

MILE 42

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INT. TRACTOR TRAILER - NIGHT

An ENGINE ROARS and METAL CREAKS as a tractor trailer speeds along a pothole-ridden road. Moonlight seeps through gaps in the frame onto...

Fifty or so HISPANIC MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN, all ages, wedged between walls and cargo. Each dressed in black, silent as the grave, dripping sweat. Trash bags and pillowcases, stuffed to bursting, litter the trailer.

OTILIO (50s) sits among them, face as wrinkled and calm as Washington's on a worn dollar.

Across from him sits CARLOS (30s) and TORAIADIO (12), both as nervous as Otilio is serene.

WHAM! The truck hits a pothole, jerks to the side. A box shifts, pins Toraidio's leg.

He cries out.

Carlos covers the boy's mouth, but too late. Glares cut the dark towards them both. A MAN (40s) with a facial SNAKE TATOO snarls at the boy while JOAQUIN (20s), stares down Carlos and puts his hand to his belt, fingering an ornate knife.

Otilio shoves the box off Toraidio with his foot, then puts his finger to his lips. Toraidio nods.

Otilio then glares down Joaquin, who returns the look... but leaves his knife sheathed.

The trailer lurches to a halt. Eyes grow anxious.

From outside, MUFFLED VOICES chatter in Spanish. Then silence. The truck pulls away. Everyone relaxes.

Until a SIREN blares. The truck stops again. More VOICES, louder and heated.

More SHOUTING, then GUNFIRE. The truck accelerates. Quickly. Bodies bounce off each other. WHAM! The truck dips, shudders, accelerates faster.

The SIREN is gaining.

BAM! The truck dips, followed by the sickening crunch of GRINDING AXLES. Boxes slide into bodies. The trailer pitches over. Gravity disappears, then... CRASH! Everything slams into the trailer's side, which rips open.

SCREAMS and WAILS echo off metal. Smoke fills the trailer. Survivors crawl over the dead towards the hole...

EXT. DESERT - WRECKED TRUCK - NIGHT

The trailer lies in a ditch, fallen from a bridge. SIRENS and LIGHTS from above, VOICES of pursuers approaching.

Carlos carries Toraidio from the wreckage, spots a nearby concrete drainage tunnel.

INT. DRAINAGE TUNNEL - NIGHT

The survivors huddle, including Joaquin with the knife who now also lugs an immense backpack.

Lights appear outside the tunnel.

Most of the migrants panic. One large group flees the tunnel and runs into the desert. The lights follow them. A second group runs deeper into the tunnel.

Carlos watches both, deciding who to follow. (NOTE: throughout the script, *italics* indicates dialogue in Spanish)

OTILIO (O.S.)
They'll all be dead or caught by noon.

Joaquin, Carlos, and Toraidio turn. Otilio stands behind them, hiding in the shadows. He motions for them to follow.

CARLOS
How do we know we can trust you?

OTILIO
You don't. Now either listen to me or follow the fools.

He disappears into the tunnel.

EXT. DRAINAGE TUNNEL - ANOTHER EXIT - DAWN

The four run out the tunnel's other end. Otilio spots a greasewood tree, takes out a penknife, cuts a branch loose.

He takes string from his pocket, ties the branch to his foot. He nods for the others to run, then follows, wiping out their tracks. They disappear into the desert.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAWN

The sun crests the mesas, the golden red blur of a soon to be hundred degree morning.

The landscape sharpens, revealing... sand. Cacti. A stretch of potholed cement with dreams of being a highway. A distant blur grows larger, sharpens into a man. A running man.

VICTOR MARQUEZ (30s). White synthetic running clothes drape his muscular build. A small backpack hangs on his shoulders. His belt holds water bottles, energy bars, a cell phone.

A plastic bracelet with a barcode hangs on one wrist, an expensive GPS unit/watch on the other.

A racer's bib adorns his chest. "BADLANDS ULTRAMARATHON: #56".

Victor runs steadily, but his face betrays agony.

Another runner, TIMSON (50s), emerges from the shimmering horizon, overtakes Victor. He's quite the sight in a Legionnaire cap and bright pink shirt.

TIMSON
You're not smiling.

VICTOR
People smile during these?

TIMSON
Finishers do.

VICTOR
I'll smile when I can feel my feet.

TIMSON
Your feet only get you into the desert. Your mind gets you out.

VICTOR
Don't get me started on my mind.

Timson laughs. They shake hands.

TIMSON
Matt Timson.

VICTOR
Victor Marquez.

Victor takes a swig of water as he and Timson clear a ridge.

EXT. DESERT - WATER HOLE - EARLY MORNING

Carlos and Toraidio refill their water jugs. Joaquin lays on the ground, exhausted. Otilio stares at Joaquin's backpack.

OTILIO
That weight's gonna kill you.

JOAQUIN
Worry about yourself, old man.

They gear up, start to move, Joaquin huffing under his pack.

Otilio slips behind Joaquin, draws his knife. Drives it into Joaquin's pack. Fine white powder pours from the cut.

Joaquin panics, sheds the pack. He draws his knife, but Otilio reaches into his waistband and pulls a revolver.

Carlos pulls Toraidio close.

OTILIO
*Drop it or leave. If we get caught,
 I'm not doing real time for you.*

Joaquin puts his backpack on upside down, to keep his cargo from spilling further. He takes his water and starts off in another direction.

Otilio starts off again on their original course. Carlos and Toraidio look at the vast desert already at their backs.

TORAIDIO
I'm scared.

CARLOS
*He's brushed out our tracks. No one
 can follow.*

EXT. DRAINAGE DITCH - WRECKED TRUCK - MORNING

Sun baked carnage. US BORDER PATROL TRACKERS scour the area, cutting sign for tracks of survivors.

An SUV pulls up, its doors bearing the logo of DART, the Border Patrol's Desert Area Rescue Team. AGENTS DONALD CUTTER (40s) and GUNNAR SOMES (30s) get out. Cutter: tall and weathered with an air of Texas Ranger. Somes: barrel-chested, blonde crew cut. Cutter bears a walkie talkie.

CUTTER
*Base, this is Cutter, we're on
 site. Tell Tucson I need as many
 trackers as they can give me.*

BORDER PATROL DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Roger. Homeland Security asked for
 a check in ASAP.

CUTTER

They'll get one when there's
something to check in. Cutter out.

Cutter holsters the radio. Somes scans the wreckage.

SOMES

Merciful lord in heaven.

An AGENT pokes his head inside the trailer, pulls it back out
and vomits into the sand.

CUTTER

Think any got out?

EXT. DRAINAGE DITCH - SECONDS LATER

A TRACKER points out tracks leading to the tunnel.

TRACKER

Twenty at least, men and women.

Somes points out a set of smaller tracks.

SOMES

And a child.

CUTTER

Where's this tunnel lead?

TRACKER

Not sure.

CUTTER

Get sure.

The trackers disperse.

SOMES

You'd have to be a lunatic to try
this on foot.

CUTTER

Lunatics, Agent Somes, are one
thing this world has in spades.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - MORNING

The sun's higher. Victor and Timson run side by side.

VICTOR

A two hundred miler?

TIMSON

Kenya. November. Ran it last year,
land so beautiful you'll cry.
Running with fucking elephants!

Victor's GPS beeps, displays "22 miles". A note follows: "800 cal".

Victor reaches into his pack, takes out a banana, and inhales it. He takes out another banana, downs that one, almost like a speed eater. Two Powerbars and a slurp of water follow.

VICTOR

Hey, gimme a second...

Victor drifts to the side of the road, undoing his pants.

TIMSON

This your first ultra?

VICTOR

How'd you know?

Timson slows his pace and undoes his shorts. He spreads his legs, stutter-steps like a linebacker, and leaves a wet streak down the road without breaking stride.

TIMSON

Over a hundred miles, that'll save
you thirty minutes.

VICTOR

Hate to see you save an hour.

Suddenly, a distant POLICE SIREN cuts the air. Victor and Timson quickly finds its source.

EXT. DESERT - MORNING

A few hundred yards off road, an Arizona State Police car chases a man with a large backpack. Joaquin.

Joaquin makes it to some tree cover. Two STATE POLICEMEN get out of the car, draw their weapons, and start after Joaquin.

Joaquin gets the drop on one policeman and slashes his arm, then runs for it, but the second policeman draws and fires, hitting Joaquin in the shoulder.

BACK TO THE ROAD

Victor stops and takes a stake bearing his bib number from his backpack, along with a roadside flare.

TIMSON
What are you doing?

VICTOR
I'll catch up!

Victor stakes the point where he's leaving the course, drops the flare, and runs for the woods.

TIMSON
Crazy bastard.

EXT. WOODS- MOMENTS LATER

Joaquin tries to distance himself from the cop, not noticing how badly he's bleeding. He keeps looking behind him...

... and never sees Victor, who tackles him from the other direction. Victor disarms Joaquin, wrestles him to the ground. The weakened, bleeding drug mule relents.

JOAQUIN
Fuck, let me go! Let me go!

VICTOR
If I do, you'll be dead in fifteen minutes.

Victor takes a first aid kit from his backpack, bandages Joaquin's wound. Joaquin motions to his pack.

JOAQUIN
*Take as much as you want. Please.
Help me out...*

VICTOR
Help yourself. Stop talking, hope they just send you home.

JOAQUIN
Brown gringo.

Joaquin spits in Victor's face. Victor wipes it clean as the state policeman reaches them and draws his gun.

STATE POLICEMAN
Hold it right fucking there, Paco!

... but then he notices Victor's runner's bib and clothing. Victor pulls a wallet from his backpack, opens it to an ID: Doctor Victor Marquez, Mount Sinai Hospital.

VICTOR
Name's Victor. This your first day,
Cletus?

EXT. DESERT ROAD - MINUTES LATER

As one state policeman loads Joaquin into the cruiser, Victor treats the other one's wounded arm.

WOUNDED POLICEMAN
Sorry about my partner, he's young.

VICTOR
Don't explain yourselves to me.

As Victor bandages the policeman's cut...

WOUNDED POLICEMAN
Army or Marines?

Victor looks up, surprised.

WOUNDED POLICEMAN
Been in plenty of hospitals.
Haven't seen a real field dressing
since Somalia.

VICTOR
Army.

WOUNDED POLICEMAN
Thought so. Do any tours?

Victor's hamstrings start to twitch. He finishes the bandage, then falls to the ground, his thighs spasming.

WOUNDED POLICEMAN
Doctor, what's wrong?

Victor stretches his legs as he takes a sodium tablet from his belt, downs it, then chugs one of his water bottles.

VICTOR
Nothing. Just have to get back to
the race.

WOUNDED POLICEMAN
Isn't this Badlands thing a hundred
and fifty miles or something?

VICTOR

Nah, that's crazy. It's only a hundred twenty-four.

Victor pats the policeman on the shoulder and regains control of his legs as an AMBULANCE SIREN approaches. Victor devours a Powerbar and runs up to the other policeman.

VICTOR

Fax whatever I have to sign to my hospital on Monday.

STATE POLICEMAN

Um, doctor, if you could wait...

VICTOR

Tell you what. You let me get back to my race, and I won't tell anyone you drew on an unarmed man in running clothes.

The policeman gulps and nods. Victor runs off.

EXT. DRAINAGE DITCH - WRECKED TRUCK - MORNING

Cutter watches his AGENTS lay body bags alongside the trailer while another AGENT scans the scene with a Geiger Counter. The walkie-talkie hisses static, then--

BORDER PATROL DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Agent Cutter, come in, Homeland keeps requesting your assessment...

CUTTER

(answering)

Jesus Herbert Christ on a pogo stick, Debbie, do they not know ISIS can fly business class to Newark any time they fucking want?

GEIGER COUNTER AGENT

It's all clean, Agent Cutter.

CUTTER

(back to radio)

Hear that? Tell Homeland it's just a bunch of dead Latinos. They'll be so relieved. Cutter out.

AGENT (O.S.)

Agent Cutter!

The agent's voice comes from the truck's cab. Cutter heads over. The agent points to the burned corpse of the driver.

AGENT

Mexican feds say this crispy critter's the coyote. Name is Jiminez. They've been trying to catch him for years.

CUTTER

Their 'trying' can be funny.

AGENT

Well, now we know why we couldn't catch him, either.

The Agent shines his light into the cab, onto a half-burned sheet of paper. What little text remains legible appears to be a timetable and a list of locations.

EXT. DRAINAGE TUNNEL - MORNING

The tunnel's other end. Somes points out tracks to Cutter.

SOMES

Three packs ran. Two from the other end, one from this one.

CUTTER

I saw the other tracks, I don't see anything here.

Somes pulls up some greasewood twigs half-buried in the sand.

SOMES

Cause the others are dumb. These guys are brushing out their tracks.

Cutter nods to Somes to come closer for privacy.

CUTTER

The coyote had our patrol schedules.

SOMES

All of them?

