

LEE

By

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Historical Events

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He was a Caesar, without his ambition; Frederick, without his tyranny; Napoleon, without his selfishness, and Washington, without his reward.

Winston Churchill

SUPER: BEDFORD VIRGINIA 1881

WORLD-NEWS OFFICE - DAY

Limping, an old black man, with a grizzled beard and an honest face, hobbles into the office. This is REV. MACK LEE (77) Typewriters clank as reporters attend to stories.

The RECEPTIONIST (30) eyes him warily as he takes a seat.

RECEPTIONIST

Can I help you?

Mack bows a little as he doffs his tattered hat, and asks softly.

MACK

Kin you white folks gimme a little money fur my church?

The Receptionist turns away indifferent, the typewriters tickle their hurried denial.

MACK

What? Ain't gwine turn away Ole Marse Robert's nigger is yer?

(pause)

Yer didn't know dat I was Gen. Robert Lee's cook all through de wah, did yer?

The typewriters start to go silent. The Reporters interest peaked, they turn as Mack sits down. He continues.

MACK

I was with him at de first battle of Bull Run, second battle of Bull Run, first battle of Manassas, second battle of Manassas and twas der at da fire of the last gun for the salute of the surrender on Sunday, April 9 at 4 o'clock, P. M., at Appomatox, 1865.

Mack goes on, all ears are on him, a reverent silence.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

This is the siege line of Petersburg, Virginia. A last stand to protect Richmond Virginia to the South. The siege has lasted ten months and has disintegrated to trench warfare.

Robert E. Lee commander of the Confederate Army and U.S. Grant commander of the Northern army are in a deadlock seesaw struggle. This is April 1865 the fourth year of the American Civil War. Losses are mounting for the South.

Two round orbs reflect fireballs and cannon fire, an inferno of Hell. Pulling back these are binoculars.

Reversing POV through binoculars. Men in Blue and Gray hand to hand fighting. The mist of gunpowder obscures view. It's carnage, blood everywhere.

The Binoculars lower revealing a weathered but hardened face. A Silver white beard adorns it, this is ROBERT E. LEE. (56) Commander of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Lee sits atop TRAVELER his horse. His Aide De Camp, CHARLES MARSHALL (30) at his side.

LEE
Come on boys.

The fighting starts to lag Union guns pound Lee's troops they are driven back to their trenches. GEN. JAMES (BULL) LONGSTREET (46) rides up to the pair.

LEE
Ten months of this hell.

LONGSTREET
Gordon's Second Corp is faltering.
We don't have the men to maintain
the attack.

Lee irate jumps from his horse calling for WILLIAM PENDLETON (50) Artillery commander.

LEE
Bill! Bill!

Pendleton scampers up the small incline. He is muddy and black powder smudges his uniform. He politely salutes.

LEE
I want you to concentrate all fire
to the flank.

(CONTINUED)

PENDLETON

General Sir our ordinance is low.

LEE

Ordinance be damned, we need to dislodge them so we can punch through. I've wasted too much time on this blessed trench warfare it's getting us nowhere.

Pendleton doesn't respond and does what he's told.

EXT. CANNON LINE - DAY

Pendleton rumbles to three CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS.

PENDLETON

Increase axon, fire at will.

SOLDIER

But Sir.

PENDLETON

Do as I say.

They load canon, Pendleton indicates to flag signalman.

A flag is hoisted as signal to commence all batteries. The roaring thunder of a hundred canons releasing their deadly rain.

In distance massive explosions, Union driven back.

EXT. CONFEDERATE TRENCHES - DAY

Troops cower as explosion fall in front of them decimating the advancing Union troops.

The fire and explosions fade. The soldiers now emboldened hop up and over into no man's land.

The famous REBEL YELL, they run forward pressing the attack.

EXT. UNION LINE - DAY

A Burly crusty man with a wiry black beard puffs on the stub of a cigar, watching the action. This is ULYSSES S. GRANT (42), Commander of the entire Union Army.

Tough determined, his resources in men and material is unlimited. Cool under fire but a reluctant conqueror.

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL SHERIDAN (45) to his side, arrogant.

GRANT

Damn! This war is all but won and he still hurls troops headlong.

SHERIDAN

Old tactics die hard.

GRANT

And we have suffered dearly for it.

SHERIDAN

His line is thin.

GRANT

Runner!

Grant pulls a slip of paper from his blue great Coat. On one knee and pencil jots something down.

A young Lieutenant rides up pulling horse to screeching stop. Grant hands paper to him.

GRANT

Take this to General Meade with all haste.

A quick turn to Sheridan.

GRANT

Take Second Corp and drop back to your left.

SHERIDAN

A flanking march?

GRANT

(indicating Lee)

It's his favorite move, lets see he can match it.

Sheridan salutes and leaves. Grant confident chews cigar.

EXT. MEADE'S POSITION UNION LINE - LATE AFTERNOON

General George Meade (50) short tempered and ill mannered. His men call him Old Snapping Turtle. When given a task he will not let go.

Meade sits astride his horse chewing tobacco and surveying his men. The rider comes up Salutes and gives him dispatch from Grant.

(CONTINUED)

Spitting tobacco he takes it, a look of satisfaction.

MEADE
Bout damn time.

Calling to adjutant.

MEADE
Form your lines.

INT. UNION TRENCHES - LATE AFTERNOON

Union troops fall back into their man sewers from the confederate onslaught. Some fall in dead as Rebels crest their position.

A BLACK SOLDIER fires up and into face of rebel the dead man falls on him. Disgusted the Black Soldier wipes his blood from his face.

BLACK SOLDIER 1
Damn got rebel goo on me.

Another Black Soldier manages a bit of humor.

BLACK SOLDIER 2
Jus one less to kill brother.

BLACK SOLDIER 1
Little pay back for the crater.

BLACK SOLDIER 2
Lost a lot of brothers there.

Fierce determination they raise up firing into the oncoming rebels. A bugle sounds more union troops arrive behind them.

BLACK SOLDIER 2
(screaming)
Take that Johnny Reb!

The rebs back up loading as quickly as they can but they are out gunned. Their attack falters as Union backup troops spill out of the trenches.

The rebels turn and start to run it's a massive push by all of Grants forces.

Sheridan rides up with his cavalry. Swords hack at fleeing troops.

EXT. LEE'S POSITION - LATE AFTERNOON

Lee looks on in desperation through binoculars. Longstreet rides up to his side.

LONGSTREET

It's no use, if we do not
disengage-

A slight nod from Lee

LEE

This position has become untenable.
(beat)
We've lost Richmond.

A regretful look from Longstreet he turns slightly motioning for signalman.

The flags for general retreat go up.

EXT. CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS POSITION - LATE AFTERNOON

The soldiers beleaguered acknowledge the signal halting rear guard action. They jump back into their holes night is falling.

The Union ceases it's fire the waning light hindering line of sight.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - NIGHT

Lee sits by campfire looking over map. Gen. A.P.(Pete) Hill (48) sits to his left. Mack approaches handing the two men coffee.

Lee looks up grateful.

LEE

Thank you Mack.

A.P. Hill nods gratitude

A.P. HILL

Coffee, been a couple days.

LEE

We're short on everything.

(CONTINUED)

A.P. HILL
The men don't complain.

LEE
(admiring)
They fight without shoes, no food,
but we can't fight without bullets.

A.P. HILL
Danville station is the closest
supply depot.

LEE
A hate to ask Pete.

A.P. HILL
We'll keep'em occupied. But you
have to move tonight.

A look between the two.

LEE
It's a two day march.

A.P. HILL
Don't worry General they won't get
through us.

A.P. Hill stands and salutes. Lee studies his map, he
breaths heavy and clutches chest. Mack sees this comes to
his aide.

MACK
Mr. Robert!

Lee pats Mack on arm reassuring.

LEE
I'm fine just a little indigestion.

MACK
Don'ts lies to me. Doc tolds you to
get some rest, dat heart o yours is
a fright.

LEE
You look after me like a mother
hen.

The pain subsiding, Lee breaths easier Mack helps him to his
feet.

MACK

Now you go in yonder ans get some sleep.

LEE

(shaking head no)

I'm sorry friend we have to move tonight.

Lee adjusts himself putting map in pocket he struggles over to Traveler. Mack helps him mount horse. A look of concern.

MACK

What about Richmond?

LEE

It can't be saved I need to keep this army alive. We're going to Danville for resupplies.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD TO DANVILLE - NIGHT

Lee at the head of his rag tag army a slight drizzle hits them. Mud begins to build, we see marching bare feet. Carts pulled by emaciated horses.

Not a proud march more of a get away. No one says a word.

Lee a solemn look straight ahead.

EXT. CONFEDERATE LINE PETERSBURG - MORNING

A.P. Hills division faces the entire Union army. They know whats expected of them and do not waver.

A.P. Hill on horse rides in front of them.

A.P. HILL

Alright boys we got a job to do and General Lee is a counting on us.

He draws his sword the troops form up a long line.

A.P. HILL

Some of you were with me at Gettysburg. It's been a hard war-

He's cut short by a scruffy barefoot Private standing next to him.

(CONTINUED)

PRIVATE

Come on General let's get it over
with.

A bit of levity from the rest of the men A.P. laughs a
little at it. Audacity in the face of death.

A.P. HILL

Alright forward march!

They advance slowly at first then it turns to a run.

The Rebel yells roars on the wind.

EXT. UNION LINE - MORNING

Not completely surprised by this Grant relays orders to
commence fire. Then something catches his eye. Though POV of
binoculars he looks carefully at number of confederate
troops. It's very thin.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD LEE'S POSITION - DAY

Lee fatigued sits as best he can in the saddle. The sounds
of the battle in distance behind him. The look of regret on
his face and his men as they trudge along.

Longstreet at his side.

LEE

This makes me sick Bull.

LONGSTREET

Had to be done.

LEE

At what price?

EXT. PETERSBURG GRANT'S POSITION - DAY

Grant realizing.

GRANT

The devil, he's slipped out under
cover of darkness.

SHERIDAN

Abandoning his troops and Richmond?

(CONTINUED)

GRANT

He's making a break for it. If he
hooks up with Johnston.

SHERIDAN

The war could go on.

Grant looking through binoculars POV. The confederates
continue charge A.P. hill leading valiantly sword drawn
defiance against overwhelming odds.

GRANT

Damn!

EXT. BATTLEFIELD A.P HILL'S POSITION - DAY

The confederate line surges forward the rebel yell
thunderous. A.P. hill picking up the pace.

A.P. HILL

Pour it on boys!

EXT. UNION TRENCHES - DAY

The now swollen union line raise what seems to be a thousand
muskets over the edge of trench.

They cock their weapons aiming deadly.

BLACK SOLDIER 1

What de hell they think their doin?

BLACK SOLDIER 2

Suicide.

The two black soldiers cock their weapons aiming straight
ahead.

Sheridan rides up to front of line a look of disbelief and
remorse at what's about to take place.

SHERIDAN

Ready, aim! FIRE!

The guns are deafening as they unleash their deadly load.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD A.P. HILLS POSITION - DAY

The bullets tear through the confederate line. Men are mowed down. Finally one strikes A.P. hill square in the chest. It sends him reeling backwards off his horse.

He falls with a thud onto the ground. Other men fall dead all around him. Gradually the guns go silent.

All the men of Hills division are killed it's a slaughter.

EXT. UNION TRENCHES - DAY

The smoke from gunpowder clears revealing the full horror of scene. All the union troops are silent. Sheridan is speechless.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD LEE'S POSITION - DAY

The sounds of the battle fade away he knows what's happened. He stares stoically ahead. Longstreet doesn't say a word.

Mack driving the mess wagon says a small silent prayer.

EXT. RICHMOND - DAY

It's pandemonium people are running everywhere. Charles Marshall rides up to his fiances Mary White's home.

A quaint Victorian style residence with white clapboard fence.

He quickly runs up and into house.

INT. WHITE HOME - DAY

The house is adorned with flowers this is his wedding day. the mood is somber and there are few guests.

The preacher is waiting, Mary is resplendent in gown.

