LAST OF THE MOHICANS

Based on the novel
by
James Fenimore Cooper

1936 Screenplay
by
Philip Dunne

Adapted
by
Michael Mann
and
Christopher Crowe

Screenplay
by
Michael Mann
"It was a feature peculiar to the Colonial Wars of North America that soldiers...expended months struggling against the rapids or the mountains in quest of an opportunity to exhibit their courage in martial conflict. Emulating the craft and self denial of the native warriors, they learned to overcome every difficulty; and it would seem that in time, there was no recess of the woods so dark, nor any secret place so lovely, that it might claim exemption from the inroads of those who had pledged their blood to satiate their vengeance.

"It was in this scene of strife and bloodshed that the incidents we shall attempt to relate occurred, during the third year of the war which England and France waged for the possession of a country that neither was destined to retain."

James Fenimore Cooper
1 FADE IN

The screen is a microcosm of leaf, crystal drops of precipitation, a stone, wood, emerald-green moss. It's a landscape in miniature. We HEAR the forest. Some distant birds. Their sound seems to reverberate as if in a cavern. A piece of sunlight refracts within the drops of water, paints a patch of moss yellow. The whisper of wind is joined by another sound that mixes with it. A distant rustling. It gets closer and louder. It's shallow breathing. It gets ominous. We're interlopers on the floor of the forest and something is coming. SUDDENLY:

2 A MOCCASINED FOOT

rockets through the frame scaring us and...

3 EXTREMELY CLOSE: INDIAN FACE

running hard. His head shaved bald except for a scalp-lock. Tattoos. He's twenty-five. He's tall with a muscled, rangy build; heavy, even breathing. This man is UNCAS. He is the Last of the Mohicans.

4 PROFILE: UNCAS' ARMS

flash as he runs. One carries a flintlock musket. Sweat on the man's skin. A calico shirt is gathered at the waist with a wampum belt of small white beads over a breechcloth. He wears leggings to protect his legs. A long-handled tomahawk is stuffed in his belt.

CUT TO

5 ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST - MASSIVE WAR CLUB - DAY

in the hand of another running man. He's heavier, older...

6 CHEST

A green bear claw is tattooed there. Silver armband. A snake is tattooed over his left eyebrow. Silver rings in his ear. He's forty to forty-five. His head is shaved into a scalp-lock. It says: "Come and lift this from me. Take it, if you can..." That prospect strikes us as extremely unlikely. This man is CHINGACHGOOK. The French call him "Le Gros Serpent," the Great Snake, because "he knows the winding ways of men's nature and he can strike a sudden, deathly blow."

7 WIDE ANGLE: CHINGACHGOOK

runs, disturbing no leaves, no branches; making no sound. He's running parallel to Uncas through the cathedral of mature forest. It's heavily canopied. There's very little brush. The girth of the trees is huge. Shafts of light illuminate motes of dust and turn leaves emerald where the sun breaks through. Sometimes there's ferns; rhododendron, sometimes pale grass and outcroppings of rock.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

These men run the forest streams, over boulders, fallen trees and down into ravines as if they own them. They do.

CUT TO

ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST - LONG BLACK HAIR - DAY

rocketing through trees. His torn buckskin shirt is tied at the waist with a wampum belt holding a tomahawk and a large knife. A long rifle in which is carved the name "Killdeer" is in his right fist. Indian tattooing on his chest. His name is NATHANIEL POE. He's a few years older than Uncas. The French and the French-speaking tribes know him as La Longue Carabine (Long Rifle). Other frontiersmen in New York Colony and the Iroquois and Delaware-speaking tribes know him as Hawkeye. Sweat stains his shirt. He flashes through tree branches disturbing nothing. Making no sound.

HAWKEYE'S POV: A PIECE OF TAN

two hundred and fifty yards away, a few square inches buried in the foliage...

SUDDENLY HE STOPS

Killdeer's at his shoulder...

HAWKEYE'S THUMB

cocks the lock holding the piece of flint: click.

UNCAS

stops dead, holding out his hand...no sound.

CHINGACHGOOK

slips through young trees and stops, shouldering his smoothbore musket. Is this an ambush?

HAWKEYE'S POV: RACK FOCUS THROUGH THE GUN SIGHT

Five feet and fourteen pounds of rifle is elevated a half inch and shifted left, off target. It's a precise, smooth movement. No human quiver.

KILLDEER'S TRIGGER

tighter...

THE COCK

holding the flint hits the iron file of the frizzen, shooting sparks into the pan of priming powder which flashes and...

TAN

is a huge elk that leaps at the sound of the lock.
KILLDEER'S MUZZLE
CRACKS like lightning.

ELK
leaps where the .59 caliber round was programmed to intercept him. On the moment of impact...

SUDDEN REVEAL: CHINGACHGOOK
The massive war club is flat and angles to one side with a stabbing blade, like a wide spear-point, imbedded on the oblique edge.

HAWKEYE
emerges.

UNCAS
coming forward.

WIDE
The three men approach the fallen elk and each other. We realize they're hunting together. Hawkeye steps aside in deference to Chingachgook. Hawkeye is stepson and stepbrother. The two younger men treat Chingachgook with the deference due a respected and formidable father. Hawkeye's a dialectic of two cultures. In his coloration and worldliness he's more the Anglo-Saxon frontiersman. In his independent views and candid manner and in his combat skills and woodsmanship, he's more native American (Mohican). As Chingachgook takes out his long knife and they approach the fallen elk...

CHINGACHGOOK
(low Mohican; subtitled)
We're sorry to kill you, Brother.
Forgive us. I do honor to your courage and speed, your strength...

INT. CAMERON CABIN - JOHN CAMERON - NIGHT
roasts potatoes on a stick in the stone fireplace next to CAPTAIN JACK WINTHROP, an American in very worn quasi-military gear. On a rough table in the tiny cabin ALEXANDRA, his Mohawk wife, is kneading bread. Three children climb on their father. He grabs their wild seven year old son, JAMES, who shrieks laughter and dodges away. The cabin has two primitive rooms, waxed paper windows, quarter-timbered walls. O.S. a dog barks. Others pick it up. Cameron and Jack are suddenly alert, reaching for weapons...
EXT. CAMERON CABIN, FENCE - CHINGACHGOOK - NIGHT

CHINGACHGOOK
Halloo! John Cameron!

Behind him, emerging from the dark trees are Hawkeye, Uncas cradling flint locks, blankets and packs over their shoulders, leading a mule laden with skins and the elk carcass.

DOORWAY: CAMERON'S

at the doorway, musket in hand. Towards the interior:

CAMERON
Alexandra!
(beat)
Set three more places.
(to the gate)
How is Chingachgook, then?

Crossing the splitrail fence...

CHINGACHGOOK
The Master of Life is good.
Another year passed... How is it with you, John Cameron?

CAMERON
Gettin' along. Yes, it is.
(warm)
Nathaniel.

HAWKEYE
Hello John! Cleared another quarter, I see.

CAMERON
(shakes hand with Uncas)
Yes I did.

JAMES CAMERON

tears past his father and runs full bore. Just before he's going to collide into Uncas, he leaps into the air and Uncas snatches him with one hand and swings him up onto his shoulders. The kid screams with delight and rides back towards the cabin that way.

CUT TO

INT. CABIN - ALEXANDRA CAMERON - EVENING (LATER)

The men have settled in the small cabin. Chingachgook smokes a clay pipe. The scene says: this is a rustic, frontier home and these people have known each other a long while and live in dangerous conditions.

CONTINUED
ALEXANDRA
(from the fireplace)
Uncas is with you. That means
he has not found a wife.

CHINGACHGOOK
Alexandra Cameron I wish you
better luck with sons. Uncas,
Hawkeye...
(disgusted)
...fly woman to woman. Women
go from man to man.
(Uncas laughs)
Your farm good to you this year,
John Cameron?

CAMERON
It was a good year for corn.

UNCAS
One field we saw is five mile
long on the river. Chief Joseph
Brandt's field.

CAMERON
You take lots of fur?

HAWKEYE
That we did, John.

UNCAS
But the horicane is nearly trapped
out.

JACK
Tradin' in New London?

HAWKEYE
Schenectady. With the Dutch for
silver. English and French are
only payin' in wampum and brandy
any more.

A pause, then:

HAWKEYE
(continuing)
So what is it, Jack?

JACK
A French army, some Canadiens and
a few thousand Huron, Ottawa and
whatnot, have come down from
Quebec to Lake Champlain and
crossed the border to go to war.
(MORE)
JACK (Cont'd)
English levied New York colony to raise a civilian militia.

HAWKEYE
How much of the county you figure will join the fight?

JACK
Maybe half. Twin River Mohawks are marchin'; Seneca and Onandaga sittin' it out.
(beat)
What about you all?

CHINGACHGOOK
The fathers of England and France are filled with greed and care only about taking more land and furs than they need.

HAWKEYE
England started it with France over fur tradin' rights on the Upper Ohio. It's got nothin' to do with plain folks here.

JACK
True. But England's the motherland. And I'd rather fight fifty miles north of here than in my bean field.

HAWKEYE
And what if they hole you up in Fort William Henry and swing war parties around the fort to rip up the settlements?

JACK
I hadn't thought of that. That's as big point. Speakin' to Webbin Albany tomorrow. So...

CAMERON
(decides)
I am stayin' to protect my family. Any from around here who go, tell 'em their women and children are welcome to fort-up with us 'til they come back.

JACK
I will.
(beat)
Where do you plan to winter?
UNCAS
With Delaware cousins living among
Shawnee peoples in Can-tuck-ee.

Cameron laughs.

JACK
Gonna marry you off for real this
time, then!

UNCAS
If only so my father and brother
leave me alone, I'll take any
Delaware woman young enough to
bear me children.

James attacks Uncas again.

JAMES
Like me?

Uncas grabs James and puts him on his lap.

UNCAS
No! You are too strong. Turn
me old too fast!

The kid's laughing and can't stay still. Hawkeye grabs him.
Chingachgook watches, content, smoking his clay pipe.

ALEXANDRA
That's what he's doin' to me...

She ruffles his hair and lifts the heavy iron pot off the
tibbet. Uncas goes to help her, she bats his hand away and
carries it to the table herself. She doesn't need any help.
The men gather around the table. There's pan-baked bread, a
dish of salt and the pot has venison and yellow gruel in a kind
of stew. Everyone waits.

CAMERON
Dear Father, thank you for
rewardin' the fruits of our labor
with plenty. Amen.

As they start to eat...

CUT TO
in two rows. At each command the crack troops respond en masse. Their hands slap the stocks of their brown bess muskets in unison. The Dutch roof lines of Albany are in the distance. These men are drilling in preparation for war.

REGIMENTAL SGT. MAJOR

(shouts)
Shoulder arms!
(slam)
Order arms! Handle cartridge!
(men bite the paper)
Prime!
(powder dropped in pan)
Load! Draw ramrods! Ram cartridge! Return ramrod! Make ready!
(muskets at chest height)
Pre-sent!
(muskets shouldered)
Make ready!
(muskets returned to chests)
Pre-sent!
(muskets returned to shoulder)
Fire!

Like a single shot, six hundred black powder muskets fire .65 caliber lead shot at chest height in a scythe of death through a massive cloud of smoke. They are a killing machine.

SERGEANT MAJOR
Prime! Load!

In the background beyond the drill a coach races past.
He is patriotic and militarily first-rate in his milieu: the open battlefields of Europe. Right now, however, he is in the forests of North America. As he pulls into Albany...

**CONTINUED**

CUT TO

**INT. BRITISH HQ, ASSEMBLY ROOM - ON HEYWARD - DAY**

entering mid-scene. An enlisted man comes to attention. An argument is raging and immediately takes Heyward's attention.

JACK (O.S.)

...if they ain't allowed to leave
to go and defend their families
if the French or Hurons swing
around William Henry and attack
the settlements, they ain't goin'!
And I have no real power...and
neither do you...to order those
boys to march off to much of
anywhere.

HEYWARD

(low)
You, there,. Help my man outside
with the baggage.

GENERAL JEROME WEBB sees Heyward and nods. Three of Webb's Adjutants are on either side. Four Grenadiers in bearskin-covered mitred caps, are at the door. Facing him are a half dozen colonial representatives including by Captain Jack Winthrop. Heyward watches Jack...

LIEUTENANT

The Crown has levied a militia
from every county!

LARGE COLONIAL REP

To any of the boys who are any
good in the first place, they
don't care what you levied!

LIEUTENANT

(rises)
They will be pressed into service!
They will not refuse to serve!

CONTINUED
I cannot imagine his Majesty, in his benevolence, would ever object to his American subjects defending their hearth and home, their women and children, if threatened by the "scourge" of attack from savages, aroused to such excess by our enemy, the ever-perfidious French.

JACK
Does that mean they would be granted leave if the settlements are attacked?

WEBB
Yes.

JACK
General Webb, you got yourself an American colonial militia.

Heyward's amazed by what he's just heard. These Americans, including Jack, are streaming past him on their way out. He looks at them curiously, then snaps to attention:

HEYWARD
Major Duncan Heyward reporting, Sir!

Webb's pouring gin.

WEBB
Duncan. How was your journey?

The door closes. Dispatches are passed. They are now alone except for the General's two Adjutants, the omnipresent guard and a shadowy form waiting patiently in a corner. He's MAGUA and in the dim light, he's motionless. Webb slides a glass across to Heyward.

HEYWARD
I didn't experience anything so surprising from Bristol to Albany as what I witnessed here today.

WEBB
And what is that?

HEYWARD
The Crown "negotiating" the terms of service?
WEBB
I know.
(assuming a
cocommiserator)
One has to give Americans
"reasons" and make agreements to
get them to do anything at all.
(throws up his hands)
Tiring, isn't it? But that's the
way of it here.

HEYWARD
(tight)
I thought British policy is 'Make
the World...England.'

A chill. Majors don't upbraid generals.

WEBB
You will take command of the 62nd
Regiment of Foot. At Fort William
Henry under Colonel Munro. I will
march the 33rd to Fort Edward.
(to Adjutants)
Explain to the Major we have
little need of militia in the
first place because there's little
to fear from the French and their
commander, this Marquis de
Montcalm in the second. The
French have not the nature for
war. Their Latinate
voluptuousness undermines their
Gallic laziness with the result:
they would rather eat or make love
with their faces than fight.

Webb's Adjutants laugh uproariously at his wit. Heyward
smiles. He does not share Webb's derisive view of the French.
Webb doesn't like Heyward's manner. We don't like Webb. Then:

HEYWARD
Might I inquire if General Webb
has heard from Colonel Munro's
daughters?

WEBB
You may.
(to Magua, after a
glance at Heyward)
You there. What does Munro call
you?
(to Heyward)
The "Scotsman" has sent you one
of his Indian allies to escort
you.

CONTINUED
Magua.

WEBB
Magua... You're a...

MAGUA

WEBB
Munro's daughters are at the Poltroon's house. They'll accompany you to Fort William Henry with a Magua and a company of the 33rd.

MAGUA

rises and slowly walks into the light. He is sullen and over six feet tall. His head is shaved into a mohawk. Rings, beads and feathers pierce his ears. A blanket is worn as a shawl over his left shoulder exposing his right arm and heavy tattooing. A long tomahawk is in the belt of his breechcloth.

HEYWARD
(to Magua)
Dawn. At the encampment. Six a.m. sharp. See to it you're there.

Beneath his barely deferential manner we sense an imposing intelligence. Magua exits.

HEYWARD
By your leave, sir.

WEBB
Dismissed.

Heyward stiffly salutes. Webb salutes the younger man in return.

CUT TO

EXT. POLTROON'S HOUSE - DUNCAN HEYWARD - DAY

brushed clean, his wig freshly powdered, his tricorn in his hand with a crimson sash and sword and his cavalry boots, walks through the gate after knocking. He enters a small courtyard. Suddenly he hears...

CONTINUED
CORA (O.S.)
Heyward! Duncan Heyward.

Heyward looks to the side. An inner light turns on. In this mode, this is a man we could like.

REVERSE: CORA MUNRO enters from the garden. She's vivacious, dark-haired, unconventionally educated but with conventional attitudes. She hugs Duncan to her and then pushes him away to look at him:

HEYWARD
My God it's good to see you.

He takes her hand in both of his and kisses it.

CUT TO

A vegetable plot behind the Poltroon's house is a provincial substitute for a formal garden setting. Heyward and Cora sit on rough wooden chairs. In the background a servant hangs laundry. The white sheets billow. A stool holds a tea setting. They're sitting close to each other, talking seriously and quietly. Time's passed. Long pause. Then:

CORA
I'm embarrassed to be so indecisive...

HEYWARD
(smiles)
I've traveled half the globe to ask this question.

CORA
(difficult)
My affection is as towards a dearest friend. Alice and I depend on you and respect you immensely, Duncan...but my feelings don't go beyond that.

HEYWARD
Isn't respect and friendship, a reasonable basis for a man and woman to be joined? And all else will grow in time...?
CORA
Others have told me that is the way of it.

HEYWARD
"Others"?

CORA
Cousin Eugenie, my father.

HEYWARD
(interrupts)
Cora, then let those whom you trust, your father, help settle what's best. In view of your indecision, why not rely on their advice and judgment...
(pause)
And mine. In my heart I know once we're joined we'll be the happiest couple in England.

