Morning Mist:
The End of the Texas Cherokee and the Transformation of Sam Houston

HONORS NORTHEAST
2016

Scene 1

INT. BLACKSCREEN - CONTINUOUS

Camera focuses on bible verse.

HOSEA 6:4 What can I What can I do with you Ephraim, what can I do with you Judah? Your love is like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears.

Scene 2

CUT TO:

INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Maryville, Tennessee 1810).

Camera refocuses on hot burn forge, then (an angry young) SAM HOUSTON standing before it. SANTIS sitting near forge sharpening blade (or whittling).

HOUSTON
I can’t take it anymore. I have to leave. You know I can handle the dangers.

BLACKSMITH
Look boy I know Yor Mama and kin bin treatin you badly but you can’t just go runnin off. You never been blinded by thirst, or so sick from the pond water that the buzzards’ll circle ya in any case. Do you even have supplies? (pause)I know you aint got no money.

Houston moves to grab knife on table.

HOUSTON
Hey, have you ever seen anything like this?

Houston tosses knife into air. Knife descends nearly missing Houstons face. Houston catches knife. Santis jumps up yelling and takes knife from his hands.

SANTIS
What in tarnation boy! You halfwit! You tryin to git yerself killed so everyone can blame old Santis here?!

Houston is holding onto the cut on his face.

HOUSTON
Well maybe if someone like old Santis doesn’t want to help me, I might need to take even greater risks.

Blacksmith puts down knife and whittling tools. Picks up pipe and lights it.

BLACKSMITH
You are the stubbornest boy. So you want a whole new lot of kin, huh? Heh, heh, heh. Well boy I can tell you what you could do. . . You take the trace the follows the sun out of town, a day and half, and you’ll see a village of huts on an island in the Hiwassee River, that’s Cherokee village. They’ll let you breathe.

HOUSTON
You still act like I couldn’t handle this. I’ve had some Cherokee friends.

BLACKSMITH
But no squaws yet huh? Look, jes tell Chief Oolooteka I sent ya. And I bet that they and I could even use a bright young boy who could carry my business with the tribe back and forth. This might even work.

Grabs a bag full of coins, opens it and hands one to Houston.

BLACKSMITH
Here, take three of these here gilded lead coins I made. They won’t know the difference. You bring me back three real coins, and I’ll cut you inta the profits after that.

Scene 3

CUT TO:

EXT. CHEROKEE VILLAGE - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Hiwassee, Tennessee, 1810

Houston is shown walking into the village. CUT TO people looking at him suspiciously. Houston is grabbed by men brought to CHIEF OOLOOTEKA who is with ADSILA and DEBORA who are in the process of killing a chicken. Houston does not struggle but looks nervous.

OOLOOTEKA
Hatlv tegivi! Who are you, and what do you want.

ADSILA
Where have you come from?

Houston
Peace, Brother and . . . sisters. My name is Sam Houston. I come bearing gifts from Santis, the blacksmith, near Maryville. I have a business proposition. I can take Santis your business and help you trade. I know English perfect, and you can teach me Cherokee.

ADSILA
What do you expect from us?

HOUSTON
I would like to live with you

The Chief and others stare at each other in shock and suspicion. Houston nervously tries to break the tension and pulls out knife. The Native Americans Eye him even more suspiciously.

HOUSTON
Would you like to see a knife trick?

They again stare in at each other in shock. Adsilla and Deborah hold The chicken steady and Deborah cuts off its head. Houston jumps. Adsila laughs, and comes up to Houston with blood on her hands. She wipes it on his face.

ADSILA
Here, have some blood. You can be one our braves!

OOLOOTEKA
Adsila, do not make such a fool of yourself. Are you here to spy on us boy? What do you seek?

Scene 4

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN - Nighttime. (Text on Screen: Maryville, 1810).

ELIZABETH HOUSTON is by the fireplace tending the fire within. She looks exasperated and is making noises to try and grab the attention of Sam who is sitting at the table reading a book. Houston pays her no mind. Elizabeth finally breaks the silence.

ELIZABETH
Why do you never do any work?

HOUSTON
I’m not a bad worker. . . I’m just not a good slave.

Elizabeth turns away from fire and stands facing Houston with a log switch in her hand. Houston continues to ignore her and read his book.

ELIZABETH
So these days, only slaves obey their parents, only slaves serve the family? Only slaves do what is needful?

Houston slams his book closed and looks up at his mother with anger.

HOUSTON
Try being a mother rather than a master, and maybe I’ll do some work!

Elizabeth advances on Houston shaking her switch

ELIZABETH
Who has bewitched you? You do not even deserve the name, of your late, sainted father, Sam Houston. You do not even deserve the bread of our table!

Scene 5

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - EVENING (Text on Screen: Near Hiwassee Village, Tennesee 1810).

Oolooteka, CHIEF BOWLES and Houston are walking through the woods hunting. Houston walks behind. The Camera on a Wheel Chair leads the hunters as they walk into the camera going forward)

Oolooteka: (with rifle)
Bucks are always hungry on a day after a storm.

Bowles: (bow and arrow)

So are people who travel to land of vanishing sun. Oolooteka, thank you for taking in my people.

Oolooteka:

Duwali I would have liked to welcome my wife's brother to a land of deer and beaver. But white men hunt just to practice their aim. Their Log fences snake west more and more along the traces. And then you sell your land. . . .

Bowles (stopping)

Great Brother, we Cherokee are a caged falcon. Cherokee headman, John Ross, think cage is sacred (in disgust).

Oolooteka:
Our land is sacred.

Bowles:

When it is polluted my brother, you leave it.
(stops, assesses his aim, and shoots bow)
You find new gods just as we Cherokee did many winters ago, when we destroyed our own Anikutani priests, and fled the northern country.
(Houston runs to find arrow)

Bowles:

That brave of yours doesn't seem to have drop of Cherokee blood.

Oolooteka:
He is full Scottish, just like you, Ross, Hicks, and Vann are half Scottish. But he's learned Cherokee, and reads us white-man stories at night. Watch, he will find that unbloodied, failed arrow of yours, using the

last rays of the great burning Apportioner in the Sky before he departs.

(walk on, finds a clearing)

Oolooteka:

We stop here, start sun fire to save the light of god.

Bowles:

It is far from dark yet, and I have flint.

Oolooteka:

I have something more sacred that my white son who we call raven fetched for us.

Bowles:

Better than flint?

Oolooteka:

Oolooteka and Bowles walk into a clearing and Oolooteka stops

Oolooteka

A burning glass![1] (flourishes prism) It take light of Divine Apportioner. Give us, little sun, in darkness!

Scene 6

CUT TO:

EXT. CLEARING AROUND CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Houston, Bowles and Oolooteka all sit around fire talking

BOWLES

White boy, in what land were you born... North Carolina?

HOUSTON

No, my Father, Virginia. Why do you ask?

BOWLES

I hate North Carolinians. Two men of that land killed my Scottish father who was a trader.

[1] Matches were not widely used until the 1850s.

HOUSTON
My father Oolooteka tells me you avenged yourself well, Chief Bowles. My first father also was a Scottish trader, and he's dead too.

BOWLES
You are . . . a handy raven. You have fetched my arrow, and carried firewater for us in bota bag (wineskin), and given Oolooteka, special burning glass.

HOUSTON
I also have a gift for you chief, as you make your path to the place where the great sun sets. A magic stone to reflect its light.

BOWLES
Ohh (inspects it, lifts is up and down) you mean, counterfeit coin. We might use this, on unsuspecting white man. Thank you son, and may you become a good Cherokee and visit us some day.

