

TEXAS RUN

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FADE IN:

EXT. COW PASTURE - NIGHT

On a dark screen, we hear teenage boys talking.

BOY #1
Hurry up, light it.

AUSTIN CONNOLLY
I will! Stand back!

CLOSE ON A MATCH HEAD - scratches a rock and ignites, it flares brightly, then touches the end of a FUSE. The fuse catches and SPARKLES towards a large MEXICAN FIRECRACKER the size of a quarter stick of dynamite.

AUSTIN CONNOLLY, 15, runs and stands with five other BOYS a safe distance away.

KABOOM! - THE FIRECRACKER EXPLODES.

A BLINDING WHITE FLASH - illuminates the LOOK OF AWE on the BOYS FACES. Some have their FINGERS in their EARS.

BOYS CHEER!

BOY#1
Austin, light another.

AUSTIN
That was my last one.

BOYS
Aww.

AUSTIN
We'd better head back.

TRACKING - Austin Connolly leads the boys as they walk towards a brightly illuminated barn. Festive MUSIC and LAUGHTER emanate from inside.

SUPERIMPOSE: TEXAS, JULY 4, 1850

INT. CONNOLLY FAMILY BARN - NIGHT

An Independence Day celebration is in progress. The barn's walls are decorated in red, white and blue garlands. A large Texas flag is displayed over the entrance.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

a) TOWN FOLK dance to a FIDDLER, BANJO PICKER and a GUITAR PICKER - who SMILES and WINKS at an admiring TEENAGE GIRL.

b) CHILDREN run through the crowd playing tag.

c) WOMEN sit gossiping behind a Potluck table.

d) MEN stand around smoking and conversing.

e) Two OLD TIMERS laugh and pass a whiskey jug.

BILLY COLE, 15, sits, watching everybody else dance. He is half Mexican/half Irish, with dark features and green eyes. The orphan son of a Mexican prostitute, Billy has spent most of his arduous life working for Austin Connolly's, father, BOYD CONNOLLY the owner of the areas largest cattle ranch, the "SHAMROCK."

COLEEN McCULLOCH, 16, The prettiest school girl in town, dances by, the song ends. She curtsies to her partner, then walks over and sits beside Billy.

COLEEN

Hi Billy.

BILLY

Hi.

Coleen knows she is pretty and could have her pick of any suitor, but... she has a crush on Billy.

COLEEN

Will you dance with me?

BILLY

I don't know how.

COLEEN

It's easy, I'll teach you.

Coleen stands, extends her hand, Billy rises.

COLEEN (cont'd)
 Just take hold of my hand and place
 your other hand here. Now, start
 with your left foot. Ready?

The band plays a waltz, off they go, a little clumsy at first but Billy swiftly gets the rhythm.

INT. BARN / CONNOLLY'S TABLE

RIP CONNOLLY, 20, Austin Connolly's big brother, has his FOOT on the table, displaying his new rattlesnake BOOTS to Austin and their middle brother TRAVIS CONNOLLY, 16.

RIP
 (boasting)
 I traded Grampa's broken pocket
 watch to some fool Mexican down
 in Matamoros.

Rip strikes a match across the sole and lights a cigarette.

Austin and Travis stare in admiration.

Billy and Coleen dance by, the boys conversation stops.

TRAVIS
 She sure is pretty.

RIP
 Why is she dancing with Billy Cole?

AUSTIN
 She looks happy.

RIP
 That's because she's never had the
 opportunity to dance with a 'real
 man.'

BOYD CONNOLLY, the patriarch of the family, joins the group. He is a large, no nonsense father figure with a commanding presence.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 Evening boys.

BOYS
 Good evening father.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 What are you young men up to?

TRAVIS

Rip was gonna' show us how a
'real man' sweet talks a gal.

RIP'S P.O.V. - Coleen and Billy finish their dance then sit
down together.

RIP

(Cocky)

Watch and learn boys.

