

TEXAS RUN

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TEXAS RUN

FADE IN

SUPERIMPOSE: MEXICO, 1860

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, lean and muscular, vigorously 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 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, smiles and embraces Billy.

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 yours tomorrow.

BILLY  
How can the government demand our cattle, what have they ever done for us?

MORELOS  
(shrugs)  
The Army must eat.

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.

MORELOS (cont'd)

I am much too 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

Jesus counts their cattle.

JESUS

The CALVING HEIFER is missing.

Jesus 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 watch from 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 bleats out.

HEIFER

Mooooooooo!

The calf lies still.

The heifer stands.

HEIFER (cont'd)

Mooooooooo!

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

BILLY  
It's a boy!

The Heifer slowly leaves the grove and re-enters the pasture followed by her newborn calf. The other cows approach to inspect their newest member.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - LATER - DAY

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, can I go to Texas with you.

Billy laughs and scruffs Eladio's hair.

BILLY  
Not this time. Someday, when you get bigger.

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.

Camilla abruptly rises and clears the table. Billy and Jesus exchange looks.

Jesus pours tequila into a cup.

ELADIO  
Abuelo, let me try.

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

Jesus slides his cup to Eladio.

Eladio sniffs it, then takes a small sip.

ELADIO (cont'd)  
(coughs)

Ewe!

Billy and Jesus break out laughing 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, me 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, Billy watches intently.

CLOSE ON MAP - Jesus traces their route to Texas with his finger.

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 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 sleep.

JESUS  
The coyotes are back.

Billy places his hand on Jesus's shoulder.

BILLY  
Buenos notches Abuelo.

Jesus pats Billy's hand.

Billy exits scene.

Jesus takes a drink from his tequila jug and scans the darkness.

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. She 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 a 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)  
 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

(serious)

Remember, when I am away, you are the  
"Man of the house," 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 Camilla stands 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.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

A SERIES OF SHOTS

- a) Billy rides point on "ANCHO," a chestnut mare he has  
raised from a foal, GINGER, their pack horse in tow.
- b) Jesus rides drag on Napoleon.
- c) Nita flushes a flock of pheasant from a bush.
- d) A maverick calf strays. Jesus reigns her in  
using a "Jineta" technique.

e) Puffy white clouds float in a blue sky.

d) Billy pours water from his canteen into his sombrero and gives Ancho a drink.

EXT. GREEN PASTURE - DAY

They stop and allow the livestock to graze.

Jesus produces tortillas from his saddle bag and hands one to Billy.

BILLY  
Gracious, Abuelo.

JESUS  
(laughs)  
You still ride like a gringo.

BILLY  
I might do better on Napoleon.

JESUS  
Napoleon will not allow anyone but myself to ride him.

BILLY  
I'll bet I could.

Jesus smiles, a twinkle in his eye.

JESUS  
Aprobado

Billy stands. He approaches Napoleon.

The giant stallion towers over him.

BILLY  
(soothing)  
Hey.

Billy opens his hand wide and displays a slice of jicama. Napoleon sniffs, then gently takes it.

Billy pets Napoleon's face, the crest of his neck and breast.

BILLY (cont'd)  
See?

Billy tentatively places one foot in Napoleon's stirrup, he steadies himself and begins to mount.

JESUS  
CLICKS his tongue once.

Napoleon immediately side steps, throwing Billy off balance and sending him crashing to the ground, landing next to a fresh patty of cow poop.

Billy looks up, frustrated.

BILLY  
(seriously)  
Teach me to ride like you.

JESUS  
I will, you and Eladio.

EXT. GREEN PASTURE - DAY - LATER

Jesus is relieving himself next to Napoleon when he spots a LARGE HARE.

He slowly draws his rifle from Napoleon's scabbard and aims, squinting his eyes through the iron sights.

Jesus FIRES!

He misses. The hare scrambles away.

JESUS  
Maldito!

Billy rides up to investigate as Jesus reloads his rifle.

BILLY  
Que pasa?

JESUS  
There was a fat hare.

BILLY  
Did you get him?

JESUS  
No.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY (LATE AFTERNOON)

Billy and Jesus drive the herd through the chaparral.

Ahead, a RAGGED BAND OF INDIANS, approach on foot from the opposite direction.

They warily pass each other.

A YOUNG BRAVE, 15, smiles at Billy as they make eye contact.