CHARLES

We haven't much time.

MARY

I've made provisions. Dear I wanted this to be special.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

I wish it could be my love.

The sounds of population screaming with fear outside stream through window.

The Yankees is a coming

Run!

The Preacher in his mid 60's cringes in fear.

PREACHER

Shall we begin?

The service is quick and Charles kisses his bride.

CHARLES

Get out of the city.

MARY

Where shall I meet you?

CHARLES

Head to Danville.

MARY

What about you?

CHARLES

I have to torch the city.

The crowd is stunned and gasps.

CHARLES

I'm sorry but we can't leave anything for the enemy.

MARY

But the war is all but lost.

CHARLES

I have my orders.

EXT. WHITE HOME - DAY

Mary has packed the wagon. Charles alights his horse and blows her a kiss and rides away.

Mary takes reins and slaps her horses and departs.

EXT. RICHMOND - NIGHT

Fire is everywhere, Charles makes his way to the warehouse district. Several troops under his command set fire to them.

CHARLES
 (to troops)
 We've done what were ordered now we
 on our own.

The men understanding throw their torches down and with all haste leave.

Galloping away the first forward scouts of the Union enter city. They block Charles escape.

Union troopers raise their muskets.

HALT OR WE'LL FIRE!

Charles and other men turn their horses the other way.

Union troops fire, men are shot off their horses only Charles manages to get away.

INT. LEE'S TENT - NIGHT

Lee stands holding tent flap back gazing at the red glow on the horizon. Sorrowful he breaths a heavy sigh.

Then a soft VOICE from behind him, a familiar one.

Turning slowly Lee lets flap fall back. From the shadows emerges the image of Thomas Stonewall JACKSON. Two years dead his face pale and emotionless he is in full uniform, the amputated arm is healed.

A ghost or a vision Lee closes eyes then opens, it's still there. The vision holds his hat in hand respectfully.

JACKSON
 (softly)
 It had to be done Robert.

LEE
 I've missed you Tom.

JACKSON
 Our revels are quickly coming to an
 end.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
How be your journey.

JACKSON
It is a place, peace.

LEE
That is what I desire most.

JACKSON
Then a decision must be made.

LEE
That being?

JACKSON
I cannot help you in what you must
do.

Lee raises voice

LEE
Sacrifice all we've fought for?

JACKSON
The boys don't mind Robert they
understand. We will rest better.

LEE
(defiant)
No!

The vision fades.

EXT. LEE'S TENT - NIGHT

Mack bringing Lee dinner pauses outside hearing Lee talking.
Curious he enters.

INT. LEE'S TENT - NIGHT

Lee standing in middle leaned forward as if addressing
someone.

MACK
You alrights Mr. Robert.

Lee comes out of his trance like state startled. He regains
composure turning to Mack.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Fine Mack, fine.

MACK
I thoughts I heard you's talkin to
someone.

LEE
No.

Mack sets dinner tray on Lee's field desk and starts to
leave.

LEE
Mack, please wait a minute.

MACK
Somethin else Sir?

LEE
Do you believe in Spirits?

MACK
Whiskey, never touch it.

LEE
(a little humor)
Neither do I, I like it too much. I
mean when we die.

MACK
Like Ghosts?

LEE
Yes, can the dead come back and
haunt us.

Lee sits down on edge of cot waiting for some words of
wisdom. Mack sits down opposite of him on small barrel.

MACK
If yous believe in a hereafter,
yous have to believe in em. But
theys in heaven yous know that Mr.
Robert.

LEE
But can they get stuck here on this
earthly plain. Some unfinished
business.

MACK

This war been hard on you Mr.
Robert. Get some sleep.

LEE

Perhaps your right.

MACK

I knows I is.

Mack gently rises and excuses himself. Lee sits there pondering all that has transpired.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - MORNING

Lee steps out of his tent the morning mist covering his army. Most of the men sleep under open sky there are few tents.

Lee walks among the sleeping men admiring their loyalty. None of them are complaining.

Charles comes to him arriving from Richmond during the night.

LEE

Good to see you back son, and Mary?

CHARLES

Fine sir she's meeting me in
Danville.

Lee puts his hand on Charles shoulder fatherly.

LEE

It was necessary you understand?

CHARLES

Completely, here's the tally report
on troop strength.

Charles hands him the report. Lee quickly scans it.

LEE

Forty three thousand.

CHARLES

Down two thousand from the day
before.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Deserters?

CHARLES
Some, but most can't go on. They're
starving.

Lee crumples paper and throws to the ground.

LEE
Form the men we must get to
Danville before nightfall.

Charles steps back and salutes.

INT. GRANT'S FIELD TENT - DAY

An open traditional field tent Grant stands over map table.
His generals around him.

GRANT
He's going for Danville Station
that's the only supply port before
Amelia some twenty miles away.

A fiery red headed young GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER speaks up.

CUSTER
My Michigan Wolverines can flank
his march and be there by mid day.

GRANT
I don't want you to engage him.
Just deny him the supplies. I want
to wear him down and heard the army
and surround them.

CUSTER
But if I could harry him long
enough till reinforcements arrive
we could end this today.

GRANT
No this war is about won and he
knows it. We're now in the business
of saving lives.

Custer backs down the other generals agree with the
strategy.

EXT. DANVILLE STATION - DAY

Mary sits in her wagon along with her Mother Tess (48). A widow her husband killed in first Battle of Bull Run.

The station MANAGER sweeps the front porch it's a beautiful spring morning. The birds chirp and dogwood blooms all around.

MANAGER

You ladies want a cup of coffee?

MARY

We're fine thank you.

TESS

Where are they?

MARY

They'll be here Mother.

EXT. FIELD OPPOSITE DANVILLE STATION - DAY

Custer's cavalry has out maneuvered Lee's slow moving army. He is poised to take Danville station.

CUSTER

All right Wolverines CHARGE!

They advance in a thunderous gallop. Two hundred men strong they bear down on the station. Mary sees them coming.

MARY

Oh my god!

Tess turns her eyes fill with horror.

TESS

They'll rape us for sure!

MARY

No they won't that's propaganda. We can't stay either.

Before Custer's troops arrive Mary turns wagon and heads opposite direction at furious pace. Unnoticed by Custer's men.

EXT. BACK ROADS - DAY

Mary guides the wagon carefully and quietly heading straight for Lee's army.

She rounds been and spies Lee and his men.

EXT. BACK ROADS LEE'S POSITION - DAY

Charles at Lee's side sees oncoming wagon he recognizes it.

CHARLES

Mary?

Lee turns to him questionably.

Mary hurries wagon to greet them. Stopping just short, Charles hops off his horse and they embrace.

CHARLES

What are you doing here? We were to meet in Danville.

MARY

General, Danville has been overrun.

Profound frustration comes over Lee.

LEE

Damn!

CHARLES

With Danville gone we must swing right to Amelia.

LEE

But that's twenty miles.

CHARLES

We can't fight for Danville the men are in a poor state. They need food and ammo.

Lee pivots on Traveler calls to his men.

LEE

Danville is not obtainable. I need volunteers to run to Jetersville and telegraph for supplies.

A hundred hands go up. Lee profoundly proud.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Thank you boys but two will do.

Lee picks two men that are the closest one is just a BOY
BOBBY (15) the other not much older a TEENAGER WILLIS (18).

LEE

All right lads be careful. Tell the
stationmaster to forward supplies
to Amelia station. We'll be there
shortly. Now off with you.

BOBBY

Yes sir.

WILLIS

Ain't no problem general we grew up
in these here parts.

The boys take off in a flash their bare feet tumbling
through the brush.

LEE

(to Longstreet)

They sometimes shine don't they
Bull?

LONGSTREET

That they do general.

LEE

Run Boys! Run!

EXT. TELEGRAPH LINE - DAY

Union troops on pole cutting telegraph lines. The wires fall
to the ground.

INT. JETTERSVILLE TELEGRAPH OFFICE - DAY

They boys rumble through the open doorway scaring the
telegraph OPERATOR (40).

OPERATOR

Here now! Don't bring no guns inna
here.

BOBBY

Sorry sir.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIS
We's gots orders from a General
Lee.

OPERATOR
(astonished)
Lee!?

BOBBY
Yes Sir he's a marching to Amelia.

WILLIS
We need supplies real bad. He wants
to send message for ration train to
meet 'em there.

OPERATOR
Why didn't you say so?

The boys look at one another a who is this dope look.

The operator turns in chair and starts sending the message.
The clicks and dash of the machine can be heard.

BOBBY
Thank you sir!

The turn and dash back out the door.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The boys are playfully giddy running through the field. Not
caring the noise they are making.

Then they stop dead in their tracks hearing other voices.
They squat in undergrowth.

Peering over grass onto road they spy Union troops cutting
the lines.

WILLIS
(under breath)
Hog slop!

BOBBY
What's it mean.

WILLIS
That there is the telegraph line.

(CONTINUED)

BOBBY

You means our message won't get through?

WILLIS

We run all dis way fer nothin'

The Bobby readies his weapon to fire at troops. Willis does too then he pulls weapon down motioning Bobby to do the same.

WILLIS

I got a better idea come on.

The boys carefully make their retreat hidden by tall grass.

Finally they make it to the ridge line of the woods.

BOBBY

Where we goin Willis?

WILLIS

We gonna find that ration train.

BOBBY

But we don't know where to look.

WILLIS

It's somewheres between Appomattox and Amelia.

They run on headlong into the woods.

EXT. AMELIA STATION - DAY

Lee and his army finally arrive at Station. The men look disheartened. No supply train.

LONGSTREET

Should have been here by now.

LEE

Let's give it some time. We force marched all night. Could be a delay.

LONGSTREET

Or the boys-

LEE

Don't say the Bull, don't think it.

Mack pulls up beside him in kitchen wagon.

(CONTINUED)

MACK

Want's sumthin to eats Mr. Robert?

LEE

No, I'll eat when my men do.

MACK

Wells at least go in the station an
take yer boots off.

Lee rubbing his chest.

LEE

I think your right.

He steps down off Traveler stretching his back.

LEE

Bull tell the men to relax we'll
rest here tonight. Send out some
foragers to find something,
anything.

LONGSTREET

General we can't stay here long.

LEE

Mack go with them fix what you can.
We need to wait for the rest of the
army to catch up.

LONGSTREET

And the wagons and reserve
artillery?

LEE

Yes I dispatched orders during the
night. If we're to have another
engagement I don't want my army
piecemeal.

Lee gingerly walks up station steps into awaiting depot. A
lone Stationmaster (70) sits behind counter.

A irritable old fellow he is the master of his universe.

Lee takes off hat letting it fall on awaiting bench he
undoes his sword and loosens tunic.

STATIONMASTER

If yer gonna wait in here you gonna
have to buy a ticket.

(CONTINUED)

Lee smiles at the older gentleman who obviously doesn't recognize him.

LEE
I'd gladly buy a ticket old man.

Lee turns facing the outside door looking over his pitiful army.

LEE
(to himself)
A ticket for me and my men out of here. Anywhere-

He loses himself in thought a quiet respite. But it is cut short by Longstreet who fills the doorway.

LONGSTREET
General Lee there's a water tower if we had the key to the spigot chain we could at least fill the canteens and water the horses.

The Stationmaster now aware of his guests identity stumbles all over himself with courtesy.

STATIONMASTER
Sorry General I didn't know.

LEE
Think nothing of it. If you could be so kind.

STATIONMASTER
Right away general.

He and Longstreet walk out the door.

EXT. ROAD WEST OF PAINEVILLE - DAY

The long wagon train and what's left of the reserve artillery of Lee's Army hobbles along towards Amelia.

A Brigade of Union Cavalry probing west spots them. The Union CAPTAIN realizing. Through binoculars he sees how it is boxed in.

CAPTAIN
Alright! Looks like we have Lee's artillery.

He orders a charge the Confederates are caught off guard but put a good resistance.

EXT. WOODS BOYS POSITION - DAY

The boys scurrying through woods hear the fight they come up on it slow. Peering over grass they see the artillery is in danger of capture.

WILLIS

This day jus keeps gettin better
and better.