Cora stares directly at Heyward. Then she looks away. She has no answer.

HEYWARD
Will you consider that?

CORA
(pause; smiles)
Yes. I will. I will consider what you've said.

ALICE (O.S.)
Duncan!

REVERSE: ALICE MUNRO

eighteen years old, white-blonde hair, wide blue eyes. She's effervescent.

ALICE
I can't believe it.

She runs and hugs him. Heyward is taken aback by her enthusiasm and laughs.

HEYWARD
My God, you've grown up.

ALICE
We leave in the morning?!

HEYWARD
(rises)
Yes, miss.

CONTINUED
50A CONTINUED

ALICE
I won't sleep tonight. What an adventure! Have you seen the savages?

HEYWARD
Mohawks?

ALICE
They're "domesticated." I meant the ones in the countryside. I absolutely cannot wait to return to Portman Square, having laid eyes upon full-blooded, red men in the wild!

CORA
My God, Alice.

HEYWARD
It can be dangerous...

ALICE
Nonsense. Papa wouldn't have sent for us if it were dangerous.

Alice takes Heyward's hand. Cora pours Heyward more tea. The white sheets billow.

CUT TO

52 EXT. BRITISH ARMY HQ - TWENTY BRITISH REGULARS - DAY

standing idly, waiting to embark. They all wear full packs, mitred hats, rolled blankets, brown bess muskets.

Magua watches the preparations. A small number of idlers and bystanders at a respectful distance watch the horses and admire the bone and blood of a large white military charger. They wait. Then...

53 MILITARY HQ, ENTRANCE - SERGEANT MAJOR AMBROSE

enters.

AMBROSE
(on the move; barks)
Atten-hut!!

54 REVERSE: BRIT REGULARS

jolt upright as if electrified.

AMBROSE
(entering)
Shoulder arms!

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

Muskets slam to shoulders. AMBROSE - a sergeant major of forty-one - is wide and deep and built like a fullback. You do not fuck with Sgt. Major Ambrose.

AMBROSE
(barks)
Form two companies of nine... MARCH!!

THE MEN

March in perfect drill into two groups, each three across and three deep. There's a gap between the two groups. With their chalked whites, tall mitred hats, five and a half foot long muskets, they look formidable.

MILITARY HQ, ENTRANCE - MAJOR DUNCAN HEYWARD

Steps out. Rigid salutes. Cora and Alice enter from the interior. They're in riding dresses and veils. The veil doesn't completely cover Alice's golden hair and blue eyes and the flush of her complexion. Heyward helps them onto their sidesaddled Narragansetts. The tight traveling dress reveals that Cora, two or three years older than Alice, is fuller and more mature.

HEYWARD

Climbs onto his white military charger. It's spirited. All three wave at the officer watching their departure from the threshold of the large log cabin. They ride to the front of the column. The baggage horses and mule are led by the two remaining regulars in the gap between the two companies.

MAGUA

Cradling his musket.

REAR SHOT: THE COLUMN

Down the path that leads into the wall of forest looks impressive.

WIDER: THE COLUMN

Marching. Now they look brave but smaller. The forest - with all its mysteries and dangers - now impresses us as towering and dark, and it swallows up the living mass which slowly enters its bosom.

CUT TO

INT. FOREST

Tracking the Redcoats, their faces now filmed with dust, cut by lines of perspiration. They march in perfect formation.

CONTINUED
We TRACK PAST the pack horses, the first company, Sgt. Major Ambrose and on to Cora and Alice. Alice seems fatigued. Cora's turned, looking up into the forest canopy, astonished at the deep beauty of the place.

CORA'S POV: FOREST CANOPY

of trees is dark, except for spots where leaves are sparse, and there the light is golden. It's the forest of childhood.

In a ravine a buck disappears into a deeper stand of trees.

CORA (O.S.)
Alice, did you see that...?

reverie's broken by Heyward entering the frame.

CORA
Alice?

Alice rouses from fatigue.

HEYWARD
Are you alright?

ALICE
Duncan. I'm tired... Will we rest soon?

HEYWARD
I'll see.

Heyward rides to the front of the column to Magua, who's twenty to thirty yards ahead of everybody else.

HEYWARD
You there, Scout!

Magua slowly turns towards Heyward.

HEYWARD
(overly articulated)
We must...stop...soon. Women are...tired. You...understand?

MAGUA
(perfect English)
Magua understand. This is not good place to stop. Two leagues from here. No water 'til then. That where we stop.
HEYWARD
We will stop in the glade ahead!
Then, when the ladies are rested,
we will proceed. Do you
understand?

MAGUA
(in Huron: English
subtitle)
"Magua understand paleface is
a dog to his women. And when
his women want to eat, he lay
aside his tomahawk to feed their
laziness."

HEYWARD
Excuse me. What did you say?

MAGUA
Magua say: "Yes. Good idea."

As they begin to stop...

CUT TO

EXT. MOUNTAINS + FOREST - WIDE - DAY

Silently entering on either side of us come Chingachgook,
followed by Hawkeye and Uncas. Even relaxed they carry
themselves with a degree of alertness. They're eighteenth
century Viet Cong moving through the rain forest. The Maxfield
Parrish/Hudson Valley of tall trees, ravines and streams is
idyllic in front of them. All three cradle their long guns and
move silently on moccasined feet.

FRONTAL: CHINGACHGOOK

- in a stream - relaxed but attentive, abruptly stops. The
others freeze in their tracks. Chingachgook sees and then
stoops to examine...

ROCK

under the water in the stream. It's been turned from its bed.
Chingachgook finds another. Uncas, moving up on his flank,
climbs the bank and moves off into the trees, searches and then
he gestures...he's found another sign of passage.

CHINGACHGOOK

has headed off further down the stream and discovers nothing.
Rapidly he rejoins Uncas and Hawkeye who've become extremely
alert. They move up the bank into the forest ninety degrees
from their previous path.
touches his head and signifies the Huron scalp-lock pattern and opens his fist twice indicating ten men.

TRACKING: HAWKEYE, UNCAS + CHINGACHGOOK


CUT TO

EXT. FOREST, TRAIL - MAGUA - DAY

on point. The trail cuts the side of a hill. The ground on one side rises into a forested acclivity and on the other falls off into a forested ravine. Magua walking towards camera.

CLOSER - MAGUA'S

I slid his tomahawk out from the front of the belt that girdles his waist. Like a snake, he lets the shaft drop into his hand. He shrugs off his blanket. There is a solidity to his dark, tall figure we didn't see before. Magua turns about face and advances on the column. TRACK WITH Magua. Heyward and the Munro girls pass the camera as does Sgt. Major Ambrose, marching in advance of the men. Magua is approaching the soldier on the left in the first row. We see Magua has caught the Redcoat's eye.

REDCOAT

is curious, starts to smile. What does the Huron want to say to him? When Magua is two steps away he caves in the side of the infantryman's head at the temple with the butt end of his tomahawk, howls a war cry and, backhanded, hacks the blade sideways, into the back of the neck of the center man in the first row.

SIMULTANEOUSLY

thirteen muskets EXPLODE from the wooded rise.

FIVE REDCOATS

are blown off the path, two others are wounded...

AMBROSE

AMBROSE

Form company! Left face! March!

ALICE

shrieks. Cora grabs Alice's reins and her own.
HEYWARD pulling his fusil (short musket), seeing, firing, reaching for the women...

CORA'S HORSE bucking.

ALICE'S HORSE bolting, dodging sideways, spilling Alice to the earth.

AMBROSE Company make ready!
The regulars slam into a firing line, stepping over the bodies of their comrades. All thirteen face the incline.

FORESTED RISE - HURONS flash downhill through the trees. Partnered in two-man teams, they load and fire; cover and advance. Leaping fallen trees and boulders, they're athletic, fast and getting closer. Even though the disciplined English regulars are a killing machine, we now see their tactics in the forest are grossly inferior to the Hurons'...

CORA covers Alice with her body, holding the reins of their bolting horses.

HEYWARD from horseback aims his horse pistol, FIRES...

AN ATTACKING HURON drops near Alice and Cora.

AMBROSE Present!!

MULE with baggage crashes off, down through the ravine. Another two Redcoats drop. Nine left. Then eight.
AMBROSE

Fire!!

REVERSE:

Only one Huron was exposed and hit. The English rush to complete the reload. Will they do it in time?

AMBROSE

Load! Load!

(beat)

Present...!

Some are still loading as the Hurons - en masse - crash into the Redcoats with tomahawks, war clubs and point-blank musket fire. They decimate the British soldiers.

ALICE

on the ground, screaming insanely, covered by Cora who's protecting her little sister, and...

HEYWARD'S

horse is shot from beneath him. The animal folding, falling straight to the earth, and...

MAGUA

shoots Ambrose in the chest, and...

HEYWARD

by the Munro daughters spins, swinging his fusil like a ball-bat, upending one Huron and lunges with his bayonet in his left towards another. But this Huron easily avoids the thrust and slams Heyward with his rifle butt.

BRITISH

dead and dying.

AMBROSE

blood gushing from his chest wound, fires his pistol, dropping a Huron; slashes a second with his sword. Then he's chopped into Swiss steak. Hurons begin scalping the British while four race towards Heyward and the two women.

HEYWARD + CORA + ALICE

being rushed; ready to die. The one Heyward shot is struggling up. Heyward has only his fusil as a bludgeon. He readies...about to go down fighting...

THREE LOUD SHOTS

BLOW three Hurons sideways, head over heels down the rise.
Uncas, Chingachgook and Nathaniel, now running across the fall line of the ravine. Nathaniel rams another ball into Killdeer. Uncas with his long tomahawk in one hand is in a full downhill run.

a fast, irrevocable force through small trees, his huge war club is in his fists.

doesn't know where the shots came from. Suddenly Chingachgook bats him, head first into the ravine with the war club. He didn't even slow down.

tomahawks a Huron warrior's shoulder. The Huron swings downwards. Uncas ducks beneath the swing and slashes his throat, sending him downhill into CAMERA as...

momentum and thrown tomahawk take down one Huron, and wounded Redcoats fight on as...

sees the odds have changed. His rage becomes focused and he commits a very revealing act. We will remember it. He raises his musket and aims at...

Why is he singling out a Munro girl to kill?

sees. Killdeer snaps to his shoulder as...

senses Hawkeye. Moving through liquid, his eyes drift left. The moment is frozen. Their eyes lock. Then...

Magua swings at Hawkeye and FIRES...

shifts. The .65 caliber musket ball rockets past his ear and he's already squeezing Killdeer's trigger as...
from Magua's musket blast clears. Magua's gone. He almost shape-shifted, it happened so quickly. It's nearly mystical.

 lowers Killdeer, impressed. Meanwhile...

pursues two fleeing Huron up the incline. Two strides gain him the first man, who he hamstrings and runs over to pursue the second up the hill...as...

aiming a found musket at an Indian's back. We recognize it's Chingachgook pursuing the second Huron up the hill...

CORA

Duncan! He's not one of them!

Duncan ignores her.

is jerked from his hands by...

 HAWKEYE

...case your aim is any better'n your judgment.

The musket's pointed at Heyward's chest, who's drawn his sword but now freezes. And Hawkeye FIRES, killing an attacking Huron just behind Heyward.

flashes up the hill. It cleaves the back of the second man's head and bowls him over. Chingachgook retrieves his club as his scalping knife slashes down...

scalps the man he killed. Chingachgook dispatches the Huron he hamstrung.

Heyward's frozen. The women are as terrified of the savages who've rescued them as they were of those who attacked them. The whole horror show only took twenty seconds.
ALICE

is nearly catatonic. Cora, holding her, is stunned but functioning. Moments ago both women were clean and demurely attired. Now their riding dresses are torn, mud-stained, blood-splattered and their baggage is gone.

HEYWARD

has crossed to his slaughtered troops. Moments ago they were a testimonial to British military prowess. Now they're dead meat. Ambrose's body is against a tree. In the B.G. two of the wounded start to rise, look to Heyward...

ALICE (O.S.)

Make him stop!

Heyward spins.

UNCAS

just cut the throat of the second Narraganset.

ALICE

(attacking Uncas)

We need the horses to get out of here! We have to go back!

Uncas gently restrains her. Cora grabs Alice away from the "savage."

HEYWARD

(re: Uncas)

...the hell he do that to the horses for?!

Uncas has left the dead horses and is now quickly reloading, lifting powder horns, scanning the trees.

UNCAS

(matter of fact)

...too easy to track...they can be heard for miles.

Cora's surprised by Uncas' English. Hawkeye's scanning the forest.

HAWKEYE

(to Heyward)

Those two, there, alive, should try walkin' back to Albany. They'll never make a passage north.

HEYWARD

(breathless)

We were headed...

CONTINUED
HAWKEYE
(appropriating a knife)
...William Henry.

OMITTED
to Hawkeye: let's go... Then a fast exchange of Delaware. Uncas agrees. Chingachgook looks at the survivors, gives his assent, starts off.

HAWKEYE
...take you as far as the fort.

Hawkeye throws Heyward a musket. Cora and Alice look at Heyward. The women are totally dependent on him and terrified of these men.

HAWKEYE
And we need to be movin' away from here fast. And it is well out of our way.

(beat)
So if you are preferring to wait for the next Huron war party to arrive, we will go back about our business...

Heyward decides to go. The women follow close on Heyward. Hawkeye starts off after Uncas and Chingachgook.

CUT TO

EXT. FOREST - HAWKEYE - DAY

moves through the trackless forest. Uncas is far out on the left flank. Cora, Alice and Duncan Heyward follow in Hawkeye's and Chingachgook's steps...

HAWKEYE'S FEET

walking through a creek, stepping in the stream bed instead of on stones. The others follow. Hawkeye looks at Heyward.

Heyward conforms. And he's ill at ease not being in command, following the lead of trailing some half-Indian frontiersman through a foreign wilderness.
HEYWARD

How far is it, scout?

HAWKEYE

Day and a half.
(pause)
Where did you get...the Indian?

HEYWARD

Colonel Munro sent him. Mohawk warrior.

HAWKEYE

He is Huron and nothing else.
(checking the Munro girls are not too close)
Any reason he would have for murdering the girl?

HEYWARD

What?!

HAWKEYE

Dark-haired...

HEYWARD

Miss Cora Munro. No. None. He's never set eyes on them before today.

HAWKEYE

No blood vengeance? No re-proach or insult?

HEYWARD

Of course not!
(pause)
How is it you were nearby?

HAWKEYE

Came across a war party, tracked 'em.

HEYWARD

Then you're assigned to Fort William Henry?

HAWKEYE

No.

HEYWARD

Fort Edward, then?

CONTINUED
No. Headin' west.

I thought all our colonial scouts were in the militia?

Off to the side, Uncas smiles at the idea.

I am not your "scout." And I am in no militia.

Then you are one of those who would allow England to stand and fight alone while she protects you from France?

England don't protect us from France. Not on our account. She uses us to war against France on her own account of greed... for land and furs.

heard. She's appalled.

That clear it up?

(loud)
Yes. The talk of a seditioner! I owe you gratitude or I'd call you out!

(turns)
Don't let gratitude get in the way...

Cora's hand holds back Heyward's sword arm because suddenly Chingachgook looms over him.

Yengeese no good in woods. Make more noise, I kill him.

Heyward spins. Hawkeye coolly watches Cora. Her attitude is hostile; aligned with Heyward. He turns away. Meanwhile...
UNCAS

stops, alarmed. Something in the air bothers him. Hawkeye smells it, too.

CHINGACHGOOK

is already moving out front, low and fast...

CUT TO

EXT. FOREST, TREE LINE - GREEN BRANCHES - DAY

After we HOLD, we realize Chingachgook's been there all along. Hawkeye and Uncas join him where the branches meet the ground. Smoke drifts through the trees. Hawkeye sees and dips his head, then looks again...

CUT TO

EXT. CAMERON CABIN - WIDE - DAY

Burned, smoldering, falling in on itself. TRACK LEFT past what was the doorway. A dead child's hand protruding from the ruin. A fragment of a dress. Charred and smoldering wood. John Cameron's body in the wreckage. And then, through the collapsed posts and timbers, Hawkeye, Chingachgook and Uncas have advanced and are seeing what we've just seen.

ALICE

approaches and is frozen in horror. Cora shields her from the sight. Cora is affected but confronts it directly.

HEYWARD

Anything to be done?

Uncas returns from under one part of the wreckage, ashen, stoic, as they all are. But inside we know the degree of their pain.

UNCAS

All dead...

HAWKEYE

bends over a moccasin print that Chingachgook's examining. They look at each other grimly. Heyward joins them.

HEYWARD

These people...

HAWKEYE

(re: print)

Ottawa!

HEYWARD

Excuse me...

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

CHINGACHGOOK
(to Hawkeye)
Ottawa.

UNCAS
enters from the burned wreckage, very careful where he places his feet...

UNCAS
Mirrors... tools... clothes... all inside.

HAWKEYE
(to Chingachgook)
War party. A raiding party would have stripped the cabin bare. This war party movin' fast and not able to carry much...?

Chingachgook nods confirmation. The significance is very ominous to them. We don't know why yet. Chingachgook starts away...

HEYWARD
Let us look after them...

He starts approaching the bodies. Chingachgook barks an order in Delaware. Hawkeye translates.