Rip takes a sip from a flask, straightens himself, winks at
his brothers then walks directly to the couple, interrupting
their conversation, ignoring Billy.

RIP (cont'd)

(sweetly)

Coleen, might I be so daring as
to request your company on the
dance floor.

COLEEN

(sincerely)

My apologies Rip, but I have had
sufficient activity this evening
and prefer to rest for a bit.

Rip is stunned by her refusal. He glares at Billy who looks
down, avoiding eye contact. Rip turns and walks back to the
table where his father and brothers are watching.

TRAVIS

Ha! You sure dazzled her with
your manly charm.

RIP

She said she was fatigued and
needed repose.

TRAVIS

Ha! She appears to be wide awake
for Billy Cole.

AUSTIN

Travis, Let it go.

BOYD CONNOLLY

Son, that filly is blossoming into
fine breeding stock. I'd never allow
a cockerel like Billy Cole to pilfer
a chick out of my hen house. But... in
this life, you must learn to seize
opportunity when it is presented.

(MORE)

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)

(sighs)

A "real Man" would climb back on that pony and ride.

INT. BARN / BILLY AND COLEEN - NIGHT

COLEEN

Shall we step outside. The moon is splendid tonight.

Coleen walks swiftly out of the barn, Billy follows her.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT - TRACKING

They stroll along, gazing at the stars, enjoying the warm summer night.

Billy is surprised when Coleen takes his hand and leads him to a willow tree by the river bank. She sits in the tall grass. Billy follows and sits.

COLEEN

Kiss me Billy.

Coleen leans towards Billy and purses her lips. Billy hesitates, then meets her halfway. Their lips gently touch for an instant.

Coleen lays back, her smile glowing in the soft moonlight.

Billy wants more. He bends down and kisses Coleen's lips - a little longer this time.

We feel the heat Coleen is radiating, her heart pounding, her breath hot and wet.

Coleen takes Billy's hand and guides it to her breast.

Billy's eyes widen.

Coleen lifts her petticoat.

KATHLEEN

(whispers)

Billy, put it inside me,

Billy is taken by surprise. Can this be happening?

Billy swiftly unbuttons his trousers and slides them down to his knees.

As he enters Coleen, she lets out a STIFLED CRY, then embraces Billy with vigorous strength, moving in a fierce rhythm, clutching him so tightly, Billy couldn't break free if he wanted to.

BOYD CONNOLLY'S FIREWORKS EXPLODE IN THE SKY ABOVE THEM.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT - LATER

Billy and Coleen lie sleeping under the willow tree.

CLOSE ON A RATTLESNAKE BOOT - kicking Billy in his flank.

BILLY

Uhhh!

Rip Connolly stands over him. Travis and Austin are there. Rip appears to be angry drunk.

RIP

Damn half breed.

Rip tries to stomp Billy again but Billy is fast. He scrambles to his feet.

Billy and Rip face off.

Coleen attempts to run to Billy but Austin holds her.

AUSTIN

(concerned)

Stay out of this, you'll get injured.

COLEEN

(shouting to Rip)

Leave us alone!

Rip is six feet tall, a grown man. Billy is a gangling teenager. He is forcefully backed to the river's edge.

RIP

I think I'll cut his huevos off so he never comes close to a white woman again."

Rip pulls an abalone handled hunting knife.

Billy back steps into the river.

COLEEN

Please don't hurt him!

Rip hesitates at the river's edge. Billy is standing knee deep in water.

TRAVIS

(taunting)

What's the matter Rip, you
afraid of getting your fancy
boots wet?

AUSTIN

Leave him Rip, he ain't worth
it.

RIP

Be quiet little brothers while
I geld this half breed.

Rip takes a step and slips in the mud, arms waving for balance. He clutches Billy's arm for support. Billy jerks his arm away. As Rip goes down, Billy reaches and pulls Rip's pistol from it's holster.

Rip lands on his butt in the river's mud.

Billy holds the Colt revolver, unsure of what to do, he aims it at Rip.

