

TEXAS RUN

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TEXAS RUN

A BLACK SCREEN

SUPERIMPOSE: TEXAS, July 4, 1850

We hear TEENAGE BOYS talk.

TRAVIS CONNOLLY
(excited)
Hurry up, light it.

AUSTIN CONNOLLY
I will, Stand back!

FADE IN:

EXT. COW PASTURE - NIGHT

A MATCH HEAD ignites, flares brightly, then touches the end of a FUSE. The fuse ignites and SPARKLES 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 boy's faces. Some have their FINGERS in their EARS.

BOYS CHEER!

TRAVIS
Austin, light another.

AUSTIN
That was our last one, we'd better head back.

BOYS
Aw.

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

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.

TOWN FOLK DANCE to a FIDDLER and a BANJO PLAYER who smiles and winks at an admiring TEENAGE GIRL.

CHILDREN gleefully run through the crowd playing tag.

WOMEN sit, gossiping behind a Potluck table.

MEN stand around smoking pipes and conversing.

TWO OLD TIMERS pass a whiskey jug.

BILLY BRAVOS, 15, sits by the wall watching the festivities. Billy is the orphaned son of a Mexican prostitute, half Irish with dark features and green eyes, a lowly stable hand at the massive CONNOLLY RANCH.

KAY-LYNN McCULLOCH, 16, The prettiest school girl in town, dances past.

The song ends. Kay-Lynn curtsies to her enamored DANCE PARTNER, who bows and waits for another dance.

Kay-Lynn sees Billy sitting alone. She ignores her dance partner and sits beside him.

KAY-LYNN
Hi Billy.

BILLY
H-Hi.

Kay-Lynn is confident she could have her pick of any suitor, but...she has a crush on Billy.

The band plays a WALTZ.

KAY-LYNN
Dance with me Billy.

BILLY
I don't know how.

KAY-LYNN
It's easy, I'll teach you.

BILLY
(smiles and shakes
his head)

No.

Kay-Lynn stands and extends her hand.

KAY-LYNN
Please, for me.

Billy processes her request. How can he say no to Kay-Lynn McCulloch?

He cautiously rises.

KAY-LYNN (cont'd)
Just take my hand and place your
other hand here.

She guides his hand to the small of her back.

KAY-LYNN (cont'd)
Count, one-two-three, one-two-three.
Start with your left foot. Ready?

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

KAY-LYNN (cont'd)
(sings to Billy)
"Green grow the Lilacs all covered
with dew"

Billy smiles.

INT. BARN - CONNOLLY TABLE

KIT CONNOLLY, the eldest of the Connolly brothers, tall, handsome and cocky, displays a revolver to his younger brothers Travis and Austin.

KIT
General Lane himself presented this
Walker Colt to father. Father said it
would be mine when I turned twenty
years old.

The younger brothers stare in admiration.

KIT (cont'd)
Look at the engraving, it killed
Mexicans at the battle of Angostura.

Billy and Kay-Lynn dance by.

TRAVIS
 (excited)
 Kit, Kit, there's Kay-Lynn McCulloch.

Kit turns to watch.

KIT
 Why is she dancing with Billy Bravos?

TRAVIS
 She looks happy.

KIT
 Well, she's never danced with a "real man."

The songs ends.

Billy and Kay-Lynn sit down together.

KAY-LYNN
 You look very handsome tonight.

Billy smiles shyly. He wears his best work shirt and a Bolo Tie made from a strip of rawhide. His worn cowboy boots are clean and polished.

INT. BARN - CONNOLLY TABLE

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

The band plays a lively uptempo song.

KIT
 (Cocky)
 Watch and learn boys.

Kit takes a sip from a silver flask, straightens himself, winks at his brothers, then walks directly to Billy and Kay-Lynn, interrupting their conversation, ignoring Billy and giving Kay-Lynn his best smile.

KIT (cont'd)
 Kay-Lynn, might I be so bold as to request your company on the dance floor.

KAY-LYNN
 (smiles politely)
 Perhaps later Kit. I'm visiting with Billy now.

Kay-Lynn turns her attention back to Billy.

Kit stands, stunned by her refusal.

He glares at Billy who looks down, avoiding eye contact.

Kit walks back to the table where his father and brothers are watching.

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

KIT
 She said she was fatigued and needed repose.

TRAVIS
 Ha! She appears wide awake for Billy Bravos.

AUSTIN
 I think he's smitten.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 Son, that filly is blossoming into fine breeding stock. I'd never allow a cockerel like Billy Bravos to pilfer a chick out of my hen house.

BILLY AND KAY-LYNN

KAY-LYNN
Shall we step outside. The moon is
splendid tonight.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT

Billy and Kay-Lynn stroll along, gazing at the stars,
enjoying the cool summer air.

Kay-Lynn reaches and takes Billy's hand.

KAY-LYNN
Come with me.

She leads him to a willow tree by the river bank and sits
down in the tall grass.

Billy follows and sits next to her.

They sit in silence for a beat.

KAY-LYNN (cont'd)
Billy, do you think I'm pretty?

BILLY
Y-Yes.

Kay-Lynn turns and leans towards Billy.

KAY-LYNN
Kiss me Billy.

She purses her lips.

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

Kay-Lynn lays back in the tall grass, her smiling face glows
in the soft moonlight.

Billy bends down and tenderly kisses Kay-Lynn's lips, softer
and longer this time.

Kay-Lynn takes Billy's hand and presses it to her breast.

Billy's eyes widen, a look of youthful innocence on his
face.

KAY-LYNN - looks up at Billy.

KAY-LYNN (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, slides them down to his knees and gently lays on top of her.

KAY-LYNN (cont'd)
 Let me...

Kay-Lynn reaches down and guides him.

As he enters Kay-Lynn, she lets out a STIFLED CRY, then embraces Billy with all of her strength, her eyes closed, a look of ecstasy on her face.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT - LATER

Kay-Lynn and Billy lie sleeping under the willow tree.

CLOSE ON A COWBOY BOOT - Kicks Billy in his flank.

Billy wakes to see Kit Connolly, drunk and angry, standing over him.

Travis and Austin stand off to the side.

KIT
 God Damn half breed.

Kit attempts to stomp Billy but Billy scrambles to his feet.

KIT (cont'd)
 What the hell you doing?

BILLY
 I-

KIT
 You don't go near her. Ever!

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

They face each other.

KIT (cont'd)
 I want you off of our ranch.

Billy is stunned.

BILLY

I-

KIT

(screams)

Quiet!

Kit draws a fancy abalone handled hunting knife from a leather sheath attached to his belt. He turns to Austin and Travis.

KIT (cont'd)

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

Billy stares at the KNIFE BLADE GLINTING in the moonlight. He back steps into the river.

Kay-Lynn attempts to run to Billy.

Austin holds her in a bear hug.

AUSTIN

Stay out of this ruckus, you'll get injured.

KAY-LYNN

(shouts to Kit)

Leave us alone!

Billy stands knee deep in water.

Kit hesitates at the river's edge.

TRAVIS

(teases)

What's the matter Kit, you afraid of gettin' your boots wet? Ha!

AUSTIN

Leave him Kit, he ain't worth it.

KIT

Be quiet little brothers while I geld this half breed.

Kit takes a tentative step, slips in the river's mud and spins sideways into Billy, waiving his arms for balance.

Billy reaches and pulls Kit's Colt revolver from it's holster.

Kit goes down and lands on his butt at the river's edge.

Billy hesitates... then aims the Colt revolver at Kit's face.

Kit holds his hands out in defense.

KIT (cont'd)
No! Wait! Wait!

KAY-LYNN
Billy! No!

Billy meets Kay-Lynn's pleading eyes.

They share a moment.

Billy slowly lowers the pistol. He tucks it into his waistband, turns and disappears silently into the rivers blackness.

EXT. RIVER BANK - NIGHT

Kit picks himself up and wipes the mud from his rear end.

KIT
That little thief stole my Colt Walker.

KAY-LYNN
That is most deserving, you indecorous oaf.

Kit glares angrily at Kay-Lynn, then... his face softens.

KIT
You boys get on back.

AUSTIN
Kit-

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

Austin and Travis leave.

Austin runs ahead to:

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Austin scans the room and spots Boyd Connolly conversing with a GROUP OF MEN. He hesitates... then discreetly approaches and tugs on his father's coat. Boyd Connolly stops his conversing and turns to Travis,

AUSTIN
 Father, I need to tell you something.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 (scolds)
 You were taught never to interrupt
 when men are conversing.

Austin looks down.

Boyd Connolly turns back to the group of men.

Austin stands there... uncertain.

Boyd Connolly tells an indistinguishable punchline. The men
 LAUGH.

Austin tugs Boyd Connolly's coat again.

AUSTIN
 Father...

Boyd Connolly turns to Austin.

BOYS CONNOLLY
What? What is so damn important?

Austin is speechless.

Boyd Connolly recognizes Austin's concern.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 (softens)
 What is it son?

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

BOYD CONNOLLY
 What is Kit doing now?

AUSTIN
 He is hurting Kay-Lynn McCulloch.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 (smiles to the men)
 Excuse me gentlemen.

They exit the barn, Austin runs ahead, leading his father to:

EXT. RIVERSIDE - NIGHT

Kit is on top of Kay-Lynn, his hand over her mouth, attempting to force his knee between hers, trying to spread her legs apart.

KIT CONNOLLY
 Goddamn you girl! Stop being so feisty.

A MASSIVE HAND - grips Kit's hair, pulls him off of Kay-Lynn and throws him to the ground.

Kit looks up, terrified, as Boyd Connolly stands over him.

Kit attempts to rise.

KIT
 Father, I was just-

Kit 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!

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

Kay-Lynn sobs uncontrollably, gasping for breath.

Boyd Connolly - unsure how to handle this scandal - attempts to comfort her.

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)
 Kay-Lynn... 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.

Kay-Lynn's sobbing slows and stops.

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)
 I mean, who could be faulted for
 desiring a beautiful young woman such
 as yourself.

(tenderly)
 My carriage is at your call, if you
 would like me to escort you home.

Kay-Lynn, looks down, shakes her head.

KAY-LYNN
 (whispers)
 No.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 Kay-Lynn dear-

She stands, raises 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 - NEXT DAY

Boyd Connolly sits at a table reading a bible.

A PLUMP MEXICAN HOUSEMAID refills his coffee cup.

Boyd Connolly GRUNTS and continues to read his bible.

The plump Mexican Housemaid exits scene.

Kit Connolly, hungover, a SCRATCH on his face, stumbles into
 scene.

BOYD CONNOLLY
 (reads aloud)
 If a man find a damsel in the field,
 and the man force her, and lie with
 her, then the man only that lay with
 her shall die:

Boyd Connolly closes his bible.

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)
 Sit down son, I have a story I need
 to share with you.

KIT
 Yes Father.

Boyd Connolly sits back, speaks slowly, choosing his words
 carefully.

BOYD CONNOLLY

When I was your age, I was attending Boston university. I was young and handsome.

(ponders)

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.

KIT

Father, I wasn't-

BOYD CONNOLLY

Now... this girl, Kay-Lynn... 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.

(beat)

I want it written and personally delivered today.

KIT

Father, must I?

BOYD CONNOLLY

Son, I have striven to raise you and your brothers as 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.

KIT
(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!
(raises his voice)
Now, write the god-damn apology!

Boyd Connolly rises to leave.

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

BOYD CONNOLLY (cont'd)
I want you boys to remember this: I
killed an Indian on this very ground
you stand upon. I did it so us
Connolly's would have advantages
never afforded to these ignorant
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 exits scene, leaving Kit sitting, rubbing his
aching head.

- END PART ONE -

MEXICO, TEN YEARS LATER

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

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

Billy Bravos, 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 spouse, CAMILLA, sits under 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 laboriously stands. She is pregnant showing a medium 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 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 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 a portion of all cattle as a tax. An official will be coming to collect ours tomorrow.

BILLY
How can they collect our cattle?

MORELOS
(shrugs)
The Army must eat.

Morelos produces a poster and hands it to Jesus.

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

Billy and Jesus study the poster.

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

MORELOS (cont'd)
I am much to old to go, but... If you will take these cattle with yours to Texas, I will hide your bull and a few heifers with mine in Canyon Verde.

EXT. COW PASTURE - DAY

Billy and Jesus ride up on horses to round up the cattle.

JESUS
The CALVING HEIFER is missing.

Jesus, flinty eyed, scans the terrain.

JESUS (cont'd)
 (points)
 There.

EXT. GROVE - DAY

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

Billy and Jesus dismount, walk softly and stand a short distance away.

A calf's hoofs appear in a skin of membrane, followed by the calf's snout.

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

The calf lies still, not moving.

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

HEIFER
 Mooooooooo!

The calf lies still.

The heifer stands.

HEIFER (cont'd)
 Mooooooooo!

The calf opens it eyes. It struggles to stand, wobbles sideways for a step or two, then finally finds it's balance.

BILLY
 It's a boy!

The Heifer slowly leaves the grove and re-enters the pasture, her newborn calf follows. The other cows approach 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, Camilla and Eladio sit at a table eating their supper.

ELADIO

Papi, I want to go to Texas with you.

Billy laughs and scruffs Eladio's hair.

BILLY

Not this time. Someday I will take you.

(serious)

When I'm away, you are the "Man of the house."

Eladio beams.

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

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.

Camilla abruptly rises and clears the table.

Jesus sips tequila from a glass.

ELADIO

Abuelo, can I try.

Jesus looks to Billy, who smiles and shrugs, "Okay."

Jesus pours tequila into his glass, then slides it to Eladio.

Eladio sniffs it, then takes a sip.

ELADIO (cont'd)

(coughs)

Ewe!

Billy and Jesus LAUGH as Eladio's face turns red and his eyes water. He swiftly gulps water.

Jesus finishes the shot of tequila with relish.

JESUS

Ahhh.

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 runs and 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, arriving at the border town where Billy once lived.

JESUS

You have enemies in Texas.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE VERANDA - NIGHT - LATER

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

A COYOTE HOWLS in the distance.

JESUS

(calls)

Mijo, fetch SANTANA.

Billy fetches Santana, Jesus's rifle, a beautiful oiled and polished Carbine. Jesus pulls a bandanna from his pocket and lovingly wipes the rifles action, then gently leans it against the wall.

BILLY

You should rest, we leave tomorrow.

JESUS
The coyotes are back.

Billy places his hand on Jesus's shoulder.

BILLY
Buenos notches Abuelo.

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 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, Eladio and our baby are my
 life. My life is here with you.]

Camilla smiles.

BILLY (cont'd)
 [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.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY - DAWN

Camilla and Eladio stand on the veranda watching 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 Kit 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 giant six year old appaloosa stallion.

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. It is very
 sharp so be careful.

ELADIO

Si Papi.

BILLY

Obey and protect your Mother.

ELADIO

Si Papi

Billy stands.

Eladio looks up to his father, then clings to his thigh.

Billy takes a half step and drags Eladio with him.

BILLY

(laughs)

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 around her neck and places it on 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 ONE -