HOUSTON
I will Father Bowles, I will!

OOLOOTEKA
(To Bowles) But tell us now why do white man, and many Cherokee want you killed?

Scene 7

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE - VARYING *(Text on Screen: Muscle Shoals, Alabama 1794).*

Bowles narrates the scene while what he describes goes silently across the screen. A different filter could show this is a montage.

BOWLES

Sixteen winters ago, white man began coming down Great River like a clan of fat alligators. I had brave named ''White Man Killer'' who I could not restrain. He murdered

white men in boat, and I was left with white captives.

Bowles with hatchet beckoning Edward Burleson, and two white women

BOWLES
I should have killed them. I warned them. They looked at me with look of goblins in their eyes. I shuddered and saw I must leave sacred ground, for new sacred ground. Then as I leave, I learn that Chief Ross arranged for the assassination of my brother, Chief Doublehead. I have no support from Cherokee for our defense of the Muscle Shoals hunting ground. And assassins follow me to new hunting grounds.

Scene 8

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Alabama Camp of United States General Andrew Jackson, 1814).

ANDREW JACKSON and Houston are sitting in rocking chairs. Jackson is whittling while Houston talks to Jackson.

HOUSTON
My Cherokee father, Chief Oolooteka, was very generous with information.

JACKSON
And can you be generous with information son?

HOUSTON
General Jackson, sir, I want to help. Most Cherokee are your friends.

JACKSON
Do you like to whittle?

HOUSTON
I do a fair bit.

JACKSON

I’ve been working on turning this hickory stick into a cane.

Jackson gets up slowly, groaning.

My body rattles like a bag of marbles just standin up. Must be all the bullets that are inside me.

HOUSTON

Sir?

Jackson

Tell, me who can we count on, then?

Houston:

John Ross will thrive if he can carry out his threats against the Creek. Chief Pathkiller is a wife- and baby- killer as they say, but Red Stick Creek murdered his kinfolk. Charles Hicks another Eastern Tennessee chief, is the one I would trust the most. He speaks English, and is a baptized Christian. There is another Cherokee, even more endangered by the Red Sticks, John Looney, the Alabama Cherokee.

Jackson:

(pauses—making a face, showing interest) Interesting, and what about Chief Ridge?

Houston:

He’s a very wealthy Cherokee chief from northern Georgia who belittled the Shawnee traitor, Tecumseh, to his face.

Jackson:

Why?

Houston:

Tecumseh urged the Cherokee to stop farming.

Jackson:

(satisfied) Have you ever thought, son, of how far you might advance in a life of public service to our nation?

Houston:

I am thinking about it a great deal now sir!

Jackson:

You know, Sam, I never had a son.

Looks with affection.

Let me know how your hickory cane develops.

Houston

Looks up for fatherly approval. Nods his head yes. Walks away, and looks back with respect) (Looks highly satisfied by his encounter with Jackson) Digs his knife into a tree a little too riotously as if he is willing to stab the Cherokee in the back.

Scene 9

CUT TO:

EXT. BATTLE OF HORSHOE BEND - DAYTIME: (Text on Screen: Central Alabama by Tallapoosa River, 27 March, 1814).

Jackson is at the front of a large group of men including Houston. Dressed in military garb waiting for the order to charge.

JACKSON

CHARGE!!!

Men charge with Houston at the lead. Jump ahead in time to Jackson overlooking the battle with BURLESON. Jackson is looking through a telescope at Houston who is fighting three Indians at once.

JACKSON

Houston must be insane.

Jackson hands Burleson the telescope.

BURLESON
Hell I guess he spends so much time with those Indians he learned to fight like‘em too.

Jump forward in time to Burleson crouching over a wounded Houston. Houston is in agony and has an arrow sticking out of his leg. Burleson is panicking and wont touch the arrow. Houston Grabs him by the collar.

HOUSTON
Look at me! LOOK AT ME! You pull it out now or I’ll kill you and find someone else to do it.

BURLESON
I can’t pull it out, what do you want to do, bleed to death?

HOUSTON
I said, pull it out!

Burleson panics and rips it out. Houston Screams.

Jump forward again to a wounded Houston surrounded by wounded men with Jackson at the lead.

JACKSON
Charge! Wait, not you! Houston come back!

Jump forward in time again Jackson once again overlooks the battle with a frazzled Burleson at his side.

JACKSON
What happened too that Lieutenant Houston?

BURLESON
The doctors stopped helping him. They say he isn’t worth the effort. He was hit three times. He has lost so much blood already.

Scene 10

CUT To

INT. Room in Cabin. Cold. Nighttime (Text on Screen: Petit Jean Creek, Arkansas, February 1814).

Participants are sprawled out along floor, some shivering. Oolooteka and Bowles are still up. There is only a light from the front that presumably could be the fire). Establishment camera shot begins with full context, and then narrows in more and more on the men.

Oolooteka:

(Ceremonially) My brother, Bowles, you are returning our favor of hospitality, and we are now lodging with you after a grueling western journey on a cold night. May your dreams and ours refresh and direct our efforts.

Bowles:

Victory against the Creek and British, has only whetted the appetite of pale faces for more land. But the blood of our dead cries for revenge. We Cherokee will be borne into the mist of night with Great Spirit, and with the waving of the laurel branch, (waves it) we call on the great Apportioner to again arise from the East, and send glory on his people.

(both appear to sleep)

Jennie Due:

Runs over to Bowles.

Chief, a visitor is having a baby.

Bowles:

She cannot do that!

Jennie:

Husband, she is doing that.

Bowles:

She would defile us?

Immookalea:

Husband, it is too cold outside.

Ama:

No one can take the risk of losing more of our people.

Bowles:

You women forget that blood in this house will pollute us all!

Ama:

Well then, you get out of the house then!

Oolooteka:

Women, women, my brother is right, we should not set the whole forest ablaze to cook a stew.

Adsila:

Father, you will need to purify yourself. Or you just go to sleep, big bear (pushes Ooloo) and forget it.

Bowles and Oolooteka try to sleep with scowls on their faces. Women go off to side.

Hialeah

(not seen)

(Shrieks as with childbirth)

Bowles gets up along with Oolooteka.

Bowles:

a skunk would have been better

Oolooteka:

Women just don’t use their heads.

Bowles:

If you had three wives like me, you would know what it means to live life in really bad hallucination.

Jennie Due: (

shouts) Does anyone have cherry bark?

Hiawassee

I will find some

Hialeah

(shrieks louder)

Bowles and Oolooteka) both look at one another in consternation.

Bowles:

It is freezing outside. Come brother

They move to corner. Bowles waves laurel branch strenuously, as if to purify a section of the house

Oolooteka:

My brother you were right about the cage, and about Ross. He wants to kill us for moving West. We need more brothers.

Bowles:

graciously) We, are at least brothers (smiles).

Women are off camera.

Women

(a shouting chant) “Come out little Boy, come out! A witch will ravage you. Come to the light, even in the night, come to us, come to us, now!”

Camera moves to extreme close-ups of the two men.

Bowles:

I have not heard about your white raven son.

Oolooteka:

Oh, I heard he was dying. He left us to fight for great white father.

Bowles:

(tentatively) Serves him right, I suppose.

Oolooteka:

I'm not giving up on him.

Bowles:

correcting himself) We could use more of his kind.

Women

(a shouting chant) "Come out little Boy, come out! A witch will ravage you. Come to the light, even in the night, come to us, come to us, now!"

Scene 11:

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN OR TENT- DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Petit Jean Creek, Arkansas, 1814).

