
BLOOD MERIDIAN

Adapted for Television by

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Episode Three:

Trophies Of War

Based on the Novel by

Cormac McCarthy

EXT. DRY LAKE - MORNING.

VERY WIDE: The gang is riding along the western edge of a dry lakebed.

MEDIUM-FULL: Glanton reins back on his horse. He turns in the saddle and looks east across the playa where the sun sits new-risen above the mountains.

MEDIUM: Toadvine and the kid sit their horses and look out over the lakebed.

Out on the playa, movement. The lakebed shimmers.

TOADVINE:

Sounds like a pack of hounds.

KID:

It sounds more like geese to me.

Suddenly one of the Delawares calls out and the company rushes to dismount their horses.

The men hobble their horses with loops of rope and take cover under the creosote bushes ringing the dry lake.

The kid lies on his stomach under the bushes. He watches the lakebed.

Far out on the playa, a line of mounted Apache archers emerges through the waves of heat.

The war cries of the Apaches drift across the flat and barren expanse.

The kid draws his revolver.

The riders are approaching fast, kicking up a huge plume of dust, their silhouettes quivering in the bake oven heat.

GLANTON:

(calling)

They'll swing to their right.

The Apaches do so. A flurry of arrows arches up from their mounted ranks, disappears into the glare of the sun, then reemerges and whistles down upon the company.

The first rifle cracks.

The kid levels his revolver with two hands and squeezes off shots with careful precision.

The Apaches draw near, bows flexing, horse hooves pounding.

Toadvine squints down the barrel of his rifle and fires.

A warrior jerks sideways and pitches down off his horse. The horse rides on with blood flecking its mane.

The riders pass within a hundred feet of the company, continue up the slope of the lakebed, and disappear into the desert to the north.

The kid lies under the bushes, breathing. His pistol barrel smokes.

He looks behind him. One of the American horses lies in the sand breathing steadily, multiple arrow shafts lodged in its torso. Other horses stand stock-still, seemingly unbothered by their own similar injuries.

The kid looks back out at the playa.

VERY WIDE: The warrior Toadvine shot lies in the dust.

The air grows still.

CUT TO BLACK:

MAIN TITLES

FADE INTO SCENE:

EXT. DRY LAKE - SAME.

Toadvine, Glanton and the judge walk out upon the floor of the playa. They approach the dead Apache.

The dead man lies face down in a patch of bloody sand. He wears skin boots and a pair of wide Mexican underwear.

Glanton pushes the dead man over with his boot. Sand is stuck to his eyeball and to the greasepaint decorating his naked torso. Toadvine's bullet had entered above his lower rib.

The judge picks up the warrior's musket and hands it to Toadvine. Then he kneels beside the dead man and cuts the strap of the man's tiger-skin warbag and empties the bag into the sand.

In the bag: a raven's-wing eyeshield, a rosary of fruit seeds, a few gunflints, a handful of lead rifleballs, and a madstone taken from the stomach of an animal.

The judge spreads these items across the sand with his palm, picks up and examines the madstone, and pockets it. Then he sweeps up the warrior's long black hair and unsheathes his knife and takes the man's scalp.

The three Americans rise and walk back across the lakebed to the company waiting along the shore.

J-CUT: Thunder booms.

CUT TO:

EXT. CALDERA - DUSK.

Heavy rainfall. The company rides out upon a ridge and looks down into a caldera where lies the abandoned ruins of the Santa Rita del Cobre copper mine.

Lightning flashes.

A subtitle appears:

Santa Rita del Cobre, New Mexico

Thunder booms.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA RITA DEL COBRE PRESIDIO - NIGHT.

The company sits their horses before the door of the adobe presidio, braced against the driving rain.

Glanton rides forward and pounds on the door with his rawhide-covered club.

GLANTON:

Come on out if you're white.

VOICE: (O.S)

Who's there?

Glanton spits on the ground.

VOICE: (O.S)

Who is it?

GLANTON:

Open it.

They wait. They hear the rattling of chains being drawn across the wood. The door opens inward. A man stands at the ready with a rifle. Glanton kicks his horse and the horse nudges the door open with its head and the company rides through into the compound.

CUT TO:

INT. PRESIDIO COMPOUND - THAT MOMENT

In the gray murk within, the gang dismount and tie their horses. A few old freightwagons stand about, some looted of their wheels by travelers. There is a lamp burning in one of the offices and several men stand in the door. Glanton crosses the triangle. The men step aside.

SQUATTER:

We thought you was Injins.

CUT TO:

INT. PRESIDIO OFFICE - THAT MOMENT

Glanton enters the office. One squatter remains standing. The other two crouch down around a fire built in the floor of the office. A fourth sits propped against the wall, bleeding from a bullet wound in his lower chest.

Glanton calls out into the compound.

GLANTON:

Doc. Come in here.

The company doctor, Irving, enters. He looks at the wounded man. Then he looks at the squatters.

IRVING:

What have you done for him?

SQUATTER:

Ain't done nothin'.

IRVING:

What do you want me to do for him?

SQUATTER:

Ain't asked you to do nothin'.

IRVING:

Good. Because there ain't nothin' to
be done.

From outside, a horrible groan. Glanton and Irving go out
into the courtyard.

CUT TO:

INT. PRESIDIO COMPOUND - THAT MOMENT

The snakebit horse circles the compound, swinging its swollen
head blindly about. Blood flows from a fresh bite in its
neck. One of the Delawares holds his horse by the bridle. The
horse tosses its head and stamps, teeth bared and bloody.
Irving turns back to the office. One of the squatters stands
in the doorway.

IRVING:

Why don't you shoot that thing?

SQUATTER:

Sooner it dies, the sooner it will
rot.

Irving spits.

IRVING:

It's snakebit, ain't it?

SQUATTER:

What's it look like?

IRVING:

You aim to eat it and its snakebit?

The squatter blinks dumbly. Irving shakes his head and walks
away.

JUDGE:

Who's this child?

The judge stands looking down at a twelve-year-old Mexican boy
crouched in a mud cubicle along the south wall. The squatter
shrugs and goes back inside the office. Glanton spits.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA RITA DEL COBRE - NIGHT

EXTREME WIDE: Lightning flashes and a thunderclap echoes around the caldera.

Guards have been posted atop the azotea. They unsaddle the horses and drive them out to graze and the judge takes one of the packanimals and empties out the panniers and goes off to explore the works.

INT. PRESIDIO COMPOUND - LATER.

The judge sits in the compound breaking ore samples with a hammer, the feldspar rich in red oxide of copper and native nuggets in whose organic lobations he purports to read news of the earth's origins, holding an extemporaneous lecture in geology to a small gathering who nod and spit.