He turns desperate to Bobby.

WILLIS

Your faster than me you gonna have
to get to General Lee and warn him.

BOBBY

What bout you?

WILLIS

I gotta find that supply train.

BOBBY

But-

WILLIS

I'll be okay, now git!

EXT. AMELIA STATION - DAY

Bobby stumbles out of the woods out of breath he runs up to Lee.

BOBBY

General sir!

LEE

Yes son.

BOBBY

Sir the Yankees done cut the lines.
An de pounced on the Artillery
wagons.

LEE

Alright tell me the size of the
force, where?

BOBBY

Just cavalry sir, just west of
Painville Sir couple miles.

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET
Gordon's mounted is just short of
there.

LEE
Quickly commander.

Longstreet calls to his adjutant. The rider quickly
dispatches.

Lee looking at Traveler anger welling in him.

LONGSTREET
What are you thinking General?

LEE
We need to asses the situation.

LONGSTREET
But sir!

LEE
Now General!

The old Lee shining through tough and resilient. He Hops on
Traveler.

Longstreet barking orders, he too mounts up.

EXT. PAINEVILLE ROAD - DAY

The confederates are barely holding on, but it's no use. The
cavalry is just too much for them they give up.

Surrendering they are taken away under guard the Union
troops burn supply wagons and destroy cannons.

EXT. AMELIA STATION - DAY

The Appomattox river it is swollen by the nights rain. Water
rushes head long it creeps up on the banks. It is getting
deeper and more hazardous by the minute.

Two confederate SOLDIERS eye the raging torrent worry on
their faces.

SOLDIER 1
Any bridges round here?

(CONTINUED)

SOLDIER 2
Just one High Bridge.

SOLDIER 1
Better get to before the Yanks.

Back again to the roaring water.

EXT. OPPOSITE PAINEVILLE ROAD - DAY

Lee racing with his force to the rescue. Coming to stop he sits up in horse with binoculars.

Troops being led away his cannons and supplies destroyed.

Furious situation quickly becoming unglued. He clutches at chest again.

He's dizzy Longstreet extends arm to prop him up.

LONGSTREET
General?

LEE
(to Fitzhugh)
I'm fine, forward

Union troops caught off Guard. Maj. Gen. Fitzhugh Lee (26) Lee's nephew leads the charge.

It is a running firefight as Union troops flee down road.

ANGLE ON LEE'S POSITION

LEE
(to Longstreet)
Where does the road lead?

LONGSTREET
Jetersville.

LEE
Excellent from there we can make it to High Bridge.

EXT. JETERSVILLE - DAY

General Meade arrives with his two divisions planning to cut off Lee.

Meade is confident proudly sitting in saddle his aides around him.

(CONTINUED)

MEADE

Well looks like we beat the fox
after all.

His men nod affirmative.

MEADE

Lets not be over confident.
Disperse to either side of rail
lines.

In the distance gunfire, Meade alert the other cavalry
steady horses. The sounds coming closer, Meade draws his
sidearm.

Union Cavalry heading straight for him Confederates close
behind.

EXT. JETERSVILLE ROAD CONFEDERATE POSITION - DAY

The Confederates are gaining on their prey. Then Fitzhugh
spots Meade's column ahead of him. It's a huge force.

Quick decision he breaks off attack and retreats.

EXT. JETERSVILLE UNION POSITION - DAY

The Union cavalry pull to a blazing stop. The Young
Lieutenant exhausted and out of breath salutes.

MEADE

Report.

LIEUTENANT

We were probing west Sir and came
up on their supply wagons.

MEADE

I Knew it we're ahead of him. WE
can box him in and cut off his
escape.

He leans over to his aide.

MEADE

Inform Grant have engaged enemy and
believe still on this side of the
river.

The aide salutes and speeds off.

EXT. ROAD OPPOSITE JETERSVILLE - DAY

Fitzhugh makes his back with his force to Lee's position.

LEE
What is this!

FITZHUGH
(out of breath)
A sizable force is moving in.

Lee concerned.

LEE
What strength.

FITZHUGH
At least a corp.

LEE
That would be Meade's II corp.

LONGSTREET
We can take that general.

LEE
(cunning)
Meade will be cautious he'll bring
up reinforcements probably Ord's VI
corp.

Lee takes binoculars and looks around surrounding countryside. In distance dust plums of marching men.

He indicates to Longstreet to look.

LEE
Yes they will not be here till
nightfall. Again we must use the
cover of darkness to mask our
escape.

LONGSTREET
And High Bridge we have no pontoon
boats.

A twinkle in Lee's eye.

LEE
We need to out distance them. I
have faith in your abilities old
friend. Probe south towards
Deatonville see if there is a way
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEE (cont'd)
to reach the bridge bypassing
Jetersville.

LONGSTREET
I'll find a way.

INT. JETERSVILLE STATION - NIGHT

A small oil lantern illuminates the building Meade at
counter. A Map spread before him. His officers surround him.

Outside the S/O troops moving in.

MEADE
He wants High Bridge we'll deny him
of that. I propose we attack at
dawn.

A young OFFICER speaks up

OFFICER
But surely sir if we attack now
when he's not expecting it-

MEADE
(interrupting)
Son he's beaten and exhausted.
Believe me he's going nowhere.
(beat)
His arrogance will make him stand
and fight. We will crush him.

Meade slams fist down on map.

EXT. AMELIA STATION - NIGHT

Mack has hurried making meals trying to feed as many men as
possible.

Their tired eyes and growling bellies says it all. They walk
the chow line grateful for every morsel.

MACK
I's sorry boys.

BOBBY
Don't be.

(CONTINUED)

MACK

You should'a be at home barely
outta diapers.

Some of the other soldiers laugh at the remark.

BOBBY

I cans shoot as good as any y'all.

From out of the darkness strides Lee plate in hand.

MACK

I'll fix yours directly Mr. Robert.

LEE

No I eat with my men.

BOBBY

Sorry bout supplies general.

LEE

Nonsense you reported the
situation. That's what a good
soldier should do.

The other soldiers are awe inspired. Mack slops something
resembling food on plate.

Lee and Bobby and some others walk over to campfire. Sitting
down on rocks. Lee a father talking to sons.

A starry eyed confederate SOLDIER asks politely.

SOLDIER

When we a goin home general.

Bobby shushes him.

LEE

No that's alright. Straightforward
question deserves such an answer.

Lee takes a bite and sip of coffee.

LEE

I don't know.

SOLDIER

But spring plantin is a coming up.

LEE

I know, but for right now we've got
to keep together.

(CONTINUED)

Another Soldier grumpy is not so optimistic.

GRUMPY SOLDIER

No disrespect general sir but
that's what de told us last year
and de year before.

LEE

None taken. We do this for our
homes you know this.

BOBBY

Yes sir! You can count on me.

LEE

(a little smile)

Bobby you wouldn't complain if your
feet were on fire.

The other soldiers manage some laughs.

LEE

Okay you boys eat up we're pulling
out.

The boys devour their food as Lee excuses himself.

Mack gives him a reassuring wink.

Lee into the darkness his back illuminated by the fire. The
voice of Jackson comes to him again. Lee does not turn
around.

JACKSON

Never has a general been so loved
by his troops.

LEE

An idolization that will get them
all killed.

JACKSON

Only if you let it.

Lee turns around sharply, nothing there except Bobby.

BOBBY

Ya left your coffee.

Lee pats him on the face.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Thank you son.

EXT. LONGSTREET'S POSITION - NIGHT

The rain has started it slows their march. Longstreet looks back over beleaguered army.

LONGSTREET
(to himself)
We offer such a sad state.

His aide to his side.

AIDE
Sir?

LONGSTREET
Nothing, what is our position?

AIDE
We passed Union lines about an hour ago.

LONGSTREET
That would put us around Sailors Creek.

AIDE
Yes sir.

EXT. SAILORS CREEK - NIGHT

The steep banks of Sailors creek are treacherous the creek below is swelled and rushing headlong.

Longstreet surveys situation.

LONGSTREET
We can't ford this.

AIDE
There's Double Bridge about half mile back.

LONGSTREET
That'll put us half an hour behind.
We must get to High Bridge and secure it for the rest of the army to cross.

Longstreet frustrated.

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET

Alright I'll take Munfords and
Rossers Divsion ahead. Make sure
Kershaws rearguard Carolinian's
make it across here.

AIDE

Yes sir.

Longstreet garners his men and they ride off.

EXT. RICE STATION - MORNING

Longstreet and his divisions arrive at Rice Station the
rains have subsided.

Locals come out cheering them.

A Local OLDER MAN speaks up.

OLDER MAN

Thank God general.

LONGSTREET

We shan't be here long.

OLDER MAN

Better than those damn Yankees.

Longstreet sensing something.

LONGSTREET

What do you mean.

OLDER MAN

Marched through here not an hour
ago.

LONGSTREET

You sure?

OLDER MAN

Heading straight up road to High
Bridge.

Longstreet pivots his horse urgency in his voice. Lt. Gen.
Rosser (30) and Brigadier Gen. Munsford (35) ready their
horses.

LONGSTREET

We've been outpaced.

(CONTINUED)

ROSSER

They'll blow that bridge.

MUNSFORD

That will leave Lee's main body cut off.

LONGSTREET

You see that it doesn't happen.

Munsford and Rosser salute they take their divisions at the quick march.

EXT. HIGH BRIDGE - EARLY MORNING

Union demolition troops are scaling the ramparts of the bridge setting charges.

Lookouts keep a watchful eye the gray mist rising from the river makes visibility difficult.

Then a sound he looks down the rail line squinting. The rumbling gets louder and louder.

Finally breaking through mist is Munsford and Rosser their swords drawn the rebel yell piercing the silence.

Charging at full gallop straight towards them.

The lookout readies his musket aiming BAM a bullet from Confederate sharpshooter from opposite bank rips through his skull.

Union troops on other side put up a tough defense. But Munsford and Rosser keep up their charge.

The demolition teams are cut down by musket fire they drop into the swirling Appomattox below.

Rosser and Munsfords horse leap over and behind enemy lines.

They hack at Union defenders some heads come off.

A vicious assault by a desperate animal the Confederate Army.

Slowly musket fire subsides Union troops give up.

The gun smoke and mist give the appearance of a boiling inferno.

(CONTINUED)

MUNSFORD
(exhausted)
We have the bridge.

Rosser he too exhausted but thrilled acknowledges.

ROSSER
Yes.

INT. GRANT'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Grant is beside himself as he pounds desk a dispatch in his hand he berates Sheridan.

GRANT
High Bridge taken by confederates.
that means he left Amelia station.

SHERIDAN
I don't understand Meade's forces
were right there.

GRANT
I'm going to fire Meade he's
cautious to a fault.

Grant studies map, we guide along with his finger.

GRANT
That means Lee's main force is
somewhere between Amelia Springs
and Rice Station.

SHERIDAN
Probably spread thin too.

GRANT
Agreed he knows better than to keep
army bunched up.

SHERIDAN
Some could be as far south as
Sailors creek.

Grant chews on cigar.

GRANT
This could be an opportunity.

SHERIDAN
Double Bridge is small if they are
crossing Sailors Creek there-

(CONTINUED)

GRANT

They would get bogged down.

SHERIDAN

We could split his Army in two.

GRANT

Divide and conquer.

Sheridan and Grant lean on table their faces reflecting confidence.

EXT. SAILORS CREEK - NIGHT

Double Bridge is clogged with the retreating confederate army. Gen. Kershaw (36) a husky determined individual rides up onto the scene with his beleaguered South Carolinian's.

He surveys situation noticing the steep slopes down to roaring torrent.

Horses hooves getting stuck in ever increasing mud. It is a dangerous quagmire.

KERSHAW

I don't like it. Stuck out here
with our asses in the wind.

Turning to young cavalry officer.

KERSHAW

Tell those equipment wagons to hold
up. We need our fighting force
across the bridge first.

The OFFICER complies making his way best he can down mud bank.

Reaching the equipment train he notices how wagons are knee deep in mud.