Bowles lies in bed unconscious in one room. In another, Jennie, Adzila, Hialeah, and Hiawassee are seated around a table with a bread board, and box of herbs.

Jennie

to Adsila almost whispering, as in these are secrets for the atomic bomb taking herbs out of box.

Licorice Root will pack a wallop!

Hialeah

(mysterious whisper) It will help balance what the Osage did to your husband.

Cutaway to Bowles in other room.

Bowles

Uhhhhhh. (In pain).

Camera back on table and the four.

Adsila

Thank the Great Spirit for these friendly herbs but who are these Osage?

Jennie

uses a knife to cut some of the leaves down and gesture

They are a terrible people who trade away their most beautiful squaws for well-balanced bows. They use the roots of this tree to dye their hair the color of fire.

Hialeah:

Those dirty blasphemers.

Adsila

Are they as bad as the Creek?

Montage of following scene, 12, shown here.

Hialeah:

(Speak slowly.) the Creek are like little yapping curs, compared to these leopards. Our chief Bowl flew at them like badger. Had they not tried to scalp him, he would have lost his life.

Camera comes back to Hialeah talking.

Big Mush say we Cherokee are only taking the land of the Caddo, a big-pot river people who the Osage were wiping out.

Cutaway closeup of Bowles in bed, on the verge of consciousness.

Bowles:

uhhhhh! (as if delirious of fever)

Jennie:

Hiawassee,[2] do we have enough new spider webs for his wounds?

Hiawassee:

Why don’t we just use cloth?

Jennie:

Looks at Hiawassee sternly

Hiawassee:

here I go again

Hiawassee runs off as if to get some. Immookalea enters from another room (as in, she has not been tending to Bowles).

Immookalea[3]

I think he’s going to die.

Jennie:

One man dies, and makes three widows of it

Immookalea

By the way Hialeah, do you have any yellow puccoon?

Jennie

[2] Cherokee for Fawn.
[3] Cherokee for waterfall.

(crossly) and why do you want to know?

Immookalea:

Its very powerful, maybe it will help Duwali.

Jennie:

Ha, I know you Immmookalea, you want yellow puccoon to make you skin white, so you can marry a paleface after your husband dies.

Immookalea

How dare you say that, Jennie!

Scene 12

CUT TO:

EXT. CLEARING - DAYTIME (*Arkansas, 1814).*

Bowles is shown fighting four Osage Indians simultaneously. He takes several wounds but kills all of them before falling.

Scene 13

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSTON CABIN - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Maryville, Tennessee 1814)

Scene starts on a close up of Houston’s eyes. They open and the scene zooms out and cuts to Houston’s mother sitting by his bed.

ELIZABETH

Elizabeth is exasperated.

Thank heavens boy, you are alive. But were you trying to get killed?

HOUSTON

No Momma

ELIZABETH

So let me get this straight: you were shot here with an (arrow) here (pointing), you got the arrow out, and then, bleeding profusely, you charged again to accept a musket ball here in your right shoulder, and another here in your left arm?!?

HOUSTON
I had to impress Father . . . (as in deliriously dreaming)

ELIZABETH

Father?

HOUSTON

I mean . . . Gen-ral Jackson.

ELIZABETH
Why, after making mistakes earlier in your life, do you risk your life now, to atone for them?

Scene 14

CUT TO:

INT. BOWLES CABIN - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Petit Jean Creek, Arkansas 1814)

Cabin door opens Oolooteka walks in. Bowles is in bed and looks up.

OOLOOTEKA
Brother, I see the Osage gave you several presents.

BOWLES

(coughing madly). They battered my skull. They tried to bleed me dry. The Osage are trying to kill me (cough, cough,)! But I will kill them (cough, cough, cough, falls back into bed as if almost dead himself)!

OOLOOTEKA

Brother, put your mind and body to rest. Give the Osage the horses and guns that will restore harmony. Your body too will know that peace.

BOWLES

(gruff) Never!

OOLOOTEKA

My brother, they kill, we kill. They kill, we kill. Blood revenge destroys both Osage and Cherokee, and who but the white man survives?

BOWLES

You heretic! If our blood is not appeased, we will all perish (cough, cough)

Jennie appears with Diana

JENNIE

Brother!

hugs Oolooteka

Husband!

grasps Bowles' arm. Diana comes behind her.

BOWLES

(intrigued to Diana) Who are you?

JENNIE

This is my daughter who you have not yet met—Diana.

BOWLES

So this is the daughter not only of my (cough, cough) esteemed Jennie, but also . . . of (cough)

DIANA

Let me help you, father. I am the daughter of Hell-Fire Jack Rogers who was a major supplier of your tribe in Tennessee, another Scottish trader just like your father.

OOLOOTEKA

I am so proud of my niece, brother. After living for a time with the Rogers family, she has returned to my tribe, a devoted Cherokee.

BOWLES

(strains) My daughter, some think I am about to die. Some think the Cherokee, are about to (cough, cough) . . .

JENNIE

Husband don’t strain yourself! Let me finish for you. Neither Chief Bowles nor the Cherokee will die. Pale faces

Montage of Andrew Jackson’s raised sword in scene 9.

use a terrible witchcraft to drive people, spirits and animals into the wilderness. They hate the sun by driving those who love her to the place where it vanishes.

Camera has close-up of Diana

Daughter—your grace, your knowledge, your beauty, your life with us is a testament—My husband has seen a vision! (pause) You are that lovely hummingbird of old whose artful darting and capture of all that is sweet will help save her people. Is that not right husband?

BOWLES:

(shakes head- Yes) (coughs)

DIANA:

Father Bowles, the healing plants have always loved the Cherokee, and I bring you a special

tea to assist your recovery, and stimulate your wisdom.

OOLOOTEKA

Diana, this is exactly what he needs.

Scene 15

CUT TO:

INT. DESK - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Nashville, Tennessee, November 1823)

Houston is sitting at a desk writing. His voice narrates what he writes.

HOUSTON

‘‘My dear General Jackson. I cannot thank you enough for the support you gave to successful run for Congress. After serving as an Indian agent, serving my country in the recent war, and earning my law degree, I believe I have gained some useful insights that can vindicate the trust you have conferred on me. I am aware of the deep esteem of people throughout this country for your person, and want you to know that 1824 election will be yours if the elation many of us feel for you could be measured in votes.’’

Scene 16

CUT TO:

EXT. Outside Home (Text on Screen: Clermont’s Osage Village, Arkansas 1817)

Bowles is shown with hatchet outside home. Rushes inside while people scream. Emerges with knife. Runs and tackles fleeing Osage Warrior and scalps him.

BOWLES

Kill them all, kill them all. If you leave one alive, they will come back and kill you.

Scene 17

CUT TO:

INT. BUILDING - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Dueling Grounds. Kentucky 1826).

Houston and White have dueling pistols and are facing one another. After a scene establishing shot, the scene starts with a close-up of Houston checking his gun.

HOUSTON
My problem with appointing Mr. Erwin as postmaster of Nashville is that he is a corrupt minion of Henry Clay, and John Quincey Adams, two perverters of our constitution who stole the last election from general Jackson

WILLIAM WHITE
And I am here because as a friend of Mr. Erwin, I personally resent this calumny, and judge you to be an inferior Congressman, so given over to insult, that you have lost any vestiges of being a discerning and honorable gentlemen.

A SECOND
It’s not to late to stop. General, let the Congressman be.

Houston shoots White in the GUT OR CHEST

WHITE
General you have killed me.

HOUSTON
I am very sorry, but you know it was forced upon me.

WHITE
(struggling) I know it and forgive you.