COLEEN

Billy! no!

Billy hesitates, he meets Coleen's pleading eyes for a moment, then turns and disappears into the rivers blackness.

EXT. RIVER BANK - NIGHT

Rip picks himself up and brushes the mud from his behind.

RIP

That little thief stole my
Colt Walker.

COLEEN

That is most deserving, you
truculent oaf.

Rip glares at Coleen. His angry face softens.

RIP

You boys get on back.

AUSTIN

Rip-

RIP
 Goddamnit! You little shits,
 I'll beat your asses.

The younger brothers leave. Austin runs ahead to:

INT. BARN - NIGHT

BOYD CONNOLLY is smoking a cigar and laughing with a GROUP OF MEN. Austin hesitates, then discreetly approaches.

AUSTIN
 Father, I need to tell you something.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 Were you not taught to never
 interrupt when men are conversing?

AUSTIN
 (whispering)
 Father, Rip is doing something bad.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 What is Rip doing now?

AUSTIN
 He is hurting Coleen McCulloch.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 (smiling)
 Excuse me gentlemen, It seems my
 youngest son requires my urgent
 attention. I shall return directly.

TRACKING - Austin runs ahead, leading his father to:

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT

Rip is laying on top of Coleen, his hand over her mouth, forcing his knee between hers, trying to spread her legs apart.

RIP CONNOLLY
 Goddamn you girl! Stop being so
 feisty.

CLOSE ON A MASSIVE HAND - griping Rip's hair, pulling him off of Coleen and throwing him to the ground.

Rip looks terrified as Boyd Connolly stands over him.

He rises but is immediately bitch slapped by his father.

RIP
 Father, I was just -

BOYD CONNOLLY
 If I ever catch you mistreating
 a lady again, I will beat manners
 back into you with your grandfather's
 razor strop. Now git!

Rip picks up his hat and swiftly scrambles up the river bank
 and away.

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)
 Coleen dear, please forgive my son's
 rascality, he sometimes gets a trifle
 wild, but...
 (a wink and a nod)
 In a young stud, that can be a
 desirable quality. May I offer you a
 carriage ride to your home.

Coleen picks herself up - avoiding eye contact - and runs
 off.

INT. SHAMROCK RANCH HOUSE / KITCHEN - DAY

Boyd Connolly sits at a table drinking coffee and reading a
 bible.

Rip Connolly stumbles into scene, appearing hungover.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 Sit down son, I have a story I
 need to share with you.

RIP
 Yes Father.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 When I was your age, I was attending
 Boston university. I was young and
 handsome. I deflowered many a
 maiden - including your mother - but
 never did I force my will upon them
 nor declare false pledges of
 affection, unlike other cads who
 would boast about their conquests
 using these deceitful tactics. I
 found their deeds distasteful... and
 ungentlemanly.

(MORE)

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)

(beat)

Now... this girl, Coleen... her grand father is Judge Winston McCulloch, an old family friend who helped me acquire the water rights to the aquifer that enables our beef cattle to prosper and multiply.

(authoritative)

I want you to write a letter of apology to Miss McCulloch explaining how the scourge of liquor clouded your judgment and you - being a fine christian, are truly apologetic for actions caused by the demon whiskey. I want it written and personally delivered today.

RIP

Father, must I?

BOYD CONNOLLY

Son, since the day your mother left, I have strived to raise you boys to become men of virtue and principle.

Boyd Connolly pauses, sips his coffee, then takes on a more intimate demeanor.

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)

Now... your brother Travis is a bit slow, Austin is soft - he takes after your mother. You are my first born son, the strongest of our kin. When I am gone, the Shamrock will be yours.

RIP

(respectfully)

Thank you father.

BOYD CONNOLLY

But first, there are lessons in life you must learn, the most important being: Never, ever, piss on the King's boot!

(raising his voice)

Now, write the god-damn apology!

Travis and Austin enter, they appear curious about the dialogue between their father and older brother.