Men are pushing and shoving to get them moving. The Officer approaches a mud encrusted sergeant.

The sergeant full of piss and vinegar cusses at the wagons. He strains to lift wagon wheel clear.

SERGEANT

Blessed Mother! Come on you
bastard!

(CONTINUED)

OFFICER

Gen. Kershaw wants this bridge clear.

SERGEANT

Well if he can do any better, he's welcome to come try.

OFFICER

Now Sergeant!

SERGEANT

Look-

It's the last word he says a bullet rips through his chest. Union Calvary with a brigade of light infantry has out flanked them.

Kershaw tries desperately to disperse his men. On the slopes they are in a precarious position.

They are cut down like clay pigeons at target practice.

A repeat of their slaughter at High Bridge only reverse.

Confederates fall into the creek some drowning because they can't swim.

The equipment wagons are a sitting duck. Some troops fight vainly to save what they can.

A Confederate SOLDIER crouches behind wagon wheel trying to load musket.

SOLDIER

(to anyone)

It's like we are fighting against hope itself.

Nobody really hears him, the rain is thunderous masking the battle noise.

The union pours it on a thousand muskets disseminate Kershaw's men. Kershaw raises his sword as if to rally his men.

He glances at ground quickly being soaked in blood mixed in mud. Looking around almost in dreamlike state, men die in agony all around him.

They can hardly get off a shot before they are riddled with bullets.

(CONTINUED)

A bullet strikes Kershaw's horse sending it bolting. Kershaw falls face into mud. His pristine uniform covered.

Finally realizing he calls out. A desperate cry for mercy.

KERSHAW
Cease Fire! Cease Fire!

Kershaw in symbolic gesture throws sword into creek and drops to his knees.

The Union COMMANDER opposite him sees action.

COMMANDER
Cease Fire!

The rest of Confederate troops lay down arms and get to feet hands raised.

The Union troops quickly round them up.

EXT. HIGH BRIDGE - EARLY MORNING

Lee a little more confident is having a bit of a rest as his men parade past him crossing bridge.

Sitting alone with his thoughts he admires them.

Sitting on stump he takes out a small journal and pencil.

He writes.

LEE (V.O.)
This terrible adventure drags on. I
do not see a foreseeable end.

He stops in recompense then begins again.

LEE (V.O.)
Virginia in the Springtime always
meant so much to me. The beginning
of new life. But this hallowed
ground of my home is now fertilized
with blood and corpses, I wonder
what crops they will bring in
future generations.

He sighs a heavy sigh, closing journal and putting back in pocket.

He dons his hat and gloves, the men passing in front of him give him encouragement.

(CONTINUED)

They shout:

Come on General we gots to get on the hump.

Can't be sitting around General.

Don't worry we aint done yet.

They keep marching ever resilient, unrestrained and confident.

LEE
(to himself)
We aint done yet.

The air is bright and crisp from the night rain.

EXT. APPOMATTOX RIVER - MORNING

Below the bridge Mack is calmly watering and tending to Traveler.

Traveler is nothing more than an Old Paint no Thoroughbred. Gray and White molts his coat with large almost blue eyes he's a gentle horse.

MACK
Now you drink up we's got a long
ride ahead. Ole Mr. Robert he don't
need to be a walkin.

Traveler has had his fill and raises up almost shaking head in affirmation.

MACK
Yes you knows it too. I think in
the end we'll be his onlys friends.

Mack takes reigns and walks Traveler back up hill to an awaiting Lee.

Lee offering kind smile to both of them he softly strokes Travelers nose.

LEE
There boy you alright.

MACK
Yes WE are.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
I could always count on you two.

MACK
(a little miffed)
Don't equate me with no horse.

LEE
You know what I meant.

Mack shoves his hands in pockets.

MACK
Mr. Robert I aint never complained
about nothin.

LEE
(not knowing where this is
coming from)
I know Mack.

MACK
Did you ever wonder Mr. Robert.
Exactly what we's fighting for?

LEE
To protect our homes from invaders.

MACK
Invaders? Four years ago you called
dem our neighbors.

LEE
That was before.

Lee mounts Traveler tired of conversation. Mack comes up
grabbing reigns from his hands.

MACK
Do you know that not once, Not
Once! In four years did I ever hear
you call them the enemy.

Lee stares blankly mouth agape loss for words.

MACK
No sir. You called them Those
People over there. Why is dat sir?

LEE
I - I?

MACK

Because you never really did. Sir
yous a good man, better than any I
know north or south. Look at your
men General.

LEE

But-

MACK

You remember your Shakespeare
General? I do you quotes it to me
all de time.

Mack releases reigns and walks away. Lee stunned at
outburst. Remembering.

LEE

But if the cause be not good, the
king himself hath a heavy reckoning
to make.

(beat)

Now, if these men do not die well,
it will be a black matter for the
king that led them to it.

EXT. RAILWAY APPOMATTOX - DAY

Willis has traveled all night dodging Union troops. He
hunkers down in the woods surveying the goings on.

The Train under civilian supervision is exposed and open to
attack.

Then he notices something, a Man in his Mid thirties. The
man is checking train looking to make sure things are tied
down.

The man is Willis Father JAKE he has not seen him for years.

Willis carefully sneaks up on him pointing musket at his
head. Jake working hears the cock of musket he slowly lifts
arms.

WILLIS

Where ya bin Daddy?

Regret on Jake's face he slowly turns to face his son.

WILLIS

Crops don gone bad, Mama been
starvin since you left.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE

I'm sorry son.

Angry Willis puts cold barrel in middle of Jake's forehead.

Jake cowers and trembles.

WILLIS

We thought you gone to fight. I followed you. No one heard of you.

(beat)

I even went to Richmond to check death records. NOTHIN!!

JAKE

I can explain.

WILLIS

Explain nothin you used the war as an excuse. All those years we thought you dead in some cornfield, forgotten and rotting!

JAKE

Fair enough, but I'm doin my part now.

WILLIS

Yea some comfy rear job. While me and Bobby doin the fighting!

Emboldened Jake lowers his hands and pushes musket aside.

JAKE

You got Bobby involved!

WILLIS

(crying)

What'a you care!?

JAKE

He's just a kid!

WILLIS

More a man than you'll ever be.

Willis is completely breaking down he falls to his knees. Jake comes to comfort his son.

JAKE

Son this war is over.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIS

Coward.

JAKE

No practical, I'm getting you out
of this.

WILLIS

How.

From around train come Union troops muskets trained on
Willis.

Enraged Willis leaps to his feet as the Troops grab him and
hold him back.

WILLIS

You BASTARD! You Fucking Bastard!

JAKE

Calm down son. You need to tell us
where Lee is.

Willis spits in his father's face as the Union troops drag
him away.

JAKE

(to himself)

It will all be over soon son.

EXT. GRANT'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Sheridan gallops up on his horse to Grant standing in front
of steps.

Sheridan jumps off his horse almost giddy with pleasure. He
hands Grant a Dispatch but blurts out it's contents.

SHERIDAN

Kershaw's surrendered, we have
almost half Lee's fighting force.

(beat)

We've split Lee's army in two. It
worked General.

Grant scans document in utter amazement his cigar drops from
his mouth.

SHERIDAN

They were cornered at Sailors
creek, their supply wagons clogged
the bridge.

(CONTINUED)

GRANT
(reflective)
Could be the beginning, keep the
pressure on.

SHERIDAN
Yes Sir!

Sheridan mounts horse and quickly departs.

EXT. BETWEEN RICE SPRINGS AND APPOMATTOX - DAY

With his army across river Lee breaths a little easier. On
Traveler Lee gently moves among his men.

Offering encouragement.

LEE
Alright supplies are just ahead.

SOLDIER
We's okay sir.

LEE
Soldiers can't fight on empty
stomachs.

Some of the other men grumble a bit. Out of ear shot or so
they think, remarks are heard.

That's what he said last time.

I'm down to four rounds left.

Might as well throw rocks at em.

Lee is stoic, reserved he moves on pretending no to hear.

EXT. HIGH BRIDGE - DAY

The last of Lee's army moves across leaving bridge open. One
soldier turns and remarks to another.

SOLDIER 1
We gonna blow dat thing?

SOLDIER 2
You got any dynamite?

(CONTINUED)

SOLDIER 1
What you take me fer?

SOLDIER 1
Longstreet's boys be on directly,
they'll take care of it.

They saunter on, the rest of army disappearing around corner. They run to catch up.

EXT. LEE'S POSITION - DAY

Lee has stopped for a moment resting, his chest hurting, out of breath. He leans on tree out of sight of troops.

Lee holds his chest.

LEE
Lord not now, let me get my boys to
safety.

Then the S/O Longstreet's voice calling out for him.

LONGSTREET (O.S.)
General Lee, General Lee.

Lee regaining composure, urgency in Longstreet's voice. He steps out from behind tree.

LEE
Here Bull.

Longstreet gallops up to him almost falling off horse.

LONGSTREET
Sir! Sir! - I

LEE
Easy what is it?

LONGSTREET
Kershaw! He-

Longstreet can hardly utter up the words. Longstreet's eyes and expression say it all.

LEE
How bad?

LONGSTREET
Almost half, four full divisions
they were cut off at Sailors Creek.

(CONTINUED)

Lee backs up, almost fainting his hands prop up on the tree steadying himself. His head down.

LEE
Where was Gordon?

LONGSTREET
He had pulled ahead the rain covered the noise of battle. It was over before it began.

LEE
I knew the army was spread to thin. Grant realized this.
(beat pause)
It's not your fault Bull. What about High Bridge?

LONGSTREET
Sir?

LEE
You did blow it?

LONGSTREET
No Sir. We were ahead of them.

Lee raises up agitated. He pounds fist on tree

LEE
For God's sake they'll pour across. That leaves two bridges between us.

LONGSTREET
Farmville?

LEE
We can at least slow them down.

Lee pensive he spies Porter Alexander (30) munitions officer passing his position. Calling out.

LEE
Porter!

Porter guides his horse over to Lee.

PORTER
Yes sir.

LEE
Do you have dynamite in your munitions?

PORTER

No Sir just canister shot.

LEE

Can you use it to blow a bridge?

PORTER

Easy, just have to tie off and put fuse to it.

LEE

Good, ride back. Take whatever you need. I want that bridge at Farmville blown Commander

A stern fierceness and finality in Lee's voice. Porter salutes

PORTER

Yes Sir!

Porter hurries off. Lee turns to Longstreet.

LEE

It's a race now.

Putting on hat Lee strides off to a grazing Traveler.

EXT. FARMVILLE BRIDGE - DAY

Union troops approaching bridge. Porter and his small detachment see them. They gallop straight at them.

Jumping off horses the men lay down a covering fire.

Union troops kneel down returning shots.

Porter slides off horse and gathers the canisters and fuse twine. He scurries off under the Bridge.

EXT. UNDER FARMVILLE BRIDGE - DAY

Bullets whiz past him, some ricochet off wooden support beams. Like a monkey, he maneuvers under Bridge out of line of fire.

He sets charges securing them to several beams. He breaks fuse twine with teeth. With knife he pry's small hole in top of each one placing fuses in them he ties them all together, leaving just one to light.

He guesstimates length to allow him time to get back.

(CONTINUED)

He lights it then hurriedly he departs. He loses footing on slick beams, but manages to catch himself. The fuse is quickly burning down.

He manages to get back to surface. He barks orders. Some men fall from gunshots.

PORTER

Quick, this bridge will be dust!

The other men disengage and jump on mounts. Moments later the Bridge explodes decimating the advancing Union troops.

Timbers of beams fall to ground leaving gaping whole over river.

The dust settles as Porter examines handiwork. Dead men floating in river below.

Other side Union troops regroup and pick up fire.

Porter and his men dodge bullets and fly down the road away.

INT. GRANT'S HEADQUARTERS FIELD TENT - DAY

Grant going over reports the S/O of soldiers marching slowly by.

Grant exits tent surveying the defeated Confederate troops being moved to the rear.

Some of the soldiers stare at their conqueror. Grant ambivalent doesn't meet their glare.

He lights another cigar as Meade approaches him.

