm.

Alex stands to greet him, holding out his hand.

ALEX CARVER

No, excuse us. So you survived a massacre, huh?

Wade looks around to check for any of the disbelieving Union men.

WADE TRAVIS

More like we survived werewolves.

SAM DALE

Excuse me, I was just curious-

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT

You heard the man.

Harry tends to the embers with a rusty bayonet. He pokes through the char with a subdued sense of violence.

KYLE MARKER

So you're a believer?

Harry pokes harder. A white-charred log splits in two and brings the embers back to an orange flicker. The light casts dark lines of shadow upon his face.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT

I've heard stories.

THOMAS HAYES

So have Tony and me.

ALEX CARVER

Couldn't you kill them? Wade, is it?

Wade joins them, sat on upturned logs by the fireside.

He attempts a thin smile, but it doesn't last long.

WADE TRAVIS

Yes, my name's Wade. And no, we couldn't kill them.

TONY HAYES

Haven't I heard of some sort of procedure, a way to kill werewolves before?

SAM DALE

Yeah, it's called shooting them.

He flashes his revolver to the group, a rugged iron six-shooter with an immaculate finish.

No one looks particularly impressed.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT

I heard it's silver that does the trick.

From a breast pocket, Harry produces a silver dollar. The thin moonlight glints off its round silver face, and the profile of Lady Liberty.

He flicks it with a satisfying pling to Alex, who hastily stuffs it into his own pocket before any troops can catch a look.

ALEX CARVER
Isn't it something else?

Without a sound, the bounty hunters appear.

DANIEL REMUS
Isn't it wolf's bane?

Their arrival shocks even the hardened outlaws.

Wade can't help but notice their clothes, and the blood on them.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT
Hardly. Who are you?

Daniel makes a big gesture out of accidentally offending them.

DANIEL REMUS
I'm so sorry, where are my manners?
I'm Daniel Remus. This lot by me
are Leo Chaney, Elliot Rabe, and
his wife Simone.

The four glance over Wade and the cowboys.

Kyle makes sure to catch Simone's eye.

KYLE MARKER
Seeing how gorgeous she is, we'll
bear that in mind.

ELLIOT RABE
I'll pretend to ignore that, if I
can.

Alex steps forward to block Kyle's view of Simone.

ALEX CARVER
So what brings you lot around here
as well?

The four share another glance, this time to each other, and
smile knowingly.

LEO CHANEY
Let's just say we're bounty
hunters.

SAM DALE
Good Lord, a looker like her too?

Harry hits him on the shin with the end of the bayonet. Sam
scowls in return.

SIMONE RABE
Me too. My name's Simone.

Alex waves dismissively at his compatriot.

ALEX CARVER
Forget my friend's lack of manners.
He has none.

SIMONE RABE
I'm used to it. As a hunter, I can
be a distraction, you know.

KYLE MARKER

I'll bet.

Alex stares disappointed at Kyle - "I expected better from you".

In return, Kyle almost scoffs, offended, and stares back - "What did I do?"

EXT. FORT ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

Balancing on the rooftops' wooden beams, Captain Jack Vent and Officer Ducken lead the Confederate escapees to the corner where the structures most closely reach the fort's outer wall.

As the air grows chill, their breath mists white around them.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

Everybody calm, just follow my lead.

While the activity seems only second nature to the Captain, some of his men aren't as sure-footed, arms out to help them balance.

OFFICER DUCKEN

If you say so.

INT. FORT CELLS - NIGHT

A new shift of Union officers enter to replace the guards.

Finding none, they shine their lanterns around.

Strange, sharp shadows climb the walls as they peer into the darkness.

To one side, all along the corridor, cell after cell lies empty, their heavy doors left ajar.

To the other, behind the entrance, the officers find their predecessors, butchered in part by at least a dozen men in turn.

UNION OFFICER
Someone raise the alarm!

FORT WATCHMAN
Sound the alarm!

EXT. UNION FORT INTERIOR - NIGHT

Word travels fast out to the yard.

Bells ring continuously. Union soldiers assemble.

Off to one side, the gathered bounty hunters and outlaws sit up and take notice.

Daniel rolls his eyes.

DANIEL REMUS
What now?

LEO CHANEY
Maybe it's an Apache attack heading
our way.

Wade looks out to the walls, growing increasingly restless.

WADE TRAVIS
Or something else...