CUTTER

Looked to be. Can you track these packs yourself?

SOMES

Come on, Don. It's me.

CUTTER

I know it is. OK. I'm going to find out who was covering this zone on our side last night, so until I do, say nothing to anyone. One hour check-ins.

Somes nods and heads for his SUV. Cutter looks to the rising sun.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Carlos, Otilio, and Toraidio rest in a saguaro's shade. Otilio takes a hunk of white cheese from his bag, cuts them all slices. Toraidio pushes it away.

CARLOS

Toraidio. You can be proud or alive.

(beat)

Mama would've understood.

Toraidio takes the cheese, nodding his thanks to Otilio.

As Otilio hands Carlos some cheese, he notices that Carlos isn't wearing shoes; he's wearing plastic sandals.

OTILIO

Those sandals won't take where we're headed.

CARLOS

Just tell me where to go. Let me worry about walking there.

OTILIO

Your walking doesn't worry me. Pray you don't have to run.

EXT. TIME STATION - DAY

Victor runs under a banner declaring this to be the MILE 25 TIME STATION. Volunteers stream in and out of a tent bearing a red cross.

INT. MEDICAL TENT - DAY

A runner lies on a cot, legs spasming, IVs and monitors lining his arms and chest like a switchboard, medics attending to him with raw urgency.

CYNTHIA (30s) stands on the far side of the tent, watching the doctors treat the runner. She wears a "SUPPORT TEAM" T-shirt and a "56" pin.

Another volunteer, JUSTIN (20s), young and dorky in the extreme, also watches. He also wears a "SUPPORT TEAM" T-shirt but a pin with another runner's number.

JUSTIN

Poor guy must not have known what he was getting into.

CYNTHIA

You'd think. He's a five-time finisher. Second in his age group last year.

Victor enters the tent and heads straight for an OFFICIAL seated at a table with a laptop.

OFFICIAL

How we feeling, fifty-six?

VICTOR

Like I could run another hundred miles.

OFFICIAL

Well, that's the idea.

The official scans the bar code on Victor's bracelet. Victor's statistics appear on the laptop. The official nods to a floor scale. Victor steps on it.

The official looks to Victor, eyebrows up.

INT. MEDICAL TENT - MINUTES LATER

Victor sits at a table with three bowls on it; one of potato chunks, one of water, one of salt. Cynthia takes a chunk of potato, dips it in the water, rolls it in the salt, stuffs it into Victor's mouth. Another, then another.

VICTOR

Gonna break forty hours, I feel it.

CYNTHIA

Less talking, more swallowing.

VICTOR

You know there's a hundred-fifty miler in November? In Kenya...

CYNTHIA

There are regular marathons, too. I
read somewhere New York has one.

Over Cynthia's shoulder, Victor sees the official with the laptop talking to a DOCTOR (DOCTOR CONNORS), who nods and approaches Victor.

DOCTOR CONNORS

Doctor Marquez, how are you
feeling?

VICTOR

Strong like bull.

DOCTOR CONNORS

You're sure? Your body weight's
down three percent since the start.

VICTOR

I don't have to drop out until it's
down six.

DOCTOR CONNORS

True, but there's a hundred miles
left, including a twenty mile
blackout zone.

VICTOR

I'm fine.

Doctor Connors's face shows that "I'm fine" isn't enough.

VICTOR

Doctor, have you read my
background?

DOCTOR CONNORS

I read every runner's background.

VICTOR

Then you know I'm familiar with
dehydration and heat exhaustion.

DOCTOR CONNORS

Which means you know how quickly
those conditions impair judgment.

VICTOR

Did number twenty one leave yet?
Timson. Matt Timson. Talk to him.
We talked a few miles out, I was
totally lucid...

The medics wheel the unconscious runner past, his pink shirt just visible under the blanket's edges.

A race board lists each runner's name and time of station entry. A volunteer goes to "21 - TIMSON" and writes "DNF".

DOCTOR CONNORS

A mile outside this station, Mister Timson went into renal failure. Started foaming at the mouth and bleeding rectally. He's only alive because we got to him so fast.

CYNTHIA

Doctor, can you give us a minute?

DOCTOR CONNORS

Of course.

Doctor Connors steps away.

VICTOR

Cynth, I'm fine. I hydrated and ate according to the plan, I'm clear-headed. I swear.

She starts feeding him potatoes, then launches into a barrage of questions.

CYNTHIA

"It was the best of times."

VICTOR

What...

(getting it)

Tale of Two Cities.

CYNTHIA

Career assists, NBA.

VICTOR

Stockton.

CYNTHIA

Thoracic diaphragm separates?

VICTOR

Thoracic and abdominal cavities.

CYNTHIA

What did your hallucination look like?

VICTOR
Haven't had any.

Without missing a beat, she throws the next potato chunk in the air. Victor catches it without blinking.

VICTOR
Cynthia, please. I need to know if I can do this.

CYNTHIA
You needed the Ironman. The Everest climb. The HALO jump. The Hoover Dam BASE jump. I can go on. And I've never once asked why. But Victor, since you got back from...

VICTOR
It has nothing to do with that.

CYNTHIA
Fine. But if each of these... quests is further out there, then one day, one's going to be too far. I saw that man come in. He's run this race five times.

VICTOR
I'm not hallucinating, I'm not dehydrating, I'm not even cramping. Please. I can't go home "Did Not Finish".

CYNTHIA
"DNF" also means "Did Nothing Fatal".

Cynthia nods to the doctor, who comes back over.

CYNTHIA
We'll stay in phone contact until the blackout zone, and if he doesn't come out of it within his target, we'll go in after him.

DOCTOR CONNORS
I can live with that.

She nods, and Doctor Connors leaves. Victor smiles.

CYNTHIA
I'm the best. I know. Now eat a fucking potato.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A row of scrub brush. A man's hand touches it. Some of the branches are cracked. Beneath them, footprints in the sand.

Agent Somes looks up; the hand is his. He draws his Beretta and follows the tracks through the brush.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A pueblo-style church on the ridge of a large canyon. The sign reads "VICTORY OF FAITH PENTECOSTAL CHURCH", but a smaller sign on the door says "KEEP OUT".

Somes follows the tracks to the church's back door.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Somes enters, quickly and quietly. There's no one in the church itself, but from the foyer he hears...

BORDEN (O.S.)
Jiminez is never this late.

INT. CHURCH FOYER - DAY

Somes peers into the foyer. Two men (BORDEN and MCCAFFREY, 20s), look out the windows. Both wear desert camo and hold hunting rifles. The heavyset Borden sweats profusely. McCaffrey is also large but muscular.

Somes slips into the foyer and presses his Beretta against McCaffrey's ear. Borden turns at the sound, shocked. Somes headlocks McCaffrey, aims at Borden.

SOMES
Drop it, fat boy.

McCaffrey tries to fight free but Somes tightens his grip. Choking, McCaffrey falls to his knees. Borden drops his gun.

Somes drops McCaffrey and shuts the window.

MCCAFFREY
(gasping)
Jesus fucking Christ, Somes!

SOMES
I ought to shoot you both right now, Ray Charles could've tracked you here.

BORDEN

Something's wrong, Somes. Jiminez
ain't here yet.

SOMES

He's not coming. He got made by the
Federals. Flipped his rig across
the line at Cochise. He's deep
fried along with half his wetbacks.

BORDEN

Fuck!

MCCAFFREY

We've got to call the Russian.

SOMES

We're not calling anybody. Borden,
pick up your gun.

Borden bends over to pick up his rifle. As he does, Somes
knees him in the gut.

SOMES

And don't ever drop it again.
Where's Jeter?

MCCAFFREY

Where do you think?

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A rattlesnake coils. JETER (20s), bends over the snake. Jeter
also wears desert camo. His sleeves are rolled halfway up his
arms, revealing a multitude of religious tattoos, including a
snake coiled around Christ on the cross.

SOMES (O.S.)

Jeter! We're moving out!

The rattler strikes, but gets caught in a wire trap Jeter has
hidden directly in front of it.

Jeter uses a machete to lift the trap by its handle. He
smiles, drops the snake into a wire terrarium next to two
other snakes, then slips the machete into its hip sheath.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Borden, McCaffrey, and Jeter pull camouflage netting off
three pickups, all of which bear the US Border Patrol logo.

Jeter puts the terrarium in his truck bed.

The trucks drive off towards the desert.

EXT. TIME STATION - DAY

Victor stops at the water table, downs two cups. He taps all of his water bottles, making sure they're full.

He lays out his pack: a knife, first aid kit, reflective heat blanket, rain poncho, tube of Krazy Glue, duct tape, socks... under which is tucked a jewelry box. He opens it; an engagement ring. A real rock.

HONK. Cynthia sits at the wheel of a Winnebago. She gives him the thumbs up. He returns it, re-hides the ring.

Before he closes the backpack, he touches something fastened to its cover.

A US Army Medical Corp lapel pin.

He fastens the pack, takes a disposable camera from its side pocket, aims it at himself, and takes a snapshot of himself. He doesn't smile for it.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Victor's the only runner on the road as far as the eye can see. Cynthia pulls up next to him, blows Victor a kiss through the window. He pretends to catch it.

They reach a fork in the road. A sign reading "RUNNERS" points one way, a "SUPPORT VEHICLES" sign points the other.

Victor and Cynthia each take their path. The Winnebago heads out of sight.

Victor's phone rings. He answers it.

VICTOR
Don't forget. Kenya, November.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
Arizona. Today. One crossing at a time, tough guy.

Victor disappears into the desert.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Otilio, Carlos, and Toraidio reach a dirt road. Tracks mark the road, but not footprints; long, parallel grooves, as if someone had dragged a giant comb down it.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - MINUTES LATER

A US Border Patrol Jeep drags four tires behind it, clearing the road of footprints, leaving the comb-like tracks.

Otilio watches from some nearby trees. The Jeep disappears around the bend.

OTILIO

Go, like I showed you.

Toraidio and Carlos cross the road, stepping in each other's tracks. Otilio follows, brushing their tracks out as he goes.

INT. SOMES'S SUV - DAY

Somes and Borden sit in the SUV, watching McCaffrey and Jeter cutting sign.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...tenth annual Badlands
ultramarathon currently underway.
Forty seven runners from twelve
countries...

Somes switches off the radio.

SOMES

Takes some kind of idiot to run
into a desert.

McCaffrey gives Somes the "roll down the window" sign.

MCCAFFREY

Someone's passed here since the
last drag. They're trying to mask
their numbers but it's more than
one, that's for sure.

Jeter WHISTLES.

EXT. DESERT - SECONDS LATER

Somes, McCaffrey, and Borden reach Jeter, who's kneeling.

A cheap sandal, broken at the strap, lies ditched in the scrub brush. Jeter extricates it with his machete.

Somes looks from the road to the sandal to the horizon, mentally plotting the sandal wearer's course.

SOMES

They're headed for Diablo's Peak.

MCCAFFREY

That'll take them right past the reservation.

BORDEN

Fucking Shadow Wolves will smell them in a second.

SOMES

Not if we get to them first.

EXT. DESERT - INDIAN RESERVATION FENCE - DAY

An ATV drives alongside a long wire fence, then stops. The driver, who's clad in a US Customs uniform, takes a sip from his canteen.

This is TERRENCE BEARCLAW (20s), a member of the Tohono O'odham tribe. He's a SHADOW WOLF, one of the Native American tactical border patrol agents who operate on reservation land along the US/Mexican border.

Terrence grabs his radio scanner.

TERRENCE

Shadow Wolf three to base.

TOM BEARCLAW (50s), Terrence's father, answers.

TOM (V.O.)

Shadow wolf three, this is base.
What's up, Terrence?

TERRENCE

Whole lotta nada at post twenty seven. Quiet out here today, dad.

INT. SHADOW WOLVES BASE - DAY

Tom sits in a small cabin with tons of communications gear, clad in the same style Customs uniform as his son.

TOM
No news is good news. Base out.

EXT. SHADOW WOLVES BASE - DAY

Tom steps outside, lights a cigarette, leans against a post. His eyes drift across the vast expanse of reservation.

Another Shadow Wolf, CHRIS WIMS (30s), naps in an improvised hammock strung between the porch post and his ATV's winch.

Tom releases the ATV winch, sending Chris to the ground.

TOM
Good morning.

CHRIS
That's your opinion.

TOM
Do me a favor. Scout thirty through fifty. I've got a bad feeling.

CHRIS
Bad feeling?

TOM
Bad feeling.

CHRIS
As long as it's serious.

Chris straps on a helmet, straddles his ATV, and pulls away. Tom takes one last look at the land and heads inside.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

The sun beats down on Victor, his stride now erratic. He breaks his pace to a walk, which he handles for about five steps before his legs start to shake. He resumes running.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
"Christmas won't be Christmas
without any presents."
(no reply)
Still with me?

VICTOR
Thought I saw another runner.

INSERT - VICTOR'S POV

Nothing but sun, road, sand, and shimmer.

