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Legacy Earned

An original screenplay by

D Scott Mangione

smangione62@gmail.com

FADE IN:

EXT. SAN ANTONIO - MAIN PLAZA - DAY

The church's heavy wooden doors fly open. SEÑOR ANTONIO TELLO, 36, wearing black pants with a white long-sleeve shirt and an unbuttoned red vest, is standing in the doorway.

Tello stumbles down the steps into the Main Plaza. His eyes scan the empty courtyard. He loudly clears his throat.

TELLLO

Fifteen years I have given to this place. What have I received in return?

Tello sways from the alcohol as he holds his chalice in the air.

TELLLO

Does anyone know? Anyone? Of course nobody knows because nothing has been offered.

Tello brings the chalice down to his mouth then drinks some wine.

TELLLO

Has anyone ever asked what does Tello want? What can we do for Tello? They have not.

Tello spins then faces the church.

TELLLO

This creation has given nothing to me, yet it has taken so much from my soul.

TWO ISLEÑOS, wearing loose fitting pants and long-sleeve shirts are working on the facade.

TELLLO

Out of my way. Let me see the masterpiece that I have created in the honor and glory of King Fernando.

The Isleños scurry away.

TELLLO

In this year of our Lord, seventeen forty-four, and by the sweat of my brow it is done, practically.

Tello drinks some more wine. He raises his chalice again.

TELLO

The great King Fernando will, for
all eternity, be associated with the
name of Antonio Tello.

A small group of longhorn cattle cross the plaza in a single
file line.

Tello glares at the cows with their massive horns as they
pass behind him. He briefly admires his masterful creation
then drinks the last of his wine.

In a fit of anger, Tello throws his chalice at the church.

Two sisters, VALENTINA, 18, and CAMILLA, 17, with long jet-
black hair, wearing one-piece dresses tied tightly at their
waists, watch Tello as they stand behind a poorly built shack.

Valentina walks directly to Tello.

VALENTINA

Why are you so angry? The church is
beautiful. The people are very proud.

Tello straightens his posture then runs his hand through his
hair. He smiles at Valentina.

TELLO

How about allowing a noble a kiss?

Valentina rolls her eyes. She walks away.

Tello laughs. He points himself in the direction of the
nearby cantina.

INT. WATERING HOLE - DAY

The cantina has a long wooden bar with two tables occupying
the small space next to the stools.

Tello sits in his usual place.

The bartender, PAULO, 28, wearing a white apron, pours Tello
a shot of tequila.

PAULO

So it is finally finished. Shall we
make a toast to this great
accomplishment?

Tello's face lights up for a moment then he becomes morose.

TELLO

Toast nothing. I'll celebrate when I receive word that I can return to Mother Spain.

Tello drinks his tequila.

TELLO

Unfortunately, most believe I could not determine the correct direction to sail.

PAULO

I know. I know. The doors face the wrong way.

TELLO

It doesn't matter. The king will never find someone worthy of replacing me.

Paulo pours Tello another shot. He reaches below the bar then brings out a bottle of his finest whiskey.

PAULO

Tello, I have told you, most don't even notice and the others don't care.

TELLO

I'm the finest mason living in this God forsaken country. Do you know what I will be remembered for?

PAULO

You really must get over this. There is nothing that can be done.

TELLO

I'll be known as the one who doesn't know where the sun sets.

Paulo pours Tello a shot of whiskey.

PAULO

Tello, it's an amazing accomplishment. You should be proud of what you have achieved.

Tello pours the tequila down his throat.

PAULO

I have always wondered. If it meant so much to you, how did you let it happen?

TELLO

You want to know how the great Antonio
Tello let it happen?

Tello humbly looks down at his shot glass.

TELLO

It was some good tequila.

PAULO

Si, a good tequila has been known to
cause many mistakes among our people.

Tello takes a drink then slams the glass on the bar. He
hits his chest when he feels the burn from the whiskey then
gestures to Paulo for another drink.

Paulo pours Tello another shot.

Tello smiles.

TELLO

It was some very good tequila.

Paulo and Tello laugh.

A group of LANCERS ride by the cantina. Tello and Paulo
watch them through the plate glass window.

EXT. ROAD IN FRONT OF THE WATERING HOLE - DAY

The king's soldiers wear blue pants and shirts with two white
bands that form an "x" across their chests. Attached to the
lancer's left arms are shields made of thick leather.

The lancers are heavily armed with a musket, sword, and lance.

MATIAS TREVIÑO, 28, turns to the soldier riding beside him.

MATIAS

I forgot my lucky rosary. I can't
ride without it.

INT. WATERING HOLE - DAY

Tello sees Matias then licks his lips with desire. He gets
off the stool then turns back to Paulo.

Tello hands Paulo some money. With a skip in his step, he
walks toward the door.

PAULO

No good can come from this. Have you already forgotten what happened last week?

TELLO

Only good comes from this one. I'll be fine. Theresa Treviño's a smart girl. Don't worry.

Tello pushes the door three times then remembers he has to pull.

INT. THERESA'S HOME - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

THERESA TREVIÑO, 22, opens the door. She and Tello embrace and kiss. In no time, their clothes lie on the floor.

BEDROOM

Tello's completely naked except for the gold cross and matching necklace around his neck.

Theresa lies back.

Tello pauses for a moment to appreciate her beauty then crawls on top of her.

EXT. THERESA'S HOME - NIGHT

Matias returns to his home. He hears some familiar sounds coming from Theresa.

INT. THERESA'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Matias kicks open the door then sees Tello's naked body lying on top of Theresa. In a murderous rage, he wildly stabs at Tello with his lance which exposes his musket.

Tello grabs the musket then fires.

Matias falls motionless on the floor.

Theresa falls on Matias's dead body. She looks back at Tello.

THERESA

(screaming)

What have you done?

Tello gathers his clothes.

Theresa kisses Matias's face.

THERESA

My love. I promise you, your death
will not go unpunished.

Tello jumps through the window.

With Matias's blood on her hands and clothes, Theresa runs
to the window.

THERESA

This is not over. Sleep lightly,
Tello.

EXT. THERESA'S HOME - NIGHT

Tello mounts Matias's horse then gallops away. His image
fades into a silhouette then disappears into the darkness.

EXT. MADRID - COBBLESTONE STREET - DAY

PEDRO, 25, walks toward the King's Palace. He's a handsome
young man wearing a snug-fitting waist-length buttoned jacket
with a collar and cuffed sleeves.

Pedro's short pants reach just below his knees. His circular
cape is draped over his shoulders. His head is covered by a
large hat decorated with ostrich plumes and quail feathers.

SOFIA, 51, sees him approaching.

SOFIA

Good morning, Pedro. I hope the
king recognizes the fine man that
you are.

PEDRO

Hola, Sofia.

MARIA, 24, is across the street.

MARIA

Pedro, I have a party next week.
You better be sure to come. I won't
listen to any excuses.

PEDRO

I'll be there.

SEBASTIAN, 10, runs to Pedro.

SEBASTIAN

Please make us proud. We know you work very hard. You have earned the respect of all of us.

PEDRO

Thank you thank you thank you.

A procession forms behind Pedro. He arrives at the King's Palace with half of the town following him.

Two of the KING'S GUARDS open the doors.

INT. KING'S THRONE ROOM - DAY

Pedro stands directly in front of King Ferdinand's throne.

KING FERDINAND, 50, is wearing his ermine robe and armor for the occasion. His face is lean with a dark complexion and his bulging nose dominates his appearance.

King Ferdinand watches Pedro approach then gestures for him to kneel. He unrolls a scroll.

KING FERDINAND

Pedro, in this year, seventeen sixty-six, I award you the title, Don. You shall now be known as Don Pedro.

Pedro reverently bows his head.

KING FERDINAND

I commission you to go to Nueva España de Tejas. There you will continue the construction of the missions.

King Ferdinand signs the bottom of the scroll.

KING FERDINAND

You will do the Lord's work and assist in the baptism of the Natives.

King Ferdinand rolls up the parchment.

KING FERDINAND

Though the governors will have your orders, you answer only to me.

Don Pedro raises his head.

KING FERDINAND

I'm counting on you to preserve the reputation of Spain.

The king hands the scroll to his SCRIBE. He watches him leave the room then puts his arm around Don Pedro's shoulder.

KING FERDINAND

I want you to fully understand the importance of this moment. Your life will never be the same.

DON PEDRO

I am grateful for this honor but I am confused. Why have you chosen me?

King Ferdinand looks into Don Pedro's eyes.

KING FERDINAND

You have excelled in your training as a sculptor, surveyor, architect, and lawyer.

The scribe returns. He gives Don Pedro a copy of the decree.

KING FERDINAND

I have watched your progress carefully and I must say I have grown to love you as a son.

DON PEDRO

You're a father to all of us, King.

KING FERDINAND

I knew when I awarded you the title "Master Carver" at the age of ten, that only you could replace Tello.

DON PEDRO

I am pleased to have this union and to have this responsibility.

The king goes back to his throne then sits down.

KING FERDINAND

You've earned this title. Wear it with dignity and respect. You're a man of exceptional quality.

DON PEDRO

I swear to never do anything that will tarnish your name or the ones you love.

KING FERDINAND

Very well, Don Pedro. Good luck and safe journey.

EXT. DON PEDRO'S HOME - DAY

The two-story hacienda's front yard is a beautiful garden.

Don Pedro walks up the steps then through his front door.

INT. DON PEDRO'S HOME - DAY

The house is crowded with the finest furniture. Paintings cover the walls and sculptures fill the floor.

Don Pedro walks by his butler, JAVIER, 60, wearing a white powdered wig.

Don Pedro doesn't say a word then stops. He turns back to Javier then holds up both of his thumbs.

JAVIER

Congratulations, Pedro. I knew it would happen. Your parents would be so proud, God rest their souls.

DON PEDRO

I'm still Pedro the orphan only now I have Don attached to my name.

JAVIER

You've done well in keeping your name in good standing. Have you told Rosa?

DON PEDRO

No, I haven't. I need a promise from her that she will join me in the New World or I will not go.

Don Pedro's maid, ANGELIQUE, 29, wearing the traditional black and white Spanish maid's costume, comes down the stairs then hugs Don Pedro.

ANGELIQUE

Do I need to bow within your presence now?

DON PEDRO

Nothing has changed other than I have a new job and I'll be going to New Spain.

ANGELIQUE

New Spain? Do you have to go? Isn't there enough stone to do your sculptures here?

DON PEDRO

I guess I don't have to go. It did sound kind of important to the king though.

Angelique hugs Don Pedro again.

ANGELIQUE

I hope Rosa tells you no.

JAVIER

Quiet Angelique. He must go, one doesn't turn down an assignment from the king.

ANGELIQUE

We will miss you so much.

CONSTANCE, 50, walks into the room wearing a large chef's hat. She's carrying a small tray with a sample of Don Pedro's dinner.

Constance has a worried look on her face as Don Pedro tastes the food.

DON PEDRO

That is delicious.

CONSTANCE

What was King Ferdinand like? Did he treat you well?

DON PEDRO

He said I was like his son.

Constance heads back to the kitchen. She stops then turns back to Don Pedro.

CONSTANCE

I don't believe you have ever prepared a meal. What will you eat in the wilderness?

DON PEDRO

Locusts and honey if I have to.

JAVIER

We have raised you since you were a child and we are happy for you but I must ask, what will happen to us?

Don Pedro becomes serious.

DON PEDRO

I'll make sure you have new employment. Anyway, I have no idea when I will have to leave.

CONSTANCE

The New World. I've heard it's dangerous. Have you ever been outside of Madrid?

DON PEDRO

I have not. I hope all of you will remember I will always love you.

CONSTANCE

The calf's head is nearly done. Everyone sit down. I've prepared Pedro's favorites.

EXT. COBBLESTONE STREET - DAY

The following morning, Don Pedro sees SEÑORA MARQUEZ, 55, wearing a torn and tattered dress. She is standing behind her flower cart.

Don Pedro stops to talk to the Señora.

Marquez convinces Don Pedro to pick a bouquet of roses.

SEÑORA MARQUEZ

We are all so proud of you. We have always considered your parents to be part of our family.

Don Pedro holds out a gold coin.

Marquez refuses to accept it.

DON PEDRO

You must let me give you something.

SEÑORA MARQUEZ

The flowers are a gift from us. What you're searching for is more precious than gold.

Señora Marquez hands him the flowers.

SEÑORA MARQUEZ

Please, go find the one who's looking for you. You know who she is. Give her the roses. Give her your love.

Señora Marquez gestures for Don Pedro to come to the back of the cart.

SEÑORA MARQUEZ

I have something else. You've earned this.

Señora Marquez opens the bottom drawer then takes out an expertly crafted leather sheath. She removes a broadsword with a blade twenty-six inches long.

DON PEDRO

You don't have to...

Señora Marquez shows the broadsword to Don Pedro.

Don Pedro stares at the beautiful etching on the blade.

DON PEDRO

No, Señora. I couldn't take this, it is far too valuable.

Señora Marquez shows on her face that she will not take no for an answer.

DON PEDRO

Thank you. I promise to cherish and protect it.

Don Pedro takes the sword then slides it back into its sheath. He secures it under his belt.

SEÑORA MARQUEZ

I know you will. It's been in my family for generations. We call it "El Rayo", the lightning.

Don Pedro hears a voice from behind him.

VOICE

Here you go.

An apple flies from the crowd that has formed around Don Pedro. He deftly catches it.

DON PEDRO

Thank you, thank you.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Don Pedro kneels down then makes the sign of the cross. He places his fingers in the Holy Water then sprinkles it across his face and chest.

Don Pedro finishes a devotional prayer then opens his eyes. He sees ROSA MONTEREY, 19, sitting in the front pew. Her black lace mantilla rises a foot above her head.

Don Pedro repeats the sign of the cross then sees Rosa mirror his movements. He takes out the rosary then kisses the beads as Rosa does the same.

Rosa rises. She walks down the aisle.

Don Pedro sees on Rosa's face that she has something weighing heavy on her mind. He follows her out the door.

EXT. CHURCH PLAZA - DAY

Rosa stands against the far wall looking out over the beautiful Spanish landscape. She keeps her back to Don Pedro.

ROSA
I heard the news, Pedro.

Rosa turns around. Her mantilla makes her appear as tall as Don Pedro. Her incredible eyes are perfectly framed by her long black hair.

Don Pedro can easily see that Rosa has been crying.

ROSA
I'm happy for you, I really am.

DON PEDRO
For us, Rosa, I know you mean for us.

ROSA
I don't want you to go.

DON PEDRO
Is that why I see such disappointment in your eyes?

Don Pedro holds Rosa to his chest. He slightly smiles.

DON PEDRO
It's me, Rosa. Have I ever lied to you? You trust me, don't you?

ROSA
Pedro, I wish it was as easy as that.

DON PEDRO
I promise you. Everything will be fine.

Rosa's eyes well up with tears.

ROSA

I stayed behind when my parents sailed to Rome. I was so determined to finish my education.

Rosa pulls away from Don Pedro as tears stream down her face.

ROSA

I never saw them again. Now, I'm staying behind as you begin a voyage to the New World.

Rosa falls back into Don Pedro's arms.

ROSA

I fear, like my parents, you will be lost to me forever.

Rosa looks into Don Pedro's confident eyes.

DON PEDRO

We must have faith, we have to be positive.

ROSA

Yes, I know, my love, but its a long voyage and the ocean is something even you can't control.

DON PEDRO

It's in your hands Rosa, whatever you decide is what I will do.

ROSA

I don't know what my decision will be.

Rosa forces a smile. She kisses Don Pedro.

Don Pedro walks Rosa to her horse then gives her a lift. He watches her ride away.

EXT. HILLTOP - DAY

It's an unusually warm winter day in Spain. The brisk breeze combines with the warm sun to create the perfect climate.

Don Pedro and Rosa lie on their backs in the middle of a beautiful red blanket spread out beneath a giant Spanish oak.

DON PEDRO

We'll have a gorgeous house and many children.

ROSA

Men of great power and riches will travel far and wide just to get a glimpse of our daughters.

Rosa rolls on top of Don Pedro.

ROSA

Battles will be fought as the best men in the world compete for our daughters' hand in marriage.

Rosa laughs then kisses Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO

The boys will be strong and carry our legacy into the future. I've heard that the New World is magical.

Don Pedro looks into Rosa's eyes.

DON PEDRO

I am ready. It will be a safe voyage. Spain has the finest fleet in the world.

ROSA

I have thought a long time about this. It wasn't an easy decision to make. You have my blessing.

Don Pedro holds Rosa like he never wants to let her go.

ROSA

I promise to join you when you feel the time is right. The journey will be very rough. Please, be careful.

Rosa buries her face in his chest.

ROSA

I just can't stop this vision of the ship sinking below the sea.

Rosa lifts her head then notices the sun is getting low in the sky.

ROSA

I have to get home. You know how my uncle is.

DON PEDRO

Yes. Yes. We need to get back.

Don Pedro retrieves the horses as Rosa folds the blanket. They mount their steeds.