The door to the inner fortress bursts open as Captain Call, flanked by half a dozen armed guards, storms into view.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
That bastard! Jack Vent has
escaped.

He sees the outlaws and bounty hunters conversing, and narrows his eyes at them, before turning to bark out orders.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL (CONT'D)
He's mine, I want him alive!

The soldiers fan out in all directions.

They search every corner, in every haystack, under every bundle of cloth.

By the fireside, the cowboys stare intently into the flames, trying their best not to be associated with it all.

ALEX CARVER
(hushed)
Everyone just be still, and lay
low.

An extra squad of troops march out carrying rifles and fresh lanterns.

The bounty hunters look skyward. A breeze picks up, the clouds shifting ever so slightly.

The moonlight beats down on their skin. They seem to relish the feeling.

ELLIOT RABE

A full moon... a time when anything
could happen.

INT. SPARE ROOM INSIDE THE FORT - NIGHT

As shouts continue to go up outside, inside Hannah groans in her sleep. She murmurs indistinctly to a nightmare, speaking in half-shrieks and words of warning.

The door opens a crack, and in peeks Wade, making sure the coast is clear before slipping inside and coming to Hannah's aid.

Taking up the chair by her bedside, Wade takes Hannah's hand. He squeezes it comfortingly, and wipes the tangled hair from her face.

As he does, her expression sours, and she jerks awake, crying out again in terror.

Wade looks over at her with concern.

HELEN CALL (V/O)

Calm down, I'm coming.

Helen enters holding a wet rag, Jenny just behind.

Seeing Wade inside, Helen frowns, but seeing his concern, breathes deep and lets it go.

HELEN CALL (CONT'D)

(to Hannah)

You look like you have a high fever. I'll calm you down with this damp cloth.

JENNY CALL

What's bothering her now?

HELEN CALL

She's just got a mild rise in temperature.

A thought strikes Jenny, and she rushes out the room.

JENNY CALL

I'll go get her something from my room.

EXT. UNION FORT INTERIOR - NIGHT

Shimmying back up the post to Jenny's room, Sam Dale grabs a handhold and hauls himself up to her window frame.

A cheeky grin on his face, he tries again to peek inside.

Down below, a furious Kyle alternates between keeping watch and ushering Sam back down to the ground to not risk being noticed.

KYLE MARKER

Come down from there.

SAM DALE

Screw you, can't you see what I'm trying to look at?

Kyle scowls. Looking in each direction to make sure there's no patrols nearby, he gets to shimmying up the post as well.

The effort it takes to reach Sam is plain to see. On his way up, Kyle grabs hold of Sam's leg, then his shirt and shoulder in futile attempts to drag him down.

As he joins Sam in balancing on the post, they both see Jenny hurry into her room toward her dresser.

She grabs the hairbrush and checks the reflection, catching them both in the act instantly. The girl spins around, back to the wall, and cries out in surprise.

JENNY CALL

Oh my...

Her words trail off at the sound of urgent creaking, not from the window, but from above.

A beat, then with a loud crack, the roof caves in. Confederates rain down into the room.

The cowboys' eyes go wide, and Kyle slips on the post, losing his footing.

On his way down, he grabs Sam's collar, and the two fall together, landing unseen with a crippling thud and a moan of pain.

INT. JENNY'S ROOM INSIDE THE FORT - NIGHT

Clambering over all the injured bodies, Officer Ducken lunges at the Captain's daughter while she's still in shock.

Grabbing her by the ankle before she can reach the door, he pulls her back in and covers her mouth to muffle the

screams.

Helen Call bursts into the room to check on the noise, as Ducken wraps an arm around the girl's neck and shakes compliance into her. From his holster the man draws his pistol and holds it to her head as hostage,

Seeing the mass of escapees getting to their feet, she immediately puts her hands in the air.

HELEN CALL

Oh no! Not my daughter, please!

Tears run down Jenny's cheeks as she tries to speak to her mother through Ducken's stifling sausage fingers.

Recovering faster than most, Captain Jack too motions for the officer to wait.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

Officer Ducken, please. Not like this. You must stop this now.

Confusion flashes across the officer's face.

His grip loosens slightly, but as Captain Call dashes into the room brandishing a sword, everyone returns to high alert.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

Hold it. Let her go son, or you'll rue doing this.

Behind his hand, the terrified Jenny sobs for her life.

Officer Ducken hears it. He looks to his Captain for orders.