Scene 18

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Neches River Settlement, Texas, 1820)

Bowles tribe is setting up camp and his wives and other women Jennie, Immooklea, Hialeah, Ama, and HIAWASEE are weeding.

JENNIE DUE

This new Texas land is not the softest earth. I don’t like the smell. It reminds me of that Creek dude with the funny nose who begged to live by saying that he . . .

IMMOOKLEA

Ha Ha Ha Ha, He had a crush on you, Due, don’t deny it.

JENNIE

He was kind of cute

HIALEAH

Is that why you broke about ten of his bones with that wooden cudgel?

JENNIE

Well did you see what they did to Big Tassel?

AMA

Girls, this is disgusting. Why do white people chase us to this evil land of the night, but because we torture one another?

JENNIE

Just because you chose to stay out of it. Why are you still then married to the chief has worked has worked harder than any to maintain all the old blood traditions.

IMMOOKALEA

Speaking of the old man, here he comes now.

BOWLES

Dearest girls, working hard I see!

HIALEAH, AND HIAWASSEE

We’re not your dearest girls.

IMMOOKALEA

Not yet anyway. The longer we have Bowles as chief, the more the young dudes die off, and all we have left, is this old windbag.

This touches a wound in the lives of each of the women, and they grow sullen

BOWLES

Immmookalea, I demand to see you alone.

Bowles takes Immookalea to the side.

BOWLES

(suddenly becoming tender), Do I have to tolerate that kind of talk from one of my wives? (Beseechingly,) Would you rather be a Comanche squaw?

IMMOOKALEA

(As if now a favored daughter) Tell Jennie, to give me back my mirror.

BOWLES

Zoom in on Bowles and Immookalea. Bowles whispers to her.

(sternly) I’ll make sure you get it back.

Turns away from Immookalea and heads to other women. Immookalea returns leisurely

JENNIE

Husband, you know I honor you as chief. But now that Insolent Immookalea has raised the issue, we have been meaning to ask. The Osage were bad (breaking into tears). But that

Comanche wolf pack that attacked our settlement at three Forks were . . . (starts crying) . . . . How do we know, they're not going to get us here?

BOWLES

There's too many trees and mire holes for their horses. (motioning). A Comanche without a horse is like a bee without wings.

IMMOOKALEA

I hated the prairie!

BOWLES

gesturing wildly

We now are far from the Comanche, possessing the land of the degenerate Caddo, who the Osage were killing off. But we Cherokee have shown the Osage the difference between the scratch of a thorn, and the bite of a leopard! We will now entangle the Osage with the Comanche. And here, right here, we finally have a land is ours!

HIAWASSEE

What about the pale faces?

BOWLES

More gesturing and almost outlandish speechmaking

This is a land they call Tejas. It is not the American empire, but a land of another people who are only half-pale face. It is a land of rich white spring foliage, of scintillating sun, our great apportioner who will give you sweet women the sweetest of strawberries! We will re-establish here a new Cherokee empire, and you will see how our young braves will replenish our people here, coming both from the sacred eastern mountains, and the northern land.

Scene 19

CUT TO:

INT. OR EXT. PULPIT - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Nashville, Tennessee 1827)

Houston stands at a pulpit addressing a large crowd.

HOUSTON
As the newly elected governor of Tennessee, I am proud to note the increase in corn, hogs, hemp, and tobacco, and I pledge to support the increase in roads, and the widening of the Natchez trace. Steamboat traffic has shown its possibilities, and there is more we can do. I would also propose a study for how we might better link the eastern half the state with the western. . .

Scene 20

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN - DAYTIME: (Text on Screen: Sumner, County, Tennessee, 1828)

Houston and ELIZA walk through a garden talking. Houston walks beside Eliza staring intently at her. Eliza looks off in the distance uninterested.

HOUSTON
You have a wonderful family Eliza. President Jackson has told me of the many times he enjoyed horse races at your estate. Nowhere is there bluer grass than here. And you are the crown jewel of it all, young, brilliant, and gorgeous.

ELIZA
Mr. Houston, I mean Samuel, my family thinks very highly of you as well. I feel crushed, I am bowled over, no, swept up by your affections.

HOUSTON
But what do you think of me?

ELIZA
You are so clever. I’m surprised, so surprised my mother is not here right now.

HOUSTON
Has she abandoned you because you wanted it that way?

ELIZA
There are times when I love my mother being around. She can be funny at times. And sometimes I feel . . . neglected.

HOUSTON
Eliza, I want you badly for myself, and I will never neglect you.

Houston gently grabs her hands to hold and makes her face him. She looks at him briefly then lets go smiling and continues to look about acting uninterested.

ELIZA
You are very strong, and you are very handsome.

HOUSTON
Am I anything more than that; could I be anything more than that?

ELIZA
My heart and mind are just out of kilter. My parents . . . they try to control me. . . in ways I don’t like. I’m confused, sometimes. I only know . . .

HOUSTON
What, what?

Eliza smiles and then laughs

ELIZA
That you stepped on my foot a moment ago and it still hurts.

Eliza sits down on a bench. Houston smiles and laughs halfheartedly feeling embarrassed.

HOUSTON
(Mockingly) I am so terribly sorry. If only there was something I could do to make it up to you.

ELIZA
I suppose the best friend of the President of the United States, and the Governor of Tennessee could make it up to me.

HOUSTON
Say the word and it will be yours.

ELIZA
Maybe if you were to marry me, my foot might begin to feel better.

HOUSTON
(laughing) That is a mighty fine idea. And if that’s what it takes.

Houston gets down on one knee.

HOUSTON
Eliza Allen, you are the smartest, most beautiful woman I know. Will you marry me?

Eliza responds in French.

ELIZA
Je vous aime bien, mais je ne vous aime pas. Si un autre vient le long, je partirai de vous.

HOUSTON
Was that a yes?

ELIZA
Maybe.

Scene 21

CUT TO:

EXT. FIELD - DAYTIME *(Text on Screen: Near Cherokee Village, by Neches River, Texas 1822)*

Bowles’ Wives, gathering materials in a field, stop for a lunch.

Jennie

Oh, Bar-B-qued bear fat on sassafras twigs—what a treat! Ama, thank you for your thoughtfulness in bringing these!

Ama

(smiles) and why shouldn’t the wives enjoy what the chief covets.

JENNIE

Wanting to eat, but impatiently waiting for Immookalea

Immookalea, will you come along, Ama has some food!

Jennie’s stare is trying to get Ama more irritated with Immookalea

IMMOOKALEA

comes in one swoop, grabbing the fat and sassafras, and starts eating carniverously, causing Jennie to really glare. But Ama starts eating.

JENNIE

What were you staring at over there?

IMMOOKALEA:

I thought I saw smoke. I wonder if we have some white squatters in this country.

JENNIE

Why don’t you let the braves worry about that! (her anger unappeased) And by the way, I am heartily tired of seeing how the woman around here with the most smart-ass things to say, is constantly spending nights with the chief (glares at Immookalea).

IMMOOKALEA

Don’t think I enjoy it; I have to.

(Jennie continues to scowl. Immookalea, irritatingly pleasant)

Oh, and, thanks for the mirror, Due!

Jennie

You just want to have more braves, so you can lord it over the rest of us.

Ama

Sisters, did I bring this treat so we could quarrel?

Immookalea

Treat or no treat, that lioness (looking at Jennie) loves tearing people to pieces.

Cut-away to Jennie, scowling.

Ama:

Moo, this time when you get that red clay you found by the great tree near the riverbank, don’t forget to bring me some pecans, and also some of the berries (pointing) that are just up the trace a little bit.