HAWKEYE
Leave them as they lay.

COR A
Though they're strangers, they are at least entitled to a Christian burial!

HAWKEYE
(shaking his head)
Let us go, miss.

COR A
I will not. I have seen the face of war before Mr. Poe, but not war made on women and children. And almost as cruel is your indifference.

Hawkeye moves rapidly towards her. She takes a step back, fearful.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

HAWKEYE
(contained)
Miss Munro.
(pause)
They are not strangers.
(beat)
And they stay as they are...

CORA

realizes Hawkeye knows them and is deeply affected by what befell them. She holds his gaze a moment. She also realizes there's a lot she doesn't know about this place, these people and the condition of their lives. He turns away from her and walks on. She hesitates a moment, then starts to follow. She remembers and turns...but Heyward is already helping up Alice...

WIDE ON THE SMALL CLEARING IN FRONT OF THE FARMHOUSE

as Chingachgook and Hawkeye, extremely alert and cradling their cocked flintlocks, walk to camera, eyes sweeping the forest perimeter, followed by Cora, Heyward helping Alice and Uncas as rearguard.

The ruined cabin and the dead dream of a family smolders behind them.

CUT TO

EXT. GLADE - PROFILE: HAWKEYE - NIGHT

moves through to where the trees seem sparse and are unnaturally white birch and some thin grass grows. The land rises into a mound. Chingachgook and the others avoid stepping on the grass and cross to the other side of it.

CHINGACHGOOK

mutters something to Uncas. He nods and disappears amongst the white birch, soundlessly.

HAWKEYE

throws Heyward a blanket. Heyward spreads the blanket below the top of the mound and - maintaining silence - he gestures for Cora and Alice to rest there.

ALICE'S HEAD

hits the blanket. She curls into a fetal position and she's out. Heyward is nearby on watch. Hawkeye has taken a position two-thirds of the way around the crescent shaped mound. Cora has sought him out.
doesn't react as Cora enters. They whisper...

**CORA**
Why didn't you bury those people?

**HAWKEYE**
Anyone lookin' to pick up our trail, would see it as a sign of our passing...

**CORA**
You knew them?

Hawkeye looks at her and nods.

**CORA**
(stiffly)
You were acting for our benefit. I apologize. I misunderstood you.

**HAWKEYE**
Well that is to be expected. My father...

**CORA**
Your father?

**HAWKEYE**
Chingachgook. He warned me about you people. He said...

(beat)
"...do not try to make them understand you."

Beat.

**CORA**
What?

**HAWKEYE**
Yes. And "do not try to understand them. That is because they are a breed apart and they make no sense..."

Cora's indignation is cut off because...

**UNCAS**
moving fast. He gestures back the way he came and it means they're in jeopardy. Uncas disappears around the mound.

**CUT TO**

**EXT. BIRCH FOREST - TREES - NIGHT**

Nothing. Imperceptibly we move closer and start to see shapes blocking out part of the white birch.
151 RED-PAINTED FACE

white eyes. A ruff of red hair stands straight up at the back of the large man's head. Monstrously elongated earlobes are weighted with silver. He's followed by others. Wary, silently, they hunt.

152 DEEPER: MORE OTTAWA

Towards the rear are two French Rangers ("Coureurs des Bois") from Le Regiment de la Sarre. They're bearded, dirty, dressed Indian-style in moccasins, leggings and breechcloths with hooded hunting shirts. There's nothing clumsy about them. They're the 18th century version of Special Forces. If they and the Ottawa find our people, it's all over.

153 ALICE

seeing the red-painted Ottawa approach, starts to panic. Her hyperventilating and involuntary small sounds of fear will reveal their position. A hand covers her mouth and silences her. WIDEN. It's Uncas. His other arm is around her, holding her, looking towards the advancing Ottawa.

154 HAWKEYE

on his back, his tomahawk within reach on the ground.

155 OTTAWA + FRENCH

are fifty yards away from the crescent mound behind which lie our people. Mist envelops them...

156 CHINGACHGOOK

His massive arms spread revealing his war club in his left fist; his fusil in his right hand.

157 HAWKEYE

waiting for the attack. Cora's eyes are anxious, but there's no terror there. Hawkeye's impressed with her cool. He hands her a pistol. She takes it. He listens for the soft drop of moccasined feet...

158 OTTAWA

through the grass. Thirty feet away they stop. They're motionless. Then their leader gestures and they start backing out. The French Rangers continue towards the crescent. The Ottawa chief takes one's arm and stops him. The French Ranger whispers something inaudible. The Ottawa chief shakes his head "Non. N'est pas possible..." And means it. They retreat.

159 SEPARATE SHOTS: HAWKEYE, UNCAS, CHINGACHGOOK, CORA

ten.eely monitor the Ottawa retreat.
He slowly removes his hand from her mouth. She's a little shy, then she looks up, catches his eyes. Then she averts her face.

sees all of it; doesn't like it.

The Ottawa are gone.

CORA
(quietly)
Why did they turn back?

In answer Hawkeye looks behind and above her head.

CORA turns and makes out stilt platforms of skeletons and torn strips of buckskin silhouetted against the night sky in the distance. They have camped on sanctified ground, a burial place.

CORA + HAWKEYE She thinks it would be a mistake to ever underestimate the skill of these men or the danger and complexity of this place. She hands the pistol back to him. Their hands almost touch:

(still pissed off)
"A breed apart and we make no sense"...?

HAWKEYE
(smiles)
In your particular case, miss, I would make some allowance...

CORA
(sarcastic)
Thank you so much.

Cora is angry. Hawkeye, staring at the trees, glances at her. She settles, looking at him. Her mood changes. Then...

CORA You called Chingachgook your "father"? What happened to your parents? Something like this?

Hawkeye's surprised by her question.
They buried my ma and pa and my sisters. And Chingachgook - who found me with two French trappers - raised me up as his own.

I'm sorry.

I do not remember them. I was one or two.

Then how did you learn English?

My father sent us to Reverend Wheelock's Indian School when I was ten. So we would know both worlds...

(smiles)
We learned English and arithmetic and...we were well-warned what not to listen to so we were saved from foolish thoughts.

What "foolish thoughts"?

The bible. King George II. Divine rights, all that...

And what is foolish about...!

Everything. Each man is his own nation. And only he can have dominion over himself; not kings.

None are higher and none are lower than other men...

Where I come from those radical ideas would land you in Newgate prison. (changing subject) Why were those people living in this danger...?
'Cos it's near free and all they can get.

(beat) They were seven years indentured in Virginia. After that misery they headed for the frontier where they would be beholden to none, could work their own land and not live by another's leave.

Cora sees the slate grey clouds and, in between, the fields of stars. She looks at Hawkeye; then again up at the night sky.

HAWKEYE
(continuing; looking up)
My father's people say...that at the birth of the sun and of his brother, the moon, their mother died...so the sun gave to the earth her body, from which was to spring all life. And he drew forth from her breast the stars. The stars he threw into the night sky to remind him of her soul.

(beat) So there is the Camerons' monument...

(the sky) ...my folks', too, I guess.

Cora's pensive. Hawkeye's watching her. Her reaction's enigmatic. After a pause...

CORRA
(low) You are right, Mr. Poe. We do not understand what is happening here. And it is not as I imagined it would be, thinking of it in Boston and London...

HAWKEYE
Sorry it disappoints you...

CORRA
(eyes downcast) On the contrary. It is more deeply stirring...to my blood...

(then up into his eyes) ...than any imagining could possibly have been...
She closes her eyes, turns slightly and prepares to sleep. Hawkeye is the one left staring into the birch forest, a little surprised.

CUT TO

EXT. FOREST - WIDE - LATE AFTERNOON

Deep fog has set in. A hand entering the frame scares the hell out of us. It moves a branch aside. It’s Uncas. Spread to the right is Chingachgook, far to the left is Hawkeye. They hike up a steep forested slope in the heart of the Adirondacks.

CORA

Much further?

HAWKEYE

After the top of this ridge, Miss, the fort and Lake George are downhill of it.

ALICE

Re-energized, her spirits pick up.

ALICE

Do you think we’ll be able to bathe?

Before Cora can answer they hear a deep, rolling roar. Alice is alarmed.

CORA

Thunder.

(beat)

Papa will arrange something.

UNCAS

looks over his shoulder, sees something in the far distance, gestures to Hawkeye and Chingachgook.

HAWKEYE’S POV: DISTANT HILLS

and the band of red-painted Ottawa and Coureurs des Bois, who have now split into two groups, are still on their trail. Meanwhile, oblivious...

HEYWARD

The men of my regiment will fetch water from the lake, build fires and provide every comfort you desire, Alice...

CONTINUED
ALICE
Duncan, you are absolutely
gallant. If Cora doesn't marry
you, I shall.

CORA
Alice!

Heyward laughs. Hawkeye sees them. It bothers us: will these
Europeans, including Cora, shed their frontier experience?

ALICE
I can't wait to see Papa...

CORA
And you, Duncan? What are you
looking forward to?

HEYWARD
Posting to a different continent.

He and Alice laughs.

CORA
I don't agree. I think it's very
exciting and important here.

Heyward looks at her. She's not kidding.

68 ANOTHER ANGLE: HEYWARD

helps Alice. As he does, he stares at Cora's separation and
now her proximity to Hawkeye, who's walking on ahead, is
something Heyward doesn't like. His dark thoughts are
distracted by a FLASH of light and more ROLLING THUNDER.

169 OMITTED

170 WIDE FROM THE FRONT - HAWKEYE

drops and pulls Cora to the ground.

CORA
Lightning?

Hawkeye doesn't answer as he, Chingachgook, Uncas and Heyward
make their way to the top of the ridge.

171 CLOSER ANGLES: CORA + ALICE

join them and look down upon their expectation of a secure piece
of England in the wilderness, a safe harbor, a father's warm
welcome.
THERE IS none of those things. The thunder is the roar of French siege cannon clouded in dense smoke. The flashes of light are mortar bombs exploding and rockets' red glare. Fort William Henry is under a massive siege by a French and Huron army.

**UNCAS**

looks over his shoulder.

**HIS POV: OTTAWA**

pursuing them. There's no way back. They're propelled forward.

**DISSOLVE TO**

**EXT. BATTLEFIELD - CLOSE SHOTS - DUSK**

Cannons roar. Mortars belch black smoke and gouts of red flame. French regular regiments in grayish white with blue facing, fire a volley, driving back a British sortie. French engineers and sappeurs with pick and spade are advancing the trenches closer to the fort.

**WIDE ANGLE FROM THE WATER**

The action is happening on the west side of the fort. On the north, the fire fight is reflected on the black water in our foreground. Then a dark shape wiping to the left cuts off those reflections. We see in silhouette the outline of a birch canoe moving silently, barely rippling the mirrored surface of the lake.

**EXT. LAKE GEORGE BEACH - FRENCH EMLACEMENT**

Behind earth-filled wicker, two Canadiens and a Huron alternately snipe at the ramparts.

**LOW + WIDE: SNIPERS**

Behind them is black water. Its surface is broken by the rising mass of Chingachgook, followed by Uncas and Hawkeye. Muzzle flashes from the cannon reveal the canoe and the forms of the girls further out. Chingachgook's war club is held low. The Huron senses and turns and Hawkeye's thrown tomahawk kills the man. Chingachgook drives the war club up, smashing a Canadien onto the wicker defenses. The second Canadien charges Uncas with his bayonet, slashing his side. Uncas folds him over and tomahawks him.

**CUT TO**

CONTINUED
Amidst the cannonade roar, ad-libbed shouts from Hawkeye and Heyward convince bedraggled soldiers to open the sally-port. Our people have cut their way into the fort and now rush in.

The group moves through the long, dank, tunnel. Enlisted men escorting them. Another torch from the other direction: CAPTAIN BEAMS is revealed.

**HEYWARD**

I'm Major Duncan Heyward!

**BEAMS**

Captain Jeffery Beams. We didn't expect you'd make it through!

**HEYWARD**

Where's Colonel Munro? His daughters are here too.

Beams raises his torch, sees the ravaged women. He is shocked that they traveled with Heyward.

CUT TO

emerges from a sally-port tunnel during a lull in the bombardment. It's smokey. NOISE is deafening. The group has traveled through a nightmare, only to arrive in hell.

run diagonally past pyramidal stacks of cannon ball, shell-holes and shrapnel, fatigued and wounded 33rd Regiment of Foot crowd into bunkers. Rangers, a couple of hundred Mohawks and Colonial Militia, as well as some women huddle in corners next to the sick and dying, or are on guard duty ready to repel an infantry assault.

AD-LIBS

(shouts over roar)

Uncas! Nathaniel...

waves. One wounded man, IAN, catches up to Uncas.
IAN
Jack say y'all weren't joinin' up.

UNCAS
(on the run)
We didn't!

HAWKEYE
Dropped by to see how you boys were doin', is all.

COLONEL MUNRO
running from his quarters is shocked to see them.

ALICE
(hysterical)
Papa, Papa!!

MUNRO
(enraged)
Why are you here?!

If Cora is stunned, Alice is decimated by colliding with the wall of her father's anger. Munro sees and whips off his coat to cover them and takes Alice roughly under his arm. Bombardment resumes. Alice clings while they race for his quarters:

MUNRO
(to Heyward; re: Alice + Cora)
Why did you allow them to come?
(beat)
And where the bloody hell are my reinforcements!!

They race into the open door and yellow lantern light of Munro's quarters. Heyward's confused...

CUT TO

INT. MUNRO'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

MUNRO
(embracing his daughters; softer)
I specifically told you to stay away from this hell hole! Why did you disobey?

CORA
When? How?

CONTINUED
MUNRO
In my letter...

CORA
There was none!

MUNRO
What?

CORA
There was no letter.

MUNRO
I sent three men to Webb!

HEYWARD
Only one called Magua arrived.

CORA
And he delivered no such message.

Munro's stunned.

MUNRO
Does Webb not even know we are besieged?

HEYWARD
No, sir. Webb has no idea. And he certainly does not know to send reinforcements!

Munro has nothing upon which to vent his fury. Meanwhile, Alice clings to her father. At fifty-five the British Army has been his life. He blindly believes in its institutions, though officers like Webb would disdain his Scots origins.

MUNRO
What happened to you?

HEYWARD
(suddenly tired)
Ambush...on the road. This Magua led us into it.

(pause; re: Heyward)
...eighteen killed. It's these men who saved us. They guided us here...

MUNRO
Can I reward you? How can I thank you?

No answer. Then...
We would help ourselves to a few horns from your powder stores.

What else?

Some food.

I'm in your debt. Get your side sewn up, young man.

sees his exhausted and bloodstained surgeon in the doorway that leads to the next rooms.

Mr. Phelps!

PHELPS' face lights up when he sees Cora Munro.

Miss Cora! How are you?

Fine, Mr. Phelps. Have you cat gut and a suturing needle?

And we could use some rum, clothes, and a place to wash...

Cora tries to remove Alice from her father, but she clings to him. Munro holds her tighter. Then he whispers something to her. She nods her head. And Cora takes her. They exit.

is moved beyond words by his daughters' presence. At the same time...

What a place for them...

(to Heyward over table map)

Can I enquire after your situation, sir, given what I've seen of the French dispositions from the ridge above?
The logistics are his guns are bigger than mine and he has more of them. His sappers make thirty yards of trench a day. In two days they'll be two hundred yards from the southwest battery, which will put their thirteen inch mortars in range. Once they're in, we will be pounded to dust.

remains...he has something else to say.

A man, here, can make a run straight through to Webb.

...not enough time, now, to get to Albany and back with reinforcements...

Webb's not in Albany. He marched the 33rd to Fort Edward two days ago.

Webb is at Edward?

Yes, sir.

That's only twelve miles away! He could be here day after tomorrow.

(to Hawkeye)

Find your man. Captain Beams will give you the message.

Beams nods. Munro's electrified. He turns back to the map.

John Cameron's cabin, we come upon it last night. Burned out. Everyone murdered. And it was Ottawa allied to the French.

Munro looks at him.

Yes, Mr. Poe? So?
HAWKEYE
A war-party. It means the Ottawa have swung around the fort to attack the settlements up and down the frontier. Many men here, their homes are in their path.

Munro looks at him for a long beat. Munro doesn't like what his response must be to this news. He turns to Heyward and the map.

MUNRO
(cold)
Thank you.

Hawkeye's dismissed, frozen out.

MUNRO
That's all, sir.

Hawkeye, furious, leaves Munro's quarters almost trampling an Adjutant.

HEYWARD
Things were done. Nobody was spared...

MUNRO
A terrible feature of war in the Americas.
(beat)
But keep your sight fixed on our duty. Our duty is to defeat France. And that hangs on a courier to Webb.

CUT TO

INT. MONTCALM'S MARQUEE - CHORAL GROUP - NIGHT

of three Seneca women and five boys, led by a Jesuit, sing the Te Deum in the Iroquois language. This is a large tent that could sleep twenty. Montcalm's personal guards are at the entrance. Inside is simple campaign furniture and a six foot by eight foot battle standard and flag of France.

MONTCALM
stands with an elaborately tattooed and robed Seneca chief who whispers in his ear...
SENeca Chief (low)  
...and the Black Robes of Michilimackinac left us no time to put our cabins in order before telling us our French father had need of our aid. We rolled our blankets and were the first to be here...