EXT. SPANISH FOREST - DAY

Both of them are excellent riders. They race toward Rosa's mansion and neither misses an opportunity to leap over an obstacle.

EXT. MONTEREY MANSION - DAY

Rosa is the first to arrive. She sees her uncle standing in the doorway.

ROSA

Hola, Uncle.

SEÑOR MONTEREY, 48, is perfectly groomed and wears the clothes of a wealthy man.

Don Pedro drops from his horse.

DON PEDRO

(to Rosa)

Must you win every time.

MONTEREY

Hola, Rosa. Buenos Noches, Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO

Buenos Noches, Señor Monterey.

Monterey puts his hands on Don Pedro's shoulders.

MONTEREY

I'm very proud of you.

DON PEDRO

Thank you. It will take some time to get used to that title.

MONTEREY

You deserve it. You are no longer Pedro, the young man. You are now Don Pedro, the noble.

INT. MONTEREY MANSION - DAY

The hacienda is filled with elegant furniture. The walls are impeccably decorated with the finest art.

Don Pedro goes to the sitting room. He sits next to Rosa.

Monterey and his wife, JULIA, 40, wearing a beautiful Spanish gown, sit down across from Don Pedro and Rosa.

DON PEDRO

Señor Monterey, I would like to ask for your permission to marry your niece.

MONTEREY

You're running out of time. Your ship will be departing tomorrow morning.

A WOMAN, wearing a white dress and sandals, comes into the room then pours each of them some tea.

DON PEDRO

I'm asking Rosa to come to the New World after I've set up a comfortable place for us to be together.

MONTEREY

Of course you have my blessing. It is settled. Now go prepare for the grueling journey.

JULIA

Please take care. We will be waiting for your letter and we will be praying.

EXT. PIER - DAY

The following day, Rosa and Don Pedro approach the frigate. The closer they get to the ship called "The San Carlos", the slower they walk. They reach the end of the pier.

The CAPTAIN, 48, with a grizzly beard, walks down the ramp.

CAPTAIN

The sails will be unfurled in two minutes.

A few tears roll down Rosa's face.

DON PEDRO

I must go. I hate to leave this way. I will see you again. I promise.

ROSA

I really do hope so. I will be praying. Please make the journey safely and take care of yourself.

Rosa and Don Pedro share a final kiss.

Don Pedro enters the ship.

Rosa anxiously waits for him to appear on the deck. As soon as she sees him, she blows kisses in his direction.

The incredible sails drop then the behemoth begins to move.

Rosa watches Don Pedro walk the one hundred twenty feet of the deck as he tries to stay as close to Rosa as he can.

Don Pedro stands at the end of the deck.

DON PEDRO

(yelling)

I will send for you, Rosa. I will send for you.

Rosa watches the ship sink below the horizon.

INT. BELOW THE DECK OF THE SAN CARLOS - DAY

Don Pedro is with his good friend, DOMINGUEZ, 28.

DOMINGUEZ

The journey is nearly over. I don't believe I have seen someone get so sick.

DON PEDRO

Don't remind me. I've never been on a ship that rocked back and forth so much.

DOMINGUEZ

Yeah, the design makes for a rough voyage but it has greater speed.

Don Pedro goes to the mirror then looks at the two months of growth on his face.

DON PEDRO

At least I avoided the lice. You weren't so lucky.

DOMINGUEZ

I don't want to think about it.

DON PEDRO

Are you aware that every young child died on this voyage? How can I ask Rosa to make this journey?

DOMINGUEZ

Pay for the best ship and hire the greatest crew. She'll be okay.

Don Pedro packs his things. He looks through his notebook. It's filled with sketches of Rosa, his future children, and the friends he made during the voyage.

Two deck hands, JULIO, 28, and JUAN, 25, pass by Don Pedro carrying the body of an indigent man.

DON PEDRO

Julio, we are so close. Can't we bury him with the wealthy that have perished?

JULIO

Why concern yourself with such matters?

DON PEDRO

Does he at least merit a brief prayer?

Don Pedro smiles when he sees Julio and Juan put the body down. He closes his eyes.

DON PEDRO

Our Father, forgive this man for his sins and accept him back into your kingdom...

Don Pedro opens one eye. He briefly looks at Julio.

DON PEDRO

...forgive us for not giving this man a proper burial. Amen.

JULIO

The wealthy pay for their burial but the sponsors of those who are destined to be indentured servants will not.

JUAN

It's been the custom for a hundred years.

Dominguez calls his fellow SHIPMATES to gather around.

One of the men steps forward. He pretends to shoot Dominguez with an arrow.

Dominguez bends down as if he was hit. He rises with an iron replica of Don Pedro's brand sitting on top of his head. It appears it has pierced Dominguez's skull.

Dominguez does his best Don Pedro impersonation.

DOMINGUEZ

I am Don Pedro. Look at my arrow.

Everyone laughs.

DON PEDRO

That arrow explains why you are so slow to do calculations.

Everyone laughs some more then they hear the sailor in the crow's nest.

SAILOR IN CROW'S NEST (O.S.)

Land ho. Land ho. Veracruz.
Veracruz.

The men disperse then get to work.

Don Pedro puts a new edge on his knife then shaves off his beard. He puts on his finest clean shirt then finds a proper pair of pants.

Don Pedro slides his feet into his sandals. He determines his surveying equipment and tools are packed correctly then he places his notebook in his bag.

Don Pedro secures the brand in a safe place then makes sure his broadsword is stored properly. He cinches up the ropes on the bags then gets on his knees.

DON PEDRO

I know I am sent by you to baptize the Natives and teach them that it is Christ who is their Savior.

The ship comes to a stop.

DON PEDRO

Give Rosa the wisdom to overcome any problems she may face. I ask for this in the name of Jesus Christ.

Don Pedro checks again to make sure that everything is ready for the crewmen to collect. He heads up to the deck.

EXT. DECK OF THE SHIP - DAY

Don Pedro faces the sun then takes a deep breath. He smiles.

The sounds of the animals being taken off the ship capture Don Pedro's attention. He watches the CREWMEN go through their debarking procedures.

The DECK HANDS put Don Pedro's valuable cargo off to the side.

The crewmen lead the sheep off the frigate.

Some of the cattle fight against their rope harnesses.

Don Pedro is approached by Dominguez. He's with EL BRUCO, 70. El Bruco has one eye and white hair.

DOMINGUEZ

This is El Bruco. He tells me he must talk to you. I know he may seem crazy but I owe him my life.

DON PEDRO

I am familiar but I do not believe we have spoken.

El Bruco grabs Don Pedro's hand then rubs his palm. He looks deeply into Don Pedro's eyes.

EL BRUCO

Your first love will not be your last. You will be challenged. Always watch yourself.

Don Pedro pulls his hand away from El Bruco.

El Bruco raises his voice.

EL BRUCO

The one you need the most will be the one who has the ability to defeat you.

DON PEDRO

Leave me, old man, I have had an abundance of your nonsense.

Dominguez and El Bruco walk away.

DON PEDRO

Not you, Dominguez. We need to talk. That old man is crazy. What else do you know about him?

Dominguez looks across the water. He sees two humpback whales surface then speaks to Don Pedro as if he's revealing a secret.

DOMINGUEZ

I was once sailing on a ship a lot like this one. We were with another vessel carrying supplies.

A geyser of water shoots out of the humpback's blow-hole.

DOMINGUEZ

El Bruco stopped us and told the captain to turn the ship in the opposite direction.

DON PEDRO

Did the captain heed his words?

DOMINGUEZ

Only because he listened can I tell you this story.

DON PEDRO

And the other ship?

Dominguez looks into Don Pedro's eyes.

DOMINGUEZ

The other captain did not pay attention to El Bruco and his ship went down. All hands were lost.

The crewmen prepare the cranes in order to offload the horses.

Don Pedro points at the crewmen.

DON PEDRO

What are they doing?

DOMINGUEZ

The horses have spent the entire voyage strapped into uncomfortable slings.

DON PEDRO

Why?

DOMINGUEZ

To avoid life-threatening injuries
in the event of a storm.

Don Pedro watches the crewmen swing the horses out from the ship then onto the dock. He walks down the accommodation ramp then takes his first step into the New World.

EXT. VERACRUZ - PIER - DAY

The quiet wharf has become a center for bustling activity. The noise from the animals and the sounds from the men fill the air.

SEÑOR MONTEZ, 45, is wearing an expensive dark coat and a wide brimmed Spanish hat. He briskly walks over to Don Pedro.

The BOY, 11, that's with Montez tries to keep pace.

Montez shakes Don Pedro's hand.

MONTEZ

Beinvenidos a Veracruz.

DON PEDRO

Hola, I'm Pedro.

MONTEZ

I'm sorry. I'm looking for Don Pedro,
a man of great importance.

Montez turns to the boy.

MONTEZ

Let's go.

Don Pedro watches Montez and the young man walk away.

DON PEDRO

Señor. Señor. I'm Don Pedro. I'm
sorry. I haven't adjusted to my new
title.

Montez and the young man turn around.

Don Pedro shakes Montez's hand again.

MONTEZ

You must get used to it. Always use
your title. You never know when you
may need it.

Montez's smile returns to his face. He raises his arms.

MONTEZ

You are in the New World now. It is a very different place.

DON PEDRO

I'm excited to be here. Who's the young man that accompanies you?

MONTEZ

He doesn't accompany me.

DON PEDRO

Is he your son?

The young man furiously shakes his head "no".

MONTEZ

He accompanies you.

DON PEDRO

Me?

MONTEZ

Don Pedro, you are a Don now. You must always have an assistant. This one is yours.

Don Pedro grabs Montez's arm. He leads him away from the boy.

DON PEDRO

Assistant? Why would I want a child to assist me?

MONTEZ

He's an orphan. He's a fine young man. You'll see he can be a valuable companion.

DON PEDRO

Two orphans exploring the New World. This truly is a strange place.

MONTEZ

You haven't even left the pier yet. Strange is too small a word to describe what you will see.

Montez claps his hands to get the attention of the men waiting near Don Pedro's equipment.

MONTEZ

Gentlemen, take all of the supplies
and put them on the mule. Move men.
We're in a hurry.

Don Pedro walks over to the young man. He holds out his hand.

DON PEDRO

We're going to get along just fine.
Can you tell me your name?

The boy only stands there.

Don Pedro looks at Montez with a face that says "what have you gotten me into". He walks back to Montez.

MONTEZ

He hasn't said a word since he showed
up at the shelter six months ago.
No one knows his name or age.

DON PEDRO

Poor thing. What am I supposed to
do with him? I know nothing about
children.

MONTEZ

We're on this Earth to learn. You
should not pass up an opportunity.

TWO MEN walk up to Don Pedro, Montez, and the boy with three horses.

MONTEZ

It's a long journey to the Governor's
Palace but first let me introduce
you to Veracruz.

The three of them mount their means of transportation then ride toward the heart of the city.

Montez moves closer to Don Pedro.

MONTEZ

Veracruz is two hundred fifty years
old. This is where Hernan Cortez
blessed the city with his own hands.

Montez points at the bay.

MONTEZ

Out there is where he blessed the
ships and out there is where he sank
them. Cortez told them...

Montez does his best Cortez impersonation.

MONTEZ

...from this time forward, those who arrive are those who will stay. Nobody's going home.

Montez lets the silence linger a moment.

MONTEZ

But times have changed and we no longer force you to stay. You can come and go as you like.

Montez laughs then moves away from Don Pedro to ride beside the boy. They pass by a slave auction.

Don Pedro observes MEN FROM AFRICA being bought and sold.

MONTEZ

Everyday, young strong men stand on the stage with ropes tied around their necks and hands.

They stop their horses momentarily to observe the proceedings.

MONTEZ

Plantation owners throughout New Spain fight and argue to get the hardest working humans.

DON PEDRO

Purchasing captives and forcing them to do our labor has never sat well with me.

They ride by bars filled with PIRATES wearing large boots and enormous hats. They have dangerous weapons hanging from their belts.

MONTEZ

The pirates come here to spend their latest bounty.

The noise from the cantina drown out the sounds from everywhere else. A fight is going on in most of the bars. In the others, CHEAP WOMEN satisfy the pirates' needs.

MONTEZ

Unless you have a very strong reputation or possess many weapons, I'd suggest you avoid the pirates.

EXT. VERACRUZ - BUSINESS DISTRICT - DAY

Montez takes them to a bustling street filled with activity. VENDORS are selling food and merchandise from all over the world.

The kaleidoscope of skin and cloth fills the narrow road. AFRICANS wear colorful headdresses, some stand three feet above their heads. Others only wear loincloths.

The fair-skinned SPANIARDS, wearing their armor, walk down the street with an arrogant gait. They are a stark contrast to the flowing robes the Africans wear.

Different bands of NATIVES walk in homogeneous groups wearing elaborately decorated clothes.

INT. SMALL CAFE - DAY

Don Pedro, Montez, and the boy are sitting at a table in the last village before reaching Aguascalientes.

Don Pedro tastes a tomato.

DON PEDRO

This is delicious but I must say the fry bread is still my favorite.

Don Pedro observes a group of MAYAN DESCENDANTS. The men wear loincloths and the women wear colorful skirts with tops that expose their mid-section. They stand out from the rest.

DON PEDRO

And those people, where do they come from? Their clothes are so creatively decorated with jewelry and feathers.

Montez turns around. He gets a good look.

MONTEZ

Oh yes. Those are the Mayan descendants, some call them the pyramid builders.

Montez leans back in his chair.

MONTEZ

They are experts at their craft. You know, we have the guns. We have the technology.

Montez looks back at the Mayan descendants.

MONTEZ

Spain is powerful but sometimes I see a strength in the Natives that I'm not sure we comprehend.

DON PEDRO

I've heard stories about them. Very intelligent people. They are amazing builders and stone workers.

Don Pedro looks into Montez's eyes.

DON PEDRO

For the longest time, we thought only Spain and Rome were capable of creating such architectural wonders.

MONTEZ

Hey, tomorrow we'll be in Aguascalientes. Let's celebrate.

Montez gets the attention of the PRETTY WAITRESS.

MONTEZ

Bring me and my friend your finest beer.

EXT. ROAD NEAR AGUASCALIENTES - DAY

The three of them are traveling through the high desert. The rich variety of cactus creates an alien looking landscape.

DON PEDRO

It seems no matter how many thorns a plant may have there is some bird that has found a way to make a nest.

MONTEZ

So true, you'd think nothing could live here but it's teeming with critters. Mostly snakes and lizards.

The sun makes the desert feel like an oven. Aguascalientes comes into view. The town sits on top of a hill.

The cacti are no longer the dominant plant. They are replaced by mesquite trees that rise from the sandy soil.

A majestic eagle swoops down in front of them then catches a snake with its talons. The eagle perches atop a prickly pear cactus then devours its new meal.

The horses begin to move a little faster.

EXT. GOVERNOR'S PALACE - DAY

Don Pedro, Montez, and the boy dismount when they reach the gate.

MONTEZ

These old bones are getting worn in the saddle. I'll let the sentries know we have arrived.

Montez walks toward the guards.

Don Pedro stretches his back then turns his horse around.

Tello, wearing clothes covered in a thick layer of dust, collides with Don Pedro's horse which causes him to drop his gourd.

TELLO

Hey. Be careful where you are going. You have spilled wine on my shirt. Don't you know I am a Señor?

DON PEDRO

Well excuse me, Señor.

TELLO

And who might you be?

DON PEDRO

I'm Don Pedro.

Tello glances at the tools being carried by the mule.

TELLO

And that equipment?

DON PEDRO

Those are the tools of my trade.

TELLO

Where are you going?

DON PEDRO

San Antonio de Bexar.

Tello's face contorts through expressions of surprise, then fear, then anger.

TELLO

You can never hope to be as great a sculptor and surveyor as me. I am the best in the Western Hemisphere.

DON PEDRO

It is a pleasure to meet you, Señor.

Don Pedro turns then winks at the young man. He turns back around then sees that Tello is gone.

DON PEDRO

Who might have that been?

The boy shrugs his shoulders.

DON PEDRO

Who knows? Maybe he was of high stature in his youth.

Montez returns.

MONTEZ

Okay. They're ready to receive us. The sentries are opening the front gates now.

They ride inside the gate then take their horses to the barn. The three of them walk to the fourteen-foot doors of Barrientos's Headquarters.

They stare at the intricate decorations and complex design.

DON PEDRO

Only a very talented mason could do such fine work.

INT. GOVERNOR'S PALACE - ENTRANCE - DAY

Montez opens the doors. At the end of the long carpeted hall, they see GOVERNOR BARRIENTOS, 42, dressed in white with a large sword hanging from his waist.

BARRIENTOS

Hola. Beinvenidos. Señor Montez, good to see you again. We've been waiting for your arrival.

Barrientos turns to Don Pedro.

BARRIENTOS

I'm Governor Barrientos. It is a pleasure to meet you, Pedro. I have your orders.

DON PEDRO

It is Don Pedro, Governor.

MONTEZ

Always a pleasure to see you, Señor
Barrientos.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

The walls are crowded with unusual decorations. A depiction of Jesus as a black man with hair that reaches his knees stands out among them.