BACK TO SCENE

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
You're drifting. Come on.
"Christmas won't be Christmas"...

VICTOR
Little Women.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
Thought I had you there. "If you
really want to hear about it, the
first thing you'll probably want to
know is where I was born..."

VICTOR
Catcher in the Rye. My turn. "All
children, except one, grow up."

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
(staticky)
Hm. Your autob...phy?

VICTOR
You're breaking up a little.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
Yeah, you're coming up on it now,
the blackout z... not goin...voice
ag... twenty miles. The next...
mark is at mile 42, Diablo's Peak.
You... OK?

VICTOR
(wincing)
Yep. Feel good.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
If you don't... half an hou...
oming in after you. Got it, mister?

VICTOR
Got it

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
(static)
...ictor?

VICTOR
Yeah?

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
(static)
...ry prou... ove yo...

BEEP. The call goes dead and Victor's GPS blinks out.

INT. WINNEBAGO - DAY

Cynthia takes a kitchen timer out of her duffle bag, sets it for two hours, and places it on the seat next to her. The Winnebago passes a sign that reads "FORT STANDISH - 10"

BACK TO VICTOR

Overwhelming silence and vastness.

VICTOR
Ninety-nine bottles of beer on the
wall...

EXT. DESERT - LEDGE - DAY

Otilio, Toraidio, and Carlos crest a steep incline. The view would be awe-inspiring had they time to look. Instead, their faces drop at the razor wire fence blocking their path.

OTILIO
This used to be wood.

There's a gate a few yards down. Otilio tries to open it, but it's locked. The electric switch to open it stands on the other side of the fence... twenty feet past the fence.

EXT. DESERT - BASE OF STEEP INCLINE - DAY

A footprint. Jeter compares it to the broken sandal.

He turns to Somes, nods.

Somes opens his SUV's trunk, moves aside the spare tire, and removes a false bottom, revealing four M-4 assault rifles.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Victor's pace is uneven, his feet rebelling against him. The road ahead slopes dramatically upwards.

VICTOR
(laboring)
Thirty-two pairs... of new feet on
the wall...

EXT. DESERT - LEDGE - MINUTES LATER

Toraidio lays on the ground. Carlos and Otilio wrap their spare clothes around the boy's hands as makeshift gloves.

CARLOS
*If you get stuck, don't panic. I'll
get you.*

Toraidio looks at the barbed loops before him. He crosses himself and starts to crawl under the fence. It's painfully slow, but he's making it... inch by inch...

Halfway through, a mound of sand blocks his path. Toraidio pushes it aside... revealing a half-decomposed skull. Maggots fester in one eye socket, flies swarm in the other.

The flies scurry past his face; Toraidio doesn't scream, but he jerks back, catching his arm on the razor wire. Carlos reaches for him, cutting his own arm.

OTILIO
*Let him go! He's closer to the
other side! Go! Go boy!*

Toraidio grits his teeth, shoves the skull out of his way, and climbs through the remaining fence. But as he moves forward, he gashes his arm.

Toraidio runs to the switch and throws it. The gate opens.

EXT. DESERT - STEEP INCLINE - DAY

McCaffrey and Borden, M-4s at their hips, move to opposite sides of the incline and start to climb.

EXT. WOODED GROVE - DAY

Otilio and Carlos carry Toraidio into a pine grove. Carlos rips off part of his shirt, wraps it as a tourniquet around Toraidio's arm, then tears off a bandage for his own wound.

Otilio cocks his head; he hears something. He goes to the edge of the grove to investigate...

EXT. DESERT - STEEP INCLINE - DAY

Borden and McCaffrey reach the top of the incline. Footprints and broken twigs line the ground, leading to a row of pine.

McCaffrey gives Jeter a "hold" sign as both encircle the trees... then a "Go" sign.

McCaffrey and Jeter burst onto a group of migrants hiding in the pine... but not Otilio, Carlos, and Toraidio; it's one of the other groups that fled the crash.

MICHAEL MCCAFFREY
Freeze!

Panic rips through the group. McCaffrey knocks one to the ground with the butt of his rifle. Jeter swipes out another's legs out with his.

One migrant breaks the perimeter and runs straight into Somes and Borden, rifles trained on his chest.

SOMES
US Border Patrol, you're under arrest!

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Victor's still running, still singing badly.

VICTOR
Give up the funk... gotta have that funk, now...

EXT. WOODED GROVE - DAY

Carlos checks Toraidio's pulse.

CARLOS
He needs help--

Otilio holds one finger to his lips, points to something off in the distance with another.

INSERT - CARLOS & OTILIO'S POV

In the distance, people move atop a small ridge; Somes and company with their rifles, forcing the migrants into rows.

BACK TO SCENE

Otilio checks his gun.

OTILIO

Stay put and stay quiet. I'm going to find a way out of here.

Otilio disappears into the brush. Carlos pats his son's head, sings a lullaby to him softly.

EXT. MESA TOP - DAY

The migrants, cuffed and gagged, kneel in rows. Borden inspects them, stopping to frisk some. He enjoys this.

Jeter finds a man with one broken sandal... it's the man with the Snake Tattoo who glared at Toraidio in the trailer. Jeter grins and throws Snake Tattoo his sandal's broken mate.

Somes, a good distance away, speaks on his radio.

SOMES

Haven't found anyone yet. I cut some sign south of Diablo's Peak, but it's staggered. They must be pretty dehydrated.

CUTTER (V.O.)

Then don't waste time talking to me. Find those people. Cutter out.

Somes heads back to the pack. McCaffrey kneels next to one of the cuffed migrants, questioning him in broken Spanish.

MCCAFFREY

(in broken Spanish)

There were more of you, at least two groups. Do you know where-

SOMES

McCaffrey, stop pretending you speak Spanish, I'm begging you.

(Somes kneels)

Estabas con los demás. A dónde fueron?

(no response)

A dónde fueron?

MIGRANT

(stone-faced)

No lo sé.

SOMES
Don't know, eh?

Somes draws his Beretta.

MIGRANT
No lo sé! Quizás norte! Creo norte!

MCCAFFREY
Ha! Fucker speaks gun all right.

SOMES
Maybe north, he says.

Borden approaches Somes.

BORDEN
The women are in good shape. Maybe
a grand a head. The men...

SOMES
The Russian wants no men today.

BORDEN
Shit. These aren't bad.

SOMES
Preaching to the choir. Take the
women back to the church, clean
them up. Jeter, sweep the area. I
don't want to leave any stragglers.
McCaffrey, load up the men.

MCCAFFREY
And?

SOMES
Don't play dumb. Take them to the
cave. Now move. There's still two
packs out there. Let's move north.

EXT. WOODED GROVE - DAY

Toraidio's breathing starts to skip, shallow out. Carlos
gives his son the last of his water.

Suddenly, through the scrub brush, he hears...

VICTOR (O.S.)
(very badly)
We want the funk... give up the
funk... now...

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Victor starts up the slope. He's slurring his singing now.

VICTOR
We want the funk...

Victor stuffs two Powerbars into his mouth. He looks to his left, surprised to find another RUNNER next to him.

RUNNER
Better pop a sodium tablet. Don't want all that potassium to fuck your electrolytes, do you?

VICTOR
Look, pal, I think I know a thing or two about the human body, OK?

RUNNER
Yeah? Then where'd I come from?

Victor looks back to the runner... to find that he has turned into a MIDDLE EASTERN BOY. About ten. Dressed like a soldier, covered in blood, stomach ripped open by gunfire.

The boy raises a machine gun and FIRES at Victor.

Victor screams and falls to the ground... but nothing happens. He looks up.

The runner, the boy... gone.

Victor unwraps and downs a sodium tablet, chugs water.

Carlos peeks out from the trees. He can't believe what he's seeing; who is this lunatic running through the desert?

Victor guzzles some water.

Carlos's eyes dance across Victor's glistening water bottles.

Victor downs a sodium tablet, inhales a banana.

Carlos's eyes light up at the sight of food.

Victor tries to stand, can't put weight on his feet. He pulls off his shoes, wincing. The soles stick to his fingers as he pulls them away; they've started to melt.

Victor peels off his bloody socks. His feet are nothing short of horrifying. The skin is white, as if soaked in salt water, and what skin hasn't blistered and torn looks loose and dead.

From his pack, Victor takes his knife and cuts his blisters. Pus oozes into the dirt. Next he slathers Krazy Glue over the blisters, then wraps his feet in duct tape.

Victor slips on new socks, then tries to put his shoes back on, but they won't fit. He cuts out their sides, then slides them over his duct-tape laden feet.

Victor's legs quiver. He starts to pack up his gear when...

BAM! A tree branch slams into Victor's back Carlos grabs Victor's backpack and water, then runs.

VICTOR

Hey!

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Carlos runs through the trees, Victor chasing wildly.

Carlos stumbles. Victor grabs him.

CARLOS

Please! No! My son!

Victor follows Carlos's pointing finger... to find Toraidio lying against the tree.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE WOODED GROVE - DAY

Jeter parks his truck, gets out... hears movement.

EXT. WOODED GROVE - DAY

Victor dresses Toraidio's wound. He notices Carlos's bandage.

VICTOR

What happened?

CARLOS

We got cut.

VICTOR

You want to die out here? Keep playing cute. What happened?

EXT. OUTSIDE THE WOODED GROVE - DAY

Jeter stalks the trees, kneels behind a tall patch of brush. He pushes the brush aside with his machete... and sees Victor and Carlos.

EXT. MESA TOP - DAY

Borden's pickup truck, its bed full of female migrants, pulls away down one side of the mesa while McCaffrey's, loaded with the men, pulls away down the other. Somes's radio hisses...

JETER (V.O.)
Two men, one boy. Boy's hurt.

SOMES
He'll heal. Take him.

JETER (V.O.)
And the men?

SOMES
Is this your first day?

BACK TO THE WOODED GROVE

Victor yanks the boy's tourniquet. Toraidio winces. Victor's legs start to spasm.

CARLOS
What's wrong?

VICTOR
Nothing. I just need a minute...

Victor stands, pumps his legs. It doesn't help. He lets himself fall to the ground to stretch... and a GUNSHOT rings out. A bullet shatters the tree limb behind him.

VICTOR
DOWN!

Carlos hits the ground.

Jeter moves into the grove, M-4 at the shoulder. They're gone. But tracks remain. Bloody tracks.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Carlos and Victor sprint down a hillside, Carlos carrying Toraidio.

VICTOR
Who the fuck are you!

But Carlos doesn't stop to answer. Victor takes cover behind a tree trunk, turns to check the ridge. All he sees is a faint glimmer of light...

EXT. ATOP THE INCLINE - DAY

... off the scope of Jeter's M-4...

INSERT - THROUGH SCOPE

... in which Victor is lined up.

BACK DOWN THE SLOPE

Victor ducks just as a CRACK comes from above. The bullet flies over his head. He scans the landscape beneath them.

The hill bottoms out into a stream, across which rises a much more serious slope... but there's a cave at its base.

Victor finds Carlos, hiding in his own blind spot.

VICTOR
*Run for that cave. And I mean run.
Not a straight line, break it up,
zig zag. Got it?*

They sprint down the incline. Victor stumbles, rolls over uneven terrain, gets back up, turning his body as he bounces off trees and rocks on the way down. Bullets WHIZZ past.

Victor's cut-up shoes start to come apart.

Carlos and Toraidio disappear into the cave.

At the bottom of the incline, Victor's shoes fall to pieces. He crashes into the water.

ATOP THE SLOPE

Jeter's lost sight of his prey. He starts down the slope.

BOTTOM OF THE SLOPE

Jeter reaches the stream. Nobody's there. But drops of water lead into the cave.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Jeter enters, handcuffs jangling on his belt.

He follows the thinning water tracks. They lead behind a stalagmite. He drops low, ready to turn the corner...

... when the flashbulb of Victor's camera goes off, blinding Jeter, sending him stumbling backwards.

Victor leaps onto Jeter's back. They fight. Jeter's rifle clatters to the ground and over a ledge into darkness.

Jeter locks one cuff on Victor's wrist, but Victor yanks himself free before Jeter can slap the second cuff on.

The sound of Jeter's RIFLE HITTING BOTTOM finally echoes back from the darkness. That's one hell of a drop.

Victor smacks Jeter across the face with the empty cuff. As they fight, the second cuff locks around Jeter's wrist. The cuffed-together men fight on. Jeter draws his machete but Victor knocks it away, then knocks down Jeter.

Jeter falls over the same ledge as his rifle, dragging Victor after him by the handcuffs.

Victor finds a handhold, but Jeter's weight is too much; he won't be able to hold on for long.

Carlos snatches the machete from the ground and hacks at Jeter, severing his cuffed arm. Jeter falls into the chasm.

Victor rolls away from the ledge, horrified to find Jeter's snake-and-Jesus tattooed forearm still cuffed to his wrist.