JUDGE:

(to the men)

--God speaks through these bones and rocks, gentlemen.

The men argue in a murmur around the compound.

GLANTON:

Hey, judge, you can't believe these rocks.

JUDGE:

Why not?

GLANTON:

Because these rocks don't mean anything. The Bible says that this planet is only a few thousand years old.

JUDGE:

(smiling)

Books lie.

GLANTON:

God don't lie.

JUDGE:

No, He does not, and these are his words.

He holds up a chunk of rock.

JUDGE:

He speaks in stones and trees, the bones of things.

The squatters in their rags nod among themselves and are soon reckoning him correct, this man of learning, in all his speculations, and the judge encourages until they were right

proselytes of the new order whereupon he laughs at them for fools.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA RITA DEL COBRE PRESIDIO - THE NEXT MORNING

The rain has stopped, the azure sky clear.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRESIDIO COMPOUND - THAT SAME MOMENT.

Pools of water stand in the courtyard. The snakebit horse lies dead on the ground with its shapeless head stretched in the mud. The company's horses stand in the northeast corner facing the wall.

Toadvine emerges from one of the cubicles. The judge is standing in the courtyard picking his teeth with a thorn.

JUDGE:

(smiling)

Morning.

TOADVINE:

Morning.

JUDGE:

Looks fair to clear.

TOADVINE:

It done has cleared.

The judge tilts back his great hairless head and gazes up at the sky. An eagle soars overhead.

JUDGE:

So it has. So it has.

The squatters emerge from the office, blinking in the light. Glanton crosses the compound leading his horse. One of the squatters approach him.

SQUATTER:

We've decided to throw in with you
if it's all the same.

Glanton ignores him. He crosses past the man to the barracks and retrieves his gear and begins to saddle up his horse. Another squatter standing at the south wall calls out to the others. The first squatter turns and walks over. In one of the cubicles, facedown and naked, the Mexican boy. The squatters crowd into the little cubicle and stand around the body.

CUT TO:

The company, now saddled and assembled in the compound, mount their horses and ride out through the door of the presidio.

Behind them, the squatters drag the boy into the courtyard. The boy's head lolls about, his neck broken. The squatters lay him down in the mud.

As the company rides out, some turn and look back at the squatters standing around the dead boy. The squatters stare back, expressionless. No one raises a hand in farewell. The dying man in the office sings a hymn and his voice follows the company as they ride up through the dripping juniper trees and leave the ruins of the Santa Rita del Cobre behind them.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The kid sits cross-legged, working at a leather strap with an awl. Tobin watches him.

TOBIN:

You've done this afore.

The kid wipes his nose with a swipe of his greasy sleeve and turns the piece in his lap.

KID:

No.

TOBIN:

Well you've the knack. More so than me. There's little equity in the Lord's gifts.

The kid looks up at him, then goes back to his work.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

That's so. Look around you. Study the judge.

KID:

I done studied him.

TOBIN:

Mayhaps he ain't to your liking, fair enough. But the man's a hand at anything. I've never seen him turn to a task but what he didn't prove clever at it.

The kid drives the greased thread through the strap and pulls it taut.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

He speaks Dutch.

KID:

Dutch?

TOBIN:

Aye.

The kid looks up at Tobin, then back down again.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

He does for I heard him do it. We cut a parcel of crazy pilgrims down off the Llano and the old man in the lead of them he spoke right up in Dutch like we were all of us in Dutchland and the judge give him right back. Glanton come near fallin' off his horse. We none of us knew him to speak it. Asked where he'd learned it you know what he said?

KID:

What did he say?

TOBIN:

Said off a Dutchman.

Tobin spits.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

I couldn't of learned it off ten fuckin' Dutchmen. What about you?

The kid shakes his head.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

No. The gifts of the Almighty are weighed and parceled out in a scale peculiar to himself. It's no fair accountin' and I don't doubt but what he'd be the first to admit it and you put the query to him boldface.

KID:

Who?

TOBIN:

The Almighty, the Almighty.

Tobin looks across the fire at the judge.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

You wouldn't think to look at him that he could outdance the devil himself now would ye? God the man is a dancer, you'll not take that

away from him. And fiddle. He's the greatest fiddler I ever heard and that's an end on it. The greatest. He can cut a trail, shoot a rifle, ride a horse, track a deer. He's been all over the world. Him and the governor Trías they sat up 'till breakfast and it was Paris this and London that in five languages, you'd have give something to of heard them. The governor's a learned man himself he is, but the judge...

Tobin shakes his head.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

Oh it may be the Lord's way of showin' how little store he sets by the learned. Whatever could it mean to one who knows all? He's an uncommon love for the common man and godly wisdom resides in the least of things so that it may well be that the voice of the Almighty speaks most profoundly in such beings as lives in silence themselves.

Tobin looks at the kid.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

For let it go how it will, God speaks in the least of creatures.

The kid cocks his head slightly.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

No man is give leave of that voice.

The kid spits into the fire and bends to his work.

KID:

I ain't heard no voice.

TOBIN:

When it stops, you'll know you've heard it all your life.

KID:

Is that right?

TOBIN:

Aye.

The kid turns the leather in his lap. Tobin watches him.

TOBIN:

At night, when the horses are grazing
and the company is asleep, who hears
them grazing?

KID:

Don't nobody hear them if they're
asleep?

TOBIN:

Aye. And if they cease their grazing,
who is it that wakes?

KID:

Every man.

TOBIN:

Aye, every man.

The kid looks across the fire at the judge.

KID:

And the judge? Does the voice speak
to him?

TOBIN:

The judge...

He doesn't answer.

KID:

I seen him before. In Nacogdoches.

Tobin smiles grimly.

TOBIN:

Every man in the company claims to
have encountered that sootysouled
rascal in some other place.

Tobin rubs his beard on the back of his hand.

[Throughout the following sequence, Tobin's story is recounted
through flashbacks. Tobin's narration continues throughout.

Switches between the flashbacks (PAST) and the campsite
(PRESENT) are denoted in the script.]

TOBIN: (CONT'D)

He saved us all, I have to give him
that. We come down off the Little
Colorado we didn't have a pound of
powder in the company. Pound. We'd
not a dram hardly. There he set on
a rock in the middle of the

greatest desert you'd ever want to see.

CUT TO:

PAST

WIDE: The judge sits cross-legged on a lone boulder in the middle of a barren desert plain.

TOBIN:

(v/o)

Just perched on this rock like a man waitin' for a coach. Brown thought him a mirage. Might have shot him for one if he'd had ought to shoot him with.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

KID:

How come you to have no powder?