Captain Jack simply nods reassuringly, and holds up his hands in surrender.

Ducken shuts his eyes in resignation, and reluctantly lets the girl go. He throws the gun to the floor, and holds up his hands also.

Around the room, the other Confederates do the same, even those still laying prone or injured.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
Smartest move you've made.

He whistles, and Union troops wash over the room through the doorway.

Two for every prisoner, they grab everyone, arms twisted painfully behind their backs, before marching them back out to the yard.

Last to leave, Officer Tave salutes as he approaches the Captain.

OFFICER TAVE
Captain, we've found some men by
the post below. Could be involved
in this too.

Captain Call narrows his eyes, already certain of who it is.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
Round them up too.

EXT. UNION FORT INTERIOR - NIGHT

In lieu of whipping posts, the prisoners and cowboys alike line up at gunpoint against the fort's exterior wall.

Under threat of a firing squad, they turn to show their shirtless backs, already bumped by goose pimples and scarred by a life of crime or war.

ALEX CARVER

I guess we've been found out as Confederates.

Captain Call paces up and down the line, breathing heavy, building himself to a state of righteous anger.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

I am not going to kill you. I am going to whip the insolence out of you all.

He runs the bullwhip through his hands, its coarse leather already frayed with use, and tightens his grip on the handle.

With a deep breath, the Captain circles the whip around his head, and strikes Jack Vent first with a cracking blow that immediately draws blood.

Two steps down the line, he repeats, the stinging snap of the whip rippling the very air as Officer Ducken lets out a pained grunt.

Nevertheless, his eyes remain firmly fixed ahead.

The audience meanwhile, seem keen to look away.

Union troops, too tired for such violent entertainment,
_____.

Helen and Jenny watch with a fiery _____

JENNY CALL

Momma?

HELEN CALL

Ever since your brother died in battle, your father just hasn't been the same.

Just behind them, it is the Captain that Wade looks on with a measure of disgust.

High above, taking in the view from the damaged fortress rooftop, the four bounty hunters' eyes light up with voracious delight. They're transfixed.

As the whip meets flesh once more, Daniel licks his lips.

DANIEL REMUS

Are you guys checking this out?

LEO CHANEY

How could I not?

SIMONE RABE

What a beautiful sight to behold.

ELLIOT RABE

And people call our profession weird.

Shivering from the pain, sweat drips from Alex's brow in
EXTREME CLOSE-UP.

ALEX CARVER

(through gritted teeth)

Just take it men.

SAM DALE

I'm not going to be the first to crack.

Dripping blood stains the ground from the garish wounds on the men's backs as the whipping continues.

A stiff gust of wind ripples the growing pools, as in the reflection, the full face of the moon finally reveals itself.

In all its glory, the moon shines clear, bathing the setting in an ethereal silver light.

CLOSE-UP to Daniel Remus' eyes, shooting to pinpoints, irises tinged a yellow-gold.

He starts to sweat. All four of them do.

The light brings every hair on their bodies to attention. The four twitch and jerk and shudder, first almost pleasurably, then switching fast to involuntary, violent.

Leo Chaney rips his shirt off with an inhuman strength, stiff cloth tearing as if it were tissue.

Simone squats on her haunches, crying out with her head craned up to the moon.

Elliot Rabe spreads his arms out to either side, and proclaims --

ELLIOT RABE
I can't contain myself any longer.

A detailed transformation sequence occurs: Pores swell the skin and sprout thick tufts of coloured fur from beneath. Limbs elongate, stretched bones creaking like the sound of celery. Tough leather boots burst from paws larger than any predator. Their faces contort to lupine snouts, hunching forward as longer spines crack and buckle into place. From their gums, human teeth are pushed back by terrifying fangs.

Where the hunters once stood, there are now werewolves.

All together, they howl in harmony.

It draws the attention of the troops, who point and shout a call to arms.

Captain Call stops mid-strike, his arm still reared up, as he follows their gaze, him too bearing witness to the creatures revealed in the light of the full moon.

The blood of the whipped men flowing fresh in their nostrils, the wolves let out a half-growl, half-laugh, and shuffle ever closer to the rooftop's edge.

OFFICER TAVE

Captain, what should we do?

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

Soldiers, to arms!

The troops about face and draw their weapons on the werewolves above. An entire fortress' worth of firearms is geared and primed against them.

Helen and Jenny huddle close together, the daughter in her mother's arms, neither able to look away.

