

OURAY' S PEAK

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - MORNING

A panoramic view of the White River Agency built within a verdant valley that nestles two or three miles wide between the rising majestic peaks of the Rocky Mountains. The valley is thick with cottonwoods and willows that line the river running gently through it.

CAMERA ZOOMS IN TO REVEAL:

A charming town of neat homes, model farms, storerooms, a blacksmith shop, a boarding house, and a bunkhouse that line this little bit of paradise on streets bearing such names as Meeker Street, Ute Avenue, Arvilla Bridge, Douglas Avenue, Jack's Farm, and the Grand Canal. The people of the town, the employees of the Agency, and the natives of the land, the Ute Indians, go about their business.

LEGEND ON SCREEN READS:

White River, Colorado. September 29, 1879.

EXT. MEEKER HOME - MORNING

Several Ute Indian men, women, and children gather round the Meeker home, some arriving for breakfast, others just leaving.

INT. MEEKER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

JOSIE and ARVILLA MEEKER gather dishes from the kitchen table as the Ute Indian woman, JANE, and her daughter TSASHIN wash. Through the archway, the dining room can be seen where more Utes are finishing their meal.

The air shimmers with heat and something else: slicing through the ordinary morning is a razor's edge of rising tension. FREDDIE DOUGLAS, son of Ute Indian CHIEF DOUGLAS, enters the kitchen through the back door.

JOSIE

Why, I declare! If it isn't
Freddie Douglas standing right
there before my very eyes!

FREDDIE

(grinning)
Good morning, Miss Josie.

JOSIE

Good morning to you.

She prepares him a thick slice of bread with extra butter. Freddie eyes the slice with great anticipation.

JOSIE

And where, may I ask have you been?

FREDDIE

Why, I been right here, Miss
Josie. Right here in Meeker Town
in White River.

JOSIE

(handing him the
bread)

Uh-huh. In town, but not at school.

FREDDIE

I go back to school today!

JOSIE

I'll wager.

FREDDIE

But first I need matches.

Josie digs some matches out of her apron pocket.

ARVILLA

What in heaven's name do you need
matches for?

FREDDIE

Now, I go smoke!

Freddie ducks out the back door. Arvilla watches him go.

ARVILLA

I'll warrant he'll set something
on fire.

Jane at the sink, stiffens, snaps.

JANE

Freddie Douglas won't set anything
on fire, Mrs. Meeker.

Uneasily, the women return to their work.

Outside, a faint rumbling, like the distant droning of bees,
or the pounding of hammers builds relentlessly.

TSASHIN

What's that sound?

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - MORNING

Along the mountain ridge ringing the town, warriors, their
faces and bodies streaked with color, gallop fiercely, arms
outstretched holding rifles. As they reach the final rise
into town, they split; three warriors galloping firecely in

three separate directions.

In town a young woman, her arms loaded with purchases watches the warriors.

YOUNG WOMAN

Look at that Indian ride!

Suddenly, the town explodes with gunfire. The young woman screams and runs.

INT. MEEKER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

Jane grabs Tsahin.

JANE

They've crossed Milk Creek!

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - MORNING

In the streets, chaos reigns. Warriors ride, shooting, shrieking cries of war. Jane runs through town, Tsashin behind her. In the center of town, as gunfire explodes all around, Jane throws back her head and howls with rage:

JANE

They've crossed Milk Creek!

On Jane's anguished cry:

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

CLOSE-UP

KRISTIN TABOR, tall, willowy, and strong, her dark hair is streaked through with white, her olive complexion lined with time, and beautiful.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Kristin stands at a gravesite, hand in hand with her brother, JAMIE. Like his sister, Jamie is tall and thin, but of a ruddy complexion, also deeply lined, and sandy hair.

In the distance, the sea crashes against its rocky coast.

The headstone reads: MICKEY TABOR. Kristin kneels before her father's grave.

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

CLOSE-UP

Kristin, about ten years old, laughing into the wind, dark pigtails flying out behind her.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

Kristin steering a speeding boat across choppy water, her father MICKEY TABOR, and brother Jamie at her side.

LEGEND ON THE SCREEN

Stratford Point, Connecticut. August 1962.

EXT. STRATFORD POINT MARINA -DAY

The speed boat docks, and the family climbs out, Kristin juggling a load of fish.

MICKEY

Come on, Kristie, let me give you
a hand with that.

KRISTIN

I can do it myself.

They walk along the dock.

KRISTIN

(pointing to the
biggest fish)

This is the one I caught.

EXT. CONNETICUT STATE HIGHWAY 8 - LATE AFTERNOON

A mint 1956 blue and white Chevy rolls along the highway.

INT. 1956 CHEVY - LATE AFTERNOON

Mickey, Kristin, and Jamie Tabor sing "By the Sea," in boisterous three-part harmony.

EXT. TABOR HOME - WATERBURY, CONNECTICUT - DUSK

The '56 Chevy pulls into the driveway. The family piles out of the car, Mickey booming:

MICKEY

Hey, Chrissie! Put the kettle on!
We got a load here!

CHRISTINE TABOR, tall and reed-like, with dark hair, eyes and complexion that now waxes pale, her brow creased with worry, steps onto the porch, hushing them with a finger drawn unsteadily to her mouth. Mickey goes to her.

MICKEY

Is it your mother?

Christine, fighting tears, nods.

INT. TABOR HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Mickey, Jamie, and Kristin sprawl on the floor playing with toy ships and scraps of brass that Mickey has fashioned into building pieces like an erector set.

JAMIE

Kristie! It doesn't go like that!
Those pieces don't fit.

KRISTIN

I don't care. I like it my way.

JAMIE

You're jammin' it all up. Pa!
She's gonna bust everything up.

MICKEY

Let's see what you got there,
Kristie.

Mickey examines Kristin's work as Christine, still drawn and pale, enters the room. Mickey goes to her. They speak in hushed, anxious tones.

MICKEY

How she doing?

Christine shakes her head. Mickey guides her into the kitchen where they can talk privately. Kristin watches them closely.

The kitchen door swings closed behind them. Kristin rises, moving close to the door, listening.

JAMIE

What're you doing?

KRISTIN

Something's wrong with grandma.

INT. TABOR HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING

Mickey and Christine sit huddled around the kitchen table.

CHRISTINE

She can't eat. Can't sleep.

MICKEY

Babe, maybe we'd better...

CHRISTINE

I'm not putting her back in that
hospital.

MICKEY

They can help her there.

CHRISTINE

All they do is pump her full of drugs! You remember what that was like. She didn't know me, the kids... all those tubes...

MICKEY

But she's full of pain. You're all worn out. It's not good. It's not good for the kids to see her like this.

CHRISTINE

Mickey ... I think there may be something I can do to help her.

MICKEY

What do you mean?

Unseen by them, Kristin slips quietly into the kitchen.

CHRISTINE

You remember her talking about her grandmother?

MICKEY

Jane?

CHRISTINE

Her grandmother had what they call medicine. She was a healer.

MICKEY

A healer?

CHRISTINE

She knew how to use herbs and roots, plants. Things like that, natural things that heal people. She passed that knowledge on to Tsashin, my mother's mother, my grandmother...

MICKEY

Chrissie, jeeze, I mean, what are we talking about here? It sounds like she's grabbing at straws.

CHRISTINE

She knows she's dying. She's not fooling herself. But she remembers those things. She doesn't want to be filled up with drugs and tubes.

(she pulls a piece of
paper out of her
pocket.)

She gave me a name.

MICKEY
(reading, mis-
pronounces)
So-wow-ic.

CHRISTINE
So-oh-wic. He's in Fort Duschesne,
Utah. The Uintah and Ouray
Reservation.
(this is very
difficult for her.)
He's a medicine man.

MICKEY
A medicine man. Jesus.

CHRISTINE
It can't hurt. Just to see. Just
to call.

From the shadows, Kristin calls out softly.

KRISTIN
Mama?

MICKEY
Hey, Kristie, baby.

CHRISTINE
Come here, sweetie.

Kristin crosses to her mother who wraps her in her arms.

KRISTIN
Is grandma going to be all right?

CHRISTINE
Mick?

MICKEY
Call. Call.

CHRISTINE
I love you, Mickey.

MICKEY
Christsie, Jesus. I don't know. I
think this is, I don't know. I
think this is wrong.

INT. TABOR HOME - TABOR BEDROOM - NIGHT

Christine and Mickey sleep deeply. Suddenly, Christine bolts
awake.

CHRISTINE

Mama!

Mickey jolts awake.

MICKEY

What is it?

CHRISTINE

Did my mother call?

MICKEY

It's three o'clock in the morning.

She rises out of bed.

CHRISTINE

I heard her call me.

INT. TABOR HOME - CHRISTIANA'S ROOM - NIGHT

CHRISTIANA, Christine's mother, dark and full-faced sits up in bed, calmly and peacefully. Christine and Mickey enter.

CHRISTINE

Mama?

CHRISTIANA

Hello, my baby.

CHRISTINE

Did you call me?

CHRISTIANA

Did you hear me?

CHRISTINE

I was dreaming. I heard you call.
Are you okay, Mama?

CHRISTIANA

I'm fine, baby.

CHRISTINE

Let me change the plaster.

CHRISTIANA

Sweetheart. There's no need.
Mickey, will you get the children,
please.

MICKEY

Ma, they're asleep. It's three a.m.

CHRISTIANA

Mickey, please. Get the children.

Mickey nods, and goes.

CHRISTINE

I'll change the dressing. Make
some tea.

Christiana grips Christine's hands.

CHRISTIANA

Good, strong hands. Filled with
power. Don't be afraid. Christine,
in the bureau, top drawer, the
w'ni thokunup. You remember?

CHRISTINE

Yes.

CHRISTIANA

Go get it now.

Christine goes to the bureau.

CHRISTIANA

They play it at Bear Dance. See
how it's carved? Like the jaw of
the Great Bear.

They place this part with all the
little notches over a drum covered
with buckskin. Then they run this
little piece up and down, faster
and faster until the drum rumbles
like thunder awakening the earth.
My grandfather carved that for my
grandmother. My mother passed it
on to me. Now, I give it to you.

CHRISTINE

Mama.

CHRISTIANA

You have great power, Christine.
Don't turn your back like I did.
Promise me that.

Mickey enters with the children. Christine places the w'ni
thokunup atop the bureau.

CHRISTIANA

Ah, there they are, my little ones.

The children scramble to their grandmother.

CHRISTIANA

Shall I tell you a story?

KRISTIN AND JAMIE

Yes, please!

CHRISTIANA

I dreamed there was a huge fire that roared across the Earth. All the People and all the animals were running to escape the flames. We ran and ran until finally, we ran deep inside the Shining Mountains and sealed ourselves inside. The Earth trembled and shook for many days, until one day, we heard a mighty roar. The mountain heaved and quaked, and suddenly, it split wide open. Standing on the other side, was a mighty buffalo, and he was pure white.

The people tumbled out of the cave, one by one they tumbled and flowed, like lava, running down the mountainside, all kinds of people of all different colors, bright colors, just like Kristie had taken her crayons and colored them herself. Orange and red and yellow and white and blue and black. Like a great river of many colors we poured out, and our joy created such music, and we swept across the scorched Earth, replacing the ashes of all that had been ruined with our song.

Christine kisses the children. She takes Christine's hand.

CHRISTIANA

Promise me, Christine.

INT. TABOR HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

Christine, subdued and distracted makes sandwiches as Mickey packs a cooler and Jamie and Kristin help.

LEGEND ON THE SCREEN

AUGUST 1963.

MICKEY

Just wait til you see her, Chrissie. Twenty-three foot, two masted, sleeps six. O'Donnell, the guy who's selling her, is practically giving her away. His wife just died and he really likes me and Denny. Said he'd throw in all the gear for free. You almost

done with those?

CHRISTINE

Yes.

MICKEY

I think this is really it,
Chrissie. By June, maybe July at
the latest, we're out of here!
Living in that little rose covered
cottage...

(singing)

"By the sea, by the sea..."

KRISTIN and JAMIE

(joining in three-
part harmony)

"By the beautiful sea..."

As they sing, Mickey sweeps Christine up in his arms,
swirling her in an exuberant dance.

CHRISTINE

Mick...

Unaware of her mood, he continues dancing and singing with
the kids.

MICKEY, JAMIE, KRISTIN

"You and me, you and me..."

CHRISTINE

Mickey... Stop....

MICKEY, JAMIE, KRISTIN

"Oh how happy will be..."

CHRISTINE

(with great force)

I said stop it!

The family is stunned into silence. After a long moment:

MICKEY

Yeah, sure. You bet.

CHRISTINE

Mick...

MICKEY

I saved my whole goddamn life for
this! Since before we were
married. This is all I been
dreaming about.

CHRISTINE

I know, Mick. I know. I just... I

just need a little time.

MICKEY

Time? You think this sweet little deal's gonna wait for you to take your time? How many deals we had to let go 'cause we didn't have the money?

And now, finally, this thing is just sitting there waiting for us to reach out and grab it, and you're telling me you need time?

CHRISTINE

Mickey ... It's like...I'm haunted.

MICKEY

Christ...

CHRISTINE

I have to do this thing...

MICKEY

What thing, Chrissie? Pack up a family? Uproot a family for Chrissakes and go traipsing out to the middle of the desert, to someplace you never seen before. Find some guy you don't know nothing about, do some kinda thing you ain't even sure you believe in...

CHRISTINE

Mick...

MICKEY

Does that make sense to you?

CHRISTINE

I don't...

Raging, Mickey advances on her.

MICKEY

Does that make sense to you!

Jamie steps between his parents, instinctively protecting his mother while warning off his father.

JAMIE

Pa?

Mickey stops.

JAMIE

(quietly)
Are we going, Pa?

MICKEY
(shaken)
Yeah. Sure. Kristie, grab the
basket.

Mickey, Jamie, and Kristin gather up the picnic things, and
head for the door. Christine speaks softly.

CHRISTINE
I made a promise to her.

Mickey looks back at his wife.

MICKEY
You made a promise to me, too.
Didja forget that? You made a
promise to me, too.

INT. TABOR HOME - CHRISTINE AND MICKEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Christine and Mickey are startled awake by Jamie's frantic
cry:

JAMIE (O.S.)
MAMA!!!

He bursts into their room.

JAMIE
Something's wrong with Kristie!

INT. TABOR HOME - KRISTIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Christine rushes into the bedroom followed by Mickey and
Jamie.

CHRISTINE
Kristie... baby?

Kristin shivers and moans.

CHRISTINE
She's burning up. Mickey, put a
kettle on to boil.

MICKEY
She needs a doctor.

CHRISTINE
We don't have time to wait for a
doctor! I need to break her fever
now! You know where I keep the
remedies...

JAMIE

I know, mama.

CHRISTINE

Good, Jamie. That's good. Put three teaspoons of yarrow, three of silkwood, and three of thyme into the teapot. When the water boils -- it has to be boiling hot, you understand? -- pour it over the herbs and bring it to me. Mickey, bring me a cold cloth -- as cold as you can get it, and the bottle of witch hazel.

Mickey and Jamie go.

KRISTIN

(calling weakly)

Mama?

CHRISTINE

I'm here, baby.

KRISTIN

My throat hurts.

CHRISTINE

Don't worry, baby. Mam's here. Mama's here.

INT. TABOR HOME - KRISTIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Kristin, nestled in her mother's arms, sleeps peacefully. Christine settles the sleeping child into bed. Mickey kisses her forehead.

MICKEY

Her skin is cool.

CHRISTINE

The fever's broken. Call Marsden now if you want.

Christine moves away from the bed. A moment, then she holds her hands out in front of her, staring at them.

CHRISTINE

My hands.

Mickey looks at her.

CHRISTINE

Oh, God. My hands.

INT. TABOR HOME - CHRISTINE AND MICKEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Moonlight floods the room as Mickey and Christine sleep. Christine stirs restlessly, calls out softly:

CHRISTINE

Mama?

She awakens. Mickey sleeps soundly beside her. Christine rises and leaves the bedroom.

INT. TABOR HOME - CHRISTIANA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Christine enters the room, which has been kept exactly as it was when Christiana was alive. Moonlight floods through the window, casting everything in a soft white light, embracing Christine with its luminescent glow. She crosses to the bureau where the w'ni thokunup still remains, taking the instrument in her hands. She hears a footstep in the hallway, and turns. Mickey stands in the shadows, watching her.

INT. TABOR HOME - KITCHEN - DUSK

Kristin and Mickey are in the Tabor kitchen, but the room is now far removed from the days of singing in three-part harmony. The walls have been stripped bare. The only furnishings remaining are the kitchen table, two chairs, and a cardboard box Kristin packs with her mother's crystal glasses.

Through the open kitchen door, the living room lies bleak, unfurnished, desolate.

LEGEND ON THE SCREEN

March 1964.

Kristin wraps the glasses carefully in newspaper, placing them gently into the box. Impatient, Mickey tries to move her along.

MICKEY

What're you doing, Kristie. Come on, let's go.