Don Pedro reads the caption.

DON PEDRO

Black Jesus of the Live Oak.

Barrientos turns to Don Pedro.

BARRIENTOS

That is correct. May I try again?
Don Pedro, I have your orders. Be
proud of that title. Have a seat.

The governor summons his staff by clapping his hands.

BARRIENTOS

How about some tequila?

Montez's face reveals his excitement.

MONTEZ

Tequila? Perhaps one of your more
famous brands?

BARRIENTOS

Who's the child? I'll get a woman
to take care of him.

A pretty young woman, JUANITA, with blonde hair walks into the office.

BARRIENTOS

I have some excellent cigars as well.

MONTEZ

Sure, Governor. That's generous of
you.

BARRIENTOS

Juanita, please take the child.
Find him something to do.

The young man moves behind Don Pedro then gently grips his arm.

DON PEDRO

That won't be necessary. The boy is my assistant.

Governor Barrientos looks at the boy from head to toe. He sees that his shoes are held together with twine. His pants are more holes than pants and his shirt is dirty.

The young man's hair has the appearance of never having been combed. The governor looks back at Don Pedro.

BARRIENTOS

Your assistant?

DON PEDRO

Yes. He can stay with me.

BARRIENTOS

Very well.

(to the boy)

Welcome and what is your name?

DON PEDRO

The boy doesn't speak. You may address him as assistant. That is what he's used to.

A look of sadness comes over the governor's face. He turns back to the boy then smiles.

BARRIENTOS

If you are the assistant of Don Pedro, then you must join us.

GOVERNOR'S MEETING ROOM

A large oval table surrounded by chairs dominates the space.

The governor grabs Montez's arm before he can sit down.

BARRIENTOS

I must show you something.

Barrientos goes to the desk in the corner of the room then removes a letter from the drawer. He hands it to Montez.

Montez takes the note.

MONTEZ

This is from King Ferdinand.

BARRIENTOS

Yes it is. Please read it.

MONTEZ

I clothe you with my whole authority
and that you may make war with a
strong hand against the Jesuits.

Don Pedro puts his fingers to his lips signaling to the young man to stay quiet.

The boy almost laughs.

MONTEZ

You are to seize all the religious
and have them brought to the nearest
port.

Montez looks at the governor with concern.

MONTEZ

The Jesuits? Have you done this?

BARRIENTOS

Keep reading.

MONTEZ

The Jesuits will be embarked on
specially commissioned vessels.
Arrest them and seal the archives.

BARRIENTOS

Yes, yes, they can only have their
prayer books. You haven't got to
the good part yet.

Montez continues.

MONTEZ

If after the ships have embarked, if
a single Jesuit remains, you will be
punished by death.

Montez takes an exasperated breath. He hands the letter back to the governor.

TWO MEN come into the room. One is carrying a bottle of tequila and three small glasses. The other one has a tray full of cigars.

Montez and Don Pedro take a cigar and a glass.

The governor abruptly stands up then goes to his desk. He takes his pen, which is a long feather, out of the drawer then plunges it into an inkwell.

Barrientos writes Don Pedro's orders then signs the decree. He allows the ink to dry then rolls up the paper.

The governor lights a candle then drops some wax on the letter to seal it. He stamps the wax with the insignia on his ring then gives it to Don Pedro.

BARRIENTOS

Be sure to give this to the governor in San Antonio. Oconór is his name.

DON PEDRO

Yes, sir.

Governor Barrientos walks to the window. He stares out at the vast landscape before him.

BARRIENTOS

Beyond this city, you will encounter a very dangerous place.

Governor Barrientos looks back at Don Pedro.

BARRIENTOS

Be careful on your journey, there are many things you have not been prepared for. It's a true wilderness.

The governor walks over to Montez.

BARRIENTOS

You'll be on your own, Montez is a great guide, listen to him.

EXT. BUFFALO VALLEY - DAY

Don Pedro, Montez, and the boy find a nice place to camp.

Don Pedro collects some suitable rocks for carving.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING

Don Pedro wakes to a thick fog. When the mist burns away, he sees an amazing site. The valley in front of them is filled with an enormous herd of buffalo.

The animals occupy the valley from horizon to horizon.

The young man and Montez join Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO

What are those funny looking beasts?
Beeves?

MONTEZ

They are called buffalo. The Natives go crazy for it but the meat doesn't suit the Spanish pallet.

DON PEDRO

Do we go around them?

Montez nervously laughs.

MONTEZ

Unfortunately, no. With a herd that size we can only go through them.

The boy drops from his horse then takes a handkerchief from his pocket. He wraps it around the mule's eyes.

DON PEDRO

What is the boy doing?

MONTEZ

If the mule gets spooked and starts kicking, we'll be crushed beneath a million tons of unstoppable beasts.

DON PEDRO

You can't be serious.

MONTEZ

We'll walk the horses. Stay silent and pray.

Don Pedro grabs his rosary then, to his disbelief, they enter the herd.

The buffalo keep their heads down as they try to fuel their enormous bodies. Every now and then, a beast will raise its magnificent head and look Don Pedro directly in the eyes.

They remain totally silent as they make their way through the herd. It becomes obvious that the boy is the one determining the best way through.

The weary travelers successfully clear the herd just as the sun begins to set. They make it to the top of a bluff overlooking the buffalo.

EXT. ON TOP OF BLUFF - DAY

Don Pedro looks down at the buffalo.

The clouds become dark then lightning strikes close to the herd. Every beast starts to move at the same time.

Don Pedro feels the earth tremble beneath his feet as he witnesses their raw power.

Montez puts his hand on Don Pedro's shoulder.

MONTEZ

We made it just in time, huh?

Montez laughs.

They make camp.

Don Pedro goes to a nearby lake to get a drink. He sees a fish that has whiskers like a cat rising to the surface. The fish gets closer then he realizes its size.

Don Pedro jumps back as the fish breaks the surface of the water.

Montez watches the scene unfold.

MONTEZ

In New Spain, sometimes the fish try to catch you. You're not afraid of a fish are you?

Don Pedro just lies back on the shore and watches the clouds float overhead. He eventually joins Montez and the boy.

EXT. MEXICAN WILDERNESS - NIGHT

They build a nice fire then prepare to sleep.

DON PEDRO

Boy, this place is not safe. I'm not sure I should even be here. Get closer to the fire, closer to me.

The boy moves closer to Don Pedro. They quickly fall asleep.

LATER

In the darkness of the early morning, they wake to the sound of a vicious roar and the braying of their mule.

Montez grabs his musket then fires it into the air. In the moonlight, he sees the cougar run right by them.

Don Pedro hears the mule run away.

EXT. MEXICAN WILDERNESS - DAY

The sun begins to rise. The edge of the eastern horizon is a deep orange that fades into a crystal blue then dissipates into the darkness of the west.

The young man rearranges their equipment so that one horse will carry the supplies. Two of them will have to share one mount.

Don Pedro moves to the top of a hill then carves one of the rocks he collected.

When Don Pedro notices Montez and the boy getting ready to leave, he puts the carving in his bag of sculptures then heads down the hill to join them.

Everything is ready to go so Don Pedro mounts his horse.

The boy jumps in the saddle behind him.

Montez adjusts his horse's bridle.

MONTEZ

Boy. You'll have to ride with me.

Montez looks up then sees the boy is already sharing a horse with Don Pedro. He smiles with a satisfied look on his face.

MONTEZ

I'm sorry. I know you are Don Pedro's assistant but I require your help. I have taught you about tracking.

The boy drops from Don Pedro's horse then walks toward Montez.

MONTEZ

Let's see you put that to use.

The young man and Montez circle the perimeter of the camp. They look for the slightest sign of disturbance. The boy finds it so Montez gestures to Don Pedro to follow them.

The young man leads them along the mule's trail. They approach an interesting looking bluff.

An occasional deer runs across its flat surface which keeps Don Pedro's attention. He sees a human figure on a horse. Thirteen others join him.

Don Pedro moves his horse close to Montez. He points at the bluff.

DON PEDRO

Friends of yours?

Montez's face goes white as he stares at FOURTEEN COMANCHE WARRIORS. One of them is holding their mule by its rope.

DON PEDRO

I've seen pictures. I've been told plenty. To be this close to a band of Comanche warriors. Wow!

Montez looks at Don Pedro like he's crazy.

MONTEZ

What were you told?

DON PEDRO

Dominguez told me if I did come across them. I wouldn't live... oh.

MONTEZ

Yeah. Wow.

Montez looks back at the Natives.

MONTEZ

We are about to have a very bad day. Please tell me you've been taught how to speak Comanche.

DON PEDRO

No, I haven't.

Montez draws his weapon.

DON PEDRO

Put that away. We don't have a chance. There are only three of us. They are fourteen.

Don Pedro's horse moves toward the Comanche.

DON PEDRO

I'll try to communicate to them we are friendly. Maybe we can get our mule back.

Don Pedro ignores Montez's attempt to stop him. He rides toward the warriors.

Montez turns to the boy behind him.

MONTEZ

You may not want to watch this. It isn't going to be pretty.

Don Pedro dismounts a respectable distance from the Comanche then holds his arms up. He shows them his empty palms.

A warrior drops from his horse. He slowly circles Don Pedro.
Montez closes his eyes.

The warrior points at the bag tied around Don Pedro's waist.

MONTEZ

How did they kill him? That's right,
you don't talk.

Montez slowly opens one eye.

Don Pedro slowly reaches into the bag. He takes out one of
his sculptures. It's an amazing carving of an antelope.

The warrior stares at the statue. He looks at Don Pedro.

Don Pedro takes out a carving of a coyote. It almost looks
alive. He hands it to the warrior holding the rope who
appears to be the chief.

Don Pedro puts his arm to his chest. He pretends to carve.

The Natives comprehend. They look at Don Pedro with awe and
confusion on their faces.

The chief puts the statue in his leather bag then pulls the
mule closer to his horse. He points at the boy and Montez.

Don Pedro shakes his head "no".

The chief and Don Pedro gesture back and forth.

Montez watches Don Pedro and the chief. He sees the chief
point at him and they seem to agree on a deal.

Don Pedro signals to the chief to wait.

The chief is now smiling.

Montez's heart drops when he sees Don Pedro reluctantly riding
toward him.

LATER

Don Pedro stands next to the mule. The Comanche warriors
are gone. He's not wearing his hat as he reorganizes
everything with the boy.

Don Pedro rides to Acuna beside the young man.

The boy looks behind him then starts to quietly giggle.

MONTEZ (O.S.)

What are you laughing at, boy?

DON PEDRO

Señor Montez, I have never seen you so upset.

MONTEZ (O.S.)

I am upset. Couldn't you have traded something else?

Montez pulls his horse beside Don Pedro. The boy smiles from ear to ear.

Montez is totally bald and there is a distinct line between the white where his hat was and the dark brown where his hat wasn't.

MONTEZ

I guess my head does look kind of funny. I probably should take my hat off every now and then.

Don Pedro can barely get his words through his laughter.

DON PEDRO

It was either our hats or our heads.

EXT. ACUNA - DAY

Don Pedro, his assistant, and Montez cross the beautiful Rio Grande. Tall trees and thick grasses grow along the bank. They enter the small town then dismount.

Montez hugs Don Pedro.

MONTEZ

This is as far as I go. I hope I've been the host I wanted to be.

DON PEDRO

It has been a pleasure and an honor to ride alongside such a great man.

MONTEZ

I'm glad you've enjoyed the journey. Don Pedro, I must ask you about those carvings you gave the Comanche.

DON PEDRO

Yes?

Montez looks deeply into Don Pedro's eyes.

MONTEZ

Why did you choose those animals?

DON PEDRO

I carve what interests me.

MONTEZ

Those Comanche warriors were part of the antelope band. You gave them an antelope.

DON PEDRO

That's right.

Montez gets a serious look on his face.

MONTEZ

The coyote is their most revered animal. You gave them a coyote. Are you really smart or really lucky?

DON PEDRO

Neither, my good friend. I am really blessed.

MONTEZ

Either way. You are a special man, Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO

I have a question for you. The closer we got to Acuna the more anxious you became. Why?

Montez looks a little embarrassed.

MONTEZ

There is a lovely señorita here I occasionally attend to. I see her every time I make this journey.

The two of them embrace again.

MONTEZ

They're expecting you. I hope the accommodations are satisfactory.

Montez gives the boy a long sincere hug.

MONTEZ

I'll miss you. You will start a new life now. Try to make the most of it.

Don Pedro watches Montez ride away. He looks at his only companion, the boy.

DON PEDRO

I am grateful you are my assistant,
Assistant.

The young man walks the horses to the stable.

Don Pedro goes to find their room.

EXT. ACUNA - NIGHT

The boy returns after preparing the horses for the evening. He sees Don Pedro standing with an ELDERLY WOMAN in front of a shack.

The old woman opens the door.

INT. SMALL ROOM - NIGHT

The boy lights a candle. There are two beds. One is a small cot and the other is a pile of straw on the floor with a blanket.

The young man opens the one small window then lies on the floor.

Don Pedro washes his face and hands in a bowl of water left on a table. He sees the boy completely under his blanket.

DON PEDRO

No, young man, you can't go to sleep
without washing your face and hands.

The boy reluctantly obeys. They both lie down.

Don Pedro falls asleep almost instantly.

The boy hears Don Pedro talking in his sleep.

DON PEDRO

I will send for you, Rosa. I will
send for you.

The boy smiles then falls asleep too.

INT. SMALL ROOM - DAY

The first rays of the sun appear.

Don Pedro wakes to the sound of the door closing. He opens his eyes.

A Half-breed, BORRADO, 19, is standing over his bed.

Don Pedro reaches for his gun but the stranger has his foot on it. He sees the scars on Borrado's arms and bare chest.

BORRADO

I am Borrado. I am your escort.
Pack your things. We have a long
journey ahead.

Don Pedro looks around to see who is with Borrado.

BORRADO

It is only me. One man. I am it.

Don Pedro sees the boy is terrified.

DON PEDRO

No need to be afraid. I'm sure we'll
be glad he's on our side.

Don Pedro and the boy get dressed then gather their stuff.

The assistant loads the mule.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

After silently traveling for some time, Borrado, Don Pedro, and his assistant stop to water the horses.

Don Pedro goes to Borrado.

DON PEDRO

I was told we are going through some
dangerous territory. As the only
escort, you must be a great warrior.

Don Pedro sees the boy drinking downstream from the animals. He grabs the young man by the shirt.

DON PEDRO

Never drink downstream from a beast.

He moves the boy so he is upstream from the horses.

DON PEDRO

You only drink upstream from them.
That way you avoid their saliva.

Don Pedro grabs his gun when he sees a mountain lion directly across from them on the other side of the river.

He notices she has two cubs with her so he sketches her instead.

EXT. SOUTH OF SAN ANTONIO - DAY

Don Pedro's body language shows how tired he is of being on a horse.

Borrado stops then turns back to Don Pedro.

BORRADO

Over that rise are the headwaters of the San Pedro creek. The place is called San Antonio de Bexar.

Don Pedro turns back to his assistant.

DON PEDRO

We're almost there. The long journey is nearly over.

Don Pedro sees a cloud of dust moving through the hills. It is caused by a longhorn plowing through the brush and mesquite. It's the first glimpse he's had of a longhorn.

Two vaqueros, CRISTOBAL, 39, and RODRIGO, 27, wearing sombreros and white cotton shirts with bolero style jackets, pursue the magnificent animal.

The vaqueros reach a clearing in the rough terrain then Cristobal throws his lasso. He gets it around the steers massive horn.

Rodrigo captures the beast's leg.

They pull their lariats with perfect timing and the longhorn drops.

Cristobal ties his lariat around the horn of his saddle then jumps off his horse with two ropes in his hand. He removes his blade from its sheath.

Don Pedro watches in awe as Cristobal cuts the longhorns front legs from hoof to haunch.

Cristobal carves the animals belly then slices the beast's back legs. He slashes down the middle of the longhorn's back then places a stone under the steers hide.

Cristobal ties the rope around the skin-covered rock.

Rodrigo moves his horse which causes the beast to roll over.

Cristobal repeats the process. He tosses one of the ropes to Rodrigo.

CRISTOBAL

On my signal, release your lariat.

Cristobal gets back on his horse. He gives the signal and they release their lariats.

The steer jumps to its feet.

Cristobal and Rodrigo chase the longhorn until it's running at full speed then they simultaneously stop their horses.

Don Pedro watches as the steers hide is ripped from its body in two solid pieces.

The longhorn runs a few more steps then falls down dead.

Cristobal whistles.

Some NATIVE WOMEN AND CHILDREN run toward them then quickly surround the beast. They carve up the meat in minutes.

Rodrigo collects the hide.

Cristobal sees Don Pedro and his two companions.

Don Pedro's nobility, Borrado's wildness, and the boy's innocence make for an interesting looking group.

Cristobal rides to Don Pedro.

Don Pedro dismounts.

CRISTOBAL

Don Pedro. We have been anticipating your arrival. I'm Cristobal. Beinvenidos a San Antonio de Bexar.

DON PEDRO

How often does this cruelty happen to such a magnificent animal?