The Marquis de Montcalm is forty-five, wears a large wampum belt as a sash over his waistcoat. He has an acute intellect, an elegant manner and is a consummate professional soldier. Over the Seneca's shoulder, Montcalm sees and nods to...

MAGUA

entering with four Huron braves. This is not the Magua we saw on the trail. In his scalp lock are three white plumes. A robe drapes his left shoulder.

MONTCALM
(to Seneca Chief)
For my children and the children of the true faith, my friendship and esteem is boundless...

(beat)
I will give you three oxen for a feast and tomorrow I will sing the war song with you in the great council house myself.

The Seneca Chief is satisfied and his people, plus the Jesuit, exit. The look on Magua's face and the wry expression on Montcalm's allows us to understand their relationship is based on realpolitik.

MONTCALM
Le Renard Subtil, how are things with your English friends?

Magua exhales in derision as he brings a chair to face Montcalm and sits, European style...

MONTCALM
(over his shoulder)
Louis Antoine, join us.

LOUIS ANTOINE DE BOUGAINVILLE enters. He wears a functional melange of Indian moccasins and leggings over white linen breeches and a blue officer's waistcoat.

MONTCALM
Hear what le Subtil has to tell us...
Bougainville published a book on integral calculus at twenty-five, at twenty-six was a secretary to the French Ambassador in London, in January 1756 at age twenty-seven he was elected a member of the British Royal Academy of Science and at age twenty-eight he's aide de camp to the Marquis de Montcalm with the rank of captain. Later in life, he brought "bougainvillea" from Tahiti to Europe and America.

BOUGAINVILLE
What sort of man is Webb?

MAGUA
English war chief is fearful. He goes to Fort Edward with 42nd Regiment because you will attack there. That lie. He know Fort Edward more safe. He does not know my father's army attacks Fort William Henry.

BOUGAINVILLE
But by now Munro knows his couriers didn't get through. He'll send another.

MAGUA
The Grey Hair will try.

MONTCALM
Four or five, including two women entered the fort...

MAGUA
The Grey Hair's children were under Magua's knife but escaped. They'll be under it again.

MONTCALM
Why do you hate the Grey Hair, Magua?

MAGUA
When the Grey Hair is dead, Magua will eat his heart. Before he dies Magua will put his children under the knife so the Grey Hair will see his seed is wiped out forever.

Montcalm won't get a direct answer.

MONTCALM
My sappeurs are advancing the trenches through the night, now. You may soon have your opportunity.
exhausted, sitting on a low stool, taking a breath.

HAWKEYE (O.S.)
She know what she's doin'?

Phelps looks up, then he looks over his shoulder at Cora. He's a little indignant.

PHELPS
Assisted me in the War of the Austrian Succesion when she was fourteen. I would say she does...

Her apron is stained. Hawkeye sees this may be her first time in the New World, but it's not her first military campaign. Still angered at Munro's dismissive response, he's nevertheless falling for Cora.

HAWKEYE
She does not shy away from much...

PHELPS
(elsewhere)
What's that?

HAWKEYE
Nothin'.

Alice Munro has caught Hawkeye's attention. Outside the surgery where a casement meets a wall, she sits, withdrawn. A catatonic older woman in a fine dress sits next to her.

PHELPS (O.S.)
Miss Cora? Gentleman looking for you.

HAWKEYE
enters. Cora's sewing up Uncas.

CORA
(looks up)
Mr. Poe?

HAWKEYE
Miss.
(re: cotton)
May I?

Cora, curious, nods. Hawkeye cuts some pieces from her ruined and discarded blouse that she now uses to bandage Uncas. We don't know why; neither does Cora.
HAWKEYE
(to Uncas)
As soon as you are done holdin' hands with Miss Munro, we have work to do...


COR
What are you looking at, Mr. Poe?

HAWKEYE
I am looking at you, Miss.

Cora measures the directness of Hawkeye's manner. It's not insolent, only unsettling. He smiles. So does she, feeling foolish, then she turns. He leaves.

CUT TO

EXT. FRENCH TRENCHES - SAPPERS + ENGINEERS - NIGHT

having worked through the night, are still digging the diagonally-advancing trench. We note it's closer than it was.

EXT. FRENCH TRENCHES - FRENCH PICKETS

at their posts guard the sappeurs. Meanwhile...

CUT TO

EXT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY, WEST SIDE - SALLY-PORT - NIGHT

opens. Ten Mohawks and Rangers crawl towards the French lines. Meanwhile...

CUT TO

EXT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY, PARAPET - HAWKEYE + UNCAS - NIGHT

are low and out of French sight in the northeast battery. Four others are with them. Stacked rifles are against the casement. We don't know why. Each rifle is within reach of Hawkeye's hand. Hawkeye is taking extra care unloading Killdeer. He charges it once, then overloads the powder and the quarter charge.

UNCAS
You told about the Ottawa?
CONTINUED

HAWKEYE
(nods)
He does not want to hear it.
(pause)
But he is gonna have to. From
John, Ian, Sharitarish, all of
us...

Hawkeye uses the fine cotton he took from Cora, wets it to make
a tighter gas seal and rams it home. The tighter fit requires
more effort.

HAWKEYE
looks below to ground level...

A FRONTIERSMAN - COURIER

Two pistols are holstered in a sash around his chest. He wears
no hat and carries no pack. He waits by the sally-port door.

CUT TO

EXT. FRENCH TRENCH - THREE PICKETS - NIGHT

are suddenly tomahawked and knifed by Rangers and Mohawks. Alarm
is raised. Shots are fired. French and some Huron run to
advance. The Rangers and Mohawks fall back.

FRENCH
emboldened, pursue...

TRENCH IN FRONT OF WEST WALL

suddenly Heyward and three companies of the 33rd Regiment of
Foot (60 men) are over the top in perfect formation...

HEYWARD
Sergeant! Form three ranks!

SERGEANT MAJOR
Sir!!
(bellows to troops)
Upon the center, wheel to the
left-about! March!
(three motions; drums)
Rear ranks, proper distance!
(the rear ranks back
up six paces)
Front ranks, take your distance!
March!
(everybody moves)
Halt!
(MORE)

CONTINUED
SEURANT MAJOR (Cont’d)
(in unison they slam
to a stop)
Make ready!
(muskets snap to port
arms)

RANGERS
dodge right and left of the 33rd Foot’s line of fire.

FRENCH
are coming forward. Their sergeants trying to stop and form
their men in ad-libbed French.

33RD REGIMENT OF FOOT

SEURANT MAJOR
(dead cool)
First rank! Second rank!
Pre-sent arms!!
(muskets shouldered)

HEYWARD
Fire!!!
Like ONE SHOT, LIGHTNING, SMOKE and .65 caliber death screams
from the first two ranks like a scythe, cutting down...

REVERSE: FRENCH
Fourteen wounded or killed...

33RD REGIMENT OF FOOT - HEYWARD
exposed. Man next to him goes down. He’s oblivious to
incoming rounds.

HEYWARD
Advance, Sergeant Major!

SEURANT MAJOR
Sir!!!
(to soldiers)
Third rank! Twelve paces!
Forward march!
(drums)

The rear rank walks through the first two ranks, who are priming
and loading in perfect order to their Sergeant Major’s commands.
As the third rank becomes the first rank...

CONTINUED
SERGEANT MAJOR
Shoulder arms!
(slam)
Present!
(slam)

HEYWARD
Fire!!!

CUT TO

EXT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY - COURIER - NIGHT

sprints for the trees during the diversion of Heyward's sally.

TWO HURONS

materialize from nowhere and charge at him... Both are BLOWN off their feet by...

EXT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY, CASEMENT - UNCAS + HAWKEYE

now handed already-loaded, primed and cocked rifles while the four men behind them reload the two just fired. Hawkeye gestures...

EXT. HILLSIDE - THREE HALF-SAVAGE CANADIENS

are running down the hill to intercept the courier. One fires...

COURIER

a near miss.

EXT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY - HAWKEYE

FIRES. A half second later, Uncas FIRES.

EXT. HILLSIDE

One Canadien's falling through trees as the second one's hit by Uncas' shot.

HAWKEYE

reaches out his hand. Killdeer with the heavier load is slapped into it. Hawkeye aims. Looks away a second and comes back to the sight in deep concentration. The world goes silent...

HAWKEYE'S POV: COURIER + CANADIEN

pursuer are barely visible. Only patches appear momentarily between the trees. They're three hundred yards away: an impossible shot in 1757.
218 EXT. FOREST - THE CANADIEN
will intersect the courier. His arm is back with his tomahawk
to throw...

219 EXT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY - HAWKEYE
judges wind, elevates the long rifle...and FIRES at us.

220 JUMP CUT BACK: TREES
Hawkeye's heavy round rips through. We HEAR the ball cut air.
A few leaves flutter...

221 EXT. FOREST - CANADIEN
whacked head over heels by the impact.

222 COURIER
looks over his shoulder. He didn't know the Canadian was
there. He stumbles in the half light. Then he runs on...

223 EXT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY - WEST SALLY-PORT
The three companies of the 33rd Regiment of Foot file back into
the fort in perfect order. The sally-port is closed. Three
men are wounded. The diversion worked perfectly.

HEYWARD
Sergeant Major!

SERGEANT MAJOR
Sir!

HEYWARD
Thank you, Sergeant Major. Thank
the men.

SERGEANT MAJOR
Atten-hut!

224 TROOPERS + MILITIA
have seen no action for three days and nights. Heyward got
their blood running and won their respect. They step aside and
nod to him. Heyward keeps walking. He is home.

225 EXT. FOREST - THE COURIER
...disappears into the dark trees.
EXT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY - HAWKEYE

HAWKEYE
(to one of the
frontiersmen)
Thomas, round up Ian and Captain
Jack. Ask them to meet me outside
the Colonel's quarters.

Then he's pensive and looks into the deep gloom of the forest.
Will the courier make it?

CUT TO

INT. MUNRO'S BEDCHAMBER - DOOR - DAY

a knock and Heyward enters.

CORAL Alice

Alice is in her father's bed. Cora is collecting and tearing
linen into strips for bandages.

HEYWARD
Cora... I wanted to talk to you,
but I'll come back another time...

Alice looks at the two of them and rises out of the bed.

CORAL Alice...

ALICE
Talk to Duncan, Cora.
(smiles)
I must manage... I cannot be an
invalid schoolgirl.
(starts for door)
I'll see if Mr. Phelps needs
anything...

She leaves.

HEYWARD
I'm sorry, I didn't mean to...

CORAL Her nerves are shattered. She's
trying to be brave.

There's a lot going on under Cora's surface. We don't know
what it is, but it's disconcerting.
Heyward

Cora, I adore you and, when we come together, we will be the happiest couple in England.

(beat)
I am certain of that. More than ever before.

(softens)
And I am certain of the rightness that you trust the judgment of those for whom your welfare is closest to their hearts to...

Cora

Duncan...

(pause)
Duncan, I promised you an answer. You have complimented me with your persistence and patience but...

(beat)
But the decision I've come to is I'd rather make the gravest of mistakes than surrender my own judgment.

Heyward is stunned.

Cora

And it's been unfair to you while I search myself for feelings, which, if they were there and as strong as they ought to be, would've made themselves known long ago...

(pause)
Take my admiration and friendship. And please take this as my final answer. It must be no.

Heyward's shattered inside.

Heyward

I see.

Cora

I am sorry, Duncan...

Heyward nods. He's speechless. He's very erect as he leaves the room.

Close: Cora

The tension rushes out of her and she shudders and leans against the quarter-timbered walls for support. Then she collects the linen and starts out.
moving through the corridor past wounded. Two French mortar bombs explode above one of the casements. We hear shrill screams in the distance and...

HAWKEYE (O.S.)
The cabin was attacked by an Ottawa war party, not a raidin' party out for pillage. They are sweeping south down the frontier and waging war against the settlements and Mohawk villages.

IAN (O.S.)
And my cabin's not thirteen miles south of Cameron's.

Cora, passing the open door to Munro's crowded office, now hesitates.

Hawkeye, Captain Jack Winthrop, Ian, seven or eight other militia spokesmen, Munro, Heyward, two adjutants, one lieutenant of Rangers.

MUNRO
I must receive proof more conclusive than Mr. Poe's opinion before I weaken our defenses by allowing militia to withdraw.

JACK
Chingachgook's of the same opinion, taken together, that's gospel. And your fort will stand or fall depending on Webb and reinforcements, not these colonials' presence.

MUNRO
I judge military matters, Captain Winthrop, not you.

HAWKEYE
But your judgment is not more important than their right under agreement with Webb to defend their farms and families.

(beat)
Major Heyward was at John Cameron's. He saw what it was.
MUNRO
(looking to Heyward for confirmation of his point of view)
What did you see, Major?

Heyward looks around the room. And he catches in the doorway...

CORA
beyond the periphery of men, staring at him.

HEYWARD
Munro is expecting him to be the good soldier in defense of British military interests. At the same time...

CORA
examines him with a cool, level stare.

HEYWARD
looks at Munro. More French mortar rounds detonate O.S. What if Webb gets here and they need to launch a counter-attack? They need every man they have. It's his moment of decision...

HEYWARD
(to Munro)
I saw nothing that would lead me to the conclusion it was other than a raid by savages bent on thievery.

Jack Winthrop grabs Nathaniel.

HAWKEYE
You are a liar!

CORA'S
saddened. Heyward's stature has fallen irrevocably in her eyes.

HEYWARD
can't help it. He turns to look at Cora...

HEYWARD'S POV: DOORWAY
She's gone.

HEYWARD
suffused with an inner sadness, turns to Hawkeye.

CONTINUED
HAWKEYE
And the blood will be on your hands!

Heyward reaches for his sword.

MUNRO
(to Heyward)
I'll have none of that!
(to colonials)
Montcalm is a soldier and a gentleman. Not a butcher.

HAWKEYE
But it is their women and children alone in wilderness cabins, not your kin!

MUNRO
(exploding)
You forget yourself!

JACK
I am not forgettin' the word Webb gave: these men would be released!

MUNRO
British promises are honored. The militia will NOT be released. Because I need more definite proof than his word!

JACK
Nathaniel's word has been good on the frontier a long time before you got here.

MUNRO
This interview's over. You've had my decision. The militia stays!

JACK
(to Munro)
Does the rule of English law no longer govern? Has it been replaced by absolutism?

This is very dangerous talk.

HAWKEYE
And if there is no trust to be placed in English law, these people would do better makin' a peace with the French!
243 CONTINUED (2)

HEYWARD
That is sedition!

HAWKEYE
That is the truth!

HEYWARD
(restraining himself)
I ought to have you whipped from this fort!

HAWKEYE
Major!
(changes down)
I think some day you and I are gonna have a serious disagreement.

MUNRO
(steel)
Anyone fomenting or advocating leaving Fort William Henry will be hung for sedition. Anyone leaving will be shot for desertion.
(pause)
My decision is final. Get out.

Hawkeye are the others are not intimidated. Their rage smolders. The look on Hawkeye's face says this is not over.

CUT TO

244 EXT. FORT, PARADE GROUND - BONFIRE - NIGHT

Sparks shower skyward. Impromptu music. Some Celtic proto-blue grass played on fiddle and drums. It's stirring.

245 ANOTHER ANGLE: SOME WOMEN

laundresses, dance from soldier to soldier - English foot and American Rangers. A few people lit by the firelight are solemn. Most are stirred to lift their morale for a while.

246 THEIR FACES

underlit by the red firelight. They are a disposable people, a diverse plurality stuck in a postage stamp-size fort in an ocean of forest, locked into mortal deadly conflict because of the policies of cold and distant European monarchs.

247 A PLACE A LITTLE DISTANT FROM THE FIRE

We can barely make out the eyes and faces of a number of men behind logs, crates and new wreckage from the day's bombardment.
HAWKEYE
By my light, if they set aside their law and the wish, they no longer have rightful authority over you. To not fight that is to aid them takin' away our natural rights as men and imposing their tyranny upon us.

JACK
That is also what I am believin'. And no force on earth will keep me here any longer.

(beat)
Anyone caught leavin' the fort could be shot. Each man make your own decision.

(beat)
Those who are goin', be back here in an hour.

HAWKEYE
Out the northern sally-port. Strike for the east side of the swamp until you clear the French picket line. Head north over the ridge, then come about southeast and fork left in Little Meadow and you're free of the outpost and skirmishers...

A COLONIAL
(grumbles)
Should've skinned outta this long ago.

COLONIAL #2
We got no families, Captain. Figured we'd stay and give 'em a hand even though...

HAWKEYE
(points up)
We will cover you from the top of the casement.

JACK
(in amazement)
You're not coming with us?

Hawkeye shakes his head.

HAWKEYE
I got reason to stay.

CONTINUED
CONTINUED (2)

JACK
Does that reason wear a blue dress
and work in the surgery?

Low laughter.

HAWKEYE
(dry)
It does and no offense, but it
is a better lookin' reason than
you, Jack Winthrop.

(more laughs)
Push hard, 'cos you got to clear
the French outpost by dawn.

(sticks out his hand
and grasps Winthrop's)
Good luck, Captain.

The men split up...

CUT TO

FIRE - HAWKEYE

wanders among the dancers and musicians clustered in groups,
lit by the firelight. Someone catches his eye and he moves in
that direction...