KYLE MARKER

Alex, what now?

Alex is still catching his breath from the punishment.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

Men, I don't know about you, but I'm out of here.

ALEX CARVER

Follow the Captain's lead.

The tension of the standoff builds, until it can't hold any longer. The werewolves pounce, and in turn-

-the first shot is fired, triggering a volley of lead.

The brown werewolf lands first in the centre of the fray - Elliot Rabe claws at the backs of fleeing troops with a huge wolven paw, to a chorus of screams.

Officer Tave gets in close while the wolf's back is turned, managing a point blank shot to the head with his powerful Colt Walker.

Rabe whips around to face him, the wound merely steaming in the cold air, without a drop of blood.

Tave's expression turns to horror, before receiving a thump that bludgeons him like a nail into the earth, killing him instantly.

The cowboys and Confederates take the opportunity to run for it. Breaking away, they skirt the fort exterior wall as the other three werewolves gleefully join in the slaughter.

Also barging free from the frenzy, Wade sees their escape, and chases after them.

OFFICER DUCKEN

Bastard, Captain Call confiscated
all our weapons!

Wade catches up to the group. He points to a spot just ahead.

WADE TRAVIS

Our weapon are by that guard on the
table there.

ALEX CARVER
What we need is some silver.

_____. A Union officer stands on top, rifle aimed square at the monsters, unleashing everything he has.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT
Hey guard, hey sonny. We want our weapons back.

The officer doesn't look away from his targets, barely pausing between shots.

UNION OFFICER
I can't do that sir.

Crates and assorted objects fly through the air, hurled by the werewolves with the strength of several men.

The black wolf picks up and throws a lump of masonry at a squad of units fleeing up the stairs to the battlements. It blisters through support beams, bringing the whole structure crashing down on top of them.

Likewise, a mutilated body sails like a ragdoll and lands on the tabletop officer, sending him careening out of view.

Captain Jack winces, mostly glad that wasn't him.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT
Well you can now!

They raid the confiscated weapons and arm themselves in belts and bandoliers.

They grab their guns, mostly revolvers, with a number of repeaters that they bear the weight of slung over their shoulders.

Seeing his guns aren't there, Wade scans their surroundings for another way out.

SAM DALE

Where to now?

WADE TRAVIS

Let's try the chapel over there.

He points to a modest structure inside the fort, standing out even under the cover of winding vines of ivy. Two thin slits about the front act as the only windows.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

Everybody, you heard the man.

The group run for the chapel, the Confederates leading the charge.

Daring to glance back, the outlaws see only violence and chaos. Small fires have broken out on most anything that could burn.

The white werewolf rips out a soldier's throat. The brown werewolf claws at another's face. The black werewolf stomps a Union soldier into a paste on the ground while the grey werewolf, mouth bloody, sees them headed for the chapel.

Clearing a wave of soldiers from its path with a single swipe, it leaps into action and gives chase after them.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

Once we're inside, lock the door!

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL (V/O)

Hold up!

Behind them, between the group and the fast approaching grey wolf, Captain Call is in hot pursuit with a number of his dwindling troops.

SAM DALE

After what he's done to us, now he
wants our help?

Reaching the chapel, the Confederates haul open the heavy doors. Everyone piles in.

Captain Jack waits until last, looking back on Captain Call and his fellow soldiers. He curses under his breath, but makes his decision.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

Give them covering fire!

OFFICER DUCKEN

Why?

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

Because we need all the help we can
get!

INT. FORT CHAPEL - NIGHT

Jack turns back and starts shooting at the wolf closing in on Captain Call as best he can given the distance.

Ducken takes cover behind the other door and does the same. Man after man joins the volley.

The bullets whizz past the Union men and hit their target, annoying the werewolf more than harming it, but seeming to slow it down a bit nonetheless.

Captain Call and his men sprint into the chapel.

Captain Jack and Ducken slam the chapel doors behind them, and pull down the bar, trapping everyone inside, just as the full force of the werewolf's body shudders the doors at the hinges.

Everyone waits anxiously, but the entrance holds firm.

Breathing a sigh of relief, the Union men see they are now faced by the same wall of guns that protected them, outnumbered by former enemies.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

Now calm down men, I only kept the
whipping going to keep order.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

My, how inspiring.

Realising there's no other way in or out, Wade pushes the outlaws aside. He doesn't have time for this.