Cristobal remains calm.

CRISTOBAL

We have a deal with the Natives. We provide them with beef and they don't raid our village.

DON PEDRO

That does not explain your barbarity.

CRISTOBAL

This is our delivery system. The hide is valuable to us and the animal dies painlessly.

DON PEDRO

I have never seen such a thing.

Everyone else dismounts as Rodrigo arrives with the hide.

Don Pedro shakes Cristobal's hand.

DON PEDRO

This is my escort, Borrado.

Cristobal holds out his hand.

Borrado crosses his arms.

CRISTOBAL

Well, nice to meet you.

DON PEDRO

This is my assistant. He's excellent with horses and a hard worker.

Don Pedro looks back at the boy.

DON PEDRO

It was only with his help that we were able to maneuver through an enormous herd of buffalo.

CRISTOBAL

Very impressive, glad to meet you.

Cristobal is only met with an expressionless stare.

CRISTOBAL

Interesting companions you have. Allow me to introduce my partner and confidant, Rodrigo.

Don Pedro holds out a hand.

Rodrigo turns away then goes to his horse.

DON PEDRO

Your companion is interesting as well.

CRISTOBAL

Not many are as skilled with words as you and me.

Cristobal laughs then Don Pedro laughs too. The boy, Borrado, and Rodrigo silently mount their horses.

EXT. SAN ANTONIO - DAY

Don Pedro, his assistant, and Borrado ride into town with Cristobal and Rodrigo.

CRISTOBAL

There are about seven hundred living
in San Antonio at the present.

A large herd of sheep cross in front of them.

CRISTOBAL

I realize there seems to be more
animals than people on the street
but we are working on that.

Don Pedro sees the bell tower of the church rising into the sky.

DON PEDRO

I have a very important letter that
needs to be in Spain as soon as
possible. Can you make this happen?

Don Pedro hands the letter to Cristobal.

CRISTOBAL

Rodrigo, post this letter.

Cristobal gives the letter to Rodrigo.

Rodrigo takes off at full gallop.

CRISTOBAL

You have my word, Rodrigo will take
care of it. You thirsty? We have a
good bar.

DON PEDRO

Assistant, please take care of the
horses. Meet me outside the bar.

INT. WATERING HOLE - DAY

Don Pedro orders a round of their finest whiskey. He sees a vaquero, ANTONIO SALAZAR, 40, with his spur against the neck of a Native lying on the floor.

DON PEDRO

What is that about?

CRISTOBAL

That's the mayor's right hand man.
The one on the floor must not have
paid his debt.

DON PEDRO

I see.

CRISTOBAL

Beware of men with a piercing on
their neck. It's a sign they are
not to be trusted.

EXT. SAN ANTONIO - MAIN PLAZA - DAY

The San Fernando Cathedral rises majestically into the morning
sky.

The sun appears above the horizon. Its rays reach the stone
surfaces. The humidity from the night before is instantly
vaporized. The light from the sun illuminates the doors.

Don Pedro looks behind him then back at the cathedral.

DON PEDRO

(to himself)

That isn't right.

Don Pedro stands in the center of the plaza then stares at
the church's doors.

DON PEDRO

(to himself)

How could such a talented man make
such a terrible mistake?

Don Pedro stares at the cathedral. He admires its beauty
then turns to get a panoramic view of the plaza.

The church has been completed but many of the buildings are
not. The homes that are finished are poorly constructed.

Don Pedro becomes distracted by two mockingbirds resting on
the tower above his head.

The scream of one of the birds sounds exactly like a cat.
Its mate responds with the sound of live oak branches rubbing
against each other in the wind.

DON PEDRO

Dios mio. What other unimaginable
beings am I yet to meet? A unicorn?
The mighty Minotaur perhaps?

MAYOR MIGUEL GORTARI, 42, enters the plaza wearing a white powdered wig and a narrow-sleeved frock-coat with a standing collar. His matching tight pants reach just below his knees.

GORTARI
Don Pedro. Don Pedro.

Mayor Gortari ignores Don Pedro's hand. He gives him a bear hug then bounces him up and down like a child.

GORTARI
I'm very glad to see you.

The mayor puts Don Pedro down.

GORTARI
I'm Miguel Gortari, the mayor of San Antonio.

Gortari looks at the cathedral.

GORTARI
What a masterpiece, huh? It's in need of some repairs though.

DON PEDRO
That it is, as well as the rest of the plaza. King Ferdinand believes it has been completed.

Don Pedro and the mayor avoid the piles of dung as they walk through the plaza. They make their way through the sheep and pigs.

DON PEDRO
I will do everything to appease you but remember, just as you have needs, the king has his needs as well.

Don Pedro looks around the plaza.

DON PEDRO
The first thing I need is an office. I also need a place to live, preferably close to the construction.

Gortari points to a shack.

GORTARI
Yes, I have prepared the perfect spot for you right there by the cathedral in the plaza.

Don Pedro sees a structure that looks like a giant stone box. He's grateful he can see a door and at least one window.

DON PEDRO

And where do you live?

Gortari points to the dilapidated shack next to Don Pedro's new home.

GORTARI

I'm living there. I am anxious to see the greatest mason in all of Spain do his work.

The mayor looks embarrassed at the condition of the plaza.

GORTARI

Tomorrow, I'm instituting a fine of four pesos to anyone who doesn't keep their livestock in their fences.

Gortari notices that Don Pedro does not look happy.

GORTARI

There's a lot to be done but that's why you're here, right? Where shall we begin?

Mayor Gortari and Don Pedro continue to walk through the plaza then stop to let a hen with her chicks pass in front of them.

The mayor smiles at Don Pedro but he doesn't look amused.

GORTARI

I know the construction should be done. Some have tried to complete Tello's work but they all failed.

Gortari directs Don Pedro's attention to the cathedral.

GORTARI

We need the doors and windows at San Fernando repaired. Only someone as skilled as you can do it.

DON PEDRO

Very well, don't push me. Let me go at my own pace. I promise you will be satisfied. I'll start immediately.

The sun becomes completely covered by dark clouds.

A typical San Antonio cloudburst occurs then almost immediately the water spills into the streets from the canales on top of the homes. The depressions below them become ponds.

The street turns to mud.

GORTARI

Let's get out of this weather. We'll meet again tomorrow morning.

EXT. SAN ANTONIO - STREET - DAY

The humidity hangs in the air.

Don Pedro walks to the mayor's office. He's greeted by everyone he passes and responds to all of them.

Mayor Gortari meets Don Pedro.

GORTARI

You may need to place the construction on hold. The king has sent us an urgent request.

DON PEDRO

What is it?

GORTARI

No one anticipated this development and it must be kept private. We'll talk in my office.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The walls are crowded with artwork from the Natives. This is obviously a temporary room.

Gortari sits in his comfortable chair. He reaches in his drawer then takes out the same decree that Montez read in Aguascalientes.

Don Pedro sweats from the heat and humidity in the stifling, poorly ventilated room. He reads the letter then hands it back to Gortari.

DON PEDRO

I didn't come all this way to round up souls and escort them to prison or possibly even death.

Gortari puts the letter back in his desk.

DON PEDRO

The king needs the construction to be completed. That letter doesn't apply to me.

Don Pedro takes out his notebook.

GORTARI

You saw the penalty if the king's orders are not fulfilled.

DON PEDRO

I'm afraid that is your problem. It is not mine.

Don Pedro's response does not make the mayor happy.

GORTARI

The Natives are cutting the stone you will need. They are at the quarry we call the Sunken Gardens.

DON PEDRO

I would like to see that now.

GORTARI

I'll draw you a map. I must stay here and try to figure out this other problem.

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Borrado and the boy approach Don Pedro and Gortari with Don Pedro's horse.

DON PEDRO

Good morning. I'm taking the boy to the quarry with me. Find out who is willing to work for the king.

Borrado heads off in the opposite direction.

Don Pedro takes the map from Gortari.

EXT. QUARRY - DAY

Don Pedro observes SOME NATIVES cutting blocks of stone from the rock wall. OTHER NATIVES are carrying boulders to a cart being pulled by an ox.

One of them drops a stone before he makes it to the cart. Don Pedro becomes incensed when he sees Salazar strike the Native with his whip.

SALAZAR

(yelling)

Until all of you produce more stone there will only be half-rations of food.

Don Pedro spurs his horse then rides to the center of the quarry. He whistles as loudly as he can to get Salazar's attention.

Salazar sees Don Pedro. He angrily approaches him.

SALAZAR

Señor, I hope you have a good reason for interrupting me.

DON PEDRO

What is your name and what are you doing here?

SALAZAR

My name is Antonio Salazar. I'm in charge.

DON PEDRO

No sir, you are not. I am Don Pedro. I am the one who leads this project.

Salazar removes his hat. He lowers his eyes.

SALAZAR

It's a great honor to meet you, sir.

DON PEDRO

You will stop treating the Natives like they are animals. They are no different from us.

Salazar raises his head.

SALAZAR

With all due respect, I must keep these animals... I mean the Natives, working.

DON PEDRO

Must I find someone else? You have heard my order.

There is a moment of silence as Salazar stares into Don Pedro's eyes. His eyes are met with Don Pedro's steely confident gaze.

DON PEDRO

Give me your whip. You will have no need for it any longer.

SALAZAR

My whip is a tool. I use it for many things. I cannot give up what I have come to rely on.

DON PEDRO

Mr. Salazar, you seem to think we are having a discussion. We are not.

Salazar hands him his whip with a look of hatred in his eyes.

Don Pedro takes a deep breath.

DON PEDRO

I trust I can count on you to follow my orders.

SALAZAR

Yes, Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO

Very well then. Back to work. Time is the one thing we have no control over.

Don Pedro leaves with the boy.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF SAN ANTONIO - DAY

Borrado meets Don Pedro outside of town.

BORRADO

Half of the village is excited to work for you. You will have no problem finding enough hands.

SALAZAR

Thank you, Borrado. We will begin surveying in the morning.

EXT. SURVEY SITE - DAY

At the break of dawn, the boy and Don Pedro begin measuring the site. Don Pedro climbs to the top of a tree with a rope in his hand.

DON PEDRO

Tie the other end of this rope to that tree.

Don Pedro loses his balance then falls. He breaks several branches on the way down then lands on soft ground.

Don Pedro lets out a strange sound then groans in agony.

DON PEDRO

I'm okay.

Don Pedro makes sure that nothing is broken then he hears the boy release a full throated laugh.

DON PEDRO
You laugh?

MANUELITO
Si.

DON PEDRO
You talk?

MANUELITO
Si.

Don Pedro has a confused look on his face.

DON PEDRO
You have been holding out on me.
What else can you do?

MANUELITO
I talk very well but I listen even better.

DON PEDRO
Before you talk, you only listen.
You are young to understand that,
Assistant.

Don Pedro holds out his hand.

DON PEDRO
Help me out.

The boy grabs Don Pedro's hand then Don Pedro pulls him into the San Antonio river.

Don Pedro jumps into the river then begins splashing the boy.

The boy furiously returns the assault.

DON PEDRO
Stop. Stop. What's your name?

MANUELITO
Manuelito Barreras, the assistant to
Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO
You speak so well and all this time
you were pretending. You don't trust
anyone do you.

Manuelito can't look into Don Pedro's eyes.

MANUELITO
I do trust someone.

DON PEDRO
And who might that be?

Manuelito looks embarrassed. He points at Don Pedro

MANUELITO
You.

Don Pedro becomes quiet then he gets out of the water.

DON PEDRO
Manuelito, we have to do something.
Come with me.

INT. DON PEDRO'S HOME - BATHROOM - DAY

Don Pedro takes Manuelito to the bathtub.

DON PEDRO
You need to fill the bathtub half-
way with the water from the well.

When Manuelito is done, Don Pedro grabs a bucket of water hanging over the fire then pours it into the bathtub.

DON PEDRO
Get in.

MANUELITO
What?

DON PEDRO
Get in. You must get clean.

Don Pedro hands Manuelito a bar of soap and a wash rag.

DON PEDRO
Tell me when you are done.

Don Pedro leaves the bathroom.

LATER

Don Pedro comes back. He throws a towel to Manuelito.

DON PEDRO

Dry yourself off and comb your hair.
A brush is on the shelf. Hurry, we
must go.

INT. STORE - DAY

Don Pedro buys Manuelito a whole new outfit from hat to shoes.

Manuelito looks into the mirror. He looks more like a prince
than an orphan.

DON PEDRO

You look nice. We must go.

INT. SAN FERNANDO CATHEDRAL - DAY

The perfectly constructed arches lead Don Pedro's eyes to
the beautiful vaulted ceiling.

DON PEDRO

Magnificent.

Don Pedro turns to Manuelito then points to a pew.

DON PEDRO

Wait here.

Manuelito sits on the pew at the back of the church.

Don Pedro leaves to find Father Solis.

INT. FATHER SOLIS'S OFFICE - DAY

FATHER SOLIS, 23, wearing a brown robe, sits behind his desk
across from Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO

Father, I have something I must tell
you.

FATHER SOLIS

Do you have a confession to make?

DON PEDRO

No, I mean yes. There's always a
need to confess. That's not why I'm
here. It concerns my assistant.

Father Solis leans back in his chair.

DON PEDRO
His name is Manuelito. He's eleven
years old and has never been baptized.

Father Solis crosses his arms.

DON PEDRO
In order for a young man to be
baptized, he must have a mother or
father to represent him.

FATHER SOLIS
This is true.

DON PEDRO
Is it necessary they be married?
I'm very fond of the boy and I would
like to act as his father.

FATHER SOLIS
It has never been a requirement for
a man or woman to be married but it
is definitely preferred.

Father Solis gets up then goes to the window. He looks at
the dilapidated building they call a school.

FATHER SOLIS
What you are about to ask for
permission to do is a great
responsibility. Do you know that?

DON PEDRO
I have thought about it and I am
willing.

FATHER SOLIS
You realize it is up to you to see
that he is educated.

DON PEDRO
I agree. He has a lot of learning
to do. The last thing we need is
for him to not know how to count.

Don Pedro gets up. He stands next to Father Solis.

DON PEDRO
What would that say about our town,
our environment?

Father Solis looks at Don Pedro.

FATHER SOLIS

We have a school but it is not in very good shape.

DON PEDRO

I am aware of the school situation. Let's focus on improving it. I'll make it a priority.

FATHER SOLIS

You seek my approval to adopt the child. Am I correct?

DON PEDRO

Yes, Father.

Father Solis goes to his chair then sits down.

FATHER SOLIS

You are a man without a wife.

Don Pedro returns to the chair across from Father Solis.

DON PEDRO

Yes, Father, but I will have one soon.

FATHER SOLIS

What makes you believe she will accept him?

DON PEDRO

I know she will. She is a woman of God.

Father Solis and Don Pedro are silent as Father Solis contemplates the situation.

FATHER SOLIS

Okay. Don Pedro, I'll give you my blessing. This Sunday we will perform the baptism and the adoption.

INT. SAN FERNANDO CATHEDRAL - DAY

Don Pedro leads Father Solis to Manuelito.

DON PEDRO

Father Solis, I would like to introduce you to Manuelito.

Father Solis shakes Manuelito's hand.

FATHER SOLIS

He looks like a fine young man.

Father Solis messes up Manuelito's hair.

FATHER SOLIS

Sunday is a big day. I shall look forward to seeing you then.

MANUELITO

I shall look forward to seeing you as well.

EXT. MAIN PLAZA - DAY

The plaza is crowded with the people willing to work with Don Pedro.

Borrado sits beside him.

A villager, SEÑOR HERNANDEZ, 30, steps forward.

DON PEDRO

What is your name?

HERNANDEZ

Pablo Hernandez.

DON PEDRO

And what can you do?

HERNANDEZ

I'm a farmer.

Don Pedro shakes his hand.

DON PEDRO

Please give the rest of your information to Borrado.

Señor Hernandez moves to Borrado.

Borrado records the information they need.

Don Pedro calls up the next VILLAGER.

DON PEDRO

How will you be able to help us?

VILLAGER

I'm very good at making paper.

DON PEDRO

Great. Borrado will take your information.

A line forms. Don Pedro interviews each one.

EXT. MAIN PLAZA - DAY

Sunday arrives. It seems like the whole town is there to witness the occasion. Manuelito is wearing his brand new clothes.

MANUELITO

What are we doing? I've never been to church.

DON PEDRO

We're baptizing you.

Don Pedro squats down. He looks into Manuelito's eyes.

DON PEDRO

Today is your first day. You will learn.

INT. SAN FERNANDO CATHEDRAL - DAY

Father Solis stands in front of GOVERNOR OCONÓR, 36, and his WIFE, 28. Don Pedro and Manuelito join them then they all kneel down.

Don Pedro presents Manuelito to Father Solis who is acting as the celebrant for the baptism.

FATHER SOLIS

What name do you give the child and what do you ask of God's church for him?

DON PEDRO

Manuelito Barreras. Baptism.

FATHER SOLIS

In baptizing the child, you have the responsibility of training him in the practice of the faith.

Father Solis stands next to the baptismal font.