Jennie:

It is amazing how you women have honed in on food, and left me with the clothes. The chief only complains about clothes. And I get no help.

Immookalea

Jennie, if I wasn’t trying to help, would I have told you about the dead coyote I spotted by the stony creek up a ways? (pointing) Its pretty gross, and I’m sure you will have to fight off the buzzards, (speaking a little too

cutesy) but I bet his brains will still be good for those hides you are working on.

Scene 22

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSTON HOUSE - DAYTIME: *(Text on Screen: Knoxville, Tennessee 1829).*

HOUSTON
Look, now that we are man and wife, can we talk just a little bit about us, and how fortunate we are?

ELIZA
I'm not sure what you have in mind.

HOUSTON
The reverend mentioned marital bliss, we've got . . .

Eliza
I'm not so sure what bliss is, but I am sure that being with you (sobs) has not been bliss.

HOUSTON
Eliza, Honey, what are you saying? We've had wonderful times together. Last night, you chose to get in one of your moods again, and . . .

ELIZA
Well when the man you marry immediately becomes suspicious . . .

HOUSTON
Well I'll be . . . split . . . on our wedding night . . . is this the time to reminisce about the other men who courted you?

ELIZA
You don't even know me.

Scene 23

CUT TO:

INT. BOWLES CABIN - NIGHTTIME (Text on Screen: Cherokee Village, Texas 1826)

Bowles and Jennie sit together in their room. Jennie is brushing her hair. Bowles is sitting in a chair next to the bed.

BOWLES
Jennie, you are my favorite wife, you know that

JENNIE
Don’t lie.

BOWLES
But you are the level headed one. Immookalea, well, she beguiles me. Ama is just Ama. But you’re the one who . . .

JENNIE
should be your real one and only wife.

BOWLES
Its so disgusting that even in my own household, the women are so quick to seize on the white man’s ways as better.

JENNIE
You seem to like the Indian white men, more than the true red men yourself.

BOWLES
What do you mean?

JENNIE
Ever since Richard Fields and John Dunn Hunter joined the tribe, you and everyone else, have been deferring to them. They are taking over the tribe.

BOWLES

Jennie they can write letters. We have some important negotiations with the new Mexican government to get title to our land. If they can do that, we must defer to them, at least for a time.

JENNIE

Hunter especially is a phony, and you don't see it.

Scene 24

CUT TO:

INT. TABLE - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Cherokee Village 1826)

Bowles and BIG MUSH sit at a table.

BIG MUSH

Richard Fields, and John Dunn Hunter have failed to obtain land titles from wily Mexicans. They now take the hand of Americans who are pouring illegally into our northeast section of Tejas.

BOWLES

The American friend of Hunter, and Fields, Hayden Edwards, remind me of Wild Boy, in old Cherokee story, a mischief maker who will turn killer as his misdeeds entrap him. We cannot trust them, nor have they earned any trust.

BIG MUSH

Is your spirit where mind is?

BOWLES

Yes, brother Big Mush, may our friendship endure as pine needles during the winter, may we plant our tribes yet as oaks in this new land, may you and I be as fierce as the bear, and bold as the water spider as we overcome our enemies.

BIG MUSH

What do you suggest?

Scene 25

CUT TO:

EXT. AROUND CAMPFIRE - DAWN: (Text on Screen: Cherokee Village, 1826)

Hunter and Fields appear by a doused fire pit, sharing whiskey, and falling over on their backs. Hunter then comes separately to a stream. He is shot in the shoulder, and falls into a stream. As an Indian aims at him again, he begs for the Indian not to shoot. He pleads that it is hard to die at the hands of friends. The Indian plugs him anyway, and he dies. Fields is caught hiding, and is killed point-blank with a look of horror on his face.

BOWLES

We have to assassinate them. I have seen a vision. (appears grave) Both Fields and Hunter appeared as grubworms toppling over on their backs in their glee to give us away to the Americans, bringing up the dust of a thousand diseases. . . And then I saw them, their greasy, (making motions) scabrous bodies slithering around our necks darting to sink their stinking teeth (bites) into our young Cherokee women.

BIG MUSH

We have letter from great moon face, Stephen Austin. He say Hunter and Fields are being deceived by bad white men. They have very bad medicine. We have other letter from Mexican agent Elias Bean; he promise death to Cherokee who aid the Fredonian Rebellion as Hunter and Fields urge.

BOWLES

Hunter and Fields must die!

BIG MUSH

We know two great loyal Cherokee Warriors who will not fail to empty them of their blood, Chief Dutch, and Panther-Lying-in-Wait.

PART II

Scene 26

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DUSK *(Text on Screen: Oklahoma Territory, 1829)*

Bowles, Oolooteka, and Houston sit on logs outside in the woods. Bowles smokes a pipe while Oolooteka drinks. Oolooteka is drunk.

OOLOOTEKA
White man come home when in trouble. My son, I have not seen you in 20 winters. I heard that you become fierce Creek killer, nearly dying, and leader of white men.

HOUSTON
Great father, forgive me! I have much. I know much. I will help Cherokee.

BOWLES
Yes, you will! (pause) You come as a spy of the eastern Cherokee and of John Ross!

HOUSTON
No my father!

BOWLES
You come as spy of great white father, Andrew Jackson!

HOUSTON
No my fathers!

BOWLES
You come as a spy of Stephen Austin and the white Texians!

HOUSTON

No, NO! Your adder tongues wound me more than arrows. I can hardly contain my grief. I come with gifts. I ask nothing. Allow me to give you this

Houston gives both chiefs, an apron, a knife, and a whiskey bottle.

HOUSTON

Good Father Bowles, give me your blessing before you travel back to Texas!

BOWLES

I have a blessing to give. But can I give it to a conjurer?

HOUSTON

I would rather die than deceive my brothers.

OOLOOTEKA

Raven, my son, speak to us without guile. What happened to you! What does great white father, Jackson want of you, and of us?

HOUSTON

I am not here because of strong man but because of a weak woman!

Houston looks at each of the men with disappointment. Bowles takes a swig, and suddenly breaks with his frown.

BOWLES

Ha Ha Ha. This sound funny. Tell us what has happened!

Scene 27

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Bowles, Oolooteka, and Houston are in the same place with a campfire going. All are drunk.

OOLOOTEKA
‘‘I know what Raven did, he blew tobacco smoke on her, and her dress caught on fire

All men laugh. The conversation continues with the men laughing.

BOWLES
No, No! Instead of kissing her on her lip...(bursting laughter) he bit her on the nose!

HOUSTON
She was a little sensitive!

BOWLES
laughing hysterically) Raven didn’t realize, she cared more about her face than his face!

All men laugh hysterically. Scene fades.

Scene 28

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIAN VILLAGE - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Oklahoma Territory, 1830).

Both are outside sitting in chairs rolling cigars.

HOUSTON
You have so changed since I knew you in our Hiwassee village!

DIANA
Our village? You left it after two years.

HOUSTON
When are your parents going back to Texas?

DIANA
They will stay as long as it takes to work things out. My stepfather, Chief Bowles, has caused great problems here among the Osage for my grandfather Oolooteka. Both are worried about the Blood Law, and the Cherokee leaders coming west, but both compete for individual families.

HOUSTON
And your mother, Jennie, is in the middle?

DIANA
Are you some kind of spy or something?

HOUSTON
Yes, I am. I want to learn as much about you as possible.

DIANA
What would you like to know?

Houston moves closer to Diana and gazes deeply into her eyes.

HOUSTON
I would like to know why your eyes set love's tinder ablaze in my heart, why, when I look at you, my mind reels with the noise of distant storms, why my limbs feel so enflamed . . .