INT. WINNEBAGO - DAY

Cynthia's watch reads 11:00. She glances to the timer; an hour to go before it rings.

Behind the timer hang several photographs, improv self-portraits of Victor SCUBA diving, mountain climbing, about to make a BASE jump off Hoover Dam. He smiles in none of them.

She turns her attention back to her magazine, the New England Journal of Medicine.

The next article's headline: "Dehydration and Heat-Related Death: Sweat Lodge Syndrome".

EXT. FORT STANDISH - DAY

Cynthia comes out of a corner store carrying an issue of Us Weekly. It's a tiny desert town, overrun by race officials and medical staff. A few dozen runners mill about at water tables, get medical attention, then run off into the desert.

Cynthia notices a Border Patrol jeep near her Winnebago.

As she gets closer to the Winnebago, she sees Border Patrol Agents talking to Justin, the other volunteer. They shake hands, hand him a business card, and leave.

CYNTHIA

What was that all about?

JUSTIN

UDAs in the area.

CYNTHIA

UDAs?

JUSTIN

Undocumented aliens. There was some accident, they may be in the area, if you see something say something, only you can prevent forest fires, blah blah blah...

Justin hands her the Border Patrol business card. The name and contact info belongs to Agent Donald Cutter.

CYNTHIA

Are they dangerous?

JUSTIN

Sure, if you're a lettuce field.

RACE OFFICIAL (O.S.)

Forty-three checking in!

Justin turns. His support team pin bears number forty-three.

JUSTIN

Mother fucker's twenty minutes ahead of pace. Later, Cynth!

He's off, helping his runner into the medical tent. Cynthia pockets Cutter's business card and looks out into the vast expanse of desert.

INT. CAVE - DAY

The duct tape has been ripped off Victor's feet, revealing an even bloodier mess than before. Carlos approaches him.

CARLOS

Gracias.

Victor gives Carlos a withering 'not now' glare. He holds up the cuffs on his arm, still chained to Jeter's forearm.

VICTOR

Can you help me with this?

CARLOS

How?

VICTOR

You know, can you... come on. You know. Can you open these?

(Carlos doesn't get it)

Nevermind, just... nevermind.

Victor uses his knife to cut the arm out of the cuffs. He stares at the snake and cross tattoo, then throws it aside.

Carlos hovers over Toraidio. Victor comes to his side.

CARLOS

He seems better.

VICTOR

Fuck would you know.

CARLOS

His breathing isn't as shallow. He's keeping water down. His pulse is regular.

Victor nods, a little surprised and embarrassed.

EXT. WOODED GROVE - DAY

The first aid kit lies in the clearing. Victor makes sure the coast is clear; it is.

He hobbles into the grove, grabs the kit, and starts back for the cave when he notices Jeter's pickup.

EXT. DESERT - JETER'S PICKUP - DAY

Victor opens the door bearing the Border Patrol logo. No keys in the ignition. Victor rifles the glove compartment. He finds a bible, and under that, an Exxon credit card in the name of "Caleb Jeter".

He checks the bed, finds the rattlesnakes in their cage.

VICTOR

People do resemble their pets.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Somes's SUV sits in a secluded stretch of pine along a drag road. A yellow traffic sign, like those you'd see at a deer crossing, stands sentinel, except it depicts a man, woman, and child fleeing across the road on foot.

Somes follows tracks along the roadside. He kneels, finds a puddle of moisture on the ground, and smells it.

SOMES

Gotcha.

Somes lays a map on the hood of his SUV and pencils in the tracks, charting their direction... right into the Tohono O'odham tribal reservation.

CUTTER (V.O.)

Somes, Cutter, copy.

SOMES

(answering the radio)

Copy. What's going on, Cutter?

CUTTER (V.O.)

Caleb Jeter, Woodrow Temberle, Martin McCaffrey. Names mean anything to you?

SOMES

Three redneck patrol rookies with more guns than brains. Why?

CUTTER (V.O.)

At some point last night, all three were on zone six detail. Dollars to donuts one of them was Jiminez's contact on our side.

Somes's eyes go from zero to furious. On the horizon, Borden and McCaffrey's pickups approach.

CUTTER (V.O.)
Any sign of the stragglers?

SOMES
Nothing yet.

CUTTER (V.O.)
All right, you keep on them, I'm
going to dig into these three names
leads. Cutter out.

McCaffrey and Borden pull up and get out. Somes drives the
butt of his M-4 into McCaffrey's gut.

SOMES
What the fuck are you doing on the
books for zone six last night!

MCCAFFREY
Temberle called in sick, it was my
spot, what the fuck you want me to
do! Jiminez was supposed to come
through four anyway!

SOMES
Six was the alternate and you knew
it! And Jeter was with you?

MCCAFFREY
How're we supposed to know he's
gonna go Evil fucking Knievel into
a drainage ditch!

SOMES
Have you bought anything in the
past year?

MCCAFFREY
What?

SOMES
Anything! A car, a boat, supersize
fries, anything? Cutter's running
this one and he will not tread
lightly! What's he going to find?

MCCAFFREY
Nothing.

SOMES
(raising the gun)
Nothing?

BORDEN
Somes, fuck, man! Relax!

MCCAFFREY
I swear! Nothing!

Somes lowers the gun, but not his temper.

SOMES
After today, we're going quiet.
These tracks head for the res,
McCaffrey, you're on them. Be
careful, they're still lucid.

MCCAFFREY
How do you know that?

SOMES
(points to the puddle)
They're not bottling their piss
yet. Borden, you're with me, we're
finding Jeter. Check in, in thirty.

Somes gets in his SUV. Borden shakes his head at McCaffrey and follows Somes.

MCCAFFREY
Watch your back, bitch.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Victor redresses Toraidio's bandages and adjusts the tourniquet. The boy's fingertips are starting to discolor.

CARLOS
Is that gangrene?

VICTOR
The beginning. We get him stitched and take that tourniquet off, he'll be fine, otherwise...

Toraidio's eyes open. He jerks back at the sight of Victor.

CARLOS
It's all right, he's a doctor.

TORAIDIO
Where did he come from?

VICTOR
Good ol New York City. Now relax...

CARLOS
New York? Why are you here?

EXT. DESERT - JETER'S PICKUP - DAY

Somes's SUV pulls up. He and Borden check Jeter's pickup.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Carlos and Toraidio stare at Victor as if he were from Mars.

CARLOS
A race through the desert? At noon?

VICTOR
Believe it.

TORAIDIO
Cool.

CARLOS
Santa Maria.

EXT. DESERT - JETER'S PICKUP - DAY

Borden rounds the truck, keeping his distance from the rattlesnakes. He spots the open glove compartment.

BORDEN
Someone's been here. Somes?

But Somes has found footprints. Bloody ones.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Carlos re-enters the cave.

CARLOS
Clear.

Victor pulls socks from his backpack, slips them on over his beaten feet, then wraps his feet in duct tape.

Toraidio watches Victor, then looks to Carlos's white plastic bag. A pair of sneakers poke out of the bag.

Carlos sees what his son is thinking and shakes his head emphatically, "no".

EXT. DESERT - DAY

McCaffrey follows a trail of prints through the sand... to a stretch of flat, hard lava rock where the tracks die.

A RUSTLING from behind McCaffrey. He turns. Is someone behind him? Or something? He doesn't see anything...

McCaffrey crosses the rocks.

Another sound. McCaffrey turns, M-4 at his shoulder, a little spooked. But there's no one there.

He turns and moves on to some scrub brush past the rocks. He finds a broken twig... then more footprints.

The prints cross a fence with a faded sign reading "SELLS TOHONEO O'ODHAM RESERVATION."

McCaffrey grits his teeth and crosses into the reservation.

A few dozen yards behind him, someone moves from a well-concealed spot in the brush.

It's Otilio. He's stalking McCaffrey.

EXT. RIO ROCO, ARIZONA - DAY

A small, blue collar suburb. Tiny cookie-cutter ranch houses.

Cutter drives down a street, checking the house numbers as he goes. Twenty four... Twenty six... He stops in front of twenty eight. He looks at the house, then rechecks the paper in his lap.

"McCaffrey, Martin - 28 San Carlos Rd, Rio Roco, AZ".

Cutter looks back to the house. This is twenty eight, but it's not like the rest of the houses on the block. There's a second level being added and a pickup in the driveway with an "I'd Rather be Huntin'" bumper sticker and temporary plates.

INT. SOMES'S SUV - DAY

While Somes and Borden drive, the radio hisses...

CUTTER (V.O.)
Knock, knock.

SOMES
(answering)
Who's there?

CUTTER (V.O.)
Martin McCaffrey.

SOMES
Martin McCaffrey who?

CUTTER (V.O.)
Martin McCaffrey the dumb mother
fucker who bought a new F-450 and
is adding onto his house.

Borden subconsciously starts to inch away from Somes, as if
the far side of the passenger seat were safer.

SOMES
Sounds like we've got our man.

CUTTER (V.O.)
I'm headed back to Tucson, gonna
scour his records. Let me know when
you find anything. Cutter out.

A looooong silence.

BORDEN
You're taking this well.

SOMES
I'm taking this quiet. A truck and
an addition? The Russian isn't
paying us that much.

EXT. DESERT - ROCKY DRY RIVER BED - DAY

Extremely uneven terrain. It's tough for Victor but near
impossible for Carlos with Toraidio on his back.

Suddenly, Toraidio goes limp.

CARLOS
Doctor!

Victor checks the boy. He fishes a smelling salt from his
first aid kit, waves it under the boy's nose. Toraidio perks
up, but Victor checks his arm. It's darker.

The sound of a VEHICLE from nearby. Carlos instinctively
lowers himself. Victor instinctively looks for the vehicle.

VICTOR
Could be race support.

Victor climbs to where he can see the road. There's an SUV on the horizon. Even from here, he can tell there's a law enforcement siren on its roof.

Victor looks to Carlos, Toraidio... to Toraidio's dying arm.

INT. SOMES'S SUV - DAY

Somes slams on the brakes as Victor runs into his path.

SOMES
What the--

Somes lowers his window.

SOMES
Sir, is everything all right? What are you doing all the way out here?

VICTOR
Officer, I'm running the Badlands, I got off course, a lot of shit's gone down, but there's a boy nearby who needs medical attention.

Somes notices Victor's bloody feet.

SOMES
You look like you could use some yourself.

VICTOR
I'm fine, sir. But these people need help.

EXT. DESERT - ROCKY DRY RIVER BED - DAY

Borden and Somes cuff Carlos while Victor checks Toraidio, scribbling instructions on a piece of paper.

TORAIDIO
Where are they taking us?

VICTOR
To get help. You're going to be OK.
I promise.
(to Somes)
Make sure the hospital knows the timeline, OK?

Victor hands Somes the instructions. As he does, he cannot bring himself to face Carlos's withering glare.

CARLOS

You won't look at me?

VICTOR

*Your son needs a hospital. His arm
is killing him.*

CARLOS

You're no man.

VICTOR

*I saved his life and probably
yours!*

CARLOS

*And if he sends us back, what have
you saved!?*

Victor looks to Somes, then back to Victor.

VICTOR

*After I get home, I'll look you
both up. Check with the customs
bureau on both your records. Make
sure you got home OK.*

Somes and Borden exchange a look.

VICTOR

Sorry. That's the best I can do.

Carlos spits in Victor's face. Victor's eyes go livid... but he wipes his face clean and walks away.

SOMES

You did the right th--

VICTOR

(interrupting)

*There's something else. A man
attacked us. He had an M-4 and was
driving a border patrol truck. His
name was Caleb Jeter.*

SOMES

My God. Where is he?

VICTOR

There was a fight. He's dead.

SOMES

Who killed him?

Victor looks to Carlos.

VICTOR
I did. In self-defense.

SOMES
You'll have to file a report.

Victor nods, then gives Carlos and Toraidio one last look. Neither look back at him.

MINUTES LATER

Victor sits in Somes's SUV. Somes and Borden talk outside near the cuffed migrants.

SOMES
You know the drill.

BORDEN
(looking at Victor)
What about him? If he looks into anything, it'll be bad...

SOMES
Oh, it would? It'd be bad? Where the fuck would I be without you? Bad. Jesus fucking Christ bad.
(beat)
Jeter's dead. It'll just look like he took someone with him.

INT. SOMES'S SUV - DAY

Somes pulls away. Victor watches Carlos and Toraidio grow smaller in the rearview mirror.

VICTOR
What'll happen to them?

SOMES
They sign voluntary departure forms, head on their merry way.

VICTOR
After you treat the boy.

SOMES
Oh, yes. Of course. After that, no fuss no muss. If they're cooperative.

VICTOR
Cooperative?

SOMES
They were part of a larger group.

Victor takes pureed baby food from his pack, eats it.

SOMES
Is that...

VICTOR
Baby food. Goes down easy and stays
there.

SOMES
So. Where you from?

VICTOR
New York.