HAWKEYE'S POV: CORA

in the shadows, leaning against the wall, searching... We sense
she's been looking for him. He comes up to her. She turns
in surprise.

CLOSER

Somehow she breathes easier because he's there. She's in a
white shirt with sleeves rolled up. Hawkeye leads her away from
some of the people.

CORA + HAWKEYE

Hawkeye takes Cora's hand. Cora is awakening to a new spirit,
a new wind blowing through a new land, a new
self-determination... And she's drawn to this rough yet
graceful man with his direct manner. Hawkeye settles against
a wall. She leans next to him. Their shoulders touch.

CORA

To her everything about him seems to be somehow right. She's
discovered that the passions and outrage that move him, move
her... And her readiness to give herself to what stirs the
deepest resonances of her soul is the same as his.
looks at her. She's beautiful in the firelight. Cora's eyes find his and she folds into his arms. His lips find hers and tears stream down her face. She's suffused with an elation she can't explain. In the night before doomsday a romance is born in rebellion amid the huddled people in this small stockade ripped from the black earth of the forests of a wild continent.

CUT TO

254 INT. BARRACKS - LOW + WIDE - NIGHT

door CRASHES inwards. Twelve British sentries storm in. Four bear torches.

255 REVERSE: HAWKEYE, UNCAS, CHINGACHGOOK, TWO COLONIALS + SOME MOHAWKS

are out of the bunks and moving at them with tomahawks, knives, a flintlock...

SERGEANT (O.S.)

You! Halt!

256 BRITISH SENTRIES

their muskets aimed mostly at Hawkeye.

SERGEANT

As you were!!

Hawkeye freezes. The others slow down, indecisive... Hawkeye drops his tomahawk and says something in Delaware to restrain Chingachgook and Uncas. The British in the torchlight with the long muskets and bayonets are an image out of Goya.

SERGEANT

Take him!

Hawkeye's spun around and while his hands are bound:

CHINGACHGOOK

(Delaware; subtitled)
Why do they make my son prisoner?

HAWKEYE

(Delaware; subtitled)
I helped Winthrop and the others leave...

CHINGACHGOOK

(Delaware; subtitled)
Why didn't you tell us?

CONTINUED
Because this fight is not yours, father. I love you and my brother. And you should leave this place now...

What will they do to my white son?

One of the guards - scared to death by Chingachgook - nervously fingers his musket.

Get back from him!

enters.

shrugs in answer to Chingachgook's question.

moved out. As he passes Heyward, their eyes lock.

CUT TO

INT. MUNRO'S QUARTERS - CORA - NIGHT

He saved us! We're alive only because of him...

WIDEN: Heyward, Munro, Cora. We've entered mid-argument. An adjutant comes and goes. Heyward and Munro are sensitive to appearances in front of the adjutant. Cora couldn't give a damn.

The man encouraged the colonials to desert in this very room, in my presence. He is guilty of sedition and must be tried and hanged like any other criminal, regardless of what he did for my children.

He knew the consequences. And he stayed. Are those the actions of a criminal?

(MORE)

CONTINUED
CORAS (Cont'd)

(beat)
Duncan, do something.

HEYWARD
He knew the penalty. He ought to pay without sending you to beg.

CORAS
You know he wouldn't send me...! You misrepresented what you saw and caused this.
(frustrated)
I, too, was at that farm. It was as Nathaniel said...

MUNRO
Not with enough certainty to outweigh the fate of this fort.

HEYWARD
And who are these colonials to pass judgment on England's policies in her possessions? And come and go without so much as a "by your leave?"

CORAS
They do not live their lives "by your leave."
(beat)
They hack it out of the wilderness with their own two hands, burying their dead along the way.

HEYWARD
(distant)
You are defending him because you've become infatuated with him.

Cora is having her intelligence written off as a hormone attack. She contains her fury.

CORAS
Duncan, you are a man with a few admirable qualities. But taken as a whole, I was wrong to have thought so highly of you.

Heyward's shot through the heart.

MUNRO
Cora! I would anything I could to keep you from being hurt.
.(MORE)
MUNRO (Cont'd)

But the man is guilty of sedition and subject to military justice and beyond pardon.

CORA

"Justice"? If that's "justice"... then the sooner French guns blow the English army out of America, the better it will be for these people.

You do not know what you are saying!

CORA

(explodes)

Yes I do! I know exactly what I am saying. And if it is sedition, then I am guilty of sedition too!

She exits, leaving them there.

CUT TO

INT. FORT, STOCKADE - NIGHT

Heavy timbered door. A sentry. They stand at attention when Cora passes as opposed to barring her entry.

INT. CELL - HAWKEYE

comes to the door, grips the bars with his hands and looks at Cora.

THROUGH THE BARS ON TO CORA

They are silent for a moment, then:

HAWKEYE

Sorry...can't ask you in.

Cora's pale smile.

CORA

They're going to hang you.

(pause; soft)

Why didn't you leave when you had the chance?

HAWKEYE

Because what I am interested in is right here...

CONTINUED
CORA
What do you want me to do?

He touches her hand.

HAWKEYE
Webb's reinforcements will arrive or not. If they do not, the fort will fall. Stay close to your father. The French will protect the officers among the English.

CORA
No. I will find you.

HAWKEYE
Do not. Ordinary people will be in danger. The officers and theirs will be safe.

(pause)
Promise me.

Cora drops her forehead to Hawkeye's hands wrapped around the bars. She acquiesces, nods. Then HEAVY SHELLING commences.

Cora and Hawkeye look up. Mortar bombs begin striking the fortress. Still dark. The French salvo started early today.

CORA
The whole world's on fire, isn't it?

A pause.

HAWKEYE
This part of it sure is...

Reaching through the bars set in the thick door, their hands clasp each others. On that image...

CUT TO

264 EXT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY - VARIOUS CUTS - DAWN

French cannoneers fire again and again. They work like precision drill teams from the new makeshift earthwork casements.

265 FRENCH TRENCH

is now only two hundred yards from William Henry's walls. French and Canadien lay down musket fire in support of artillery crews who reload the squat and massive newly arrived thirteen inch mortars.
266 MORTAR ONE

is loaded with powder, patch and thirteen inch diameter bomb. The flash-hole is primed. The burning fuse is jammed into the bomb. The primer charge is lit off and the crew ducks as the crude iron belches red flame and black smoke into the lightening sky. The other mortar ROARS.

CUT TO

267 INT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY - ENGLISH CANNON CREW - DAWN

tries to return fire under the heavy French bombardment. The French mortar bomb arcs in and EXPLODES smoke, flame and shrapnel, wiping out most of the crew. The fortress is under the heaviest attack we've seen. Wounded are in shock or terrorized.

CUT TO

268 EXT. BEHIND FRENCH LINES - MONTCALM - DAWN

surrounded by his officer staff. Though aristocrats and haute bourgeoisie, none are dilettantes. These are tough, seasoned soldiers. Among them are Chevalier de Fouchard and Louis Antoine de Bougainville.

269 CHEVALIER DE LEVIS

moves through the officers to Bougainville's side and whispers, handing him a dispatch. The Chevalier's white lace and breeches are dirty. He's wounded. He wears three pistols holstered in a brace like a sash across his chest.

BOUGAINVILLE

(indicating dispatch)
Well done, Chevalier. Thank you.


MONTCALM

(to Bougainville)
Prepare the honor guard.

CUT TO

270 INT. FORT WILLIAM HENRY, MUNRO'S QUARTERS - MUNRO - MORNING

dusty, dirty, up all night argues with engineers. One's bloodstained. Munro looks around suddenly because most of the O.S. cannon ROAR has quit. The men, realizing this, looking around as...

271 HEYWARD

enters.

CONTINUED
HEYWARD
Montcalm...asking for a parlay!

MUNRO
A parlay?
(beat)
Could it be his outposts have
spotted Webb and reinforcements?

HEYWARD
We needn't grant it, sir.

MUNRO
(he thinks)
Use the parlay to move the nine
pounders across to the south
casement. Fast!
(grimly)
Turn out a guard of honor.

BEAMS
Yes sir!

CUT TO

EXT. FRENCH LINES - FACES - DAY

They carried two hundred and forty-five bateaux across a ten
mile portage, all their supplies and artillery, and then rowed
down the length of Lake George to get here. To them, assaulting
this fort is the easy part. The drummers of the honor guard
play a tattoo behind them.

INDIAN FACES

Huron, Ottawa, Osage, Seneca, Choctaw, Fox...hear the drum of
the honor guard and wait. They're in war paint of green, black
and red. Many tattoos. Split ears. The Osage scalping locks
are hennaed red. Canadiens among them are bearded, dirty...
At their head...

MAGUA

in full war paint, with a coterie of Huron warriors, silent,
menacing. Drums.

HONOR GUARD - FRENCH OFFICERS

Marquis de Montcalm, immaculate, followed by a guard of honor in
white, grey and medium blue with six foot by eight foot
regimental colors and the French flag (gold fleur-de-lis on a
field of blue).

REVERSE: MUNRO, HEYWARD, BEAMS

approach, followed by an honor guard of the 33rd Regiment of
Foot and British drummers in scarlet, tall mitred hats, gold
braid.
INT. FORT - ENGLISH TROOPS

grim, silent and watchful. Drum sounds.

ENGLISH ARTILLERYMEN

move cannon. Drum sound.

AMERICAN SCOUTS, COLONIAL MILITIA, MOHAWK INDIANS IN WAR PAINT

watching the parley from a battery. Silent. Drum sound.

WIDE: FRENCH + ENGLISH

come together, stand to attention, salute. Drums cease. Montcalm steps forward and sweeps his plumed hat to the ground in a courtly bow. Munro bows coldly.

MONTCALM

Colonel Munro, I have known you as a gallant antagonist. I am happy to make your acquaintance as a friend.

MUNRO

And I to make yours, Monsieur le Marquis.

MONTCALM

I have long realized that even outnumbered as you are, it would be merely a waste of breath to invite your surrender.

MUNRO

You are correct.

MONTCALM

Please accept my compliments for the strong and skillful defense of your fortress. Under the command of a lesser man it would have fallen long ago given the superior numbers and material... mere chance has allowed me to array against you...

MUNRO

Monsieur le Marquis, I am a soldier, not a diplomat. You called this parley for a better reason than the exchange of compliments?

CONTINUED
MONTCALM
As a soldier you have already done everything which is necessary for the honor of your Prince. I will forever bear testimony that your resistance has been gallant and was continued as long as there was hope. But now, I beg you to listen to the admonitions of humanity. I beg you to consider my offer to you of terms of surrender.

MUNRO
However I may apprise such testimony from Monsieur Montcalm, Fort William Henry is strong and still stands.

MONTCALM
Honor that is freely accorded to courage, may be refused obstinacy.
(pause)
These hills afford us every opportunity to reconnoiter your works and I am possibly as well acquainted with their weak condition as you are yourselves.

Is Webb really en route and Montcalm hopes to take the fort by duplicity before reinforcements arrive?

MUNRO
Perhaps the General's glasses can reach to the Hudson and he knows the size and imminence of the army of Webb...?

Montcalm takes a moment to reply and appears genuinely sympathetic to Munro.

MONTCALM
(quietly)
My scouts intercepted this dispatch intended for you.

Munro is puzzled, suspicious.

MONTCALM
(to Bougainville)
Read the dispatch.
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BOUGAINVILLE (O.S.)
(reading)
"Colonel Munro - Fort William
Henry. I have not a single man
available to send to your rescue.
It is impossible. I advise you
to seek terms for surrender.
Signed Webb."

Munro, Heyward and Beams are rocked, as if struck by a single
blow. Bougainville hands Heyward the letter.

HEYWARD
(confirming)
This is the signature of Webb.
(to Munro)
And I know the temper of our men.
Rather than spend the rest of the
war in a French prison hulk in
Hudson Bay, they'll fight to the
end.

MUNRO
(to Montcalm)
You have heard your answer,
Monsieur le Marquis.
(salutes)

Munro starts off. Montcalm stops him.

MONTCALM
Sir.
(challengingly)
I am incapable of mistreating
brave men. So I beg you not to
sign the death warrant of so many
until you've listened to my
terms.

Munro turns.

MUNRO
Such as...?

MONTCALM
My master requires the fort be
destroyed. But, for you and your
comrades, there is no privilege
that will be denied. None of your
men will see the inside of a
prison barge. They're free to
go so long as they return to
England and fight no more on this
continent, and the civilian
militia return to their farms.

CONTINUED
Their arms?

MONTCALM
They may leave the fortress fully armed, but with no ammunition.
(beat)
Other than that, ask what you wish.

Munro's impressed with Montcalm's generosity.

MUNRO
The honors of war?

MONTCALM
Granted.

MUNRO
My colors?

MONTCALM
Carry them to England with pride and show them to your King.

MUNRO
Allow me to consult with my officers.

Something's gone out of Munro forever. As the men move away from the French...

MUNRO
I have lived to see two things in my old age I never expected. An Englishman afraid to support a friend. And a Frenchman too honest to profit by that advantage.

HEYWARD
General Webb can burn in hell. Our mission is to fight until the end. We'll go back and dig our graves behind the ramparts!

MUNRO
(flares)
Death and glory are sometimes thought the same. Over the years I've learned they are not.

Munro looks at the fortress behind him.

HEYWARD
Sir!
MUNRO
(stops him with his eyes)
The decision is final.

A beat. Then Munro turns towards Montcalm. Their eyes meet across the churned, scarred earth of the battlefield.

MUNRO
I am deeply touched by such unusual and unexpected generosity.
(pause)
The fort is yours under the condition that we be given until dawn to bury our dead, prepare our men and women for their march and turn our wounded over to your surgeon.

MONTCALM
/ Granted, Monsieur.

And Montcalm bows deeply and as he does so...

CUT TO

EXT. FRENCH LINES - CLOAKED MAN - NIGHT

passes away from the little city of tents in the direction of the beach and towards William Henry. He seems to head towards a vantage point from which to observe the fort. As he approaches a sentry:

SENTRY
Qui vive?

MONTCALM
France.

SENTRY
Le mot d'ordre?

MONTCALM
La victoire.

SENTRY
C'est bien, vous vous promenez bien matin, monsieur!

MONTCALM
Il est necessaire d'etre vigilant, mon enfant.

The cloak parts. By the light of the moon the man's face is dimly perceived by us and the soldier as General Montcalm.
The soldier snaps erect as Montcalm continues walking out beyond the line to a small stand of trees.

ANOTHER ANGLE: MONTCALM

The moon is broken into pieces of light on the water and behind Montcalm, from the front of the stand of trees emerges a tall figure.

MAGUA
Is the hatchet buried between the English and my French father?

MONTCALM
Yes.

MAGUA
Not a warrior has a scalp and the white men become friends.

MONTCALM
My master owns these lands and your father has been ordered to drive off the English squatters. They have consented to go. So now he calls them enemies no longer.

MAGUA
Magua took the hatchet to color it with blood. It is still bright. When it is red, then it will be buried.

MONTCALM
But many suns have set since Le Renard struck the war post?

MAGUA
Where is that sun?! Behind the hill. It is dark and cold. When the sun comes again it will be bright and warm.

(threatening)
And Le Subtil is the son of his tribe. There have been many clouds and many mountains before he has come to lead his nation. But now he shines and it is a clear sky.

MONTCALM
That Le Renard has power with his people, I know well.
Magua grabs the hand of the French commander. Imperceptible surprise in Montcalm's eyes. Magua jams Montcalm's fingers to his chest.

MAGUA

Does my father know that?

MONTCALM

That's where a lead bullet has torn you.

MAGUA

And this?

Magua turns his naked back to Montcalm and puts Montcalm's hand on his back...deep ridges of scar a half inch wide.

MONTCALM

My son has been sadly injured. Who did this?

MAGUA

(laughs; sardonic)

Magua slept hard in the English wigwams. And the sticks left their mark...

(pause; for real)

Magua's village and lodges were burnt. Magua's children were killed by the English. Magua was taken as a slave by the Mohawks who fought for the English. Magua's wife believed he was dead and became the wife of another. The Grey Hair was the Mohawks' father. He told them to do all this.

(pause)

Magua became blood-brother to Mohawk to become free. In his heart he always was Huron. And his heart will be whole again on the day when the Grey Hair and all his seed are dead!

MONTCALM

My son Magua's pain is my pain.

MAGUA

Does the chief of the Canadas believe the English will keep the terms?

CONTINUED
MONTCALM
Munro would. But General Webb will not send their soldiers across the salt lake. We, few that we are, will have to fight the same men again when we move south.

(pause; shrugs)
And yet, I cannot break the terms of the capitulation and sully the lilies of France. I cannot...

Long pause, wheels turn. Then:

MAGUA
But many things my French father cannot do, Magua can.

Montcalm reacts as if he hadn't thought of that.

MONTCALM
As the English march away, our soldiers and the Canadiens will be drawn to the looting of the fort...except a small guard...

Magua abruptly leaves Montcalm.

CUT TO

EXT. WOODS - MAGUA - NIGHT

walking back to the Huron camp. Reveal a Huron sub-chief has been in the woods, waiting for Magua. Now he joins him. They walk in silence. Then...

MAGUA
(in Iroquois; re: Montcalm)
I wonder at the blindness and pride of the white man. He believes only he knows how to speak falsely to make other men do his bidding.

Magua exhales in derision.

CUT TO

EXT. FORT, MAIN GATE - MUNRO - DAY

at the end of the column, rides out on his horse. Both sides of the gate are jammed with armed French troops standing at attention. It looks like there are thousands. The French colors and an honor guard are just outside the gate along with Bougainville, Chevalier de Levis, both on horseback as is - at the head - Montcalm.
trots past his walking column out the gate. He does not look at the French.

Montcalm

salutes Munro and bows gravely from the saddle.

Closer: Munro

salutes Montcalm.

Munro

(eyes forward)

Monsieur, the fort is yours.

MID-COLUMN - ON HEYWARD

Marching with his 33rd Regiment of Foot well beyond the fort. The French troops have thinned out. Repressing shame, his backbone is rigid, his face is straight ahead. The 33rd marches in perfect cadence to the drum. In the B.G. Munro on his horse passes Heyward as he rides towards the front of the column. Heyward does not look at him.

FRONT OF COLUMN - CORA WITH ALICE

On the back of a mare. Alice, living through a wide-awake nightmare, is huddled under the arm of her sister. They ride behind the standard bearers. In the B.G. her father is seen approaching and takes his position at their side. Cora looks down the column, shielding her eyes against the sun. We know who she's looking for... Hawkeye.

CORA'S POV: THE COLUMN

Sullen Rangers, the 62nd and 33rd Regiment of Foot including Heyward...thirty to forty women and a number of children - for safety - in the middle, some frontiersmen, Sharitarish and many Mohawk, walking wounded. The column is still snaking its way out of the fort. No Hawkeye.

CORA

straining to see...

EXT. FORT - PRISONERS

Being assembled, their hands shackled. Hawkeye is among twelve or thirteen. He stands erect, walking out of the gate. The French are starting to pour in to loot the interior. Hawkeye looks to his left about twenty paces in front of him and sees...

UNCAS + CHINGACHGOOK

On the other side of the column... Chingachgook cradles Killdeer as well as his own musket. They fall back to walk beside the prisoners on the other side of Hawkeye. Their eyes connect... We don't expect Hawkeye to stay shackled for the duration.
RANK AND FILE FRENCH


EXT. ROAD - HAWKEYE

His eyes sweep the column snaking its way into the v-shaped valley. The path cuts through the forested hills ahead. He sees...

HAWKEYE'S DISTANT POV: CORA

riding near the front where there are no more French soldiers. Only a few scattered and curious Huron and Ottawa. She does not see him.

PROFILE OF COLUMN - HIGH + WIDE

as it passes left to right below like a long snake through the narrow valley. We're shooting from inside the dark woods. Lower, in the light, we see a scattering on both slopes of a couple of hundred Ottawa and Huron. They are in no order, are spread out and don't constitute a threat. They watch the column. SLOWLY THE CAMERA...slides across the shoulders and back of a large man wearing black plumes in his scalp-lock and other than a breechcloth is almost naked. He is heavily war-painted...

FRONTAL - MAGUA

and the left two-thirds of his face is painted red. The right third is painted black. Much silver is in his ears. His tomahawk is in his left hand. His cut-down musket in his right fist. Magua's attention is all focused to one point.

MAGUA'S LONG + TIGHT POV: MUNRO + CORA + ALICE

at the head of the column. This is the focus of Magua's attention.

WIDE FRONTAL: COLUMN, STANDARD BEARERS + MUNROS

Cora turns again to look for Hawkeye.

CLOSER: CORA

doesn't see him, but something else has caught her eye.

YOUNG HURON

running toward the column. Just one man. No musket. He's running and whooping like a dog charging from his master's front yard. Why?

CLOSER

the Huron arrives at the column, his tomahawk swings into his hand and he brains a British trooper who falls dead. The single Huron never breaks stride. He simply runs off again...
CORAL

horrified, holds Alice tighter.

MUNRO

has seen it too. And now he sees...

62ND REGIMENT OF FOOT

fixing bayonets. A large sergeant unsheathes a two-handed claymore, facing the Hurons and other Indians...

TROOPERS

of the 33rd present arms. Did they violate the surrender by carrying ammunition? Locks are cocked. There's the answer.

MUNRO

Steady! No-one fires!

EXT. FORESTED HILLSIDES - OTHER TRIBES

are watching what happens.

HEYWARD

scanning them.

HEYWARD

(to Sergeant Major)  
Men are to stay in file, Sergeant Major!

SERGEANT MAJOR

Yes sir!

Drums beat the cadence.

TROOPERS

step over the fallen soldier. Heads turn, they're on edge...

END OF COLUMN - HAWKEYE, UNCAS + CHINGACHGOOK

watching. They exchange looks: this is not good. Chingachgook cocks both Killdeer and his own musket.

HAWKEYE'S POV: FORESTED SLOPES

Hold. We start to make out detail in the shadow. Tree trunks. We become accustomed to the dimness. Now in the lower light we see movement deeper in the forest.

CLOSER

Many 'Iuron and Ottawa are hidden in the shadows. They're moving along parallel to the column, stalking it. Waiting...
ANOTHER BRAVE racing down the hill from the opposite flank towards the 62nd.

TWO SOLDIERS look at their sergeant. He nods. They wait until he's within ten feet of the column. Both bayonet the Indian. He's dead.

EXT. HILLSIDES - HURON + OTTAWA saw what happened. But, they hold their ranks.

MOHAWKS among the British are slipping tomahawks into their hands, surreptitiously. Some are cocking flintlocks.

MUNRO gallops his horse away from Cora and Alice towards the scene of the last attack. We hear him from the distance ordering...

MUNRO
Do not break ranks! I want these ranks to hold...!

Cora's frightened.

HAWKEYE'S frustrated. He saw Munro leave Cora. He knows events have a momentum and it's accelerating.

CHINGACHGOOK + UNCAS move next to the sergeant with the shackle keys who looks at them curiously as...

WOMEN with children nervously search the threatening trees, hoping against hope these are isolated incidents.

HEYWARD draws his sword and is passing orders to his sergeant major, scanning the hills...

EXT. FORESTED SLOPE - MAGUA His eyes see Munro.

WIDER + LOWER: MAGUA raises his musket in his fist and emits a war whoop. WE NOW SEE there hundreds have been stalking the column, hidden in the trees, maybe thousands. Then...
FIRE from the trees crescendos within seconds revealing a spontaneous and massive ambush of mostly Hurons. They appear from behind every tree and it turns to a ROAR of musket fire, war whoops and screams as...

dropping like flies and seemingly thousands of Hurons attack down both slopes.

is being unshackled by Uncas. The sergeant is rising from the ground where Chingachgook knocked him. Chingachgook throws Hawkeye Killdeer and Hawkeye shrugs into his pouch and powder horn as he races with Uncas for the head of the column...

charging down the hill...with his coterie of twenty Huron warriors, heading for the area in which he saw Munro.

at the head of the disintegrating column. Cora's holding Alice's head to her bosom, covering her ear as if to protect her from the sounds.

shouting orders.

Right-about face! March! First rank present!

Fire!

The volley knocks down fifteen of a horde of attacking Hurons.

Prime! Load! Second rank six paces forward! Present!

Hurons are twenty yards away and closing.

Fire!

As the line of muskets belch smoke and fire...
We're shooting into the "v" of the valley with Hurons and other tribes pouring down from both sides. (IMPORTANT: the combined musket fire of Hurons, English and Mohawks generates tremendous clouds of smoke which obscure action, close off views, isolate pockets of combat into surreal tableaux that we'll move in and out of.)

using their useless muskets as clubs or with fixed bayonets - as the smoke and fog swirls among the men - fighting for their lives...

glides through the scenes, striking and hunting. Some of his coterie of braves near him. He sees...

hugging the ground in fear. Magua throws her over. It's not Alice Munro. It's a woman protecting her baby. Magua walks on. One of the braves behind Magua raises his tomahawk. On his downswing...

running through surreal patches, thinks he glimpses Cora two hundred yards away.

Cora!
Chingachgook, on Hawkeye's left, slams down two Hurons with his war club.

running through the chaos and murder and British troopers and Mohawks locked in struggle with Hurons. Cora's dress is torn. She holds Alice to her. There's a pistol in Cora's hand.

scalping a prone soldier, rips the trophy from his head, turns and faces us.

shoots him in the face.

and her eyes take it all in. And her affect starts to flatten. A blankness suffuses her expression and the girl withdraws from this reality into a deep dark cave inside her head.
locked into combat. He tomahawks one Huron's arm with a slashing downstroke and comes right back into the face of the second with his backswing while his right hand fires Killdeer at...

six feet from Uncas and about to shoot him in the back.

free for a moment, spins. He has no idea of direction any more. Everything is death in strange tableaux. Meanwhile:

hollerin':

MUNRO
Cora! Alice!

He cuts down a Huron with his sword who is trying to leap at him from the right. An Osage warrior with red scalp-lock leaps on the back of Munro's horse, reaching over to stab down into Munro's neck. The old man's left hand grabs the warrior's knife hand in an iron grip. His right hand pulls his horse pistol and under his upraised arm fires backwards, point-blank, blowing the Osage off the back of his horse.

Just then Munro's mount is shot. His horse rears up, throws Munro and falls on him.

shouting orders over the deafening noise.

HEYWARD
Second rank fire! Six paces back!
Prime! Load! Third rank!
Present!

A well-oiled, well-drilled fighting machine, but there are fewer of them. They're getting cut. They close ranks automatically as a man drops. They're retreating in perfect order.

about to strike a downwards blow is pushed aside by Magua.

His eyes drop to what's in front of him. The field goes quiet.
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350 OVER MAGUA'S SHOULDER: MUNRO

his lower body trapped under his dead horse. Magua leans in towards him.

MAGUA
Grey Hair. I will cut your heart from your living chest in front of your eyes. As you die, know that I will put under the knife your children and wipe your seed from this earth forever...

Magua pulls his knife and as he leans down towards Munro.

351 MOHAWK + HURON

spin and flail furiously at each other with tomahawks and knives. The Huron goes down and then the Mohawk is shot. The Huron who shot him is cut down by a Ranger with tomahawk in one hand and bayonet in the other. Two Mohawks and three Rangers fighting back to back. They become an island swamped by Huron and Ottawa: amidst bodies and ground slippery with blood. As smoke obscures their image.

352 CORA + ALICE

in a group of civilian militia. Two of the militiamen are shot down. The third engages a Fox warrior. Cora and Alice run.

353 MUNRO'S FACE

frozen in agony by shock.

354 MAGUA

reaching down and up into something, emerges and jams an object we barely see into the air. But his arm and shoulder and half his chest are splashed red with blood.

355 LONG SHOT: MAGUA

seen from far away, holding aloft the heart of Munro.

356 REVERSE: HAWKEYE

saw him and fights his way to attack when...

357 WHITE HORSE

crazed, CRASHES through men, knocking Hawkeye over...

358 CHINGACHGOOK

protecting Hawkeye, slams his war club into one Huron, breaking his attack, his arm and his skull and swings the other way burying the bladed end into the chest of an Ottawa who's behind him. Then...
HAWKEYE'S
up, looking wildly...

CAMERA JAMS INTO CLEARING SMOKE:
33rd Regiment of Foot and Heyward. They FIRE into our face.

CLOSER: HEYWARD

HEYWARD
Six paces back! Prime! Load!
Rank two, present! Rank two, hold!

He grabs a partially loaded musket, the ramrod still in the barrel. They're taking fire. Men are dying. They're being pushed back.

AN ABNAKI

wearing a large cross, attacks Heyward from the side. One-handed, Heyward fires the musket into the man's chest, sending the ramrod through him. Then Heyward's shot in the thigh and a thrown tomahawk hits him in the head and knocks him sideways. Dazed. Barely able to stand. He uses the musket as a cane and...

HEYWARD
Rank two, six paces back! Rank one, present!

Rank two did not retreat six paces. They stand in confusion. Heyward looks to see what's wrong.

HEYWARD'S POV: THE REMNANTS OF THE 33RD REGIMENT OF FOOT

are standing in water. They're up against Lake George. Their backs are to the wall. Last stand. Heyward straightens.

TWO FRENCH OFFICERS

on horseback try to intercede in the slaughter of five women. One French officer is shot by a Huron. The other French officer runs through that Huron and shoots the second. Then his horse is shot out from under him and he goes down...

JESUIT

pleads with an Abnaki to give up a child he's holding by the legs in one hand. He offers his cross. The Abnaki throws the baby to the Jesuit, Pere Roubaud.

UNCAS

sees a flash of something yellow. So does Hawkeye. They charge into the swirling chaos of attacking bodies. As we lose sight of them...
on her hands and knees. A massive Ottawa pulls her upright by her hair about to take her life and her scalp. He's struck by a rock in the hands of Cora which barely phases him. He bats her aside and returns to Alice, when suddenly...

is spun, punched and tomahawked into the ground by Hawkeye. Uncas has Alice and Cora...

from the earlier group are nearby. They combine with Hawkeye to fight their way out with bayonets and tomahawks.

back through the swirling smoke. There seems to be a lull. Then they're hit from the side by musket fire. One of the Rangers is shot, the other wounded. Hurons attack. The Mohawk supports the wounded Ranger.

shields Cora as they back up.

smashing his war club straight down on a Huron, reaches for the man's musket and shoots another. Then he sees...

It's glass-smooth. And the bows are barely visible of three or four Huron war canoes.

back into the water. They're pursued by Ottawa and Hurons as they fight their way to the canoes.

held up by Hawkeye, suddenly screams.

something underwater is pulling her down. An Ottawa brave rockets out of the shallows. Before he's erect, Hawkeye slams him back into the water and FIRES.

has shoved a large birch canoe at them.
Suddenly, the Mohawk fighting with them is shot and spins to face Hawkeye. His hands rest on Hawkeye's shoulders. Hawkeye looks into his face. Tries to hold him up, tries to rescue him. A frozen moment. Hawkeye's staring into his eyes and the man is staring into Hawkeye's as the light goes out... Hawkeye lets him slide into the water and float away. He moves Cora and Alice towards the canoe...

CUT TO

EXT. LAKE GEORGE - WATER + SWIRLING SMOKE - DAY

The bottom of the frame is water like glass. Smoke obscures the background. Fingers tendril towards us. Out of the mist we HEAR small splashing and then the high bow of a war canoe defines itself. It's paddled towards us.

HAWKEYE, CHINGACHGOOK + UNCAS

Cora's behind Hawkeye. Alice and the wounded Ranger are near Uncas.

CLOSER: HAWKEYE + CORA

Cora looks left. Her eyes go wide.

CORA

No!

HAWKEYE spins.

HEYWARD + TWO TROOPERS OF THE 33RD IN A SECOND CANOE

have emerged from the smoke ten feet from them. Heyward's aiming a horse pistol at Hawkeye.

HAWKEYE

is non-plussed. He doesn't stop paddling.

HAWKEYE

You got nothin' better to do today on Lake George than shoot me, Major, then go ahead...

Heyward's a hair's breadth from firing. Suddenly they hear the boom of muskets and rounds come in.

WIDE

They're being pursued by three boatloads - and then a fourth and fifth - of Huron.
is indifferent to Huron musket balls. Hawkeye hasn't stopped paddling and pays Heyward no heed.

CORAL
Stop it!!

Heyward comes to his senses. His head is gashed. A scarf, as a tourniquet, is tied around his leg. He lowers the gun.

HEYWARD
When you fall into British hands again, Nathaniel Poe, I will have you hanged.

HURON CANOES
paddle hard and deep and the canoes power across the lake.

HAWKEYE + HEYWARD'S CANOES
with less paddlers, plus wounded, are slower and will be overtaken.

HAWKEYE
looks to Uncas. They both realize the same thing. Hawkeye nods and he, Uncas and Chingachgook begin to paddle furiously. The others match the doubled pace. They're sprinting ahead but the effort is exhausting.

HURON CANOES
maintain their steady pace. Three or four Hurons fire.

HAWKEYE'S CANOE
Musket balls ricochet on the water's surface. One rips a hole through the bow. Hawkeye sees one of the Redcoats in Uncas' canoe is giving out...

REDCOAT #1
Can't...keep it up...

HAWKEYE
Pull!

He renews the attack on the water with the paddle.

HEYWARD
(shouts)
How long?

CONTINUED
Heyward digs in. Like firecrackers in the distance, Huron muskets sound. A new hail of musket balls cut the fabric of the canoes. One Redcoat is shot in the back. He falls overboard.

HAWKEYE
(shouts)
Pull!!

More Huron musket balls hit water nearby.

in Heyward's boat is shot. BUT...the .65 caliber ball didn't penetrate his skin. The Redcoat - amazed - picks it off the floor of the canoe.

REDCOAT #2

Spent.

Distance caught up with eighteenth century ballistics. They're out of smoothbore musket range.

HAWKEYE
(to Heyward)
Head for...for the white water.

HEYWARD
Do you hear me, sir!
(exhausted)
If you ever fall...into
(MORE)

CONTINUED
Continued

Heyward (Cont'd)

British hands...
(breathes)
What white water?

Heyward + Redcoat's POV: Lake

divided by a spit of land. The right fork becomes a river with white water rapids.