KRISTIN

They have to be wrapped carefully, Pa, or they'll break.

She holds one up to the fading evening light. A muted rainbow shimmers against the bleak bare wall.

KRISTIN

Look at the rainbow!

MICKEY

Christ! Will you come on! I said I wanna be out of here in twenty minutes!

Suddenly overwhelmed, Kristin breaks into tears.

KRISTIN

I don't want to go.

Chastened, Mickey goes to her, stroking her hair.

MICKEY

Kristie...

KRISTIN

I don't want to leave this house.
This is my house. How's mama going
to know where to find us if we go?

MICKEY

Kristie, listen to me...

KRISTIN

She's going to want to know.

MICKEY

Let's just finish up packing now.

KRISTIN

When she comes back, she's going
to want to know where we are!

MICKEY

She's not coming back!
(he cups her face)
Baby, please... Your mother's gone.

KRISTIN

I don't believe that!

MICKEY

Kristin, baby, how many times I
got to go through this. I told you
the day she left... Things change.
Sometimes something happens and
things just change.

KRISTIN

Did she stop loving us?

MICKEY

No. No.

KRISTIN

She never even said goodbye.

MICKEY

Sweetheart, I told you, she
thought it was better that way.

He walks away from her.

MICKEY

She was close to her mother. Maybe that's where I made my mistake. Who the hell knows? But when your grandmother died, your mother changed, and when she changed, she left.

(he takes a moment)

Just finish up now, okay?

Unappeased, Kristin returns to her packing. Mickey leaves the kitchen, moving to the front window of the living room. He glances back toward the kitchen, and sees Kristin absorbed in her packing. Turning away, he pulls a letter from his pocket.

In the kitchen, Kristin turns toward her father. In the slanting rays of the dying light, she watches him as he reads the letter.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The move complete, Kristin begins unpacking the crystal glasses as Mickey sits at the kitchen table in the new house, a glass and a bottle of whiskey in front of him. She watches him warily as he drinks.

KRISTIN

You want me to fix you something to eat?

MICKEY

I'm not hungry.

KRISTIN

I could make sandwiches.

MICKEY

(looking at her a long moment)

No.

KRISTIN

I just thought...

MICKEY

You just thought what?

KRISTIN

The bottle's almost empty.

MICKEY

You tellin' me how much I should drink?

KRISTIN

(holding his gaze)

No.

MICKEY

I'm just having a little house
warming, Kristie. One man party.
(killing the bottle)
Dead soldier. Dead sailor.

Suddenly, he hurls the bottle against the wall. As it crashes and splinters, Kristin lets out a heartbroken wail. In her hand she holds the remnants of a shattered crystal glass.

KRISTIN

They're broken! They're all
shattered!

She turns on him, holding the shattered glass, her grief inconsolable.

KRISTIN

It's all your fault! You wouldn't
let me pack them the right way,
and now they're all shattered,
everything's shattered, and its
all your fault!

With a guttural cry, Mickey lunges. Her grabs her shoulders, shakes her, and pushes her forcefully back.

As Kristin falls back against the wall, Jamie bursts into the room.

JAMIE

PA!

Mickey stunned and wild-eyed, stands pale and trembling, shocked at what he has done.

EXT. NEW TABOR HOME - MORNING

A frosty late winter morning breaks as Jamie and Kristin exit the front door, back-packs slung across their shoulders.

They walk past melting snowdrifts on their way to the school bus stop. As Kristin walks on ahead, Jamie scoops up a ball of icy snow, and hurls it at her. A spirited snowball fight erupts, leaving Jamie and Kristin breathless, giddy, and soaking wet.

EXT. NEW TABOR HOME - MORNING

Mickey exits the house, and gets into his '56 Chevy. The car pulls out of the driveway.

EXT. POST OFFICE - WATERBURY, CONNECTICUT - MORNING

Mickey pulls up to the post office.

INT. POST OFFICE - WATERBURY, CONNECTICUT - MORNING

Inside, Mickey talks to a clerk.

MICKEY

All the mail will come here, then,
right?

CLERK

That's right, sir.

MICKEY

I don't want nothing coming to the
house, you understand?

CLERK

Sir, all mail will be delivered to
your post office box here
exclusively, as per your order.

MICKEY

Good. That's good.

EXT. WATERBURY BRASS FACTORY - MORNING

Mickey parks in the lot.

INT. 1956 CHEVY - MORNING

Mickey turns off the ignition. He is about to exit the car,
when he stops, dropping his head into his hands.

EXT. NEW TABOR HOME - JUST BEFORE DAWN

Winter has melted into early spring. Down the street, Jamie
and Kristin deliver newspapers together as dawn breaks.

EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND, WATERBURY, CONNECTICUT - DAY

On a late summer afternoon, a small crowd watches the home
town team play against New Haven. Jamie is at bat. The pitch
crosses the plate, Jamie swings gracefully, and the ball
soars out over the fence.

IN THE STANDS

Kristin and Mickey sit side by side watching. They rise,
clapping and cheering as Jamie rounds third, but the gulf
between them yawns painfully.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - FRONT HALL - AFTERNOON

Kristin enters the house loaded down with schoolbooks. She
crosses to the staircase, bounding up the stairs.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

As Kristin comes up the stairs, she sees her father leaving his room. Mickey turns, seeing her.

MICKEY

Hey.

KRISTIN

Hey.

MICKEY

You just comin' from school?

KRISTIN

Yeah.

MICKEY

(referring to her
books)

You got quite a load there.

KRISTIN

Yeah. Well.

An awkward silence, neither knowing what to say, any connection between them long since severed.

MICKEY

Jamie home?

KRISTIN

No. Practice. Hockey.

MICKEY

Yeah. Right. He made the team.
Well, I gotta go. They got me
working afternoons. Eighteen years
I been bustin' my hump for those
freaks, and now, they got me
working afternoons.

KRISTIN

You want something to eat before
you go?

MICKEY

No. I don't got time now.

KRISTIN

I'll save you something for later.

MICKEY

Okay.

She moves past him to her room. As she opens her door, she glances back. Mickey stands at his bedroom door, locking it

securely.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Chuck Berry plays loudly on the stereo as Kristin and Jamie dance. Jamie is every bit as graceful on the dance floor as he is on the baseball diamond. Kristin follows his lead perfectly as they work out a complicated routine.

Snow falls softly outside the front room windows.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Kristin prepares supper. Through the kitchen window, she watches as outside in the backyard, Mickey and Jamie play catch.

EXT. WATERBURY HIGH SCHOOL - EVENING

Cars arrive packed with teenagers going to the dance.

INT. WATERBURY HIGH SCHOOL - GYM - EVENING

The gym swarms with activity as teenagers dance to rock n' roll. A banner stretched across the stage reads:

Waterbury High School Annual Sock Hop, December 1966.

IN THE CENTER OF THE GYM

Jamie and Kristin dance their intricate routine to cheers and applause.

INT. 1956 CHEVY - NIGHT

Jamie drives his father's mint '56 Chevy, a first place trophy resting on the bench seat between Kristin and him. They sing loudly in perfect harmony to a song on the radio.

EXT. NEW TABOR HOME - NIGHT

The car pulls up to the house. In the headlights, Jamie and Kristin see Mickey in shirtsleeves weaving unsteadily, attempting to string up a set of broken Christmas lights.

INT. 1956 CHEVY - NIGHT

Jamie turns to Kristin.

JAMIE

Stay here 'til I get him in the house.

Jamie exits the car. Kristin watches through the windshield as he approaches Mickey.

EXT. NEW TABOR HOME - NIGHT

Jamie puts his arm around Mickey's shoulders, gently taking the broken lights from his hand.

JAMIE
Hey, Pop, what're up to? Come on,
let's go inside.

Jamie helps Mickey into the house.

Kristin exits the car.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kristin stands in the center of the room, a puzzled, concentrated look on her face. She sees a family photo album lying open on the coffee table. No one has looked at this album in years. There's an aura about the room; something is off kilter, different.

Jamie enters the room.

JAMIE
He's out. Passed out before I got
him in bed.

Kristin picks up the photo album.

KRISTIN
Is his room locked?

JAMIE
What?

KRISTIN
He couldn't lock it.

Kristin sets the album down and heads for the stairs. Jamie goes after her, grabbing her arm.

JAMIE
Don't even think about it.

Kristin shakes him off, and climbs the stairs, Jamie right at her heels.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

The door to Mickey's room stands ajar. Kristin enters.

INT. MICKEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark and shrouded. Shadows from the oak tree outside play against the walls, their skeletal branches scratching at the windowpanes. One of the dresser drawers is pulled halfway open. Kristin crosses to the bureau.

Jamie stands on the threshold, tensely watching.

Kristin rummages through the drawer. Her hand falls on something strange and stick-like, shaped like the jaw of a large animal. She pulls it from the drawer. It is the w'ni thokunup.

Mickey stirs awake.

MICKEY
(mumbling)
What's going on?

He sits up awkwardly, still drunk, his mind a muddled fugue.

From the threshold, Jamie whispers tensely.

JAMIE
Let's go.

Kristin doesn't move. She remains standing, holding the instrument, staring into the shadowed pools of her father's eyes.

Mickey growls, a low guttural sound. Suddenly, like a wild predator, he springs at his prey.

Jamie bolts from the doorway, blocking his father from his sister, grabbing his shoulders.

JAMIE
Hey, Pop! What's the matter?
You're having a bad dream, Pop.
Come on, let's get you back to bed.

Mickey stumbles, mumbling incoherently, and collapses against Jamie. Jamie gets him back to bed.

Jamie crosses to Kristin, pulling the w'ni thokunup out of her hands, and shoving it back inside the bureau drawer.

JAMIE
(fiercely quiet)
Let's go.

He leads her out of the room.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

KRISTIN
That was Mama's.

Jamie pushes past her down the stairs, Kristin following.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

KRISTIN

She took it with her when she left.

JAMIE

You don't know that!

KRISTIN

She was here!

JAMIE

For Christ's sake, Kristie!

She grabs up the photo album.

KRISTIN

When the hell has anyone looked at these, huh? There were letters up there, too. Hidden away. Those letters are from Mama.

(Jamie does not
respond)

He told us he didn't know where she was. He told us she just walked out on us.

JAMIE

She did just walk out on us.

KRISTIN

She's been writing to him. She's been writing to us.

JAMIE

So what.

KRISTIN

So what?

JAMIE

If she'd given a goddamn about us, she'd never have left. That's all I need to know.

KRISTIN

You sound just like Pa.

JAMIE

Just stay out of his room.

KRISTIN

He's been lying to us for three years.

JAMIE

Jesus Christ, Kristie, you hear what I'm saying? Just stay away, you got that? Jesus Christ, just

stay out of his room!

Jamie storms away from her.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Afternoon light slants into the kitchen as Kristin prepares the evening meal. The house is quiet. She stops what she's doing, wiping her hands on a dish towel, and walks through the archway to the living room.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The photo album lays on the coffee table. Kristin picks it up, leafing through the pages.

CLOSE UP OF PHOTOS

Mickey and Christine young and in love. Kristin and Jamie as toddlers and in grade school. Mickey holding Kristin tightly, grinning widely into the camera. Mickey, Jamie, and Kristin sailing through choppy waters, Kristin steering. Christine alone and beautiful in front of the Christmas tree.

Kristin closes the album. She glances to the top of the stairs. Her father is at work. Jamie is at practice. She's alone in the house.

She rises.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Kristin stands outside Mickey's room, a screwdriver in her hand. She jimmy's the lock, until the door falls open.

INT. MICKEY'S ROOM - DAY

Kristin crosses to the dresser, opening the drawer. The w'ni thokunup is where Jamie left it. Digging deeper, she finds her mother's letters.

EXT. NEW TABOR HOME - DAY

Mickey's '56 Chevy pulls up in front of the house. He gets out, weaving, his right hand heavily bandaged.

INT. MICKEY'S ROOM - DAY

Kristin sits on the bed, cradling the w'ni thokunup, reading her mother's letters.

The door creaks open. Mickey stands in the doorway. Kristin looks up. Their eyes lock. Steely-eyed and unflinching, Kristin rises to meet him. With a growl more animal than human, Mickey attacks.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - FRONT HALL - AFTERNOON

Jamie enters, carrying his hockey gear. Sensing danger, he drops his gear, and bolts up the stairs.

INT. MICKEY'S ROOM - DAY

At the threshold, Jamie sees Mickey standing over Kristin who lies crumpled on the floor.

JAMIE
Pop? Oh, Jesus. Jesus.

He goes to his sister, gathering her in his arms.

MICKEY
Jamie?

JAMIE
I'm taking her to the hospital.
I... I gotta take her to the
hospital.

Jamie carries Kristin out of the room.

INT. NEW TABOR HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jamie enters the living room. Mickey sits slumped in a chair, his head buried in his hands, his eyes red-rimmed and swollen.

JAMIE
I told them she had an accident.

Mickey cannot bring himself to look at his son.

JAMIE
I told them she fell.

After a long moment, Mickey speaks.

MICKEY
Your mother was the most beautiful
thing in the world to me. You two
kids.
(he starts to break)
I drink. I shouldn't drink.

Jamie, pained by his father's tears, stands uncertain, straddling two worlds.

MICKEY
She walked outta my life. One day
you wake up, and nothin's like it
used to be.

JAMIE
Pa... Don't.

MICKEY

You got a wound, Jamie, you gotta
clean it out. Scrape all the dead
flesh away, or it can't heal.

Jamie notices smouldering in the fireplace, the remnants of
his mother's letters. On the mantle the w'ni thokunup sits
unharmmed.

MICKEY

(his tears breaking)
It can't ever heal, Jamie.

Overcome by his father's naked emotion, Jamie goes to him,
holding him as he weeps.

JAMIE

Don't cry, Pa. Please. Don't cry,
anymore.

INT. KRISTIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Slats of bright sunshine cast striped shadows across the high
gloss of the linoleumed floor, and stripplle across the white
cotton blanket that covers Kristin as she lies pale and
still, as silent as death. White-washed walls gleam icily in
the stark artificial brightness of the flourescent light,
reflecting off the cold polished chrome of the hospital bed
and beeping electronic machinery.

Jamie enters the room, bearing the w'ni thokunup. Kristin
does not stir. Jamie lays the instrument across the body of
his sleeping sister, turns, and leaves the room.

EXT. DREAM SEQUENCE - MOUNTAIN PEAK - DAY

Kristin dreams. She stands high atop a jagged mountain peak,
white-capped fingers of stone jutting towards a turquoise
sky. A long cloak striped with turquoise, gold, and red
geometric patterns billows around her as puffed clouds race
across the peaks. In the distance, a figure appears, moving
gracefully along the rugged trail, a long cloak of similar
pattern and color flowing behind her.

KRISTIN

Mama?

The figure draws closer.

KRISTIN

Mama.

Kristin runs to the woman, running her fingers hungrily
across her face. They embrace.

Suddenly, the light changes. The sky streaks with violent
slashes of purple and green. Storm clouds gather, dark and

threatening. Jagged peaks rise.

KRISTIN

It's so steep.

CHRISTINE

You won't fall. I'm with you.

Mist sweeps in, shrouding mother in daughter in a fog of white. The earth trembles. Out of the mist, another figure appears. Christiana.

CHRISTIANA

The earth trembles all around, but there is a river that flows with many colors. Remember, Kristie? You colored the river with your crayons. Sowowic knows where the river goes.

INT. KRISTIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Kristin awakens. She sees the w'ni thokunup, and takes it in her hands.

INT. KRISTIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

The hospital bed is stripped; the machinery gone. Kristin stands by the window, dressed in jeans and a sweater, watching as snow swirls lazily by.

Jamie enters the room. Kristin turns to him. They regard each other in silence.

INT. 1956 CHEVY - MORNING

Jamie drives. The radio plays softly, but there is no singing in perfect harmony. Kristin looks out the passenger window in silence.

EXT. TABOR HOME - MORNING

The car pulls into the driveway. Jamie gets out, returning to the passenger side to help Kristin, but the bond between them has been severed.

INT. TABOR HOME - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The house is shrouded, dark, and silent. The television flickers in a corner of the living room, but no one watches. Kristin moves through the house like a ghost, like one who has already left. She climbs the stairs to her room.

INT. TABOR HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mickey and Jamie watch a hockey game on a television flickering with the snow of poor reception.

INT. TABOR HOME - KRISTIN'S ROOM - DAY

Dressed in jeans, boots, and a down jacket, Kristin finishes packing, placing the w'ni thokunup carefully inside her backpack.

The sound of the hockey game plays muffled in the background.

INT. TABOR HOME - STAIRCASE AND LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kristin walks down the staircase to the front door.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Jamie turns toward the door, catching a fleeting glimpse of Kristin, closing the door behind her. He gazes at the closed door a moment, then, his face blank, turns back to the father.

EXT. TABOR HOME - DAY

Kristin walks down the street as snow begins to fall.

INT. BUS STATION - DUSK

Kristin stands at the window, a clerk handing her a ticket, and change in silver.