TOBIN:

Shot it up at all the savages. Holed up nine days in a cave, lost most of the horses. We were thirty-eight men when we left Chihuahua City and we were fourteen when the judge found us. Mortally whipped, on the run. Every man jack of us knew that in that godforsaken land somewhere was a draw or a cul de sac or perhaps just a pile of rocks and there we'd be driven to a stand with those empty guns. The judge. Give the devil his due.

The kid watches Tobin.

TOBIN: (CONT'D)

We'd been on the plain all night and well up into the next day.

CUT TO:

PAST, DESERT PLAIN - DAY

TOBIN:

(v/o)

The Delawares kept callin' halts and droppin' to the ground to give a listen. There was no place to run

and no place to hide. I don't know what they wanted to hear. We knew the bloody devils were out there and speakin' for myself that was already an abundance of information, I didn't need more. That sunrise we'd looked to be our last. We were all watchin' the backtrack, I don't know how far you could see. Fifteen, twenty miles. Then about the meridian of that day we come upon the judge on his rock there in that wilderness by his single self. Aye and there was no rock, just the one. And there he set. No horse. Just him and his legs crossed, smilin' as we rode up. Like he'd been expectin' us. It was like... you couldn't tell where he'd come from. Said he'd been with a wagon company and fell out to go it alone.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

TOBIN:

Davy wanted to leave him there.

Tobin watches David Brown across the campsite.

TOBIN: (CONT'D)

Didn't set well with his honor and it don't to this day.

Now Tobin looks across at Glanton. Glanton sits staring into the coals of his fire.

TOBIN: (CONT'D)

Glanton just studied him. It was a day's work to even guess what he made of that figure on the ground. I don't know to this day. They've a secret commerce. Some terrible covenant. You mind. You'll see I'm right.

CUT TO:

PAST, DESERT PLAIN - DAY

TOBIN:

(v/o)

He called for the last of two pack animals we had and he cut the straps and left the wallets to lay where they fell and the judge mounted up and he and Glanton rode side by side and soon they were conversin' like brothers.

The judge sat that animal bareback like an Indian and rode with his grip and his rifle perched on the withers and he looked about him with the greatest satisfaction in the world, as if everything had turned out just as he planned and the day could not have been finer.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

TOBIN:

We'd not rode far before he struck us a new course about nine points to the east.

Tobin breaks off the story to retrieve a hot coal from the fire and with it he lights his pipe.

He looks at the kid, he exhales a cloud of pipe smoke through his nose.

TOBIN: (CONT'D)

Now what do you reckon it was in them mountains that we set out for? And how did he come to know of it? How to find it? How to put it to use?

Tobin stares into the flames and takes a long draw at his pipe.

TOBIN: (CONT'D)

How indeed. We reached the foothills in the early evenin' and rode up a dry arroyo and pushed on I guess 'till midnight and made camp with neither wood nor water.

CUT TO:

PAST, FOOTHILLS - MORNING

TOBIN:

(v/o)

Come mornin' we could see them out on the plain to the north maybe ten mile out. They were ridin' four and six abreast and there was no short supply of them and they were in no hurry.

PAST, FOOTHILLS - NIGHT

TOBIN:

(v/o)

The judge had been up all night by what the videttes said. Watchin' the bats. He would go up the side of the mountain and make notes in a little book and then he would come back down. Could not have been more cheerful. Two men had deserted in the night and that made us down to twelve and the judge thirteen.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

TOBIN:

I gave him my best study, the judge. Then and now. He appeared to be a lunatic and then not. Glanton I always knew was mad. We left out with the first light up a little wooden draw. We were on the north slope and there was willow and alder and cherry growin' out of the rock, just little trees. The judge would stop to botanize and then ride to catch up. My hand to God. Pressin' leaves into his book. Sure I never saw such the equal to it and all the time the savages in plain view below us. Ridin' on that pan. God I'd put a crick in my neck I couldn't keep my eyes off them and they were a hundred souls if

they were one.

CUT TO:

PAST, ROCKY GROUND - NIGHT

TOBIN:

(v/o)

We come out on some flinty ground where it was all jumper and we just rode on. No attempt to put their trackers at fault. We rode all that day. We led them in the dark. There was no trail, just steep scrabbly rock. When we reached the cave some of the men thought that he meant for us to hide there and that he was for a fact daft altogether.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

TOBIN:

But it was the nitre. The nitre, you see. We left all that we owned at the mouth of that cave and we filled our wallets and panniers and our mochilas with the cave dirt and we left at daybreak.

CUT TO:

PAST, ROCKY PROMONTORY - NIGHT

TOBIN:

(v/o)

When we topped the rise above that place and looked back there was a great spout of bats being sucked down into the cave, thousands of the creatures, and they continued so for an hour or more and even then it was just that we could no longer see them.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

TOBIN:

The judge. We left him at a high pass, a little clearwater creek.

Him and one of the Delawares. He told us to circle the mountain and to return to that place in forty-eight hours. We unloaded all the containers onto the ground and took the two horses with us and him and the Delaware commenced luggin' the panniers and the wallets up that little creek. I watched him go and I said that I would never set eyes on that man again.

Tobin looks at the kid.

TOBIN (CONT'D):

Never in this world. But in those two days the judge leached out the guano with creekwater and woodash and precipitated it out and he built a clay kiln and burned charcoal in it.

When we found him him and the Delaware were settin' in the creek stark naked and they appeared to be drunk but on what none could surmise. The entire top of that mountain was covered with Apache Indians and there set he.

CUT TO:

PAST, MOUNTAIN CREEK - DAY

The judge sits in the creek beside the Delaware. All around them, huge numbers of Apaches.

The judge turns and looks at the company and smiles.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

TOBIN:

He'd ground the charcoal to a powder in the hollow of a rock, you could made some fuckin' ink of it. He lashed the bags shut and put them across the pommel of Glanton's saddle and we rode out.

CUT TO:

PAST, DESERT PLAIN - NIGHT

TOBIN:

(v/o)

It was dark when we reached the plain and we grouped and took a headcount and then we rode out. The moon was about three quarters full and waxing and we were like circus riders, not a sound, the horses on eggshells. We set out west across the desert.

PAST, LAVA FIELD - DAWN

TOBIN:

(v/o)

In all this time the judge had spoke hardly a word. So at dawn we were on the edge of a vast malpais and his honor takes up a position on some lava rocks there and he commences to give us a address. It was like a sermon but it was no such sermon as any man of us had ever heard before. Beyond the malpais was a volcanic peak and in the sunrise it was many colors and the judge pointed to that stark and solitary mountain and delivered himself of an oration to what end I know not, then or now, and he concluded with the tellin' us that our mother the earth was round like an egg and contained all good things within her. Then he turned and led his horse across that terrain of black and glassy slag, treacherous to man and beast alike, and us behind him like the disciples of a new faith.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

Tobin ashes his pipe against the heel of his boot. He looks across the fire at the judge, sitting with his broad hairless chest bared to the flames. He turns to the kid.