DIANA
(smiling) Maybe you have a fever. Are you feeling OK?

Scene 29

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIAN CAMP - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Oklahoma Territory, 1830)

This scene has no words, just the beat of the drum, and perhaps some Indian singing. Oolooteka, Bowles, and the other Indians look on. Houston enters one side of room with shank of beef Diana is on other side of the room with corn half unsheathed

both Diana and Houston come closer and closer to one another as the drum intensifies. They smile at one another. They reach the center. Jennie and Bowles each come with blanket. Each take the corner of the other's blanket, and wrap both around the couple. The camera last espies Houston and Diana wrapped together, looking at one another, starry eyed.

Scene 30

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIAN VILLAGE - Evening (Text on Screen: Oklahoma Territory, 1832)

Hialeah and Adsila are sitting in camp shucking corn. A drunken Houston stumbles up and sits down nex to Adsila.

HIALEAH
Don't look now, but here come's Diana's new husband, Big Drunk.

HOUSTON
Howdy girls, heard there was a corn festival. I'm here to help you do it right.

Houston picks up some corn and tries to shuck corn from the wrong end.

ADSILA
In green corn festival, men should not be helping with corn. In any case, Sam I think you have the wrong idea.

HOUSTON
I've got the right idea.

ADSILA
You idiot, let me show you.

Adsila grabs the corn from him and does it right

HOUSTON
HA HA HA! No wonder I'm so frustrated.

HIALEAH

Congratulations on your marriage Sam. I like your new cabin. Wigwam Neosho, I hear you call it.

HOUSTON

It’s a place where an angry woman, keeps a young man in bondage.

HIALEAH

What did you expect, to lord it over us Cherokee women?

HOUSTON

No. . . I just heard something bout, the Green Corn Festival, and during it, I might be entitled to another woman.

Houston looks at Adsila.

ADSILA

Well Mr. Houston, you may think that any Cherokee widow may be fair game for you, but you know, we don’t need another white drunk to contend with!

HOUSTON

Well I guess if that’s the way it is I’ll just be going.

Houston gets up and stumbles away drinking out of his bottle.

Scene 31

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAWN (Text on Screen: Oklahoma Territory, 1832)

The scene shows Houston in a stupor at the base of the tree with a bottle in his hands. Diana walks up in front of him and throws a bucket of water in his face. He gasps violently startled.

HOUSTON

What on Gods green earth...

DIANA
And so Mr. Houston, what do you think this is. We are now dependent on loans from my father, John Rogers, so you can, what sing to squirrels out here! I knew you were on another bender, you worthless skunk!

HOUSTON
Woman I don’t think yyyyou understand.

DIANA
Oh, I understand real well. And I heard you were on the prowl yesterday, and you even all but propositioned Adsila, you two-timing wretch.

HOSTON
D-Diana, I can explain everything!

DIANA
You worthless sot. You said you had some diplomacy to do in Washington. Well having utterly failed as a diplomat around here, maybe its time you get lost.

Scene 32

CUT TO:

INT. BUILDING - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Washington, D.C., 1832)

STANBURY addresses congress

STANBURY
My fellow Congressmen, the whole issue of the Cherokee removal has been clouded by unscrupulous agents working to increase their own purse. One of them is the lucre-loving, late Governor Sam Houston. He has proposed special Cherokee deals with President Andrew Jackson. Is this not a pathetic spectacle? A corrupt administration employing a Cherokee double agent to cheat the Cherokees and the American people!

Scene 33

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Washington, D.C., 1832)

Houston is walking down a city street with a cane. He passes Stanbury on the street, does double take, turns around and accosts him.

HOUSTON
Are you William Stanbury?

Stanbury turns around looking

STANBURY
Yes... Sam Houston is it? I believe I saw you in the crowd at yesterdays speech. What did you think?

HOUSTON
You want to know what I think? Ill show you, you damned rascal.

Houston hits him in the side of his face. Stanbuty falls and Houston continues to beat him. Houston spits down on stanbury and turns to walk away. The Camera shows Stanbury on the ground. Stanbury pulls out a pistol and points it at Houston. He pulls back the hammer and pulls the trigger, but it misfires. Houston turns back around will a look of shock on his face but it quickly turns to a smile, he laughs.

HOUSTON
Good day Mr. Stanbury.

Scene 34

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIAN VILLAGE - DAYTIME: (Text on Screen: Cherokee Village, Texas 1832)

A shot of a dead body is shown. Zoom out to see Hialeah and Hiawassee crying. Jennie Due, Big Mush, and Immookalea are walking away and discussing Houston.

HIALEAH
Oh our father is dead

HIAWASSEE
Ohhh-—he was a good man.

Jennie and Big Mush take each girl by the hand, walk away together

JENNIE
Let’s hope Hialeah doesn’t botch another funeral. I believe we have been plagued recently by a ghost because of her poor performance upon her mother’s death.

BIG MUSH
I hear that your father’s friend, Sam Houston, has similarly botched another marriage.

JENNIE
He left my daughter, and hasn’t returned, the heel.

BIG MUSH
We have heard he has taken his anger to the land of the Great White Father, beating up a congressman.

JENNIE
Will they kill him for this?

BIG MUSH
I have heard he is considered more a hero than ever. I talked to your brother Oolooteka two days ago. He says that Houston and Great White Father Jackson have plan to send Houston out our way again.

JENNIE
Our hemp, our corn, its all good, but that wild weed of a man, why is he settling near us? Of course, my husband, Duwali, likes Houston.

BIG MUSH
Jennie, getting white men on our side, is like herding raccoons. But we must try, we must make every appeal to divide white man as much as possible. This means giving them the laurel branch from time to time. I go now. Please

ask Ama about our town's proposed trade for the heifers.

JENNIE
Big Mush, ado.

JENNIE
The big drunken raven is coming here, after leaving my daughter. May water spiders sting out his eyeballs, may skunks forever mark him as one of their tribe.

IMMOOKALEA
Don't worry, Diana will get a better man. Houston was a disgrace.

JENNIE
Oh, and Big Mush still wants the heifers.

AMA
Tell him that we only trade heifers for mares. And he can also throw in about twenty pounds of beads.

Scene 35

CUT TO:

EXT. TREE HILL - DAYTIME *(Text on Screen: Nacogdoches, Texas, 1835)*

Houston is addressing a large crowd. He stands in the shade of a tree.

HOUSTON
Since moving here to Nacogdoches four years ago, I have noticed, my fellow citizens, a steady increase in arbitrary rule in Mexico City, total confusion about the laws here, and increasing anxiety that the Mexicans will make an example of our town by punishing it for its disobedience most soundly. Let us consider. The most important fact of all is that we can beat the Mexicans. They are only a disorganized, tottering nation of half-Indians!

camera shows Houston stabbing the tree

The Mexican Confederation is a rusty chain. Let us break the bonds completely!

show snippet of Mother Elizabeth shaking the stick

But you say now is not yet the time, we must wait. ‘‘The man who does not defend liberty, when it is being destroyed, does not deserve it.’’ ‘‘No other help remains for us now than our own strength, and the consciousness that we have seized our arms for a just cause.’’ So ‘‘Let us break off the live slab from the dying cactus that it may not dry up with the remainder. (

show Houston leaving Diana

Let us plant it anew that it may spring luxuriantly out of this fruitful savannah.

Scene 36

CUT TO:

INT. TABLE - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: During Texas Consultation, San Felipe, Texas, October 1835)

RUSK, Burleson, AND DAVID BURNET sit at a table playing cards. They are discussing Houston.