SOMES
Did you run all the way here, or
did the lunacy start once you
arrived?

Somes laughs, Victor doesn't.

VICTOR
I wouldn't call it lunacy.

SOMES
No? Coming to Arizona to run a
hundred miles in July, sucking down
baby food, wearing duct tape
sneakers? A man's gotta know his
limits.

VICTOR
Limits are there to be tested.

SOMES
Limits are there to limit.

VICTOR
Maybe for some.

SOMES
Hm. Funny.

VICTOR
What's funny?

SOMES
You're an educated man. Newton.
First law. Bodies at rest stay at
rest unless...

VICTOR
... acted upon by an outside force.

SOMES
So you tell me. What drives a man
to run into a desert?

VICTOR
Maybe I'm running towards
something.

SOMES
Maybe back to your people?

VICTOR
My what?

SOMES
Your heard me.

VICTOR
My people.

SOMES
You killed to save them.

VICTOR
How about they're just people? Hm?
How's that work for you?

Uncomfortable silence.

SOMES
Know the problem with sitting on a
fence, Doctor? In a war, fences get
knocked down.

VICTOR
There's no war here. Believe me.

SOMES
That's what I'd expect someone like
you to say.

VICTOR
Yeah, lemme tell you about 'like
me'. 'Like me' has done things for
this country that'd make you shit
those Army surplus pants. So fuck
you. 'Like me' is American.

SOMES
American?

The vehicle stops. Victor realizes they're back at Jeter's pickup.

SOMES
You're just a citizen.

Somes draws a can of mace, sprays Victor in the face. As he screams, Somes punches him across the face, knocking him out.

INT. JETER'S PICKUP - DAY

Victor's eyes open. He can barely see through his mace stunned eyes, but he's in the rear of Jeter's truck cab.

He goes for the door. Locked. A police-style screen blocks him from the front doors.

Somes holds Jeter's rattlesnake cage against the window. It hisses, sending Victor backwards in shock.

Somes laughs, moves to the back of the truck, pushes.

Victor realizes the truck's moving towards a slope... that drops to a river.

The truck hurtles down, bouncing Victor around its interior. It hits the river, starts filling with water.

EXT. ATOP THE SLOPE - DAY

Somes watches as the truck disappears down river.

INT. JETER'S PICKUP - IN THE RIVER - DAY

Victor realizes the impact has knocked the police screen loose. He tries to reach the front doors through the loose screen... can't.

He uses the rising water to rinse the mace from his eyes. Gets his bearings. He kicks a wider space between the police screen and cab, worsening the cuts on his feet. Tries again to reach the doors. Almost there... almost...

POP. Water shorts the truck's fuses. Victor reaches the front lock button, but with no electricity it's just clicking plastic.

The truck's almost completely submerged. Victor tries to shove the window down, but it's not budging. He slams Jeter's handcuffs, still secured to his wrist, against the window to break it. Nothing.

VICTOR
Cynthia... Cynthia, I'm sorry...

Victor spots his backpack. He digs out Cynthia's engagement ring, drags the diamond across the glass.

Water washes over his mouth, completely filling the truck. He coils his body, braces his feet against the far door, and launches himself at the cut glass. It shatters.

Victor pulls himself free, kicks and pulls his way to--

EXT. RIVER - CONTINUOUS

-- the surface, where he sucks in air.

Victor swims to the shore and collapses. He kisses the ring, tucks it in his pocket, and looks around. He's near the cave where he, Carlos, and Toraidio hid.

He drags himself upright and starts to run.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Borden, rifle at the hip, forces Carlos and Toraidio over a dry river bed and into a dense thicket of trees.

CARLOS
Why this way?

BORDEN
Cause that's where the gun's
pointed. Move.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Victor runs past the cave where he and the migrants hid.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Carlos stumbles, struggles to balance Toraidio on his back.

BORDEN
Get up.

CARLOS
Your friend... promised help!

BORDEN
Help-o coming. Now move-o.

EXT. DRY RIVER BED - DAY

Victor runs across the dry river bed. He slips and falls, gashing his leg. He forces himself up on trembling legs, runs as fast as the terrain and his body allow.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Carlos stumbles. Borden rams his M-4 into Carlos's gut.

BACK TO VICTOR

Victor stumbles again, his legs going into full on spasms the second they stop pumping.

BACK TO BORDEN

Borden levels the gun at Carlos's head.

BORDEN

Up!

BACK TO VICTOR

Victor hears Borden's command. He forces himself to his feet, then back to full sprint.

BACK TO BORDEN

Borden forces his captives into a ditch at the base of a steep hill.

BORDEN

On your knees.

Carlos, defeated and weeping, kneels... just as Victor leaps from the top of the hill.

CRASH! Victor slams into Borden, sending them rolling both down another slope.

They bounce over rocks and grass, crash into a dirt mound, and stop.

Borden and Victor turn to face each other... until they realize there's something on both of their legs.

The mound was a fire ant hill. Angry red insects cover Borden and Victor's limbs.

Carlos sees Victor and Borden halfway down the hill. He also sees Borden's M-4, lying on the ground.

Borden and Victor fight while ants swarm them.

Carlos tries to fire the M-4, but nothing happens.

Victor fights pathetically, his body and mind beyond exhausted. Borden grabs the back of Victor's head, drives his face into the ant hill.

A shadow crosses Borden's face. Carlos swings the M-4 like a bat, crushing Borden's face with the stock.

Victor rises, wiping insects and blood from his face, but it's no use. The ants are all over him.

Carlos sees a small stream nearby. He grabs Victor, throws him into it.

Borden, blood and ants covering his face, appears wielding a tree branch. Victor grabs the M-4 from Carlos, flicks off the safety, and empties its clip into Borden's chest.

Victor stares at Borden's corpse, and realizes his finger is still holding down the trigger. He drops the gun.

INT. WINNEBAGO - DAY

RING. The timer goes off. Cynthia dials her phone.

RECORDING (O.S.)
The number you have attempted to
reach is not avail...

EXT. FORT STANDISH - DAY

Cynthia hurries out of the Winnebago, stares down the road. Nobody in sight. She dials her phone.

CYNTHIA
Justin, can one of your partners
handle the next time station?
(beat)
Victor hasn't checked in.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Victor bandages his leg. Then he turns on his phone and GPS. They BEEP and declare 'No signal'. He checks his pocket.

The ring is gone. He searches for it, double checks his pocket... and realizes Toraidio is holding it.

TORAIDIO

It fell when you leapt on the fat man.

Victor takes it.

VICTOR

Gracias.

TORAIDIO

For a woman?

Victor stares at the ring. Nods.

Carlos opens his bag and takes out his pair of beaten sneakers. He hands them to Victor.

CARLOS

I was saving them for work in California.

VICTOR

Then save them.

CARLOS

We have to get to California first.

Victor takes the shoes and slips them on. They fit his swollen, battered feet well.

VICTOR

We get to California, I'm buying you some fucking Timberlands.

CARLOS

Timberlands?

VICTOR

You'll see.

TORAIDIO

Papi? Will the other one come back?

Victor and Carlos look at each other, knowing the answer is 'yes'.

EXT. DESERT - LAVA ROCK - DAY

McCaffrey reaches another stretch of rock where the trail seems to die. A few birds fly overhead, but there's otherwise no sound, no life, no movement. Until...

OTILIO (O.S.)
Just like a gringo.

McCaffrey spins, rifle at his shoulder. Otilio's right there.

OTILIO
Missing a whole forest hoping to
find one tree.

McCaffrey lowers his gun; he KNOWS Otilio.

MCCAFFREY
Jiminez! You fried in the truck!

OTILIO
I hid with the cargo when we
switched routes. Federal Police
know my face better than their
wives'. Now follow the trail.

MCCAFFREY
What trail?

OTILIO
You can't see it. You're looking
down.

Otilio starts to cross the rocks, keeping low. Finally, McCaffrey sees where they're headed...

... towards the circling birds. They're vultures.

EXT. BORDER PATROL HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A huge gray box of a building guarded by a giant fence.

INT. BORDER PATROL HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Chaos. For every agent there are ten migrants waiting to be processed, some cuffed to the benches while they wait.

INT. CUTTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Cutter sits in his office, door closed against the mayhem. He scours patrol duty log books.

Jeter and McCaffrey's names appear in several zones together on the same nights. Often.

Cutter grabs another file, labelled "UNFOUND UDAs".

He checks dates when Jeter and McCaffrey worked together against dates of cases in the Unfound UDAs file. One match. A second. A third.

His phone intercom lights up. Cutter picks up.

CUTTER

Cutter.

(beat)

Put him through.

INT. SOMES'S SUV - DAY

The radio crackles to life.

CUTTER (V.O.)

Somes, Cutter, copy, I'm on with Tom Bearclaw of the Shadow Wolves.

SOMES

What's up, Tom?

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Chris, Tom, and Terrence sit on ATVs near a fence.

TOM

We found tracks moving north, cutting on and off the res. If they're UDAs, they're either real smart and trying to fuck us up or real dehydrated and just fucked.

INTERCUTTING SOMES, CUTTER, AND TOM

SOMES

Where are they headed?

TOM

Hard to say. Looks like they'd be a few miles down from us now.

SOMES

I'll cut up ahead of the res, see what I can find. Let's go, we've got lives to save. Somes out.

Somes hangs up and drives off.

SOMES
Fucking reds.

Tom holsters his scanner.

TOM
Save this, you sanctimonious fuck.
(to Chris)
Let's keep tracking.

CHRIS
Bad feeling?

TOM
Bad feeling. Split up.

The three ATVs roar off.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The sun beats down mercilessly from its zenith. Carlos, Toraidio, and Victor march with zombielike deliberation.

The sun glints off the Victor's handcuffs. Suddenly, Victor looks down at this wrist in agony.

VICTOR
Ah, fuck!

The sun has heated the cuffs to scalding.

Victor pours water onto the cuffs, then wraps the reflective blanket from his pack around his wrist.

He realizes the water bottle he just used is empty, and checks the bottles still on his waist. Two still hold water.

EXT. DESERT - SANDBAR - DAY

McCaffrey and Otilio climb a sandbar... but find no one on the other side. The vultures are directly overhead.

MCCAFFREY
Where'd they go?

The footprints circle wildly.

MCCAFFREY
It's like they vanished? Where the fuck did they go?

OTILIO

Nowhere.

MCCAFFREY

Thanks, grasshopper! Did they turn
invisible or did the fucking
wetback mothership beam them up?

Otilio bristles at "wetback mothership", but the sound of an APPROACHING ATV reaches their ears.

Terrence rounds an outcropping, approaches the sandbar.
Otilio and McCaffrey are nowhere to be seen, but the wild
footprints are still here. He grabs his radio.

TERRENCE

Shadow Wolf three. Can I get some
backup near forty five?

TOM (V.O.)

Copy that three. Got something?

TERRENCE

I got the fucking Rose Bowl Parade.

INSERT - THROUGH BINOCULARS

Someone's watching Terrence.

EXT. DESERT - SANDBAR - DAY

McCaffrey's got the binoculars. He and Otilio, hidden behind
rocks a few dozen yards, watch Terrence search.

INTERCUTTING - TERRENCE, MCCAFFREY AND OTILIO

A trail catches Terrence's eye.

MCCAFFREY

(whispering)

He's got something.

Terrence follows the tracks... heading right for McCaffrey
and Otilio. Otilio looks at McCaffrey's boots.

OTILIO

(whispering)

Yeah. He's got you.

Terrence is almost onto them... when Otilio steps from behind
a rock, hands raised, crying. Terrence draws his sidearm.

OTILIO
(heavily accented)
Wait please, no shoot!

Terrence looks to Otilio's feet. He wears McCaffrey's boots.

TERRENCE
Where 'd you get those?

OTILIO
A man. Dead. In the desert.

TERRENCE
Are you alone?

OTILIO
With many others. I fell behind.

ATVs approach. Terrence throws Otilio a pair of handcuffs. Otilio hesitates, but snaps them on as Tom and Chris pull up.

TOM
What's he say, Terrence?

TERRENCE
Says he was part of a pack, but the others pulled a Houdini right here.

Chris and Tom scan the ground, following the crazy tracks... then look at each other knowingly. Each unstraps a submachine gun from his ATV. Tom speaks loudly to the sandbar.

TOM
We're holding very big guns that we don't get to shoot often. We could use some practice. And this dune looks like practice. One. Two...

Suddenly part of the sandbar explodes. A crying MIGRANT WOMAN stands bolt upright from her hiding spot, buried in the sand.

MIGRANT WOMAN
Don't shoot!

One by one, the rest of the MIGRANTS stand, turning the bar into a sand waterfall.

EXT. DESERT - SANDBAR - MINUTES LATER

Terrence and Chris line up the migrants. Tom's on his radio.

CUTTER (V.O.)
Women?

TOM

Mostly. No guns or drugs and relatively healthy now that they've got some water in them. I'm inclined to catch and release.

CUTTER (V.O.)

All of them?

TOM

You have the resources to process them?

INT. BORDER PATROL OFFICES - DAY

Cutter looks at the insanity that is his office.

EXT. DESERT - SANDBAR - DAY

Tom goes to Terrence and Chris.

TOM

Cutter agrees. Catch and release. Drop them at mile marker thirty.

Chris hands out water, Terrence takes pens and papers from his ATV's saddlebag and hands them to everyone, including Otilio. "US CUSTOMS BUREAU - VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE FORM".

Otilio holds up his handcuffed wrists.

TERRENCE

Sorry.

Terrence uncuffs Otilio. Otilio signs, hands the form back. Terrence turns away, but realizes...

TERRENCE

Hey, can I get my pen-

Terrence turns back, but Otilio is gone.

Otilio and McCaffrey hurry away, staying low. McCaffrey radios Somes.

MCCAFFREY

Get to thirty on the res fence. It's a mother lode, Somes. And you're never gonna believe who's with me.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Victor, Carlos, and Toraidio stagger. There's no shade or breeze, just crushing sun.

They sip from one of Victor's water bottles, emptying it. One remains.

Toraidio falls. Carlos lifts him. The boy's arm is dark purple.

Victor sees a man sitting in the desert, cross legged, yoga-style. He squints. It's Timson. Blood lines his shirt and legs. Dried foam sits at the corners of his lips.

TIMSON

Your feet only get you into the desert. Your mind gets you out.

VICTOR

My mind and I... ain't speaking at the moment...

CARLOS

Who are you talking to?

Victor looks to Carlos, then looks back. Timson's gone.

They enter a narrow valley lined with oak and pine. There's shade here. But from above, a COYOTE howls. Seconds later, another COYOTE answers. Toraidio fearfully scans the ledge.

VICTOR

Coyotes rarely attack people.

Suddenly a coyote BARKS. Something much larger ROARS. There's a SMASH, and WHIMPERING COYOTES running off.

TORAIDIO

What attacks coyotes?

A low GROWL continues from the tree line.

EXT. RESERVATION FENCE - DAY

Mile marker thirty. The just-freed migrants kneel. Otilio gags them with duct tape as McCaffrey holds them at bay with his M-4. Somes surveys the catch.

SOMES

Good work. Twenty grand easy. Get your truck.

McCaffrey heads off. As soon as he's out of view...

SOMES
Glad you're OK, Jiminez.

OTILIO
Wish I could say the same for this
one, Somes. Look.

Otilio points to one of the migrants.

Somes passes Otilio to check it out. As he does, Otilio
knocks the gun from his hand and draws his thirty eight.

OTILIO
I want my cut.

SOMES
The fuck are you talking about?

OTILIO
The Guadalajara street trash on my
truck carrying forty kilos. Don't
play dumb with me, culo, how long
have I been your coke mule?

Somes looks to McCaffrey as he disappears over the horizon.

SOMES
Jiminez. This isn't me.

OTILIO
If you can't trust your men, it may
as well be.

Somes nods, starts to rise... but swipes Otilio's leg. In a
second Otilio is on the ground and Somes has his gun.

SOMES
You ever draw on me again, I will
gut you. Then I'll find your family
and do the same. All the years I've
masked your crossings? Without me,
you'd be at the bottom of a well in
Nogales. Never forget that. Never.

Otilio nods; he sees Somes means it. Somes uncocks the gun
and hands it back to Otilio.

SOMES
We'll straighten this out.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

As McCaffrey walks, his radio crackles...

MCCAFFREY
(answering the radio)
Look, I'm moving as fast...

BORDER PATROL DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Martin McCaffrey? This is Border
Patrol Dispatch. Agent Donald
Cutter wants to speak with you.

McCaffrey stops... then keeps right on walking.

MCCAFFREY
Put him on.

EXT. NARROW VALLEY - DAY

Victor, Carlos, and Toraidio continue through the narrow valley. The GROWLING still follows, hidden in the trees.

VICTOR
Make yourself look big.

Victor puts Toraidio on his shoulders. Carlos and Toraidio wave their arms, but still the GROWL follows.

Suddenly, there's a second GROWL, this one coming from ahead of them.

VICTOR
One's pushing us to the other.

Carlos taps Victor, points to a notch in the valley wall.

INT. CAVE - DAY

The three hurry into the small cave. The GROWLING follows, it's right outside.

Victor takes a flare from his pack, lights it, reaches outside the opening and waves it. Something SIZZLES, followed by the sounds of two large animals running away.

VICTOR
Don't know how long that'll buy us.

Victor suddenly smells something awful. So do Toraidio and Carlos.

He follows his nose deeper into the cave, lighting his way with the flare. He motions for Carlos to keep Toraidio back.

Where's that smell coming from? Victor can't find it, so he turns to go back to the others...

And trips on a corpse. The migrant with the Snake Tattoo, half eaten by a wild animal.

Victor tries to crawl away, but his hands land on more bones and corpses, some fresh, some not. Toraidio and Carlos start to follow.

VICTOR

Keep him out of here!

But Toraidio sees it all and SCREAMS. Carlos pulls the boy to him and covers his eyes, but then he sees Snake Tatoo.

CARLOS

This man was on our truck!

Victor notices the corpse's throat. One clean cut.

INSERT - FLASHBACK - SOMES'S SUV

SOMES

*They were part of a larger group.
You follow?*

BACK TO THE CAVE

VICTOR

We've got to get out of here.

CARLOS

*Those animals will smell the blood
on us.*

Victor looks at the burn on his wrist from his cuffs.

MINUTES LATER

The still-burning flare sits on the floor, wedged between two rocks. Victor holds his knife in the flame until it glows.

Biting down on his pack strap, he touches the glowing knife to the cut on his leg. Victor's face lights up with pain. He pours water on the wound. A neat cauterization.

He turns to Toraidio and Carlos. Toraidio grips his father's hand. Victor takes his backpack and shows the boy the Army Medic pin on its cover.

VICTOR

Know what that says? That I used to be in the army, and my job was to treat the wounded.

TORAIDIO

Were you good?

VICTOR

No patient of mine ever lost a limb.

Toraidio thinks about this... then presents his arm to Victor. Victor gives the boy the strap to bite down on, takes the boy's hand. Toraidio squeezes back hard.

VICTOR

On three. One...

Victor taps the blade to the wound. Toraidio's eyes go wide, but the knife is away before he can scream. Victor cleans the burn, then loosens the tourniquet. It stays closed.

TORAIDIO

Two comes after one.

Victor laughs and turns Carlos around so he can see the wound on his back. As Victor heats the knife....

CARLOS

On three. No tricks.

VICTOR

You got it. What are you going to do in California?

CARLOS

A cantaloupe farm. My brother worked there last season, made more in a day than AGHHH!!!

Victor touches the knife to Carlos's wound with no warning, but again, the blade is away in a flash.

CARLOS

I will get you back for that.

Victor and Carlos laugh.

EXT. STREAM - DAY

Somes stares at Borden's corpse floating in the stream. McCaffrey and Otilio approach.

MCCAFFREY
They headed into Phoenix Valley.

INT. SOMES'S SUV - DAY

Somes drives behind McCaffrey and Otilio, who track on foot. His radio hisses...

CUTTER (V.O.)
Somes, this is Cutter, copy, you're late on check-in.

SOMES
(answering quickly)
Sorry, Don, wasted twenty minutes on a dead trail. What's up?

CUTTER (V.O.)
When it rains it pours. I just got off the phone with the marathon people. A runner's missing.

SOMES
Cutter, there's a limit to how many trails I can follow at once.

CUTTER (V.O.)
I know, but if you see anything, lemme know. Cutter out.

SOMES
Hey, what's up with those three names you were looking into?

CUTTER (V.O.)
Didn't have to look too hard. But I talked to that McCaffrey guy. We're gonna meet tonight. Says he's got some info I might be interested in.

Somes's eyes dig daggers into McCaffrey's back. In the backseat, Jeter's snake hisses.

SOMES
Think he's on the level?

CUTTER (V.O.)
I'll see. Cutter out.

Otilio runs up to the SUV. Somes lowers the window.

OTILIO
You're not going to believe where
they are.

SOMES
I'm believing a lot today.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Victor applies burn cream to Toraidio's cauterization.

CARLOS
*I don't hear anything outside. I'll
check.*

VICTOR
Be careful.

Carlos nods and leaves.

TORAIDIO
*My father says you killed the fat
man. With his own gun.*

VICTOR
I didn't have a choice.

TORAIDIO
*The fat man's friend. If he finds
us, will you kill him?*

VICTOR
Not if I don't have to.

TORAIDIO
If you don't, I will.

Victor sees Toraidio means it. As he keeps treating the boy's wound...

VICTOR
Ever kill anyone?

Toraidio shakes his head, 'no'.

VICTOR
*Want to know how to kill your first
person?*

Toraidio leans in, bright-eyed.

VICTOR

Imagine you're in a truck. One of three. In a desert like this. One of the other trucks hits a bomb. Bullets fly. You're treating the wounded and someone you know, a friend, he's covering you, he gets shot. You see who did it. He doesn't see you. Your friend's gun is at your feet. What do you do?

TORAIDIO

I shoot the man.

VICTOR

So your bullets rip him open. You expect the sight, but not the sound. Soft. Mushy. He tries to run but his stomach spills out and he slips on it. And you hear he's crying for his mother, cause now you can see he's a ten year-old boy in a twenty year-old uniform holding a thirty year-old gun. And he dies. What now?

(beat)

You tell yourself it was him or you. Everyone else tells you the same. But what you'll never forget is how sure you were that you were right to pull that trigger. Because every time you close your eyes afterwards, that's how sure you'll be you were wrong. You'll do anything to forget it. You'll even... run into a desert.

Toraidio's eyes lower. He nods.

Victor turns... right into a LARGE PUMA. He SCREAMS and falls back, drawing his knife... as he realizes the puma is dead.

Carlos stands behind the animal, holding it, laughing.

CARLOS

I told you I'd get you back!

VICTOR

How the hell did you...

OTILIO (O.S.)

He didn't. I did.

Carlos moves aside. There, in the mouth of the cave, stands Otilio, still holding his thirty eight revolver.

OTILIO
You're lucky. The other one was bigger.

EXT. VALLEY - DAY

Otilio waits in the background.

VICTOR
You trust this guy?

CARLOS
Yes. We'll be fine. He's like us.

Victor nods. He turns to Toraidio, hands him the bottle of burn cream.

VICTOR
If it starts to hurt.

TORAIDIO
Thank you.

Toraidio hugs Victor. Victor, surprised, hugs him back. Victor takes his Medic pin gives it to Toraidio.

VICTOR
It's good luck.

TORAIDIO
Then keep it.

VICTOR
You need it more.

Victor turns to Carlos.

VICTOR
To California.

CARLOS
Or bust, someone once told me. I don't know what that means.

VICTOR
It means or else.

CARLOS
California or bust, then.

Victor and Carlos shake hands. Victor looks to Otilio.

VICTOR
You're sure it's that way?

OTILIO
About five miles. You'll see the town from the ridge. Fort Standish.

Victor waves to Carlos and Toraidio, and starts to run off.

EXT. DESERT - ROAD - DAY

Victor clears a ridge that opens up onto a vast expanse of white sand. And in the middle of it sits a small town, the size of a Matchbox town at this distance.

VICTOR
Fort Standish!

INT. WINNEBAGO - DAY

Cynthia pulls the Winnebago back into Fort Standish. She's alone. She's crying.

EXT. DESERT - ROAD - DAY

The town's closer. Victor increases his pace, dowsing himself with his last water bottle as he goes.

INT. WINNEBAGO - DAY

Something catches her eye out the window. She runs out the Winnebago door.

EXT. DESERT - ROAD - DAY

At this distance, Victor sees individual structures.

EXT. FORT STANDISH - DAY

Cynthia steps out of the Winnebago. Justin steps out of his Jeep and runs towards her.

JUSTIN
We've been up and down all the roads from here to Tucson. He's not on the course. He's lost.

EXT. MOCKED UP TOWN - DAY

Victor slows to a stunned, silent stop. The buildings have no detail. They're nothing. It's an olive drab mockup of a town.

Victor stumbles down "Main Street". The buildings are nothing but canvas stretched over frames, "US AIR FORCE" stenciled at regular intervals.

Further down the road, just beyond the perimeter of the town, he spots a metal road sign. He stumbles towards it, his legs starting to give out.

He reaches the sign. "BARRY M GOLDWATER BOMBING RANGE - US AIR FORCE - NO TRESPASSING".

EXT. DESERT - THROUGH BINOCULARS - DAY

Through the binoculars, someone watches Otilio, Carlos, and Toraidio approach.

SOMES (O.S.)
Looks like the doctor bought it.

EXT. DESERT - THROUGH A RIFLE SCOPE - DAY

Through the rifle scope, someone watches the same view.