TOBIN:

The judge, he seemed not to take his eyes from that dead cone where it rose off the desert like a great chancre. At the foot of the mountain we drew lots and we sent two men to go on with the horses. I watched them go. One of them is at this fire tonight and I saw him lead them horses away over the slaglands like a doomed man.

The kid watches Tobin.

TOBIN (O.S.) (CONT'D):

And we were not doomed ourselves I don't reckon.

CUT TO:

PAST, VOLCANO SLOPE - DAY

TOBIN:

(v/o)

When I looked up he was already upon the slope hand and foot, the judge was, his bag over his shoulder and his rifle for alpenstock. And so did we all go. Not halfway up we could already see the savages out on the plain. We climbed on. I reckon it was midday when we reached the top. We were done in. The savages not ten miles out. I looked at the men about me and sure they didn't look much. The dignity was gone out of them. They were good hearts all, then and now, and I did not like to see them so and I thought the judge had been sent among us for a curse.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

TOBIN:

And yet he proved me wrong. At the time he did. I'm of two minds again now.

CUT TO:

PAST, VOLCANO SUMMIT - DAY

TOBIN:

(v/o)

He was the first to the rim of the cone for all the size of him and he stood gazin' about like he'd come for the view. Then he sat down with his back to that gapin' hole and he begun to scale at the rock with his knife and he called upon us to do the same. It was brimstone.

We chipped it loose and chopped it fine with our knives until we had about two pounds of it and then the judge took the wallets and went to a cupped place in the rock and dumped out the charcoal and the nitre and stirred them about with his hand and poured the sulphur in.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

TOBIN:

I didn't know but that we'd be required to bleed into it like freemasons but it was not so. He worked it up dry with his hands and all the while the savages down there on the plain drawin' nigh to us and when I turned back the judge was standing, the great hairless oaf, and he was pissin' into the mixture, pissin' with a great vengeance and one hand aloft and he cried out for us to do likewise.

Tobin shakes his head, smiling.

TOBIN: (CONT'D)

We were half fuckin' mad anyways. All lined up. Delawares and all. Every man save Glanton and he was a study.

We hauled forth our members and at

it we went and the judge on his knees kneadin' the mass with his naked arms and he was cryin' out to us to piss, man, piss for your very souls for can't you see the redskins yonder, and laughin' the while and workin' up this great mass in a foul black dough, a devil's batter by the stink of it and him not a bloody dark pastryman himself I don't suppose and he pulls out his knife and he commences to trowel it across the southfacin rocks, spreadin' it out thin with the knifeblade and watchin the sun with one eye and him smeared with blacking and reekin' of piss and sulphur and grinnin' and wieldin' the knife with a dexterity that was wondrous like he did it every day of his life. And then he watched the savages and so did we all.

CUT TO:

PAST, VOLCANO SUMMIT - DAY

TOBIN:

(v/o)

We had, I suppose an hour. We watched the savages and we watched the judge's foul matrix dryin' on the rocks and we watched a cloud that was making for the sun. One by one we give up watching the rocks or the savages either one, for the cloud did look to be dead set for the sun and it would have took the better part of an hour to have crossed it and that was the last hour we had. Well, the judge was sittin' makin entries in his little book and he saw the cloud same as any other man and he put down his

book and watched it and we did all.
 No one spoke.
 And that cloud just cut the corner
 from the sun and passed on and
 there was no shadow fell upon us
 and the judge took up his ledger
 and went on with his entries as
 before.

BACK TO:

PRESENT

TOBIN:

I watched him. Then I clambered
 down and tested a patch of the
 stuff with my hand. There was heat
 comin' off of it. I walked along
 the rim and the savages was
 ascendin' by every quarter for
 there was no route to favor on that
 bald and gravel slope. Well the
 judge closed up his little book and
 took his leather shirt and spread
 it out in the little cupped place
 and called for us to bring the
 stuff to him. Every knife was out
 and we went to scrapin' it up and
 him cautionin' us not to strike
 fire on them flints. And "Captain
 Glanton," he calls out-

CUT TO:

PAST, VOLCANO SUMMIT - DAY

JUDGE:

Captain Glanton, would ye believe it?
 Come charge that swivelbore of
 yours and let's see what manner of
 thing we have here.

Glanton crosses to the pile of black powder and charges both
 barrels of his rifle and loads two balls and starts to walk
 to the rim.

JUDGE: (CONT'D)

(nodding to the volcano
 crater)

Down the maw of that thing.

Glanton goes to the edge of the yawning abyss and points his rifle down into it and cocks the hammer and fires.

PAST, VOLCANO SLOPE - THAT MOMENT

The Apache warriors pause in their ascent as the thunderous blast echoes around the crater and rolls across the landscape.

A second rifleshot booms.

The Apaches crouch on the rocks and wait and listen, peering up toward the rim of the volcano.

They start to move again when suddenly:

Another gunshot booms. And then nine more, one after another. The Apaches watch the rim.

VERY WIDE, APACHES' POV: The judge steps into view above them waving a white linen shirt.

JUDGE:

(calling down)

All dead save me. Have mercy on me.

Tódos muértos. Tódos.

The Apaches let up a war cry and start clambering up the slope.

PAST, VOLCANO SUMMIT - THAT MOMENT

The company of Americans stands at the ready, rifles charged and loaded with the judge's gunpowder.

MEDIUM-FULL: The judge turns around to face the company.

CLOSE: The judge smiles.

JUDGE:

Gentlemen.

MEDIUM-FULL: The judge turns back to the rim, drawing his pistols from his belt one in each hand. He aims the pistols down at the Apaches and opens fire.

BACK TO:

PRESENT, MOUNTAIN CAMPSITE - NIGHT

END OF FLASHBACK.

The gunshots echo in Tobin's memory and fade. Tobin turns and looks at the kid.

TOBIN:

And that was the first time I ever saw the judge. Aye, he is a thing to study.

The kid looks at Tobin.

KID:

What's he a judge of?

TOBIN:

What's he a judge of?

KID:

What's he a judge of.

Tobin glances off across the fire.

TOBIN:

Ah, lad. Hush now. The man will
hear ye.

MEDIUM CLOSE-UP on the judge.

TOBIN: (O.S) (CONT'D)

He's ears like a fox.

CUT TO:

EXT. ASPEN WOOD - DAY

The company rides up switchbacks through an aspen forest, the little golden leaves shimmering in the breeze.