TICKET CLERK

This'll take you as far as
Addyston on the Indiana border.
Track 9, 5:23.

She takes the ticket, and pockets the coins.

EXT. ADDYSTON BUS TERMINAL -NIGHT

A Grehound bus pulls up in front of the depot. Kristin, the lone passenger, disembarks. The bus pulls away, exhaust steaming in the frosty air. Snow continues to fall.

INT. ADDYSTON BUS TERMINAL -NIGHT

Kristin enters the deserted station. She curls up in a chair in the waiting room.

A clock on the wall reads: 12:57.

TIME ON CLOCK DISSOLVES:

Clock reads: 3:00

A security guard spies Kristin and approaches.

SECURITY GUARD

Okay, now. Come on. Let's go.

EXT. ADDYSTON BUS TERMINAL -NIGHT

Kristin steps into the night. Snow swirls. In the cold, the dark, and the snow, she walks along the desolate highway.

A pinpoint of light shimmers in the distance. Kristin walks on.

EXT. RIVER'S EDGE CAFE - NIGHT

The light is a motel and 24 hour cafe perched on the banks of the Ohio River. Kristin enters the cafe.

INT. RIVER'S EDGE CAFE - NIGHT

There are no customers at this late hour. An elderly black man, a crop of snow white hair bristling around him, stands arms folded behind the counter watching Kristin approach.

Carefully she counts out change.

KRISTIN
Coffee, please. Black.

The man pours her coffee. Kristin takes it to a booth by the window. As the Ohio River flows darkly past, she closes her eyes and drifts into sleep.

From far away a voice echoes.

MAN
Miss. Miss. Hey, Miss.

She stirs awake.

MAN
You can't sleep here. I got rooms
if you want to sleep.

KRISTIN
(gathering up her
things)
I don't have enough money for a
room.

MAN
That so. You know how to work?

KRISTIN
Yes, sir.

MAN
Well okay, then. Save me the
trouble of putting up a sign.

EXT. RIVER'S EDGE CAFE - DAY

Winter disappears into spring. The snow along the banks of the Ohio melt into the rushing waters; bright green buds poke through the earth and burst among the bare brown branches of graceful willows that bend to the earth.

Atop a ladder, Kristin scrapes at the flaking white paint of a window sash, scraping and sanding until the wood is smooth and soft beneath her fingers. She leans back satisfied with her work.

INT. RIVER'S EDGE CAFE - DAY

Kristin washes up at the sink, then sits at the counter.

Earl, the cafe owner, sets a cheeseburger and fries in front of her. Kristin attacks the food with gusto. Earl rests back against the counter top, watching her with admiration.

EARL

I sure am going to miss havin' you
around this place.

Kristin speaks around a large bite of burger.

KRISTIN

Me, too. I don't know where I'm
going to get another cheeseburger
tastes as good as yours.

EXT. ADDYSTON BUS TERMINAL -NIGHT

Earl's beat up Ford pick-up truck pulls up in front of the station. Kristin and Earl get out of the truck.

EARL

You need anything, you know where
I'm at.

KRISTIN

Yes, sir, I do.

Earl extends his hand to shake hers.

EARL

You take care, now, you hear.

KRISTIN

Don't worry about that.

Shouldering her backpack, she walks toward the terminal., Earl watches her go.

EXT. ADDYSTON BUS TERMINAL -NIGHT

A Greyhound bus pulls out of the terminal, the destination in front reads: Denver.

INT. DENVER BUS STATION - DAY

Kristin stands before a map of Colorado, tracing the line of the Rocky Mountains with her fingertips. Her finger rests on the small mountain town of Basalt.

EXT. MAIN ST., BASALT, COLORADO - DUSK

The Greyhound bus pulls up in front of the "Main St. Cafe." Kristin disembarks.

Across the gravel street, a sign reads: "Basalt Cabins." She walks across the street.

INT. KRISTIN'S CABIN - DUSK

In a tidy one room efficiency, Kristin sets up home, hanging the few items of clothing she has in the closet, setting a picture of her mother on the dresser, and carefully placing the w'ni thokunup on the kitchen table where she can see the Basalt River tumbling outside her window.

EXT. HIGHWAY 82 OUTSIDE BASALT - MORNING

Kristin hitchhikes along the highway.

EXT. ASPEN, COLORADO - DAY

Kristin walks from one business establishment to another, looking for work. As the day wears on with no luck, a waitress at the "Ute City Bank" points out the Aspen Public Library across the street.

EXT. ASPEN PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Kristin enters the library.

INT. ASPEN PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Kristin scours the "Community Post Board," looking for Help Wanted ads. AMANDA BREMMER, a tall robust woman in her late sixties with short-cropped grey hair and round grey eyes magnified behind large glasses, enters the library, carrying a sheaf of brightly colored flyers. She stands next to Kristin looking for a place to post her ad.

Observing that Kristin is perusing the Help Wanted section, Amanda regards her carefully, then turns to her.

AMANDA

I need an all-around handy-person.
Think you can fit the bill?

EXT. ASPEN, COLORADO - DAY

Amanda leads Kristin to her white Scout Jeep parked in front of the library. They get in.

INT. SCOUT - DAY

Amanda drives, shifting smoothly, handling the compact car with precision and ease as she winds her way through a narrow mountain road.

AMANDA

I can pick you up in town at eight a.m. Monday through Thursday. Never know where I'll be for the weekend, so I don't have anybody working Fridays. One twenty-five an hour. Okay?

KRISTIN

Okay.

EXT. AMANDA BREMMER'S HOME - GARAGE BREEZEWAY - DAY

Amanda pulls the Scout into the breezeway at the end of her drive.

AMANDA

We'll start with the windows.

Amanda leads Kristin to a shed inside the breezeway stocked with tools, paints, ladders, and cleaning utensils.

AMANDA

Grab that bucket, there.

EXT. AMANDA BREMMER'S HOME - REDWOOD DECK - DAY

Kristin stands on a ladder perched on an expansive redwood deck, facing enormous floor-to-ceiling windows. Reflected in their glass, Aspen Mountain rises majestically behind. Amanda stands below her on the deck.

AMANDA

There's still a cap of snow on Aspen Mountain.

Some years, the snow will stay right through 'til the Aspens are in full bloom. That's something to see.

(she turns to go into
the house)

Well, we'd better get started.

Amanda rounds the corner of the deck. Kristin picks up a bottle of ammonia and some newspaper. She turns, looking at the mountains, glinting in the mid-day sun.

MONTAGE OF SCENES

Kristin hitchhikes along 82. Amanda picks her up in town.

Kristin pushes a hand-mower over Amanda's grass, then edges and clips neatly.

In Amanda's kitchen, Kristin carefully unscrews a kitchen cabinet door, as Amanda packs items neatly into cardboard boxes. Sitting on a stool set on a wide plastic tarp in the center of the room, Kristin strips off the old stain, and meticulously sands the wood until it is soft and smooth.

Amanda serves lunch at her dining room table, a panoramic view of the mountains rising outside her sparkling dining room windows.

Outside, Kristin climbs a ladder, a can of redwood stain in her hand. Carefully, she stains the area around a back window.

EXT. AMANDA BREMMER'S HOME - ROCK GARDEN - DAY

A white hot sun fires the azure sky. Distant peaks shimmer in the midday brightness.

In the rock garden, Kristin works diligently, pulling and tearing at stubborn weeds. Amanda approaches with a sweating glass of iced tea.

AMANDA

Kristin.
(she doesn't respond)
Kristin.
(Kristin remains at
her task)
Kristin!

KRISTIN

(startled)
Oh!

AMANDA

I'm sorry dear! I didn't mean to
startle you.

KRISTIN

It's these darn weeds. It seems as
fast as I pull them, that's as
fast as they grow back.

AMANDA

(laughing)
I know just what you mean. Which
is why I don't do it anymore.
Which is why I hired you.
(hands her the tea)
Iced tea?

KRISTIN

Yes. Thank-you.

AMANDA

Only the beginning of May, and already so hot! I'm going to have to run off to San Francisco soon.

KRISTIN

San Fransisco?

AMANDA

I have a daughter there. Another in Massachusetts. A son near Washington, D.C., though now is certainly not the time to go trekking back East. My people are spread out all over.

(she looks at Kristin)

What about you?

KRISTIN

Hmmm?

AMANDA

Where are your people?

KRISTIN

Oh.

(she pauses, looking away)

Back East.

AMANDA

Ah.

She gasps suddenly, grabbing Kristin's arm and speaking in an excited whisper. She gestures toward a brilliantly colored small bird perched on the branch of an Aspen tree.

AMANDA

That's a tanager. A male. See how brightly colored he is? That's so he can attract a female. Wait awhile... it's only the beginning of May. He's early. Aha! Hot as blazes. Tanagers are here! We are in for a hot summer!

(with the burst of a sudden idea)

Come on! Let's go!

KRISTIN

Go?

AMANDA

We're off for a picnic in the high country!

EXT. COLORADO HIGH COUNTRY - DAY

Amanda expertly guides her Scout through a twisting mountain road.

The jeep stops beside a meadow bursting with tall grass and vibrant patches of vivid wildflowers.

EXT. COLORADO HIGH COUNTRY - MEADOW -DAY

Amanda and Kristin walk through the meadow.

AMANDA

These are elephant heads.
See how the tiny bloom looks just
like the head of an elephant.

KRISTIN

That's amazing.

AMANDA

Those, there, are fairy trumpets.
And here, Indian Paintbrush.

(they walk on)

Ah -- see that bright patch of
blue?

(they move closer in)

Columbine.

KRISTIN

(kneels before the
patch)

They're so delicate.

AMANDA

Delicate, but strong. Winter
breathes down from the mountain,
blowing her icy winds. Yet, year
after year they return, stronger
than ever, sprouting all over the
mountainside. You know what their
secret is?

KRISTIN

No.

AMANDA

They take winter's icy breath and
merciless blows, and turn them
into a source of strength.

EXT. COLORADO HIGH COUNTRY - MEADOW - DAY

Classical music resonants through the mountainside. The Scout
bucks and weaves along a twisting mountain road, as Amanda
teaches Kristin to drive, the two, laughing into the wind.

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE ASPEN - DAY

Kristin and Amanda haggle with a middle-aged man with a round belly over the price of his robin's egg blue Chevy Impala complete with rust-spotted roof. Amanda vigorously shakes her head.

AMANDA

That's highway robbery young man.
This young lady will pay you two-
hundred and fifty dollars and not
one dime more.

Kristin, uselessly trying to suppress a giggle, counts out the money.

EXT. HIGHWAY 82 OUTSIDE BASALT - MORNING

Kristin whizzes toward Aspen in her brand-new ancient rust-spotted robin egg blue Chevy Impala, the Roaring Fork river whirpooling 500 feet below.

EXT. AMANDA'S HOME -- DRIVEWAY - DUSK

Kristin gets in her car, and steers down the drive.

EXT. HIGHWAY 82 - OUTSIDE ASPEN - DUSK

Kristin drives toward Basalt, classical music blaring from her open windows.

On the other side of the highway a '56 blue and white Chevy in mint condition streaks past.

INT. CHEVY IMPALA - DUSK

Kristin gasps, pales. She steers jaggedly onto the narrow shoulder, jamming on the break.

EXT. HIGHWAY 82 - OUTSIDE ASPEN - DUSK

Narrowly avoiding an accident, Kristin U-turns, and revving the engine, speeds after the Chevy.

The blue Impala chases the '56 Chevy along the torturous highway. At the edge of town, the '56 Chevy turns into the Aspen Airport parking lot. The driver, a young man, hops out.

Kristin wheels into the airport, breaks, and flies out of the car. She runs, her voice ragged, calling:

KRISTIN

Jamie! Jamie!

She's on his heels. He turns. He is tall and thin, handsome with a ruddy complexion, but he is not Jamie.

KRISTIN

Oh... Oh... I'm sorry... I ... I'm
sorry.

Kristin backs away.

INT. CHEVY IMPALA - DUSK

Kristin sits behind the wheel. Pale and shaken, she shudders. Wrapping her arms around her, she doubles over, and curling into a tight ball, her knees drawn up to her chest, lies across the bench seat.

INT. AMANDA'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Kristin hangs the last cabinet door in place. She surveys her work, and then calls out:

KRISTIN

Amanda?

There's no response. Kristin leaves the kitchen, walking down the hallway to the library.

INT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - LIBRARY - DAY

Kristin studies a map of Colorado framed on the wall. On Amanda's desk several books on the history of Colorado, and its original people, the Ute Indians, lay open. Amanda enters the library.

AMANDA

Oh, there you are. I was calling
you to lunch.

Amanda notices the books.

AMANDA

Have you taken an interest in our
local history?

KRISTIN

(tracing the map)
My People are from here. They
lived here.

(turning to Amanda)
My mother is Ute. Part Ute. Me,
too, I guess. Right?

AMANDA

Do you know which tribe, Kristin?

KRISTIN

No.

AMANDA

The Utes are settled now in Southwestern Colorado, here. And some up here in Utah. Fort Duchesne.

KRISTIN

Fort Duchesne. That's what I remember. Fort Duchesne.

EXT. HIGHWAY 82 OUTSIDE BASALT - MORNING

Kristin puts the last of her gear into the Blue Impala, and heads out of town, following along Highway 82 as it twists along the Roaring Fork River past Glenwood Springs.

MONTAGE OF SCENES:

Kristin driving the twisting highway past Rifle, Grand Junction, and across the border at Fruita into Utah.

LEGEND ON THE SCREEN READS:

September 1969

MONTAGE CONTINUES:

Kristin turns North at Route 45, continuing through the dusty foothills to the village of Fort Duchesne, located along the banks of the Duchesne River, and at the edge of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation.

EXT. FORT DUCHESNE - DUSK

Kristin pulls up in front of the Fort Duchesne Hotel.

INT. KRISTIN'S ROOM - FORT DUCHESNE HOTEL - DUSK

Kristin sits on the single iron-framed bed in the close and dingy room, staring out the window. The Duchesne River flows in the distance.

The sun dips lower in the sky, burning a burnished orange-red, slipping behind the willows that shade the Duchesne River. Kristin rises from the bed. Rummaging through her backpack, she pulls out a picture of Christine, pockets it, and leaves the room.

EXT. DUCHESNE RIVER - SUNSET

The sky streaks with fingers of purple, red, and violet. Kristin walks down a path to the river. As she walks, mosquitoes circle about her. Absent-mindedly, she waves them away. As she moves deeper into the woods approaching the river, the mosquitoes gather into a swarm. Her actions grow increasingly frantic, but she cannot wave them away. The swarm covers her.

A deep voice resonates through the woods:

BILLY MAX (O.S.)
Just stand still.

Startled and miserable, Kristin looks up to see BILLY MAX EAGLE, a handsome dark-complexioned young man in his twenties with a wide bright smile, and long black hair shining bluely in the sunlight, falling freely about his face.

BILLY MAX
Don't move. And whatever you do,
stop all that waving.

He pulls a coin from his pocket, and lifting it toward the setting sun, softly chants in his native tongue. Mosquitoes swarm around him until he is covered with a cloud, but he remains unaffected.

BILLY MAX
Over there's some mint. Pick some
leaves, and chew them. Don't pick
them all from the same plant,
though.

Kristin picks the leaves, mosquitoes still buzzing her.

BILLY MAX
Mosquitoes like the sunset. They
like the river, too. Right now,
they put a lot of stuff in your
blood, poison, and that poison
attracts other mosquitoes because
it makes you nervous, and the
mosquitoes key into that. The mint
changes the chemistry. The best
thing is vinegar, but the mint
will do for now.
(he puts the coin
back in his pocket)
Come on. I know a place the
mosquitoes haven't discovered yet.

EXT. DUCHESNE RIVER - SUNSET

Billy Max and Kristin are perched on a rock high above the river, without a mosquito in sight.

Kristin shows Billy Max the picture of Christine. He recognizes her immediately, but hides this from Kristin

BILLY MAX
I know someone who might know
something about her.

INT. KRISTIN'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

A large bottle of red wine vinegar sits atop Kristin's dresser next to her mother's picture and the w'ni thokunup.

Kristin runs a comb through her hair, goes to the door, and opens it. She stops, walks back to the dresser, takes a huge swig of the vinegar, grimaces, and leaves the room.

EXT. DUCHESNE RIVER - MORNING

Billy Max and Kristin hike through the woods along the river. Mosquitoes swarm around them, but do not bite.

EXT. SOWOWIC'S CABIN - MORNING

Billy Max and Kristin approach a tidy cabin in the woods. SOWOWIC, a tall man, powerfully built and still strong though close to ninety-five years of age steps onto the porch. He is dressed simply in khaki pants and a denim shirt with an Inidan print. A red bandana is tied around his forehead, his abundant grey hair flowing down his back like the mane of an ironly spirited horse. His dark eyes crackle with the fire of a fierce life force. He recognizes Kristin immediately.

SOWOWIC

Come in.

INT. SOWOWIC'S CABIN - MORNING

Outside the cabin, a storm gathers, thunder rumbling softly in the distance.