Hawkeye Canoe - Hawkeye

paddling now, too, as they furiously jam for the white water that will shoot them way ahead of the Hurons.

Uncas

leaps off the stern of Hawkeye's canoe and climbs up the stern of Heyward's and takes control. He roughly gestures to the Redcoat and the Major to stop paddling. He and Hawkeye will pilot the two canoes.

Ext. White Water - Wide - Day

The canoes enter the white water and they're so light, they're jet-propelled.

Canoe POV: Eight Foot Wave

racing the same direction they are. They hit it straight on and it shoots over them and they're drenched by two waves coming from the sides.

Hawkeye + Chingachgook

paddle like fiends to get momentum and control.

Uncas' Canoe

Same thing. When they crested the wave Uncas hollers at them to "pull" and they do. As soon as they're through it, Uncas slams the paddle in the water and makes the canoe revolved a hundred and eighty degrees in a vortex so that it's now going through stern-first or the stern became the bow, so that Uncas could pilot it a different way through a hazard of...

Exposed Rocks

jutting out of the water.

Wide - Both Canoes

Hawkeye didn't have to turn because Chingachgook, at the bow, uses his paddle to shove the canoe away from jutting rocks. Uncas does the same. Past the jutting rocks, Uncas swings it back around while...
WHITE WATER
smashes into the camera.

ALICE + CORA
as the canoe roller-coasters and water bursts the bow. Then suddenly it's through and the water is miraculously smooth.

CANOES
The Ranger, the Redcoats and even Heyward feel the exhilaration of the ride. That's because they think they're home free.

HAWKEYE
Here's where it gets tricky...

Heyward turns to look in front of him. He doesn't know what the hell Hawkeye's talking about.

HEYWARD'S POV: THE RIVER AHEAD
looks glass-smooth. Although...there is a distant ROAR of sorts Then Heyward realizes: something's wrong with this picture.

CLOSER: HEYWARD
The look on his face starts to change.

HEYWARD'S POV: TIGHTER
The glass surface of the river continues to a line then falls off the end of the world. The river just ends...

BOTH CANOES: HEYWARD, REDCOATS, THE RANGER
realize they're heading for the lip of a waterfall. There's a couple of outcroppings of rock in the center at the very edge. We are at Glen Falls.

HAWKEYE
Don't move...

AERIAL SHOT
From the other side of the falls. It's a two hundred foot high, death-defying cataract. The canoes - slightly above us - will go right over.

TWO CANOES
At the last moment, Hawkeye and Uncas land both on either side of the larger rock outcropping. It is literally at the lip of the falls.

HEYWARD
grabs a rock to anchor the bow of the canoe. He loses his grip. The canoe rockets for the edge.
lurches sideways, grabs a tree root. He is the only link of the canoe to earth. The bow, with Heyward, is literally hanging over the edge. Uncas strains and pulls the canoe to the rock. He gestures to Heyward.

Heyward crawls forward and makes the island. Then the two Redcoats. Finally Uncas. The canoe rockets over the falls. Meanwhile...

Hawkeye has beached his canoe and is camouflaging it with driftwood and brush. As they clamber over the high pieces of broken limestone, we see Hawkeye is slipping into a crevice. He motions to Cora. Uncas carries the wounded Ranger. Heyward helps Alice...

CUT TO

The irregular opening of medium blue sky is obscured by the black silhouetted forms of Hawkeye, Cora and then the others entering.

Heyward Where do we go from here?

Hawkeye We don't.

Heyward I don't understand!

Hawkeye This is it, as far as we can go. (beat) If we're lucky, they'll be figurin' we can't have come this way and we must've beached our canoes and headed cross land. If we're very lucky, they'll figure we went over the falls.

Heyward Then what?

Hawkeye Then we take the south rim down the mountain and it's twelve miles cross country to Fort Edward.

Heyward And if we're unlucky?

CONTINUED
HAWKEYE
You will have to forego the pleasure of hangin' me.

Hawkeye helps Cora; Heyward, the Ranger. Chingachgook carries Alice, down the rockface into a cave. We hear a distant ROAR reverberating off the walls.

ANOTHER ANGLE: THE WALLS
are scooped out, bone-like hollows eroded by tumbling water. At an earlier time the formation was part of the falls.

HAWKEYE + CORA
reach the irregular floor of the chamber. The ROAR is louder.

WIDEN TO REVEAL a curtain of falling water. They're behind the cataract, probably a third of the way down its height. Light through the water strikes them with a silver luminescence. They're exhausted. The others join them. They have to almost shout to be heard.

CHINGACHGOOK
followed by Uncas, takes stock of their supplies. They check their powder. They have almost none. Uncas shares his with Hawkeye. The Redcoat's cartridge case is soaked, the paper cartridges a soggy mess. Heyward has none. The Ranger has two left. In Mohican, Chingachgook decides some things. Hawkeye and Uncas nod. Heyward approaches Hawkeye.

HEYWARD
Any powder?

HAWKEYE
(crossing to Cora)
Only one or two loads.

CORAN
is soaked to the bones. Hawkeye strips off his buckskin hunting shirt and wrings it out. Cora turns her back, strips off her white blouse and puts on the faster-drying chamois.

CORAN
Are we safe?

HAWKEYE
Maybe...

CORAN
Our father? Did you see my father?
EXTREME CLOSE UP: HAWKEYE

The look on his face tells it all.

CORA

Tell me!

TWO-SHOT

Hawkeye takes Cora away from the group and turns her by her shoulders and whispers to her. We don't hear what he says. Cora drops to her knees and places her hands over her eyes and face like a little girl trying to make something bad go away.

HAWKEYE

Leads her to a depression, his arm around her shoulders, her face covered and she cries softly into his shoulder.

EXTREME CLOSE UP: CORA

says into Hawkeye's ear, after she looks O.S....

CORA

Say nothing to Alice...!

Hawkeye nods.

ALICE

stands in the chamber not far from the wall of water, fascinated with its shimmer. She's oblivious to all the events and everything going on around her...

HEYWARD

sees Cora and Hawkeye together and turns away.

GROUP

Uncas watches Alice. The wounded Ranger has fallen asleep. The Redcoat is exhausted. Hawkeye and Cora against the wall.

CUT TO

EXT. RIVER BANK - RIVER FALLS ARE IN MIST AND RED SKY - TWILIGHT

A landscape with mist rearlit by the red light of the sun that's already behind the mountains. The blues are turning purple and the greens are turning black and the white highlights of the foaming water are going rose. Reflecting the darkening sky, where the surface isn't broken, the water is fast-moving metal... SUDDENLY: a shaved head and muscled back stands into the foreground. It moves down the shore away from camera. He's followed by other Huron warriors. They're two hundred yards away from the Glen Falls island.
looks at the island of rock and trees and tilts his head, curiously...

CUT TO

watches the Hurons below make their way towards the edge of the falls.

join him, moving frenetically, uneasily... The leader of the pack looks up and howls as his eyes go white reflecting the new moon.

hears the distant howl. He's now lit silver blue by the moonlight through the falling water. Hawkeye knows it means Hurons are out there. He exchanges worried glances with Uncas and Chingachgook.

immediately starts up the right acclivity to one fissure, and Chingachgook moves carefully to the first fissure. Hawkeye follows.

His countenance gives way momentarily. All his experience seems of no avail. He touches the side of Cora's face. Grabs Killdeer and follows Chingachgook.

sensing new danger, slips away on her own.

crosses to the Ranger who's semi-conscious, feverish and getting delirious. She can't do a thing except hold his hand and think of her father.

below the edge, listen and wait, testing the environment with all their senses...

against one wall, has his ear cocked, monitoring, facing away from the sky...
looks at the sky through the fissure. She sees the starfields and feels the silver moonlight pull her forward. She starts out onto the island, oblivious, unaware she'll expose them. Suddenly...

yanks her down next to him. He pulls her head into his chest, looking out over the edge, his tomahawk in front of him, his musket near his right hand. There's no sign she was seen.

He relaxes, looks at her and puts his finger to his lips telling her to be silent. Languorously, she lies back, closes her eyes and lays a hand on his shoulder, palm up, as if he were a prince in a romantic fantasy. Uncas tries to restrain her.

/eyes slowly open. Oblivion disappears. It's replaced with escalating fear. She holds onto Uncas with desperation. Her fingers claw his shoulders. She buries her face in his chest.

Her body shudders. Her terror's total. He tries to restrain and calm her. She won't let him. Then her mouth seeks his and in the passion of despair and fear and wanting life, she holds him between her thighs. And Uncas is confused, but Alice whispers his name and he responds. He loves her in the half-light.

his hand buried in her hair irradiated by the moon, then she seems to reach some emotional climax and begins to cry softly, and Uncas stops making love to her and holds her. Then she's flooded with shame. He reaches for her. She jerks away. He reaches for her again and clutches her to him. And she breaks down. Then he turns her face to him, but her expression has completely flattened.

She's not a lover to Uncas now. She's pitiful and stricken and he comforts her.

(OMITTED 449-457)
EXT. RIVER - MAGUA - NIGHT
beaches a canoe on the bank. He and eight braves ease out. His
war paint is fresh: green handprints on his chest and black and
green on his face. Black plumes are affixed to his scalp-lock
and his shawl is over his left shoulder. The right arm carrying
his musket is exposed. Many scalps are tied to his tomahawk.
He walks towards us approaching the island, two hundred yards
away...

CUT TO

INT. SOUTH FISSURE - HAWKEYE - NIGHT
checks his powder horn. Nearly empty. He looks at
Chingachgook.

CUT TO

INT. GLEN FALLS ISLAND, CAVE - CORA - NIGHT
with the Ranger, looks up. Hawkeye enters. The look on his
face. Then hers. They've been discovered. Now they're backed
into a hole in the ground with no powder and no way out.

CUT TO

(OMITTED 460)

INT. GLEN FALLS, CAVE - HAWKEYE + CHINGACHGOOK - NIGHT
Chingachgook talks to him in Mohican. Momentarily the anger and
frustration is seen on Hawkeye's face. All his experience and
craft has been to no avail. He looks at Cora. Back to
Chingachgook. Chingachgook states something terse in Mohican.
Hawkeye agrees. Heyward's confused. He doesn't know what
they're talking about. Cora has understood Chingachgook's
intent perfectly.

CORA
Yes. Go ahead.

HEYWARD
(explodes)
What the bloody hell plan is this?

HAWKEYE
(to Cora)
In this there is a chance. If
I live, I can try to free you.
If we don't go, there is no
powder, there's too many of them.
Though my heart would keep me
here, in that there is no chance.
None. I can do nothing. Do you
understand?

CONTINUED
CONTINUED

CORA
Yes. I want you to go.

HEYWARD
Coward! Coward back at the fort. Coward here.

Hawkeye uses discipline not to kill the man.

CORA
You try. With all you have. To save yourself. If the worst happens, and only one of us survives, something of the other does, too...

CUT TO

INT. NORTH FISSURE - UNCAS - NIGHT

listens. Hears. Then he inches above cover to see...

UNCAS' POV: THE RIVER + SIX WAR CANOES

of Hurons approach to assault the island carrying torches.

CUT TO

INT. GLEN FALLS CAVE - CORA + HAWKEYE - NIGHT

She's holding him. In the rigid language of her body is the struggle to contain her fear.

HAWKEYE
(very close)
If they don't kill you, they may take you north up into Canada. A warrior may take you for a wife.

CORA
turns aside. Hawkeye insists.

HAWKEYE
(continues)
Listen. Submit. You hear me? You're strong. You stay alive. I will find you...no matter how far, how long it takes...

CORA
(nods, low)
...never doubt what you're doing.

RANGER

conscious now, arranges his crushed body to face the direction from which will come the attack as...
puts Alice, who's entered, behind him as... Uncas hits the floor of the cave. Now the first glow from Huron torches starts to light the walls. They're coming...

CHINGACHGOOK

has their weapons slung over his back. He says something in Mohican. Uncas spins looks at Alice: her expression's vacant.

HAWKEYE'S KNIFE

cuts a lock of Cora's hair. He folds it into his shirt. The orange light from Huron torches, now closer, plays on the wall behind her.

We hear many Huron approach.

CHINGACHGOOK + UNCAS

now run out of the cave and throw themselves into the curtain of water. This is their exit.

HAWKEYE

engraves her image in his memory one last time and then sprints across the floor towards the water...

WHAT HAWKEYE SEES: JAMMING AT THE WATERFALL

and then through it into...

SUBJECTIVE CAMERA: UP

An awful CRUSHING ROAR. We explode out the front of a white cataract a third of the way from the top and we fall down away from the world.

EXT. GLEN FALLS - HAWKEYE - NIGHT

tumbles downs the falls; rolling, tumbling through white water; then through air; then back into cascading white water again, disappearing...

THE RIVER BELOW - UNCAS' + CHINGACHGOOK'S

bodies hit, disappear and don't surface. It looks unsurveiveable.

HAWKEYE'S POV: FALLING

Sheets of water fall with us. The bottom races towards us at a hundred miles an hour... Just before we hit...

CUT TO
INT. GLEN FALLS, CAVES - FLAMING TORCH - NIGHT

The cave is filled with Hurons. The Redcoat is dead in the corner. A group of braves moves away from the body of the Ranger.

HEYWARD'S

surrounded. The women are behind him. He slashes at one Huron with his sword and is clubbed down by a giant.

MAGUA

enters. His blanket, like a shawl, over his left shoulder, black-dyed plumes in his hair. He's imperturbable.

MAGUA'S HAND

reaches out and touches Cora's hair. Cora is frozen to the spot. His hand drops away from the hated Munros and as Magua turns to go, he says something low in Huron and the two women are jerked towards the fissures. Heyward is dragged by the arms.

CUT TO

EXT. RIVER - WHITE WATER - NIGHT

miles from the falls. We see a figure. It's Chingachgook, nearly spent, rolling and tumbling through the fast-moving white water. He submerges, then surfaces again. He appears exhausted by the fall and ride.

CHINGACHGOOK'S POV: WATER

rocketing at us, battering and drowning us. We glimpse something downstream...

CHINGACHGOOK

tries to focus, slammed against rocks, he's striking out towards the right, swimming against the current. He's grabbing for something.

KILLDEER'S MUZZLE

and leather shoulder-strap. Chingachgook's hand grabs it. The current rushing past tries to steal him from Uncas and Hawkeye, who're also beaten, bloodied, exhausted. They pull the older, larger man from the water and...

ON THE ROCK

all three lie there, almost devoid of energy. Then Hawkeye rises, looks at the others. Chingachgook nods. He's up. Then Uncas, and they're moving off into the calm eddy between the rock they landed on and the shoreline.

CUT TO
move along animal paths.

struggle through the branches of trees. No-one helps them. When they fall behind, they are pushed forward.

badly beaten, bound, staggers ahead to get behind Magua. Then:

**HEYWARD**

If Magua give women to Yengeese soldiers...will receive many gifts.

**MAGUA**

(as if considering)

Gifts?

**HEYWARD**

Three, four oxen...much wampum.

**MAGUA**

Wampum?

**HEYWARD**

Yes.

**MAGUA**

Does Yengeese Major have property across salt sea?

**HEYWARD**

Yes.

**MAGUA**

Yengeese Major give all property to Magua. Magua give Yengeese Major much wampum, many gifts, maybe three, four oxen.

Magua looks at Heyward derisively. Does this white man think he's an idiot?

**HEYWARD**

Gold could be arranged.

**MAGUA**

For Munro children?

**HEYWARD**

Yes.
MAGUA
How much gold has master of the Yengeese?

HEYWARD
The King? The King has mountains of gold!

Long pause as if Magua and King George II were seriously considering this transaction.

MAGUA
Not enough.

Heyward is first realizing with whom he's playing.

HEYWARD
What is enough?

MAGUA
Heart. Give Magua new heart.

Magua totally disdains the Englishman and walks away from him, starting up a steeper forested hill.

CUT TO

EXT. FOREST - HAWKEYE, UNCAS + CHINGACHGOOK - TWILIGHT
running cross-country after the Huron column. They leap over fallen logs and keep going.

FRONTAL: HAWKEYE
breathing hard, his lips drawn back, sweat stains his buckskins.

PROFILE: UNCAS
runs. Then he sees something.

BENT BRANCH
where Cora and Alice were struggling up the animal path.

REAR SHOT
as they race across a stream away from us after the war party and into the night...

CUT TO

thru OMITTED thru

EXT. FOREST - CORA - NIGHT
supporting Alice, is dragged forward by a Huron warrior by a woven rawhide thong tied to her neck.
is imperturbable.

move quickly down into a ravine.

is shoved forward.

CUT TO

Long, loping strides.

cover ground like long-distance runners. No noise except their hard, even breathing. They're moving down a clear trail.

out on the flank, running hard.

lips drawn back, determined, flashing through the hard verticals of the forest, now leaps down an embankment into the soft loam and keeps going.

CUT TO

on a rude platform. The entire village is crowded around in a large circle. They all wait for someone. They've been waiting a long time. In the perimeter warriors keep Huron at bay for some reason. We see Magua. He stands apart. They wait. Then...

is led to the dais by three women down the main street between the neat rows of birch bark lodges. Many scalps and trophies from the massacre are in evidence. He sits on the raised platform. He looks to be in his nineties.