Glanton reaches up and plucks a leaf from a branch and turns it by its stem and lets it fall.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANYON TRAIL - DAY

The company rides along the rim of a steep canyon.

One of the packmules loses its footing and goes skittering off down the canyon wall, turning soundlessly in the empty air before vanishing into the chasm far below.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT MESA - DAY

The company rides through a forest of agave plants, the flowering stalks rising forty feet into the desert air.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILD VALLEY - DAY

The company descends into a valley strewn with grass huts and the remains of old cookfires. The men dismount and move among the low hovels in dead silence, Glanton and David Brown in the lead. The valley floor is littered with bones and flint arrowheads and the men see shards of clay jars and a straw doll and a broken one-stringed fiddle. Glanton and Brown approach the last of the huts and peer in through the waist-high doorway. Inside, a large dog crouches snarling against the rear wall, teeth bared and ears flat. Brown draws his pistol but Glanton puts up a hand. He drops to one knee and speaks softly to the dog.

DAVID BROWN:

He'll bite you.

GLANTON:

Get me a piece of jerky.

DAVID BROWN:

You won't man that son of a bitch.

GLANTON:

I can man anything that eats. Get me a piece of jerky.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT CAMPSITE - EVENING

The dog trots over to where Glanton squats at a council with the Delawares and David Brown and the judge. The dog lays down beside Glanton.

GLANTON:

How far?

DELAWARE:

Less than four hours south. There's a lake.

GLANTON:

Numbers?

DELAWARE:

More than a thousand. Women and children. Elders.

Glanton nods. He rises. The dog follows him as he walks out on the desert and stands looking out upon the darkness downcountry.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE SHORE - PRE-DAWN.

Toadvine and Tobin lead the company (sans Glanton, his lieutenants, and the Delawares) along the north shore of the lake. Across the black water, on the far shore, the embers of the Apache encampment's fires glow faintly. Ducks call out on the lake.

WIDE: A lone rider sits in front of them. One of the Delawares. He turns his horse silently and the company follows him up a brush-covered incline.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILLOWS ABOVE THE LAKE - MINUTES LATER

The company rejoins the rest of the party, crouched in a stand of willows a half-mile from the Apache encampment. The new riders dismount and hood their horses with blankets and sit on the ground facing Glanton.

GLANTON:

(in a low voice)
 Gentlemen, we got an hour, maybe
 more. When we ride in it's every man
 to his own.
 Don't leave a dog alive if you can
 help it.

SCALPHUNTER:

(out loud)
 How many are there, John?

GLANTON:

(hissing)
 Did you learn to whisper in a fuckin'
 sawmill?

JUDGE:

There's enough to go around.

GLANTON:

Don't waste powder and ball on
 anything that cain't shoot back. If
 we don't kill ever last soul here
 we need to be whipped and sent
 home.

The kid watches Glanton silently.

CUT TO:

INT. APACHE WICKIUP - PRE-DAWN

A seven-year-old Apache girl lies asleep in her grass wickiup
 beside her family.

In the distance, an old man cries out and is silenced. The
 sound of wings fluttering as ducks take off from the surface
 of the lake.

The girl's eyes open. She looks around at her family, all
 fast asleep on their blankets. She sits up, rubs her eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. APACHE ENCAMPMENT - THAT MOMENT

The Apache girl emerges from the shadowy doorway of her
 wickiup. She looks around the encampment. A dog barks.

Another joins in, and another. The camp begins to stir.
 Now a great chorus of dogs is howling.

Through the din, the sound of pounding hooves.

The girl peers into the pre-dawn gloom. Dark shapes move.
 The girl takes a few timid steps forward. The hoof-falls
 intensify.

Suddenly, out from the fog thunders a gang of nineteen

mounted barbarians, clubs whirling, bearing down on the camp with eyes wild with bloodlust.

A collective scream goes up from the Apaches.

The girl, terrified, turns and begins to run.

Everywhere Apaches are scrambling out of the low doorways.

The Americans ride them down, trampling them underfoot or bludgeoning them with their rawhide-covered clubs.

The Americans ride through the encampment leaving a swath of death and destruction behind them. Then they turn and come back.

A warrior steps in front of the company and raises a lance and John Glanton shoots him dead. Three others run screaming and he shoots the first two in quick succession and the third is ripped apart by half a dozen American pistol balls.

The girl is running through the camp, rounding corners blindly, dodging her fellow Apaches as they run screaming and are ridden down.

Now a number of the wickiups are on fire, the Americans moving on foot among the huts with torches blazing. Apaches stumble through the encampment on fire and the mounted Americans slay them with knives.

The girl continues on through the camp, her face streaked with ash and spattered with blood.

She rounds a corner and comes face to face with the kid.

FULL SHOT: The kid stands with his pistol outheld, the air choked with ash and smoke and embers from the inferno raging around him.

REVERSE, MEDIUM: The Apache girl stares into the kid's pistol barrel.

REVERSE, CLOSE: The kid's lip moves. He blinks.

REVERSE, FULL: The girl stands frozen. And then a rifleball punches through the center of her forehead and erupts out of the back of her skull and the girl pitches backward and hits the ground.

The kid jolts and whirls around, pistol outheld.

FULL: The judge, rifle barrel smoking, silhouetted against a wall of fire.

The two men stare at each other as the encampment burns around them.

The kid stands with his pistol leveled at the judge. His hand trembles. His eyelids flicker.

BIG CLOSE-UP: The judge stares at the kid. His eyes burn with

a terrifying ferocity.

A tear sits quivering on the kid's eyelid and then it falls and traces a path down his ash-covered cheek.

Hellfire rages in the judge's pupils. He turns slowly and walks away and is swallowed up by the flames.

The kid watches him go, shaking.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE SHORE - DAWN

The kid walks along the shore of the lake. The frothy pink water laps at his boots. The dead lie awash in the shallows and countless others are strewn along the beach. Americans wade into the lake and drag the bodies ashore and scalp them on the sand.

The kid continues down the beach.

Juan Miguel steps from between two burning wickiups and makes his way down to the lakeshore. He is skewered through with a lance and his face is very pale.

The kid approaches him and Miguel sits down gingerly in the sand.

The kid reaches out to Miguel.

GLANTON:

Get away from him!

Juan Miguel turns to look at Glanton and Glanton rides up on his horse and draws his pistol and shoots him through the head. He reholsters his weapon and stands his empty rifle upright against the saddle and holds it with his knee while he measures powder down the barrels.

VOICE: (O.S)

(in the distance)

Hey!