WADE TRAVIS

I've got to find Hannah.

ALEX CARVER

And boys, we've got to find a way
out of here.

WADE TRAVIS

But our bullets have no effect.

Standing at the back of the chapel, Harry is already raiding through cupboards.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT
These silver ornaments, at the back
of the chapel, they will.

He produces a pair of silver candelabras, one in each hand, and slams them down on the altar. We see there's plenty more where they came from.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL
Then whatever's planned, I've got
to get it done so I can get to my
family.

He gives the outlaws a nod of approval.

The cowboys start gathering silverware in haste.

Soldiers take the ornaments and throw them into a cauldron over the chapel fire. Already lit, it burns bright and white hot. With a metal rod, Harry presses down on the metal, as it turns smooth and molten against the cast iron pot.

INT. SPARE ROOM INSIDE THE FORT - NIGHT

Leaning the chair up against the door as a makeshift barricade, Jenny rushes to the window.

By Hannah's bedside, Helen checks her brow with the back of her hand and softly soothes her.

JENNY CALL
Do you see this? First a whipping,
now a piece of folklore come to
life!

Helen wrings out the cloth onto the floor, dipping it into a bucket before reapplying to aid Hannah's fever.

HELEN CALL

I hear howling and screaming, but I
don't want to believe it.

A loud bang booms from the floor beneath, shaking the building to its very frame.

JENNY CALL

You'd better believe it. We must
arm ourselves.

Another crash, louder this time, as though the stone wall was torn down in a heavy charge.

Jenny searches through Hannah's belongings. Wrapped in cloth, she finds Wade's guns, a cheap but functional pair.

The girl waves them around excitedly.

JENNY CALL

Well, now I'm armed with these
pistols.

Helen's eyes go wide. She rushes over to take the weapons from her.

HELEN CALL

Maybe you'd better help look out
for Hannah.

INT. FORT CHAPEL - NIGHT

Harry casts bullets from the silver as fast as is humanly possible. His hands move in a flurry. Combined with his

injuries, the heat and exertion, his efforts seems to border on superhuman.

With a pair of tongs, he lays out a fresh batch on the altar. The Hayes brothers pour water from the font over the casts, steam filling the air with a furious hiss.

Harry looks down into the cauldron. There's not much molten metal left, and not enough bullets to go around.

With a grimace, he pulls out the saddlebags and starts tossing in stolen silver by the handful.

Off to the side, Sam watches in his own kind of dejected horror, as their ill-gotten gains are literally melted before their eyes.

By the entrance, the two captains stand atop a wooden crate, peeking out through the thin slit window at the massacre still taking place outside.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

This is a battle I bet you never
thought you'd be fighting.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

I've fought to protect my land from
you Johnny Rebs. I can do this.

Jack turns to glare at the fellow captain, offended by the notion.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

You think I didn't too? My daughter
and wife were killed in a skirmish.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

So was my son.

The two square up. Years of built-up animosity crackles between them.

INT. SPARE ROOM INSIDE THE FORT - NIGHT

Helen handles the twin pistols uncertainly, pointing them limply at the door.

Jenny tries her best to help Hannah out of bed, the woman's grogginess wearing off under the newfound adrenaline.

Another crash sends loose brick dust into the air. Jenny can't help but let out a whimper as they make their way to the window and check upside the outer wall.

It seems the roof could be reachable from here.

Helen coughs, but daren't move a muscle from aiming towards the entrance.

The padding of heavy paws increase in volume as the creature nears, one after another, until-

-with a bloodthirsty roar, the black wolf comes SMASHING UPWARDS THROUGH THE FLOOR, missing Helen by inches.

The boards fall away and a mighty claw gropes wildly for the women. Helen dives to avoid it, but lands sprawled out on the ground.

HELEN CALL

Jenny, run with Hannah, now!

Jenny hesitates, but does as her mother told her. She urges Hannah out first, giving her a boost from the sill to push

her to the roof.

Amid the smoke and dust, the black wolf climbs up into the room, its eyes glowing.

Helen opens fire from the ground, drawing the wolf's attention. The bullets deal no more damage to it than a capgun.

As Helen sees her daughter disappear from view out the window, the black werewolf swipes the guns from her hands, a second strike slashing at her bodice and chest.

Looming large, almost twice her size, the beast throws her onto the bed with a lusty growl.

The mother holds up her hands to defend herself, but realises the creature's intentions too late.