GRANT

Proud even in defeat.

MEADE

Admirable if not deluded.

GRANT

I don't know if is delusional, but it has been a tragedy.

Meade doesn't respond as the soldiers are paraded by.

GRANT

Sad, more so that future generations may ponder why we took up arms against our neighbors our brothers.

(CONTINUED)

MEADE

Kane and Able.

GRANT

A simple analogy. We've won the war, now it will be up to him to win the peace.

MEADE

We still have to catch him.

GRANT

Maybe not.

Grant moves into his field tent.

INT. GRANT'S FIELD TENT - DAY

Grant sits down at little field desk paper and ink and pen laid out.

He dips pen and begins to write

Close-up of paper

GRANT (O.S.)

General LEE
The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle...

EXT. LEE'S POSITION - DAY

Lee and Longstreet stand reading over Grant's letter.

LEE (O.S.)

...I feel that it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood, by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the C. S. Army known as the Army of Northern Virginia. U.S. Grant

LONGSTREET

I don't think so, do you.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
(obstinate)
Not Yet!

INT/EXT. PRISONER HUT - DAY

Willis sits stranded and alone in small bivouac hut. A lone young soldier no older than Willis, stands guard.

Willis squirms on the ground unable to get comfortable. The young guard looks on sympathetic.

GUARD
I's see if I can get you a blanket
or sumtin.

WILLIS
Mucha obliged.

GUARD
Why do you fight anyway.

WILLIS
You'd fight to if somebody took
over your home.

GUARD
We just trying to preserve the
union.

WILLIS
Seems that would'a been better done
talkin.

GUARD
Maybe so.

WILLIS
(put off)
You got a name Billy Yank?

GUARD
Micheal Pierce and you Johnny Reb?

WILLIS
William Steal. But folks call me
Willis.

MICHEAL
Nice to meet you.

Micheal gingerly extends his hand through wooden bars.
Willis warily eying action finally gives in and shakes it.

(CONTINUED)

MICHEAL

They say it will all be over soon.

Willis tightens his grip and pulls Micheal almost through the bars. He punches him in the face almost knocking him out.

Grabbing his keys Willis frees himself locking Micheal inside. Micheal half way raises up.

MICHEAL

What'd you do that fer.

WILLIS

Sorry friend perhaps we'll see each other under better circumstances.

Micheal acknowledges Willis kind words noticing that he didn't even try to take his gun.

MICHEAL

Take care Willis.

WILLIS

You too, just give me ten seconds.

Willis dashes off into the woods.

EXT. WOODS WILLIS POSITION - DAY

In the distance some futile shots ring out. The S/O prisoner escape, Stop him!

Willis doesn't stop just continues like a rabbit jumping over brush and dodging trees.

EXT. ROAD TO APPOMATTOX LEE'S POSITION - DAY

A little more urgent Lee is constantly looking over his shoulder. For the first since Gettysburg his men feel his tension. They bolster him.

From the soldiers to Lee:

SOLDIER 1

Don't worry General we'd hear them long before they got here.

SOLDIER 2

We know this country like the back of our hands.

(CONTINUED)

Longstreet sits in his saddle as he he gently rides along beside Lee.

LONGSTREET
Never has a General be so beloved
by his men.

LEE
A General full of self doubt.

The Familiar voice of Jackson drones over the clatter and into Lee's ears.

JACKSON
Peace with dignity Robert, don't
let down the boys.

Lee winces at the voice he raises a hand to ear to drown it out.

LEE
Will you stop that!

LONGSTREET
Sir.

Lee coming back to reality.

LEE
No, Sorry Bull, not you.

LONGSTREET
Sir?

LEE
You may think me crazy if I
explained.

LONGSTREET
(sympathetic)
The war has gotten to all of us
from time to time.

Lee turns in his saddle and motions for Longstreet to move with him. Out of earshot of rest of men.

They stop, Lee catches his breath a little.

LEE
I feel I've been to hard on you old
friend.

LONGSTREET
Now General-

LEE
Let me finish. Do you think we can
finish this fight?

Longstreet spits his chewing tobacco.

LONGSTREET
If ever a man could, it would be
you General.

LEE
My old warhorse. Ever confident.

LONGSTREET
Not too confident at Gettysburg.

LEE
Forget that, it was an error on my
part.

LONGSTREET
Beggin pardon General but just what
are you getting at?

LEE
(coming clean)
I've had dreams of Thomas. They are
not real clear but he seems to be
urging me on to something.

LONGSTREET
Like what?

LEE
Like I said, I only have vague
recollections. Something about
peace and honor.

Longstreet brings a little levity.

LONGSTREET
Sounds like Thomas alright, always
was a bit high and mighty.

LEE
(smiling)
Your right could count on a sermon
if you got him started.

LONGSTREET

Just a little self doubt that's all. Once we clear Appomattox and get our supplies we'll be set.

LEE

I hope so.

Longstreet salutes and goes back to his men. Lee alone with thoughts, then a crashing in brush behind him.

Lee swirls Traveler through bushes comes Willis busting through. Panting and exhausted

On his knees Willis tries to catch breath as he speaks.

WILLIS

General Sir
(heaving breath)
Sir I-

LEE

Rest easy son.

Lee steps off Traveler and kneels on one knee beside him.

WILLIS

I was captured.

LEE

Where?

WILLIS

Pamplin station.

Close on Lee's face the gravity of situation hits like a brick.

WILLIS

That's right Sir. The Yankees done beat us to it.

LEE

What strength.

WILLIS

Couldn't tell, I just saw some cavalry maybe a company of infantry, but I can't be sure.

LEE

Two of my best troopers.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIS

Bobby?

LEE

He's fine. You have helped us keep ahead of the game.

WILLIS

What are we going to do?

LEE

We have no alternative but to move on Appomattox.

Lee stands helping Willis up. Lee calls out to Longstreet once again.

Longstreet comes up.

LONGSTREET

General?

LEE

Pamplin is lost. It's on to Appomattox.

LONGSTREET

(saluting)

Yes sir!

Lee sits down and scribes a quick not in response to Grant's offer.

LEE

I need you to do one more thing for me lad. It may by us some time. Take a flag of truce-

WILLIS

But General Sir I'ms a fighter.

LEE

I know you are son, but sometimes we have to be peacekeepers to. Await a response and try and catch up with us.

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE PAMPLIN STATION - DAY

Willis makes his way through the tall grass parading the white flag on a stick.

The Union line stops him. Micheal is there with a big black eye.

UNION TROOP

Halt!

WILLIS

(calling out)

I gots a note for General Grant.

The Union troops advance on his position. Michael is a little miffed.

MICHEAL

Didn't think I'd see you so soon.

WILLIS

Missed me huh?

MICHEAL

Ah shut up, come on.

They take Willis in tow to an awaiting Sheridan.

SHERIDAN

Well what have you got?

WILLIS

A letter to Grant from General Lee.

SHERIDAN

I'll see that he gets it.

WILLIS

All due respect General I's supposed to give it to him in person, and wait for a response.

SHERIDAN

Of all the nerve.
(reluctantly)
Get him a horse.

EXT. ROAD WEST OF APPOMATTOX - DAY

Grant rides with his aides behind main force of his Army. Sheridan trots up with Willis. Willis presents Grant with the note.

SHERIDAN

From Lee.

Grant tears it open. He reads.

GRANT (O.S.)

General: I have received your note of this date. Though not entertaining the opinion you express of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia, I reciprocate your desire to avoid useless effusion of blood, and therefore, before considering your proposition, ask the terms you will offer on condition of its surrender.

R.E. Lee, General.

Grant's face is shallow. He steps down off his horse. Leaning on saddle he scribbles a short response and hands to Willis.

Grant motions his aide.

GRANT

Take him back to his line unabated.

Willis departs with escort back to his line.

SHERIDAN

What does he say?

GRANT

He's not giving up.

Grant hands him the letter. Sheridan scans it.

SHERIDAN

He's stalling.

GRANT

We have another fight yet.

Grant getting back on horse, he trots on glumly, weary.

EXT. ROAD WEST OF APPOMATTOX - NIGHT

The rain has started again. The Confederates are moving slower. Some just drop in the mud only to be helped up.

The rain drips from Lee's cap keeping his face dry the rest of him is soaked. He looks to be aging years as the days go by, his color is terrible and bags under his eyes.

Longstreet beckons the men on almost tyrannically.

LONGSTREET

You want to sleep and die or fight
and eat!

Generals Gordon and Pendleton survey the men's plight.

PENDLETON

This is pointless.

GORDON

They can't stand, much less fight.

PENDLETON

We must approach Lee.

GORDON

Not without Longstreet's approval.

EXT. ROAD APPOMATTOX BEHIND LEE'S POSITION - DAY

Sheridan looks at abandoned carts and wagons. Personal items and cook wear, all discarded by fleeing confederates.

SHERIDAN

(to aide)

They are in a dead run, leaving
with only what they can carry.

Sheridan and his men move forward keeping up the pressure. Rain in sheets falls all around.

INT. PENDLETON'S AND GORDON'S TENT - NIGHT

Rain drips through the flimsy cloth tent the floor a puddle of Mud. A single lantern lights interior. Pendleton and Gordon wright out their proposal.

Longstreet enters slapping rain off in a highly disgruntled state.

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET

Blasted Rain! Bad enough I have to contend with hungry men. I wonder whose side God is on.

Pendleton stands straight away and cuts to the chase.

PENDLETON

Perhaps both sir.

LONGSTREET

Don't speak in riddles Will, I'm not in the mood.

Longstreet sits down on a barrel shaking off the chill.

PENDLETON

No riddle General, it's over.

LONGSTREET

(disbelieving his ears)
What did you say!

Gordon steps up and repeats.

GORDON

You heard him, we're done Pete.

LONGSTREET

I'll be damned if that's so.

PENDLETON

Surrender is the only option.

LONGSTREET

You hold your tongue! That's a decision only Lee can make.

Pendleton approaches Longstreet in almost a pleading fashion.

PENDLETON

I know, but if we could have a consensus, he may see the futility.

LONGSTREET

(incensed)
We have been in dire situations far worse than this. Now that your tired and a little wet you think all hope is lost. What about Lee? He's lost his home at Arlington, Virginia is laid waste. Who are we

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET (cont'd)
to give up now. You know a rope
probably awaits all our necks if we
give up.

GORDON
You don't know that.

LONGSTREET
Look at your history Generals,
traitors are usually hung.

With that Longstreet puts his soaking hat back on and
departs. Gordon and Pendleton stare bemused.

INT. LEE'S TENT - NIGHT

Lee lies on his cot in restless sleep, he tosses and turns.
Sweat pours from him. Mack at his side gives him a worried
look.

Lee cries out in his sleep it is a waking nightmare.

LEE
NO! To the right! Thomas!

He sits up with a start eyes wide staring looking around,
coming back to reality.

MACK
Alright Mr. Robert?

LEE
No, the nightmare doesn't end when
I wake up.

Lee hoists legs over cot and sits up, bent over he runs
hands through his hair.

MACK
If you'd eat sumtin you'd feel
better.

LEE
I doubt that, we've been over this
before, I eat when the men eat.

MACK
And when will dat be?

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Appomattox isn't far.

INT. LEE'S TENT - MORNING

Lee, head in hands as if nursing a headache rubs his fingers through his hair. A long sigh of a man exhausted he tries to stand.

Mack gets up to intervene and help, a gentle wave off by Lee. Lee eyes the lantern on his field desk illuminating the wet maps.

Some of the ink is smudged and has run blotting the paper.

Lee looks at them hopelessly the names of towns blurred.

He picks one up examining it.

LEE
Now the heavens are denying my
eyes.

MACK
You don't know that.

Lee crumples up map and discards it like so much trash.

Landing in mud is quickly gets soaked. Mack vainly tries to retrieve it.

LEE
Let it be Mack, there is only one
destination now anyway.

Lee steps towards the front of his tent and flips back flap.

From Lee's POV the beleaguered Army trudges by.

No longer do they holler out his name as Savior. The fight is almost gone from them. Their pallor is gray like their uniforms which are in tatters.