FATHER SOLIS

It will be your duty to bring him up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us by loving God and neighbors.

Father Solis looks deeply into Don Pedro's eyes.

FATHER SOLIS
Do you clearly understand what you
are undertaking?

DON PEDRO
I do.

Father Solis turns to Governor Oconór and his wife.

FATHER SOLIS
Are the two of you ready to help the
parents of this child in their duty
as Christians?

GOVERNOR OCONÓR
I do.

MRS. OCONÓR
I do.

Father Solis baptizes Manuelito.

FATHER SOLIS
Manuelito, the Christian community
welcomes you with great joy. In His
name, I claim you for Christ.

Father Solis makes the sign of the cross on Manuelito's
forehead.

FATHER SOLIS
I trace the crucifix on your forehead
and invite your parents and godparents
to do the same.

Don Pedro and the godparents make the cross and kiss Manuelito
on the cheek..

One more has come unto God. Tradition dictates a celebration.

Father Solis turns to Don Pedro.

FATHER SOLIS
You are now not just his guardian,
you are very much his father.

Father Solis sees Manuelito's eyes fill up with tears.

FATHER SOLIS
Manuelito Barreras, you are no longer
his assistant, you will from this
day forward be his son.

Father Solis embraces Don Pedro and Manuelito. They walk out to join the party.

EXT. MAIN PLAZA - DAY

Manuelito is overwhelmed by the experience. He turns to Don Pedro.

MANUELITO

Don Pedro, is it okay if I call you
Papa?

DON PEDRO

That's going to take some getting
used to.

Don Pedro laughs. He hugs Manuelito for a moment then pushes him back to look into his eyes.

DON PEDRO

Manuelito, you must know from time
to time I will have to leave.

MANUELITO

And I will go with you.

DON PEDRO

No, you're no longer my assistant,
you're my son. You'll stay here and
learn to read and write.

MANUELITO

Yes, Papa.

Don Pedro hugs Manuelito again.

DON PEDRO

My son will not be illiterate. You
do trust me, right?

A GIRL, 12, walks up behind Manuelito then crushes a cascarones on his head.

Don Pedro laughs. He picks up Manuelito with sheer glee then spins Manuelito around.

DON PEDRO

This fiesta is to celebrate, so let's
celebrate. I will never be gone
long and I will always return.

Don Pedro puts Manuelito down. They get some refreshments.

EXT. SAN JOSE MISSION PLAZA - DAY

The entire town has shown up to celebrate the laying of the church's cornerstone.

Father Solis consecrates the plaza.

San Antonio's mayor of seventeen sixty-eight, JACINTO DELGADO, 39, watches with anticipation.

SEÑOR BUSTILLOS, SEÑOR PACHECO, and SEÑOR HERNANDEZ stand as official observers.

Governor Oconór directs the ceremony. The cornerstone is lowered into place.

Don Pedro joins Oconór for the ritual sacrifice of corn, oil, and wine.

The governor picks up the ceremonial gavel. He hands it to Don Pedro.

Don Pedro strikes the cornerstone three times.

Oconór uses the ceremonial trowel to smear some cement on top of the stone.

The king's soldiers perform a fifteen gun salute.

The vaqueros slaughter and roast a fully grown ox.

Nearly everyone grabs a partner then dances as the NATIVE MUSICIANS play one of their favorite songs.

The sounds of violins and accordions fill the air until the early morning.

EXT. SAN ANTONIO DE VALERO - DAY

Don Pedro and Borrado sit on the ground with their backs against the wall.

Don Pedro raises his head just enough to see over the barrier. He sees that the COMANCHE WARRIORS seriously outnumber those defending the city.

The Comanche, with their faces covered in black and red paint, hold their metal-tipped spears in one hand as they ride their magnificent horses with grace and dignity.

Short bows hang over their shoulders and French muskets hang from their waists in leather holsters.

DON PEDRO

It's been three weeks, we have to end this.

BORRADO

They show no sign they intend to leave. I'm not sure what they want. We are out-numbered and out-gunned.

DON PEDRO

We cannot hold out any longer.

BORRADO

Be thankful they haven't attacked. The Apaches would all be dead and our women would be captured.

Don Pedro looks over the wall again.

DON PEDRO

It's time to exercise some faith.

Don Pedro gets the vaqueros attention.

DON PEDRO

Cristobal. Rodrigo. Take our place. Do not let them breach the walls.

Don Pedro grabs his gun and ammunition. He turns to Borrado.

DON PEDRO

Come with me.

INT. DON PEDRO'S HOME - DAY

Don Pedro comes out of his bedroom with a pouch that contains his small figurative sculptures.

DON PEDRO

Borrado, can you dress as a warrior?

BORRADO

I don't think...

DON PEDRO

The time is now. Supplies are nearly depleted. Do you have what you need?

BORRADO

I do.

INT. BORRADO'S HOME - DAY

Borrado returns from his bedroom. He's indistinguishable from the warriors conducting the raid.

DON PEDRO

Let's go. Grab every hat that you have.

EXT. BORRADO'S HOME - DAY

Don Pedro and Borrado mount their horses.

DON PEDRO

If they wanted to kill us, we would already be dead. We need to get close enough so they can hear you.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF SAN ANTONIO DE VALERO'S WALLS - DAY

Don Pedro and Borrado stop before they make themselves visible to the Comanche warriors.

Don Pedro hands a rope to Borrado.

DON PEDRO

Tie my hands together.

BORRADO

You'll be defenseless. What do you want me to say to them?

DON PEDRO

I've learned a Comanche will always consider a trade. We're going to negotiate. Ready? Let's do this.

Borrado holds the rope tied to Don Pedro's hands. They ride directly toward the Comanche warriors. Borrado speaks perfect Comanche.

BORRADO

I come from the south. You must speak with this one. He offers a valuable trade.

The COMANCHE CHIEF gives the signal for his warriors to relax.

Borrado dismounts then forces Don Pedro off his horse.

BORRADO

This man's a stone shaper and he offers unique, valuable items.

Borrado reaches into the pouch tied around Don Pedro's waist. He takes out the representations of a bear and a buffalo.

The warriors have twenty bows and guns pointed at Don Pedro.

Borrado slowly walks toward the chief then gives him the sculptures. He goes back to his horse then grabs the hats.

The Comanche pass around the carvings.

BORRADO

He has many more carvings and these.
All he asks is that you leave.

A warrior drops from his horse then gets close to Borrado. He stares at Borrado for a moment then takes the hats.

Borrado grabs the pouch with the rest of the sculptures from Don Pedro. He gives it to the chief.

The chief raises his spear. The Natives turn in unison.

Don Pedro and Borrado watch them ride off into the distance.

Borrado wipes the paint from his face then unties Don Pedro's hands. They ride back into town.

BORRADO

It worked.

DON PEDRO

For now. I can't send for Rosa under these conditions.

BORRADO

We need bigger walls but defending the whole town is almost impossible.

DON PEDRO

I know. I'm going to focus on San Jose. I will make it safe for Rosa.

EXT. SAN JOSE MISSION - DAY

San Antonio's mayor of seventeen seventy-one is JOSÉ MENCHACA, 42. He rides through the fortified gates of San Jose then looks at the four watch towers Don Pedro has constructed.

One of the SENTRIES climbs down from a watchtower.

SENTRY

(yelling)
Mayor Menchaca has arrived.

Don Pedro walks out to meet the mayor.

DON PEDRO
Hola, Mayor. How can I help you?

The mayor dismounts from his horse.

MAYOR MENCHACA
What you have done is very impressive.
Even the Natives are safe within the
San Jose walls.

DON PEDRO
Thank you, Mayor.

The mayor moves closer to Don Pedro.

MAYOR MENCHACA
Now that the walls are complete, I
must ask something more of you.

DON PEDRO
What can I do for you?

MAYOR MENCHACA
I believe if we can train the Natives
in a variety of skills they will be
less of a burden.

Don Pedro shows the mayor the Native quarters.

DON PEDRO
That is a good plan. It would require
the construction of the necessary
facilities.

MAYOR MENCHACA
What you have done here is so
impressive. Can you build what I
seek in San Antonio?

DON PEDRO
I agree it would be smart to teach
the Natives the skills they want to
learn. What do you have in mind?

MAYOR MENCHACA
We need to produce clothes. We need
more who know how to work with iron
and builders in general.

Don Pedro stops. He looks at the mayor.

DON PEDRO

I will not construct these facilities only to have them destroyed by another Comanche raid.

Don Pedro and the mayor approach the church that is still under construction.

DON PEDRO

The church is my priority now.

MAYOR MENCHACA

I believe that teaching the Natives trades will only increase the overall safety of everyone.

DON PEDRO

I agree. I will do it but only if the facilities are constructed within these walls.

The mayor looks around the plaza.

MAYOR MANCHACA

I have been authorized to grant you land for everything you construct. You will become a wealthy man.

EXT. SAN JOSE MISSION - DAY

The mayor of seventeen seventy-two is Jacinto Delgado. He rides next to Don Pedro as he examines the plaza.

DON PEDRO

Congratulations on becoming mayor again. Let me show you some of what I've done.

DELGADO

I understand you are teaching new trades to the Natives.

Don Pedro and the mayor ride by the weaving house and tailor shop.

DON PEDRO

The Natives are producing enough clothes and blankets for the entire town.

DELGADO

I had some Natives construct an addition to my home. They obtained those skills here?

DON PEDRO

Yes, sir. One of the first facilities
I built was a carpenter shop.

Delgado stops his horse in front of the foundry. THREE
APACHES are pouring molten metal into molds.

DON PEDRO

These guys have supplied us with
almost every tool we need.

DELGADO

What you have done for the Natives
is impressive. The viceroy has begun
the assessment of the settlements.

DON PEDRO

I have several teams finishing their
projects. I can say with confidence
he will be impressed.

DELGADO

I hope so. The existence of this
outpost is at stake.

EXT. SAN ANTONIO - DAY

The viceroy, CARLOS FRANCISCO DE CROIX, 70, rides beside Don
Pedro. They stop to let a FARMER, 42, leading an ox with a
cart full of vegetables, pass in front of them.

DON PEDRO

It seems a new family moves here
every week with an ox. We're getting
used to them on our streets.

VICEROY

He must be going to that communal
market you mentioned. It is nice to
see a settlement functioning well.

Mayor Delgado and GOVERNOR VICENCIO, 40, listen intently to
the conversation as they ride behind the viceroy. Delgado
spurs his horse then moves next to De Croix.

DELGADO

Yes, Viceroy. When I became mayor,
self-sufficiency was my number one
priority.

GOVERNOR VICENCIO

They grow more than enough maize,
beans, cotton, peppers, watermelon...

The viceroy turns completely around to face the governor.

VICEROY

I understand Governor, they grow a lot of vegetables.

Manuelito and Borrado quietly laugh at the kiss-up display as they bring up the rear of the group.

The viceroy turns back to Don Pedro.

VICEROY

In Mexico City, I knew of your accomplishments but this is truly impressive. Well done, Don Pedro.

They all stop when a GROUP OF CHILDREN approach Don Pedro. Each of them hands him a flower. SUSAN, 6, the smallest of the group is last.

SUSAN

We love you, Don Pedro.

BORRADO

(to Manuelito)

I've seen enough.

Borrado and Manuelito turn their horses then ride away.

Don Pedro's face is slightly red from embarrassment.

DON PEDRO

I am sorry, Viceroy. The children appreciate the improvements I've done to the school.

GOVERNOR VICENCIO

He's become somewhat of a celebrity in the province.

The group stops at the Main Plaza. Don Pedro sits tall in his saddle.

DON PEDRO

Rome wasn't built in a day, Viceroy. Look and see what can be accomplished with a little time and a lot of work.

A GROUP OF ISLEÑOS AND SPANIARDS approach the mayor.

SPANIARD

We must speak with you about water rights. It is not equitable.

The mayor uncomfortably looks at the viceroy then turns back to the Spaniard.

DELGADO

Gentlemen, quiet please. Now is not the time. I believe there is a meeting scheduled.

The governor becomes very serious. He moves his horse next to Don Pedro's.

GOVERNOR VICENCIO

What you've done is amazing. I'm sure you have heard we have a crisis on our hands.

DON PEDRO

Yes, Governor. I am aware.

Governor Vicencio looks back at Mayor Delgado seeking some help.

The mayor only mouths to the governor, "tell him".

Vicencio gives Don Pedro a look filled with apologies.

GOVERNOR VICENCIO

We need you and Borrado to travel to Nacogdoches. We will provide you with several escorts.

DELGADO

You must secularize the mission there and evacuate the people, including the Natives, and bring them here.

The viceroy interrupts.

VICEROY

Don Pedro, there is one more thing. I noticed your list of certifications is not complete.

DON PEDRO

Is that true, Viceroy?

VICEROY

Are you not trained in matters regarding the law?

DON PEDRO

I am. My skills are best suited for creating sculptures or metallurgy, even as a surveyor I do quite well.

Don Pedro uncomfortably shifts his weight in the saddle.

DELGADO

Your title is a vice-judge. That requires a very fair man and a deep understanding of the law.

VICEROY

If the king made it possible for you to receive such training shouldn't you use that training for the king.

Don Pedro looks at the homes lined along the street.

DON PEDRO

Do you see those cracks? If the homes had properly constructed roofs that would not have happened.

DELGADO

I understand. Try not to be distracted. This matter is extremely important.

Don Pedro turns to De Croix.

DON PEDRO

I'm sorry, Viceroy. Of course, I am willing but I'm already busy doing my employment for the crown.

DELGADO

You are the only one who can complete the task. The king has put you in charge of Native affairs.

GOVERNOR VICENCIO

I have seen how well you get along with Borrado. He doesn't like anybody but he trusts you. We need him.

DELGADO

He has befriended you. He will listen to you. Borrado is the key to peace among the Natives.

Don Pedro takes a deep breath.

DON PEDRO

Yes, but a position such as that is where a man's career goes to die.

The viceroy moves his horse right next to Don Pedro's.

DON PEDRO

I plan on raising my family here. I don't want to be sent back because of something I cannot control.

The viceroy looks Don Pedro directly in the eyes.

VICEROY

Then don't fail. It is what the king wants.

DON PEDRO

What exactly does the king want?

GOVERNOR VICENCIO

Peace between the Comanche and the Apache. Borrado's mother is Comanche. His father is a Spaniard.

DELGADO

Borrado speaks both languages and Apache as well. He will teach you. Just be yourself.

Don Pedro sarcastically laughs.

VICEROY

We must find a way to end the feud between them. We must end the attacks against New Spain. Will you do it?

DON PEDRO

Do I have a choice?

VICEROY

A choice you have. We have no other choice but you.

DON PEDRO

Very well, Viceroy.

A look of sadness comes over the mayor's face.

DELGADO

You have done a fine job. I am sure you will work just as hard fulfilling your new responsibility.

Delgado, Vicencio, and the viceroy ride away leaving Don Pedro to think about his new predicament.

INT. DON PEDRO'S HOME - DAY

Borrado walks in with pelts in one hand and a buckskin shirt in the other.

Don Pedro examines the merchandise.

DON PEDRO

Very nice. It is fine workmanship.
I will give you two carvings.

Don Pedro goes into his bedroom. He comes back with sculptures of a deer and a dove. The detail is amazing.

BORRADO

There is more tension than ever
between the Comanche and Apache.

Don Pedro hands the carvings to Borrado.

DON PEDRO

The king demands that they find a
way to have peace.

BORRADO

I understand but I am sure they are
not concerned with what the king
wants.

DON PEDRO

It must happen. The king doesn't
want a war like they had in Cortez's
time.

BORRADO

Why is he so concerned?

Don Pedro turns away from Borrado.

DON PEDRO

We are not as strong as we once were.
A battle with the Comanche could
quickly become a fight we can't win.

The sound of Natives and Mestizos arguing becomes loud enough to be heard by Don Pedro and Borrado.

DON PEDRO

Listen to that. They're complaining
because San Antonio de Valero is
becoming too crowded.

BORRADO

The tension has gotten worse since word got out that more settlers will be coming from the East.

DON PEDRO

It's not only the Comanche and Apache, the king demands cooperation from the citizens of New Spain as well.

Borrado goes to the window. He watches them argue.

BORRADO

That could prove to be the greatest challenge.

DON PEDRO

We leave tomorrow to secularize the mission and evacuate Nacogdoches.

BORRADO

Why are they doing this?

DON PEDRO

Those remote outposts have become less important since France ceded Louisiana to Spain.

EXT. - SAN ANTONIO STREET - DAY

The San Antonio sun and the thick humidity makes the atmosphere feel like a sauna. Don Pedro wipes the sweat from his brow as he walks with Manuelito.

DON PEDRO

I told you from time to time I would have to leave. This is one of those times.

MANUELITO

Where are you going?

DON PEDRO

I must go to Nacogdoches to bring some people back so they will be safe. Father Solis will watch you.

MANUELITO

I'm sixteen. I don't need someone to watch over me.

Don Pedro faces Manuelito.

DON PEDRO

You're a fine young man and you have done great with your studies, I don't want to take that away from you.

MANUELITO

I should go with you.