On the mantle of the stone fireplace Kristin sees a picture of her mother. Sowowic watches her as she crosses to the fireplace, taking the picture gently in her hands.

SOWOWIC

You look just like her.

Thunder rumbles closer; lightning streaks shimmer through the windows.

KRISTIN

Is she here?

Sowowic slowly shakes his head.

SOWOWIC

She died. A year ago.

Kristin stands in silence.

EXT SOWOWIC'S CABIN - MORNING

Thunder cracks. The sky swells purple. Streaks of lightning flash. Kristin walks along the river path away from the cabin.

Trees bend, their limbs moaning and cracking in the gathering

wind. Kristin walks faster. A jutting root catches her foot; she stumbles, tumbling to the ground, her palms scratching against thorny thistles crowding the way. Lightning crackles. An owl shrieks. Kristin pulls herself up. She runs.

Blind and heedless, she crashes through the woods, her face twisted in torment. Sobs rise in her throat, choking her. The storm breaks; rain cascades down in sheets. The sobs tear loose; ripping rawly. Kristin collapses.

Soundlessly, Billy Max approaches. Gently, he gathers her in his arms, holding her tightly against him as she weeps.

EXT. DREAM SEQUENCE - MOUNTAIN PEAK - DAY

Kristin dreams. She stands high atop a jagged mountain peak, as she did in her first dream, white-capped fingers of stone jutting towards a turquoise sky. A long cloak striped with turquoise, gold, and red geometric patterns billows around her as puffed clouds race across the peaks. In the distance, a figure appears, moving gracefully along the rugged trail, a long cloak of similar pattern and color flowing behind her.

KRISTIN

Mama?

The figure draws closer.

KRISTIN

Mama. Is it really you?

CHRISTINE

(holding out her arms)

Yes, baby, it's me. It's really me.

Kristin goes into her mother's arms.

KRISTIN

I thought you had gone.

CHRISTINE

No.

KRISTIN

I thought you had gone far away.

CHRISTINE

I'm right here.

Suddenly, the light changes. The sky streaks with violent slashes of purple and green. Storm clouds gather, dark and threatening as lightning flashes. Jagged peaks rise, surrounding them -- rising higher than the mountaintop on which they sit.

KRISTIN

It's so high. You never told me

how high it is.

CHRISTINE

Don't be afraid.

Mist sweeps in, shrouding mother in daughter in a fog of white. The earth trembles. Wind blows, swirling the mist. A figure emerges atop one of the peaks: Christiana.

CHRISTINE

Look, Kristie.

Another peak clears to reveal Tsashin.

CHRISTINE

Look.

And atop the third peak, Jane.

CHRISTINE

Look.

INT. KRISTIN'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Kristin awakens. Outside the window, the river flows. The sky is bright blue, washed clean from the rain. She rises.

EXT. FORT DUCHESNE - MORNING

In her blue Impala, Kristin drives through town, and along a gravel fire road through the dusty foothills to the head of a mountain trail. She gets out of the car, shoulders her backpack, and heads up the trail.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - MORNING

Kristin hikes. The wind whistles through the aspen trees, their silver trunks shining in the morning sun. Owls hoot, a crow caws, and high up in the cloudless sky, a hawk circles on the wind.

A stream flows across her path, bubbling gently against its stone bed. Morning passes to noon. Kristin rests, peched atop a jutting stone, eating her midday meal.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - MIDDAY

Kristin hikes on. The path ascends steeply, then dips and bends, cutting through a stone canyon of towering red rock. The wind rises, a mournful whistling sound swirling and building within the red stone. Rocks jut out at odd angles; sun and shade play against the stone creating shadows, images, faces. As if out of a mist, faces, sharply defined appear, out of the very stone. The wind whispers -- words, an ancinet tongue, muted, unclear, rising. Kristin stands in the stone canyon, the faces and whispers rising all around her. Up above, a shadow crosses the path. Kristin follows the

shadow.

The path is high, the air is thin, but Kristin runs, pursuing the shadow. She rounds another bend. In the clearing, Sowowic, in full reaglia, stands atop a jutting stone, pointing to a distant summit.

SOWOWIC

That's Ouray's Peak.

EXT. SOWOWIC'S CABIN - DUSK

Kristin hikes through the woods along the river to Sowowic's cabin. As she approaches, he stands on the porch, simply dressed in khakis and denim shirt. Seeing him, she stops. They regard each other a long moment in silence. It is obvious he could have, physically, been nowhere near that mountain peak.

KRISTIN

I want to know about my mother.

EXT. UINTAH AND OURAY RESERVATION - DAY

Billy Max drives his jeep, Sowowic in front and Kristin in back, through the reservation.

They stop before a tidy stone house. A young Indian woman, and three small children greet them.

SOWOWIC

Kristin, this is Silvie.

Silvie grasps Kristin's hands, tears shining in her eyes.

SILVIE

Dr. Christine's daughter.

Deeply moved, Silvie lays her hand aside Kristin's face. She reaches for the hand of her oldest daughter, Melania, a pretty young girl about eight years old.

SILVIE

Melania, say hello to Dr. Christine's daughter. This is Kristin.

MELANIA

Hello.

KRISTIN

Hello.

The children surround Kristin, chattering, reaching to touch her.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE RESERVATION - DAY

Sowowic speaks as Billy drives.

SOWOWIC

Your mother was a powerful healer.
She learned very quickly, as if
all her power had lain in wait,
curled inside like a firey
serpent, gathering force, waiting
for release. There is no doubt she
had Jane's blood.

As Billy Max drives through the reservation, Kristin meets
the people her mother worked with, helped, and healed.

EXT. SOWOWIC'S CABIN - SUNSET

Through the open door, Billy Max can be seen preparing the
evening meal, as Kristin sits on the porch with Sowowic.

KRISTIN

How did she die?

SOWOWIC

Cancer. Like your grandmother.
Like your grandmother, her passing
was painless. Except for here.
(he folds his hand
over his heart)
Here, her heart lay divided.

The sun blazes brightly, then dips below the horizon. Long
purple shadows reach through the trees, lengthening in the
gloaming. Mountain peaks glisten in the distance.

SOWOWIC

Look how long the shadows are.
That's the spirit that lies in
everything coming out. Now, at
twilight, that spirit is at its
strongest. Look at the shadows of
the mountains. Look as they spread
themselves wide across the land.
Everything is contained within
them. Past, present, and future.

EXT. CHRISTINE'S CABIN - EVENING

Kristin, Billy Max, and Sowowic follow a path through the
woods behind his cabin.

SOWOWIC

This is where Christine lived.

INT. CHRISTINE'S CABIN - EVENING

A tidy one-room cabin. A pine bed stands in one corner

surrounded by wooden shelves filled with books. Across the room is a fireplace, and at the opposite end, a small kitchenette, with a small bath off of that. The walls around the bedroom area, and the fireplace are covered with photographs.

SOWOWIC

She liked having her family all around her.

Kristin looks at the photographs: Mickey and Christine, Jamie, Jamie and Kristin, and her grandmother Christiana, her family in various poses and groupings. In neat round writing, Christine has labeled each picture.

Sowowic moves to another set of photographs: Christiana as a child, hanging on to her mother Tsashin, who stands next to a handsome white man, his arm around her.

SOWOWIC

That's your great-grandmother, Tsashin.

KRISTIN

I remember that picture.

SOWOWIC

With her handsome Army Captain Jeremiah Tilden.

He moves across the room to the living area where older prints in sepia tones line the walls, and sit on the mantlepiece.

SOWOWIC

These are the White River folks.

KRISTIN

Douglas, Jack, Ouray
(she glances at
Sowowic)
-- Chief of all the Utes.

She comes to the picture of her great-great grandmother, a tall, thin woman, beautiful and angular, with piercing black eyes.

SOWOWIC

Jane.

Standing next to Jane is a handsome young man. Next to this photograph, a picture of another young man astride a pony, riding bareback, his arms stretched wide in front of him.

SOWOWIC

Jane's husband, Pauvitz. And his brother, Antelope.

KRISTIN

Did you know her?

SOWOWIC

(he nods)

Jane was the best medicine woman
in all of Colorado. She could
charm the pants off of anybody.
She was a slave child....

KRISTIN

A slave child!

SOWOWIC

They did that then. Her parents
died young, who's going to take
care of her? She was sold first to
Chief Tabby, but she didn't like
him. Said he was too fat and
always making her cook. She ran
away so much he finally sold her
to a judge from Virginia, Carter...

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

INT. JUDGE'S MANSION - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A teenage Jane waits table at a sumptuous banquet, pouring
wine expertly, and flirting outrageously with the guests.

A handsome young soldier beckons her, waving his glass:

SOLDIER

Jane! Miss Jane! My cup is empty!

Jane sashays to the soldier, pouring his cup to the brim.

JANE

Now, your cup runs over.

The guests laugh. From the head of the table, the Judge booms:

JUDGE CARTER

Why, Miss Jane, you just quoted
the Bible. How do you come to know
our Good Book?

JANE

Judge Carter, every white person
I ever met made a big point of
showing me that Book.

The table erupts with laughter. Jane sashays away.

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. JUDGE CARTER'S MANSION -NIGHT

In the dead of night, Jane steals away from the mansion across the comound to the corral.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

Jane liked the judge pretty well,
but not enough to stop her from
roaming.

Jane mounts a pony, and rides off toward the mountains.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

Somebody always brought her
back, 'cause the judge paid twenty-
five dollars for her safe return.
But one day she came back on her
own, with a handsome young brave
by her side.

EXT. JUDGE CARTER'S MANSION - CORRAL -DAY

Jane and Pauvitz ride up to the judge, and dismount. Jane approaches the Judge with Pauvitz in tow.

JANE

Judge Carter, this man's gonna be
my husband.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

The judge let her go with his
blessing...

Jane and Pauvitz mount their ponies, and ride wild and free back to the mountains.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

... a fifty dollar bonus, and the
two ponies she had already stolen.

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

INT. CHRISTINE'S CABIN - EVENING

Sowowic stands at the stone fireplace.

On the fireplace mantle, a photograph shows a teen-age Tsashin linked arm in arm with a white girl about the same age. In the background, Nathan Meeker beams, his arm around his wife, Arvilla. Written in Christine's neat round hand is the inscription: The Meekers. Nathan, Arvilla, and Josie with Tsashin.

SOWOWIC

When Nathan Meeker came to White
River, she was the first Indian he
met. He hired her on the spot as

a maid for his wife.
(he glances sideways
at Kristin)
You know the story of White River?

Kristin shakes her head no.

SOWOWIC
Neither did Christine when she
first came here.

EXT. UINTAH AND OURAY RESERVATION - DAY

Sowowic, Kristin, and Billy Max gather plants and herbs in a meadow. Sowowic approaches a circle of plants, and points to the centermost plant.

SOWOWIC
This one's the Chief.

He removes some grains of tobacco from a pouch he wears attached to his belt, and holding them up to the sun, chants a prayer softly. then he places the grains at the base of the plant that is the Chief.

SOWOWIC
Okay. We gotta spread out. We
can't take everything from one
place.

Kristin and Billy Max move out in opposite directions, gathering.

SOWOWIC
This meadow here has hundreds of
things I can use for my medicine.
Right here in front of us, I can
see ten, maybe twelve plants.
Yarrow, there. Wild plum. Clover.
Everything set before us by the
Great Spirit for a purpose.
Everything on Earth has a purpose.

Kristin and Billy Max, absorbed in their work, widen out even further. Sowowic continues to speak, his voice filling the space. He speaks easily, quietly, but his words echo throughout the field, resonating on the wind.

SOWOWIC
The mountains used to be filled
with elk and deer, buffalo, bear.
But the invaders came, gobbling
their way through the mountains,
never giving thanks, or even
thought to what they did. Then
tractors came, and big shovels
digging deep, ripping through the

earth in search of her veins of
gold and silver and coal. And the
earth bled. And a chain of
disharmony was created.

Kristin straightens up from her gathering. When she looks up,
a shiver runs through her. Sowowic stands in the far
distance, a shimmering mirgae in the wavering sunlight.

SOWOWIC

The Creator created the Earth and
everything on her for all of us to
live with in harmony.

EXT. UINTAH AND OURAY RESERVATION - DAY - (LATER)

Billy Max wheels the Jeep back towards Sowowic's cabin,
singing loudly along to a country-western tune playing on the
radio. Sowowic watches his antics in great amusement. Kristin
sits in absorbed silence in the back, still wondering just
what happened in that meadow.

EXT. SOWOWIC'S CABIN - DAY

Billy Max brakes the Jeep. They get out.

SOWOWIC

Okay. I'll see you two later.

He walks toward his cabin. Billy Max and Kristin walk down
the wooded path to Christine's cabin.

INT. CHRISTINE'S CABIN - DAY

Billy Max leans his lanky frame against the sink, drinking a
glass of water. Kristin paces.

KRISTIN

I thought he was standing right
next to me, but when I looked up,
he was way across the field.

Billy Max grins, shrugs, and says nothing.

KRISTIN

I want to know what happened!

BILLY MAX

You thought he was standing right
next to you but when you looked
up, he was way across the field.

KRISTIN

You know what I mean.

Billy Max crosses to the mantle, sees the w'ni thokunup.

BILLY MAX

That's a w'ni thokunup.

KRISTIN

It was my mother's.

BILLY MAX

It's older than that. Probably her mother's. You know what happens at Bear Dance? The woman tugs on the blanket of the man she wants to dance with. After that, they get married.

Kristin crosses to him, taking the w'ni thokunup.

BILLY MAX

Bear Dance is coming up this Spring. You want to tug on my blanket?

KRISTIN

I want you to tell me what happened in that field.

BILLY MAX

Kristie, you saw what you saw.

KRISTIN

What about you?

BILLY MAX

I saw what I saw, too.

KRISTIN

And what was that?

BILLY MAX

I was way over across the other side of the field.

KRISTIN

I saw him up in the mountains. When I was hiking. There was no way he could've been there.

BILLY MAX

Once, I saw him turn into a bear.

KRISTIN

(her eyes wide)

Did you?

Billy shrugs and grins again.

KRISTIN

(howling in

frustration)
Oh! You're driving me crazy!

BILLY MAX
Come on! Let's go dancing!

KRISTIN
Dancing?

BILLY MAX
It's Saturday night. The River
Front's got live music on Saturday
night.

INT. RIVER FRONT SALOON - NIGHT

A small town saloon crowded with regulars. A Country-Western band plays a lively number as Billy Max and Kristin dance a two-step line dance with a large group of people. They move easily, gracefully together.

The music ends, and they sit at a nearby table.

KRISTIN
I'm not done with you yet.

BILLY MAX
I certainly hope not.

KRISTIN
I mean about my previous line of
inquiry.

The band plays a slow waltz. Billy Max rises, bowing at the waist, holding out his hand.

BILLY MAX
Mademoiselle. S'il vous plait.

As they dance to the mournful love song, Billy Max looks into her eyes. Kristin smiles up at him in response. He traces a finger along her jawline, turning her gently in his arms, pulling her in more tightly to him.

EXT. RIVER FRONT SALOON - NIGHT

Kristin and Billy Max leave the saloon, and walk down the street to his jeep.

EXT. CHRISTINE'S CABIN - NIGHT

Billy Max and Kristin walk through the woods to her cabin. A swollen orange moon rises. They reach the porch, and stand in silence, looking at the moon.

BILLY MAX
I should go.

Neither one moves. Billy Max turns to her, reaching for her. He runs his fingers lightly through her hair, caressing the tips.

BILLY MAX

Ah, Kristin.

He lifts her chin, and under the swollen moon, kisses her gently. Holding her close, he speaks softly:

BILLY MAX

The things you want to know, you will know in time. They will come to you here...

(he places his hand
lightly over her
heart)

In their time. All you have to do, is be patient, wait, and open yourself up to them.

EXT. DREAM SEQUENCE - WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - DAWN

Kristin dreams.

Jane and Pauvitz walk along a mountain stream that trickles through a wide meadow bursting with new spring growth. Pauvitz carries a bow and arrow. The sky radiates with pink and blue as the sun rises. As they round a bend, they stop suddenly. Before them a buffalo drinks from the stream. The beast raises his head, his eyes locking with theirs. He stamps the ground, then shakes his head as water from his mane flies in a circle all around him. The buffalo begins slowly moving forward.

Pauvitz raises his arrow. He chants a prayer in his native tongue aloud, and fires. The arrows pierces through the buffalo's shoulder, and into his heart. Mortally wounded, the beast cries out loud, falling to his knees.

Pauvitz shoots another arrow. It pierces the buffalo, and with one last mighty cry, the beast falls silent.

Pauvitz and Jane approach the kill. Pauvitz kneels before the beast, uttering a prayer of thanks.

A strong wind suddenly blows, passing by the kneeling Pauvitz. Pauvitz shudders deeply, as if the wind, the spirit of this mighty beast, has passed right through him.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - MORNING

Sowowic, Kristin, and Billy Max walk the same trail Kristin had walked earlier, when she had her vision of Sowowic. They come to a mountain stream. Sowowic pulls out a flask, filling it with the clear water.