A soldier stops defiantly in front of him and plants his barefoot in the mud. He does not say a word, Lee understands.

The soldier marches on.

EXT. GENERAL GORDON'S POSITION - DAY

General Gordan sits atop his horse as his portion of the army files by.

Two of Gordon's MEN bring him what appears to be two prisoners. Wearing gray uniforms they seem unusually scared to be deserters.

MAN 1

Found these two counting campfires.

PRISONER 1

We been on furlough General, just wanted to know if we had and an army to come back to.

Gordon suspicious starts a mild interrogation.

GORDON

To what Mess do you belong.

PRISONER 2

Hampton Sir, part of Pendleton's brigade.

PRISONER 1

You see we had the fever and Fitzhuh that's General Lee's-

GORDON

I know who it is private. Let me see your papers.

The prisoners dig into their pockets and produce orders.

Gordon examines them he looks down from his POV Lee's signature. It looks funny, but he's not sure.

He hands them back to prisoners.

GORDON

They seem to be in order.

From behind comes one of Gordon's scouts. He interrupts saluting.

SCOUT

Sir there are Federals all over the place.

He stops then glances at the two prisoners. Noticing gray uniform. One of the Prisoners squirms.

(CONTINUED)

Then recognition from the scout.

SCOUT
These are Union troops sir.

GORDON
You sure?

SCOUT
Positive. These two captured me
months ago at Grant's headquarters.

PRISONER 1
But General Sir, you saw our
papers.

The Scout yanks the paper from his hand looking at it
closely.

SCOUT
These are forged Sir.

GORDON
Search them.

The Scout and others immediately do as they are told.

They fumble around till finally one reaches into one of the
Prisoner's boot.

He pulls out a folded piece of paper hands it to Gordon.

Gordon's eyes widen.

SCOUT
What does it say.

GORDON
Grant ordering Ord to cut our line
of retreat at Appomattox.

INT. LEE'S TENT - MORNING

Lee looks over the paper from the two prisoners. Gordon
looking sorrowful.

GORDON
The ink's still fresh sir.

LEE
(reading)
April 5th 10:10 pm Jetersville.

(CONTINUED)

Lee looks to the heavens

LEE

Now I have two armies facing me.
Plus I have Sheridan's cavalry
hanging off my flank. We have no
choice but to push ahead.

MACK

Like herding cattle.

Lee admonishes him.

LEE

I don't need that from you.

EXT. GENERAL EWELL'S - DAY

General Ewell the old battle horse leads the rear end of Lee's army. The last of the supply wagons slog slowly through the mud.

He is Lee's rear guard the last point of defense to protect the main portion of the army with Lee.

He rides along high in his saddle despite the loss of one leg.

Then a slow rumble is heard the ground shakes slightly.

Ewell alert calls to his men.

EWELL

Defensive positions!

Sheridan's cavalry careens towards him, a freight train at full gallop.

Ewell's men dig in they rally a full volley from muskets. Bringing up a cannon they load with canister shot and gouge a gaping hole in Sheridan's advance.

Sheridan's forces pull back.

Ewell calls for the SUPPLY MASTER.

EWELL

Make your way forward to Gordon. It
will leave us less to protect.

Ewell's men part out of the roadway to let the bony teams pass.

EXT. ROAD TO APPOMATTOX - DAY

The wagons without veteran commanders to guide them quickly become disoriented. They start to fragment some breaking off across field.

Without troops to guard them they are sitting ducks.

On a hill overlooking the scene is Custer and his men.

Like vultures they circle in and quickly ensnare the supply train.

EXT. EWELL'S POSITION - DAY

Sheridans cavalry has regrouped and again engages Ewell. But Ewell's men are almost out of ammunition.

With bugles crowing the charge Union infantry raids down on them irresistibly.

The Cavalry hits Ewells flanks which disintegrate. Confederates here and there fight valiantly some hand to hand.

Then the inevitable hits them and with sudden realization, they drop their muskets.

Ewell astride his horse in one final act of defiance breaks his sword throws down his revolver and raises his hands.

Union troops rush to him and take gently down from his horse.

The rest of his force raises their hands as well.

EXT. LEE'S POSITION - DAY

Lee worried looks with binoculars to his rear. The barren Virginia landscape gives a clear view of countryside.

A British observer Colonel Garnet Wolsely at his side.

LEE

I do not like it Colonel.

Wolsely a refined British officer speaks in abject candor.

WOLSELY

It would be good if we had word from Ewell.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
You state the obvious.

WOLSELY
Only state the facts sir.

LEE
Let's see if we can expand on those
facts. Care to join me?

Lee spurs Traveler on at full gallop, Lee's aides protest.
Lee calls back to them.

LEE
I'll be right back.

Colonel Wolsely is hot behind him. They reach a rise over
which Ewell should be seen.

They stop Lee raises binoculars seeing hundreds of white
objects covering the hill.

LEE
Are those sheep.

WOLSELY
(grimly)
No those are Yankee tents.

LEE
What are they doing here?

Colonel Veneble (38) under Ewell has managed to escape the
carnage. He joins Lee at the crest of the hill.

VENEBLE
Did you get my message?

Lee perplexed vaguely shakes his head no.

VENEBLE
They captured the rest of the
supplies.

LEE
Show me where commander.

VENEBLE
Sir?

WOLSELY
I must protest Sir we-

Lee cuts them short and almost roars.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
NOW comanders.

The three ride in the direction of the battle.

EXT. EWELL'S POSITION - DAY

The three approach slowly, the scene beyond them beggars description. Wagons on fire men dead everywhere. General Ewell is being led away under guard.

EXT. LEE'S POSITION - DAY

Surveying with binoculars Lee has to choke back the tears.

LEE
Is my army dissolved? First Kershaw
now this.

Veneble summons up the nerve as does Wolsely.

VENEUBLE
No, we still have some fight left
in us sir.

WOLSELY
Their commander has not yet
conceded has he?

LEE
No.

VENEUBLE
Will you allow me to place my men?

Lee agrees and softly turns Traveler back to a more secure position. Sad his head down a little.

Veneble hurries back gathering what stragglers he can to form a defensive line.

EXT. HILL OVER APPOMATTOX ROAD - DAY

Lee on Traveler his head down he holds the Confederate Battle Flag to his side. Wolsely beside him.

Veneble approaches. Lee's voice is stricken.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Half my army is destroyed.

VENEUBLE

Give me the flag Sir.

LEE

My son Custis has been captured,
his division wiped out.

Longstreet joins the small group, sympathetic he replies.

LONGSTREET

General we need you now more than
ever.

WOLSELY

The matter is at hand sir.

With a turn about resolution Lee hands Veneuble the flag. He straightens up in the saddle. Pulling out binoculars he rides down amongst his men.

Carrying binoculars in right hand his head erect, his gestures animated and in the whole face and form of a hunter close upon game.

Lee rides into the twilight among the disordered groups of men.

The sight of him rises a tumult from them.

Fierce cries resound from all sides with clenched fists raised aloft they call upon him to lead against the enemy.

The S/O the men

It's General Lee!

Uncle Robert!

Where's the man that wont follow Uncle Robert.

Close on Lee's face determined and unyielding.

SUPER APPOMATTOX STATION APRIL 8

EXT. APPOMATTOX STATION - DAY

Three confederate supply trains carrying food and ammunition sit waiting. Guarded only by a handful of Confederate troops.

The troops walk a slow patrol around them, the air is filled with the tenseness of a battle to come.

EXT. CUSTER'S POSITION - DAY

Custer's brigade has been paralleling railroad in woods. He stops at the head of his column, pauses seeing something he looks through binoculars.

A slight smirk comes across his face.

CUSTER

This should be easy.

He hands binoculars to his aide and pulls out his sword. The rest of the compliment does the same.

A bugler sounds the charge. The force hops out of the woods on the the side banks of rail line. They plummet ahead, a thunderous roar of hoofs.

The confederates guarding the trains put up a fight but it is in vain.

Custer's men slam into the small force, some men give up and drop their weapons.

One of them manages an escape and flees into the woods.

Custer's men quickly cordon of the supply trains. Custer calls to his AIDE.

CUSTER

Take word to Sheridan. WE have their supplies. I will force the bastard to surrender to me.

AIDE

Sir you do not have the authority.

CUSTER

(scruffily)

Do as your told.

The Aide Salutes turns horse sharply and gallops away.

EXT. ROAD TO APPOMATTOX - DAY

Grant on horse, Sheridan at his side. Grant rubs his forehead and spits out his cigar.

SHERIDAN
Headaches again?

GRANT
They never end.

Grant reaches into pocket pulls out pill bottle, he upends it in his mouth. Swallowing hard he grimaces.

SHERIDAN
That's not candy.

GRANT
Don't patronize me.

From ahead comes Custer's Aide. He gallops to a halt and salutes Generals. He hands note to Grant.

AIDE
From General Custer.

Grant takes it quickly.

GRANT
We have the last of Lee's supplies.

SHERIDAN
This should force his hand.

GRANT
Maybe, but let's air on cautions side.

Grant gets off horse and sits down on a nearby stone. He jots down another letter.

GRANT (O.S.)
General Lee-

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - DAY

Through binoculars Lee see's lone Union RIDER under flag of Truce. Lee indicates to soldiers to let him through the lines.

The Rider approaches Lee's Position. The Rider salutes and produces letter. Lee returns salute and takes it.

(CONTINUED)

RIDER
General Grant's compliments.

Lee reads Grants letter.

EXT. APPOMATTOX ROAD GRANT'S POSITION - DAY

Grant reads Lee's response to his letter.

GRANT (O.S.)
To be frank, I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of this army, but as the restoration of peace should be the sole object of all. I should be pleased to meet you at 10 a.m., tomorrow; on the old stage road to Richmond, between the picket-lines of the two armies.

R. E. LEE,
General.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - NIGHT

Lee and Generals Gordon, Longstreet, Pendleton and Venable gather around a small campfire. They sit on their saddles, Lee uses stick to draw plans in dirt.

Mack away from them, tends to the one wagon left carrying some of Lee's last possessions.

Lee speaks softly but deliberately.

LEE
From what I've been told only a small cavalry force holds the station.

LONGSTREET
Yea that red headed devil Custer.

LEE
(to Gordon)
Form what's left of your Battalion take Fitzhugh's cavalry and punch a hole through that line.

GORDON
Sir, they probably have burned the trains by now.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

I know, our only hope is to
breakthrough to Johnston.

(to Longstreet)

You stay in support if they try and
move more troops in.

PENDLETON

What of Meade's second corp?

LEE

I do not believe they will arrive
till late tomorrow.

GORDON

And if your wrong?

Lee indifferent does not respond to the question.

LEE

In the mean time, I will go see
Grant in the morning to see if
further hostilities can be averted.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - MORNING

Lee lies under a tree his saddle as a pillow. Pendleton
raises slightly from his. The morning mist is gray, he hears
the shuffling of marching feet to his side.

We hear a faint whisper of a song emanating from fog a lone
flute plays. Moving through mist we see it is Bobby playing
soulfully.

The soldiers around him sing a soft Appalachian song.
Mournful as they know only death awaits them.

Pendleton hangs his head low as the soldiers pass.

EXT. BETWEEN PICKET LINE - MORNING

The morning mist has cleared. Lee stands under an apple
tree, Pendleton and Mack are at his side. A slight air of
tension, Lee has his head bowed a little. Pendleton breaks
the silence.

PENDLETON

Gordon's men should be forming
positions now.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Where's Grant?

Mack holds Traveler's reigns, his hat off with respect. Lee starts to pace.

LEE
I did it for my country.

PENDLETON
(incensed)
Country, Country? WE have no country, there hasn't ever been one. It was a dream and a bad one.

LEE
Our native land charms us with inexpressible sweetness, and never never allows us to forget that we belong to it.

PENDLETON
Don't quote Ovid. General, it is over. Call off the attack.

LEE
(regretful)
My father helped found this country and all I've done is tear it apart.

Mack breaks in. Lee clutches at his chest.

MACK
You were the country the mens fought for you.