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)
I was explaining to your brother,
how god did not bequeath this land
of abundance to the weak. Myself
and other brave men took it!
With blood - steel - and balls!

Boyd opens his shirt and displays a thick scar on his
breast.

BOYD CONNOLLY(CON'T)
I want you boys to remember this:
(beat)
I killed an Indian with my bare hands
on this very ground we stand upon -
so us Connolly's would have
advantages never afforded to these
hicks you see around us. If there is
one truth in Texas, it is this: "If
you don't claim it, some other man
will."

Boyd Connolly rises and exits scene, leaving Rip sitting,
rubbing his aching head.

SUPERIMPOSE: MEXICO, TEN YEARS LATER

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

On a hill, facing southwest, sits a humble two room ranch house. CHICKENS and PIGS roam free, a vegetable GARDEN blooms, HORSES graze in a small pasture.

Billy Cole, 25, now a grown man, lean and muscular, pumps water into a raised wooden barrel shower attached to rear of his ranch house.

Billy's wife, CAMILLA, sits in the nearby shade. Their son ELADIO, 5, sits between her legs as she trims his hair with a knife.

Camilla is deaf.

NOTE: All interaction between Billy, Eladio and Camilla will be in sign language / subtitled, indicated by being enclosed in brackets.

Billy tosses a PEBBLE that lands by Camilla's feet. She looks up.

BILLY
[Camilla come, I need your help]

Camilla stands laboriously. We see she is pregnant showing a good sized baby bump. She and Eladio join Billy.

Billy points to the bottom of the barrel shower.

Camilla and Eladio look up. Billy pulls a rope, the rain barrel pivots and empties it's chilly contents on all three.

Camilla is shocked! She angrily pounds on Billy's chest.

Eladio laughs.

Billy spits a fountain of water on Camilla, then takes her hand and HUMMS a MEXICAN FOLK SONG as they dance in the mud.

Camilla gives in and smiles.

NITA, their mongrel dog, lying in the shade, barks happily,

A HEN approaches and has a drink of water.

JESUS GUERRERO, 50, Camilla's father, smiles as he watches from the side.

Two MEN, driving a small herd of CATTLE, approach.

Billy and Jesus go to greet them.

JESUS
Bien dia senior MORELOS.

MORELOS
Bad news mi amigos. The governor
is demanding one half of all cattle
as a tax. An official will be coming
to inspect yours tomorrow.

BILLY
(Innocently)
How can they seize our cattle
without paying?

MORELOS
(Shrugs)
The Army must eat.

Senior Morelos produces a POSTER - WANTED BEEF CATTLE, \$22
IN GOLD.

MORELOS (cont'd)
There is a man in Texas buying
livestock. I cannot go, but If you
will take half of my cattle to sell,
I will escort your bull and cows to
Canyon Verde and hide them along with
mine.

DISOLVE TO

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - LATER

Billy and Jesus watch Senior Morelos leave with their bull
and six of their cows.

INT. RANCH HOUSE / DINNER TABLE - DUSK

Billy, Jesus and Eladio eagerly devour their supper.

Camilla seems distant, she pokes at her food on her plate.

ELADIO
Papi, do you know the difference
between a horsey and a ducky?

BILLY
 No Eladio, what is the difference
 between a horsey and a ducky?

ELADIO
 One goes quick and the other
 goes quack!

Billy laughs and scruffs Eladio's hair.

Eladio feeds a food scrap to Nita, who stands on her hind legs with her paws on the table.

CAMILLA
 (bangs on table)
 [No!]

Nita cowers.

Billy and Jesus exchange looks, something is not right.

Camilla abruptly rises and clears the table.

BILLY
 (to Eladio)
 Eladio, I have something for you.

Billy reaches into his pocket and slowly presents Eladio with a small HAND CARVED WOODEN PONY.

Eladio's eyes light up. He studies the wooden pony, grinning at the realistic craftsmanship.