RUSK

I’m not sure how this came to be, but Houston has everything we need, military experience, the kind of political leadership that might draw more Americans to our cause, ties to the Cherokee which might help to pacify Chief Bowles, and, and, he is the best friend of Andrew Jackson, a man who might actually be able to get the American army involved on our side.

EDWARD BURLESON

I call it

RUSK

A simple straight might do!

BURLESON

Tarnation

Burnet looks at risk angrily.

DAVID BRUNET

What is in your whuskey?

Burnet gathers cards angrily and deals.

DAVID BURNET

But you can’t believe anything he says, Houston’s a liar!

BURLESON

Houston is a drunk, and a damn Cherokee.

RUSK

You know Edward I like your spirit, but what is it with you and the Indians? David here has even lived with the Commanch (com-MANCH), and I don’t hear him bad-mouthing them like you.

BURLESON

(looking at cards with smile) My daddy, James used to say: ‘‘There are no good Indians but dead ones, and I have a burning missionary zeal to make as many good ones as possible.’’ (tries to get the other two to laugh, but they don’t). You know it is that same red devil, Chief Bowles, not too far away from us to the north right now, who was responsible for the killing of my granddaddy, and the scalpin of my Aunt Abbey in Alabama! They nearly killed my father. Bowles drove my family from Alabama, and he is going to pay for that.

RUSK
Gimme Four (cards) So we are going to declare a war on Mexico, while fighting 2,000 armed Cherokee to the north.

BURNET
They couldn’t field half that number. And there nothing compared to the Commanch in any case. Believe me, we’ll . . .

BURLESON
Just one (card from Burleson)

RUSK
Well this is exactly my point. Because of your hatred for Houston, you would be content to take on the Commanch, the Cherokee, and the Mexicans, and risk not having that special tie to the President of the United States all the while, who alone could help us if things go badly.

RUSK
I’ll raise you both two dollars. (smile, confidence)

BURLESON
(looks at cards) Darn it!

Rusk throws winning hand on table, and smiles.

BURNET
(throws cards on table) Lord have mercy!

Scene 37

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAYTIME *(Text on Screen: Near Nacogdoches, Texas, November 1835)*

Bowles, Houston, Big Mush, and MARY are talking in the woods.

BOWLES

My son, I knew when I saw you in Hiawassee village years ago that you were a lucky hunter. Spirits weave around your body. You will soar and triumph like the eagle. It is magnificent that the Texians have chosen you as their chief.

HOUSTON

My father, I give you this ceremonial sword, sash, and hat, knowing that your wisdom and skill has earned for you this land of East Texas between the Angelina and the Neches. You shall surely receive a title, after I have whipped the Mexican army.

BOWLES

My granddaughter has a gift now for you, Mary!

Mary walks into the scene with a vial in her hand. She hands it to Houston.

MARY

I prepared this for you General Houston. A vial of bone and Chamomile that will help you whenever you are sick.

HOUSTON

Mary you are such a talented young girl. Thank you for this kindness.

MARY

(Grabs both of his hands) General Houston, the Cherokee sincerely pray for your sucesss in the coming battle.

BOWLES

Thank you Mary!

Mary exits.

BOWLES

Now Big Mush, bring us the black drink Ama prepared, that we may be joined as one.

HOUSTON

Father. . . . with all due respect, your black drink, and I mean . . . your black drink will make me sicker than a mule feeding on weeds. I have something better (fetches whiskey bottle)

BIG MUSH

Ah fire water, a gift of the great apportioner, and a giver of visions, which we so need in this hour!

BOWLES

It is a sacred old Cherokee coffee of holly and Jimsonweed! This is the tonic that purifies, the fluid that invites the greatest of spirits, this is the very blood of war that transforms (holding it up)!

HOUSTON

It will transform me alright. But father, I cannot afford to lose even a day as we prepare our army.

Big Mush takes the whiskey and hands it to Bowles

BIG MUSH

I say, here’s to you, Raven. May the Texans be like locusts devouring, the double talking Mexicans! Father, let us not quibble over drinks, but over the promise Raven is making! As chief of the Texans, he is our guarantee, our title to the land between the Neches and Angelina will be in our hands. And we will make it understood as well Houston, that our

braves will not support your fight. We will merely stay out of it!

HOUSTON

Then We agree. You stand aside. We will deal with the Mexicans. I know you'll be happy with the land, and your tribe shall live here in Texas forever, bringing forth the best of the Cherokee spirit.

Bowles takes a big swig of Whiskey

BOWLES

My son, I absolve you of your indiscretions. Give me your hand, and whisper into my ear once more, the promises you are making to your father.

Scene 38

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS INTO CLEARING - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: During Runaway Scrape, Cherokee Country, Texas 1836)

David Burnet, ANNA, and REBECCA flee north while discussing Houston.

ANNA

All General Houston does is retreat. How can you allow this President Burnet?

BURNET

Confound it, I have told him. If it wasn't for Secretary of War Rusk, Houston would have been gone long ago.

REBECCA

Even if we do win now, what is the point? Our men have been annihilated at Goliad and the Alamo. That butcher, Santa Anna, has conquered more than half of our country. We have probably lost more than half of our women and children!

ANNA

I don’t know if I can take much more.

BURNET
I wonder whose farm that is out yonder; there’s really strange about the fences.

Hialeah catching the whites looking toward the farm in an opposite direction.

HIALEAH
Howdy strangers

Burnet gets his gun, pauses, he is confused.

ANNA
Who are you?

HIALEAH
My name is Hialeah, and this is Hiwassee. This is our farm.

Burnet, Anna and Rebecca stare in unbelief.

HIAWASSE
We have a message from our chief Bowles for you.

HIALEAH
Yes, flea your homes! Leave the area. The Mexicans are coming?

BURNET
How do you know this, is your chief working with the Mexicans?

HIALEAH
Not at all. We want to help you Texians, and I can even fetch some vittles for you three. But you must promise us to leave your land. For we cannot prevent the Mexicans from harming you.

Scene 39

CUT TO:

EXT. BATTLEFEILD - DAWN: (Text on Screen: Battle of San Jacinto, April 1836)

Houston is sitting at a battle plan table. He looks up to see Lamar leading a bruised and beaten Rusk back.

HOUSTON

Sir, for your gallant and courageous rescue of our Secretary of War Rusk, and another soldier from Mexican capture, I promote you this day from Private to Colonel. Colonel Lamar, We need someone to command the Calvary. Can you do this?

LAMAR

General Houston, I am ready to engage the enemy at any moment, and in any way.

HOUSTON

I have already told Colonel Shannon of this-— Here are your papers, report back to me in a few hours once you have looked the situation over.

LAMAR

Aye, Aye Sir (saluting; Lamar departs)

HOUSTON

Secretary Rusk, are you hurt?

RUSK

Well my pride is bruised and bleeding badly, but if some of our other soldiers have the courage of Lamar’s horse, all will be well.

HOUSTON

Well what happened?

RUSK

Lamar’s huge steed basically ran into and over the Mexican Mustangs.

Scene 40

CUT TO:

EXT. BATTLEFEILD - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Battle of San Jacinto, 1836)

Houston is at the lead of his men and ready to charge into battle with the Mexican army. Houston raises his sword.

HOUSTON
Charge!

Trident score indicating an attack. Switch to Houston's POV. A few Texans (Burleson, Rusk) route the Mexicans, Santa Anna appears with fear and apprehension on his face as he shouts out orders in Spanish then turns around to flee. Suddenly the camera faces the earth, getting closer and closer. The camera readjusts, and it shows Houston, down.