MCCAFFREY (O.S.)
Hope no one checks that bombing range.

BACK TO THE BINOCULARS

SOMES (O.S.)
No checks on the rota till next month. By the time anyone thinks to look there, it won't matter.

BACK TO THE RIFLE SCOPE

MCCAFFREY (O.S.)
It's all good. Saves me a bullet.

McCaffrey lines up Carlos in his scope.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Victor crawls, the mocked-up bombing range "town" about a mile behind him. But here he collapses, motionless, baked by sun. Sand cakes him. He can't even sweat.

A vulture lands nearby. Victor tries to wave it away, shoo it verbally, but no sound comes out of his mouth.

Timson appears to him.

TIMSON

You're in bad shape, bud. I'm just wondering, you got a rope or a belt or something on you?

Victor blinks. Timson has become Doctor Connors from the medical tent.

DOCTOR CONNORS

I only ask because you know what happens next. Your core temperature has peaked. In the next half hour, you'll lose muscle control, then vision. Then comes the delirium, and that'll be it. Unless...

Victor blinks again. His hallucination is now the Middle Eastern boy with the machine gun riddled chest. The boy points to a nearby yucca tree.

And then the boy is gone. Victor stares at the sky.

From his backpack he pulls out his rain poncho. Pulls the tie cord laced through its hood out.

Victor gathers his strength and crawls to the tree. He doubles the cord around itself and ties it in a circle around the highest branch he can reach. Then he loops the rest of the cord around his neck.

But then he hears a MOTOR in the distance.

An ATV on the horizon... is it really there?

Terrence stops his ATV, hops off, stretches his legs, sips his canteen. He scans the horizon. Nothing.

Victor tries to call out to Terrence but no sound escapes his dry, cracked throat.

Terrence caps his canteen, gives the horizon one more look.

Victor sobs dry tears. He reaches out in vain... then sees the GPS unit on his wrist, "NO SIGNAL" staring back at him.

Terrence starts back for the ATV.

Victor unstraps his GPS, turns it off, then back on.

Terrence gets on his ATV, tries to kickstart it. It almost catches...

Victor's GPS boots up; "No Signal" looks him in the face... along with its accompanying ELECTRONIC BEEP.

Terrence stops... did he just hear something?

Victor restarts the GPS again. BEEP.

Terrence is off his ATV; there's something out there.

BEEP.

Terrence fires up his ATV and heads for the BEEP. He spots Victor.

Victor's world goes black as Terrence runs towards him.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Otilio drags the sobbing Toraidio, his mouth gagged and his hands cuffed, to Somes's SUV and roughly throws him in.

SOMES

Careful, god dammit! He's five
grand easy!

McCaffrey drags Carlos's body to the SUV.

SOMES

Good shot.

MCCAFFREY

I know. Help me.

Somes just stands there.

MCCAFFREY

Come on, Somes, he's heavy.

Still Somes doesn't move.

MCCAFFREY

We can't leave him! You know I make
my ammo special! Wrong person finds
him, they'll be on me in an hour!

McCaffrey tries to lift Carlos again...

SOMES

It won't even take them that long.

Somes drops Jeter's rattlesnake down McCaffrey's shirt.
McCaffrey looks up in shock, then pain, then panic. He
screams as the snake bites him over and over.

Somes tears the false bottom out of Jeter's snake cage, then
starts to read papers hidden there.

SOMES

May fifth, twenty kilos, marked
received, smuggled in by four of
Jiminez's migrants. June fifteenth,
thirty k's. Fifty on July third.
Getting a little greedy there.

The venom hits McCaffrey's system. He falls, spasming. He
reaches for Otilio, begging for help with his eyes.

OTILIO

Sorry. Only wetbacks allowed on the
mothership.

SOMES

Never thought you had it in you,
smuggling the hard stuff right
under my nose. How'd it work? I
figure your source slips the mules
onto Otilio's truck, lets him take
all the risk with no clue what he's
hauling. Then you seize the goods
before you bring the pack to me.
What Somes doesn't know, he doesn't
need a cut of, right?

MCCAFFREY

Somes... please...

SOMES

Except you got noticed. You didn't
learn. Keep it focused. Keep it
small. You endangered our whole
enterprise for a quick, big score.

(grabs McCaffrey by the
hair, leans in close)

But I win.

(MORE)

SOMES (CONT'D)
With you and Jeter dead, Cutter's
got no case. It'll all land on you.
And your families. I'll see to it.

McCaffrey can only gurgle as the venom closes his throat. He dies in agony.

SOMES
Nasty business, drugs.

Somes gets in his SUV. He and Otilio drive away.

On the ground... Carlos's hand moves.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Victor opens his eyes to find the Shadow Wolves over him.

TOM
Son of a bitch, Chris, I owe you
twenty. Call Border Patrol...

VICTOR
(hoarse)
Wait... don't...

CHRIS
He's American!

VICTOR
Somes... Somes... Carlos...

TOM
What about Somes?

VICTOR
Stop him... don't... don't call...

Victor tries to stand but crumbles to the ground.

TOM
Easy buddy, easy, your leg can't
take too much more.

Victor looks at his leg; it's discolored badly, just like Toraidio's arm was earlier.

The radio crackles to life. Tom answers it.

CUTTER (V.O.)
Bearclaw, Cutter copy.

TOM
This is Bearclaw, what's up?

CUTTER (V.O.)
Somes just checked in. Bad news.
There was a third pack of UDA's but
their trail disappears near Phoenix
Canyon. Unless they find water,
it's over.

VICTOR
(crying)
He's got them....

Tom signals Chris to hush Victor up.

CUTTER (V.O.)
Any sign of that marathoner near
the reservation?

Tom looks at Victor's clothing.

VICTOR
Please... don't...

TOM
He's probably in Somes's zone.

CUTTER (V.O.)
Somes says he hasn't seen a trace
of him.

TERRENCE
(whispering)
But this guy knows Somes's name!

The Shadow Wolves look to each other. What is going on here?
Tom looks at Victor for a long beat before responding.

TOM
We haven't seen him.

CUTTER (O.S.)
Damn. OK. Cutter out.

Tom holsters his radio and turns to Victor.

TOM
Sir? I hate to get all direct here,
but what the fuck is going on?

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Somes's SUV pulls up in front of the church.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Somes and Otilio drag Toraidio through the church, through a door behind the altar, and down into...

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

... where the migrants sit chained and gagged. Somes chains Toraidio to the floor. He and Otilio slam the door, leaving the room in darkness.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The Shadow Wolves stare at Victor. Chris's expression is pure shock. Terrence's eyes burn. But Tom's face is unreadable.

Tom goes to his ATV. Takes something out of its saddlebags.

TOM

Doctor Marquez, you're telling me a decorated officer of the US Border Patrol is kidnapping undocumented aliens? And trying to kill you for finding out about it?

VICTOR

I know. It's hard to believe.

Tom turns, holding a jar of Navajo war paint. He spreads it across his face. Tosses it to Terrence, who does the same.

TOM

Not as hard as you might think.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The Shadow Wolves' ATVs roar through the canyon where Victor left Carlos and Toraidio. Tom picks up tracks. Terrence and Chris follow, Victor hanging on for dear life.

The ATVs stop before McCaffrey's lifeless body, cooking in the sun.

TOM

Rattler, I bet. Got him bad.

Chris and Terrence check the land and road for tracks.

CHRIS
Somebody hightailed it out of here,
and not long ago.

TOM
All the connecting roads are paved,
we'll never be able to track him.

About sixty feet off the road, Victor sees the fallen Carlos.

VICTOR
No!

Victor and Tom run to him. He's barely alive.

VICTOR
*You're gonna be OK! Where's
Toradio!*

CARLOS
Church...

VICTOR
A church?

Carlos points to the road, gesturing desperately.

CARLOS
*Let's get... Get to the church...
he said church...*

TOM
Terrence, bust out the map! Find me
churches!

VICTOR
*You're gonna be OK. Relax.
California. Stay on me, California.*

Carlos lifts himself up to Victor's face.

CARLOS
Duérmete...

VICTOR
What?

CARLOS
Duérmete Mi Niño...

VICTOR
The lullaby? It's...

Victor hums the tune. It's the song Carlos sang to Toraidio in the grove.

CARLOS
Toraidio... can't sleep without it.

Carlos's life slips from him. Victor grips his collar for what seems like forever before he lets go.

VICTOR
He just wanted to pick cantaloupe.

TERRENCE
There are seventeen friggin churches on the map!

Tom leaves Victor with Carlos, goes to Terrence.

TERRENCE
Checking them all will take hours.

CHRIS
State Police could help if we--

TOM
Somes gets their frequency, he'll know we're onto him.

Victor's head jerks up.

INSERT - FLASHBACK - THE CAVE

Jeter's snake-and-Jesus tattooed arm, severed by Carlos, cuffed to Victor's wrist.

BACK TO SCENE

Victor turns to the Shadow Wolves.

VICTOR
Are any of those churches Pentecostal?

EXT. CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON

The sun hangs over the Victory of Faith Pentecostal Church. The Shadow Wolves' ATVs pull up on a nearby ridge.

TOM
You Christians like to be as close to your God as possible, don't you?

Victor's GPS beeps. He looks down; for the first time in hours, he's got signal.

INT. WINNEBAGO - LATE AFTERNOON

As Cynthia stares at a race map, there's a flurry of activity outside the window: EMTs, RACE VOLUNTEERS, POLICE.

She watches two of the policemen talking. One shakes his head. The other frowns.

Tears line her face. And then her phone rings.

EXT. CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON

Victor limps away from the ATVs, phone to his ear.

CYNTHIA (V.O.)
WHERE THE FUCK ARE YOU!

Tom turns, eyebrow raised as he hears Cynthia's tirade.

INTERCUTTING - VICTOR AND CYNTHIA

VICTOR
Something's happened.

CYNTHIA
What? What happened? Where are you?

VICTOR
People are in trouble, Cynthia.
They're in trouble and it's on me
to stop it. It's on me. All on me.

CYNTHIA
Victor, you're scaring me, what's--

VICTOR
I spent three years in a desert
fighting for people who were trying
to live like us. I won't watch a
man who wears my flag kill people
for trying to live like us. I
can't. It's gotta end.

CYNTHIA
Victor, listen to me. Tell me where
you are. We'll call the
authorities...

VICTOR
He is the authorities.

CYNTHIA
Then we'll call HIS authorities!
Victor, they'll listen to you!
You're a veteran, a doctor...

VICTOR
None of that matters, not out here.
I love you.

CHURCH BELLS ring. Victor hangs up.

INT. WINNEBAGO - LATE AFTERNOON

Cynthia stares at the phone. She pulls Cutter's business card from her pocket.

EXT. CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON

Victor returns to the ATVs. As the bells fade, a box truck crests a hill and approaches. It slows, but doesn't stop.

VICTOR
False alarm?

TOM
My ass. Three trucks come down this road a year. That bell's a signal.

The CHURCH BELLS ring twice again. The truck drives off.

INT. CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON

Somes climbs out of the bell tower, goes behind the altar, and disappears down a flight of stairs.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

The migrants, including Toraidio, sit naked and chained to the floor as Otilio hoses them down. Some choke and gasp, others gulp the water out of thirst. Somes appears.

SOMES
He's here.

Otilio turns off the hose, levels an M-4 at them, and undoes the chain holding them down.

OTILIO
Get dressed!

The migrants move towards their clothes, piled in the corner, as Somes unlocks an iron door in the back of the basement. It opens onto a flight of stairs that disappear into darkness. As the migrants dress, Somes gags them all. One bites him. Somes backhands her to the ground.

EXT. CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON

Terrence mounts up, war paint under his eyes too, now.

TOM
You understand?

TERRENCE
Follow the truck. The second it
enters the canyon, call base.

Chris applies his war paint.

VICTOR
Do I need any of that?

Terrence starts to offer his war paint to Victor, but sees Tom glare with disdain. Terrence withdraws the paint.

CHRIS
Wouldn't help you. It lets us draw
on the spirits of our elders.

VICTOR
Really?

CHRIS
Nah. But it looks hard core.

TOM
Chris, let's go.

VICTOR
What should I do?

Tom hands Victor the radio scanner.

TOM
With that leg? Watch. Radio for
help if we need it.

Before Victor can protest, Tom and Chris are headed towards the church on foot.

INT. STAIRS - LATE AFTERNOON

The gagged migrants move down the stairs. Somes and his M-4 lead them, Otilio and his M-4 bring up the rear.

The stairs lead out onto...

EXT. MULE TRAIL - LATE AFTERNOON

... a trail snaking down to the canyon floor. This is a box canyon, with one entrance through a notch on the far side.

Somes turns to Otilio.

SOMES
Burn it all.

Otilio nods, heads back up the stairs.

EXT. CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON

Victor watches Tom and Chris disappear into the church.

Then he sees a set of Bilco doors from the church's basement open. Otilio, M-4 at the hip, comes out, heads for a shed...