Don Pedro hears the teacher ringing the school bell.

DON PEDRO

We will have time to make our own adventures. The only thing you need to worry about is school.

The school bell rings again.

DON PEDRO

I will be back in less than two months. Study hard Manuelito, learn as much as you can. I love you.

MANUELITO

Yes Papa, I love you too.

EXT. SAN ANTONIO - MAIN PLAZA - DAY

The group heading to Nacogdoches gathers at the plaza. Borrado, who will be their guide, is riding beside Don Pedro. Directly behind them are Don Pedro's PERSONAL GUARDS.

The guards wear a white coat with a blue collar and cuffs, a waistcoat, and breeches with white metal buttons.

Behind them, eight fully armed LANCERS are holding their shields. They are the viceroy's strongest soldiers.

Cristobal and Rodrigo, with four other VAQUEROS, bring up the rear. Nine mules are loaded with supplies.

Don Pedro gives the signal then some of the finest men in all of New Spain begin their journey.

EXT. THE ROAD TO NACOGDOCHES - DAY

The horses bully their way across the sandy soil. The pecan and live oak trees dominate the landscape. The ravines are lined with mesquite trees.

DON PEDRO

Eighteen men riding fine horses with no wagons and a few mules. It will be quite different returning home.

Don Pedro enters into his diary every plant and animal he sees.

BORRADO

Though they are not seen, they are here.

DON PEDRO

I agree. I have felt eyes on my back all day.

EXT. GUADALUPE RIVER - DAY

A steep bank rises at the river's edge. The river is higher than expected but the island in the middle is still visible.

The horses and mules struggle to reach the island. The power of the water is impressive. One of the mules barely makes it.

EXT. NEAR THE COLORADO RIVER - DAY

Borrado leads the way alongside Don Pedro.

BORRADO

To your left are the hills and to your right is the Blackland Prairie. We'll travel due east tomorrow.

Don Pedro points out a GROUP OF NATIVES to their north. They are chasing a large herd of deer.

Their short bows indicate they are a Comanche band but they are too far away for Don Pedro to determine which one.

EXT. BLACKLAND PRAIRIE - DAY

The hills continue to level out until the caravan is traveling across a perfectly flat plain.

DON PEDRO

I can't shake this feeling of being watched. Are we being followed?

BORRADO

Since we left. They are only curious but we are outnumbered. Many want to see the Stone Shaper.

DON PEDRO

Cristobal said the Comanche have started to wear armor that our muskets can't penetrate. Is that true?

BORRADO

My people learn fast. Just as they have mastered the pony, they will master the weapons as well.

The company finds an appropriate place to set up camp.

Cristobal walks over to Don Pedro.

CRISTOBAL

Have you seen them? What do you think they want?

DON PEDRO

They just want to make sure we are safe.

Cristobal looks at Don Pedro as if he was insane then both of them nervously laugh.

THE NEXT MORNING

Don Pedro wakes to find Borrado sitting cross-legged on the ground staring across the vast plains.

Don Pedro sits down next to him.

BORRADO

Our camp was visited last night. We could all be dead. I must become more aware.

DON PEDRO

Hey remember, they only want to meet the Stone Shaper.

The caravan lines up. The personal guards and lancers maintain their discipline. With perfect spacing, they head out two-by-two across the Blackland Prairie.

The rich dark-green grass dominates the landscape. The buffalo and deer graze side-by-side.

Two vaqueros leave the group to collect some deer meat.

Long before they reach the grove, Don Pedro takes a deep breath then smiles with pleasure at the unfamiliar scent.

Don Pedro's head is on a swivel as he rapidly looks in every direction. He turns to Borrado.

DON PEDRO

I still feel like we are being watched. It has to be my imagination because there is nowhere to hide.

EXT. LOST PINES GROVE - DAY

Don Pedro strains to see the tops of the tall and perfectly straight loblolly pines.

The rays from the sun completely disappear as they reach the deepest part of the forest. Borrado looks as deeply as he can into the thick woods.

BORRADO

An entire band of Natives could remain unseen in these trees. Many stories have been told about this place.

Don Pedro watches an armadillo running alongside the team. He points the animal out to Cristobal.

DON PEDRO

When I see such strange creatures, it makes me realize that anything is possible in this New World.

CRISTOBAL

Many creatures are stranger than that one and some are dangerous.

EXT. PINEY WOODS - DAY

Borrado leads the company into the vast forest riding side-by-side with Don Pedro.

BORRADO

You haven't said a word all day. Are you not feeling well?

DON PEDRO

It has been five years since I have been with Rosa.

BORRADO

That is a long time to be without the one you love.

DON PEDRO

I have imagined a thousand different versions of what our reunion will be like.

Don Pedro stops his horse to admire the trees.

DON PEDRO

These trees would be much easier to work with than the mesquite or live oak.

BORRADO

This is only the beginning. Soon the whole world will be trees.

Borrado leads the caravan to a spring-fed creek. They decide to set up camp. Everyone fills their empty containers with the crystal clear water.

Borrado gestures for Don Pedro to follow him.

Borrado takes Don Pedro deep into the forest. He puts a finger to his lips signaling "quiet" then points at a pair of ivory-billed woodpeckers more than two feet long.

The bird's pure white bills stand out against their bluish-black feathers.

BORRADO

(whispering)

The one with the red crown is the male. When very young he finds a companion.

DON PEDRO

They are beautiful.

BORRADO

If she accepts him, they stay together for life. That couple will live longer than most men.

The birds sit in their nest tapping their bills which looks like they are kissing.

BORRADO

True love lasts forever. Rosa's love will endure. She'll be here when the time is right.

Don Pedro watches the pair then smiles. He turns to Borrado.

DON PEDRO

Thank you, Borrado. You are a true friend.

Borrado and Don Pedro quietly head back to camp.

Don Pedro hears a wail coming from deep inside the forest. It sounds human but not quite. He notices the vaqueros acting nervous.

Cristobal comes over to Don Pedro.

CRISTOBAL

Two of my men wish to leave now. They believe it is not safe here.

DON PEDRO

We will stay here. A sound in the distance will not force us to travel at night.

THE NEXT MORNING

The caravan quickly gathers camp at sunrise. The forest has become so dense and the trees are so tall that hardly any sun reaches the ground.

It becomes difficult to find a path through the forest. Swamps begin to appear more frequently. Not one drop of rain has fallen and the swamp water is not fit to drink.

Cristobal points out the alligators lying on the edge of the stagnant water. They are nine feet long and have their mouth open displaying their huge knife-like teeth.

DON PEDRO

If any creature is a spawn of Satan these lizards are definitely one.

EXT. CADDO VILLAGE - DAY

The CADDO CHIEF greets Don Pedro.

CADDO CHIEF

Welcome. Please allow us to share our food with you.

DON PEDRO

We will gratefully accept your offer and we are honored by your generosity.

The Caddo Chief leads Don Pedro and the rest of the company to a group of large huts divided into rooms by woven grass curtains.

The band of Natives welcome the company into their village with open arms.

INT. CADDO DINING HUT - DAY

The Caddo women serve the group corn and beans from their fields along with succulent deer meat. When every plate is filled to overflowing, the chief gets everyone's attention.

CADDO CHIEF

On your way East, you will pass by the enormous burial mounds west of the Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

DON PEDRO

Burial mounds?

CADDO CHIEF

The mounds were built by our ancestors long ago. Walk lightly in their presence.

DON PEDRO

You have my word.

The Caddo Chief looks into Don Pedro's eyes.

CADDO CHIEF

The land is protected. Take time to absorb the spirit. You will be safe there. Show them respect.

The travelers finish their meal then say their good-byes to the Caddo people.

EXT. CADDO MOUNDS - NIGHT

At nightfall, the group enters the land of the ancient burial mounds. Don Pedro decides the company should make their camp in the middle of the three largest mounds.

Don Pedro sits beside Borrado as they watch the small smoldering fire in the center of their camp.

DON PEDRO

I'm convinced those people were the friendliest Natives in all of New Spain.

BORRADO

Their spirit is high and their wisdom is great. It comes from a thousand years of occupying this land.

THE FOLLOWING DAY

Everyone wakes with great anticipation. The company packs up their things then heads east. They are only a few hours away from Nacogdoches.

Cristobal brings his horse beside Don Pedro.

CRISTOBAL

Can't wait to see some fellow Spaniards. The ones who ride with us have heard all my stories.

EXT. VILLAGE OF NACOGDOCHES - DAY

The company cautiously enters the town. The caravan is greeted by suspicious glances. The structures and fences appear to have been repaired and rebuilt many times.

The mayor of Nacogdoches, ANTONIO ESQUIVEL, 38, rides toward Don Pedro.

ESQUIVEL

I'm the mayor of this village. My name is Antonio Esquivel. If you seek supplies we have none.

DON PEDRO

We have enough for our own. My name is Don Pedro. I lead this group.

ESQUIVEL

It would be best for everyone if you just continue through town. There's no reason to stop here.

DON PEDRO

I'm here to evacuate your people to San Antonio and secularize the mission in Las Adeas.

Esquivel looks away from Don Pedro. He watches the villagers slowly walk down the street.

ESQUIVEL

Attend to the mission as you like but I can speak for my people, they have no desire to go anywhere.

DON PEDRO

I'm afraid they have no choice. I am to arrest any who fail to cooperate.

Esquivel takes a long look into Don Pedro's eyes.

DON PEDRO

Please have everyone assemble in the Main Plaza.

Esquivel rides away.

Borrado approaches Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO

We must leave in five days. I want an account of every person and every piece of equipment.

EXT. NACOGDOCHES MAIN PLAZA - DAY

Esquivel and the villagers wait to receive instructions.

Don Pedro stops before entering the plaza then appears to be counting as he looks over the enormous crowd. He dismounts then stands in front of the solemn faces.

DON PEDRO

I have been sent here by the viceroy. My orders are to escort you to San Antonio. Every person must leave.

Jeers and protests come from the villagers.

DON PEDRO

Everything you want you must take because you will not be coming back.

Murmurs of dissent are heard coming from the towns people.

ESQUIVEL

We will go with you but only because we have no choice. How much time do we have to prepare?

DON PEDRO

Five days. You will all be safe in San Antonio. The king's lancers and my associates will assist you.

More complaints come from the group as they meander back to their homes.

Don Pedro watches them leave then mounts his horse as Borrado arrives.

BORRADO

We were told there would be two hundred. There's more than five hundred.

DON PEDRO

I know. We were also told they wanted to leave.

BORRADO

We only have supplies for two hundred and they are very meager.

DON PEDRO

Make an account of everything they bring. I must secularize the Las Adeas Mission.

Don Pedro walks over to two lancers.

DON PEDRO

Come with me in case I need help bringing anyone back.

EXT. LAS ADEAS - DAY

Don Pedro and the two lancers arrive at the abandoned Las Adeas mission. They inspect the area making sure no one is there.

Don Pedro finds four large stones then kneels down. He throws each stone in the direction of the four winds then bows his head.

DON PEDRO

Heavenly Father, from this edifice I now remove your grace. I beg you to accept the apologies of the king.

Don Pedro makes the sign of the cross and the secularization is complete.

EXT. NACOGDOCHES - MAIN PLAZA - DAY

Don Pedro looks across the multitude. He notices a few villagers missing but there are still more than five hundred souls and not one appears happy.

Don Pedro sees some of the lancers approaching with their muskets at the backs of the townspeople who refused to leave.

Piles of discarded furniture line the outside of the plaza. Villagers scour through the heaps hoping they have the room for some newly found treasure.

The livestock is scattered. The corn that's ready for harvest is left to die in the fields. A few men bury cannons, balls, and ammunition that can't be transported.

Half of the townspeople are on horses. The other half are traveling on foot.

Esquivel with a humble look and a respectful posture advances toward Don Pedro.

ESQUIVEL

By the mercy of God, please let my mother, son, and sister-in-law stay at my ranch, La Leona.

DON PEDRO

Everyone must come with me to San Antonio.

ESQUIVEL

They and twenty-one others are too sick to travel and surely they will die.

DON PEDRO

Very well.

Don Pedro looks at the angry, scared, and confused throng. Many of the settlers are seriously ill.

Don Pedro mounts his horse. He waits for some to complete their last minute tasks then gives the signal.

The multitude moves out.

EXT. CADDO VILLAGE - DAY

As the caravan passes by, several young warriors decide to tag along for part of the trip. The Natives show off the agility and swiftness of their horses.

The Caddo warriors have long colorful blankets draped across their right shoulders. Some hang upside down by one leg as they hit targets with their arrows.

EXT. TRINITY RIVER CROSSING - DAY

The caravan stops at the bank. The settlers spread out blankets then get some much needed rest.

Ladies pass out jerky and fruit.

Cristobal is standing on the bank with Don Pedro. They are joined by Borrado.

BORRADO

Our first obstacle.

CRISTOBAL

Could be worse. The drought has made the crossing less formidable.

DON PEDRO

It looks difficult. These people are farmers and weavers. They are not accustomed to this sort of thing.

BORRADO

I have a plan.

Esquivel walks toward them with a worried look on his face.

ESQUIVEL

(to Don Pedro)

So many are sick and now they need to cross this. This disease has already taken two women from us.

BORRADO

And one of our lancers. Like this river, the disease will run its course. Let your people rest.

Esquivel goes back to the villagers.

Borrado takes a closer look at the river.

Cristobal watches Esquivel until he's out of sight.

CRISTOBAL

This group is weak. They are not prepared for a journey like this.

DON PEDRO

If you had to guess. How many do you think will make it to San Antonio?

The warriors stop their impressive antics then group together.

Don Pedro watches as one gives a signal then they all gallop back to their village at full speed.

CRISTOBAL

They face the sickness, the drought, many dangerous rivers...

Don Pedro watches the last warrior speed away then turns to Cristobal.

DON PEDRO
And the Comanche.

CRISTOBAL
Yes. They must avoid the Comanche.

Cristobal's eyes show sadness as he looks silently into Don Pedro's worried eyes.

Borrado returns.

BORRADO
There are better ways but some skill
would be required. With this plan
they only need to walk.

DON PEDRO
What do you have in mind?

BORRADO
Three lines will cross together.
The vaqueros will lead the mules and
the oxen. They will be upstream.

Borrado stoops down then draws three parallel lines in the sand. He points to the middle one.

BORRADO
Downstream from them, the men from
the village will lead the horses.
The women and children will be here.

Borrado points to the third line.

DON PEDRO
Let everyone rest a little longer
then explain the plan to them. We'll
set up camp on the other side.

LATER

The mules and oxen stay on their feet as they slide into the water. The horses are in the middle. The women and children are downstream from them.

The women lead the cattle. The children hold smaller animals.

As the line, led by Don Pedro and Borrado, reaches the other bank, an ox slips.

The mule behind it jumps in panic then collides with the line of horses.

A lancer's horse rears its front legs then falls onto the food wagon.

The wagon breaks free which forces two boys, Jared, 14, and his brother, Kenny, 11, into the full force of the current. They disappear into the rushing water.

Don Pedro takes off after the boys before anyone moves.

Cristobal tosses his lariat.

Don Pedro grabs it then spurs his horse. He sprints along the river's bank then catches a glimpse of the two boys struggling to keep their heads above water.

Don Pedro cracks the reins then gets ahead of the boys. He throws the rope across the creek.

Jared catches it.

Kenny holds onto his brother with all of his might.

Don Pedro pulls the two of them to the bank. The boys shiver from the cold and the fright as Don Pedro helps them on his horse.

The boys run to their mother.

KATERINA LOPEZ, 36, holds them in her arms.

In disbelief, the father, Jose Lopez, 40, looks at Don Pedro.

JOSE LOPEZ

You have performed a miracle today.
We will forever be grateful.

The rest of the group makes it across the Trinity River safely.

The villagers gather together then say a prayer of thanks.

Esquivel discovers they've lost most of their cattle in the chaos.

BORRADO

(to Don Pedro)

These settlers are not prepared for this. We may lose some to more than the disease.

DON PEDRO

When one of their souls leaves this earth, I feel part of mine goes with them.

BORRADO

You're responsibility is great and your task is difficult. A man has only so much soul to give.

DON PEDRO

We must protect them. Help me to still possess at least a small bit of my soul when we return.

EXT. BRAZOS RIVER CROSSING - DAY

In a single file line the villagers easily wade to the opposite bank. The caravan stretches from bank to bank.

Cristobal is at the end of the line with the other vaqueros.

The clouds increase then quickly darken. Large drops fall from the sky. The rain becomes a downpour.

Cristobal kicks his horse. He gallops at full speed to the bank.

CRISTOBAL

Get out of the water. Get out of the water now!

The settlers are stunned. They just stand there.

CRISTOBAL

Move, now! The water's coming!

The villagers scramble to both banks as the others help them out of the river.

A low-pitched rumbling grows louder. The sound of branches breaking gets closer.

The last settler reaches the bank as a wall of water bears down on them.

The creek they could easily wade across has become a torrential river and most of the company is still on the other side with the animals and supplies.

Cristobal examines the river then turns to the group.

CRISTOBAL

We must go into the forest and cut
down enough trees to create a raft.