HELEN CALL

Oh my god, no!

INT. FORT CHAPEL - NIGHT

Harry pulls his hatchet from the molten metal, gilded in silver. It glints in the light.

Similarly, Captain Call holds up his sword, a decorative rapier with a fancy pommel.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

At least I didn't have to give up
my silver sword, a prize for loyal
service.

No one seems to share his impressedness.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

I'll bet.

Wiping the sweat from his brow, Harry finally steps away from the empty cauldron.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT

Now, we've got some stuff melted.

The altar is lined with fresh silver bullets. Some show mild imperfections, but still look useable.

A familiar crackling noise comes from the other side of the chapel door, the sound of burgeoning fire.

Smoke starts billowing in through the cracks. Union troops keeping guard of the barricade cough heartily, quickly choking.

WADE TRAVIS

They're trying to smoke us out!

ALEX CARVER

Clever.

All of a sudden, over the noise of the fire, A BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM.

The chapel occupants rush to the window, but none beat Captain Call there. His anguished expression says it all.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

That's Helen!

In a fit of panic, he removes his captain's coat and bandolier, and tries to squeeze through the narrow window. Too small for the wolves to get through, it's just wide enough for a man with enough determination.

Once he's through, the captain leaps down and away, out of sight.

INT. SPARE ROOM INSIDE THE FORT - NIGHT

Helen thrashes like a soul possessed, pinned down to the cot by the wolf's significant strength. She screams in mental and physical agony, her face expressing the raw pain of her brutal rape.

Sprinting footsteps precede Captain Call bursting open the door to the room, sword drawn.

CAPTAIN CHRIS CALL

Helen!

Taking in what is happening, his eyes fill with the purest form of rage.

The wolf pulls out and emits the same half-growl, half-laugh of superiority as before.

With every nerve of her being, Helen lets out a harrowed cry--

HELEN CALL

End it, please!

The Captain raises his blade to grant her mercy.

Leaping over the gaping hole in the floor, he faces down the black wolf-

-who slashes her throat before he can react.

Captain Call lets out a war cry and swings his sword, but the faster wolf easily dodges-

-and its own swing lops off the captain's head. His body twitches and drops like dead weight as his head rolls along the floor.

The black wolf wastes no time in taking a large chunk out of the man. Its jaws dripping with blood, it howls out in victory.

EXT. FORT ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

Jenny and Hannah balance along the roof beams, the brown werewolf in hot pursuit.

Hannah's pace is failing, lagging behind the younger Jenny.

HANNAH HALE

Jenny, I can't go on much longer.

Jenny turns back and grips her by the wrist, dragging her along with.

JENNY CALL

You have to!

INT. FORT CHAPEL - NIGHT

The smoke starts to pour in through the windows as the fire outside grows in intensity.

Trying to stay low to the ground, everyone struggles to see as they load up their guns with silver rounds.

ALEX CARVER

Captain Vent, everybody, let's get ready to rush them.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

Yes, before we choke on the smoke why not.

EXT. UNION FORT INTERIOR - NIGHT

The grey and white werewolves pace impatiently outside the chapel entrance, a stack of wooden beams and boards ablaze, the fire spreading all the way up the ivy on the side of the building.

Just as one looks to the other, the chapel doors burst open, the combined contingent of Union, Confederate and cowboy racing out in a bum-rush, guns blazing.

Bullets tear through the wolves' skin, burning on contact, cauterising wounds with the bullets still inside.

The werewolves cry out in pain for the first time.

They rally much faster than expected, and launch themselves at the group, too agile to aim at well, too close to not risk shooting their own side.

Wade sees Hannah clambering on the roof of the fort.

She slips, and has to be rescued by Jenny.

WADE TRAVIS
There she is, Hannah!

He runs off in her direction, dodging and ducking bullets coming every which way.

The grey werewolf moves almost as a blur. In a flash, it slides past the Hayes brothers, standing back to back, and lunges at them.

THOMAS HAYES
Tony, look out!

TO late to react, it grabs Tony by the arm and throws him onto the mass of burnt and broken wood, impaling him from several angles simultaneously.

Thomas is distracted, trying to reach out to his writhing brother but the flames preventing him.

Appearing as if from the smoke behind, the white werewolf closes in on Thomas.

ALEX CARVER
Thomas!

Thomas doesn't hear. He turns, and raises his gun, but-

-CHOMP! The white wolf bites Thomas' head clean off.