Lee looks at him a question on his face.

MACK
You didn't know dat? De did it fer you.

PENDLETON
You were the standard, not Davis, Richmond or the whole blessed Confederacy. You were their God.

MACK
And dat wasn't a bad thing General.

PENDLETON
You should have seen how they looked at you when you passed. A hushed silence befell them.

(CONTINUED)

MACK

Because you were selfless and
believed in honor and duty and you
loved you some Jesus.

Lee has a half tear in his eye. Then that soft voice of
Jackson can be heard.

JACKSON

It's true Robert. Now is the time
to lead them to peace.

LEE

Grant isn't coming.

EXT. FIELD OUTSIDE APPOMATTOX - DAY

The last of Gordon's corp forms up in long skirmish line.

Gordon on horse peers through binoculars.

Binocular POV Custer with his cavalry ready themselves.

EXT. WOODS LONGSTREET'S POSITION - DAY

Longstreet beside horse his battalion behind him. They wait
in support of Gordon's attack.

Longstreet spits his chewing tobacco restlessly waiting for
orders to attack.

EXT. FIELD GORDON - DAY

The troops are ready. Gordon steady's himself in saddle.

He guides his horse and parades in front of men.

GORDON

I don't have to tell you how
important this is. Your stomachs
have reminded you for days. I can
tell you if we take the day we have
a good chance to reach Johnston and
continue the fight.

The men hunker down, some sad but most with grim
determination. They cry out we hear.

Men:

Come On General

(CONTINUED)

Let's get this over with

I'm starving!

A slight chuckle from remark rumbles through ranks.

Gordon too smiles he looks admiringly across their faces.

Turning his horse and pulling out his sword. He spurs his horse and in a mighty roar lets out the rebel yell.

It reverberates through the ranks sounding like thunder as the whole corp behind Gordon breaks into a run.

Bayonets fixed they charge forward Gordon leading the way.

His sword outstretched like a Knight jousting, the mighty mass of men and steal behind him.

The juggernaut swells forward.

EXT. CUSTER'S POSITION APPOMATTOX - DAY

Custer nervous but confident eyes the swarming herd approaching.

CUSTER

Steady!

Then in unbridled bravado he too pulls out his sword.

He charges forward his small band of cavalry behind him.

EXT. MIDDLE OF FIELD - DAY

The two armies slam into one another. Custer and Gordon duel it out with swords clanking. They chop at one another, two mad men bent on murder.

Custer's cavalry intermingle in confederate line hacking at men. They are wild men too splintering formation.

They break off attack, as does Custer they fly back to station.

Gordon has lost momentum then the real attack comes. From the hills Union canon fire rains down on them.

Huge holes are blown through Gordon's lines.

Gordon surveying situation, his attack is fracturing.

(CONTINUED)

An explosion to his side knocks him from his horse.

Gordon gets up, gun smoke fills the air it's hard to see.

The earth starts to tremble Gordon feels it. Through mist he gets a glimpse of what it is.

Pouring down through the hills and into the streets it's Meade's entire second corp 100,000 men strong.

Gordon calls out to his men to retreat.

GORDON

Back to the wood line!

What's left of his division scampers back. Gordon calls to a Lieutenant.

GORDON

Tell Lee we must have Longstreet's support.

EXT. HILL - DAY

Lee has been watching the attack from a distance. From his POV the disorganization and the flooding in of Union troops draws despair across his face.

Lee lowers his binoculars as Gordon's Lieutenant rides up.

LIEUTENANT

Sir we need Longstreet to come up.

Lee lowers his head and softly shakes his head no.

LEE

It's over. I must go see Grant, and I would rather die a thousand deaths. I'm ordering a general truce.

Lee personally pens a note and hands to Lieutenant.

EXT. LONGSTREET'S POSITION - DAY

Longstreet sees the mass of men coming in. Gordon's attack has failed.

Longstreet spits again takes off hat and wipes brow with handkerchief. With a heavy weight on his chest he sighs and turns to his Aide.

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET
I must go see General Lee.

Longstreet gets on his horse.

LONGSTREET
Stand down the men. We're leaving.

Longstreet pulls out with his division behind him.

EXT. WOOD LINE - DAY

Gordon exhausted calls to men to stop firing. The situation is hopeless and he knows it.

Gordon's Lieutenant returns and hands him note from Lee. He reads, then with a crack in his voice.

GORDON
Stop firing!

A young officer beside him Colonel Peyton (24).

GORDON
Ride out under a flag of truce.
Tell them we have suspended firing.

PEYTON
Sir?

GORDON
Use your handkerchief.
(beat)
Lee has asked for a truce.

PEYTON
I have no handkerchief.

Gordon exasperated at stalling.

GORDON
Then tear your damn shirt!

Peyton nervous does as he's told. He ties it to his bayonet. Putting jacket back on he rides out.

Moments later Gordon sees him returning, Custer at his side.

They ride up to Gordon, Custer is all puffed up with himself.

(CONTINUED)

CUSTER

My compliments General. You and your men fought valiantly.

Gordon's black eyes size up his opponent.

CUSTER

I bring a message from Sheridan. To demand immediate and unconditional surrender of all men under your command.

Gordon shoves his hands in pockets, a sign of total disrespect.

GORDON

And say to him I will not surrender this command.

CUSTER

(snapping)

You will, or we will surround and annihilate you within the hour.

GORDON

I know my position well enough, he can move at his own risk.

Then Sheridan gallops up under flag of truce. Custer backs off.

SHERIDAN

(to Gordon)

I have no word of a truce from Grant.

Gordon pulls out note from Lee. Sheridan reads it.

SHERIDAN

Oh my God.

EXT. LONGSTREET'S POSITION - DAY

Now it was Longstreet's turn to encounter the ever exacerbating Custer.

Custer with only one aide rides defiantly towards him.

Some of Longstreet's men raise muskets.

Custer is a sitting duck.

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET

Wait! Let's hear what he has to say.

Custer reigns back his horse as he comes to a sliding stop. He takes sword and Salutes Longstreet. Longstreet does not return salute.

CUSTER

In the name of Sheridan I demand the unconditional surrender of this army.

Longstreet spits his tobacco.

LONGSTREET

I am not in command of this army, Lee is.

CUSTER

You will surrender to me now!

LONGSTREET

May I remind you that you are within enemy lines without authority and addressing a superior officer.

(beat)

And in disrespect of General Grant as well as myself.

Custer now deflated mildly responds.

CUSTER

It would be a pity to spill more blood today.

LONGSTREET

That it would. I believe Lee will go see Grant today. It is for them to decide.

Custer half salutes and rides back to his lines.

EXT. ROAD TO APPOMATTOX - DAY

Grant rides alone his head killing him. He guzzles more aspirin washing it down with some whiskey from a flask.

Sheridan rides up to him carrying Lee's correspondence.

(CONTINUED)

SHERIDAN
From General Lee.

Grant takes it and dismounts, he hurriedly opens it.

LEE (O.S.)
I received your note of this
morning on the picket-line, whither
I had come to meet you and
ascertain definitely what terms
were embraced in your proposal of
yesterday with reference to the
surrender of this army. I now ask
an interview in accordance with the
offer contained in your letter of
yesterday for that purpose.

R. E. LEE,
General.

A look of relief comes over Grant's face he has to sit down.

The Sheridan concerned, dismounts and puts his hand on
Grant's shoulder.

SHERIDAN
I almost feel sad. Should be
cheering.

GRANT
It's been a sad war there's nothing
to cheer about, except that it's
over.

Grant rolls his neck.

GRANT
I think my headaches gone.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - DAY

Lee stands under tree as Mack polishes his sword. Mack leans
it against tree and helps Lee dress. It is a new uniform the
last that he has.

Mack aware of the dignity Lee holds in his appearance says
nothing.

He adjusts the blue gray frock coat. Then Mack ties the red
officers sash around his waist. The gold plated belt goes
over it.

(CONTINUED)

Lee takes sword and clips to his side. His sidearm holstered the leather shiny black.

Lee raises foot as Mack buffs his high boots to a polish.

The whole endeavor like a Samurai readying himself for Battle.

Finally Lee dons his hat, Travelers saddle polished too.

Steadying himself he climbs on, his face flush and eyes fixed.

Charles Marshall at his side on his horse. Mack holds his hat across his heart.

MACK

I'll pray for yer.

Lee and Charles ride away.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF APPOMATTOX - DAY

The two riders stop. Ahead a Union officer Captain Dunn (30) waits for them.

CHARLES

I will ride ahead with the officer
and secure the meeting place.

Lee nods his head for him to proceed. Alone now for the first time in the war.

He looks lost, a man with no purpose, then the sounds and screams of men being killed. Terrified Lee holds his hands to his ears.

LEE

God! Stop!

Through the groans comes the voice of Jackson.

JACKSON

It will fade in time Robert.

LEE

Explain to me, was I wrong, that I
left half a million dead in my
wake? Was duty and honor more
precious than one man's life? Will
that be my epitaph? To keep the
black man enslaved, a vision I

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEE (cont'd)

abhor, was this bloodletting for that!? Tell me is that who I am? If it be so then let Grant hang me from the highest tree and burn my ashes and scatter them to the wind to be forgotten in time. Let future generations say this man was a traitor pure and simple and may his soul rot in hell, I welcome this.

JACKSON

No. You were part of history, a change was coming, like the wind suddenly it is here. There are higher ideals, men need guides some things need to be held onto. You gave them a sense of country and loyalty. A new crop has been sewn General, perhaps a better one.

Lee brings his hands down and sighs relief regaining composure.

EXT. APPOMATTOX STREET - DAY

Charles and Dunn ride into the City proper. The town is deserted. People stay at home away from battle.

DUNN

(disgusted)

It's Palm Sunday people should be in church.

CHARLES

After today I think normality should return.

DUNN

But right now they hold their breath behind closed doors.

Then a lone soul wanders up the street William McClean (48) sharp, a business man. He's not going to let a war stop his Sunday stroll.

Charles and Dunn gently guide their horses over to him. The pair raise their hats to him in cordial greeting.

CHARLES

Good Day to you Sir.

(CONTINUED)

MCCLEAN

Yall bout done tearing things up.

DUNN

With respect sir maybe so.

CHARLES

General Lee would like a place to confer with General Grant.

MCCLEAN

How bout the courthouse. No damn, wait it's Sunday be locked. Come on follow me.

McCLean steers the soldiers around the corner to a vacant warehouse. The two get off their horse and follow him inside.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Charles, Dunn and McClean enter the building. It's spartan and unfurnished. Charles glances around snubbing nose at surroundings.

CHARLES

No this won't do.

DUNN

I agree, we'll need a desk.

MCCLEAN

Well how about my house? I moved here to get away from the war. First Battle of Manasas was fought on my land might as well end the war in my parlor.

The three leave.

EXT. MCCLEAN HOME - DAY

A short distance away lies the McClean Home. Immaculate and grand with a wrap around porch. Charles and Dunn are satisfied.

CHARLES

Yes, this will do.

(CONTINUED)

DUNN

I will let Grant know.

Dunn turns and rides away. Charles tips hat to McClean.

CHARLES

We will be back within the hour.

Turning, Charles sees the Union troops gathering beyond the house in the fields.

Wary, he gallops along slowly, feeling the eyes on him.

EXT. MCCLEAN HOME - LATER

Union troops by the thousands line the road up to the house. On porch waits Sheridan, Meade and other officers.

Lee approaches, the Union troops in hushed silence, almost reverent watch as he and Charles pass.

Lee sitting erect in saddle, his manner commanding.

The first glimpse most of the Union troops have gotten of their nemesis.

The black Troops from first Battle, react to the site of him.

BLACK SOLDIER 1

Looks like a grandfather.

A white Union troop calls him down.

UNION TROOP

Hush Up Darcy shows some respect.

The Black Soldier looks at him sharply

The White soldier tries to bring it on, grasping the Black Soldiers collar.

UNION TROOP

Come on Nigger you and me.

The Black soldier pulls him closer in tighter grasp

BLACK SOLDIER

I didn't mean it that way.