Cristobal shows with his hands how wide the logs must be to support the supplies.

Some of the men grab an ax. They quickly produce the logs that are needed.

The vaqueros tie the logs together with rope.

Cristobal attaches two wide boards from a wagon to the bottom of the raft. As he carefully sets them at the right angle, he sees Don Pedro watching him.

CRISTOBAL

(to Don Pedro)

The boards make this possible.

Cristobal and Rodrigo tie their ropes to one side of the raft. With great skill, they manage to get the rope to the other side.

Two of the vaqueros tie their ropes to the other end of the barge then the remaining two jump in the creek. They hang on to opposite sides of the raft.

The vaqueros work together to keep the raft stable as the settlers fill it with their supplies.

With the raft loaded, the vaqueros let out their rope as Rodrigo and Cristobal pull in their's. The two in the water keep the raft steady as it traverses the river.

The vaqueros pull the craft back with the ropes then repeat the process until all of the supplies are taken over the Brazos.

Some men and women with horses get across. The remaining villagers are last. They make it to the bank with the other animals.

EXT. BLACKLAND PRAIRIE - DAY

As the caravan leaves the piney woods, the rain stops. The landscape changes to an endless level field of luscious grass broken only by a small grove of chestnut trees.

An enormous herd of deer graze undisturbed by the convoy. Flocks of small birds land on the mules and oxen to take advantage of the free ride.

Large turkeys hunt and peck seeds and grass. Several black bears are seen in the distance.

Don Pedro rides with Borrado far ahead of the others. Borrado points out a herd of wild cattle unceasingly eating the fresh grass.

BORRADO

A few cattle escaped from your people almost two hundred years ago. Now they out-number the buffalo.

DON PEDRO

This looks like a great place to make camp and replenish our food supply. Let everyone know.

BORRADO

I will.

DON PEDRO

That feeling's back. Stronger than ever. I know we're being followed.

Borrado gives Don Pedro a knowing look then heads toward the group.

The vaqueros immediately go after the cattle. They gallop to the herd causing them to stampede.

Each vaquero singles out a slower cow then chases it until it becomes so fatigued only one shot from their musket is required to kill it.

The vaqueros carve out what they need then leave the rest to the wolves. They make sure to get some bear meat as well.

The women and children gather wild onions and chestnuts as the men set up camp.

Don Pedro pulls his horse alongside Cristobal.

DON PEDRO

We're being watched. I think it's the Comanche.

CRISTOBAL

I've seen them but to shout about it would only cause panic.

DON PEDRO

I want four on guard all night. Make a schedule for the lancers and vaqueros to watch in shifts.

EXT. EDGE OF HILL COUNTRY - DAY

The land slowly changes from a flat plain to gently rolling hills.

Borrado rides over to Don Pedro.

BORRADO

Our exodus is nearly over. The casualties were low and it seems the villagers are in good spirit.

DON PEDRO

The abundance of wildlife easily provided plenty of sustenance for all.

BORRADO

They will replace the missing cattle in time and the disease has left us.

DON PEDRO

Eleven days to get to Nacogdoches and two months to return. It has been an eventful journey.

Out of nowhere, a hundred Comanche appear in the distance. They arrange themselves across the caravans path.

Don Pedro stops the group.

The Natives move toward them until they are only fifty yards away.

The Nacogdoches settlers quickly arm themselves then mount their horses. They assemble in a well-practiced formation. Each side has an equal number of capable fighters.

Men on both sides aim at their targets. Musket shots ring out and the first casualties of the battle occur.

The chief emerges from the band and rides at full speed toward the settlers. He's holding an oversized shield made from buffalo hide stretched tautly across a wooden frame.

The settlers open fire and the musket balls harmlessly ricochet off the chief's shield.

As the villagers reload, the rest of the warriors gallop toward the group firing their weapons. One settler is shot and falls off his horse.

Another member of the company goes down with several arrows embedded in his chest. A lancer has his horse collapse from under him.

Don Pedro rides over to him then grabs his hand. He pulls the lancer onto his steed.

A horse drops from below a vaquero.

Cristobal lifts him onto his horse.

A Comanche throws a spear which passes through the vaquero's body seriously injuring Cristobal.

Cristobal allows the now lifeless body to plummet from his horse.

Another villager is killed by an arrow.

Rodrigo finds the archer then shoots him right between his eyes.

The battle devolves into hand-to-hand combat which gives the settlers the advantage.

Borrado locates the chief then rides to confront him. He jumps from his horse and takes the chief to the ground. With marvelous skill, he ends the Comanche chief's life.

The Natives retreat when they realize their leader is dead.

The battle is over.

Don Pedro counts twenty-one savages lying dead on the prairie. Five men in his company are killed. Many of the villagers are seriously injured.

Cristobal approaches Don Pedro.

CRISTOBAL
(short of breath)
They came to steal the horses but
they got none. Only killed two.

DON PEDRO
Have one of the women attend to your
wound. You are losing a lot of blood.

The village gathers together to bandage the wounded and bury the dead.

EXT. GUADALUPE RIVER - DAY

The caravan must use the raft controlled by the vaqueros to cross the river. Everyone makes it across. Antonio Esquivel humbly approaches Don Pedro.

ESQUIVEL

There's a garrison of Spanish soldiers here. Many of my people are pleading with me to allow them to stay.

DON PEDRO

We are so close.

ESQUIVEL

They can't bear to take another step. Don Pedro you have made many decisions that have benefited us all.

DON PEDRO

I have done my best but it is only God's grace that got us here.

Esquivel falls to his knees.

ESQUIVEL

Please, Don Pedro. They are exhausted. The soldiers will protect them and see to their needs.

DON PEDRO

Very well. I will inform the soldiers.

EXT. SAN ANTONIO - DAY

Manuelito is the first to see his father's company drag into town. Four hundred sixty-seven exhausted souls enter the plaza.

Thirty of the settlers are severely wounded. They add to San Antonio's defense with a few four-pound cannons and fifteen boxes of ammunition.

Manuelito runs into Don Pedro's arms.

MANUELITO

Papa. I've missed you so much. I was so worried. You have been gone so long.

DON PEDRO

We had some delays but it was nothing I couldn't handle.

MANUELITO

I've learned so much. I love the new school.

Don Pedro lovingly pats Manuelito on the head.

DON PEDRO

Now run along. I have to take care of some business. Tonight, you'll tell me all that I have missed.

MANUELITO

Please hurry, Papa. So much has happened while you were gone.

DON PEDRO

This will take very little time.

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The governor sits in his chair and listens intently as Don Pedro stands in front of his desk.

DON PEDRO

Thirty died along the trip. Each had a proper burial. The details are in my log.

The governor can see the anguish in Don Pedro's face. He embraces Don Pedro then looks into his eyes.

GOVERNOR VICENCIO

You've done very well. Many more would've been lost in the care of less capable hands.

Don Pedro turns away from the governor.

DON PEDRO

They did not want to come.

GOVERNOR VICENCIO

We'll need them to defeat the Comanche. They weren't protected out there. Our walls are stronger.

DON PEDRO

These hands feel stained with their blood. I'm not sure we should have forced them to leave.

GOVERNOR VICENCIO

They're much safer here. Go get some rest, we can figure all of this out later.

INT. DON PEDRO'S HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Don Pedro and Manuelito sit at the table.

MANUELITO

Papa. Have you noticed the changes
I've made while you were gone?

Don Pedro can barely keep his eyes open. He looks around
the room.

DON PEDRO

It is very clean. I have never seen
such decorations.

Don Pedro can see the pride in Manuelito's eyes.

DON PEDRO

I love it. I have missed you so
much...

Don Pedro begins to weep.

Manuelito takes him by the hand then escorts his father out
of the room.

BEDROOM

Manuelito helps his father lay down in his bed then makes
him comfortable.

Manuelito sits in a chair next to the bed.

MANUELITO

Right after you left, Papa, we were
attacked again by the Comanche.

Manuelito wipes Don Pedro's face with a handkerchief.

MANUELITO

Everyone said they wished you were
here. They finally left...

Manuelito hears snoring then sees that Don Pedro has already
fallen asleep. He gives his father a kiss on the cheek.

MANUELITO

I love you, Papa.

EXT. SAN JOSE PLAZA - DAY

The seventeen seventy-six mayor of San Antonio, Vicente
Álvarez Travieso, 71, stands in front of the chapel.

Don Pedro walks over to the mayor.

DON PEDRO

It is nearly done.

Travieso turns around.

TRAVIESO

It's beautiful. We will have our first mass this Sunday. It will be a special day.

DON PEDRO

I've been told the king has Made San Antonio the provincial capital of Tejas.

TRAVIESO

Yes. The king knows you've transformed the San Jose y San Miguel de Aguayo mission into a fortress.

DON PEDRO

Protection was my priority. I needed to create a safe space for Rosa. She'll be here soon.

Don Pedro and Travieso walk in front of the two-story granary.

TRAVIESO

The naves are breathtaking. They are truly a work of art.

DON PEDRO

I have done my best. I hope it is acceptable.

TRAVIESO

Such a humble man. You have overseen the construction of almost every building in town.

DON PEDRO

I am most proud that San Jose is completely self-sufficient and the best defense against a siege.

The mayor studies the watchtowers guarding the mission.

TRAVIESO

The Comanche have learned they can't breach these walls. We are fortunate that God sent you here.

DON PEDRO

Have you heard? The British colonies have issued a declaration of independence.

TRAVIESO

They are involved in a full scale war but that is very far away. It is of no concern.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING

Don Pedro is in the plaza. The heat and humidity forces him to remove his shirt. He ties it around his waist and works on finishing the chapel.

Cristobal enters the plaza with his leather tube strapped to his body. He rides directly to Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO

You must have a delivery. Is it a letter from Rosa?

Cristobal drops the reigns and silently dismounts. His feet drag as he walks toward Don Pedro.

Cristobal slowly takes the tube from around his back with a grim look on his face. Don Pedro watches as Cristobal drops his head then removes a letter.

Don Pedro's smile is replaced with a look of concern.

DON PEDRO

What?

Don Pedro looks into Cristobal's eyes and the expression on his face screams "I'm sorry". He shivers from the chill that runs down his spine then takes the note.

Don Pedro hesitates for a moment then breaks the seal. He looks back at Cristobal's sullen face.

Reluctantly, Don Pedro unrolls the paper.

Don Pedro's knees go weak and he can no longer support his weight. He begins to sob.

Cristobal places his hand on Don Pedro's shoulder.

Don Pedro only has the strength to slightly crush the letter and drop it. He manages to lift one heavy leg but remains on one knee.

The Natives in the plaza see the drama unfolding then stop working. They all look at Don Pedro with love and concern.

Father Solis walks into the plaza then notices this normally busy place is completely silent. He sees Don Pedro then drops his tools.

Father Solis runs to Don Pedro then gently helps him to his feet. He embraces him.

FATHER SOLIS

What is it? What is it? Whatever
it is our grace is with us. Our
Father will get us out of this.

Father Solis recites a short prayer.

FATHER SOLIS

Don Pedro, what happened?

DON PEDRO

(weakly)
The ship. Rosa, my sweet Rosa.

The silence in the plaza is only disturbed by Don Pedro's quiet cries.

INT. DON PEDRO'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

The sun is beginning to rise when Manuelito hears a knock on the door. He opens it with a frying pan in his hand. Father Solis is standing there.

MANUELITO

Father Solis, welcome. I'm making
breakfast. You hungry?

FATHER SOLIS

No, thank you. I must talk to your
father.

Father Solis walks through the door then through the kitchen.

FATHER SOLIS

I know, I know. He's sleeping.

BEDROOM

Father Solis noisily enters. He drags a chair to the bed with no effort to keep quiet then sits down.

FATHER SOLIS

Don Pedro, you must get up now.

Father Solis hears Don Pedro groan then watches him roll over.

FATHER SOLIS

Pedro, only a mission from God would get me to enter this pigsty.

Don Pedro looks at the Fray. He doesn't look well. His head falls back on the pillow.

Father Solis gets out of his chair. He pulls the blanket off of Don Pedro.

FATHER SOLIS

And look, you're already dressed. That's convenient. Get up. I have a problem.

Don Pedro slowly sits up.

FATHER SOLIS

It's been a year and you're still not yourself.

DON PEDRO

I am an empty man. Every bit of joy has been drained from my life.

FATHER SOLIS

I've heard it before. The Natives told me they can't remember the last time you spoke to one of them.

DON PEDRO

Has Manuelito made breakfast?

Father Solis has heard enough. He lifts Don Pedro to his feet.

FATHER SOLIS

You have forced Manuelito to nurse you through this terrible depression. This cannot continue any longer.

EXT. SAN JOSE PLAZA - DAY

Father Solis and Don Pedro stand in front of a window on the outside of the chapel. Father Solis takes a few steps back and studies the facade.

FATHER SOLIS

This is my problem. My concern is for the unbaptized Natives.

DON PEDRO

I have no time to perform baptisms.
I'm not a missionary.

FATHER SOLIS

I would like to share the beauty you
have created inside with the Natives
who are waiting outside.

DON PEDRO

Why are we staring at the sacristy
window?

Juanita, 11, shyly approaches Don Pedro.

JUANITA

I know you're still sad. I was
unhappy for a long time when my mother
died. I got better. You will too.

Juanita hands him a rose.

JUANITA

This is for Rosa.

FATHER SOLIS

Everyone knows Rosa though they have
never seen her. How many know Christ
by your words? Come with me.

Father Solis leads Don Pedro through the plaza. It is filled
with activity. The Natives look at Don Pedro with love and
sadness as they pass.

FATHER SOLIS

I know you must design, survey, and
organize. It takes all of your time.

Father Solis points at the walls.

FATHER SOLIS

As soon as you returned, you
immediately designed and built the
best walls in all of New Spain.

Two women, Julia and Evelyn, walk past.

EVELYN

So sorry about Rosa.

FATHER SOLIS

They all know her name. You're a
better missionary than you give
yourself credit for.

Father Solis turns back to the walls.

FATHER SOLIS

These walls forced the Comanche to give up. You deserve all of the credit. You made it happen.

Father Solis and Don Pedro walk back to the window.

FATHER SOLIS

Everyone here has lost a loved one but they returned to their lives. It's time you return to yours.

DON PEDRO

I can't, Father. I can't forget about Rosa. It's all I think about.

FATHER SOLIS

I accept your confession. I will determine your penance.

DON PEDRO

Confession?

Father Solis and Don Pedro get back to the window.

FATHER SOLIS

I don't want you to forget her. You need to do something to make sure no one fails to remember her, ever.

DON PEDRO

How could I do that? No one has even seen her.

FATHER SOLIS

You are an artist. You create buildings but you could do so much more. Create something for her.

Father Solis places both hands on Don Pedro's shoulders.

FATHER SOLIS

It's what you were born to do. Why are you here, Don Pedro? How did you become a Don?

DON PEDRO

I was the best sculptor in all of Spain. I have been trained in...

FATHER SOLIS

A sculptor. Other than those stone animals what have you sculpted?

DON PEDRO
I have no time for decorations.

Father Montez claps his hands.

FATHER SOLIS
I got it.

DON PEDRO
What?

FATHER SOLIS
Your penance for giving all of your thoughts to Rosa when you should have been worshiping Christ.

Don Pedro appears completely confused.

FATHER SOLIS
You must decorate this church unto the Lord.

Don Pedro stares at the window. He looks over the whole facade then smiles for the first time in a while.

DON PEDRO
All of it?

FATHER SOLIS
I don't know if you are aware but the unbaptized Natives have to watch the mass through this window.

DON PEDRO
Right. They can't enter the church unless they are baptized.

FATHER SOLIS
I would start here. Oh, part of the penance is that you must find a name for the window.

Don Pedro slowly stands up straighter then stares at the fenestra.

DON PEDRO
(to himself)
I can make this a masterpiece.

Don Pedro looks back at Father Solis with a spark in his eyes that has been missing for so long. He hugs the Fray then lifts him off the ground.

DON PEDRO
I accept the penance. Thank you,
Father.

Don Pedro puts Father Solis down then looks into his eyes.

DON PEDRO
Thank you, my friend.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING

Don Pedro sits and stares at the window with his tools beside him.

Father Solis walks over.

FATHER SOLIS
Is there something wrong?

DON PEDRO
Father, how do you begin a
masterpiece?

FATHER SOLIS
I can't see what you do but show us
what's in that stone. Identify the
gem within the rock.

DON PEDRO
All I can see is sadness. Loneliness.
That is not the tribute I want to
leave for Rosa.

The Father stares at the window. He keeps his back to Don Pedro.

FATHER SOLIS
The unbaptized Natives watch mass
through this window with hope and
patience. Like I watch my flowers.

Father Solis turns back to Don Pedro.

FATHER SOLIS
Every winter I wait with hope that
the flowers will be as beautiful as
the year before.

Don Pedro moves next to Father Solis. They both stare at the window.

FATHER SOLIS

I have to be patient because only
God controls the seasons. Maybe
flowers. You must decide what kind.

Don Pedro immediately begins sketching in his notebook with his eyes focused on the window. He looks for every detail then pauses.