... and comes back out carrying two cans of gasoline.

Otilio douses the church with gas. Suddenly, there's a sound behind him. A MOTOR.

Victor, on Chris's ATV, barrels right into Otilio and through a stained glass window.

INT. CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON

The ATV crashes through the pews, stopping near the altar.

EXT. MULE TRAIL - LATE AFTERNOON

The sound of the CRASH shocks both the migrants and Somes.

SOMES
Move! Now! Let's go!

Toraidio looks down; they're at a fork in the trail with three branches. He pulls Victor's Medic pin from his pocket.

INT. CHURCH FOYER - LATE AFTERNOON

Tom and Chris try to enter the church, but the doors are chained from the inside.

INT. CHURCH - LATE AFTERNOON

Otilio pulls his knife on Victor, aims to skewer his throat.

Victor grabs the metal rope from the ATV's winch. He wraps it around Otilio's throat, then turns the winch on.

WHIRR! THUNK! The rope cuts through Otilio's throat. His severed head rolls down the aisle.

Tom and Chris break in the door just as the head reaches it. Both leap back at the sight.

VICTOR

You needed help. I called.

INT. WINNEBAGO - LATE AFTERNOON

Justin works at Cynthia's laptop, hacking away at the keyboard, as Cynthia talks on the phone.

CYNTHIA

That's all he said. A man who wears his flag.

INT. BORDER PATROL OFFICES - LATE AFTERNOON

Cutter on his phone.

CUTTER

That could be a Boy Scout Leader, Miss! Did he say anything else!

INTERCUTTING - CYNTHIA AND CUTTER

Justin waves Cynthia over. On his screen he has an online mapping application, highlighting churches. Cynthia pulls a cell phone service coverage map from the desk and holds it up next to the computer screen.

CYNTHIA

I heard church bells! There are three churches in his cell zone...

Cutter's radio hisses...

BORDER PATROL DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Agent Cutter, Terrence Bearclaw
from the Shadow Wolves...

TERRENCE (V.O.)
Say again, we're at the Victory of
Faith Pentecostal Church, there is
a human trafficking operation in
progress--

CYNTHIA
Agent Cutter, that's one of the
churches!

Cutter grabs his radio as he runs out the door.

CUTTER
This is Cutter! Get me all units!

INT. WINNEBAGO - LATE AFTERNOON

Justin turns to Cynthia.

JUSTIN
What do you want to... Whoa!

The Winnebago peels through the town of Fort Standish and
into the desert, Cynthia at the wheel.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON

Somes leads his captives onto the canyon floor. The box truck
pulls through the canyon's entrance.

EXT. MULE TRAIL - LATE AFTERNOON

Tom, Chris, and Victor find the mule trail. Tom and Chris
carry their submachine guns, Victor has Otilio's M-4. They
reach the fork.

TOM
Which way?

One set of tracks grabs Victor's eye.

The set with an impression of his US Army Medic pin in every
other footprint.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON

Toraidio stumbles, gets back up... but makes sure Victor's pin is still jammed into the sole of his shoe.

EXT. MULE TRAIL - LATE AFTERNOON

Victor points to Toraidio's tracks.

VICTOR

This one.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON

The box truck stops.

EXT. MULE TRAIL - LATE AFTERNOON

Victor, Tom, and Chris reach the end of the trail. They see Somes and the migrants, then watch two large men get out of the box truck.

CHRIS

We rush in before the cavalry's
here to pen them, they'll bolt.

Victor looks at the ridge surrounding the canyon.

VICTOR

What if they think they're already
penned?

He reaches into his backpack and takes out the reflective heat blanket and knife.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON

The Russian's TWO BODYGUARDS nods to Somes, who nods back. Then THE RUSSIAN gets out. He's in his fifties, with long grey hair and a grey beard, dressed ostentatiously.

SOMES

Nice to see you again.

THE RUSSIAN

You're no better a liar today than
you were last month, Somes, but I
don't care. Good crop.

SOMES

Women and children only. All soon
to be officially filed desert
crossing fatalities.

The Russian strokes Toraidio's hair.

THE RUSSIAN

What's your name, boy?
(no response)
Somes, you know what Mexicans and
cue balls have in common?

The Russian backhands Toraidio across the face, knocking him down. He draws back his leg to kick the boy...

TORAIDIO

Toraidio.

THE RUSSIAN

The harder you hit them, the more
English you get.

The bodyguards laugh.

THE RUSSIAN

By the way, I was sorry to hear
about Jiminez. He was good.

SOMES

Be careful what you read in the
papers. Jiminez is just--

Suddenly, something in the air distracts Somes. Something small, about the size of a volleyball, thrown from the ridge of the canyon. It lands between Somes and the Russian.

Jiminez's head.

GUNFIRE opens up from both sides of the canyon.

EXT. RIDGE - LATE AFTERNOON

On one side of the ridge, Tom crouches, fires, moves, fires again.

Across the ridge Victor does the same, using Chris's ATV to move.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON

Sand kicks up everywhere. The Migrants dive for cover. The Russian, Somes, and the Bodyguards do the same.

THE RUSSIAN
What the fuck is this!

The Russian draws a pistol and scans the canyon ridge.

ANOTHER SHOT. The truck's windshield shatters.

BODYGUARD
How fucking many are there?

Suddenly shots ring out from the canyon entrance.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CANYON - LATE AFTERNOON

Terrence, laying low, moves to a different spot, and takes a few more shots.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON

The Russian, Somes, and the bodyguards spin like tops trying to locate their attackers.

The Migrants, still on the ground, look up, realizing their captors seem to be the shooters' targets.

Something on the ridge catches the Russian's eye, a glimmer, among the brush.

THE RUSSIAN
There! Go!

EXT. RIDGE - LATE AFTERNOON

The bodyguards reach the ridge. Bodyguard one waves his gun at the glimmer. Now Bodyguard two sees it; metal in the bushes.

One waves his gun in a circle; two nods.

They circle the spot... and open fire, blowing away the underbrush completely.

The dust clears. A strip of Victor's bullet-riddled reflective heat blanket flaps in the wind.

A SHOT. One's shoulder explodes. He falls, writhing. Bodyguard Two turns in time to catch a bullet in the leg.

Tom slaps in a fresh clip.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON

The Russian watches his bodyguards go down. He leaps into the truck and pulls away on two flattened tires, almost crushing the hiding migrants.

He drives for the canyon entrance, but slams on his brakes.

EXT. DESERT - LATE AFTERNOON

Here comes EVERYONE, enough police vehicles to almost cover the entire horizon.

With a Winnebago bringing up the rear.

INT. WINNEBAGO - LATE AFTERNOON

Cynthia's grinding gears, trying to keep up.

CYNTHIA
Where's fourth in this thing!?

JUSTIN
Winnebago's don't have a fourth--

CYNTHIA
WHY THE FUCK NOT!

INTERCUTTING - RIDGE AND CANYON FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON

The Russian turns the box truck to block the canyon entrance.

From the ridge, a voice calls out...

VICTOR
*Anyone who wants out of this
canyon, run for the trail! NOW!*

Toraudio looks back to the mule trail... and sees Chris hiding there, waiting to cover their escape.

TORAUDIO
Come on!

Toraudio breaks for the mule trail. The others follow.

Somes tries to return fire but three sets of bullets kick up sand at his feet. He runs to the very edge of the canyon, where he's able to hide in shadows.

Victor and Tom lose sight of Somes.

Toraidio runs as fast as he can but is soon at the back of the pack. Chris waves the other migrants onto the mule trail.

Victor drives his ATV down the mule trail until it's too narrow to go further, then starts helping migrants to safety.

Somes makes his way around the canyon, staying in shadows, getting closer to the mule trail.

Toraidio reaches Chris.

CHRIS
Go! Go! Go!

Bullets rip open Chris's stomach. Toraidio turns.

Somes, in the shadows, reloads.

Toraidio runs up the mule trail.

TOM
Chris! Hang on!

Victor spots the moving Somes and unloads his clip at him. Somes fires back. The volley goes on until both men are dry.

Somes chases Toraidio, staying too low for Tom to get a bead on him.

Victor grabs the ATV's winch rope, wraps it around his waist and, using it to balance, starts to follow Toraidio's tracks down as fast as he can on his discolored leg.

Somes catches Toraidio, puts his Beretta to the boy's head.

SOMES
I'm heading out of this canyon with
no trouble! Understand me!?

Tom has no clear shot.

But Victor is on Somes from behind, knocking him to the ground. The Beretta falls into the canyon.

VICTOR
Toraidio! Run!

Toraidio takes off. Somes thrashes Victor, bloodying his face, and runs after the boy. Still Victor chases.

Toraidio realizes Somes is going to catch him. He goes off the path and starts to climb the rock in an effort to slow his pursuer. But Somes climbs after him, undeterred.

Victor will never catch up... until suddenly the winch starts to pull him.

Tom has made it back to the ATV and thrown the winch switch.

Toraidio's hand slips. Somes is about to reach him.

Victor, pulled by the winch, passes Somes and grabs Toraidio.

Somes grabs Victor's leg, stopping his ascent, then makes a lunging grab for the boy's ankle.

Victor slaps the free half of his handcuffs around Somes's wrist.

Somes looks at the cuffs, shocked, allowing Toraidio to slip out of his grasp.

VICTOR

Consider this a citizen's arrest.

Victor lets go of the rope and falls down the steep cliff, pulling Somes with him.

They bounce once off the mule trail and fall through space, landing in the scrub brush at the bottom of the canyon.

Toraidio makes it to the top of the trail, where he grabs Tom. Police and rescue vehicles head for the church. Tom waves them this way.

EXT. CANYON FLOOR - LATE AFTERNOON

Victor lays in the brush, dazed, disoriented.

Somes sits up, sees his Beretta lying nearby, and grabs it...

But now Somes realizes there are SIRENS approaching. He looks around the canyon and sees cops cuffing the Russian. Up on the ridge, EMTs bring water to the migrants.

And now Cutter's running this way, followed by a small army.

Somes hides his pistol, waves to Cutter.

SOMES

Cutter! I got him! He's been
running the whole thing... working
with... Jiminez...

CUTTER

Stop it, Somes. It's over.

Somes realizes all the guns in this canyon are aimed at him.

SOMES

Come on, Don. It's me.

Cutter's face tells him how over it really is.

CUTTER

I know it is.

Like a flash, Somes draws his pistol and turns to Victor.

BANG.

Somes falls dead. Cutter holsters his smoking pistol.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. VICTOR'S POV - DUSK

Victor flutters in and out of consciousness, vision blurring. Anything he hears is garbled. But he can make out Cynthia standing over him, fitting him with a rescue harness.

CYNTHIA

(filtered)

...hang on... little longer...

EXT. ON THE RIDGE - DUSK

Scores of PARAMEDICS and COPS take up positions on the hill.

Terrence helps paramedics wheel Chris on a gurney into a waiting ambulance. More SIREN-BLARING AMBULANCES arrive.

CUTTER

Clear a path!

Everyone -- cops, paramedics, and migrants alike -- start clearing brush from the edge of the canyon to the ambulances.

A vehicle lowers Cynthia a rope, which she secures to Victor's harness.

BACK TO VICTOR'S POV

Black flitters over the scene as the winch pulls him up.

CYNTHIA
(filtered)
...thing's gon... K...

BACK ON THE RIDGE

The harness lays Victor on the ridge's edge, where Tom and Terrence help paramedics lay him on a stretcher.

Tom wipes the war paint from his face and smears it onto Victor's. Terrence watches this, and smiles.

The paramedics lift Victor and run him towards the ambulance. Cynthia reaches the top of the mule trail and joins them.

BACK TO VICTOR'S POV

PARAMEDICS
(filtered)
...legs look pre... bad, I don't
kno...

BACK ON THE RIDGE

Toraidio, crying, runs for Victor. Victor sees the boy and reaches for him, but Toraidio can't keep up and falls to the ground.

But Cynthia sees the fallen boy, and sees Victor reaching for him as the paramedics load him into the ambulance.

Cynthia lifts Toraidio in her arms, loads him into the ambulance, then climbs in herself. The ambulance pulls away.

EXT. VICTOR'S POV - DUSK

Looking past breathing tubes, out the ambulance windows.

The mountains and mesas fade into...

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NOVEMBER - DAY

The Manhattan skyline stands against a rising sun.

Runners and fans line the streets. The New York Marathon.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NOVEMBER - DAY

Bleachers line the finish. Onlookers wait for familiar faces to clear the last hill. Cynthia and Toraidio are among them.

CYNTHIA
(pointing)
There!

Toraidio's eyes go wide. He and Cynthia cheer.

Victor clears the last hill. He's moving steady and smooth. His legs, both the real one and its new prosthetic partner, tap the course in perfect rhythm.

He sees the finish line, sees Cynthia and Toraidio in the stands.

Victor smiles.

T H E E N D