Billy nods back.

BILLY.  
Recognize them?

JESUS  
No.

They stop at a creek to water the herd.

JESUS (cont'd)  
This is a fine place to camp.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Billy waters their horses and washes himself in the creek.

Jesus gathers fire wood, he finds a wild marijuana plant, smiles and breaks off a branch, adding it to his bundle.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY - DUSK

Billy clears their sleeping area of rocks and branches. Nita lays by the fire, watching Jesus stir a pot of chili.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT - LATER

Jesus produces a jug of tequila. He uncorks it and chugs a mouthful.

JESUS  
(gleeful)  
Tequila will comfort you when you  
have no woman.

Jesus passes the tequila jug to Billy.

Billy takes a small swig and passes it back to Jesus.

Jesus roasts the marijuana branch over the fire until it begins to smoke. He brings it to his face and inhales.

JESUS (cont'd)  
(exhales)  
Ahh, Madre di dio.

Jesus offers the branch to Billy.

BILLY  
No.

Jesus's eyes are pink and happy.

JESUS  
Have I shared with you how I met  
Camilla's mother?

BILLY  
No, tell me.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. TIDELANDS - DAY

Jesus gallops along the coast, he is young, handsome, even dashing in his army officer's uniform.

JESUS (V.O.)  
I was returning home when I first saw  
NACONA.

A YOUNG COMANCHE GIRL bathes in the sea.

JESUS (V.O.) (cont'd)  
She was naked, dark as a vanilla  
bean. She saw me, but did not cover  
herself.  
(beams)  
It is a wondrous thing to see a naked  
woman bathing. I dis-mounted, slowly,  
so as not to startle her, then... I  
shed my uniform and jumped into the  
sea. She laughed at my floundering  
and swam away. I swam after her,  
and... I caught her!  
(beat)  
I never let her go.

INT. DARK CANDLE LIT BEDROOM - NIGHT

JESUS (V.O.)

Naconah glowed like the Madonna, she held Camilla to her breast and smiled at me. Then...my world changed.

Naconah bent forward, blood gushed from her womb. She clutched my hand with such vigor, her fingernails dug into my flesh. She looked to me for help. But I...I could do nothing.

(stifles a tear.)

Then god took mi Naconah.

END FLASHBACK.

JESUS

(upbeat)

But he gave me Camilla, Eladio, and you, Mijo.

Jesus takes another drink of tequila.

JESUS (cont'd)

(sings forlorn)

"Las Blancas Flores-"

Nita alerts and growls lowly. Jesus stops singing.

A figure appears just outside of the perimeter of their camp, silhouetted by the moonlight.

Jesus grabs his rifle. They stand and face the intruder.

It is the young Brave from their earlier encounter.

JESUS (cont'd)

(speaking Comanche)

Ma Ru awe.

The Brave says nothing, he stands there.

BILLY

Habla Espanol? English?

The Brave says nothing.

We hear commotion in the distance. Billy and Jesus turn and see the Indians stealing one of their horses.

When Billy turns back, the Brave has vanished.

The Indians SCREAM WAR CRIES as they escape with one horse.

Jesus runs after the Indians.

Billy runs after the the young Brave.

EXT. PRAIRIE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON THE BRAVE - Looks back and sees Billy gaining on him.

Billy catches up and tackles him.

Down they go.

Billy rises and stands over the young Brave who looks up at him with terrified eyes.

Billy sees the Brave is skinny and malnourished.

BILLY  
(with compassion)  
Ahh, just go.

The young brave scrambles to his feet and runs off.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Billy returns, his shirt is ripped across the breast.

BILLY  
He got away.

JESUS  
let us consider the pony a toll for  
using this trail.

BILLY  
They cannot claim this trail, This is  
Mexico.

JESUS  
They do not understand borders.

EXT. CAMPSITE - LATER

Jesus places some pebbles into an empty bean can, then hangs it from the horses tether. He gives it a shake the can RATTLES.

JESUS  
This will alert us if they  
return.

Jesus sits on his bedroll next to the fire, removes a boot  
and rubs his sore foot.

JESUS (cont'd)  
Dios mio.

He lays back, closes his eyes and... immediately falls  
asleep, snoring loudly.

Billy lays his Colt pistol across his chest, using his  
saddle for a pillow, he covers himself with a blanket,  
closes his eyes and tries to rest.

- END PART ONE -