DON PEDRO

(to himself)

I will sculpt something as great as
my love for Rosa.

EXT. THE ROSE WINDOW - DAY (MONTAGE)

- Don Pedro measures the stone around the window.
- Don Pedro strikes his chisel with all of his might.
- Don Pedro works on the details with the precision of a watchmaker.
- Don Pedro carves the sculpture in the pouring rain.
- Manuelito brings a tray of food to Don Pedro. He refuses it and continues to sculpt his masterpiece.
- Don Pedro sleeps on the ground below the window.
- Don Pedro works on the sculpture. His clothes are filthy and hang from his thinner body.

END MONTAGE

EXT. ROSE WINDOW - DAY

Don Pedro carefully strikes his chisel one last time. He steps away from the window. The most extraordinary creation is revealed.

DON PEDRO

(to himself)

This will forever be known as Rosa's
Window.

Cristobal walks over then stands beside Don Pedro.

CRISTOBAL

That's truly amazing. I don't believe
I've seen a finer sculpture anywhere
in the world.

DON PEDRO
It's my finest work.

CRISTOBAL
You've been working on this for almost
a year. Do you remember the promise
you made to Arocha?

DON PEDRO
Yes, I do.

Don Pedro rubs a small part of the sculpture with sandpaper.

CRISTOBAL
You do know that it's tomorrow, right?

DON PEDRO
He's getting married tomorrow? What
month is it?

CRISTOBAL
It's May. We are in the month of
May now. Do you know the year is
seventeen seventy-seven?

DON PEDRO
May? Where has the time gone? I've
been so focused on my work. Of
course, I'll be there.

Cristobal pats Don Pedro on his back.

CRISTOBAL
There will be many beautiful women
there and most are single.

DON PEDRO
I have no interest in that.

CRISTOBAL
It's been eleven years since you
have had a long conversation with a
woman.

DON PEDRO
I'll be at the wedding. Right now,
I need to polish Rosa's Window.

INT. SAN ANTONIO DE VALERO - NIGHT

Don Pedro, wearing his best clothes and looking extremely handsome, attends the wedding. His face is glowing as he stands with Cristobal.

Cristobal slaps Don Pedro on his shoulder.

CRISTOBAL

Look at you, I think the old Don Pedro is back.

DON PEDRO

Not the old, my friend, the new Don Pedro is here.

CRISTOBAL

You have created a fitting tribute to Rosa.

DON PEDRO

And the unbaptized Natives have a beautiful window to look through as they watch the mass.

The wedding is quite magnificent. Don Pedro watches as SIMON AROCHA, 28, and ANITA IGNACIA, 21, say their vows at the altar.

Simon Arocha opens a box filled with coins. He pours the coins into Anita's hands.

Anita lets the coins slip through her fingers.

Don Pedro notices MARÍA HENRIQUEZ and her sister wearing white linen shirts with elbow-length sleeves and ankle-length petticoats. María is in red and her sister wears black.

The young women walk by Don Pedro. María is so beautiful he can't help but stare.

María and Don Pedro lock eyes for a moment. His face turns slightly red from the embarrassment then he gets Cristobal's attention.

DON PEDRO

Who is that in the red dress?

CRISTOBAL

That's María Henriquez. She's the daughter of one of the wealthy Isleños who just recently arrived.

Cristobal looks into Don Pedro's eyes.

CRISTOBAL

Is that some interest I see in there?

DON PEDRO

Eleven years is a long time.

Cristobal immediately walks over to María.

Don Pedro watches Cristobal say something to María then they both laugh.

Cristobal points at Don Pedro.

María looks directly into Don Pedro's eyes.

Cristobal sees Don Pedro nearly drop his drink and holds back a laugh.

Cristobal and María walk toward Don Pedro.

CRISTOBAL

María Henriquez this is Don Pedro.
Don Pedro this is María Henriquez.

Cristobal disappears.

EXT. ROSA'S WINDOW - DAY

The sun is beginning to rise.

Cristobal goes to see Don Pedro. He walks over to a nearby Native.

CRISTOBAL

Have you seen Don Pedro?

NATIVE

No, it's odd not seeing him there.

Cristobal sees Don Pedro walk into the plaza with a spring in his step and a smile from ear to ear.

CRISTOBAL

Things have turned around for you.
I thought you had no interest in
another woman.

DON PEDRO

María isn't just another woman. Now
leave me. I must finish polishing
this monument to Rosa.

Cristobal laughs as he walks away.

María enters the plaza. She sees Don Pedro cleaning up his equipment then approaches him.

MARÍA

I forgot to tell you. There is a
party next week at my...

María sees the freshly polished carving. The roses appear to open as the sun's rays slowly move across the sculpture.

MARÍA

Is that what you were working on?
Were you cleaning it?

DON PEDRO

I made it. It's a tribute to my first love, Rosa. She died in a shipwreck.

MARÍA

I'm so sorry.

DON PEDRO

I hope it doesn't bother you that I once loved another woman.

María looks into Don Pedro's eyes.

MARÍA

Not at all. It tells me a lot about you. I knew you were an outstanding individual and now I feel it.

DON PEDRO

Thank you, María.

EXT. SAN JOSE PLAZA - DAY

Don Pedro, Father Solis, and Cristobal are standing in the plaza. They are watching the mass through Rosa's Window.

FATHER SOLIS

Not only did you create a masterpiece for yourself and for your love. Look at what you've done for them.

DON PEDRO

They do seem happy. Look at their smiles.

Cristobal puts his arms around Don Pedro's and Father Solis's shoulders.

CRISTOBAL

We have a church that looks better from the outside looking in than from the inside looking out.

Cristobal moves aside as the Natives walk by Don Pedro to show their appreciation. Each of them makes sure to touch the Stone Shaper.

INT. DON PEDRO'S HOME - BEDROOM - DAY (MONTAGE)

- María is in bed holding her newborn child. She's surrounded by her family.

Don Pedro walks into the room with Manuelito.

MARÍA

Pedro, I know how badly you wanted a son but behold your beautiful daughter.

Don Pedro takes the baby and gazes at the tiny human.

María and her family hold their breath as they wait for Don Pedro's reaction.

Tears start to flow down Don Pedro's cheeks. He raises his head.

DON PEDRO

She's beautiful, María, so beautiful.
Thank you for this wonderful gift.
We give you the name Maria Josefa.

Don Pedro holds the infant high.

DON PEDRO

You have entered this world in the year seventeen seventy-eight to be the matriarch of a large great family.

MANUELITO

I would say that it's definitely time for a fiesta.

That bedroom in San Antonio is the happiest place on the planet.

- Don Pedro holds his newly born son in the air.

DON PEDRO

Jose Joseph in seventeen seventy-nine you have received your name.
Only greatness is in store for you.

- Don Pedro gently embraces his second son.

DON PEDRO

In seventeen eighty, you are named for the Patroness of the Americas.
You will be known as Jose Guadalupe.

- María hands Don Pedro his second daughter.

DON PEDRO

Seventeen eighty-one is the year you
received the name Maria Trinidad.
You will live a life free of sin.

- As Don Pedro looks at the face of his third son, the infant opens his eyes and looks at his father.

DON PEDRO

Jose Antonio, I can see in your eyes
that you will be called upon to
preserve the legacy we will earn.

Don Pedro lays Jose Antonio in his crib. He removes his sword from its sheath and places it across the crib's rails.

DON PEDRO

In seventeen eighty-three, "El Rayo"
is yours. Protect our lands and
family. In you, I place my faith.

- María gives birth to Jose Lucas.

DON PEDRO

My son, Jose Lucas, you bring joy
when there was only sadness. In
seventeen eighty-five we lost...

Don Pedro's voice breaks as tears fill his eyes.

DON PEDRO

... the sister you will never know,
Maria Trinidad, to disease. Your
souls will forever be connected.

- María is sleeping as Don Pedro holds her hand. He looks very concerned.

A NATIVE WOMAN walks in then hands a baby to Don Pedro.

Don Pedro lays the baby next to María.

DON PEDRO

Jose Carlos, seventeen eighty-seven
will be remembered as the year God's
grace protected you and your mother.

Don Pedro gently kisses María on the cheek then does the same to Jose Carlos.

DON PEDRO

Because of this, the bond between
you and your mother will always be
strong.

- Maria is in bed holding her newborn son. Jose Antonio, 6, is the only other person in the room.

ANTONIO
Where is everyone?

MARÍA
The baby came much sooner than expected. You just happened to be with me.

María carefully places the tiny infant in Antonio's arms.

ANTONIO
He's so small.

MARIA
And fragile. Are you sure you can do it?

ANTONIO
Yes, Mamma.

Antonio thinks for a minute then smiles.

ANTONIO
You are given the name, Jose Geronimo, and in the year...

Antonio looks back at his mother.

MARÍA
Seventeen eighty-eight.

ANTONIO
That one. I promise to protect you.

END MONTAGE

EXT. ROAD TO LA BAHIA - NIGHT

It has grown dark so Don Pedro stops his horse. He gathers up some grass then makes a pillow. The night is so nice he sleeps under the stars without making a fire.

LATER

Don Pedro wakes when a mountain lion buries its teeth in his shoulder. He turns his head then yells at the top of his lungs directly into the cougar's ear.

The cougar is startled by the sound and releases its grip.

The lion immediately goes back at Don Pedro. It takes a chunk out of his side with his claws.

Don Pedro manages to kick it in the head with his pointed boot.

The cougar is dazed for a moment.

Don Pedro draws "El Rayo" from its sheath.

The lion sinks its teeth into his leg as it slices his other leg with its claws.

Don Pedro plunges his sword into the cougar's side. The lion falls on top of him, dead.

Don Pedro lays there with the weight of the cougar pressing down on him. He summons the strength to roll the lion off of his chest.

Don Pedro cannot use his legs and he can barely move his left arm. With only his right arm fully functional, he examines his wounds.

The cuts are deep and bleeding profusely.

Don Pedro starts a small fire which produces the soot he needs to stop the bleeding. He fills his wounds with the soot then tightly wraps each cut with cloth.

When the bleeding stops, Don Pedro looks around for a source of some life-saving water. He hears the quiet gurgling of a stream down the hill.

He pulls himself off the road and down the hill with one arm. With the last of his remaining strength he makes it to the creek.

Don Pedro drinks as much as he can then passes out completely hidden from the road.

THREE DAYS LATER

Manuelito comes down the hill through the brush and cactus. He sees his father with half of his body in the creek.

Manuelito rolls his father over so that he's completely on the bank. It's obvious Don Pedro's life is hanging by a thread.

Manuelito pours some water on his father's face.

Don Pedro's eyes slowly open.

MANUELITO

Papa, I thought I had lost you.

DON PEDRO

You know what, it will take more than a mountain lion to take me out.

Don Pedro smiles then passes out.

Manuelito takes his healing kit from his horse then replaces the bloody bandages with new ones.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING

Manuelito is holding his father when Don Pedro opens his eyes. Don Pedro smiles when he sees it is Manuelito holding him.

MANUELITO

You look better. I think you're going to make it. How do you feel?

DON PEDRO

Like I was attacked by a mountain lion. My son, what are you doing here?

MANUELITO

The governor told me you never made it to La Bahia.

Don Pedro tries to get up but his legs won't hold him.

MANUELITO

Careful, Papa, you've got some serious injuries.

DON PEDRO

How did you find me?

MANUELITO

I'm a tracker. Remember the mule?

DON PEDRO

Oh yes, the mule. You did a fine job, son.

Manuelito looks around in every direction.

MANUELITO

Your horse is gone. You couldn't ride anyway. You'll have to lie across my horse. Can you make it?

DON PEDRO
Of course. I'm your father aren't I?

MANUELITO
Great. Let's go home.

DON PEDRO
No. I need to go to La Bahia. It's closer anyway.

Manuelito looks at his father in disbelief.

MANUELITO
What is so important in La Bahia?

DON PEDRO
The governor sent me to design the irrigation system for the Nuestra Señora de Loreta Presidio.

MANUELITO
You need to be recovering in a bed.

DON PEDRO
I just need to see the land then I can design it from a bed. You'll take me won't you?

Manuelito gives his father some jerky. It takes all of his strength to get Don Pedro on his horse. Manuelito heads toward La Bahia.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Don Pedro walks into the mayor's office with a slight limp.

Manuel de Arocha, 51, is San Antonio's mayor of seventeen ninety-three. He rises from his chair then quickly goes to Don Pedro. He helps him sit down.

AROCHA
You look great, Don Pedro. How are you feeling?

DON PEDRO
If one more person asks me how I am feeling, I may... Well, never mind. I feel fine, Mayor.

AROCHA
That's great news. I would like to commission you to secularize the San Antonio de Valero mission.

DON PEDRO

Already?

The mayor goes back to his chair.

AROCHA

It's been planned for awhile. I just needed to find the right person to do it.

DON PEDRO

I am honored, sir.

AROCHA

You represent the Natives and Spaniards alike. They trust you.

DON PEDRO

It's been more than twenty years since the first Natives joined us. Most of them are still here.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MEETING ROOM - DAY

The room is noisy and crowded. All the seats are taken and most are standing. It seems every person is arguing with the one next to him.

Don Pedro walks in. It becomes quiet as soon as everyone notices him.

Don Pedro walks to the front of the group.

DON PEDRO

Governor Munoz has given me the task of partitioning the lands. I see Governor Puente is here.

GOVERNOR PUENTE

You bet I am. It's about time this is happening.

DON PEDRO

Are all of the refugees from the abandoned presidio of Las Adeas here?

REFUGEE

Twenty-three, sir. Exactly how are you going to determine who gets what?

The room becomes noisy again as everyone tries to give their opinions at once. Don Pedro counts the Natives.

DON PEDRO

Quiet please. All twenty-eight
Natives from San Antonio de Valero
are here as well so let's begin.

The room becomes silent.

DON PEDRO

I have been given this responsibility
because I led the evacuation of Las
Adeas and secularized the mission.

GOVERNOR PUENTE

Are we going to vote?

DON PEDRO

That won't be necessary. I've decided
to distribute the lands by lots.
You all must accept what you get.

Murmurs and grumbling ensues.

DON PEDRO

It may be plowed land or timber land.
It may have irrigation or there may
be lateral conduits.

GOVERNOR PUENTE

What if we don't like what we get?

DON PEDRO

To assure your satisfaction, I will
provide each of you with six almudes
of seed corn.

The refugee raises his hand.

Don Pedro points at him.

REFUGEE

And if we are still not happy?

DON PEDRO

Then you can take it up with the
king.

INT. DON PEDRO'S HACIENDA - DAY

The home is magnificent and reeks of luxury. It sits on a
one hundred thousand acre rancho. All of his children are
gathered around Don Pedro in the dining room.

They sit around an amazing polished oak table. It is filled
with a variety of food prepared by the finest chefs.

One SERVANT pours water into each of their crystal goblets.

Different servants come in and out of the dining room with more food and drinks.

Manuelito, 48, sits next to Josefa, 26. Joseph, 25, and Guadalupe, 24, sit at the end of the table. Antonio, 21, sits next to Don Pedro, 63, at the other end.

Lucas, 19, Carlos, 17, and Geronimo, 16, sit across from Manuelito and Josefa.

Everyone has just about finished their extravagant meal.

Don Pedro taps on his glass with his fork to get his children's attention. He becomes long-faced then looks at his daughter and seven sons.

Antonio sees a look in his father's eyes he has never seen before. He sees sadness with a small tinge of fear.

ANTONIO

Papa, what's wrong? You have become so quiet.

DON PEDRO

I was thinking about your mother. Do you realize that eight years have passed since she left us?

JOSEFA

That long? I miss her so much. I miss Trinidad too. I'm sure they are together.

DON PEDRO

We all do, my love.

Don Pedro makes eye contact with each of his children. He smiles with a look of ever enduring love then a seriousness washes across his face.

DON PEDRO

I have had some visions. They are coming like waves that eat away the shore. Always hungry. Unstoppable.

GERONIMO

Who's coming, Papa?

DON PEDRO

I don't know but I do know everything will change. I have prepared all of you well but remember this...

The servants walk into the room and clear the table.

DON PEDRO

Each of you has unique talents and skills. Stay together. That is when you will be strongest.

JOSEPH

We will, Papa.

DON PEDRO

Follow my example, I have shown you the way. Every man has his time and the end of mine approaches quickly.

INT. DON PEDRO'S BEDROOM - DAY

Don Pedro lies in his bed. Josefa holds his hand as she sobs. All of her brothers are there with somber looks on their faces.

Four of the best doctors in New Spain are attending to Don Pedro. One of the doctors looks at Antonio then shakes his head.

Antonio puts a hand on two of the doctor's shoulders as they feverishly work on Don Pedro.

ANTONIO

Please. Give us a moment with our father.

The four doctors leave the bedroom.

Don Pedro's children gather around him. Each of them places a hand on his face or chest.

Don Pedro slowly opens his eyes. He looks at each of his children then smiles. His eyes close.

DON PEDRO

I will send for you, Rosa. I will send for you.

Don Pedro takes his last breath then leaves this world.

FADE OUT.

THE END