SOWOWIC

I should come here all the time to
gather the water. It's purer here.
Closer to the source.

He walks to the mountain edge, Kristin and Billy Max
following.

SOWOWIC

See down there, from the edge of
the river all the way up against
the foothills, that was all Jane's
land.

Kristin climbs atop a jutting rock, pointing.

KRISTIN

That's Ouray's Peak.

Sowowic looks up at her, and smiles.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - MORNING

Billy Max wheels the jeep down the mountain.

INT. JEEP - MORNING

SOWOWIC

I was just a little guy when the
Massacre occurred and we were
pushed out of the mountains. My
mother struggled to carry me on
her back all those dusty miles.

The jeep pulls up aside a field, and the three get out.

Billy Max takes a blanket and a picnic basket out of the back
of the Jeep.

Kristin looks over the land. In the far distance, bumping
against the foothills, tractors chew across the land.

KRISTIN

They look like prehistoric
monsters.

SOWOWIC

Predators.

Kristin bends to the ground, picking up a rock.

KRISTIN

(holding the rock)

This is her land. This is where
she lived. This is where she died.

SOWOWIC

This is where she farmed, too. You should have seen that farm! She could coax anything out of the Earth.

Billy Max spreads the blanket out, and they sit.

SOWOWIC

Billy Max, hand me that flask. Yeah. That one.

KRISTIN

Rocky Mountain spring water.

SOWOWIC

Paul Masson Emerald Dry.

Billy Max grins wide.

SOWOWIC

This is a long story. We're gonna be her all night. That's thirsty work.

As Billy Max hands out sandwiches, Sowowic speaks.

SOWOWIC

Nathan Meeker came to White River to build Paradise.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE MEEKER HOME - WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - NIGHT

Soft yellow lamplight fills the windows of the tidy home, reflecting warmly in the newly-fallen snow. From the house, the final strains of "Silent Night" ring out.

A legend on the screen reads:

White River, Colorado. Christmas 1878.

INT. MEEKER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Around the dining room table, Nathan, Arvilla, Josie, Jane, Tsashin, and Pauvitz sing the final notes of "Silent Night," Pauvitz stumbling good-naturedly. The remains of a bountiful Christmas feast spread out before them.

Arvilla reads from the Bible.

ARVILLA

"Behold, I bring to you good news of great joy, for to you is born this day in the city of David a savior who is Christ the Lord."

The Meekers respond "Amen."

After the prayer, Josie clapping her hands together, rises.

JOSIE

And now it's time for fruitcake!

TSASHIN

Fruitcake?

JOSIE

Oh, Tsashin, you have never tasted anything like my mother's fruitcake. She even uses rum.

PAUVITZ

Rum. That's good.

NATHAN

I'll help you, Josie.

ARVILLA

No, Father, sit down. I'll do it.

NATHAN

Mother, you sit. You've been laboring all day.

ARVILLA

With Jane's splendid help. And Tsashin's.

NATHAN

Then you all must sit! I've done nothing but eat and smoke cigars all day.

ARVILLA

I declare, I could have done without the cigars.

The company laughs.

PAUVITZ

Tobacco is good, Mrs. Meeker. You should try it.

ARVILLA

Heavens above!

TSASHIN

Sure, Miss Arvilla. Ask Josie. Miss Josie likes tobacco.

Quelling the storm before it can rise, Josie grabs her father's arm and ushers him off to the kitchen.

Arvilla turns to Tsashin.

ARVILLA

Josie tells me you are enjoying
your duties at the schoolhouse.

TSASHIN

Oh, yes! Josie is so smart! She
knows everything, and she's
teaching me. She even has my
father almost convinced to learn
to read and write English.

Pauvitz grins.

Suddenly from the kitchen Nathan utters an anguished cry.
Arvilla rises:

ARVILLA

Nathan!

NATHAN (O.S.)

It's all right, mother. I've just
burned my hand.

EXT. MEEKER HOME - NIGHT

Outside, Jane firmly grasps Nathan's hand, and plunges it
into the snow.

NATHAN

(wincing)

Ah...

JANE

The first thing you gotta do with
a burn is get it cool as fast as
you can. If you're gonna burn
yourself, Mr. Meeker, winter's the
time to do it.

From the pouch she carries on her belt, Jane takes out a
container of salve, running it firmly over the burn.

NATHAN

What's that?

JANE

Red ochre, four o'clock,
sagebrush -- this is how you call
them in English -- pentesman,
hairy umbrella wort all mixed up
with buffalo fat.

(he winces)

Hurt?

NATHAN

Just a bit.

JANE

It won't for long. See?

She holds her hand up against his cheek.

JANE

Feel how hot that is? That's the power of medicine. I always feel the power first in my hands.

Nathan, gingerly flexes his hand.

NATHAN

I don't feel any pain.

JANE

Sure. That's the best medicine there is. Indian medicine.

NATHAN

But Jane ...

(he flexes again)

Why, that's remarkable.

JANE

Why? It all comes from the Great Spirit. Just like your Jesus.

She indicates the handkerchief in his breast pocket.

JANE

Give me that. I gotta wrap your hand.

(she wraps his hand)

Sunawiv, that's how we call the Great Spirit, created all the Earth, all the plants and animals, everything to live together in harmony.

NATHAN

Harmony. I've searched for harmony all my life.

JANE

You have?

NATHAN

I believe it is possible to create harmony on earth. I do. I believe it is possible for all the Earth to live as one.

JANE

Mr. Meeker, now you sound like Indian.

NATHAN

Help me, Jane.

JANE

Help you, Mr. Meeker?

NATHAN

If you and Pauvitz would farm, just a small piece of land, I know the others will follow.

JANE

Oh. I don't know, Mr. Meeker.

NATHAN

Jane, if your People refuse to work, if they do not learn to cultivate the land, you will not survive. Change, change is coming.

JANE

I heard Ouray speak of this change.

NATHAN

Yes, Ouray. I've met him.

JANE

He has a farm.

NATHAN

A beautiful farm. And a house made of wood. Year round he lives in shelter and comfort.

JANE

He says we must bend before the storm. We must bend with the wind that blows, or, even like the mighty oak, we will break.

NATHAN

I've seen the broken People, Jane. All across this country. It's a horrible sight to see.

Jane regards him a long moment in silence.

JANE

I think I'm gonna help you, Mr. Meeker.

NATHAN

Jane. Oh. Good. Oh, that's good, Jane.

JANE

I think maybe it is not such a bad thing to farm.

NATHAN

Not a bad thing at all. Jane, I swear to you, I give you my oath, if you follow me, as long as I live, neither you nor any of your people shall ever know any harm.

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. JANE'S LAND - DUSK

Billy Max builds a fire, as Sowowic and Kristin sit in the gathering dark. Long purple shadows reach across the land, staining the Earth with their violet presence. At the foot of the mountains, the great tractors belch puffs of black smoke into the darkening sky. A light snow begins to fall.

SOWOWIC

Like her chiefs before her, she believed him. Like her chiefs before her, she made her treaty with him.

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - JANE'S GARDEN - MORNING

Jane tends her garden, Tsashin by her side as Nathan instructs her.

Over the scene Sowowic speaks.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

Jane farmed. But Pauvitz refused. As did their chief, Jack.

NATHAN

That's it, Jane, good. Don't dig the hole too deep. No, Tsashin, that's too close. They're just tiny seeds now, but by the beginning of September, they'll be so big, large plants, their leaves bursting with all manner of good things to eat.

JANE

What we gonna have?

NATHAN

Tomatoes, corn, squash, beans. And next year, once we have this

garden growing, I'll show you how to plant all the things you use for your medicine.

JANE

Yeah? You can make them grow all in one place?

NATHAN

All in one corner of your garden.

Jack and Pauvitz walk by.

PAUVITZ

Working hard, Jane?

NATHAN

Come give us a hand.

JACK

We gonna go shoot some deer, Mr. Meeker. Pauvitz and me bring you back something good to eat. Meat. Not flowers.

JANE

Pauvitz, I think maybe you got some time to help Mr. Meeker first.

PAUVITZ

Okay, okay. What you need, Mr. Meeker?

NATHAN

Tip that barrell over, will you? Then take a shovel, and spread the fertilizer out over here.

Jack helps Pauvitz tip the barrell over.

PAUVITZ

Phew! That stinks!

Jack, Jane, and Tsashin giggle.

NATHAN

It's only fertilizer.

JACK

It's cow shit.

They all laugh louder.

NATHAN

It makes the garden grow!

PAUVITZ

Jane and Tsashin gonna have to
sleep in some other place tonight.

TSASHIN

Papa!

JACK

Come on, Pauvitz, let's go. Get
away from that stink.

NATHAN

Oh, for heaven's sakes!

As they leave, Jane turns to Nathan.

JANE

Don't you worry, Mr. Meeker. If
this garden gonna grow the way you
say, by September they gonna
forget all about the stink. They
gonna eat as much beans as anybody
else.

EXT. WHITE RIVER COLORADO - LODGE HOUSE - DAY

In front of the Lodge House by the Smoking Earth River,
Jack's band prepares for the hunt.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

Spring blossomed to mid-summer,
then fall, and Jack's band of
White River Utes prepared to go on
their hunt.

Pauvitz, and Antelope carry bows, arrows, and hunting knives,
packing their gear into their ponies saddlebags.
Jane, Tsashin, and other Ute women pack cooking utensils and
gear.

Nathan Meeker appears, walking rapidly, waving wildly.

NATHAN

Jane! Jane!

JANE

Hey, Mr. Meeker. I was just gonna
go find you.

NATHAN

I met Tsashin at the river. She
said you're preparing for your
hunt.

JANE

Yeah. Pauvitz and me gonna bring
you back whatever you want.
Buffalo, elk, deer? Maybe bear?

NATHAN

Jane...

JANE

When we come back, we gonna put everything together. All the meat, and all those vegetables growing in my garden -- did you see my garden?

NATHAN

(clipped, impatient)

Yes. Of course.

JANE

We gonna have enough food to last all winter!

NATHAN

(sharply)

Jane! A garden needs to be tended.

JANE

Sure. You told me.

NATHAN

And just how do you plan on tending yours when you are miles away roaming about on your hunt.

JANE

But that's what you're gonna do..

NATHAN

Me...?

JANE

You and all those Greeley boys. You tend the garden, we hunt, and when we get back together...

NATHAN

Jane! You promised you would help me!

JANE

I did help you, Mr. Meeker. You wanted me to plant. I planted.

NATHAN

You don't just plant once!

JANE

And because I planted, many families in Jack's band planted, too.

NATHAN

And now they're all going off on the hunt! You think you can just throw seeds into the ground and build a farm?

JANE

I know it don't work that way!

NATHAN

A garden is like a child. It needs care...

JANE

But that's what you're supposed to do.

NATHAN

(furious)

No, Damn it, Jane, no! I am not here to do your work for you.

JANE

Our work?

NATHAN

If you are going to build a community, if your People are going to build a community, then your People must learn to do the work involved.

JANE

We do our work. Indian work.

NATHAN

There is no longer any need for your Indian work.

JANE

No need?

NATHAN

Look around you! Look at what I've built for you!

JANE

Mr. Meeker. The Ute --- he is first, a hunter.

NATHAN

There is no need for you to hunt!

JANE

(placing her fist
over her heart)

The need is here.

NATHAN

Oh, God, Almighty!

JANE

Mr. Meeker, how much time you say it takes to grow a garden?

NATHAN

Three moons. At least three moons.

JANE

How much to grow a tree?

NATHAN

Jane...

JANE

Oak tree grows for two, maybe three hundred years. My People lived in these mountains for thousands. When change comes, Mr. Meeker, it got to come slow.

NATHAN

How much time do you think you've got? If your People refuse to work, if you continue to squander what the good Lord has given you, then other people will come, white people will come, and they will take this land from you.

JANE

The land is ours.

NATHAN

No. No it is not. This land belongs to the United States Government. Your People are here by their good graces alone.

JANE

You told me we would have peace and riches for all time to come.

NATHAN

If you work this land.

JANE

You swore to me, on your life, you would never see us harmed.

NATHAN

If you follow me.

JANE

You say this is not our land? You
say, this is not our land!

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. JANE'S LAND - NIGHT

A light snow continues to fall. Kristin, Billy Max and
Sowowic sit before the fire.

SOWOWIC

That year, for the first time
since anyone could remember, they
didn't go on the hunt. But they
didn't farm, either. Jane didn't
want to work for Meeker anymore,
but Jack wanted her there. He
wanted someone near him all the
time. Someone he could trust.

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - MORNING

Sowowic's voice over continues:

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

A few of the Utes farmed. Douglas'
band mostly.

Chief Douglas and a small group of his followers toil
feverishly in the noonday sun.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

Once in a while Jack would take a
party to Middle Park or Twenty
Mile Park to hunt...

Jack and his band ride their ponies on the hunt.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

...but they would return the same
day, or at the very latest the day
after. Jack wanted to stay as
close as possible to the agency.
He wanted to know at all times
what Nathan Meeker was doing.

MONTAGE OF SCENES

In the Meeker home, Jane works silently beside Arvilla.

At the schoolhouse, Josie teaches four or five children as
Tsashin assists.

In town, the Greeley Boys build new storefronts, the sound of

hammers ringing through the town.

INT. NATHAN MEEKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Nathan sits at his desk writing a letter:

NATHAN (V.O.)

"My dear Commissioner Hayt. At the end of June, there is much to report. We have plowed eighty acres and by September these fields will yield corn, winter wheat, beans, tomatoes, and squash. Some families have even planted flowers. However, it is still only Chief Douglas' band that works..."

MONTAGE OF SCENES CONTINUES:

Jack and his band throw knives, Jack winning.

Jack, Pauvitz, and Antelope track deer and other small game.

Jack, Jane, Pauvitz, Tsashin, and Josie among others watch as Antelope races his pony around the track by the lodge house.

NATHAN (V.O.)

Not a single member of Jack's band will do anything.

It is the natural tendency of the savage to shy away from civilized work...

The race is close, but suddenly Antelope sprints forward, winning easily. As Nathan's voice over finishes, a huge cheer rises from the crowd. Josie claps her hands and cries out:

JOSIE

He won! He won! Antelope won!

She hugs Tsashin. Money changes hands, several people laying money in Josie's outstretched palm.

NATHAN (V.O.)

...but I remain determined to guide them to the joys of labor and value of material goods. I have decided that in order to spur them on, I shall cut the rations of each and every Indian to the starvation point if that is what is necessary to get them to work.

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - DAY

Sowowic's voice over continues:

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

Nothing Meeker did could get them
to work, but he was bound and
determined to find a way...

A grassy field waves and shimmers in the summer sunshine.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

Next to the track where the ponies
raced was a long wide field where
they grazed. The grass was so
thick and green there, it covered
the Earth like a river that had no
banks.

Sounds filter in: the wind whispering through the grass,
horses' hooves pounding, the distant throbbing of a threshing
machine, and the heavy, tearing, plundering sound of a plow
as it is dragged across the Earth.

The horses hooves pound harder, sharper, building in
intensity. Suddenly Pauvitz, with Antelope at his side bursts
into view at the top of the field, galloping fiercely.

The men fly across to the other edge of the field. Nathan
Meeker stands coolly, watching a young Greeley Boy, Shadrich
Price, as he plows the land.

Pauvitz flies from his pony, marching towards Meeker,
Antelope at his side.

PAUVITZ

This is not your land.

NATHAN

This land will yield two hundred
acres of winter wheat.

PAUVITZ

This is not your land!

NATHAN

The community needs this land now.

PAUVITZ

There's plenty of other land.

NATHAN

This tract is the finest.

PAUVITZ

You promised Jack you don't touch
the ponies.

NATHAN

I promised Jack I would not let
his People starve.

PAUVITZ

We got thousands of ponies. Where
they gonna graze if you tear up
this land?

NATHAN

For God's sake, man. What is more
important? Your People or your
ponies? If you cannot take care of
the ponies you have, then perhaps
you'd best kill some of them.

Fire glints in Pauvitz's eyes. Slowly he approaches Nathan.
Nathan stands his ground, but fear flickers across his face.
Pauvitz grabs Nathan by the collar, then without a word,
shoves him away, his power so fierce, the agent stumbles
backward and falls to the ground.

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - MOUNTAINS TRAIL - DAY

Sowowic's voice over continues as Jack with Pauvitz and
Antelope ride high up in the mountains.

SOWOWIC (V.O.)

They didn't want war. Jack had
been to war many times. He had
fought with the Pueblo and the
Paiute against the Spanish. With
his own People against the
Cheyenne. He had fought with the
white man against the Sioux. He
had seen enough to know that
whenever the red man fights
against the white, it is always
the red man who loses.

Suddenly, Jack signals the others to stop. Marching to the
North, is a line of soldiers riding on horseback.

JACK

Soldiers. Riding to Fort Rawlins.