His dark wrinkled face is contrasted by his long white hair. His robe is painted in hieroglyphical representation of combat. He wears numerous silver and gold medals, gifts of French, English and Dutch governors. Most startling is his face. His dark and lined skin is enhanced by delicate lines of tattooing. He looks up to Magua.
SACHEM  
(in Huron; subtitled)  
The tomahawks of your young men  
have been very red.

MAGUA  
(in Huron; subtitled)  
Many of the Yengeese are dead,  
great Sachem.  
(sound dissolve to  
English)  
I have brought three of my  
prisoners, to honor you. Two are  
the children of Munro. Whose  
scalp hangs on my lodge pole.  
And whose heart I cut from his  
chest.

Now we SEE Cora on the ground. Defeat and fear are held in  
place by her determination. Alice looks around, in another  
place. Heyward's hands are bound behind his back with a piece  
of wood wedged through his elbows.

CUT TO

EXT. DIFFERENT FOREST - WIDE FRONTAL: UNCAS, HAWKEYE +  
CHINGACHGOOK - DAY

running. Then Uncas drops and the other two follow.

WIDE OVER THEIR SHOULDERS: THE HURON "CASTLE"

seen in the distance through sparse trees. They have dropped at  
the very periphery of the forest where the woods end. (The lay  
of the land is important for action that follows: the village  
is built in a meadow. To the left is a cliff face that rises  
to a rocky promontory. On the right is a path that winds up  
to the promontory and beyond, across the mountains.) Hawkeye  
sees...

HAWKEYE'S POV: THE VILLAGE, CAPTIVES + HURON CROWD

in the center, outside the largest lodge.

HAWKEYE

slams the earth with his fists. They didn't intercept them  
in time. Difficult odds just became impossible.

CUT TO
...the earth was pale. Our tomahawks were bright. Now they are dull from war. And the Huron rich with trophies of honor.

(Magua will sell the English officer to Les Francais and the reward is my gift to you, wise one.)

The women - children of the white war chief - will burn in our fires so all can share in this.

The Sachem considers this. Then he looks up and sees something beyond Magua.

senses the Sachem's eye line...

unarmed, walking through Hurons. A young boy rushes at him. Hawkeye, at the last possible second, dodges. Others catch and restrain the boy. The Hurons are astounded a European would simply walk into their camp.

sees him enter, doesn't believe he's here.

Nathaniel!

Hawkeye glances at her, doesn't respond. The situation is a stick of dynamite ready to go off.

(to Heyward; low)

Translate for me, Major. Into French. Every word... as I say it.

Magua starts towards Hawkeye, his tomahawk slipping into his hand.

I come to you unarmed and in peace to unstop your ears, wise one. Because the Hurons are misled by the words of the wolf who's never spoken the truth.

CONTINUED
Sachem gestures with his hand to Magua. Magua reluctantly stops advancing on Hawkeye. Heyward's French translation has faded to a murmur. We hear Hawkeye's English.

**HAWKEYE**

Let the children of the dead Colonel Munro go free and take fire out of the English anger over the murder of their helpless ones.

**MAGUA**

(to Sachem)

Our father, Montcalm, is greater than the Yengeese in the arts of war. The Huron do not fear English anger.

**HAWKEYE**

(to Sachem)

Wise one, the French fathers made peace and swore to their honor not to break the friendship. Magua broke it. It is false that the French would not be friends, still, to the Huron.

Sachem reacts.

**MAGUA**

(laughs)

It made our French father happy to never have to fight the same Yengeese again. He told me this without telling me this.

Hawkeye realizes this is true.

**HAWKEYE**

So the Huron are the servants of the French? To do what the French are shamed to do?

**MAGUA**

No.

(to Sachem)

Huron serve no-one. The French father believes he fooled Magua because he is so proud of his cleverness, he is blind. But it is the Huron path that Magua walks down, not the French one.

(beat)

Now, Les Francais, also, fear Huron. That is good.

(MORE)
MAGUA (Cont'd)
When the Huron is strong from their fear, we will make the terms of trade with Les Francais. And we will trade as the white man trades. Take land from Abnakes; fur from the Osage, Sauk and Fox. And make the Huron great. Over other tribes. No less than the whites, as strong as the whites.

Hawkeye appears to be losing his debate with Magua.

HAWKEYE
(to Sachem)
Magua would use the ways of Les Francais and the Yengeese...

MAGUA
(to Sachem)
The red man put down the bow, picked up the fire stick and became the best warrior in the forest. Yes. It is the only way.

HAWKEYE
Would the Huron make his Algonquin brothers foolish with brandy and steal his lands to sell them for gold to the white man? Would the Huron have greed for more land than a man can use? Like Francais Black Robes do? Would Huron kill tribes with disease? Would the Huron fool Seneca into taking all the furs of all the animals of the forest for beads and brandy? But sell the fur to the white man for gold?

(beat; to Sachem)
Those are the ways of Yengeese and Les Francais masters. Are they the ways of Huron men who hunt and work the land? Or of dogs?

(beat)
Magua's heart is twisted. He would make himself into what twisted him. A Dog, become Master of Dogs. But are Huron dogs?

(beat)
Magua's way is false. It is like the white sickness.

(MORE)
HAWKEYE (Cont'd)
Magua's way will bring only sadness and shame. Is there another way? I don't know.
(pauses)
I am Nathaniel of the Yengeese;
Hawkeye, adopted son of
Chingachgook, of the Mohican people.
(beat)
Let the children of the dead Munro go free.
(beat)
I speak the truth.

Magua starts to rebut. Sachem holds up his hand and stops him. Nobody talks. Sachem whispers to the older men on either side of him.

MAGUA waits for the decision.

CORA looks to Alice, then to Hawkeye.

HAWKEYE exchanges a desperate look with Cora and then senses the Sachem is staring at him from the perspective of nearly a century of laws and judgments. Then... to every word.

SACHEM
The white man comes like a day that has passed. And night enters our future with him...
(pause)
Our council talks since I was a boy: what is the Huron to do?
(pause)
But Magua would lead Huron down paths that make us not Hurons.
(the judgment)
Dark girl burn in fire to heal the twisted heart of Magua.

Cora, hearing the sentence... Hawkeye's losing her.

SACHEM (continuing)
Munro daughter with moon in her hair must be Magua's wife so Munro's seed doesn't die...

Alice is gone, living in some dark recess of her mind.

CONTINUED
People move, start to implement the sentence. Hawkeye's panicked. Cora is jerked upright. She looks at Hawkeye in terror. Sachem is starting to depart.

**HAWKEYE**

No! Listen.  
(to Heyward)  
Tell him I'll trade him! Me for her! Tell him!!

Heyward translates into rapid-fire French.

**HAWKEYE**

(shouts)

I am La Longue Carabine! My death is a great honor to the Huron. Take me!

Cora is jerked forward by three Hurons. Magua grabs Alice. Cora strikes at Magua. He knocks her aside. Chaos and confusion. Meanwhile:

**MAGUA**

(French; subtitled)

This is not the voice of wisdom.  
I go to the Hurons of the Lakes!  
You are women. Send your arrows and guns to the Seneca; beg from them venison to eat, corn to grind. Slaves, dogs, rabbits, thieves... I spit on you!

Those Hurons who hear, do so in a deadly, boding silence. Magua and his fourteen hard-core braves start out as...

**SACHEM**

heard Heyward's translation. He looks at Heyward, then looks at Hawkeye and he nods his head.

**HAWKEYE**

sees this. His eyes go to Cora. They've stopped dragging her towards the fire pit. Hawkeye steps forward to surrender. Cora is thrown at him. Cora looks around wildly. Instead of taking Hawkeye, two warriors grab Heyward.
is immediately hamstrung and his legs collapse. He gasps. He's caught under the arms and dragged forward.

HAWKEYE
I said to trade me!

Heyward struggles to be seen.

HEYWARD
...compliments, Mr. Poe.
(pause)
Take her and get out.

CORATAKE HER AND GET OUT (standing)
What are they doing to Duncan? L'uncan!

He's gone. They start to ease away from the mass of Hurons.

HAWKEYE
(low to himself)
And my compliments to you...

CORAAlice?

Hawkeye's concentration is on backing out of the Huron mob. Will the Sachem's judgment be honored? Will some warriors hack down Cora and Hawkeye? As they go...

CORAmoves to her sister. But Hawkeye holds her tightly as they retreat.

CORA'S POV: ALICEmoves to her sister. But Hawkeye holds her tightly as they retreat.

CUT TO

EXT. FOREST, TREE LINE - CHINGACHGOOK + UNCAS - DAY

Uncas sees Magua's direction. Uncas touches his father, grabs his musket and races off. Chingachgook reaches to stop him, but he's too late. Chingachgook's hand in the air...

TWO-SHOT: HAWKEYE + CORANear the tree line. Hawkeye has eyes only for...
moving towards fire pit. One turns to watch Hawkeye and Cora depart. Will he arouse others to attack? Behind him others are doing something to Heyward and flames leap up.

CORA'S EYES
are on Alice, off to the right in the meadow.

HAWKEYE
tense. They're almost there.

CHINGACHGOOK
holding Killdeer.

CHINGACHGOOK'S POV: MASSED HURON
Sky and flames. Suddenly, Heyward's stood upright into the fire, bound to a bracket by his arms. As the flames start devouring him...

HAWKEYE + CORA
close to Chingachgook and the tree line...

CHINGACHGOOK
tosses Hawkeye Killdeer. As fast as he jams it into his shoulder, he FIRES.

HEYWARD
among the hollering Hurons, is shot dead. It goes unnoticed.

CUT TO

EXT. PROMONTORY - UNCAS - DAY
half-way up the rock face. He's approaching an overhang. He climbs with a reckless desperation...

EXT. STREAM - HAWKEYE + CHINGACHGOOK
pound across the to the meadow towards Magua's path...

CORA
trying to stay with them, scrambles up...

EXT. PROMONTORY - UNCAS
reaches the overhang. It juts away from the face six feet.
THE CEILING OF THE OVERHANG

Uncas' hand jams into a crack in the granite, forms a fist and twists, making a wedge. He swings out, dangling in space by the hand wedged into the rock. His right hand reaches out and up, searching the vertical face for...

UNCAS' HAND

...a rock flake. An indentation. Anything... His fingers find a diagonal crevice and...

UNCAS

swings out, now hanging by the vertical face above the overhang. His features are distorted with determination. Nothing will stop him. His right hand grabs another rock. His arms snap him up. Then push. He's on the ledge. Moving fast...

CUT TO

EXT. PROMONTORY - HURONS - DAY

on point are approaching the path above the promontory. Five warriors are ahead of Magua. One behind him drags Alice.

FIRST

Huron starts up the narrow path. Suddenly...

UNCAS

slams him off the rock with the butt of his musket.

WIDE ANGLE

Two's musket coming up. Uncas swings. FIRES. Before he's fallen Uncas bayonets Three.

FOURTH

FIRES, misses, swings. Uncas slips the swung musket, but it catches his elbow. Uncas' musket falls. Before it hits the ground his tomahawk is out and hacks Four over the edge...

MAGUA

running forward past Five, confronts Uncas head on. It's incredibly fast.

UNCAS'

three tomahawk swings are dodged by Magua whose own knife streaks like silver flashes. Uncas, gashed on arms and chest, feints right and slams Magua with an open hand, closes and the men are intertwined steel and muscle...and Magua throws Uncas. Going with him and rolling off Uncas, Magua's knife flashes into his armpit. Uncas' right arm is useless. He scrambles up. Next to the expertise of a mature warrior like Magua, Uncas' raw, young determination may not be enough.
EXT. MEADOW - CHINGACHGOOK
freezes.

EXT. PROMONTORY - UNCAS

closing, swings. Magua moves inside, stabs Uncas twice, turns him to face the edge, ripping his head left to expose the right underside of his throat.

CLOSE: MAGUA'S

knife arm punches forward.

WIDE: PROMONTORY

Uncas falls down the face onto the rocks.

CHINGACHGOOK

seeing his boy killed, CRIES out and is charging up the path, * Hawkeye following. *

EXT. PROMONTORY - ALICE

backs to the edge..

MAGUA

moves on Alice. His knife is low, about to strike. She stares at him. Her eyes are like pools of deep water, calm, open, almost beatific. It stops Magua...

inexplicably, drops his knife hand. He's riveted by her. About him, there's a glimmer of something else. He wears a human face for this one moment. He reaches out with his other hand to offer her safety. To bring her back from the edge...

ALICE

looks down at Uncas, her lover, dead on the rocks below. She turns to Magua with enigmatic calm. Her eyes seem to see into him. She steps off the edge. She falls to her death next to Uncas...

EXT. MEADOW - CORA

collapses to her knees on the ground and her face falls forward into her hands...

HURON WARRIORS

are running down the path to intercept Chingachgook, charging uphill, fueled by a father's rage, and Hawkeye. One Huron aims at the center of Chingachgook's chest...
551 HAWKEYE

FIRES past his father's side. The Huron's blown off the path. Hawkeye races to reload on the run...

552 EXT. PROMONTORY - MAGUA

sees the approach of Chingachgook.

553 TO CHINGACHGOOK

Huron warriors are an irrelevance. He slams one aside with his musket.

554 HAWKEYE

FIRES.

555 HURON

with tomahawk, about to blindside Chingachgook, is SHOT DOWN.

556 MAGUA

charging Chingachgook.

557 VERY WIDE

Two men, like dots, race to collide at the center of the promontory. Now the others fall back... It's one-on-one. Hawkeye slows...

558 COMBATANTS

Magua - confident, pumped up - feints with his left, his tomahawk appearing in his right, sweeping backhand, while his left, magically holding his blade, is jamming up to gut Chingachgook. Chingachgook's dead. Except...

559 CHINGACHGOOK

isn't there. He rolled and, on one knee with his back to Magua, his arm slams rearward. The massive war club crashes into Magua's back.

560 MAGUA

stunned, turns to hatchet Chingachgook...

561 CHINGACHGOOK

- now up and towering - slams his club right into Magua's assault... destroying it, breaking Magua's right arm. And...

562 CHINGACHGOOK

...with the momentum, spins like a shot-puter and the next blow cripples Magua's left side and crushes part of his chest.
ANOTHER BLOW

destroys Magua's collar and shoulder.

MAGUA

amazed. His body is broken and crippled, but he still stands. He looks into the eyes of the last warrior of the Mohicans.

CHINGACHGOOK

UNCAS!!!

And he spins and swings. The bladed side of the war club punches into Magua's chest, caving him in two.

WIDE

Magua dies in the dust.

HAWKEYE

watching Chingachgook's heaving back. It's over.

CORA

alone, kneeling in the meadow. Her eyes downcast...

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - WIDE REAR SHOT - NEXT DAY

Chingachgook's at the edge, facing the endless rolling forests to the west. A haze of sunlight illuminates silver and lead clouds. Hawkeye is a little apart, watching his father.

HAWKEYE'S POV: CHINGACHGOOK

speaks to the sky.

CHINGACHGOOK

(Mohican)

Great Spirit and the Maker of all Life...

ON HAWKEYE + CHINGACHGOOK

We HEAR Hawkeye's English translation in VOICE OVER:

CONTINUED
CHINGACHGOOK/HAWKEYE (V.O)
(in English)
...a warrior goes to you swift and straight as an arrow shot into the sun. Welcome him and let him take his place at the council fire of my tribe.
(pause)
He is Uncas, my son.
(pause)
Bid them patience and ask death for speed; for they are all there but one - I, Chingachgook - Last of the Mohicans.

Chingachgook's hands drop to his sides. He lets out his breath with a weariness. His eyes seek Hawkeye's. They hold...

CORA
is standing, her back to us, in front of a rock-covered grave with a wooden cross. Next to it is Uncas' burial platform.

Cora's silent prayer. Then she pauses, crosses herself. Her emotions are spent. She moves next to Hawkeye. He takes her hand.

HAWKEYE + CORA

HAWKEYE
Will you go back to England?

CORA
I have nothing to go back for.

Long pause.

HAWKEYE
Then will you stay in America?

She turns to face him.

HAWKEYE
And will you by my wife?

Pause.

CORA
Yes.

They hold each other's eyes. She searches his face.

CORA
Where will we go?

CONTINUED
HAWKEYE
Winter with the Delaware, my
father's cousins. And in the
spring, cross the Ohio and look
for land to settle with my father
in a new place called
Can-tuck-ee.

They move next to Chingachgook. He senses they're beside him.
Hawkeye's arm is around her shoulders.

CHINGACHGOOK
The frontier moves with the sun
and pushes the red man of the
wilderness forests in front of
it. Until one day there will
be nowhere left. Then our race
will be no more, or be not us.
(beat)
The frontier place is for people
like my white son and his woman
and their children.

HAWKEYE
That's my father's sadness
talking.

Hawkeye puts a hand on his shoulder.

CHINGACHGOOK
No. It is true... One day...
there will be no more frontier.
Then men like you will go, too.
Like the Mohicans.
(pause)
And new people will come. Work.
Struggle to make their light...
(beat)
One mystery remains.

HAWKEYE
What is that?

Cora, listening to Chingachgook, takes Hawkeye's hand.

CHINGACHGOOK
Will there be anything left to
show the world that we ever did
exist?
Cora stands next to her man. Hawkeye puts his arm around his father. They stare out over the wilderness.

THE END