A bellowed cry rings out, and Harry leaps down onto the white wolf from a vantage point. This time it's the wolf's turn to be taken by surprise.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT
It's hatchet time!

His silver-coated hatchet shines bright. He brings it down onto the square of the wolf's back.

It screeches like a stuck pig as the silver sears deep into its skin.

EXT. FORT BATTLEMENTS - NIGHT

Wade clutches to the roof edge with both hands and pulls himself up.

Ahead, Hannah and Jenny are backed up against a fatal drop. The brown wolf inches ever closer to them with precarious footing.

Drawing a small Union revolver, Wade hops along the beams with his greater dexterity.

WADE TRAVIS

Get down!

The girls drop to their knees as Wade opens fire.

The brown wolf turns, but slips, and Wade hits his mark right between the eyes.

Listing to one side, the wolf's weighty form collapses through the roof into a storage room below.

Once the dust settles, the transformed corpse of Elliot Rabe lies where the creature did.

The trio stare at him as though he could rise again at any moment, but he does. The body remains still.

Wade looks to the women, bloody and shirtless, with his still-smoking gun.

WADE TRAVIS

Silver.

EXT. UNION FORT INTERIOR - NIGHT

Sam watches everything transpire from the ground.

SAM DALE

There's that girl, Jenny.

KYLE MARKER

Screw that, I want out of here.

Firing in organised volleys, the grey wolf is forced behind cover.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

I think we've got them on the run!

The men slowly, cautiously advance, fanning out to encircle the werewolf.

A roar sounds out. The black werewolf kicks open a hole in the building wall where the window used to be. It howls once more from its own vantage point.

The wolf dives out and tears into the volley line, splitting the men right down the middle.

Officer Ducken dodges swiftly, points and fires, but his rifle clicks, out of ammo.

In a final desperate move, he swings the rifle by its barrel, hammering the wolf in the head with the butt to no effect.

The black wolf responds with one lightning fast claw swipe.

Ducken clutches his throat on instinct, but is dead before he falls to his knees. Head lolling backwards, it hangs half-severed from his neck and bubbles up blood.

Harry still riding the white wolf, it flails wildly, eventually shaking him from its back like an unwanted tick.

Harry rolls with the landing and comes out relatively uninjured.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT
Fast fuckers.

He lunges at the white wolf again with his hatchet.

Without the element of surprise though, he misses-

-and it slashes him in return, three bloody streaks across his belly to match those on his back.

HARRY "THE HATCHER" GARRETT (CONT'D)
Oh God, now I'm marked!

He runs at the werewolf again in a berserker rage, stabbing it in the stomach as it grabs him in a bear hug.

Harry's last screaming breaths are stolen by the sound of crushed ribs and pierced lungs.

The remaining survivors - Kyle, Sam, Alex and Jack race towards the safety of the fort watchtower, checking their ammo. Their expressions tell they're running dangerously low.

Round the corner, they run into Wade, guiding ahead of the women.

There's a moment of respect shared amongst them, brief and wordless, for having made it this far.

KYLE MARKER

I'll give you lot covering fire.
Now get out of here.

As they run again, Jenny lingers for a moment.

JENNY CALL

I'm sorry you got whipped.

KYLE MARKER

At this rate, we'll all get
whipped.

The bloodied white werewolf blitzes forward, Harry's hatchet still embedded in its gut. Its cry is more pain than hunger now, its stride less agile.

It closes the gap between it and the party fast.

At the last moment though, Captain Jack pivots and unloads his pistol, hitting a leg, an arm and an eyeball.

The white wolf trips over itself and slides to a stop, slightly sizzling. Undeniably dead, it starts its gruesome transformation back into Simone Rabe, blood trickling from her socket.

Unlike the others, Sam doesn't stop to relish the small victory. He's already halfway up the ladder to the watchtower, climbing two rungs at a time.

To his surprise on reaching the top, a fort watchman cowers in the corner of the tower's box, his bayonet pointed outward in a futile defense.

FORT WATCHMAN
What are you doing here?

SAM DALE
I'm here to jump it.

Sam pays the man no mind, and focuses on his target - a flagpole on the fort exterior, a brave distance away.

He breathes in and out, twice fast, and commits.

He runs, and jumps, and-

-the grey werewolf leaps, up from his ambush spot atop the battlements, an epic jump that clears almost twenty feet. The wolf plucks Sam from the air and grasps one of the tower's struts with its free hand, hanging one-handed above the ground.