EXT. WHITE RIVER, MEEKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Jack, Pauvitz, and Antelope ride up to the Agency office.
Jane joins them from another direction.

INT. MEEKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Nathan pounds his desk in fury.

NATHAN

I tell you I had no choice!

JACK

And I tell you, soldiers come,
that means war!

NATHAN

No, Jack...

JACK

War!

NATHAN

I don't feel safe.

JACK

Neither do my People!

NATHAN

(indicating Pauvitz)
He attacked me viciously.

JACK

Since you been here, you done
nothing but attack us.

NATHAN

How? How have I attacked you?

JACK

You threaten us with soldiers. You
threaten us with prison. You take
your white man's tools and tear up
where our ponies graze. And now,
you have soldiers coming here,
here to our land.

NATHAN

Only for peace.

JACK

Peace. With guns and whips and
chains. You are a very bad man.

NATHAN

(anguished)
No.

JACK

And very bad for us.

NATHAN

No, no, no. Why can't I get
through! Why can't I get your
People to understand!

JANE

Indians don't understand guns for
peace.

NATHAN

I only want harmony.

JANE

You only want us white!

Crushed, Nathan walks away from them.

JACK

My scouts tell me your soldiers
are near Little Snake River.

You tell them to set up camp at
Bear River.

NATHAN

Jack, that's thirty miles from
here.

JACK

That's right. They gonna stop
there. Then you, me, Pauvitz,
Antelope, Colorow, and Piah, we
gonna pow-wow. We gonna make
peace, Mr. Meeker. Without guns.

NATHAN

All right, Jack. All right.

He crosses to his desk, and begins writing the orders.

NATHAN

Maybe that way... with a third
party... a negotiator...
...because Jack, you and me, we've
never been able to ... come to an
understanding. You don't believe
me, I know, but that is all I have
ever wanted.

(he looks at Jane,
eyes pleading)

Harmony. Often, you know, the man
who brings peace, who brings
unity, often that man is not
understood, or even recognized in
his own time. Often he is even
despised. Yes, despised. But if
good can come, good will come,
what does it matter.

(he sets down his pen)

We'll meet, and all the ... bad
blood, will evaporate, disperse
into the air like the smoke from
our peace pipes, and we will have
harmony.

JACK

Mr. Meeker, from Bear River flows Milk Creek. This is the border to our land. Settled by treaty with the United States Government. If one soldier sets one foot across Milk Creek, we got war.

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. JANE'S LAND - DAWN

The fire smoulders, the embers dying. Dawn breaks quietly across the distant peaks, shimmering softly under a blanket of freshly fallen snow.

SOWOWIC

We got war.

EXT. UINTAH AND OURAY RESERVATION - EVENING

Earth passes into deep winter. The waters of the Duchesne River clog with ice, snow piles along their banks.

In an open space on the reservation, a fire glows brightly in a pit. Sowowic, Billy Max, Kristin, and another young woman, Isabelle sit in a circle around the fire.

Sowowic lights a pipe, inhaling the smoke deeply. The smoke billows from his moun as he faces the four directions:

SOWOWIC

To the East, where the Sun first comes/
To the North, to the power of the Wind/
To the South, where the gentle waters lay/
To the West, to the mysteries of the Night./
To the Sun, Father Light.
To the Earth, Mother Strength.

Sowowic passes the pipe to Kristin, who inhales, and passes it on to Isabella. Isabella inhales, and passes the pipe to Billy Max. Sowowic speaks to Isabella.

SOWOWIC

Why have you come to me?

ISABELLA

My skin is covered with rash.

SOWOWIC

And why do you wish to be relieved of this condition?

ISABELLA

There is much work I have to do.
I come to help the little ones

learn our sacred dances. But the
rash makes my movement difficult,
my teaching painful.

Sowowic places his hands on Isabella's shoulders, throwing
his head back with a wailing chant.

From his medicine pouch he withdraws an eagle feather, and in
long sweeping arcs, passes the feather all around Isabella.
With each pass he moves back to the fire, vigorously shaking
the feather over a piece of red meat that has been placed
among the coals, his lips constantly moving in prayer.

SOWOWIC

We ask that Isabella be relieved
of this condition. Our People
fight despair everyday. They have
been wrenched from their homeland,
pushed out of the mountains that
have always been their strength,
and they need much courage to
survive. With Isabella's help, the
children will be guided in the
ancient ways. We ask this of you
great Spirit because we wish it to
be this way.

EXT. UINTAH AND OURAY RESERVATION - EVENING - (LATER)

The fire glows softly. Sowowic hands a container of salve to
Isabella.

SOWOWIC

Cover the afflicted area once at
sunrise, then again at sunset.
That should do the trick. You'll
be okay.

ISABELLA

Thank-you, Sowowic.

Isabella leaves. Sowowic returns to the circle. He sits
heavily, awkwardly. Billy Max immediately notices that he has
been weakened by the ceremony.

BILLY MAX

You do too much.

SOWOWIC

I do what is necessary.

INT. TRIBAL COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Sowowic, Kristin, and Billy Max watch as Isabella leads a
group of young girls in a tribal dance and song. Sowowic
beams. He rises, joining in with the dance, chanting the song.

EXT. TRIBAL COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Sowowic, Billy Max, and Kristin walk to Billy Max's jeep.

SOWOWIC

When Isabella first started her school, no one would come. The little ones would cover their mouth and giggle, "Who wants to learn junk like that?" Now they come from all over.

(he smiles broadly)

Isabella went with her grandmother to all the tribes. Mountain Ute, Southern, Northern. And even to our cousins, the Shoshone, and Hopi, to learn the proper way.

Kristin regards him closely.

KRISTIN

You have no despair.

SOWOWIC

Nope. Don't believe in it. It's negative energy, Kristin. There's a time for everything, and signs to indicate the right time. One day, the time will be right, and the white buffalo will come. Then all the people of the Earth, will flow together in the River of Many Colors, and the earth will live once more without pain.

EXT. UINTAH AND OURAY RESERVATION - DAY

Spring awakens the Earth. Across the Reservation, new growth bursts forth.

Trucks, vans, and cars arrive at the central gathering circle on the Reservation. People of many nations, Utes, Shoshone, Apache, Navajoe, as well as non-Indians of varied ethnicity arrive for Bear Dance.

Booths of food, crafts, and games line the perimeters. A group of older women play hand games with children. Another group of women, gamble with cards.

Kristin arrives with Billy Max, Isabella, Silvie and her children, and several other young men and women. Billy Max spreads a blanket on the ground. Kristin sits with Isabella and Silvie, as the children dash off to play hand games. Billy Max spreads out another blanket, as do the other men.

Sowowic arrives. He goes to one end of the circle where several chairs have been set up behind a box covered with

corrugated tin. Several men sit there waiting.

When Sowowic arrives, they all place w'ni thokunups atop the tin, and rub the carved and notched sticks up and down with a smaller stick. A sound like thunder, rumbles.

All around the circle, young girls, giggling shyly, or grinning boldly, ask young men to dance.

Billy Max looks expectantly at Kristin. She blushes, and looks away.

In the center, two lines of dancers face each other -- one male, one female. They dance in rhythm to the sound of the drum.

Isabella and Silvie jostle Kristin.

ISABELLA

Go ask Billy Max to dance.

SILVIE

Go on, Kristie. Go tug on his blanket.

With much prodding, Kristin finally tugs on Billy Max's blanket. Billy Max springs up, bows, and leads her to the dance line.

Sowowic stands watching the People. He sees Isabella leading a group of young girls in the dance. He sees Silvie with her children, with Melania, playing hand games. He hears the rumbling of the drum. He sees young men and women dancing. He looks out beyond the circle of folding chairs and umbrellas, blankets, and games and sees the Reservation, shimmering in the awakening Spring sunlight, seedlings coaxed forth from the sleepy Earth.

He sees People of many Nations, as well as non-Indians celebrating the awakening of the Earth.

He sees Billy Max, and Kristin, arms wrapped about each other's waists, feet high-stepping, hair flowing, dancing in sweet rhythm, joy and harmony.

CLOSE-UP

Sowowic's face, weathered, beautifully carved with the windstorms of his years. His piercing coal-black eyes spark with a dying fire. His face is at peace.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - MORNING

Billy Max and Kristin lead a procession as it winds its way through the mountains on horseback.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - MIDDAY

Billy Max and Kristin stand at the edge of a mountain peak, the gathering of the People grouped all around.

BILLY MAX

Saddened and full of despair for his People, Ouray came to this peak to fill his spirit for the last time with the strength of the Shining Mountains. "We shall fall as the leaves of the trees when winter comes and the land we have roamed for countless generations will be given up to the miner and the plowshare and we will be buried out of sight."

Billy Max opens his pouch. He scatters several bird feathers of many colors to the swirling winds.

BILLY MAX

Now this will be the place of healing. This will be the place from which the River of Many Colors will flow.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PEAK - SUNSET

A campfire glows in the gloaming. Kristin sits huddled on a wide flat stone perched at the edge of the peak.

Scattered around the mountainside, other campfires glow softly into the night.

BILLY MAX

Sowowic always found this peak to be a great source of strength.

(he looks over at her)

This is where he brought your mother.

KRISTIN

This is where she died.

BILLY MAX

Yes.

KRISTIN

Were you here?

BILLY MAX

No. I was off the reservation for most of the years Christine was with us, going to school.

KRISTIN

Did you know her?

BILLY MAX

I knew her.

(he takes her hand)

You have her blood.

Kristin looks out over the wide expanse of the mountain peaks, the landscape eerily reminiscent of the summits in her dreams. The sunset paints the sky with tones of rose, pink, and purple. Violet shadows reach across the expanse. Kristin sits quietly, tears gathered in her eyes.

EXT. SOWOWIC'S CABIN - MORNING

Several Ute Indian men carefully carry out the last of Sowowic's earthly possessions. The cabin is shuttered and boarded up.

Kristin watches in silence.

INT. KRISTIN'S CABIN - NIGHT

Kristin lies awake in her cabin. No dreams come to her.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

Kristin hikes the mountain trail. Stillness and silence surround her. No wind, no whispers, no ancient faces.

EXT. UINTAH AND OURAY RESERVATION - DAY

Spring ripens to midsummer. Tall supple grass burns in the midday heat, turning dry and brown.

EXT. KRISTIN'S CABIN - DUSK

Kristin sits on her cabin porch. Billy Max beside her.

BILLY MAX

I'd like you to come to Ignacio with me. For Sun Dance.

It was supposed to be here this year.

Sowowic wanted it that way, but now, it wouldn't be right. Ignacio is good. I want you to come.

EXT. OUTSIDE IGNACIO, COLORADO- SOUTHERN UTE SUNDANCE - DAY

Cars, vans, and pick-up trucks rumble along a rutted dirt road to a sign that reads: Sun Dance.

Tribal police check each car, then wave the vehicles onto an open field, burned brown and dry from the midday sun.

Billy Max drives his jeep in the middle of the procession.
Kristin sits beside him.

EXT. SOUTHERN UTE SUN DANCE - DAY

Forming a circle in the middle of the hardscrabble sun-baked meadow, three teepees stand; stretched between them are several shade houses, low and rectangular, covered with fresh-cut cool green cottonwood branches. In the middle is the Sun Dance Lodge, a construction made of juniper and cottonwood branches extended out from the center pole, atop which is placed a buffalo head.

Most of the people gathered are Ute -- with a smattering of other Nations, but unlike Bear Dance, there are no non-Indians.

People walk back and forth across the field, avoiding the sacred Sun Dance circle, talking quietly, visiting various camps, and carrying blankets, food, water, and other items into their shade houses and the tents set up beside them.

Some of the tents are brightly colored with pictures of bear and elk and deer and buffalo. Some depict the moon and the stars. Some are plain.

Billy Max and Kristin set up a plain tent beside a shade house they are sharing with other Utes.

Children scamper across the field, but their mood is somber, as is the mood of the entire gathering.

EXT. SOUTHERN UTE SUN DANCE - SUNSET

Smoke from cooking fires rises from the Sun Dance encampment. The chopping of wood rings into the twilight as Indians gather to smoke, talk in low voices, finish their evening meals, and pray.

EXT. SOUTHERN UTE SUN DANCE - EVENING

The single note of an Eagle-bone whistle pierces the twilight. A faint smudge of blue violet fades in the west, as the full moon, iridescent, rises in the night sky.

A drum beat sounds; the whistle stabs the air.

From a semi-circle of camps, the Sun Dancers emerge wrapped from head to tow in white sheets. They drift across the field, ethereal, other-wordly, illumined by the moon and the stars and the circle of light produced by the ring of cars and trucks and campers.

The procession, led by the Sun Dance chief, circles the Sun Dance lodge. Each of the dancers sounds his eagle-bone whistle, and carries a scared egale plume.

They enter the lodge one by one, their backs pressed up against fresh branches of cottonwood and cedar.

In a half circle in front of the lodge, the People sit on blankets. The night air is cool. Kristin sits on a blanket, fresh sheets, clothing, and leaves of sage beside her. On the blanket next to her sits Isabelle and Silvie.

A pile of sticks in the shape of a teepee is placed at the entrance to the circle. A man strikes a match, his face briefly illumined in the glow, and sets the twigs afire. The Buffalo head glows in the firelight. The back of the carcass is stuffed with an offering of sweet grass. Rippling in the night breeze, attached to the top of the pole are ribbons of the four colors: red, white, black, and yellow. Around the base of the pole, painted black and red, are offerings: tobacco and sage.

The dancers emerge from the lodge, barefoot, stripped now to the waist, their torsos decorated with ropes of beads or paint, wearing long skirts of many colors and patterns with beaded waistbands.

The drum beat intensifies, the circle of drummers pounding in rhythm. The Sun Dance chief, his eyes fastened to the Buffalo head, moves to the center pole and back. The other dancers follow, moving steadily, back and forth.

As the dancers move, the drumming builds. Voices ring in, singing in the ancient tongue, and the energy of the dancers matches the pounding of the drums until it builds to an explosive crescendo.

Billy Max dances, his movements powerful, sublime, filled with frenzy and poetry, his eyes fixed to the Buffalo head, his every breath resonating through the eagle-bone whistle.

On the blanket before him, Kristin watches, the firelight flashing across her face.

As the drumming and singing builds, as the whistles echo on the chill night wind, as Billy Max moves gracefully, powerfully back and forth to the center pole, Kristin watches.

Silently, she rises.

KRISTIN'S POV:

The raptuous sun dancers waver before her, fading to the warrior image of Jack, Pauvitz, Antelope, Douglas, Colorow, and Piah, their faces and bodies painted in streaks of red and blue, dancing round a huge bonfire, drums pounding, dancing the dance of war.

EXT. VISION SEQUENCE - WAR DANCE - NIGHT

Kristin, dressed in white buckskin, stands at the edge of the war circle. Jane stands beside her.

JANE (V.O.)

Jack called his pow-wow. As well as Pauvitz, Colorow, Antelope, and Piah, there was Douglas. Jack had gone to him, and they agreed it was time to put their bitter rivalry aside. Soldiers will always do this. All afternoon they pow-wowed, and when nighttime came, they prepared the ceremony in case there was war. Douglas who had grown so old and weakened, who was almost finished with his time on earth, danced with them, and as he danced, the years shed from him as a snake sheds his skin, and together the two chiefs danced and joined as brothers.

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

INT. MEEKER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

Arvilla, Josie, Jane, and Tsashin prepare breakfast and set the table in the early morning.

Kristin stands in one corner of the room, dressed as before, an observer, a shade.

JANE (V.O.)

All night they danced, and as the morning sun came up, covering the day in a shimmering heat, we went about our work at White River as if in a dream. It was the twenty-ninth of September...

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL ALONG MILK CREEK - MORNING

Jack with Antelope, Pauvitz, Piah, and about fifty young Ute warriors follow the mountain trail along Milk Creek.

INT. MEEKER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING (LATER)

Josie and Arvilla gather dishes from the kitchen table as Jane and Tsashin wash. Through the archway, the dining room can be seen where more Utes are finishing their meal.

The air shimmers with heat and something else: slicing through the ordinary morning is a razor's edge of rising tension. Freddie Douglas, son of Ute Indian Chief Douglas, enters the kitchen through the back door.

JOSIE

Why, I declare! If it isn't
Freddie Douglas standing right
there before my very eyes!

FREDDIE
(grinning)
Good morning, Miss Josie.

JOSIE
Good morning to you.

She prepares him a thick slice of bread with extra butter.
Freddie eyes the slice with great anticipation.

JOSIE
And where, may I ask have you been?

FREDDIE
Why, I been right here, Miss
Josie. Right here in Meeker Town
in White River.

JOSIE
Uh-huh. In town, but not at school.

Josie hands him the bread.

FREDDIE
I go back to school today!

JOSIE
I'll wager.

FREDDIE
But first I need matches.

Josie hands him some.

ARVILLA
What in heaven's name do you need
matches for?

FREDDIE
Now, I go smoke!

Freddie ducks out the back door. Arvilla watches him go.

ARVILLA
I'll warrant he'll set something
on fire.