(beat)

Reminds me of my grand pappy.

(CONTINUED)

The men straighten themselves and fall back in line. Lee passes unflinching at little conflict.

He rides to the front steps of McClean house. Charles is first off his horse. He then helps Lee down.

Climbing steps, Sheridan acknowledges him with slight nod as do others. Nothing is said the air is tense. Lee enters.

INT. MCCLEAN HOME - DAY

Lee removes his hat, his eyes dart around room. A casual parlor with with red carpet. A small writing desk sits in middle. The fireplace simple and plane.

Lee walks to window seeing the sea of blue uniforms gathering in fields and beyond.

He turns and places his hat and gloves on the table.

Standing as straight as an arrow facing the outside door. Charles slightly behind him readies. He glances down at his pistol.

CHARLES

Sir, if the try and arrest you.

LEE

Do not even think about it. What will be will be. I would sacrifice myself a thousand times to wash my sins away.

EXT. MCCLEAN HOUSE - DAY

Grant rides through his troops and up to the steps. He gallops up and screeches the horse to a stop. Hurriedly, he hops off.

He removes hat then looks at himself, all dusty and muddy. He vainly tries to make himself presentable.

Then, carefully he climbs steps eyes close on door.

INT. MCCLEAN HOUSE - DAY

Lee gazes at door intently, the moment of truth. A squeak can be heard on the porch as someone approaches.

Close on door knob turning, Charles holding breath. Lee tense but steady, the unknown about to present itself.

(CONTINUED)

It opens, Grant appears a melancholy look. Lee knows in an instant that his opponent means no ill will.

Grant approaches he extends his hand, Lee his. They shake.

GRANT

I must apologize for my appearance.

Lee, a look.

GRANT

You once dressed me down for a soiled uniform. The Mexican war.

LEE

(remembering)

Yes, now I recall. An officer should look his best.

A smile from Grant, he motions for Lee to take a seat.

Relaxing, Lee crosses his legs.

GRANT

I always remembered that.

LEE

Likewise, you left a strong impression.

GRANT

(reminiscing)

The old army, many fine officers.

Lee drifts off a little.

LEE

Jackson, Ewell, Hancock, Stuart.

GRANT

So many gone. I remember in the overland Campaign, Jackson once-

Lee interrupts him.

LEE

General, the affair at hand.

Grant, for all his power is now nervous. The fate of the peace and country now rest squarely upon his shoulders.

GRANT

The terms are this. You, your officers and men are to lay down their arms. Swear not to bring Arms against the United States ever again and go home.

Lee feels his sword, Grant notices.

GRANT

Your officers may keep their swords and sidearms.

LEE

If I may. Spring planting is coming my men will need their horses.

GRANT

Of course. They must be hungry I will send provisions.

(to Sheridan)

Have 25000 rations sent to the men.

Lee staring straight ahead not wanting to break down.

The magnanimity of Grant swelling over him, but he is stoic.

LEE

That will be agreeable to them.

The Union Scribe in the corner who has been covering the proceedings is a nervous wreck. His hand shakes, unable to wright. Charles observes and intervenes, taking pen from him he moves into his seat.

CHARLES

It's alright I'll take it from here.

Grant leans over table writing out terms of surrender. He calls to Colonel Ely Parker (38) a Seneca American Indian, and attorney to check his draft.

Parker makes some adjustments and hands back to Grant.

He hands surrender form to Lee. Taking his spectacles out of pocket he reads. Agreeing with a slight nod.

Close on paper and pen in Lee's hand, it hesitates a moment then boldly Lee signs.

Handing back to Grant.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

I would like a copy if you please.

GRANT

Of Course. Let me introduce you to my staff.

The room is crowded, Grant courteously guides Lee to each officer. First Sheridan, shaking his hand.

SHERIDAN

Sir.

Then on around room graciously acknowledging each finally stopping at Parker. Noticing he is a native American.

LEE

It is good to see a real American here.

PARKER

Sir, now we are all Americans again.

The words sink into Lee as he nods agreement.

EXT. MCCLEAN HOUSE - DAY

Custer sits on the edge of porch on top step looking board. The door opens Lee steps out, Custer falls all over himself to get up and salute.

Lee gives him a look as does Grant and Sheridan.

Traveler is in yard grazing, a Soldier brings him up to Lee as he puts on gloves.

Lee stamps fist in other hand and mounts Traveler. The Union officers gather on porch. Grant steps down in yard in front of Lee. Grant doffs hat, the other union officers remove theirs and hold over hearts.

Lee tips his hat and he and Charles turn horses and leave.

The Union troops lining road stand at attention, some salute. In particular the Black Soldier.

Close on Black soldiers face a small tear coming down, his friend beside him noticing as Lee passes by him.

(CONTINUED)

BLACK SOLDIER 2
What you cryin for fool?

BLACK SOLDIER 1
I was thinking how my Grand Pappy
is now free.

The other Black Soldier salutes as well.

Sheridan comes down from steps and joins Grant in yard.
Silent reflection on both their faces. From their POV Lee
rides way and disappears down road.

GRANT
Go tell Meade to stand down.

Sheridan turns Grant catches him by arm.

GRANT
And tell him I do not want any
celebration or firing of guns. The
rebels are our countrymen again.

SHERIDAN
I'll spread the word.

Sheridan leaves. Grant pulls out a new cigar bites off end
and spits out, then lights. He puffs, then looks down at his
muddy uniform, the red mud looks like blood.

GRANT
(disgusted)
I need a bath.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - DAY

Lee saunters in on Traveler, his head bent a bit. The men
gather round him, some tears in their eyes. They have no
words, they gently pat Traveler as he passes.

Traveler bobs his head up and down in acknowledgment.

Lee stops in front of his tent and dismounts. Taking off
hat, standing in front of soldiers gathered around him he
softly speaks.

LEE
Boys, I have done the best I could
for you. Go home now. And if you
make as good citizens as you have
soldiers, you will do well. I shall
always be proud of you. Goodbye.
And God bless you all.

Lee enters his tent. The soldiers weak from hunger and emotionally torn down, disperse.

INT. LEE'S TENT - DAY

Lee glancing around, all alone, defeated, his whole world gone. Mack enters.

MACK

Cans I gets you sumthin Mr. Robert?

LEE

No, I'm fine.

MACK

What you gonna do?

Lee sits down, it suddenly strikes him.

LEE

Funny, I have nothing to do. For the first time in my life there is absolutely nothing to do.

(a slight laugh)

I have no money, Arlington is gone. Last I heard, my wife was in a boarding house outside Richmond. I guess I'll go there, and you?

Mack sits down beside him two kindred spirits.

MACK

Been at your side so long I don't know. Look for a job maybe.

LEE

You wanted to be Preacher didn't you?

MACK

Yessa, I reckon so.

LEE

This country is gonna need some preachers.

Mack and Lee laugh together, Lee slaps him on the knee two old friends.

LEE

(choking up)

You were always-

(CONTINUED)

MACK

It's alright, we's gonna be
alright.

Tears in Lee's eyes, he holds back, Mack smiles.

EXT. APPOMATTOX COURTHOUSE - LATER

The formal surrender of all the troops. The long gray line parades up the road lined by Union troops.

They march in perfect order despite their rags and some with no shoes. Bobby leads the procession playing Dixie on the flute.

To his side rides General Gordon carrying the Confederate battle flag. His face downcast

Ahead standing in front of courthouse is General Joshua Chamberlain (35) hero of Gettysburg. He orders the Union troops to shoulder arms and come to salute.

CHAMBERLAIN

Company! Order Arms! Carry, Salute!

The shifting of men to attention honoring with hushed silence what seemed to be the passing of the dead.

Gordon hearing the shifting of arms catches the meaning. Bobby takes the flag, twice his length he carries it proudly.

Gordon unsheathes his sword and lowers to his boot a sign of complete respect and salute as he turns to face Chamberlain as he passes. He orders confederate troops.

GORDON

Carry arms!

Bobby stops opposite Chamberlain, Gordon on horse beside. The Confederate soldiers pass between them stacking guns on ground.

They reform line and march forward, returning salutes to Union Soldiers. Honor meeting honor.

The last man passes all guns neatly stacked.

Chamberlain walks across road. Bobby presents him the flag.

Chamberlain gently takes it and rolls it up with respect. Not casting it on the ground like a conquering hero.

(CONTINUED)

Gordon motions for Bobby to hop on horse with him. They slowly ride away Bobby looks back as Chamberlain comes to full salute snapping boots.

The Confederacy is no more. No words or cheers.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

The Black Soldier from earlier stands guard outside Mary Custis Lee's door. Lee rides up on Traveler in a plain suit, he dismounts.

The Soldier snaps to attention and salutes, Lee returns it smartly. Lee moves up steps towards him.

LEE

Thank you Sir.

The Soldier looks at him for what seems an eternity emotionless. A tenseness rises.

BLACK SOLDIER

Where do we go from here?

LEE

WE go in peace.

The soldier steps from in front of door Mary Custis (55) opens it. Lee steps up lightly kisses her and goes inside.

EXT/INT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

Washington, the White House still adorned with the black mourning casons around front columns. The flag at half mast, the nation in grief over Lincoln's assassination.

Bitterness is everywhere

The Oval office President berates Grant who sits in front of him calmly smoking cigar. Andrew Johnson(60) Vice President now acting President, waves a letter in his fist.

JOHNSON

A full Pardon! Citizenship?!

GRANT

I gave him my word.

Johnson leans hard over desk, glaring.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

Now you listen to me I want Lee arrested and tried for treason. I want that son of a bitch hung!

Grant politely shakes his head no.

JOHNSON

I am the President, your boss!

GRANT

Then I will resign and probably fighting would flare up again. But this time it would be a guerrilla war, would last decades, and in the end you would have to concede two nations.

Grant stands and walks to window looking out at people filing past, throwing flowers on lawn.

GRANT

No, this ends here, now.

Johnson belittled, looks at Pardon and signs it.

JOHNSON

But I don't have to grant him citizenship.

A stern look from Grant this time Johnson doesn't back down.

INT. SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, RICHMOND - DAY

A year later Easter Sunday. The preacher has called for communion. The congregation, mostly white start to stand.

From back, in colored section steps a black man. He walks confidently to the front and kneels down on alter to take communion.

The whites are beside themselves, in muffled whispers we hear.

Who does he think he is?

This is outrageous.

The Preacher does not know what to do. Footsteps are heard as another White gentlemen approaches. All eyes turn on him a look of shock and recognition.

(CONTINUED)

The white man kneels down by the black gentleman, it is Lee. He bows his head then turns slightly and smiles to black man it is Mack.

They take communion together. The congregation gets it, this is the new world now.

WORLD NEWS OFFICE PRESENT - DAY

Mack finishes his story, the crowd around him sit in silence. Like school kids waiting for the big punch line, holding their breath.

Finally a young REPORTER speaks up, irritated.

REPORTER

That's it?!

The others look at him as if he was crazy.

RECEPTIONIST

Hush up!

REPORTER

Is that last part true?

MACK

As best I can recollect.

REPORTER

(looking around)

Come on People, this Ole Darky done told us a tale.

Mack seems a little put off by the remark. The Editor steps up.

EDITOR

I reported on Lee's death. I heard there were only three people with him when he died. One was his wife the other his son. They made me swear not to tell anyone of his last words, fearing people would remember him as crazy in his passing.

(beat)

I never knew the third.

Mack's teary eyes wander up to his, voice cracking.

(CONTINUED)

MACK

Strike the tent. Tell Ewell to come
up, the war is lost.

The Editor shakes his head yes. All the wallets come out and they start handing Mack money. He thanks them, stands puts hat on.

He gently shuffles out the door into the bright sunlight.

FADE OUT.

SUPER:

The New York Herald called for Lee's candidacy for the Presidential election of 1868. Lee declined citing he was not a citizen, it was not granted back to him until 1977.

Mack Lee built his Church and formed Virginia's First State Benevolent Society for Colored People. Mack died in 1905.

Arlington, Lee's former home was turned into a national cemetery, honoring all America's heroes who have fought and died for what they believed in.