The horse trembles and steps back as Glanton speaks to it softly and patches two balls and drives them home. He watches a rise to the north where a band of mounted Apaches are grouped against the sky. They are a quarter mile distant, six of them, their cries thin and lost. Glanton brings the rifle to the crook of his arm and caps one drum and rotates the barrels and caps the other. He does not take his eyes from the Apaches. Glanton's rifle has set triggers and he cocks the rear one and lies his face against the cheekpiece. He reckons the drift of the wind and against the sun on the side of the silver foresight and he holds high and touches off the piece. Glanton sits immobile. The shot is flat and dead in the

emptiness and the gray smoke drifts away. The leader of the group on the rise sits his horse, then slowly pitches sideways and falls to the ground. Glanton gives a whoop and surges forward. Four men follow. The warriors on the rise have dismounted and are lifting up the fallen man. Glanton turns in the saddle without taking his eyes from the Indians and holds out his rifle, which is taken by Sam Tate who reins his horse short. Glanton's men ride on and Tate draws the ramrod for a rest and crouches and fires. The horse carrying the wounded chief falters and runs on. He swivels the barrels and fires the second charge and it plows to the ground. The Apaches rein with shrill cries. Glanton leans forward and speaks into his horse's ear. The Indians raise their leader to a new mount and riding double they flail at their horses and set out again. Glanton draws his pistol and gestures with it to the men behind and one pulls up his horse and leaps to the ground and goes flat on his belly and draws his own pistol, pulling down the loading lever and sticking it in the sand.

CUT TO:

POV: Tate looking through the scope of his rifle and aiming at the Indians in the distance.

BACK TO:

EXT. LAKE SHORE - THAT MOMENT

The horses are two hundred yards out and moving fast. Tate fires into the distance and the pony that bears the leader bucks and a rider alongside reaches and takes the reins. They attempt to take the leader off the wounded animal in mid-stride when the animal collapses. Glanton is the first to reach the dying man and he kneels with the man's head cradled between his thighs like a nurse and dispatches the other savages with his revolver. He then turns his lost eyes upward, already glazed, the capillaries breaking up. He takes out a knife.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP - LATER.

Glanton rides back to the camp at the fore of his small column with the chief's head hanging by its hair from his belt. The men are stringing up scalps on strips of leather whang and some of the dead lie with broad slices of hide cut from their backs to be used for the making of belts and harnesses. McGill, the dead Mexican has been scalped and the bloody skulls are already blackening in the sun. Glanton takes up a

lance and mounts the head upon it. He turns his horse towards the judge, who is sitting on the ground drinking water from a leather bottle. He looks up at Glanton.

JUDGE:

That ain't him.

GLANTON:

What ain't him?

JUDGE:

(nodding)

That.

Glanton turns the shaft. The head with its long dark locks swings about to face him.

GLANTON:

Who do you think it is if it ain't him?

JUDGE:

(shakes his head)

It's not Gomez. That gentleman is *sangre puro*. Gomez is Mexican.

GLANTON:

Will it pass for him?

JUDGE:

No.

Glanton looks towards the north. He looks down at the judge.

GLANTON:

You ain't seen my dog, have ye?

The judge shakes his head.

JUDGE:

Do you intend to drive that stock?

GLANTON:

Until I'm made to quit.

JUDGE:

That might be soon.

GLANTON:

That might be.

JUDGE:

How long do you think it will take those bastards to regroup?

Glanton spits on the ground.

GLANTON:

Where's your horse?

JUDGE:

Gone.

GLANTON:

Well, if you aim to ride with us you
better be gettin' another one.

He looks at the head on the pole.

GLANTON:

(to the chief's head)

You were some fuckin' kind of chief.

EXT. ENCAMPMENT - LATER.

He nudges the horse forward with his heels and rides out along the water's edge. The Delawares are wading about in the lake feeling for sunken bodies with their feet. He sits there a moment and then turns the horse and rides up through the sacked encampment. He rides warily, his pistol across his thigh. He follows the tracks coming down from the desert.

EXT. LAKE SHORE - LATER.

The gang are mounted and riding south leaving behind them on the scourged shore of the lake a shambles of blood and salt and ashes and driving before them a half a thousand horses and mules. The judge rides at the head of the column bearing on the saddle before him a strange dark child covered with ash. Part of its hair has been burned away and it rides mute and stoic watching the land advance before it with huge black eyes like some changeling. The men as they ride on turn black in the sun from the blood on their clothes and their faces and then pale slowly in the rising dust until they assume once more the color of the land through which they pass.

EXT. LAKE SHORE - DUSK

The fireblackened husks of the Apache wickiups smolder in the last purple light of day.

On the beach, the scalped bodies of the numberless dead lie sprawled in the crimson sand.

The body of Juan Miguel rests on its side, still lanced through, his left eye obliterated by Glanton's pistolball, blowflies crawling on the raw bone of his skull.

CROSS-FADE:

EXT. DESERT PLAIN CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The Americans squat around their campfires and count the scalps and string them on poles.

The judge sits cross-legged before the fire with a two-year-old Apache boy in his lap. Part of the child's hair has been

burned away and now he gazes silently about the campsite and chews a piece of jerky.

David Brown walks limping between the members of the company, an arrow shaft protruding from his thigh.

DAVID BROWN:

Boys, I'd doctor it myself but I
cain't get no straight grip.

He stops in front of the judge. The judge smiles up at him.

DAVID BROWN: (CONT'D)

Will you do her, Holden?

JUDGE:

No Davy, I won't. But I tell you
what I will do.

DAVID BROWN:

What's that?

JUDGE:

I'll write a policy on your life
against every mishap save the noose.

DAVID BROWN:

Fuck you then.

The judge chuckles.

Brown glares around the campsite.

DAVID BROWN: (CONT'D)

Will none of ye help a man?

None answer.

DAVID BROWN: (CONT'D)

Fuck all of ye then.

Brown sits on the ground and grips the arrow shaft and pushes.

His hands are slick with blood. He curses and holds his leg.

The kid stands.

KID:

I'll try her.

DAVID BROWN:

Good lad.

Brown shifts on the ground, stretching his leg toward the light of the fire. The kid kneels down beside him.

Brown removes his belt and folds it.

DAVID BROWN: (CONT'D)

Grip her stout, lad. And drive her
straight.

He puts the belt between his teeth and bites down hard.

The kid seizes the arrow shaft and pushes. Brown swears through the belt.

The kid takes a new grip and pushes again. The arrowhead punches through the other side of Brown's thigh.

The kid sits back and wipes his brow with the sleeve of his shirt.

Brown takes the belt from between his teeth.

DAVID BROWN: (CONT'D)

Is it through?

KID:

Yeah.

DAVID BROWN:

The point? Is that the point? Speak up, man.

The kid draws his knife and severs the hammered copper point from the shaft. He hands it to Brown.

Brown holds the arrowhead up to the fire.

DAVID BROWN: (CONT'D)

Stout lad, ye'll make a shadetree sawbones yet. Now draw her.

The kid pulls the arrow shaft out from Brown's thigh. Brown hisses through his teeth.

Brown lies on the ground for a moment, breathing heavily, then he sits up and tosses the arrowshaft into the fire and moves away to make his bed.

The kid returns to his blanket beside the ex priest Tobin.

TOBIN:

Fool. God will not love ye forever.

The kid looks at him.

TOBIN: (CONT'D)

Don't you know he'd of took you with him? He'd have taken you, boy. Like a bride to the altar.

Across the campsite, the judge watches the kid.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT PLAIN CAMPSITE - THE NEXT MORNING

The company is saddled up and assembled to ride out.

At the rear of the column, the kid fastens his blanket to his saddle.

He looks back toward the campsite.

Beside the ashes of the judge's fire, the Apache child lies

dead and scalped. Toadvine puts the muzzle of his pistol against the great dome of the judge's head.

TOADVINE:

Goddamn you, Holden.

JUDGE:

You either shoot me or take that away. Do it now.

Toadvine puts the pistol in his belt. The judge smiles and wipes the scalp on the leg of his trousers and rises and turns away. The kid takes a long look. And then he mounts up and follows the company out onto the desert.

WIDE, DOLLY OUT: The dead child recedes into the distance.

CUT TO:

INT. CHIHUAHUA CITY BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

The kid, newly shaved and wearing a starched collar and cravat, stares down at his plate.

Tobin sits opposite him, ripping into a greasy chicken leg.

At the head of the long banquet table sits Governor Ángel Trías. Seated to his right is the judge, dressed in a bespoke suit of unbleached linen. The two are deep in conversation.

A subtitle appears:

La Ciudad de Chihuahua

July of 1849

The Governor rises and taps his glass with a spoon. He starts to give a formal address but the Americans drown him out with calls for drink and coarse laughter and their own obscene toasts.

The bursar enters the banquet hall bearing a long canvas bag stamped with the state's insignia. The Americans welcome this entrance with a chorus of cheers and catcalls.

Glanton takes the bag and upends it onto the table. The gold coins rain down and clatter among the bones and rinds and pools of spilled drink.

Glanton divides out the gold with his knifeblade and the men rush forward to scoop up their respective shares.

At the head of the table, Governor Trías sits back down and observes this scene coolly.

CUT TO:

INT. CHIHUAHUA CITY DANCE HALL - LATER

A small band plays a quadrille and the Americans stamp about, reeling drunkenly, hand in hand with the ladies of the city. The judge dances nimbly and with an easy gentility and he is

a great favorite.

CUT TO:

INT. CHIHUAHUA CITY HOTEL - LATER

The dance has degenerated into a riot.

Fights break out, men brandishing chairlegs and candle stands and discharging their pistols with abandon.

A pair of prostitutes crash into a sideboard and go to the floor still tearing at one another's hair and clothes.

The Americans have built a bonfire outside the doors of the hotel and they hurl pieces of furniture into the blaze.

HARD CUT:

EXT. CHIHUAHUA CITY STREETS - MORNING

The streets are empty and silent. Dust blows.

The windows of the shops are boarded up.

The remains of the bonfire smolder in the street outside the hotel.

On a limewashed wall, scrawled in charcoal:

Mejór los indios

Garlands of scalps adorn the stone façade of the cathedral, the sun-dried skins clacking in the wind.

CROSS-FADE:

EXT. NACORI STREET - DAY

The company rides into the town of Nácori.

A subtitle appears:

Nácori, México

The Americans rein up in front of the cantina, dismount, and tie their horses at the rail.

Tobin stays outside to guard the horses. The rest of the company enters the cantina.

CUT TO:

INT. NACORI CANTINA - THAT MOMENT

The company files through the doorway into the dimly lit cantina.

Seated inside, around twenty Mexicans.

The Americans take seats.

The kid looks around the room at the other patrons.

STREET

Tobin stands outside the cantina.

A small party of five Mexican workers approaches across the plaza.

As they near, Glanton's dog rises up and growls.

The workers eye the dog nervously, they nod to Tobin. He

squints back at them. They mount the porch and cross to the door.

Down the street and around the corner, a firecracker pops. The workers turn and look down the street. Tobin follows their gaze.

From around the corner, a funeral procession appears, led by a juggler carrying a bundle of firecrackers under his arm. The Mexican workers stand with their backs to the door holding their hats to their chests.

Tobin looks at them, then turns and watches the procession drawing near.

CANTINA

A waiter, having just taken the Americans' drink orders, moves off through the haze of smoke.

A man standing at the bar turns slightly. The kid can see that he carries a holstered pistol.

The kid looks over at Toadvine. Toadvine is also watching the man with the gun. His hand hovers near his own pistol.

The kid reaches down and places a hand on the butt of his revolver.

A Mexican customer seated by the window sees the funeral procession come into view in the street outside.

STREET

The funeral procession is now starting to pass in front of the cantina.

The juggler takes a firecracker from under his arm.

CANTINA

The customer by the window rises and starts to walk to the door.

One of the Americans snorts and spits on the floor.

A Mexican at a nearby table mutters:

SEATED PATRON:

(subtitled in English)

Súcia escoria Americana.

{Filthy American scum.}

Toadvine, the kid, and two other Americans stand.

TOADVINE:

(subtitled in English)

¿Qué feo cabrón dijo eso?

{What ugly bastard said that?}

The Mexican customer stands up.

STREET

The juggler lights the fuse of the firecracker with the end of his cigarillo.

CANTINA

The customer opens the door.

The bang of the firecracker blasts into the cantina through the open doorway.

The entire company of Americans spring to their feet. Most head for the door, shoving the Mexican customer out of the way. The kid and Toadvine remain at the table, hands on their pistols, staring down the seated patron.

Unseen by the Americans, a drunk rises from a corner table and draws a knife. His friends call after him but he waves them away, heading for the door.

STREET

Three Americans burst through the doorway onto the porch, the judge close behind.

The judge looks over the heads of the Americans and Mexican workers. He holds up a hand to halt those behind him.

The pallbearers are passing in front of the cantina carrying a bier. Inside, the body of a young woman.

JUDGE:

It's a funeral.

Another firecracker explodes in the street.

The Mexican drunk with the knife sinks the blade deep into the back of an American named Grimley.

Grimley puts a hand on the doorframe.

GRIMLEY:

(weakly)

I'm killed.

The judge draws his belt pistol and levels it above the heads of the men and shoots the drunk through the middle of the forehead.