Jane at the sink, stiffens, snaps.

JANE
Freddie Douglas won't set anything
on fire, Mrs. Meeker.

Outside, a faint rumbling, like the distant droning of bees, or the pounding of hammers builds relentlessly.

TSASHIN

What's that sound?

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL ALONG MILK CREEK - MORNING (LATER)

Jack, Antelope, Piah, Pauvitz, and about fifty young Ute warriors ride to the top of a long ridge along the bank of Milk Creek, rifles dangling at their sides.

EXT. MILK CREEK, COLORADO - MORNING

On the other side, Major Thomas Tipton Thornburg sits astride his horse, Lieutenant Samuel Cherry by his side. Closing up behind is the 4th Infantry Calvary Corps.

Lieutenant Cherry points up to the ridge. He is young, and very nervous.

Watching along the banks of the creek, is Kristin.

LIEUTENANT CHERRY

There's about fifty of them up there, Major. Mostly Jack's band, but some of Douglas', too.

Captain J. Scott Payne rides up and dismounts.

CAPTAIN PAYNE

Jack planned this. He planned an ambush.

Thornburgh regards the Utes along the ridge. Some sit astride their ponies, several others are dismounted.

CAPTAIN PAYNE

Sir? I believe you'd better give the order to fire.

MAJOR THORNBURGH

Hold up. We can try something more peaceable first.

Never taking his eyes from Jack, Thornburgh rides out a few yards into Milk Creek. He slowly removes his hat, and waves it.

Atop the ridge, Jack in the same slow studied motion, never taking his eyes from Thornburgh, removes his hat and waves back.

Time freezes as tension rises.

Jack dismounts, Pauvitz beside him.

Lieutenant Cherry, unnerved, verges on panic.

LIEUTENANT CHERRY

They're moving forward.

MAJOR THORNBURGH

Easy.

Thornburgh ventures a few more feet forward.

Cherry, limping slightly, nervous and tense, moves into Milk Creek behind Thornburgh. He glances back at the Infantry, who stand poised, ready for a fire fight, and turns turns back to the ridge. His motion unsteady and jerky, he takes off his hat. Glancing once more behind him, he waves his hat.

A gun fires, pinging in the stillness and shimmering heat. A moment. Then without an order, without another sound, gunfire explodes all around.

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - MORNING

Along the mountain ridge ringing the town, warriors, their faces and bodies streaked with color, gallop fiercely, arms outstretched holding rifles.

As they reach the final rise into town, they split; three warriors galloping firecely in three separate directions.

In town a young woman, her arms loaded with purchases watches the warriors.

YOUNG WOMAN

Look at that Indian ride!

Suddenly, the town explodes with gunfire. The young woman screams and runs.

INT. MEEKER HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

Jane grabs Tsahin.

JANE

They've crossed Milk Creek!

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - MORNING

In the streets, chaos reigns. Warriors ride, shooting, shrieking cries of war. Jane runs, Tsashin behind her. In the center of town, as gunfire explodes all around, Jane throws back her head and howls with rage:

JANE

They've crossed Milk Creek!

As the chaos continues, Kristin, dressed in white buckskin, appears in the center of town, an apparition, a ghostly

observer, seeing, feeling, hearing, wholly present within her Vision.

AT ANOTHER PART OF THE AGENCY

Nathan Meeker leaves his office, running along Meeker Avenue. A band of Ute warriors ride up to him.

Tsashin stands in the center of town, looking at the chaos around her, bewildered, heart broken.

TSASHIN (V.O.)

My People. Savages. My People.

Kristin, as before in white buckskin appears beside her. Tsashin speaks to her:

TSASHIN

All my days had been spent among them, hunting, stretching buckskin, making moccasins and beadwork.

All through the mountains I had wandered, gathering berries and bark, grasses and herbs and flowers for food and for medicine. My mother dried them, ground them, and made pastes and powders and salves from them. All my days. Rejoicing in births, mourning for deaths.

ANOTHER PART OF TOWN:

Nathan Meeker lies in the street, shot in the side of the head.

Kristin, as before, is here. Tsashin continues her narrative in voice over. As she speaks, we see what she is describing, the gentle Utes, attacking the body of Nathan Meeker, looping it with chains, and dragging it across the compound attached to a pony.

TSASHIN (V.O.)

My People, whose faces now were painted in violent streaks of red and blue, descended, like vultures, on the body of Nathan Meeker. With chains, they tied his hands and feet, and looping the chain around his neck, they attached it to a pony, and pulled his body across the compound until his bones were broken, and his handsome grey head flopped to one side like a broken doll.

ANOTHER PART OF TOWN:

Ute men, women, and children set out to destroy the town.

Kristin sees.

We see what Tsashin describes, her gentle People attacking the town that Nathan Meeker built with hatchets and hammers, destroying his plow and his threshing machine, setting fire to every last vestige of the white man's civilization that had been brought to White River:

TSASHIN (V.O.)

They set out to destroy everything
in the town that Nathan Meeker
built.

With hatchets and hammers, they
slashed and tore and dismembered,
even his plows and his threshing
machine. Savagely. Oh, yes, a
savageness had come into my gentle
People, and it was as though they
had given up their power to the
gods of war. Fires were set and
razed the last vestiges...

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL ABOVE WHITE RIVER - DUSK

Jane rides a pony up the mountain trail. Riding behind her are Arvilla, Josie, and several other white women from White River. Tsashin rides behind.

Kristin, in white buckskin, ghostly, stands along the trail, watching them ride past.

TSASHIN (V.O.)

.. as my mother and I, our
captives between us, rode away
from the compound in silence,
threading our way alongside the
churning White River, along the
Grand Trail, and across the stream
to where the Old Woman's Camp
stood framing the banks of
Piceance Creek that bubbled softly
in the midday sunshine, sounding
like a prayer.

The party reaches the camp, and dismounts. Tsashin and Josie look at each other.

Kristin stands beside the creek.

Tsashin and Josie fall into each other's arms, weeping.

EXT. WHITE RIVER, COLORADO - MORNING

A panoramic view of the White River Agency built within a verdant valley that nestles two or three miles wide between the rising majestic peaks of the Rocky Mountains. The valley is thick with cottonwoods and willows that line the river running gently through it.

CAMERA ZOOMS IN TO REVEAL:

A town, once of neat homes, model farms, storerooms, and shops now stands twisted and destroyed.

As a merciless sun bakes the gravel streets, a sad procession, an exodus, marches past the destruction. Ute Indian men, women, and children, carrying everything they own, on their backs, on their ponies' backs, march out of town, out of their mountains.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

A snaking line twisting down the mountainside, a river of displaced humanity, marching, marching down the mountain.

The sun rises high in the sky.

CLOSE IN

As Kristin watches, a young mother struggles with her possessions, and a little boy about five years old who is weary from the long march. The mother sets down her things, and picks up the boy, comforting him.

Jane approaches with Tsashin beside her. As the mother settles the boy on her back, Jane picks up her things, handing some to Tsashin. They walk on together.

As Kristin stands at the edge of the trail, Jane passes. Their eyes lock. Jane walks on.

INT. KRISTIN'S CABIN NIGHT

Kristin awakens. She lies in bed, Billy Max keeping vigil at her side.

BILLY MAX

Kristie...?

She turns to him, transformed from her Vision, her eyes black and piercing, flaring with cold fire, and the steely blood of her ancestor, Jane.

KRISTIN

Finished. All finished. So much finished.

EXT. KRISTIN'S CABIN - MORNING

Kristin packs up her Chevy Impala, Billy Max at her side.

BILLY MAX

Jane was the best medicine woman
in all of Colorado, but that
defeat at White River destroyed
her. Turned her bitter and filled
with hate.

(she doesn't respond)

Kristin. Good medicine can't
survive that.

Kristin goes to him, embracing him.

KRISTIN

Don't worry about me.

She breaks from him, and getting into her car, leaves the
Reservation. Billy Max watches her drive away.

EXT. HIGHWAY 45 - UTAH - DAY

A quick succession of cuts shows Kristin driving south on 45
to the Utah border. At Fruita, she crosses into Colorado.

EXT. HIGHWAY 82 COLORADO - DAY

Quick succession of cuts shows Kristin winding past Grand
Junction, Rifle, and Glenwood Springs. She continues on
through Basalt, and into Aspen.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - SUNSET

As the sun slips behind Aspen Mountain, Kristin winds the
Impala along the mountain road to Amanda's house.

EXT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - SUNSET

Kristin rings the bell. A moment, and a young woman in her
mid-thirties with several children hiding behind her answers
the door.

YOUNG WOMAN

Can I help you?

KRISTIN

I was looking for Amanda.

YOUNG WOMAN

Amanda Bremmer? She sold us the
house and moved back East. Several
months ago, now.

KRISTIN

Oh. Oh. Thank-you.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - ASPEN - NIGHT

Kristin sits alone in her motel room. Her drapes are open to the silent night. Framed in the window, Aspen Mountain glows darkly in the moonlight.

EXT. SILVERLEAF SKI RESORT - MORNING

Kristin drives up to the entrance and parks.

INT. SILVERLEAF SKI RESORT - LOBBY - MORNING

Workers prepare the resort for the season. Kristin approaches a young man in overalls covered with paint splashes.

KRISTIN

Is the manager around?

INT. SILVERLEAF SKI RESORT - OFFICE - MORNING

Kristin sits facing Rene Bideaux -- the manager of the resort. A name plate rests on his desk along with a jumble of papers, and other office paraphenalia.

RENE

You worked for Amanada?

KRISTIN

Yes sir.

EXT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - DUSK

Kristin pulls up to a small dark cabin in the woods. A creek rushes past. She gets out of her car, carrying her backpack.

INT. CABIN IN THE WOODS - DUSK (LATER)

Kristin stands at the window of the cabin, watching as Woody Creek tumbles over rock grottos on its way to the Roaring Fork. Aspen leaves, already turned golden drift down, swirling, into the creek.

Kristin leans her head against the glass.

The Aspen leaves dissolve to snow as the seasons pass.

Legend on the screen reads:

February 1979.

INT. KRISTIN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Kristin turns from the window.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

The small cabin has grown into a magnificent house built across the tumbling creek, beautifully appointed, furnished with exquisite antique pieces handpicked with great discernment, and decorated with Ute artifacts such as blankets, baskets, beadwork. In a prominent section of the high-ceilinged living room, the w'ni thokunup is displayed on a hand-carved table. The photographs from her mother's cabin adorn the walls.

Though exquisite in design and execution, the house is removed, cold and sterile.

EXT. KRISTIN'S CABIN - MORNING

Kristin leaves the house and gets into a white Jeep Scout.

EXT. HIGHWAY 82 - MORNING

Kristin wheels her jeep along the highway to Silverleaf.

INT. SILVERLEAF SKI RESORT - OFFICE - MORNING

Kristin sits behind the desk where she interviewed with Rene Bideaux. The name plate now reads: Kristin Tabor, Manager.

EXT. TABOR HOME - DUSK

Jamie pulls the 56 Chevy, no longer pristine nor mint, but careworn and rusted, into the driveway, and gets out of the car. He weaves unsteadily as he negotiates the snow and ice. The Tabor home, like the car, is weather-beaten and worn down.

INT. TABOR HOME - FRONT HALL - DUSK

Jamie enters the house. It is dark and shrouded, the drapes pulled down against any light, the furnishings gone to shabbiness and neglect. Jamie climbs the worn staircase.

INT. TABOR HOME - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DUSK

Jamie hears his father moan softly from his bedroom, the words barely audible.

MICKEY

...Kristie...

INT. TABOR HOME - MICKEY'S BEDROOM - DUSK

The years have not been kind to Mickey; he lies in bed, his face heavily lined, his eyes sunken, wracked with pain. On the nightstand beside him sit several bottles of prescription medicine, and a glass of water.

Jamie enters the room. Mickey looks up expectantly, then settles back heavily when he recognizes Jamie.

MICKEY

Ah... Jamie... Jamie boy.

JAMIE

How you doin', Pop?

MICKEY

I must've been dreamin'...
(a pain grabs him, he
moans)

JAMIE

Let's take your meds.

Jamie goes to his father, helping him with the medication.

MICKEY

Must've been dreamin'...

EXT. HAMMONASETTE BEACH - MORNING

Under a lowering sky, Jamie walks the beach. The sea rises in a howling wind, thundering to the rocky shore. Seagulls circle in the slate grey sky, their calls haunting in the whistling wind. The shoreline curves, an outcropping of jagged rocks slices into the swirling surf. Jamie scrambles up the slippery side. The wind rises, the whistling intensifies, echoing through the rock grottoes of the outcropping. Dark shadows play against the stone jetty, creating images that swirl into faces rising out of the sea foam and the shadows, out of the very stone. The wind whispers -- words, an ancient tongue, muted, unclear, rising. Jamie stands atop the jetty, the sea crashing, the faces and whispers rising all about him.

Farther up the rocky coast, a figure emerges from the windswept fog. Scrambling among the rocks, Jamie pursues the figure. An old man, strong and powerfully built with piercing eyes, Sowowic, stands atop a jutting stone, pointing to the West.

SOWOWIC

That's Ouray's Peak.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Mickey lies motionless, drained of color, against the stark bleak white and chrome of the hospital room. Tubes run from his arms into an IV drip; machines hum and beep. A nurse checks the machines.

NURSE

He'll be okay, now. He's resting
quietly.

JAMIE

I'll check in.

NURSE

Don't worry, Mr. Tabor. We'll take
good care of your father.

EXT. BRADLEY AIRPORT - HARTFORD/SPRINGFIELD - DAY

Jamie pulls into the airport.

INT. DENVER AIRPORT - EVENING

Jamie walks through the Denver terminal.

EXT. DENVER - NIGHT

Jamie drives a rental car out of Denver.

MONTAGE OF SCENES

Jamie traces the path of his sister ten years before him,
west out of Denver, and up through the mountains, past
Glenwood Springs, Rifle, Basalt, Grand Junction, and to the
Utah border at Fruita.

Like Kristen so many years before him, he heads north at
Route 45, continuing through the dusty foothills to the
village of Fort Duchesne, located along the banks of the
Duchesne River, and at the edge of the Uintah and Ouray
Reservation.

EXT. FORT DUCHESNE - DAWN

Jamie pulls up in front of the Fort Duchesne Hotel.

INT. JAMIE'S ROOM - FORT DUCHESNE HOTEL - DUSK

Jamie sits on the single iron-framed bed in the close and
dingy room, staring out the window. The Duchesne River flows
in the distance.

The sun dips lower in the sky, burning a burnished orange-
red, slipping behind the willows that shade the Duchesne
River. Jamie pulls a flask from his pocket, drinks deeply,
then rises.

EXT. DUCHESNE RIVER - SUNSET

The sky streaks with fingers of purple, red, and violet.
Jamie follows a snow-covered path to the river's edge. The
water moves slowly burdened under layers of snow and ice. In
the distance, the mountain peaks reflect the sun's dying
light, shimmering under their new coat of snow.

INT. RIVER FRONT SALOON - NIGHT

The saloon is quiet on this frigid night. Just a few
regulars, some guys playing pool, a few couples dancing
lazily to music from the juke.

Jamie sits at the bar, the remains of his dinner pushed aside, sipping whiskey.

The barmaid, a young Indian woman in her twenties, approaches.

BARMAID

Can I get you another?

JAMIE

Please.

BARMAID

You done with that?

JAMIE

Yeah.

BARMAID

You don't like our cooking?

JAMIE

No, it isn't that. Just not that hungry, I guess.

The barmaid takes his dinner plate away, and returns with the bottle. She pours. Jamie indicates for her to pour more. She does, smiles, and begins to move away, when he calls her back.

JAMIE

Ah... miss?

BARMAID

Alex.

JAMIE

Alex... I was wondering...Maybe you could help me out.

He pulls out a well-worn picture of Kristin at sixteen, showing it to Alex.

JAMIE

Have you seen her?

Alex glances down towards a second bartender, an older Indian man who has been carefully observing the exchange.

BARMAID

I don't know...

JAMIE

The picture's old.

The bartender walks over.

BARETENDER

What you got there guy?

JAMIE

(showing him the
picture)

I was wondering if anyone here
might know her...

The bartender's eyes flick over the picture. He recognizes
Kristin.

BARETENDER

I can tell you someone who might
know something.

EXT. SOWOWIC'S CABIN - DAY

Jamie hikes through the snowy woods to Sowowic's old cabin.
As he approaches, Billy Max appears on the porch. The two men
regard each other carefully. Billy Max knows who this is.

BILLY MAX

Come in.

INT. SOWOWIC'S CABIN - DAY

Jamie and Billy Max enter the cabin. The place is neat and
tidy, looking much like when Sowowic lived there. A fire
burns in the fireplace. On the mantle are several
photographs, among them pictures of Christine, Kristin, and
Sowowic.

Bily Max watches in silence as Jamie crosses to the
photographs, picking up each one. He picks up the one of
Sowowic last.

MEMORY FLASH:

Sowowic standing upon the jutting rock jetty, pointing West.

