

TEXAS RUN

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TEXAS RUN

On a BLACK SCREEN, we hear YOUNG BOYS talk.

TRAVIS CONNOLLY
Hurry up, light it.

AUSTIN CONNOLLY
I will, Stand back!

FADE IN:

EXT. COW PASTURE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON A MATCH HEAD - ignites and flares brightly, touches the end of a FUSE and burns towards a large MEXICAN FIRECRACKER the size of a quarter stick of dynamite.

Twin brothers, AUSTIN and TRAVIS CONNOLLY, run and stand 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!

TRAVIS
Light another.

AUSTIN
That was my last one.

Austin, Travis and the boys walk towards a brightly illuminated barn. Festive MUSIC and LAUGHTER emanate from inside.

SUPERIMPOSE: TEXAS, JULY 4, 1850

INT. BARN - NIGHT

An Independence Day celebration is in progress. Red, white and blue garlands line the walls. A massive Texas flag is proudly displayed at the far end.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

- a) TOWN FOLK dance to a FIDDLER, BANJO PLAYER and a GUITAR PICKER.
- b) The guitar picker smiles and winks at an admiring TEENAGE GIRL.
- c) CHILDREN run through the crowd playing tag.
- d) WOMEN sit and gossip behind a Potluck table.
- e) MEN stand around smoking and conversing.
- f) Two OLD TIMERS pass a whiskey jug.

BILLY BRAVO, 15, sits by the wall watching the festivities. Billy is the bastard son of a Mexican prostitute, half Irish with dark features and green eyes. He has spent most of his arduous life working at the Connolly ranch.

COLEEN McCULLOCH, 16, The prettiest school girl in town, dances past.

The song ends, she curtsies to her partner, then walks over and sits beside Billy.

COLEEN

Hi Billy.

BILLY

H-Hi.

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

The band plays a WALTZ.

COLEEN

Dance with me Billy.

BILLY

I don't know how.

COLEEN
It's easy, I'll teach you.

Coleen stands and extends her hand.

Billy rises.

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

Off they go, a little clumsy at first but Billy swiftly gets the rhythm.

INT. BARN / CONNOLLY'S TABLE

RIP CONNOLLY, 20, has his foot on the table, displaying his new rattlesnake boots.

His younger brothers Austin and Travis stare in admiration.

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

Billy and Coleen dance by.

AUSTIN
She sure is pretty.

TRAVIS
Why is she dancing with Billy Bravo?

AUSTIN
She looks happy.

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

BOYD CONNOLLY, Patriarch of the Connolly family, enters scene. 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.

Coleen and Billy finish their dance and sit down together.

RIP
Watch and learn boys.

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

RIP (cont'd)
Coleen, might I be so bold as
to request your company on the
dance floor.

COLEEN
(sincerely)
Perhaps later Rip, for now, I
prefer to sit and visit.

Rip appears stunned by her refusal. He glares at Billy who looks down, avoiding eye contact.

Rip turns and slinks back to the table where his father and brothers are watching.

TRAVIS
Ha! You sure dazzled her with
your manly charm.

AUSTIN
I think he's smitten

RIP
She said she was fatigued and
needed repose.

TRAVIS
Ha! She appears to be wide awake
for Billy Bravo.

BOYD CONNOLLY
Son, that filly is blossoming into
fine breeding stock. I'd never allow
(MORE)

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)
a cockerel like that Billy Bravo to
pilfer a chick out of my hen house.

INT. BARN / BILLY AND COLEEN - NIGHT

COLEEN
Shall we step outside. The moon is
splendid tonight.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT

Billy and Coleen stroll easily along, gazing at the stars,
enjoying the warm summer night.

COLEEN
Come with me.

Coleen takes Billy's hand and leads him to a willow tree by
the river bank.

She sits in the tall grass.

Billy sits next to her.

Coleen leans towards Billy.

COLEEN (cont'd)
Kiss me Billy.

She purses her lips.

Billy hesitates, then meets her halfway. Their lips gently
touch for an instant.

Coleen lays back. We feel the heat she is radiating, her
smile glows in the moonlight.

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

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

Billy's eyes widen.

Coleen looks up at Billy with loving eyes.

COLEEN (cont'd)
(breathless)
Billy, put it inside me,

She lifts her petticoat.

Billy is taken by surprise. Can this be happening?

He swiftly unbuttons his trousers and slides them down to his knees. As he enters Coleen, she lets out a STIFLED CRY, then vigorously embraces Billy.

Boyd Connolly's FIREWORKS EXPLODE in the sky above them.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT - LATER

Billy and Coleen lie sleeping under the willow tree.

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

BILLY

Uhhh!

Rip Connolly, drunk and angry, stands over him. Travis and Austin stand off to the side.

RIP

Damn half breed.

Rip tries to stomp Billy again but Billy scrambles to his feet.

Billy and Rip face off. Rip is six feet tall, a grown man. Billy is a gangling teenager.

Rip forcefully backs Billy to the river's edge, then draws an abalone handled hunting knife from a leather sheath attached to his belt.

RIP (cont'd)

(playfully)

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

Billy back steps into the river.

Coleen attempts to run to Billy.

Austin holds her in a bear hug.

AUSTIN

Stay away, you'll get injured.

COLEEN
(shouts)
Leave us alone!

Billy stands knee deep in water.

Rip hesitates at the river's edge.

TRAVIS
(taunts)
What's the matter Rip, you afraid
you'll get 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 tentative step towards Billy and slips in the river's mud, his arms waiving for balance.

Billy reaches and pulls Rip's pistol from it's holster.

Rip goes down and lands on his butt.

Billy aims the Colt pistol at Rip.

COLEEN
Billy no!

Billy hesitates. He meets Coleen's pleading eyes.

Rip, a look of fear on his face, holds his hands out in defense.

Billy slowly lowers the pistol. He takes a last look at Coleen, then silently turns and disappears into the rivers blackness.

EXT. RIVER BANK - NIGHT

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

RIP
That little thief stole my Colt
Walker.

COLEEN
That is most deserving, you
indecorous oaf.

Rip glares angrily at Coleen.

His 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 conversing with a GROUP
OF MEN.

Austin discreetly approaches.

AUSTIN
Father, I need to tell you something.

BOYD CONNOLLY
(scolds)
Were you taught never to interrupt
men who are conversing?

Austin looks down.

Boyd Connelly, recognizes Austin's concern, he listens.

BOYD CONNELLY
What is it son?

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

BOYD CONNOLLY
What is Rip doing now?

AUSTIN
He is hurting Coleen McCulloch.

BOYD CONNOLLY

(smiles)

Excuse me gentlemen, It seems my youngest son requires my urgent attention.

Austin runs ahead, leading his father to:

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT

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

RIP CONNOLLY

Goddamn you girl! Stop being so feisty.

CLOSE ON A MASSIVE HAND - grips Rip's hair, pulls him off of Coleen and throws him to the ground.

Rip appears terrified as Boyd Connolly stands over him.

Rip starts to rise.

RIP

Father, I was just -

He is immediately bitch slapped.

BOYD CONNOLLY

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

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

Coleen weeps, uncontrollably.

Boyd Connelly - unsure how to handle this scandal - attempts to comfort her. He places his hand on her shoulder.

Colleen immediately shrugs it off.

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.

Coleen looks a Boyd Connolly with dis-belief.

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)
I mean, an able young man cannot be faulted for desiring such a beautiful young woman such as yourself.

Coleen's sobbing slows.

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)
May I offer you a carriage ride to your home.

Coleen, looks down, shakes her head.

COLEEN
(soto)
No.

BOYD CONNOLLY
Coleen dear...

She rises, holds her head high and exits scene, leaving Boyd Connolly at that SACRED SPOT, where earlier in the evening she had made love for the first time.

INT. CONNOLLY RANCH HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

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

Rip Connolly, hungover, stumbles into scene.

Boyd Connolly closes his bible.

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.

(MORE)

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)

I found their deeds distasteful... and ungentlemanly.

(beat)

Now... this girl, Coleen... her grand father is Judge Winston McCulloch, a 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.

(beat)

I want it written and personally delivered today.

RIP

Father, must I?

BOYD CONNOLLY

Son, since the day your mother left, I have striven 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, he's a bit slow, Austin is soft, he takes after your mother. You are my first born, the strongest of our kin. When I am gone, the Connolly ranch 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.

AUSTIN

Father?

BOYD CONNOLLY

I was explaining to your brother,
how god did not bequeath this land
of abundance to the feeble.

Boyd Connolly rips open his shirt and displays a thick scar
on his breast.

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)

Don't ever forget: I killed an Indian
with my bare hands on this very
ground we stand upon. I did it so us
Connolly's would have advantages
never afforded to these ignorant
hicks you see around you. 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.

- END PART ONE -

SUPERIMPOSE: MEXICO, TEN YEARS LATER

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

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

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

Billy's wife, CAMILLA, sits by a nearby shade tree. 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 you.]

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, lies in the shade and barks happily,

A HEN approaches and has a drink of water.

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

EXT. RANCH HOUSE TRAIL - DAY

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

Billy and Jesus go to greet them.

JESUS
Bien dia Senior MORELOS.

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

BILLY
How can they collect our cattle without paying?

MORELOS
(shrugs)
The Army must eat.

Senior Morelos produces a poster and hands it to Jesus.

MORELOS (cont'd)
There is a man in Texas buying
livestock.

Billy and Jesus study the poster.

POSTER - WANTED BEEF CATTLE, \$22 IN GOLD.

I cannot go, but... If you will take
these cattle to sell, I will hide
your bull and heifers with mine in
Canyon Verde.

EXT. COW PASTURE - DAY

Billy and Jesus arrive to round up the cattle.

The herd is gathered near a grove of trees on the pasture's
edge.

BILLY
The CALVING HEIFER is missing.

JESUS
(points)
There.

EXT. FORREST GROVE - DAY

Among the trees, the calving heifer lies on her side, deep
in labor.

Billy and Jesus stand a distance away and watch as the
calf's hoofs appear in a skin of membrane.

The calf's hoofs are followed by the calf's snout.

The heifer gives one final push and the newborn calf squirts
out.

The calf lies still, not moving.

BILLY
Should we help?

JESUS

No, we wait.

The heifer turns to inspect her calf, licks it vigorously, then blares out.

HEIFER

Moooo!

The calf lies still.

The heifer stands.

HEIFER (cont'd)

Mooooo.

The calf opens its eyes. It struggles to stand, wobbles sideways for a step or two, then finally finds its balance and stands.

BILLY

It's a boy!

The Heifer leaves the grove, her newborn follows. As they re-enter the pasture. The other cows approach, faces turned to inspect their newest member.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE TRAIL - LATER

Billy and Jesus watch Senior Morelos leave with their bull, two of their cows, the heifer and her newborn calf.

INT. RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

Billy, Jesus and Eladio sit at a table eating their supper.

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

ELADIO

Papi, can I go to Texas with you?

Billy laughs and scruffs Eladio's hair.

BILLY

Not this time. Someday I will take you to Texas, but for now, you must stay and protect your mother.

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 and slinks off.

Billy and Jesus exchange looks.

Camilla abruptly rises and clears the table.

BILLY
 (to Eladio)
 I have something for you.

Billy reaches into his pocket and 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
 (excited)
 Papi, mi gusta.

Eladio lays on his cot, galloping the wooden pony across his pillow.

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

Jesus lays a crude map on the table and traces their route to Texas with his finger.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE VERANDA - NIGHT

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

A COYOTE HOWLS in the distance.

JESUS
 (calls)
 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 leans it against the wall.

BILLY
 You should rest Abuelo, we
 leave 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 lies in bed, wide awake, staring at the ceiling.

Jesus's GUITAR plays softly outside.

Billy slips into bed. He 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
(smiles reassuringly)
[No, I'll be fine.]

CAMILLA
[Will she be there?]

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

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

Billy places his hand on her baby bump.

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, relieved, she wraps her arms around Billy and snuggles closer, kisses his cheek, then climbs atop and straddles him, making soft COOING NOISES.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE VERANDA - NIGHT

Jesus plays his guitar, he hears Camilla's cooing, looks towards the bedroom and smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY - DAWN

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

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

Billy carries Rip Connolly's Colt Walker pistol in a tanned 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 your grand
 mother when I was your age. I want
 you to have it.

Eladio beams.

BILLY (cont'd)
 Keep it clean and oiled. It is very
 sharp so be careful.

He places his hand on Eladio's shoulder.

BILLY (cont'd)
 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 stands.

Eladio looks up to his father and clings to his thigh.

Billy takes a half step and drags Eladio with him.

BILLY
 (laughing)
 Eladio, I must go.

(beat)

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, hugs Camilla one last time, then mounts his
 horse.

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

- END PART TWO -

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