CANTINA

The drunk falls backward into the cantina, blood spurting from the bullethole in his head.

Grimley turns in the doorway and the men in the cantina see the knife protruding from his back.

Instantly, the kid and Toadvine draw their pistols and open fire.

The kid shoots the seated patron through the face and then unloads on the other men at the table.

Toadvine turns his pistol on the armed man at the bar. The

man pulls his revolver clear of its holster and Toadvine's first bullet shatters the knuckles of his right hand and the second sends him to the floor.

STREET

Inside the cantina, the Americans' pistols roar uninterrupted. The doorway is rapidly filling with smoke. The Mexican workers draw knives and the judge and the other three Americans on the porch back away toward the open doorway.

CANTINA

Most of the Mexican patrons lie strewn about the smoke-filled room, blood draining onto the packed clay floor and dripping down the walls.

The remaining survivors make for the light of the doorway.

There, silhouetted and backlit, stands the judge.

The first of the survivors swipes at the judge with his knife but the judge sidesteps and seizes the man's arm and snaps it and picks the man up by his head.

The judge puts the man up against the wall and smiles at him. Blood runs between the judge's fingers and over his hands and there is a sickening wet crunch and the judge releases the man and he slides to the floor and does not move.

A barrage of gunfire and the last of the survivors collapse in the doorway.

A ringing silence falls upon the room. The cloud of gunsmoke swirls.

The judge steps to the door and calls across the wall of bodies to Tobin.

JUDGE:

The laggards, Priest, the laggards.

STREET

Three of the Mexican workers are sprinting down the street and two others are running across the plaza.

Tobin steps from between the horses and levels his pistol in two hands and begins to fire.

The two men in the plaza drop and Tobin swings the pistol around and shoots the three in the street, one after another. The last man falls dead in a doorway.

Tobin draws the other pistol from his belt and turns and looks up the street and then across the plaza for any sign of movement. All is still.

CANTINA

The judge steps back from the doorway and turns to face the room.

The Americans stand looking at one another. Then they all look at Glanton.

Glanton passes his eyes across the room. He walks to a table and retrieves his hat and sets it on his head and squares it. He looks at the company.

GLANTON:

Hair, boys. The string ain't run on this trade yet.

CUT TO:

EXT. NACORI STREET - LATER

WIDE: The Americans ride out up the street, their dripping trophies strung on poles.

The horses and riders disappear into the dust.

HOLD. The sound of pounding hooves fades into the distance.

SLOW PAN AROUND to the plaza. The dust settles over the scalped bodies of the two dead men.

After a long moment, doors open around the plaza and the residents step cautiously into view.

They approach the cantina.

REVERSE: The cantina. SLOW DOLLY IN toward the doorway.

An old man emerges from the gloom within, scalpless and holding a gunshot wound in his chest.

One of the residents walks up and lays a hand on his shoulder.

RESIDENT:

A dónde vas?

OLD MAN:

A casa.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT CAMPSITE - NIGHT.

The judge cracks open the shinbone of an antelope with the back of an axe. The marrow drips onto the ground.

The men watch him from their places around the fire.

GLANTON:

How far do you make them?

Holden shakes his head.

JUDGE:

They've made half a day on us. They number no more than twelve, fourteen.

They won't send men ahead.

GLANTON:

How far are we from Chihuahua City?

JUDGE:

Four days, maybe three. Where's Davy?

GLANTON:

(to Brown)

How far to Chihuahua, David?

Brown stands with his back to the fire and nods.

DAVID BROWN:

If that's them, they could be there
in three days.

GLANTON:

You reckon we can overhaul them?

DAVID BROWN:

I don't know. Might depend on whether
they figure us to be after them.

Glanton turns and spits into the fire. The judge raises one
arm and pursues something in the pit of it with his fingers.

JUDGE:

If we can be off of this mountain by
daylight, I believe we can overtake
them. Otherwise we had better make
for Sonora.

DAVID BROWN:

They may be from Sonora.

GLANTON:

Then we'd better go get them.

DAVID BROWN:

We could take these scalps to Ures.

The fire sweeps along the ground, then rises again.

JUDGE:

We'd better go get them.

EXT. MEXICAN CAMPSITE - MORNING.

The company rides out towards a campsite.

A subtitle appears:

Twenty miles outside of Chihuahua City
For a while, they ride almost parallel toward the gates of the
city, the two parties bloody and ragged, the horses stumbling.
Glanton calls out to them.

GLANTON:

(subtitled in English)

Ríndete, ríndete!

{Surrender, surrender!}

The Mexicans ride on. Glanton draws his rifle. They are shambling along the road like dumb things. Glanton pulls up his horse and it stands with its legs spread and its flanks heaving and he levels the rifle and fires. The Mexicans are, for the most part, no longer even armed. There are nine of them and they halt and turn and then they charge across the intermittent ground of rock and scrub and are shot down in the space of a minute.

The horses are caught and herded back to the road and the saddles and trappings cut away. The bodies of the dead have been stripped and their uniforms and weapons burned along with the saddles and other gear and the Americans dig a pit in the road and bury them in a common grave, the naked bodies with their wounds like the victims of surgical experimentation lying in the pit gaping sightlessly at the desert sky as the dirt is pushed over them. They trample the spot with their horses until it looks like the road again and the smoking gunlocks, saber blades and girthrings are dragged from the ashes of the fire and carried away and buried in a separate place and the riderless horses hazed off into the desert and in the evening the wind carries away the ashes and the wind blows into the night.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHIHUAHUA CITY - NIGHT.

They enter the city haggard, filthy and reeking with the blood of the citizenry for whose protection they have contracted.

CUT TO:

EXT. GOVERNOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT.

The scalps of the slain villagers are strung from the windows of the governor's house and the partisans are paid out of all but exhausted coffers and the Sociedad is disbanded and the bounty rescinded.

CUT TO BLACK.

BLACK

A subtitle appears:

One week later

FADE INTO SCENE:

EXT. CHIHUAHUA CITY - DUSK.

The governor posts a notice on a noticeboard.

GOVERNOR:

(in Spanish, subtitled)

¡Ocho mil pesos por la cabeza de este
americano!

{Eight thousand pesos for this
American's head!}

Todas las partes serán pagadas en su
totalidad.

{All parties will be paid in full.}

A gang of horsemen ride out on the north road along with
parties bound for El Paso, but before they are even quite out
of sight of the city they have turned their mounts to the west
and they ride infatuate and half fond toward the red demise of
the day, toward the evening lands and the distant pandemonium
of the sun.

PAN UP slowly to the sky and--

CUT TO BLACK.
END OF EPISODE THREE.