ELADIO
 (excitedly)
 Papi, mi gusta.

Eladio accepts the pony, then runs and lays on his bunk galloping the pony across his pillow.

Camilla silently washes plates in a tub at the kitchen window.

Jesus lays a crude map on the table.

INSERT MAP - NORTH EAST MEXICO / TEXAS BORDER

Jesus traces their route to Texas with his finger.

Billy studies.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE / VERANDA - NIGHT - LATER

Jesus sits on a bench, under the stars, PLAYING his Spanish GUITAR, a jug of tequila by his side.

A COYOTE HOWLS in the distance.

JESUS
(calling)
Mijo, fetch SANTANA.

Billy fetches Jesus's rifle, a beautiful oiled and polished Carbine from Jesus's soldier days. Jesus pulls a bandanna from his pocket and lovingly wipes the rifles action, then gently lays it across his lap.

BILLY
You should rest Abuelo, we
have an early start tomorrow.

JESUS
The coyotes are back.

Billy places his hand on Jesus's shoulder.

BILLY
Buenos notches Jesus.

JESUS
Buenes notches Mijo

Billy exits scene. Jesus takes a drink from his tequila jug then scans the darkness, squinting his eyes.

JESUS P.O.V. - CHICKENS quietly rest in their COOP twenty yards from their ranch house.

INT. RANCH HOUSE / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Camilla and Billy lie in bed, wide awake, staring at the ceiling.

Jesus's GUITAR plays softly outside.

Billy props himself up on an elbow and turns to Camilla.

BILLY
[What is wrong?]

She turns and faces him.

CAMILLA`
 [I had a vision; Something bad
 will happen to you.]

Billy ponders her remark for a beat.

BILLY
 (smiles reassuringly)
 [No, we'll be fine.]

CAMILLA
 [Will she be there?]

BILLY
 (shrugs)
 [I don't know.]

CAMILLA
 [I fear you will see her
 again and leave us.]

BILLY
 (sincerely)
 [You and Eladio are my life.
 My life is here with you.]

Camilla smiles.

BILLY (cont'd)
 (eyes light up)
 [When I return, I will
 bring you a bag of gold.]

Camilla grins. Appearing relieved, she wraps her arms around Billy and snuggles closer, kissing his cheek then climbs atop and straddles him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY - DAWN

Camilla and Eladio stand on the veranda watching Billy and Jesus pack their horses.

The two vaqueros wear leather chaps, boots with spurs, large brimmed sombreros and long sleeve shirts.

Billy carries Rip Connolly's Colt Walker pistol in a handmade leather cross-draw holster.

Jesus slides his rifle into a scabbard strapped to his saddle, then he mounts NAPOLEON, a six year old

appaloosa.

Billy kneels to say good-bye to Eladio. He reaches into his pocket and presents Eladio with a small folding knife.

BILLY
 (intimately)
 Eladio, this was my father's one possession given to me by my mother when I was your age. I want you to have it.

Eladio beams.

BILLY (cont'd)
 Keep it clean and oiled until I return. It is very sharp so be careful.
 (seriously)
 Eladio, while I am away, you are the "Man of the House."

ELADIO
 Si Papi.

BILLY
 Protect and obey your Mother.

ELADIO
 Si Papi

Billy scruffs Eladio's hair, Eladio hugs his father's thigh with all his might and does not let go.

Billy takes a half step, dragging Eladio with him.

BILLY
 (laughing)
 Eladio, I must go.

Eladio reluctantly releases his hold, Billy turns to leave but is blocked by Camilla standing before him, a serious look on her face.

She removes her SAINT CHRISTOPHER MEDAL from her neck and places it around Billy's.

CAMILLA
 [Regreso a mi.]

Billy nods, gives Camilla a hug, then mounts his horse.

With a tip of his hat, Billy, Jesus and Nita set out with their herd of fifteen cattle and five horses.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

The two Vaqueros are in fine spirits as they travel easily on.

- END PART ONE -