Jamie turns to Billy Max.

JAMIE

Is she here?

BILLY MAX

(shakes his head)

She left. Several years ago.

JAMIE

Do you know where she is?

BILLY MAX

She lives in the mountains. She
lives buried in ice and snow.

They regard each other a long moment.

BILLY MAX

Sit down.

INT. SOWOWIC'S CABIN - DAWN

The fire has long since died out. Early morning light filters through the windows.

BILLY MAX

This is something only her brother can do. Can you do this thing, Jamie Tabor?

EXT. KRISTIN'S WOODY CREEK HOUSE - DAY

Jamie pulls up the drive, stops the car, and gets out. he looks at the house a moment, then walks up the drive.

EXT. KRISTIN'S WOODY CREEK HOUSE -FRONT PORCH -DAY

Jamie rings the bell. An attractive young woman, big-boned and round, fully-feminine with bronzed skin and indeterminate mixed blood and age, answers.

HELEN

Hello.

JAMIE

Hello. I was, ah, looking for someone.

HELEN

I've been looking for someone all my life.

(she smiles)

You looking for Kristin?

JAMIE

Is she here?

HELEN

Away on business. I'm taking care of her place while she's gone. Would you like to come in?

INT. KRISTIN'S HOUSE - DAY

Jamie enters Kristin's spectacular house. He crosses to the plate glass window framing the rushing river tumbling by.

JAMIE

That's the river.

HELEN

Woody Creek, actually. Runs right underneath the house.

Jamie crosses to the opposite bank of windows.

HELEN

I'm waiting for it to flood. Then
we'll all be swept away.

Jamie does not respond, absorbed in his exploration of his
sister's universe. Helen observes him curiously.

He sees the w'ni thokunup displayed on the carved wooden
table. He crosses to it, picking it up.

HELEN

She calls it a w'ni thokunup.

JAMIE

It's Ute.

HELEN

So it is. She has many things Ute.

He crosses to the gallery of pictures.

CLOSE-UP:

A picture of Jamie and Kristin with Mickey, sailing across
choppy waters, Kristin steering, dark pigtailed flying out
behind her in the wind.

JAMIE

When will she be back?

HELEN

Sunday evening. Would you like to
leave a note or something?

JAMIE

I'll come back.

HELEN

Can I tell her who's calling?

JAMIE

I'll come back Sunday evening.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Jamie sits alone at the bar, drinking whiskey. He signals for
another, then rises.

INT. BAR - PUBLIC PHONE - NIGHT

Jamie places a call on the telephone.

INT. MICKEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Mickey lies as before, pale and still under his white blankets. The nurse speaks to Jamie on the phone in Mickey's room.

NURSE

No, Mr. Tabor. No change at all.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Jamie goes back to his drink, draining it.

INT. JAMIE'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jamie dreams. He stands high atop a jagged mountain peak, Ouray's Peak, atop a wide flat stone. White-capped fingers of stone jut towards a turquoise sky. A long cloak striped with turquoise, gold, and red geometric patterns billows around him as puffed clouds race across the peaks. In the distance, a figure appears, moving gracefully along the rugged trail, a long cloak of similar pattern and color flowing behind her.

Jamie turns to the figure. It is Christine.

CHRISTINE

I knew you would come.

Jamie awakens.

EXT. WOODY CREEK HOUSE - DUSK

Jamie sits outside the empty house as dusk lengthens into evening.

EXT. WOODY CREEK HOUSE - NIGHT

Kristin's jeep, headlights sweeping in an arc, rounds the corner, and pulls into the driveway.

She gets out of the car. From out of the darkness, a shadow emerges.

JAMIE

Kristie...

She turns toward him. The night explodes with stars. Jamie moves in closer. In the darkness, she pales.

JAMIE

Kristie.

She holds up her hand as if warding off a blow.

KRISTIN

No. No.

JAMIE

Kristie.

KRISTIN

No.

She turns, and moves away.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

Jamie hikes along a well-worn mountain trail under a bright cold late winter sky.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN

Kristin hikes among the jagged peaks.

The wind whispers through the bare Aspen tress shimmering with ice. Images swirl before Kristin's eyes -- but these are not the images of ancient ancestors; it is her brother's face she sees.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN

Jamie sees Kristin behind pained closed eyes.

INT. SILVERLEAF - LOBBY - NIGHT

Kristin is alone in the lobby, everyone else long since gone home. She closes for the night.

Jamie enters the lobby. She looks up at him.

JAMIE

I'm not going away.

EXT. SILVERLEAF - NIGHT

In the cold night air, stars pinned to the cloudless sky, snow crunching beneath their booted feet, Jamie and Kristin walk to the base of the mountain.

KRISTIN

Did you ever wonder where I had gone?

MEMORY FLASHES:

Jamie taking Kristin to the hospital, laying the w'ni thokunup across her broken body, the back door softly closing as she leaves home.

JAMIE

Every day of my life.

He tries to speak, but emotions well up in him, threatening to overpower him.

JAMIE

Kristie... I...
(he breaks)
Oh, God, Kristie, please...forgive
me.

Kristin holds him as he weeps.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAILS - DAY

Late winter turns toward early spring. Kristin and Jamie ride in her jeep along the same mountain trails that she and Amanda rode.

KRISTIN
In a month or so, this field will
be covered with wildflowers.
Elephant's Head. Indian
Paintbrush. Columbine.

INT. KRISTIN'S WOODY CREEK HOUSE - DAY

Kristin and Jamie look at the photographs.

KRISTIN
(pointing out the
pictures)
That's Tsashin, with her husband
Jeremiah Tilden. This is Jane.

JAMIE
Those are grandma's eyes.

He looks at Antelope astride his pony.

KRISTIN
Antelope.

JAMIE
Riding like the wind.

She looks at him quizzically. Jamie picks up a photograph of Sowowic.

JAMIE
Sowowic.
(he takes a moment)
I've seen him. On the beach. In a
storm. Standing on top of a rock
jetty pounded by the sea.
(he looks at her)
It's not dead in me, either.

INT. BAR - PUBLIC PHONE - NIGHT

Jamie speaks on the phone to the hospital nurse.

JAMIE

(on the phone)
Yes. I understand...He's still
conscious now? ...Okay...Yes, I
will. Right away.

He hangs up the phone.

INT. KRISTIN'S WOODY CREEK HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kristin stands by the pane-glass windows that frame the
tumbling creek.

JAMIE
He's dying. He's been sick for a
while. Cancer. But now ... There's
nothing they can do.

She turns away from him.

JAMIE
Kristie...?

KRISTIN
Don't say anymore.

JAMIE
Kristin.

KRISTIN
I don't want to hear anymore.

JAMIE
Kristie... He's calling out for
you.

EXT. DREAM SEQUENCE - MEADOW - DAY

Kristin dreams. She stands in a grassy field bursting with
new life, gathering herbs. Sowowic stands across the field
from her. He speaks, his voice clear and strong, resonating
on the wind.

SOWOWIC
This one here's the Chief. All
these things, even this...
(raising up his flask)
...pure water, can be used for
medicine, if used in the right way.

EXT. HIGHWAY 82 OUTSIDE ASPEN - DAWN

A late season blizzard covers the mountains and the road in
a thick cloud of swirling white. Kristin drives her Scout
through the mountains, past Glenwood Springs, Grand Junction,
and across the Utah border at Fruita, heading north on
Highway 45.

Out of the blinding snow, she hears her father calling out to her.

INT. WOODY CREEK HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAWN

Jamie calls out for Kristin.

JAMIE
Kristin! Kristin!

He goes to the window. Her jeep is gone. He grabs his coat from the closet.

EXT. HIGHWAY 82 OUTSIDE ASPEN - MORNING

Jamie traces the path of his sister in the ice and snow, wheels skidding and slipping on the treacherous route.

EXT. BILLY MAX'S CABIN - NIGHT

Kristin's jeep is parked outside. Yellow light falls across the newly-fallen snow. Stars twinkle out from behind fleeting clouds. Smoke drifts lazily into the night.

INT. BILLY MAX'S CABIN - FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

Billy Max sits by the fireplace, in the chair so often used by Sowowic, listening quietly as Kristin speaks.

KRISTIN
He took everything away. My mother. My mother died alone, without us, without me. How can I forget that? Am I supposed to just forget everything?

BILLY MAX
Not forget. You can't forget.

Headlines shine into the front room of the cabin. A car door slams. Footsteps muffled in the snow. The cabin door opens. Jamie stands on the porch, his face drained of color.

JAMIE
Jesus, Kristie. Jesus.

INT. BILLY MAX'S CABIN - FRONT ROOM - JUST BEFORE DAWN

The fire burns with dying embers. Kristin and Jamie are alone in the room.

KRISTIN
She had powerful medicine. She was only here a few years before she died. Before she died here.

JAMIE

I know.

KRISTIN

He kept her from us. Hid her letters. Lied. Lied. So much of our lives filled with his lies.

JAMIE

Filled with hate and destruction.

KRISTIN

When you have a wound, you have to cut it out. Cut all the dead flesh away, or it will never heal. It will never heal, Jamie.

JAMIE

That's just what Pa said. When Mama left. That's just what he said.

EXT. BILLY MAX'S CABIN - MORNING

The snow has stopped, the day dawned clear and bright. The midmorning sun shines brightly, melting the snow from the tree branches, turning the ice into rivers of slush.

Kristin stands outside the cabin, her backpack strapped across her shoulders.

KRISTIN

Silvie says I can use one of her ponies.

BILLY MAX

You can't go up there without a pony.

KRISTIN

I know.

JAMIE

I can go with you.

KRISTIN

No. I know how to ride in these mountains.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

Kristin rides through the mountains on a pony of pure white, following a mountain stream swollen with melting rushing water. The sun shines high in a sky billowing with white puffy clouds. Birds call -- an owl, a hawk. The wind whispers through the trees, branches bare of leaves, just beginning to bud.

She stops for lunch, letting her pony graze. Then, moves on.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - SUNSET

The sky explodes with radiant color -- turquoise blue streaked with gold, red, purple, and violet. Mountain peaks glisten in the distance.

Ouray's Peak beckons at the end of the trail.

EXT. OURAY'S PEAK - NIGHT

Stars shine out behind fleeting clouds. The night is quiet and still. Kristin sits atop a wide flat stone that juts out over the edge of the mountain. The darkness deepens.

She chants softly -- a prayer.

EXT. OURAY'S PEAK - NIGHT - (LATER)

Kristin rolls out her sleeping bag, lying down before her campfire.

EXT. DREAM SEQUENCE - MOUNTAIN PEAK - DAY

Kristin dreams. She stands high atop a jagged mountain peak, white-capped fingers of stone jutting towards a turquoise sky. A long cloak striped with turquoise, gold, and red geometric patterns billows around her as puffed clouds race across the peaks. In the distance, a figure appears, moving gracefully along the rugged trail, a long cloak of similar pattern and color flowing behind her.

Seeing her, Kristin waves in greeting. The figure, her mother, walks to stand beside her.

Suddenly, the light changes. The sky streaks with violent slashes of purple and green. Storm clouds gather, dark and threatening as lightning flashes. Jagged peaks rise, surrounding them -- rising higher than the mountaintop on which they sit.

KRISTIN

I can't climb them.

CHRISTINE

Yes you can.

Mist sweep in, shrouding mother in daughter in a fog of white. The earth trembles. Wind blows, swirling the mist. A figure emerges atop one of the peaks: Christiana.

CHRISTINE

Look, Kristie.

Another peak clears to reveal Tsashin.

CHRISTINE

Look.

And atop the third peak, Jane.

CHRISTINE

Look. Look back to move forward.

Kristin awakens.

EXT. OURAY'S PEAK - DAY

Kritin gathers wood for her campfire. Across the peaks, storm clouds gather, casting light and shadow across the land.

Kristin moves through a grassy wood, stopping suddenly, arrested by a bright patch of blue. She kneels down, brushing undergrowth aside. Bursting through the rich soil is a bright patch of blue columbine.

EXT. OURAY'S PEAK - TWILIGHT

The shadows stretch long and purple across the land. Storm clouds gather, black and green and deep purple-blue. Thunder rumbles. Lightning crackles, streaking across the sky illuminating the gloaming.

Kristin walks to the wide flat stone. She steps out to the edge.

Mists swirls in, a fog of thick white. The wind rises, a mournful whistling sound swirling among the peaks and deep canyons. Rocks jut out at odd angles; the clouds, the growing darkness play against the stone creating shadows, images, faces. The wind whispers -- words, an ancient tongue, muted, rising. Out of the stone, an image appears, the face of Christine. Mist swirls past, Christine emerges, out of the mist, out of the very stone.

Christine stands beside Kristin, taking her hand. With the other arm, she gestures wide across the peaks and valleys. Slowly emerging, one by one, ancestors, ancient ancestors forever remaining among the mountain shadows. Tsashin, with Jeremiah Tilden at one side, and Josie Meeker at the other. Christiana, Jane, Pauvitz, Jack, Antelope astride his pony, and the other folk of White River, Indian and white, and at the topmost peak, dazzling in white buckskin, dressed in full regalia -- Ouray, proud and free in the Shining Mountains.

Thunder rumbles. The earth trembles. Hooves pound. Shimmering in the distance, pounding down the mountainside comes a buffalo breathing fire, and the buffalo is pure white. With every stamp of his hooves, streaks of multi-colored fire spring from the earth, like hotbeds of lava flowing, a river of many colors, flowing from the striking hooves, flowing down the mountainside.

EXT. BASE OF THE MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

Kristin rides down the mountain astride her pony of pure white.

At the foot of the trail, Billy Max and Jamie await her return.

Shimmering in the sunlight, Kristin's long dark hair flows out behind her, and it is streaked through with white.

INT. MICKEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

As Jamie crouches beside them, Kristin cradles her father in her arms, chanting softly a prayer in her native tongue.

Mickey's pain dissolves to peace.

SCENE DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. GRAVESITE - DAY

Kristin, now a woman in her late forties, kneels before her father's head stone. In the distance, the sea crashes. Jamie stands beside her. A young girl's voice calls softly:

YOUNG GIRL (O.S.)

Mama?

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

A young girl in her early teens who looks much like the young Tsashin of Milk River.

YOUNG GIRL

We're going to be late.

Billy Max, in his fifties, steps into the frame, placing his arm around his daughter.

A young man in his late teens, tall and handsome with freely flowing dark hair speaks:

YOUNG MAN

They can't start without Mama,
Chrissie.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

The group, Kristin and Billy Max, their daughter and son, and Jamie with his wife, Helen from the Woody Creek House, and their three sons walk across the cemetery lawn.

The sea rises, and crashes behind them.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Quick succession of scenes shows the entourage driving from Connecticut into New York City, finally arriving at Riverside Church on the Upper West Side in Manhattan.

INT. RIVERSIDE CHURCH - DAY

A banner across the proscenium reads:

Siva Saubel Humanitarian Award 2003.

The speaker introduces Kristin.

SPEAKER

...writer, teacher, activist, and
humanitarian, Dr. Kristin Tabor
Eagle...

Kristin enters the stage. The audience rises to a standing ovation; a sea of faces, a river of many colors.

KRISTIN

My grandmother used to tell me the
story of the river of many
colors...

As Kristin speaks in voice over, images flash across the screen:

The earth and her mountains, her streams and waving grassy plains and crashing sea.

KRISTIN (V.O.)

One day a huge fire roared across
the Earth. All the People and all
the animals were running to escape
the flames.

Whispers on the wind and ancient faces swirling into focus out of stone.

KRISTIN (V.O.)

They ran and ran until they ran
deep inside the Shining Mountains
and sealed themselves inside.

A pleasant town built among the rocky splendour of the Shining Mountains with gravel streets bearing names such as Ute Avenue and Meeker Street.

KRISTIN (V.O.)

The Earth trembled and shook for
many days. One day there came a
mighty roar. The mountain heaved
and quaked, and split wide open.

Warriors dancing round blazing fire; soldiers marching and gunfire exploding.

KRISTIN (V.O.)

Standing on the other side, was a
mighty buffalo, and he was pure
white.

Still photographs in sepia tones of Jane and Tsashin, Josie
and Arvilla, Pauvitz and Jack and Antelope astride his pony,
riding like the wind; of Nathan Meeker tall and proud in the
midst of his Paradise; of Christiana and Christine posed
before the Christmas tree.

KRISTIN (V.O.)

The people tumbled out of the cave
like lava running down the
mountainside, all kinds of people
of all different colors, orange
and red and yellow and white and
blue and black.

Still photograph of Jamie and Mickey standing beside a little
girl as she steers a racing boat across choppy waters,
pigtails flying, laughing into the wind.

KRISTIN (V.O.)

Like a great river of many colors
the People poured out...

A buffalo shimmering against fire sparks of snow, breathing
down the mountain, dazzling in his coat of pure white.

KRISTIN (V.O.)

...and their joy created such
music, and the river of many
colors swept across the scorched
Earth, replacing the ashes of all
that had been ruined with their
song.

FADE OUT: