

Surrender

By

Lee M. Field

Historical Event

Lee. M. Field (C) 2017

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

Winston Churchill

SUPER: BEDFORD VIRGINIA 1881

WORLD-NEWS OFFICE - DAY

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

RECEPTIONIST

Can I help you?

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

MACK

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

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

MACK

What? Ain't gonna turn away Ole General Lee's friend?

(pause)

Bet you didn't know I was his cook all through war.

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

MACK

I was with him the day it started and for last gun for the salute of the surrender on Sunday, April 9 at Appomattox, 1865.

(pause, beat)

Want to know the truth of those last days?

Curious but skeptical a Reporter speaks up.

REPORTER

I don't for once believe you but go on.

(CONTINUED)

Mack begins as all ears are on him.

SUPER APRIL 1865 VIRGINIA

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Gray, incessant rain pours across a muddy landscape. Droplets pelt a gray felt hat. The Brim is soaked as beads of water drop from it.

Slow it lifts revealing a tired weathered face. Close on gray eyes that stare directly ahead. Sad eyes with deep crows feet and black circles underneath.

A Chiseled jaw adorned by a silver white beard. This is **ROBERT E. LEE (56)** Commander of the Army of Northern Virginia.

He looks out over the mud soaked field. Remnants of his shattered army huddle in whatever shelter they can find. Some in trenches, others under rain soaked tents.

His horse **TRAVELER** grazes on what little grass there is. Iron gray in color with black points, a long mane and a flowing tail. Lee is thin, gaunt, Traveler likewise, the war has been long and hard on both of them.

Smoke fills the air from recent artillery action. The landscape is ominously devoid of life. Dirt upturned with craters from explosions pock the landscape.

Traveler perks up as if hearing something his ears twitch at the slightest sound. Someone approaches he senses it, but does not flinch. Standing square and chewing his meal Traveler keeps his composure.

Then a gentle hand appears, small but dirty, it strokes Traveler's nose. Reversing we see this is **BOBBY** barely 13 in rags, barefoot and shivering. He wears a Confederate Gray KEPI hat over his blond hair.

Lee stands out of sight watching them with tender eyes.

BOBBY

There now, what you doin out here?

Traveler bobs his head up and down like he understands.

BOBBY

Ole General Lee be a lookin fer you.

(CONTINUED)

The two of them soak in the moment, alone, boy and horse the worlds problems far away. The wind whips up, the rain gusts and we hear the sounds of men and material being moved.

In an instant the blissful scene is gone. Officers barking orders, the rumbling of canons being wheeled into place. In the distance explosions can be heard. Close, but far enough away not to be of any concern. Bobby turns his attention to the horizon.

Then a fatherly, deep and resonating voice comes from over his shoulder.

VOICE (O.S.)
In safe hands I see.

Startled Bobby turns, and sees Lee approaching.

Bobby grins from ear to ear, his idle and superhero in the flesh.

BOBBY
He's a good un General.

Lee puts on his gloves walking down the small slope to them.

LEE
The best I've ever had.

BOBBY
I do believe he knows what I'm a sayin.

Lee reaches the pair and takes a hold of Traveler's bridle. The rain continues to pound them.

LEE
You're probably right.

BOBBY
I wish I had some sugar fer him.

Then Bobby's stomach growls from hunger it embarrasses him.

BOBBY
Sorry General.

LEE
When was the last time you ate?

BOBBY
Don't know sir.

LEE

Let's see if we can't do something about that.

BOBBY

Oh I don't mind General sir.

LEE

How old are you son?

BOBBY

Almost fourteen Sir.

Lee sighs remembering.

LEE

I was about your age when Daddy left us.

BOBBY

You too? I mean that's why I'm here. Daddy took to drink and Mama she kinda lost herself and left us. Me and Willis, dat's my brother, well de army is alls we's got.

LEE

Then we're both where we want to be.

BOBBY

(happily)

Yessir.

Lee pats him on the cheek and tugs his ear.

LEE

Brave boy.

BOBBY

I'm to small for de Yankees to see or shoot.

A gentle laugh from Lee. Approaching them is **MACK LEE (50)** a black man, he's Lee's cook and man servant. Lee's closest friend and lifelong companion since they were kids.

Mack scolds Bobby.

MACK

Mr. Bobby what ya doin here?

(CONTINUED)

BOBBY

Nothin, just pettin Traveler.

MACK

Mr. Lee yous needs to gets out of
de rain

Traveler snuggles and licks Bobby's face.

MACK

Sorry about the boy General.

LEE

No bother, get him something to
eat.

MACK

But sir?!

LEE

I know, not now.

MACK

Oh's alright, come on.

Mack takes Bobby, and guides him away. The distant sounds of cannon fire are now getting louder and closer. Lee raises his binoculars watching the coming storm.

Then he mounts Traveler getting ready for battle, Bobby looks on proudly, but a bit worried. Traveler roughs the ground with his hoof and bobs head up and down, as if to say that he'll take care of Lee.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

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

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

Lee lowers his binoculars studying the engagement of men. His **Aide De Camp, CHARLES MARSHALL (30)** at his side.

Traveler fidgets under the storm of artillery.

A shell hits nearby spraying the three of them with dirt. Traveler bucks up as if to bolt, but Lee calmly pats him on the neck.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Easy old friend, this isn't like you.

CHARLES

If we don't break this siege. Our supplies will be depleted in a week.

LEE

Sooner than that.

Traveler settles down. Mack rejoins Lee at the line. He reaches into his pocket retrieving some sugar cubes, and feeds them to Traveler.

MACK

Bout alls we gots left.

Lee nods in affirmation. He looks back through binoculars at his men struggling in the assault.

We see the attack faltering. Lee quickly turns to Charles.

LEE

Tell Longstreet to expend all remaining ordinance to help Gordon.

Charles swirls his horse around and takes off down the hill.

Lee looks regretful seeing all the bloodletting spilling before his eyes.

LEE

If I had accepted Lincoln's offer of command this never would have happened - it would have been over in a day, but my home, Virginia, I could not bear the thought of raising my hand against her. Tell me Mack was it worth these boys lives.

A note of finality in Mack's voice.

MACK

We can'ts change what is done.

LEE

The war goes on and on year after year.

(CONTINUED)

MACK

Only yous has de power to stop it.

Lee rubs his chest in obvious pain. Mack pleads with him.

MACK

General, git down, that heart of yours is a fright.

LEE

I'm fine. I fear this is all in vain, that no one will be the victor here.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD UNION LINE - DAY

Trenches wind through the landscape like so many veins. In them, men ready themselves for battle this is the all black division of XVIII Corps.

Close on Two Negro Soldiers checking their equipment.

ABLE MASON (26) educated, and fair complected nervously loads his rifle.

Next to him **HENRY FREMONT (22)** a runaway slave confidently takes care of his, ramming the bullet securely in the muzzle.

HENRY

Careful don't shoot me.

ABLE

I wish I was in Boston

HENRY

Me too, but we's here.

Approaching them is **SERGEANT WALSHTON (40's) Irish**, career Army man. He leads the all black regiment and hates it.

WALSHTON

Alright yer Black Bastards up and over.

He stares straight into Able's eyes, seeing his fear.

WALSHTON

Them Southern boys good shots.

(beat)

They'll get a bead on the first one of ya, then we can tear into the lot of dem.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Lay off him Sarge!

Walshton hauls off and hits Henry. Henry pulls back to fight. Walshton puts his hand on his revolver.

WALSHTON

Come on I'd love it.

Able interdicts.

ABLE

Easy Sir.

WALSHTON

Then get a move on.

Able turning to Henry their eyes meet, acknowledging fate.

Up the ladder they go out into no man's land. The rest of the regiment follows suite.

Bullets fly by, men are cut down Henry and Able keep low.

More troops pour out of other trenches till it is a massive tide of Union Blue.

At the quick step they move forward into the fray of Battle.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD CONFEDERATE POSITION - DAY

General **JOHN GORDON (33)** strong, autocratic and audacious. He sits tall in the saddle of his horse. Fearless in the face of certain death he leads his troops from the front.

He barks orders at his men using his sword to indicate directions.

His hair is muffed and uniform smudged with soot from gunpowder and dirt. The field ahead of him is obscured with a heavy plume of smoke.

All around him his brigade is disintegrating. Men drop their weapons and run. Others fall to their knees, shell shocked and crying for their mother.

GORDON

Forward damn you!

Gordon scrambles to reform his attack, but to no avail. The pressing Union infantry and their concentrated Artillery fire force him into a decision he doesn't want to make.

He looks hopelessly around for some sort of salvation.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD UNION LINE - DAY

The long Blue Union Line advances on the beleaguered Confederates. Victory is in their grasp.

An all **BLACK DIVISION OF XVIII** Corps leads the way.

Able carefully aims his rifle, ahead a mass of rebels he should hit something. Firing, he looks but can't tell if he hit anything.

Henry laughs at him, he can't tell either but doesn't miss an opportunity to goad Able.

HENRY
Fool, is you blind?!

ABLE
I know I got one.

HENRY
Here's how it done.

Henry readies his weapon taking deadly aim. He sights a rebel soldier. Breathing deep taking his time, slowly squeezing the trigger, he fires.

From his POV a rebel soldier falls dead.

HENRY
Just think it's Walshton.

Henry spits with deadly satisfaction.

EXT. CONFEDERATE LINE LONGSTREET'S POSITION - DAY

The fighting intensifies, Union guns pound Gordon's troops driving them back. **GEN. JAMES LONGSTREET (46)** observes this disaster with primal eyes.

The weight of years war has honed him into a fighting machine. He is fierce warrior, but pragmatic, he knows when to call it a day.

Charles brings his horse to a screeching stop beside him.

LONGSTREET
Ten months of this hell.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES
Gordon's Second Corp is faltering.
General Lee wants artillery.

LONGSTREET
With what? We're running out!

CHARLES
He specifically said expend all
remaining ordinance.

Longstreet is disgusted he jumps down from his horse.
Surveying the field with hopelessness in his voice.

LONGSTREET
We can't sustain this!

CHARLES
Do as you are ordered Sir!

Longstreet grabs Charles horses bridal. The beast jerks
violently almost tossing Charles from the saddle.

LONGSTREET
Another useless battle in a lost
war.

CHARLES
Perhaps if you spent more time
obeying orders than questioning
them, we might yet prevail.

Charles jerks his horse away.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD GORDON'S POSITION - DAY

A moment of truth for Gordon as the wave of UNION BLUE is
advancing on his position. It's fight or flight for Gordon
we hear his men calling and begging him for orders on what
to do next.

MEN:

General what now!

What do we do sir?

Then coming from behind him the high pitched shrill of out
going artillery rounds. Longstreet has begun his bombardment
of the Union Line in support of his attack.

The ensuing fire explodes directly into oncoming union
Troops.

(CONTINUED)

Men disintegrate before our eyes, body parts fling through the air. Gordon is now emboldened, he rally's his troops.

GORDON

Come on boys General Lee not gonna
let us down.

A shoulder beside him cowers on the ground under the under the withering fire. Gordon swats at him with his sword.

GORDON

Son think of your family.

SOLDIER

I's can't Sir.

GORDON

Get up I say.

SOLDER

I'm one bullet away from the
Almighty.

GORDON

Well, meet him on your feet or I'll
shoot you on your knees.

Gordon Pulls out his revolver and cocks it.

He's not kidding and the soldier knows it. Timidly the soldier picks up his rifle and falls in line with the others.

The troops form up behind Gordon. Satisfied, he turns to face the onslaught. Stealing himself with a face as hard as iron, he produces a guttural roar kicking the spurs into the horses side.

He charges forward brandishing his sword in front of him. The troops follow, in one massive push, all joining in with a deafening **REBEL YELL**.

Longstreet's artillery acts as a shield punching a whole in the Union formations.

Gordon troops slam into their opponents like a freight train. Gordon hacks and slashes at the Union troops.

BATTLEFIELD HENRY AND ABLE'S POSITION - DAY

Henry and Able march into the firestorm.

Ahead the sound of swords clanking together, men fighting hand to hand.

The smoke from explosions is getting thicker the only thing visible, the man to the left and right of them.

BOOM! A shell hits directly in front. Blood and guts are sprayed onto Henry and Able.

Able petrified with fear stops, holding back the urge to throw up.

Henry wanks him by the collar.

HENRY

Move!

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The pair is jostled from side to side from concurrent exploding shock waves.

SMOKE EVERYWHERE! Confused and no sense of direction they are lost in the mist. Another devastating round hits knocking Henry off his feet.

He quickly recovers, they are alone and completely turned around.

BOOM! BOOM!

Able screams his eardrums busted blood oozes from them.

HENRY

Come On!

They scramble to the relative safety of the treeline. Ducking behind some trees the sound of rushing feet and horses can be heard.

The smoke still obscures their view.

EXT. UNION COMMAND POSITION - DAY

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

(CONTINUED)

Tough, determined, his resources in men and material is unlimited. He is cool under fire but a reluctant conqueror, a young Lieutenant stands beside him.

GRANT

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

LIEUTENANT

Old tactics die hard.

GRANT

And we have suffered dearly for it.

LIEUTENANT

His line is thin.

GRANT

I'm going to end this.

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

The young Lieutenant gets on his horse. Grant hands the paper to him.

GRANT

Take this to General Meade with all haste.

EXT. MEAD'S POSITION UNION LINE - LATE AFTERNOON

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

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

Spitting tobacco he takes it immediately a look of satisfaction comes across his face as he reads.

MEADE

Bout damn time.

Calling to adjutant.

MEADE

Form your lines.

EXT. GORDON'S POSITION - DAY

Gordon's men have the initiative, emboldened by Longstreet's artillery fire they press on.

Union troops fall back.

Gordon continues the attack in high spirits.

GORDON

Come on! We got em!

Then a rumbling sound, the earth quivers under his horse. Gordon wonders at it. Then it becomes clear what it's from. Coming over the ridge comes Meade's entire Third corp.

Thirty thousand men strong they are approaching fast.

Outnumbered ten to one Gordon makes the only decision he can.

GORDON

Damn! Retreat!

The confederate soldiers take flight, it is a rout. They fly past their encampment back to the relative safety of the trenches.

EXT. LEE'S POSITION - DAY

The sun is setting, light is fading fast. Lee lowers his binoculars and his face is grim.

The spattering sounds of guns and cannons falling silent.

LEE

Saved by the loss of day.

MACK

Come on General you need to eat.

LEE

No Mack, my men need it more.

Beleaguered Lee lets out a sigh. Charles rejoins him.

CHARLES

Perhaps when Pickett arrives.

A runner brings a dispatch, he hands it to Lee and salutes. Lee scans it his eyes close with bad news.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Pickett's not coming.
(beat silence)
He surrendered his command.

CHARLES
Treason.

LEE
No, just the beginning.

CHARLES
What are you saying General?

Lee turns and surveys the field now quickly getting dark.

LEE
We cannot hold this position.

CHARLES
Retreat?

LEE
We'll make our way south and hook
up with Johnston.

CHARLES
But that means abandoning Richmond.

LEE
Grants forces have effectively cut
our supply line. We need
provisions.

CHARLES
Yes Sir.

LEE
Assemble Longstreet and Gordon and
meet me at my tent.

INT. LEE'S COMMAND TENT - NIGHT

Lee hovers over the map table studying it. Longstreet,
Gordon and Charles enter.

LEE
Good evening Gentlemen.

LONGSTREET
Sir.

(CONTINUED)

GORDON

General.

LEE

As you know our situation is untenable.

LONGSTREET

Yes the assault this afternoon depleted our artillery, and we lost more than a third of the men.

GORDON

The desertion rate is up.

LEE

I will not hear of that.

GORDON

But Sir with morale low we cannot hope of a sustained campaign.

LEE

Once we abandon Richmond that will improve.

LONGSTREET

Leave Richmond open?

LEE

Not open destroyed.

Longstreet and others stand aghast at his statement.

LEE

Charles take a small contingent and destroy what remaining supplies there are then torch the city.

LONGSTREET

What of the civilians?

Lee looks up from his map the weight of the decision weighs on his face.

LEE

I'm sorry Generals but I need to keep this army intact.

GORDON

That will not sit well with the men.

(CONTINUED)

The tent flap opens and the crippled **GENERAL A.P.(Pete) HILL (40)** hobbles in. He is another warrior that has seen his fare share of bloodletting. His appearance is gaunt but he has an air of courage.

Hill stops and salutes.

HILL
You sent for me sir?

LEE
Pete you know the situation.

HILL
It's not hard to see the writing.

LEE
No it's not.

HILL
I'll do what is needed sir.

Lee lays a hand on his shoulder in solemn confidence.

LEE
I am going to break out of this strangle hold. Charles here will set fire to Richmond. Then I want you to cover us as we move out.
(beat)
A hate to ask Pete.

HILL
Danville is the closest supply depot.

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

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

A look between the two.

LEE
It's a day's march.

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

LEE

That will be all Gentlemen.

In unison the three snap a salute and leave.

EXT. LEE'S TENT - NIGHT

Longstreet puts on his gloves as does Gordon. Charles dons his hat.

LONGSTREET

His command almost gone and he still takes the offensive.

GORDON

Agreed this can only prolong the inevitable.

Charles will have none of this talk. He cranes into them in a defiant whisper.

CHARLES

He is your commanding officer!

GORDON

Hill's men will be annihilated.

LONGSTREET

It's suicide Charles.

CHARLES

At least he will die with honor.

LONGSTREET

Don't speak to me of honor. I'm just trying to get these boys home.

GORDON

It's over for by heaven!

Charles leaves in a fluff.

GORDON

We can't let him destroy Richmond.

LONGSTREET

Lee's gotten us this far and I'm afraid there is a noose waiting for us if don't try.

INT. LEE'S TENT - NIGHT

Lee half hears their conversation, but dismisses it. Mack enters with a cup of coffee and some bread.

MACK

Mr. Robert please eats somthin.

LEE

You look after me like a mother hen.

MACK

Somebody's got to. Here sit down.

Lee accepts coffee and settles down on the cot.

LEE

They used to call me Old Granny.

MACK

Don't know why with that white beard.

LEE

(a laugh)

That first Battle of the Wilderness was a disaster.

MACK

I remember.

LEE

Lost near four thousand men.

MACK

That was a long time ago.

LEE

I learned though. Be aggressive, never let up. Keep poring it on.

MACK

They changed their minds fast.

LEE

We started to win.

MACK

Manases, Five Forks, Fredricksburg.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Chancellorsville.

MACK
Dat where we lost Mr. Jackson.

Lee takes a sip from his coffee.

LEE
(solemn)
Then Gettysburg. We have been
through it, you and I.

MACK
(understanding)
Yessa

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. COUNTRY HOME - DAY

Young **ROBERT E. LEE (10)** plays with his close friend **MACK LEE (9)** black. He is the son of a freed slave that work's for the Lee's.

The boys frolic and tumble about like boys do of that age. Suddenly this bucolic setting is disturb by shouts of anger and a woman crying.

Robert's parents burst from the house, **LIGHT HORSE HARRY LEE (48)**, drunk and his wife **MARTHA (35)** trails him in tears.

MARTHA
What did you do with it?

HARRY
I had a little fun!

MARTHA
How are we going to eat?

Mack's Dad **JOSEPH (30'S)**, stands on the porch watching the seen. Harry plops himself down on the steps and pulls out a flask of whiskey.

He guzzles it before Martha knocks it out of his hands.

MARTHA
Your not a war hero anymore!

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

This country should appreciate me.

Harry looks out into oblivion with wanting eyes. Sad his glory days are gone.

Martha understands but has had enough she kneels beside him.

MARTHA

They do, we all do. But now we have to get busy with living.

HARRY

I try Mother but nothing good comes from my hands except war.

MARTHA

(quoting)

We shall turn our swords into plows.

HARRY

You put too much faith in that book.

MARTHA

It's all we have.

Harry has heard enough, he stands and proclaims a final rash decision.

HARRY

I've got to go, but I'll be back, rich you'll be proud of me.

Martha realizing, as Harry storms to his horse. Taking the bridle he swings up into the saddle.

He is a commanding figure, heroic almost. Robert looks up at him puzzled but admiringly. Harry addresses him directly his words almost seem final.

HARRY

Take care of your Mother.

Martha almost tumbles down the steps and grabs the side of his stirrup. She knows he's leaving for good, sad, desperate and relieved all at the same time.

MARTHA

Where will you go?

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

New Orleans I have a friend in the shipping business.

That's it with no fanfare he's off pivoting the horse around and galloping away.

Joseph steps down to Martha's side.

MARTHA

I don't know how I will pay you.

JOSEPH

We'll s get through it.

His eyes drift over to Robert.

ROBERT

Where's Daddy going?

Martha doesn't answer as Harry just rides away. Leaving young Robert and Mack standing there looking lost.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. WHITE HOUSE - NIGHT

A bespectacled **ABRAHAM LINCOLN(55)** sits reading a telegram by candlelight. The war has aged him beyond his years. Long wrinkles line his face.

We hear Grant's voice as he reads.

GRANT (V.O.)

It is my firm conviction we can finally see a clearing in the storm. Our dreadful estate may see an end as we have successfully cut Lee's supply from Richmond. On the morrow we will occupy the city. If we press the matter final victory is ours.

Lincoln gently sets the telegram down and glances out the window. Stars sparkle in the night sky Lincoln reflects.

LINCOLN

Please press the matter.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Henry and Able make their way through the brush the best they can. A twig breaks under Able's feet.

HENRY
(whispering)
Shush Fool.

ABLE
We should have seen our lines by
now.

HENRY
Yeah I think so to.

They continue on, crouching and feeling their way through the darkness.

ABLE
I didn't know it could get dark so
fast.

HENRY
That gun smoke and haze didn't help
none.

ABLE
Maybe we should turn around.

HENRY
Then we'd be walking in circles.

A faint sound from ahead of them.

HENRY
Wait I hear something.

ABLE
(anxious)
It's our company!

HENRY
Wait a minute lets check it out.

The pair creep forward as quietly as they can. Firelight flickers through the thicket.

Voices are getting ever louder. Henry and Able peer through the brush. Ahead of them they see a **REBEL ENCAMPMENT**.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Damn we're further behind the lines
than I thought.

ABLE

(scared)

Maybe we should just surrender.

HENRY

You stupid, they kill niggers in
uniform. No questions asked.

INT. REBEL CAMP - NIGHT

Three surely rebel soldiers try as best they can to warm
themselves by a small campfire.

The tallest and obvious Leader **SERGEANT RED LEUFFERS**
(27) sits on an old stump polishing his musket. Four years
of war have made him cynical.

Beside him on the ground making drawings in the dirt is **HANK**
ROWE (17) mean as a snake.

Sitting on a rock trying to make himself comfortable is
LAYTON WEAVERS (20) pudgy, not real smart and always
irritable.

RED

(heavy southern accent)

I don't know about y'all but I'm
done with this.

LAYTON

Done wit what?

RED

Done wit what? You idiot, de war!

Hank residing his fate.

HANK

What are we gonna do about it?

LAYTON

Yeah all we can do is make it to
the next day.

RED

There could be something done.

(CONTINUED)

HANK

Like what?

LAYTON

You gonna tell ole General Lee to
jus gives up.

RED

Not in so many words.

Red admires his musket, he attaches a sniper scope to it.
Then raises the gun to his shoulder and aims into the
darkness.

RED

I can Kill a running buck at a
thousand yards.

LAYTON

Really.

HANK

No foolin he killed him three
captains and a colonel in one day.

RED

Never could catch me neither.
(beat)
Know why.

Layton is hanging on every word.

RED

Because I'm er ghost.

LAYTON

(gulping)
A what?

RED

Never shoot from the same place
twice.

HANK

One shot one kill right?

RED

That's why Gordon made me a
sharpshooter.

Red gets up and leans on a tree and makes himself a
cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

RED

General Lee gots this war all wrong.

HANK

How so?

RED

He done taking them head on all de time. Grant no fool, he's just gonna wear us down tills we got nothing to fight with.

HANK

You just talkin in circles.

RED

Don't you see, we takes out Ole Masser Lee we got a whole new war. Dem Yankees can't fight in the woods like we can.

(beat, long pause)

And maybe ifs I get close enough take out Grant to. Then they'd give up fer sure.

LAYTON

Now yer dreamin, an I got no cotton on killin General Lee.

Red places cigarette in his mouth and lights it. He takes a long drag.

RED

Lee may be somebody, you ain't, no one will miss you.

HANK

Awe come on Red quit riding him. You ain't gonna no more Shoot Lee than I am. Grant maybe.

EXT. WOODS HENRY AND ABLE'S POSITION - NIGHT

HENRY

Damn they're gonna kill ole Lee.

ABLE

We got to warn Grant.

Able shifts his position a twig breaks. Red comes to full attention readying his musket.

(CONTINUED)

He stares out into the darkness.

RED
Yer hear dat?

HANK
Just a critter.

Henry and Able freeze.

Hank steps forward a little then a raccoon scampers out from the undergrowth. Hank lets out a sigh. Henry and Able breath easier.

LAYTON
(laughing)
Dars de enemy! Better get him Hank.

HANK
Dinner you idiot, get after him!

The three rustle off into the darkness to catch their meal.

Henry and Able seize the opportunity and retreat in opposite direction.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - NIGHT

Charles readies his horse and checks his side arm. Lee beside him puts his hand on his shoulder.

LEE
Make it quick.

CHARLES
Yes sir.

LEE
It's terrible, I know, don't try and think about it. Pick someone to go with you just in case.

CHARLES
Shouldn't I ask for a volunteer?

LEE
No they wouldn't understand.

CHARLES
Keep them in the dark?

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Yes until you get there then it
will be too late.

Charles solemnly agrees. He mounts his horse and takes the
bridle of another horse.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - NIGHT

Charles rides in amongst the men. He spies some soldiers
milling around a campfire.

He slowly approaches then stops in front of Red, Hank and
Layton who look up at him.

CHARLES

(formally)

I need one of you men to come with
me.

The three just hang their heads and look away. Clearly
ignoring him they continue on with their conversation.
Charles, perturbed and anxious barks at them. He points to
Hank.

CHARLES

You! Come with me!

Hank timidly points his finger indicating himself.

HANK

Me sir?

CHARLES

Yes, now!

Charles hands him the reigns of the other mount. Red and
Layton give a questioning look, Hank shrugs shoulders not
knowing. The two men spur their horses on into the night.

EXT. RICHMOND - NIGHT

Charles and Hank slip into the city. Eerily quiet all we
hear are the gently hoof falls of the horses. With torch in
hand Charles makes his way to one of the large warehouses.

The two soldiers dismount and creep inside. Rows and rows of
gunpowder barrels line the walls. Lifeblood for the army but
with no way to get them to the rest of the troops.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES
We have to destroy it.

HANK
What! and the city?

CHARLES
It is necessary.

Hank is clearly divided, knowing what he has to do, he hesitates wanting as much to run as fight.

HANK
Can't we warn the people?

CHARLES
No time! Come on!

Timidly and with much regret Hank finally agrees. They set about to their task overturning barrels and spilling out the powder. Charles grabs one up and makes a powder trail to the front door. A long fuse to enable them to escape.

Hank quickly finishes up joining him at the entrance. Both are running on pure adrenalin, super charged and anxious.

HANK
This place is gonna go sky high.

CHARLES
The spill over will ignite the other structures.

Hank looks grim and sad faced at Charles indifference.

CHARLES
I know, it's not what soldiers are supposed to do, but sometimes it is for the greater good.

HANK
Let's just do it.

Charles drops his torch onto the powder it immediately sparks and starts to burn down. The men scamper to their horses and make a dash for the countryside.

EXT. RICHMOND COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Headlong they go gaining speed to outrun the impending blast. Seconds turn into an eternity, Charles glances back.

Then a loud crack and **KABOOM!** The warehouse splinters into a million pieces. The shock wave heaves the two riders forwards. The Horses scared, Winnie at the deafening sound.

On they go not looking back as other munitions ignite and explode. It is a fireworks display, bullets and cannon shot ricochet off one another.

Finally at a safe distance near their lines Charles and Hank stop to take in the show. The mushroom cloud thunders upwards hundreds of feet into the air. It rolls and billows in a hellish yellow and orange. Parts of the city are already ablaze from burning rubble falling back upon the other wooden structures.

Things quickly get out of control as horses and people run panicked through the inferno. People themselves ignite and burn, as well as animals and homes.

The whole scene weighs heavily on Charles shoulders. Hank keeps his emotions tucked away but inside he burns it wears on his face.

HANK

And this was necessary?

Charles shoots him a look.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - NIGHT

Away from the others Lee holding Traveler's reigns watches Richmond burn. The whole horizon is alight from the massive fire. We faintly hear screams and other sounds of chaos.

Traveler bucks a little from the distant noise, Lee strokes his nose as he too quivers. A small tear trickles down his cheek he quickly wipes it away.

LEE

(to Traveler)

Easy, I know, how can I make you understand when I don't know myself. I do what I am trained for and that is to win but at what cost?

(CONTINUED)

Lee turns away unable to bear the sight, the crackle of the fire and it's smoke, fill the air. It wraps around Lee and countryside like a giant funeral shawl. Shrouded in smoke resembling a scene from Dante's Inferno Lee hangs his head as if in prayer.

From out of the mist comes a voice. One that is familiar to Lee and in some measure Traveler who reacts by pawing the ground.

VOICE

Robert.

Lee raises his head quickly, looking around the smoke seems thicker.

LEE

Who is that?

VOICE

Robert it is time.

Lee finally recognizing the voice.

LEE

I've missed you Tom.

From mist emerges the apparition of **THOMAS STONEWALL JACKSON** a Confederate General. Two years dead his face pale and emotionless he is in full uniform, his amputated arm is healed.

Lee closes eyes then opens, it's still there. The vision holds it's hat in hand respectfully.

JACKSON

Our revels are quickly coming to an end.

LEE

How be your journey.

JACKSON

It is a peaceful.

LEE

That is what I desire most.

JACKSON

Then a decision must be made.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
That being?

JACKSON
I cannot help you know what you
must do.

Lee raises his voice.

LEE
Sacrifice all we've fought for?

JACKSON
What exactly would that be Robert?
Did you ever believe the cause
just? End this, we will rest
better.

LEE
(defiant)
No!

The vision fades. Almost appearing from nowhere himself
comes Mack. Lee starts coughing on the smoke.

MACK
General Sir we's needs to go.

LEE
Did you see him?

MACK
See who? Dis smoke done blind
everything we's got our chance.

EXT. LONGSTREET AND GORDON'S POSITION - NIGHT

Longstreet observes the fire with his binoculars. The heavy
pressure from the spring rains has forced the smoke low to
the ground providing a perfect screen of cover.

LONGSTREET
The man is either brilliant or
lucky, our movement will be totally
obscured.

Gordon lowers his binoculars in disgust.

GORDON
By sacrificing a city, thousands of
innocent lives.

Charles rides up joining them.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES
Has Lee given the order?

LONGSTREET
Not yet.

GORDON
Did you give them any warning?

CHARLES
There was no time.

GORDON
No time, Good God this needs to
stop and I mean now!

LONGSTREET
What are you thinking General?

Longstreet continues his observation without looking at him.
Gordon backs down.

GORDON
I think we should form the men for
retreat.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Hank has rejoined his compatriots, Red and Layton. They
watch the uncontrolled fire. Red has the look of a firebug
almost enjoying the spectacle.

RED
Look at it Burn.

LAYTON
Never seen de like.

Hank more reserved and ashamed.

HANK
Didn't even give em a chance.

RED
Looks like Ole Lee gonna get way
with it again.

HANK
Did you mean what you said?

(CONTINUED)

RED
(acting ignorant)
About what?

HANK
About Lee, and ending dis.

RED
I'd never kid bout a thing like
that.

Hank stares deep into Red's eyes an understanding passing between them. Layton observes them both closely then gulps, getting it.

LAYTON
Ah Shit!

EXT. GRANT'S POSITION - NIGHT

Grant lowers his binoculars in disbelief, almost stunned.

GRANT
Good God I never thought-

He's cut short by Sheridan.

SHERIDAN
He's getting desperate.

GRANT
We didn't need his supplies he knew
that. There was no reason to
destroy the city.

Then Grant notices something, the heavy smoke laying low in the valley.

GRANT
Maybe not so desperate after all.

SHERIDAN
All this smoke and rain will make
it difficult to track his
movements.

GRANT
General prepare for an attack.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The sun is up but the gray April drizzle and the lingering smoke make it appear as late dusk. **A.P. HILL** sits astride his horse ahead of his rear guard brigade.

Rag tag soldiers, emaciated and ill **equipped but still full fight**. **WILLIS (17) Bobby's brother** readies himself. He loads his musket then hunkers down ready for the charge.

A.P. Hills division faces the entire **UNION ARMY**. They know whats expected of them and do not waver.

HILL

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

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

HILL

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

Willis ever the optimist cuts him short.

WILLIS

Come on General let's get it over
with.

HILL

(a chuckle)
Alright forward march!

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

The **REBEL YELL** roars on the wind. Obscured by the smoke and fog they charge on to a certain fate. The sound of bullets spit through the dense air.

Willis wipes a cold sweat from his brow. Unable to see but a few feet in front of his face he charges on. All his senses are firing on automatic, his heart is in his throat, **THUMP, THUMP, THUMP!**

EXT. UNION LINE - DAY

Grant strains through his binoculars trying to see what is going on. The sound of the charging men gives him the only clue as to what is happening.

(CONTINUED)

GRANT
(reluctant)
Hold your position. Let the
artillery do the work, no need to
sacrifice our men.

SHERIDAN
What a useless waste.

GRANT
One last gasp hoping to punch a
hole in us.

SHERIDAN
Nothings coming through our lines.

GRANT
I know.

With that Grant gives a nod to start the bombardment.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Again cannon fire breaks out in a thunderous crescendo.
Orange fireballs light up the smoke laden landscape.

Shrill cries of men dying by the droves. Willis pounds on
till finally a shell explodes nearby. The shock wave sends
him reeling.

He lands with a thud the breath knocked out of him he drifts
into unconsciousness. Some time passes Willis eyes fitter
open, his vision is blurry for a moment then it passes
coming into full focus.

He heaves air rushing into his lungs he coughs up the dirt
he has inhaled. Struggling to rise but every part of him
burns with pain. Exhausted he flops back down on the ground.

He turns to look to his side there another soldier lies
still with dead eyes starring back at him. Blood oozes from
the gaping hole in the mans head.

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

The Confederate line surges forward the **REBEL YELL**
thunderous. Hill picking up the pace.

HILL
Pour it on boys!

EXT. UNION TRENCHES - DAY

The now swollen **UNION LINE** raise what looks to be a thousand muskets over the edge of trench.

They cock their weapons aiming deadly.

EXT. GRANT'S POSITION - DAY

Grant realizing. Hill's men are doomed it's a trick.

GRANT

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

SHERIDAN

Abandoning his troops and Richmond?

GRANT

He's making a break for it. If he hooks up with Johnston the war could go on!

Grant looking through binoculars POV. The Confederates continue to charge. Hill leading them valiantly with his sword drawn in defiance against overwhelming odds.

GRANT

Damn!

EXT. BATTLEFIELD HILL'S POSITION - DAY

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

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

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

EXT. UNION TRENCHES - DAY

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

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

The smoke is hanging low. Rising up, Willis realizes he's the only one left and slips away into the bushes.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD LEE'S POSITION - DAY

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

Mack driving the mess wagon says a small silent prayer.

EXT. ROAD TO DANVILLE - DAY

Lee hangs his head low knowing his friend and the division have been wiped out. Young Bobby walks behind Traveler equally worried about his brother.

There is a rustling in the bushes to their side. Charles pulls out his revolver expecting the worst. Willis bursts through the shrubs to a relieved Bobby.

Dirty and grimy he looks like he's been through hell. Charles jumps from his horse and gives him his canteen. Willis drinks it down catching his breath.

LEE

What happened Son.

WILLIS

Theys all gone Sir.

LEE

Hill?

WILLIS

Shot from his horse he's dead.

Lee dismounts to comfort his young soldier.

LEE

You did your best.

WILLIS

Sir we can't stay here. I saw them moving heading this way.

Profound frustration comes over Lee.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Damn!

CHARLES

Trying to box us in.

LEE

We must try for Amelia

CHARLES

But that's ten miles.

LEE

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

Lee remounts Traveler and pivots calling to his men.

LEE

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

No hands go up he expected this then Bobby's hand goes up. He nudges his exhausted brother to do the same. Willis looks irritated at him but does the same raising his hand.

LEE

Thank you boys.

Bobby beams he couldn't be prouder.

LEE

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

BOBBY

Yes sir.

WILLIS

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

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

LEE

(to Longstreet)

They sometimes shine don't they General?

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET

That they do sir.

LEE

Run Boys! Run!

EXT. TELEGRAPH LINE - DAY

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

INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE DANVILLE - DAY

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

OPERATOR

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

BOBBY

Sorry sir.

WILLIS

We got orders from a General Lee.

OPERATOR

(astonished)

Lee!?

BOBBY

Yes Sir he's heading to Amelia.

WILLIS

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

OPERATOR

Why didn't you say so?

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

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

BOBBY

Thank you sir!

They turn and dash back out the door.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

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

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

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

WILLIS
(under breath)
Shit!

BOBBY
What's it mean.

WILLIS
That there is the telegraph lines.

BOBBY
You means our message won't get through?

WILLIS
We run all dis way for nothin'

The Bobby readies his weapon to fire at the troops. Willis does too then he pulls back and motions for Bobby to do the same.

WILLIS
I got a better idea come on.

The boys carefully make their retreat hidden by the tall grass.

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

BOBBY
Where we goin Willis?

WILLIS
We gonna find that train. Then Grant won't be awaiting for us at Amelia we'll intercept it along the way and resupply.

BOBBY
But we don't know where to look.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIS

It's some wheres between Appomattox
and here.

They run on headlong into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - DAY LATER

The boys struggle through eh dense underbrush. Suddenly they
hear a girl scream.

WILLIS

Hear that?

BOBBY

Yeah.

The make a beeline for the noise. The screaming is getting
louder and more horrifying. Whoever it is they are in
trouble.

Finally they reach a clearing and see the source of the
screams. Two guff looking Union men are trying to rape a
girl.

Rage immediately comes over Willis and without thinking runs
headlong into the fray. One of the men is Sargent Walshton
and he's piss drunk.

Willis tackles him the girl tries to scamper away but the
other man grabs her. Bobby comes running to the rescue. But
the other man is far larger and tosses Bobby into a tree.

Even though Walshton is drunk he quickly gets the upper hand
on Willis. He sits on top of the boy with one hand firmly
planted on Willis throat. Then draws a large knife ready to
finish the deed.

Raising it high he has an evil grin on his face. It is short
lived as musket blast rings out and a mini ball splits
Walshtons' skull wide open.

The other man stunned by this drops the girl and pulls out
his revolver. He too is quickly dropped by a sniper's
bullet.

Willis heaves the lifeless body of Walshton off of him.
Looking around he spies Henry and Able in the bushes just to
the side of him. Henry has a look of satisfaction on his
face and a still smoking musket.

Able appears more scared.

(CONTINUED)

ABLE

Damn why did you do that?

HENRY

Because he deserved it.

With trepidation they step from their hiding place. Able looks at the other dead man.

ABLE

I don't understand who killed -

His question is cut short by an equally Grimm sounding voice. One that resonates more venomous than Henry's reaction to Walshton's death.

RED

I did ya damned Nigger.

Able quickly readies his musket aiming it directly at Red.

RED

Hold on now I aint got no argument with you.

Willis remembers the girl he quickly goes to her. She is crying and her dress is torn. He then sees his brother Bobby. He attends to him first.

Bobby is shaken but not seriously injured.

WILLIS

Dummy don't do that again.

Back to the girl.

WILLIS

You alright? What's your name.

She is frightened and pulls away by suddenly being surrounded by males. Willis tries to calm her down.

WILLIS

Shush we're here to help.

GIRL

Sarah my name is Sarah they killed my Ma.

WILLIS

We can't stay here.

Willis gets her to her feet. Henry and Able are still in a stand off with Red.

(CONTINUED)

RED
You boys done way behind enemy
lines.

HENRY
We know that fool.

RED
Done killed a white officer one of
yer own you gonna hang for sure boy
no matter which side catches ya.
You got no place to run.

Willis picks up his gun in defense of the two black
soldiers.

WILLIS
They helped us.

RED
My, my what ole General Lee think
about you helping Niggers?

Red reaches to pull out his revolver. Bobby has come up from
behind him. Cocks his musket and puts it in the back of
Red's head. Red feels the barrel and returns the revolver to
his holster.

BOBBY
We's grateful, now git.

RED
(smiling)
Alright, see ya around.
(sarcastically)
yall.

He backs away slowly and disappears into the brush. The
group eases with his departure. But it is still tense
between the two groups.

WILLIS
Thank you but I think we better not
stick together.

ABLE
He's going to try and kill Lee.

Henry shoots him a look.

ABLE
Lee's going to surrender he wants
to prevent that.

BOBBY

Dats crazy.

HENRY

Look this war is over.

The news angers Bobby.

BOBBY

General Lee ain't never giving up!

Another shot rings out hitting Able directly in the heart. He stares wide eyed in astonishment and disbelief and collapses the others hit the dirt. A devilish laugh comes from the woods.

EXT. RED'S POSITION - DAY

RED

That's what's ya git fer talking
Nigger!

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Henry crawls on his belie to Able. He checks for life. Deep sorry is on Henry's face.

HENRY

You just couldn't keep quiet.

WILLIS

Come on we gotta go.

Keeping low and on the ground they flee into the bushes.

EXT. AMELIA STATION - DAY

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

LONGSTREET

Should have been here by now.

LEE

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

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET

Or the boys-

LEE

Don't say that, don't think it.

Mack pulls up beside him in kitchen wagon.

MACK

Want's sumthin to eats Mr. Robert?

LEE

No, I'll eat when my men do.

MACK

Wells at least go inside an take
yer boots off.

Lee rubbing his chest.

LEE

I think your right.

He steps down off Traveler stretching his back.

LEE

(to Longstreet)

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

LONGSTREET

General we can't stay here long.

LEE

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

LONGSTREET

And the wagons and reserve
artillery?

LEE

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

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

(CONTINUED)

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

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

STATIONMASTER

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

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

LEE

I'd gladly buy a ticket old man.

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

LEE

(to himself)

A ticket for me and my men out of
here. Anywhere-

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

LONGSTREET

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

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

STATIONMASTER

Sorry General I didn't know.

LEE

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

STATIONMASTER

Right away general.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

After a long run Willis pauses and stops the others.

WILLIS

We'll rest here a minute.

(CONTINUED)

They are all out of breath. Henry takes out his canteen and takes a swig then offers it to Bobby.

BOBBY

I ain't' gonna drink from a nigger canteen.

HENRY

Then go thirsty!

Henry then softly offers it to Sarah. She happily takes it and drinks. She then passes it to Willis. He too has no problem and takes a swig. Bobby licks his parched lips.

BOBBY

Oh alright let me have it.

He gulps it down.

HENRY

Careful you may get cooties!

They all share a laugh. Sarah takes Willis hand. She looks into his eyes tenderly, then turns her attention to Henry.

SARAH

Your not from up North are ya.

HENRY

No I'm a runaway.

BOBBY

And yer fighting down here where if the war don't kill ya, some masser will string you up for sure. Now who's dumb.

The question doesn't upset Henry he just smiles.

HENRY

Maybe. But someday this whole country gonna be free Black and White and if I can make that day come sooner by dying well so be it.

Henry takes his canteen and returns it to his belt. He looks puzzled at Bobby.

HENRY

Now I's knows you too young to have slaves why ya fightin?

WILLIS

We're brothers we ain't never had slaves.

SARAH

Me neither.

HENRY

Then why fight?

BOBBY

The army is home.

SARAH

Seems like there's a better way to settle things without all this. You come down here and destroy our lives.

HENRY

People don't change unless forced.

EXT. ROAD UNION CAVALRY POSITION - DAY

A Brigade of Union Cavalry is probing west. A Union CAPTAIN scans ahead with his binoculars. A short distance away he spots Lee's Army hobbling towards Amelia.

With it is the long wagon train of what's left of the reserve artillery. The Union CAPTAIN realizing what he has come across sounds off.

CAPTAIN

Alright! Looks like we have Lee's artillery.

EXT. ROAD CONFEDERATE POSITION - DAY

The Confederates are caught off guard as the Union Cavalry plow into them. They try and put up a resistance.

EXT. WOODS WILLIS AND GROUPS POSITION - DAY

The group scurries through woods and hears the fight, they come up on it slow. Peering over grass they see the artillery and other confederates in danger of being overrun.

WILLIS

This day jus keeps getting better and better.

(CONTINUED)

He turns desperate to Bobby.

WILLIS

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

Still holding Sarah's hand he looks into her eyes.

WILLIS

You need to go with him.

SARAH

I can't I'm not leaving you.

WILLIS

Shush. Me and Henry here got a job
to do

BOBBY

Where you a going?

Willis glances at Henry who understands

WILLIS

Gotta find Red and stop him.

BOBBY

What, how?

WILLIS

You get this don't ya Henry?

HENRY

It's personal for me.

EXT. AMELIA STATION - DAY

Bobby stumbles out of the woods with Sarah in tow. Both of
them out of breath they run up to Lee.

Lee looks curiously at the Sarah.

LEE

Where did yo come from child?

BOBBY

It's a long story, listen General
sir!

LEE

Yes son.

(CONTINUED)

BOBBY

Sir the Yankees done cut the lines,
and pounced on the artillery
wagons.

LEE

Alright tell me the size of the
force, where?

BOBBY

Jus cavalry sir, west of here a
couple miles.

Lee looking at Traveler anger welling in him.

LONGSTREET

What are you thinking General?

LEE

We need to asses the situation.

LONGSTREET

But sir!

LEE

Now General!

The old Lee shining through tough and resilient. He hops on
Traveler and looks down at Bobby and Sarah.

LEE

You two stay here.

BOBBY

But general Sir I can take you.

LEE

(harsher)

No stay here.

Bobby looks crushed hanging his head. Lee steps back off and
kneels to Bobby.

LEE

Son your my best trooper look after
the girl. If anything happens your
my rear guard.

Bobby smiles confidently. Longstreet barks orders to the
rest of the troops to move out.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

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

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

EXT. LEE'S POSITION - DAY

Lee racing with his force to the rescue. Coming to a stop he sits up and looks through his binoculars.

Troops are being led away and his cannons and supplies destroyed.

He is furious at the situation and clutches at chest.

Lee wobbles in the saddle, dizzy Longstreet extends arm to prop him up.

LONGSTREET

General?

Lee recovering.

LEE

I'm fine, where does the road lead?

LONGSTREET

To Appomattox.

LEE

Excellent there is a bridge between us and the Union lines if we can get there first then destroy it the swollen river will buy us time to get away.

LONGSTREET

But sir if we do that the rest of our force will be trapped on this side.

LEE

It's a chance we'll have to take.

EXT. GENERAL MEADE'S POSITION - DAY

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

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

MEADE

Report.

LIEUTENANT

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

MEADE

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

He leans over to his aide.

MEADE

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

The aide salutes and speeds off.

EXT. LEE'S POSITION - DAY

The day is fading fast twilight is upon them. A weary confederate scout makes his way up to Lee.

LEE

What is this!

SCOUT

(out of breath)

A sizable force is moving in.

Lee concerned.

LEE

What strength.

SCOUT

At least a corp.

LEE

That would be Meade.

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET

We can take that general.

LEE

(cunning)

Meade will be cautious and take his time and not attack at night. Like at Gettysburg when he could have destroyed this army. He'll bring up reinforcements first.

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

He indicates to Longstreet to look.

LEE

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

A twinkle in Lee's eye.

LEE

We need to out distance them. I have faith in your abilities old friend. Probe south for a quicker route.

LONGSTREET

I'll find a way.

INT. MEADE'S FIELD TENT - NIGHT

A small oil lantern illuminates the tent with Meade hovering over a Map spread before him with his officers surrounding him.

Outside the S/O troops moving in. Meade points to a bridge on the map.

MEADE

He wants this bridge, we'll deny him of that. I propose we attack at dawn.

A young OFFICER speaks up

OFFICER

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

(CONTINUED)

MEADE

(interrupting)

Son he's beaten and exhausted.
Believe me he's not going anywhere.

(beat)

His arrogance will make him stand
and fight and we will crush him.

Meade slams fist down on map.

EXT. AMELIA STATION - NIGHT

Mack hurries making meals trying to feed as many men as possible.

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

MACK

I's sorry boys.

BOBBY

Don't be.

MACK

You should'a be at home barely
outta diapers.

Some of the other soldiers laugh at the remark.

BOBBY

I cans shoot as good as any y'all.

Sarah takes her plate and she and Bobby go and sit on the front stoop of the station.

BOBBY

It's usually pretty good.

SARAH

Anything is better than nothing.

BOBBY

I's sorry bout all dis.

Sarah is scarfing down her food like a wild animal.

BOBBY

I'll be over soon Ole Lee gonna
whoop em.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

Then where will I go? My Mama's
dead so's my Dad. I don't know
where my brother is.

BOBBY

Any other kin?

SARAH

No just me,

BOBBY

I ain't got nobody except Willis.

SARAH

He's cute.

BOBBY

Not as cute as me.

They both laugh in a moment of respite. Then gunfire erupts
at the edge of camp. Sporadic at his then it turns into a
full barrage of musketry and cannon fire.

The two kids throw down their plates as Mack comes running
up.

MACK

Come on we's gotta go.

Bobby takes the lead with his experience in battle coming
through. Grabbing Sara's hand they keep low.

BOOM!, BOOM! BOOM!

Men are blown sky high around them in the darkness.
Confusion reigns as Lee's forces disintegrate in disarray.

The three keep close till they reach the opposite end of the
camp and the woods. Desperately they try and get away
jumping down a hill that leads to the rushing **APPOMATTOX
RIVER.**

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

Mack's age holds him back but he keeps up sliding on his
butt through the muddy leaves. The hill provides them
protection from the hell above. The gunfire is fainter as
they distance themselves.

Bobby scans the river for signs of an easier crossing but
there is none.

(CONTINUED)

BOBBY
Gawd Dammit.

MACK
Mr. Bobby watch yous language!

Bobby rolls his eyes at the reprimand. Sarah's eyes widen at the site of the torrential flood of water.

BOBBY
We just gonna have to hold onto one another tight.

SARAH
I can't swim.

BOBBY
(incredulous)
What you kiddin?

SARAH
Not a lick.

BOBBY
Well maybe it ain't deep.

Sarah grips his and Mack's hand tight as they form a human chain. Bobby steps into the freezing water. He shivers as his bare feet touch the icy bottom.

Slowly they begin to forge across. They begin to sink as the river comes up around their waists. On Bobby it is a little higher. He strains trying to hold Sarah. She begins to panic.

BOBBY
Be still I can't hold ya.

SARAH
We're gonna die!

BOBBY
No we not look we's almost there.

Sarah looks and sees the shore but her foot slips on a slick river rock and she tumbles away.

She pulls Bobby and Mack with her as they careen through the rapids. She flails her arms in desperation as she is separated from their grip.

Bobby quickly assesses the situation he sees a log protruding over the rushing river. Taking the initiative he swims with the current and reaches it before the others.

(CONTINUED)

He grabs hold of the wet wood just in time to catch Sarah as she comes by. Mack grabs the wood right behind her. Now stopped from being swept away Bobby hoists himself up on to the log. Mack positions himself to push Sarah up into his arms.

Bobby sets her on the log. With her safe he helps Mack up. and they climb to shore.

Wet and shivering they have no choice but to keep moving till they can dry out enough to make a fire.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP NIGHT

Lee looks sorrowful and surprised hearing the battle in the distance. He walks over to join some of his men eating the little rations they have. He sits down amongst them like a father joining his sons.

A starry eyed confederate SOLDIER asks politely.

SOLDIER

When we a going home general.

The other men shush him.

LEE

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

Lee takes a sip of coffee. The sounds of the battle not far away

LEE

I don't know.

SOLDIER

But spring plantin is a coming up.

LEE

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

Another Soldier grumpy is not so optimistic.

GRUMPY SOLDIER

No disrespect general sir but them Yankees right behind us and we ain't fit to fight.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

None taken. We must keep moving.

SOLDIER

Yes sir! You can count on me.

LEE

(a little smile)

You boys wouldn't complain if your feet were on fire.

The other soldiers manage some laughs.

LEE

Okay you boys eat up we're pulling out.

The boys devour their food as Lee excuses himself.

EXT. LEE'S POSITION CAMP - NIGHT

He sits down by a tree to think. His back is illuminated by the campfires. Lee drifts off to sleep.

EXT. WASHINGTON - DAY (FLASH BACK)

The war is over there are cheering crowds everywhere. Close on a pair of gray eyes that we immediately recognize they are Robert E. Lee's. A tear drips down his cheek.

Pulling back he is sitting in an open wagon. His arms and legs are in chains and shackles. Armed Union guards are driving the team of horses. Two Union soldiers are on either side of the wagon also armed.

They are heading straight down Pennsylvania Avenue the Capital looms large in front of the wagon.

Throngs of angry mobs line the street and toss garbage at Lee and the wagon. A rotten tomato hits Lee square in the chest. Soiling the white night shirt which the only garment he has on.

He's a war criminal and being humiliated. This is what happens to traitors. Then he spies the gallows erected right on the second elevation of the Capital steps going up into the great building.

There are hundreds of thousands there to witness this. The wagon stops at the foot of the steps.

(CONTINUED)

The guards quickly come around and manhandle him tossing him out of the wagon. Lee tumbles hitting his head drawing blood. A woman from the crowd cries out Lee turns it's his wife Martha.

MARTHA

Mercy!

A union soldier intervenes hitting her in the head with the butt of his gun. She fall down lifeless. Lee screams.

LEE

No!

His plea is ignored as he's dragged up the steps. Smoke drifts across the scene. As Lee gets to the gallows he looks to his right.

To his horror out on the main lawn thousands of confederate troops are rounded up like so much cattle. Groups are being led from their pens and are being line up in front of firing squads.

Hundreds at a time are mowed down. Then their bodies are being dragged to large funeral pyres. Dozens of the grim bonfires burn with piled up bodies.

He walks up the steps to the awaiting hangman. Standing there is Abraham Lincoln. He is holding a large Bible.

LINCOLN

It didn't have to be this way
Robert.

The hangman steps forward with a scroll of paper unfurled.

HANGMAN

Robert E. Lee the people of the
United States have found you guilty
of the crime of high treason. Your
sentence is death. Do you have
anything to say?

LEE

I'm sorry.

The benevolent Lincoln then turns blood red with anger.

LINCOLN

Sorry! Sorry! For ending a million
lives and almost destroying this
nation!

Then another voice calmer and more sympathetic Lee turns to his side and Jackson is standing there.

JACKSON

Never has a general been so loved
by his troops.

LEE

I have gotten them all killed.

JACKSON

Only if you let it. End this
Robert.

Lincoln throws down his Bible and pushes the hangman aside. He takes the noose himself and wraps around Lee's neck. He secures it tightly. Then steps to the trap door releasing the lever and yanks it back.

Lee drops out of sight.

FLASHBACK ENDS

Lee wakes up with a start. Sweat pouring down his face. Disoriented he looks around. All is normal the war still goes on.

INT. GRANT'S TENT - NIGHT

Grant is huddled over his command map with Sheridan. Opening the flap of the tent Meade enters. Grant raises up with a look of dissatisfaction on his face.

GRANT

Why didn't attack in force?

MEADE

It was not my idea to attack at
all!

SHERIDAN

How many did you encounter.

MEADE

Four maybe five thousand.

GRANT

Only a token force but predictable.

SHERIDAN

My scouts indicate Lee's split into
three groups. One which we
encountered at Amelia. The other

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SHERIDAN (cont'd)

two the south and Lee himself with his main body up north, we don't know where yet.

Grant studies the map and sees the bridge. His face crestfallen, he points his finger to it.

GRANT

Another diversion.

SHERIDAN

He hopes to reach the bridge then blow it leaving us to founder on the opposite side.

Grant pulls a cigar from his pocket and lights it thinking.

GRANT

We won't chase him like he wants.

MEADE

But sir we could out flank them and get there before dawn!

GRANT

True enough. Send a third of your force to do just that.

Sheridan looks at Grant getting it. Then points to the map.

Close on his finger drifting over a point. On the map it reads **SAILORS CREEK.**

SHERIDAN

But I'll catch his rear guard. They'll be slow crossing here at Sailors Creek.

GRANT

That will be Kershaw and Ewells divisions. A Third of Lee's army.

MEADE

I see deny him his strength. Take him apart piecemeal.

GRANT

Box him in try and save the bridge if you can. Lets try an persuade him to surrender before there's more bloodshed.

Hope is in Grant's eyes.

(CONTINUED)

GRANT
Divide and conquer.

Sheridan and Grant lean on the table their faces reflecting confidence.

EXT. SAILORS CREEK - DAY

The road is clogged with the retreating Confederate army. A Confederate Officer rides up onto the scene with his beleaguered troops.

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

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

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

He notices how wagons are knee deep in mud.

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

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

SERGEANT
Blessed Mother! Come on you
bastard!

OFFICER
We need to clear this!

SERGEANT
Well if he can do any better, get
down here.

OFFICER
Now Sergeant!

SERGEANT
Look-

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

The Confederates try desperately to disperse. On the slopes they are in a precarious position.

(CONTINUED)

They are cut down like clay pigeons at target practice.

Confederates fall into the creek some drowning some not able to swim.

The equipment wagons are a sitting ducks. Troops fight vainly to save what they can.

A Confederate SOLDIER crouches behind wagon wheel trying to load a musket. The rain is thunderous masking the battle noise.

The Union pours it on a thousand muskets disseminate them. The officer raises his sword to rally his men.

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

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

A bullet strikes the officers horse sending it bolting it throws him into mud. Standing up and realizing it's hopeless he calls out. A desperate cry for mercy.

OFFICER

Cease Fire! Cease Fire!

In a symbolic gesture he throws the sword into the creek and drops to his knees. The Union troops opposite him sees and hears his cries and they too cease fire. It's over.

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

The Union troops quickly round them up.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Further behind this the last of Lee's army is led by **GENERAL EWELL** an old battle horse. The last of the supply wagons slog slowly through the mud.

He is Lee's rear guard the last point of defense to cover Lee's retreat He rides along high in his saddle despite the loss of one leg.

Then a slow rumble is heard and the ground shakes slightly.

Alerting Ewell he calls to his men.

(CONTINUED)

EWELL
Defensive positions!

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

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

Sheridan forces pull back.

EWELL
Make your way forward.

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

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

The Cavalry hits the flanks of Ewell's position and they disintegrate. Confederates fight valiantly some hand to hand.

Seeing more and more Union heading at them they reach the inevitable conclusion and with a sudden realization, they drop their muskets.

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

Union troops rush to him and take gently take down from his horse. The rest of his force raises their hands as well.

EXT. WILLIS AND HENRY'S POSITION - DAY

Rain has set in masking their movements they keep low in the bushes out of sight. Coming up to a rise they peer down and see Confederate forces surrendering in droves.

Willis is brought to tears Henry's reaction solemn.

HENRY
I never thought I'd see the like.

WILLIS
Damn what will happen to us?

A single shot rings out and a puff of mud splatters Henry's face. The sound of it is heard by the boys even as a crack of thunder breaks from the heavens.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Shit what was that.

WILLIS

It's Red he's not gonna give up.

HENRY

We're close.

WILLIS

He's taunting us my guess we ain't
been tracking him he's been
tracking us!

EXT. WOODS WILLIS POSITION - DAY

Morning is breaking through cold gray landscape. A slight drizzle begins. Willis and Henry running and prone to the earth. They move like gazelles as they dart through the brush.

Like hunters stalking a deer moving fast but cautiously. Willis is in his element. He halts Henry stopping and listening.

There is movement up ahead of them they begin to move laterally to it. The terrain is getting steeper as the climb the small mountain.

EXT. MOUNTAIN REDS POSITION - DAY

Red climbs with his hands and feet his musket slung over his shoulder. The craggy rocks provide good footholds for his ascent.

Searching to better his position near his target. From the sounds below there is an army on the move. He reaches a small precipice for a good vantage point.

With his scope attached to his musket he peers down. Through the lens are nothing but Grey uniforms. He spots Longstreet through viewfinder he scans the crowd.

The rain begins to pour the water obscures his view.

He lowers the musket disgusted then something is running towards him. But it's hidden by the bush. He brings his musket up smooth and quick, waits, then a hint of blue.

Then something else. Peering through the scope he finally sees it the muzzle of a musket trained on him! He moves quick as Willis fires just missing his head. The bullet splinters the tree next to him.

EXT. MOUNTAIN WILLIS POSITION - DAY

Smoke from Willis musket blast clears. Red's gone. He almost shape-shifted, it happened so quickly it's mystical.

Henry is anxious for a report.

HENRY

Did you get em?

From Willis no inflection. He gestures for Henry to stay where he is. The significance is very ominous to him. With Willis taking the first shot they have given away their position.

Red will take advantage of that. They're in danger. Rain begins to pelt them relentlessly it becomes a torrent. The earth is now a slippery quagmire of fallen leaves and mud.

The boys have to move but they are near an edge which is a shear drop off opposite of Red. Henry tries to maneuver but the dirt ledge gives way under the flood.

He drops his musket it plummets twenty feet to the bottom. Righting himself he overcompensates and loses his balance.

As he falls he manages to grab hold of a rock it starts to dislodge under his weight. Willis sees him about to lose it. But if he moves he will come out from his cover and vulnerable to a sniper shot from Red.

EXT. MOUNTAIN REDS POSITION - DAY

A trained killer Red positions himself for a shot. Through the scope he sees Henry dangling. An easy shot he waits for two targets.

EXT. MOUNTAIN WILLIS POSITION - DAY

Willis is helpless hunched into the mud. He's frightened but if he doesn't do something Henry will fall.

Moment of truth he rises quickly and slightly to grab Henry

(CONTINUED)

HENRY
(Shaking his head no)
Don't do it.

Too late Willis goes for it.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RED'S POSITION - DAY

He smiles a toothless grin.

RED
Gotcha now.

He fires.

EXT. WILLIS POSITION - DAY

The bullet catches Willis in the forearm - lucky

But the force of the impact creates a momentum that propels him into Henry. Both tumble away against the slick slope and fall end over end. There is enough of an incline to break most of their fall. But the rocks below are another problem.

The boys slam into the half buried boulders ruffing them up. Willis screams in agony as the busted forearm breaks. The bone punches through the skin.

EXT. REDS POSITION - DAY

Satisfied with his work and that his pursuers are out of commission he heads on to finish finding his ultimate target Lee.

EXT. HOLLOW - DAY

Now in the small valley region between the two low mountains the two of them writhe in pain. Henry manages to stand up and shaking off the fall.

Willis is in terrible shape and blood spews from his wound. Henry is quick and takes his belt strap and wraps it around his arm to stop the bleeding. It works, he examines Willis condition.

HENRY
Damn we gonna have to set that.

Willis is in no condition to argue.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIS

Just do it Gawd Dammit!

Henry moves him to a boulder and sets him up getting him comfortable. He looks around and grabs some broken limbs to use as splints and breaks a twig for Willis to bite down on placing it in his mouth.

HENRY

Bite down hard don't scream.

Willis understands. Then Henry takes the arm and yanks. The crunch turns his stomach. The bone slides into place and Willis eyes roll over as he passes out from the pain.

Henry finishes dressing the arm.

EXT. GRANT'S HEADQUARTERS TENT - DAY

Sheridan gallops up on his horse to Grant standing in front of of his tent. Sheridan jumps off his horse almost giddy with pleasure.

SHERIDAN

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

(beat)

We've captured half of Lee's army.
It worked General.

Grant is in utter amazement his cigar drops from his mouth.

SHERIDAN

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

GRANT

(reflective)

Could be the beginning, keep the pressure on.

SHERIDAN

Yes Sir!

Sheridan remounts his horse and quickly departs.

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Bobby has made a small fire and Sarah and Mack huddle around it warming themselves.

Sarah begins to cough she doesn't look good. Mack reaches over to feel her temple.

MACK
She's a burning up.

Bobby thinking making a plan. His face is panic stricken.

BOBBY
Can you help her?

MACK
Not out here.

BOBBY
We gotta move then.

MACK
Mr. Bobby she's gonna need a doctor.

BOBBY
You mean one of them Yankee doctors?

Sarah hears them and goes hysterical.

SARAH
No!No! don't leave me!

MACK
It's de only way honey.

BOBBY
You just wanna git rid of her.

Mack explaining.

MACK
Nawsir we needs a horse. I'll stay and tend to Miss Sarah. But you needs to hurry!

Bobby grabs more wood for the fire and builds it up. He then tenderly bends down and takes Sarah hand.

(CONTINUED)

BOBBY

You're gonna be okay Mack here
gonna take care ya whiles I go get
help.

Sarah smiles weakly. Mack looks at him hopefully.

BOBBY

I be back quick as I can.

The rain is starting to lift as Bobby scurries away.

EXT. BRIDGE - EARLY MORNING

Lee's Army reaches the Bridge Crossing the Appomattox. He has a look of relief on his face. Sitting in the saddle has stiffened him up. He gets down gingerly.

His beleaguered army files past him. Lee looks a little more confident as his men parade past him crossing bridge.

With a few moments to spare he sits down on a log. Alone with his thoughts he admires them.

He takes out a small journal and pencil to compose a letter

He writes.

LEE (V.O.)

Dearest Wife. This terrible
adventure drags on. I do not see a
foreseeable end.

He stops in recompense then begins again.

LEE (V.O.)

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

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

He dons his hat and gloves as the men pass in front of him giving him encouragement.

They shout:

Come on General we got to get on the hump.

(CONTINUED)

Can't be sitting around General.

Don't worry we ain't done yet.

They keep marching ever resilient, unrestrained and confident.

LEE
(to himself)
We ain't done yet.

The air is bright and crisp from the night rain. Too the side of the bridge Lee's horse Traveler is gentle grazing on what little grass there is.

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

LEE
Eat up old friend we have a long way to go.

Traveler has had his fill and raises up almost shaking head in affirmation. He snuggles Lee's face almost reassuring him.

LEE
I know. We'll rest soon.

Lee lost in thought gently strokes Traveler's nose.

LEE
There now you alright?

A voice comes up from behind him it's Jackson again. Lee doesn't look up he isn't startled this time. It's a haunting he's become accustomed to. Almost welcoming.

JACKSON
Yes we are.

LEE
I could always count on you too.

JACKSON
(a little chuckle)
Don't equate me with the horse.

Ghostly humor, slightly unnerving for Lee.

LEE
You know what I meant.

JACKSON
The boys never complained Robert.
(pause)
They don't now.

LEE
I know.

JACKSON
Did you ever wonder Robert. Exactly
what we're fighting for?

LEE
To protect our homes from invaders.

JACKSON
Invaders? Four years ago you called
them neighbors and fiends.

LEE
That was before.

Lee mounts Traveler tired of the conversation. The voice of Jackson continues echoing through the wind.

JACKSON
Not Once in four years did you ever
call them the enemy.

Lee stares blankly at a loss for words.

JACKSON
You called them Those People over
there. Why is that?

LEE
I - I?

JACKSON
Because you never really did.
Robert your a good man. Look at
your men General.

LEE
But-

JACKSON
You remember your Shakespeare
Robert?

Jackson's voice fades to nothing but the sound of the wind. Holding the reigns and bowing his head he remembers and recites out loud.

LEE

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

(beat)

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

EXT. BRIDGE - EARLY MORNING

The rear guard of Longstreet's men set demolition charges.

A **LOOKOUT** keeps a watchful eye out. The gray mist rising from the river makes visibility difficult.

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

Finally breaking through mist are Union troops.

Charging at full gallop straight towards them. The **LOOKOUT** readies and aims his musket. **BAM!** a bullet from a Union sharpshooter from the opposite bank rips through his skull.

The Confederate troops put up a tough defense. But Union Calvary keep up their charge.

A confederate soldier manages to set and light one of the dynamite charges. It is a short fuse he dives for cover to the side of the bridge.

It explodes but as the smoke clears the damage is negligible.

More of the demolition teams are cut down by musket fire. They drop into the swirling Appomattox River below.

The Calvary horsemen leap over and the defending Confederate lines.

They hack at the defenders some of their heads come off.

A vicious assault by desperate soldiers wishing to end the war.

Slowly the musket fire subsides and confederate soldiers give up.

EXT. LONGSTREET'S POSITION OPPOSITE SIDE OF BRIDGE - DAY

Longstreet watches the disaster through his binoculars. The gun smoke and mist give the appearance of a boiling inferno. He sees the Union troops holding the bridge and his troops with their hands in the air.

There is nothing he can do but leave before more Union troops arrive.

EXT. LEE'S POSITION ROAD - DAY

With his half of the army across river Lee breaths a little easier. Lee riding Traveler gently moves among his men.

He hears their bellies rumble from lack of food.

LEE

Don't worry boys there's supplies ahead.

Lee stops for a moment getting off Traveler and resting. He holds his hand on his chest its hurting and he's out of breath. He leans on a tree out of sight of troops.

Lee holds his chest.

LEE

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

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

LONGSTREET (O.S.)

General Lee, General Lee.

Lee regains composure hearing the urgency in Longstreet's voice. He steps out from behind tree.

LEE

Here Sir.

Longstreet gallops up to him and jumps off his horse.

LONGSTREET

Sir! Sir! - I

LEE

Easy what is it?

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET

Kershaw! He-

Longstreet can hardly utter the words his eyes and expression say it all.

LEE

How bad?

LONGSTREET

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

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

LEE

Where is Gordon?

LONGSTREET

I lost my scouts he's ahead
somewhere.

LEE

I knew the army was spread to thin.
Grant realized this.

(beat pause)

It's not your fault. What about the
bridge?

LONGSTREET

Sir?

LEE

You did destroy it?

LONGSTREET

No Sir. We tried but the Union
Calvary prevented us from
finishing.

Lee raises up agitated. He pounds fist on tree. Charles
Lee's aide steps off his horse to offer a bit of comfort to
the news of the disaster.

Lee will have none of that demanding action.

LEE

I need to survey the situation.

LONGSTREET

They captured the rest of the
supplies.

(CONTINUED)

LEE
Show me where commander.

LONGSTREET
Sir?

CHARLES
I must protest Sir we-
Lee cuts them short and roars.

LEE
NOW commanders.

The three ride in the direction of the battle.

EXT. HILL OVERLOOKING SAILORS CREEK - DAY

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

EXT. LEE'S POSITION - DAY

Surveying with binoculars Lee has to choke back the tears.

LEE
Is my army dissolved?

Longstreet summons up the nerve as does Charles.

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

CHARLES
Their commander has not yet
conceded has he?

LEE
No.

LONGSTREET
Will you allow me to place my men?

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

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

EXT. HILL OVER APPOMATTOX ROAD - DAY

Lee sits atop Traveler he holds the Confederate Battle Flag to his side. Charles is beside him on his mount.

Longstreet approaches returning with survivors from the **SAILORS CREEK DISASTER**. Lee's voice is trembling.

LEE

Half my army is destroyed.

CHARLES

Give me the flag Sir.

LEE

Whole divisions have been wiped out.

Longstreet joins the small group.

LONGSTREET

General we need you now more than ever.

CHARLES

The matter is at hand sir.

Resolute Lee hands Charles the flag. He straightens up in the saddle. Pulling out his binoculars he rides down amongst his men.

Carrying binoculars in right hand his head erect, his gestures more likened to the man who once led his troops to victory. A hunter returning to his game.

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

The sight of him rises a tumult from them.

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

THE SOUNDS OF THE MEN CALLING OUT:

It's General Lee!

Uncle Robert!

Where's the man that wont follow Uncle Robert.

EXT. ROAD WEST OF APPOMATTOX - NIGHT

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

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

Longstreet beckons the men on somewhat tyrannically.

LONGSTREET

You want to sleep and die or fight
and eat!

General Gordon has rejoined them with his division. He surveys the men's plight along with Longstreet.

GORDON

This is pointless. They can't
stand, much less fight. We must
approach Lee.

Longstreet eyes him with a bit of disdain in his eyes.

EXT. ROAD APPOMATTOX BEHIND LEE'S POSITION - NIGHT

Sheridan examines the abandoned carts and wagons. Personal items along with cook wear have all been discarded by the fleeing Confederates.

SHERIDAN

(to aide)

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

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

INT. GORDON'S TENT - NIGHT

Rain drips through the flimsy cloth tent the floor is a puddle of mud. A single lantern lights interior. Gordon wrights out a proposal.

Longstreet enters slapping rain off himself in a highly disgruntled state.

LONGSTREET

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

(CONTINUED)

Gordon stands straight away and cuts to the chase.

GORDON
Perhaps both sir.

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

Longstreet sits down on a barrel shaking off the chill.

GORDON
No riddle General, it's over.

LONGSTREET
(disbelieving his ears)
What did you say?!

Gordon steps up and repeats.

GORDON
You heard me, we're done Pete.

LONGSTREET
I'll be damned if that's so.

GORDON
Surrender is the only option.

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

Gordon approaches Longstreet in almost a pleading fashion.

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

LONGSTREET
(incensed)
We have been in dire situations far
worse than this. Now that your
tired and a little wet you think
all hope is lost. What about Lee?
He's lost his home, Virginia is
laid waste. Who are we to give up
now. You know a rope probably
awaits all our necks if we give up.

GORDON
You don't know that.

(CONTINUED)

LONGSTREET

Look at your history General,
traitors are usually hung.

With that Longstreet puts his soaking hat back on and departs. Gordon stares bemused at Longstreet's attitude.

INT. LEE'S TENT - NIGHT

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

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

LEE

NO! To the right! Thomas!

He sits up with a start eyes wide staring looking around, coming back to reality. Charles always attentive steps into the tent

CHARLES

Alright Sir?

LEE

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

Lee hoists his legs over the cot and sits up. Bent over he runs his hands through his hair.

CHARLES

You'd feel better if you ate.

LEE

I doubt that, we've been over this
before. I eat when the men eat.
Appomattox isn't far.

INT. LEE'S TENT - MORNING

Lee with his head in his hands. He exhales the long sigh of a man exhausted and tries to stand.

Charles has been with him all night. He rises quickly to help his General. Lee waves him off eyeing the lantern on the field desk illuminating the **WET BATTLEFIELD MAPS**.

The rain has caused the ink on them to run smudging the paper.

(CONTINUED)

He picks one of the maps to examine it. But the names of towns and battle plans are hopelessly blurred.

LEE

Now the heavens are denying my eyes.

CHARLES

You don't know that.

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

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

LEE

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

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

From Lee's **POV** the beleaguered Army trudges by.

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

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

The soldier marches on.

EXT. RED'S POSITION - DAY

The surly confederate shuffles through the undergrowth. Peering through he sees the Union army in mass forming up in a field beyond.

He keeps hidden as soldiers march past his position.

Taking out his compass he checks his direction. On it the needle points North. He then pulls out a flask of whiskey and takes a drink getting drunk.

RED

(to himself)

Well you boys moving right that means Ole Lee is a heading to Appomattox.

Red smiles now having a direction to go on. As quiet as a church mouse he steals away.

EXT. WOODS MACK'S POSITION - DAY

Mack has managed to make a small lean two to keep the rain off of them. Sarah's condition is worsening. Mack tries to keep her warm with a fire. She has a hacking cough.

There is no blanket so he snuggles up beside her to provide heat from his body.

MACK

Don't worry Miss Mr. Bobby be backs directly.

He feels her forehead she's burning up. Worry in his eyes.

EXT. HENRY'S POSITION - DAY

Henry and Willis keep moving they come across a broken branch. Still on the trail of Red.

Willis is a good tracker but struggling to keep up.

WILLIS

He's been through here.

HENRY

How you know its him.

Willis indicates Union troops in the distance.

WILLIS

Yankees are sticking to de roads. He stopped here to check direction.

HENRY

So wheres he heading.

WILLIS

Appomattox there's plenty good sniper spots round there.

Willis can't stand anymore he begins to faint from loss of blood and the pain. Henry catches him and props him up against a tree.

WILLIS

Yous' got to go on leave me.

HENRY

Oh hell no you dumb reb.

Henry has a moment of realization.

(CONTINUED)

HENRY

Friends don't leave one another
behind.

WILLIS

(a smile)
You'll be faster.

HENRY

(determined)
Ah shut up. I can't track him.

He throws Willis arm over his shoulder and hoists him to his feet. Willis winces in pain.

EXT. APPOMATTOX STATION - DAY

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

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

EXT. UNION POSITION - DAY

A brigade has been paralleling the railroad line in the woods. A **UNION CAPTAIN** stops at the head of his column. He pauses seeing something and looks through his binoculars. Through them he sees the supply train.

A slight smirk comes across his face.

CAPTAIN

This should be easy.

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

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

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

The Union troops slam into the small force of Confederates, they give up and drop their weapons.

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

(CONTINUED)

The Union troops quickly cordon off the supply trains. The Captain calls for a runner.

CAPTAIN

Take word to Sheridan. We have
their supplies.

The Runner salutes turns on his horse and gallops away.

EXT. ROAD TO APPOMATTOX - DAY

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

SHERIDAN

Headaches again?

GRANT

They never end.

Grant reaches into his pocket and pulls out a pill bottle. He upends it in his mouth. He grimaces swallowing hard.

SHERIDAN

That's not candy.

GRANT

Don't patronize me.

From ahead comes the runner. He gallops to a halt and salutes and hands the note to Grant.

Grant takes it quickly.

GRANT

We have the last of Lee's supplies.

SHERIDAN

This should force his hand.

GRANT

Maybe, but let's air on cautions
side. Ride to Meade and tell him to
keep up the pressure.

The Runner and Sheridan ride away on their respective missions. Alone Grant gets off his horse.

He pats his horse **CINCINNATI**. Speaking to him softly.

(CONTINUED)

GRANT
(to Cincinnati)
Old friend I pray it's about over.

Cincinnati bobs his head up and down seemingly agreeing with him. Grant lets him graze.

He sits down on a nearby stone and takes out a pencil and notepad from his pocket. He begins to compose a letter.

GRANT (O.S.)
General Lee-

EXT. BOBBY'S POSITION WOODS - DAY

Keeping low he sees it's clearing up ahead the road comes into view. He hears the sound of a horse roughing it's hooves.

The horse nays sensing his approach. Bobby is cautious as he creeps up. He doesn't see anyone.

BOBBY
(quietly to himself)
Must have gotten loose.

Emboldened he steps into the clearing. As he does he disturbs General Grant. The site of him startles Bobby who was not expecting to see anyone.

Bobby quickly assumes a defensive stance and levels his weapon at Grant.

Grant calmly stands with his arms outstretched.

GRANT
I'm unarmed son.

Bobby's nerves are shattered. But Grant's voice is soothing and fatherly.

BOBBY
Jus be still I only needs the
horse.

GRANT
Sure.

BOBBY
I could shoot you.

(CONTINUED)

GRANT

You can but that would be the wrong thing to do.

BOBBY

How can you be sure.

GRANT

General Lee wouldn't like it.

BOBBY

He ain't here, I's got a sick girl friend because one of you Yankees tried to force himself on her.

The news angers Grant.

GRANT

Who? I'll have him hung!

BOBBY

Don't worry I kilt him.

Bobby eases as the horse nudges him.

GRANT

He likes you.

BOBBY

What's his name.

GRANT

Cincinnati.

Bobby has a look of recognition.

BOBBY

I know you, you's Grant!

Bobby raises his gun itching to shoot.

BOBBY

I kill and you the wars over!

GRANT

No son it will go on.

Tears are streaming down Bobby's cheeks.

BOBBY

Cause a you I lost my family and I don't know where my brother is.

(CONTINUED)

GRANT

No the war caused that and I aim to stop it.

Bobby can't bring himself to fire. He is having a complete meltdown. He throws the gun down. More little boy now than soldier. Grant steps to him and kneels down understanding.

GRANT

But we can stop it together.

Grants blue eyes speak to Bobby's' Grant takes a handkerchief and wipes Bobby's tears.

EXT. MACK'S POSITION - DAY

Mack lies prone dozing next to a sleeping Sarah.

A **UNION PATROL** stumbles into their camp. They see a black man next to a white girl whose clothes are ripped

There is immediate assumption on their part.

They grab up Mack startling him.

UNION SOLDIER 1

What ya do Nigger?!

UNION SOLDIER 2

It's obvious.

UNION SOLDIER 3

String him up.

Shouts from the other men.

Kill him!

He done raped her!

Sarah is stirred awake confused by all the commotion. She sees the soldiers and starts screaming incoherently.

A soldier throws a rope over a nearby limb and quickly makes a noose.

MACK

No's wait!

The soldiers don't listen and put it around his throat then tie his hands. They begin to hoist him into the air. Mack gasps for breath.

(CONTINUED)

A shot rings out and Grant rides up with Bobby sitting behind in the saddle holding his smoking musket.

GRANT

Put that man down!

The soldiers immediately comply. From behind him comes a surgical wagon. A **DOCTOR** in white jumps down to help Sarah. Mack drops to his knees as Bobby climbs down off Cincinnati.

Bobby goes to check Mack.

BOBBY

You okay?

MACK

Fine Mr. Bobby fine.

Bobby turns to Sarah the Doctor is having trouble getting close enough to make an examination. Bobby consoles her.

BOBBY

(shush)

They's here to help.

SARAH

(weakly)

I knew you'd come back.

Bobby strokes her fine blond hair there is reassurance in his eyes. She accepts the doctors help.

An orderly comes with a stretcher and they load Sarah into the medical wagon. Grant approaches Bobby and Mack.

GRANT

I need you to get this to General Lee.

Grant hands Mack a folded note. Bobby then remembers.

BOBBY

Sir there is this reb whose gonna try and kill Lee.

Grant understand the consequences.

GRANT

Who we must find him!

BOBBY

(confident)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BOBBY (cont'd)
Don't worry General my brother
Willis and one of your soldiers is
a hunting him down.

The tale is incredulous but hopeful to Grant.

GRANT
A Confederate and Union trooper
working together?

A slight twinkle in Bobby's eyes.

BOBBY
Who figured.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - DAY

Lee, Longstreet and Gordon sit around a campfire on their
saddles. Lee uses stick to draw plans in the dirt.

Lee speaks softly but deliberately.

LEE
I believe only a small cavalry
force holds the station.

LONGSTREET
Maybe.

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

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

LEE
I know, our only hope is to
breakthrough.
(to Longstreet)
You stay in support if they try and
move more troops in.

LONGSTREET
What of Meade's second corp?

(CONTINUED)

LEE

I do not believe they will arrive
till its too late.

GORDON

And if your wrong?

There is a small disturbance behind them. Turning Lee sees Mack and Bobby. A look of relief and a smile crosses Lee's face

Overjoyed he stands to greet them.

LEE

I'd thought I'd lost you both.

BOBBY

Sir I got something for ya.

Bobby hands him the note. Lee perplexed begins to read it.

GRANT (O.S.)

General R. E. LEE:

The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel that it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood. Seriously hoping that all our difficulties may be set-tied without the loss of another life.

U.S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General

There is heart felt look on Lee's face. He hands it Longstreet who shakes his head yes. Gordon grabs it and reads reluctantly agreeing to it as well.

LEE

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

Lee stops and looks and young Bobby.

BOBBY

I think he means well sir.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Words cannot express what is one's heart son.

BOBBY

He helped me and the Girl.

MACK

It's true Sir and saved me.

Lee irritated at the both of them displaying a prideful a side of himself never seen before.

LEE

What would you have me do? All these boys would have died for nothing.

BOBBY

At least talk to him sir.

LEE

I will go and see him alone.

BOBBY

No Sir you can't

LEE

Why not son?

Gordon, Longstreet and Charles perk up.

BOBBY

Well Sir one of the men is gonna try and kill ya. Willis and me found out about it. Then things happened. Willis is trying to find him with this black fella named Henry he's a runaway slave and a Union soldier - you see, Red that's the guy who killed his friend Able now he wants revenge - and -

Longstreet and Gordon chuckle.

GORDON

Sounds like you've got an imagination.

LONGSTREET

A reb tracking a reb with the help of a runaway negro. This whole thing smells like a set up to get you alone sir.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Grant would never do that.

BOBBY

It's true sir let me go I'll find them and prove it.

LEE

No son you've done enough its in Gods hands now.

LONGSTREET

You can't be serious.

Gordon steps up to intervene.

GORDON

Sir I won't let you go.

LEE

Your bordering on insubordination. I still decide for this army.

Bobby can't stand the arguments he runs off in a run back the way he came. Mack tries in vain to grab him.

MACK

Wait Mr. Bobby!

LEE

Let him go Mack. Charles you and Mack will accompany me.

(turning to Longstreet)

However if there are signs of an imminent attack you two don't hesitate.

Longstreet and Gordon understand.

EXT. FIELD OUTSIDE APPOMATTOX - DAY

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

Gordon on his horse peers through binoculars.

Binocular POV The Union Calvary is readying themselves. Gordon's instinct kicks in.

GORDON

I knew it, I knew it is a trap to encircle us.

EXT. WOODS LONGSTREET'S POSITION - DAY

Longstreet on horse with his battalion behind him. He waits restlessly. Longstreet spits his chewing tobacco. He checks Gordon's situation and sees him rallying his men.

Then he glances to the right and spies the Union readying themselves. He fidgets in the saddle.

EXT. FIELD GORDON - DAY

The troops are ready. Gordon steady's himself.

He guides his horse and parades in front of men.

GORDON

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

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

MEN:

Come On General!

Let's get this over with!

I'm starving!

A slight chuckle from the remarks rumbles through ranks.

Gordon too smiles as he looks admiringly across their faces.

Turning his horse and pulling out his sword. He spurs his horse and in a mighty roar lets out the **REBEL YELL**.

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

Bayonets fixed they charge forward Gordon leading the way.

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

The juggernaut swells forward.

EXT. UNION CAVALRY POSITION APPOMATTOX - DAY

A Captain nervous but confidently eyes the swarming herd approaching.

CAPTAIN

Steady!

Then in unbridled bravado he too pulls out his sword.

He charges forward with his band of cavalry behind him.

EXT. MIDDLE OF FIELD - DAY

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

Union cavalry intermingle in confederate line hacking at men. They go wild splintering the formation.

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

Huge holes are blown through Gordon's lines.

Gordon surveys the situation and sees his attack is fracturing.

An explosion to his side knocks him from his horse.

Gordon gets up, gun smoke fills the air making it hard for him to see.

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

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

Gordon calls out to his men to retreat.

GORDON

Back to the wood line!

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

GORDON

Tell Lee we must have Longstreet's support.

EXT. HILL - DAY

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

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

LIEUTENANT

Sir we need Longstreet to come up.

Lee lowers his head and softly shakes his head no.

LEE

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

EXT. LONGSTREET'S POSITION - DAY

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

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

LONGSTREET

I must go see General Lee.

Longstreet turns his horse.

LONGSTREET

Stand down the men. We're leaving.

Longstreet pulls out with his division behind him.

EXT. WOOD LINE - DAY

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

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

GORDON

Stop firing!

EXT. WOODS BOBBY'S POSITION - DAY

Like a jack rabbit Bobby runs headlong through the woods. Determination on his young face. The bushes scratch him but he doesn't care.

As he jumps through a clearing he runs headlong into Red!

RED

We meet again little man.

Bobby reaches for his weapon. But before he does Red swings the butt of his gun it crashes into the side of Bobby's head knocking him out.

EXT. BETWEEN PICKET LINE - MORNING

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

CHARLES

Gordon's men should be falling back now.

LEE

Where's Grant?

Mack holds Traveler's reigns with his hat in hand out of respect. Lee starts to pace.

LEE

I did it for my country.

CHARLES

(incensed)

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

LEE

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

CHARLES

General perhaps we can regroup.

(CONTINUED)

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

Mack breaks in. Lee clutches at his chest.

MACK
You were the country the mens
fought for you.

Lee looks at him with a question on his face.

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

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

MACK
And dat wasn't a bad thing General.

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

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

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

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

EXT. WOODS RED'S POSITION - DAY

Ever the wary soldier Red staggers a bit as he reaches a high point overlooking the Picket line. He takes out the whiskey flask and downs another gulp.

With his scope on the rifle he surveys the area below. His tracking has paid off he sees his target. The white outline of Lee's hair is moving under the leaves of the apple tree.

He has no clear shot as yet.

EXT. WOODS WILLIS AND HENRY'S POSITION - DAY

The pair struggle into the vicinity of the Picket line.
Willis still looking bad. But his keen eyes scan the area.

It is open and with a small rise is to the left.

HENRY

Okay where to?

WILLIS

This is it this be where I'd do it.

He points to the hill with a clump of trees.

WILLIS

He's up there.

They move further down. Then they spy Lee and his group. The situation is more urgent now.

Willis gets a surge of adrenalin that takes over. Seeming stronger he scans with his perfect vision.

He sees a rustle in the leaves of a tree a hundred yards away. He points it out to Henry.

They keep low.

WILLIS

We'll circle around him.

He notices Lee and others under tree obscured.

HENRY

Hurry!

EXT. BOBBY' POSITION - DAY

Bobby rouses from unconsciousness his head pounding. He rubs his neck shaking it off.

Then realizes what happened and he struggles to get up then takes off running.

EXT. TREE LIMB - DAY

Red has climbed a tree and sits on a limb for a better vantage point.

Through his scope he still hasn't got a clear shot.

EXT. HENRY WILLIS POSITION - DAY

Climbing through the growth Red hasn't spotted them. Willis tries to hold his musket but the broken arm prevents it.

WILLIS
You gonna have to take the shot.

HENRY
That's too far I can't.

WILLIS
You have too.

Henry swings his musket off his shoulder.

WILLIS
You'll only get one shot.

HENRY
Now ya tell me.

EXT. BOBBY'S POSITION - DAY

Not as fast as before Bobby through blurry eyes hobbles through the tall grass. It opens up and he looks around.

He hears a horse Nay looking it's Traveler.

Then he sees Lee and he is at a dead run shouting.

BOBBY
General ! Get down! General!

EXT. TREE - DAY

Bobby's yelling has caught Red's attention. He takes his eyes off target.

He sees Bobby parting the sea of grass heading straight for Lee. Pissed he turns his weapon not thinking.

RED
Little shit!

The alcohol has clouded his judgment and is making him wobble but he's still deadly. Through the scope he takes aim at Bobby.

He fires the Bullet grazes Bobby's shoulder knocking him down.

EXT. HENRY'S POSITION - DAY

Henry has his musket at the ready aiming at the limb. The puff of smoke gives him a target. Red pokes his head out to see when he does Henry shoots.

The Bullet hits Reds eye socket and shatters his skull as it exits the back of his head. He falls lifeless with a thud to the ground.

HENRY
That was for Able.

WILLIS
Great shot!

Both of them breath relaxing.

EXT. BOBBY'S POSITION - DAY

Bobby lies on the ground disoriented and in pain. Lee and the others rush up to him. From Bobby's POV Lee comes into view hovering over him.

Next is Willis looking pretty pitiful himself.

LEE
There son. Rest easy.

WILLIS
Dummy tryin to git yourself killed.

Bobby manages a weak smile but doesn't speak.

From behind them a Union Scout on horseback rides up under a flag of truce. He stops just shy of the group. He steps off and Salutes then retrieves a note from his pocket.

SCOUT
My complements sir from General Grant.

Lee quickly takes the note and reads

GRANT (O.S.)
My apologies General having not received your letter in time to meet. I am authorized to tell you that your Army as a whole will be allowed to return home unabated or under threat of imprisonment so long as they sign an oath of

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GRANT (O.S.) (cont'd)
allegiance to the United States and
lay down their arms. Yours US
Grant.

Lee is almost moved to tears the note trembles in his hands.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - DAY

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

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

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

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

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

The whole endeavor like a Samurai readying himself for Battle.

Finally Lee dons his hat, Travelers saddle is polished too.

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

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

Lee and Charles ride away.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF APPOMATTOX - DAY

The two riders stop. Ahead the Union Captain waits for them.

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

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

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

(CONTINUED)

LEE

God! Stop!

Through the groans comes the voice of Jackson.

JACKSON

It will fade in time Robert.

LEE

Explain to me, was I wrong, that I left half a million dead in my wake? Was duty and honor more precious than one man's life? Will that be my epitaph? To keep the black man enslaved, a vision I abhor, was this bloodletting for that!? Tell me is that who I am? If it be so then let Grant hang me from the highest tree and burn my ashes and scatter them to the wind to be forgotten in time. Let future generations say this man was a traitor pure and simple and may his soul rot in hell, I welcome this.

JACKSON

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

Lee brings his hands down and sighs relief regaining his composure.

EXT. MCCLEAN HOME - DAY

A short distance away lies the McClean Home. Immaculate and grand with a wrap around porch. Lee, Charles and their Union escort approach.

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

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

Lee sitting erect in saddle, his manner commanding.

(CONTINUED)

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

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

BLACK SOLDIER
Looks like a grandfather.

HENRY
Hush up show some respect.

A stunned look from the others. Lee passes and he salutes.

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

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

INT. MCCLEAN HOME - DAY

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

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

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

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

CHARLES
Sir, if they try and arrest you.

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

EXT. MCCLEAN HOUSE - DAY

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

(CONTINUED)

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

Then, carefully he climbs the steps his eyes close on the door.

INT. MCCLEAN HOUSE - DAY

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

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

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

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

GRANT

I must apologize for my appearance.

Lee, a look.

GRANT

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

LEE

(remembering)

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

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

Relaxing, Lee crosses his legs.

GRANT

I always remembered that.

LEE

Likewise, you left a strong impression.

GRANT

(reminiscing)

The old army, many fine officers.

Lee drifts off a little.

(CONTINUED)

LEE

Jackson, Ewell, Hancock, Stuart.

GRANT

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

Lee interrupts him.

LEE

General, the affair at hand.

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

GRANT

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

Lee feels his sword, Grant notices.

GRANT

Your officers may keep their swords and sidearms.

LEE

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

GRANT

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

(to Sheridan)

Have 25000 rations sent to the men.

Lee staring straight ahead not wanting to break down.

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

LEE

That will be agreeable to them.

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

CHARLES

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

(CONTINUED)

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

Parker makes some adjustments and hands it back to Grant.

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

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

Handing back to Grant.

LEE

I would like a copy if you please.

GRANT

Of Course. Let me introduce you to my staff.

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

SHERIDAN

Sir.

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

LEE

It is good to see a real American here.

PARKER

Sir, now we are all Americans again.

The words sink into Lee as he nods agreement.

EXT. MCCLEAN HOUSE - DAY

Traveler is in yard grazing, Bobby is there with his arm in a sling tending him. Lee smiles at him as he puts on gloves.

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

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

(CONTINUED)

The Union troops lining road stand at attention, some salute. In particular Henry.

Bobby looks over at him and his friendly manner gives him a wink. Henry is caught up in the moment. A small tear trickles down his cheek. A soldier beside him notices.

BLACK SOLDIER
What you cryin for fool?

HENRY
I was thinking of Able.

The other Black Soldier salutes as well.

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

GRANT
Go tell Meade to stand down.

As Sheridan turns Grant catches him by the arm.

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

SHERIDAN
I'll spread the word.

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

GRANT
(disgusted)
I need a bath.

EXT. LEE'S CAMP - DAY

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

Traveler bobs his head up and down in acknowledgment. Bobby is on Charles horse. Charles lets him off and he joins Willis and Sarah now together. Two broken boys and a girl a small family.

(CONTINUED)

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

LEE

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

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

INT. LEE'S TENT - DAY

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

MACK

Cans I gets you sumthin Mr. Robert?

LEE

No, I'm fine.

MACK

What you gonna do?

Lee sits down, it suddenly strikes him.

LEE

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

(a slight laugh)

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

Mack sits down beside him two kindred spirits.

MACK

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

LEE

You wanted to be Preacher didn't you?

(CONTINUED)

MACK

Yessa, I reckon so.

LEE

This country is gonna need some preachers.

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

LEE

(choking up)

You were always-

MACK

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

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

EXT. APPOMATTOX COURTHOUSE - LATER

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

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

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

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

CHAMBERLAIN

Company! Order Arms! Carry, Salute!

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

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

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

(CONTINUED)

GORDON

Carry arms!

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

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

The last man Willis, gently stacks his gun. He looks up and sees Sarah next to the fence with Mack standing beside her she smiles at him.

Bobby proud, a family coming back together a symbol for all.

Chamberlain walks across road. Bobby presents him the flag.

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

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

Willis falls in behind them heading home.

The Confederacy is no more. No words or cheers.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

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

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

LEE

Thank you Sir.

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

HENRY

Where do we go from here?

LEE

We go in peace.

EXT/INT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

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

Bitterness is everywhere

In the Oval office the **PRESIDENT ANDREW JOHNSON** berates Grant who sits in front of him calmly smoking cigar. Johnson waves a letter in his fist.

JOHNSON

A full Pardon! Citizenship?!

GRANT

I gave him my word.

Johnson leans hard over his desk, glaring.

JOHNSON

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

Grant politely shakes his head no.

JOHNSON

I am the President, your boss!

GRANT

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

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

GRANT

No, this ends here, now.

Johnson belittled, looks at the Pardon and signs it.

JOHNSON

But I don't have to grant him citizenship.

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

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

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

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

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

Who does he think he is?

This is outrageous.

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

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

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

WORLD NEWS OFFICE PRESENT - DAY

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

Finally a young REPORTER speaks up, irritated.

REPORTER

That's it?!

The others look at him as if he was crazy.

RECEPTIONIST

Hush up!

REPORTER

Is that last part true?

MACK

As best I can recollect.

REPORTER

(looking around)

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

(CONTINUED)

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

EDITOR

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

(beat)

I never knew the third.

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

MACK

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

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

He gently shuffles out the door into the bright sunlight.

FADE OUT.

SUPER:

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

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

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