SAM DALE
Somebody help me!

The party watch from the ground as the grey wolf tries to bite Sam.

Sam writhes in the monster's humongous paw, swinging wildly, and gets his arm mauled in the process.

Alex swings a rifle from over his shoulder, taking aim.

He breathes slow, deep, and takes the shot-

-hitting Sam by accident. His head explodes.

ALEX CARVER
Well, I tried to help.

The grey wolf lands on the ground with an almighty thud.

Through the dust, it glares at its remaining prey.

Wade takes Hannah's hand and goes to run in the opposite direction, but find their path cut off by the black werewolf.

Penned in by beasts, an upturned cart and the fort's mighty wall, there is no escape.

Struck by an idea, Kyle crawls under the cart and works to cut free a stack of barrels.

A standoff on both sides. Claws and trigger fingers twitch in anticipation. Muscles tense and bulge, ready to act.

Captain Jack checks his chamber and sighs. He throws down his gun.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT
Damn, I've got no more bullets.

Kyle gets one barrel to slide out. With both feet, he kicks it away, and it rolls slowly towards the black wolf.

It seems to merely laugh at the pathetic attempt.

KYLE MARKER
Now we're all going to go.

The wolf distracted, Kyle draws quick, and shoots the barrel.

Full of gunpowder, it explodes in a ball of orange fire. The wolf is blasted away, engulfed in flame.

The force of the blast also rocks the watchtower. One strut breaks like a breadstick, and the tower tilts and twists unnaturally.

The cowering fort watchman falls out to his death, his scream stopping abruptly.

It crashes into the exterior wall. Sturdy brick crumbles under the force of the impact.

Through the rubble, a monumental gap appears, the wild frontier beyond.

Alex looks from the spectacle back to the grey werewolf-

-only to see IT'S RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM.

It forces Alex to the ground, pushing down hard as it snarls and snaps its jaws.

Squirming to get free, Alex spots the discarded silver sword of Captain Call, and reaches out desperately to grab it.

ALEX CARVER
Embrace this!

Alex rams the sword into the grey wolf, impaling himself in the process.

The wolf goes limp, and transforms back into Daniel Remus, still impaled to Alex's body.

A primal howl of animal rage.

The smouldering black werewolf blisters through the yard, charging a hole through the stone fortress' inner building.

The second storey collapses behind the speeding creature, eyes no longer yellow but deathly red.

WADE TRAVIS
Run through the hole the blast
caused!

The party clamber over the wreckage to make it out of the fort, sliding on loose bricks and wood fragments.

Turning to fight, Kyle take up position and readies to quickdraw.

The black werewolf snakes left and right, before jumping, as high as Daniel Remus, into the air.

IN SLOW MOTION, Kyle draws the revolver from his holster as the terrifying monster bears down on him from the sky.

Its bloodied teeth shine in the moonlight.

In the nick of time, Kyle raises the gun, angled from his hip, and fires his final shot.

The silver bullet spins through the smoke. Through the air. Directly into the werewolf's open mouth, and through the back of its head.

The creature drops like a stone and lands directly in front of Kyle, among the rubble.

The wolf lays dead, the still-smouldering corpse transforming, slowly but surely, back into Leo Chaney.

The fort falls silent.

Union soldiers, werewolves, all dead.

Kyle breathes a long sigh of success, and walks away.

EXT. UNION FORT EXTERIOR - NIGHT

Three of the four survivors gather out in the brush, under the stars. The clouds have passed. The sky is clear.

HANNAH HALE

Well... where to now?

KYLE MARKER

I'd rather head for California.

Jenny looks back at the fort, mourning her family as Hannah does.

JENNY CALL

Can I come with you too?

Wade smiles warmly, overjoyed by the idea.

WADE TRAVIS

With Hannah and me, you've got
company. That pioneer spirit still
lives on.

Unsteady hoofs approach. Captain Jack Vent rides up, leading
three other horses.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

Here you lot, take horses. As for
me, well, adios!

KYLE MARKER

Isn't it your lucky day. You're a
free man.

The Captain takes it all in, the night air, the smoking
jail, the blood rushing through his veins. He grins a wide
grin, and points to his fellow survivors.

CAPTAIN JACK VENT

And don't you forget it!

DISSOLVE TO CREDITS.

THE END