Scene 41

CUT TO:

EXT. LONE OAK TREE - EVENING

Houston is sitting with bandaged foot on a bucket. A chained Santa Anna lead in front of him. Houston is reading, he waits and finally looks up disinterested.

HOUSTON
Ah the great General Santa Anna has finally decided to join us. Glad you could make it General; take a seat.

SANTA ANNA
That general should count himself fortunate to have imprisoned the Napoleon of the West. And in such good fortune should show mercy to the vanquished.

HOUSTON
Well now you should have thought about that at the Alamo. You see, just about every man in my camp, hell in my state, wants you see you dead.

SANTA ANNA

You are a funny man. You, of course know that you cannot kill me. If I die there will be no peace.

HOUSTON
Try telling that to my men, Hmm? Why don’t I walk you through my camp right now and see what they think about letting you live... You wouldn’t make it past the first pair of eyes you saw.

Houston pulls out a gun and levels it at Santa Anna.

HOUSTON
Come to think of it you might not even make it to the end of this conversation.

SANTA ANNA
Very well Mr. Houston let us dispense with the threats and talk about why I am really here.

HOUSTON
Better...

Houston puts down the gun.

HOUSTON
Much Better, now let’s get down to business. First let’s talk about how much land your going to go back and tell your country you lost them today.

Scene 42

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHTTIME (At Home of Maverick Family, East Texas, May 1836)

At the Cherokee Table with Bowles, Houston, Big Mush, Hialeah, Hiwassee, Adzila, and Awinta there is whiskey, and laughter. At the Texian table, Burleson, Burnet, Lamar, Rusk, Anna, and Rebecca)
(Bowles and Big Mush are smoking cigars through their noses

RUSK

(to Rebecca eying Bowles). I don’t think I could smoke like that. I might make an ash out of myself.

REBECCA

(utters encouraging laugh, but nervous) I didn’t know the Cherokee were invited to this victory Fandango? (camera shifts)

BOWLES

(to Houston) The chiefs are very happy with the treaty. God prolong your days. We are well pleased with your arrangements.

BURLESON

(to Anna) The glory of our conquest at San Jacinto was the starvation of our women and children-—such glory I hope never again to witness.’’

BIG MUSH

(smiling) We honor our Texian friends for their remarkable triumph, and are so pleased to join them in this victory fandango.
(the Dance commences. The Texians do an orderly Virginia reel. The Indians and Houston, laughing and carousing, do a disorderly square dance, that breaks into something resembling modern dancing)

BURLESON

(pulls Anna aside): this is disgusting. Look at those savages over there.

ANNA

Which ones the red ones, or the white ones?
(camera shows Houston, first stiffing Mary’s vial, then dancing wildly by Adzila)

LAMAR

(to Burnet observing the vial) I did not believe it till now that Houston is taking opium as well as whiskey. (points over to Houston, stiffing vial) I do believe that this

dance has become polluted. It is high time for honorable ladies and gentlemen to leave. (Lamar leads a pull out).

(Texians pull out; Cherokees and Houston are left dancing)

Scene 43

CUT TO:

EXT. BALCONY - DAYTIME *(Text on Screen: State of Texas Capital in 1837, Houston)*

Houston stands on a balcony or another building outlook.

HOUSTON

As the first elected president of the Republic of Texas, I must report with some misgivings, that actions of the Mexican government along our southern border, and not only that, their use of agents, infiltrating our Republic. Under these circumstances it is essential that we Texians remain united with our Indian friends, and essential that we respond to the Mexican threat with one voice.

Scene 44

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM - DAYTIME

Anna, Rebecca, and Burnet Discuss Events

ANNA

I don’t blame our settlers in Northeast Texas for building Fort Sherman, and other fortifications like it. The Cherokee are riddled with Mexican agents.

BURLESON

Houston’s foolish treaty with the savages is not going to last long

REBECCA

President Jackson has deemed the eastern Cherokee to be dangerous. Can we allow all those heathen migrating west to come to Texas, and live under that bloodthirsty Chief Bowles.

ANNA

How do you know he’s that bad?

BURNET

Houston’s friend Bowles killed my people in Alabama, murdered the Osage in Arkansas, fought a savage battle with Comanche I knew-—getting whipped of course, but then arranged for the assassination of two rival Cherokee chiefs during the Fredonian uprising. Bowles is a wild snapping dog, who will team up with the Mexican murderers as soon as its his interest to do so.

REBECCA

This is depressing. And to think we have a Cherokee as president of Texas?

BURNET

Some of us have an idea ladies that is so good, that it is making me crazier than a June Bug. Mirabeau Lamar, who has risen from Private to Secretary of War, is also a poet, and a former editor. He has all the traits and traits we could desire. We can run him for president against any puppet Houston might nominate, and, I believe win.

REBECCA

Why won’t Houston run again.

BURLESON

He can’t according to the Constitution.

ANNA
And you have heard that Lamar hates the Indians, and will certainly drive them from Texas!

Burnet smiles

Scene 45

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIAN VILLAGE - EVENING (Cherokee Village, Texas 1838)

HOUSTON
‘‘All our good men wish you to be happy.’’

BOWLES
We Indians have received token after token of impending doom. Now your white men build forts on edge of Cherokee country? Why my son?

HOUSTON
Forts, where?

BIG MUSH
Do not play the fool with us Houston. There is a Fort Sherman along the Cypress river to the north, another fort in a town called Winfield . . (like he’s got a list)

HOUSTON
My father, you cannot control, all your braves. Neither can I control all of my people. But we are going to get the Texian Congress to approve your title to the land forever. My father it is only a matter of time.

BOWLES

I hope when we come to a fair understanding it will all be the truth. I do not want either party to be deceived.

HOUSTON
My father it is important, however, that you dissolve all ties to Mexican agents. You cannot expect the Texians to abide with the knowledge that these agents are negotiating with you.

BOWLES
You say, you cannot always control your people, how can you expect me to always control mine?

Scene 46

CUT TO:

EXT. MULTIPLE - MULTIPLE (Text on Screen: Houston, Texas, 1838)

The Scene cuts between Lamar narrating and him standing at a pulpit or something of that nature.

LAMAR
I can only be thankful and fearful for all the honor that has been conferred to me as the second President of this Republic. The Texas Republic is nothing less than a Second Garden of Eden, but for those who murder and steal indiscriminately, and still live in our midst.

Camera shows Bowles, Big Mush and other Cherokee.

LAMAR
As the new President of Texas, I have called for an exterminating war against the Cherokee. We need to remove them entirely from Texas. For They are like wild cannibals having the ferocity of tigers and hyenas.

Camera shows Houston arguing with Diana.

LAMAR

Our last esteemed President prided himself as being a go-between with the Cherokee. He saw himself as their protector, as a man filled with the humane desire that we live in peace.

(camera shows Adzila looking away from Houston (not interested), as Houston spins out some yarn.

LAMAR

I am the one who tells it straight to the Indians. I speak the truth and nothing but the truth to my friends and my enemies. On 17 May 1838: Mexican agents were intercepted by Texas Rangers. They came from the Cherokee camp. We cannot and will not abide with the ‘‘atrocious conduct of the Cherokee, forming alliances with our enemies. They will be driven from Texas, and it is in their interests to know this.

Scene 47

CUT TO:

INT. TABLE - DAYTIME: *(Text on Screen: Austin, Texas, May 1839).*

Lamar, Burnet, Burleson, and Rusk sit at a table discussing the destruction of Texas Cherokee.

BURLESON

Some think we need merely to disarm the Indians. I think we should dis-leg them as well.

RUSK

But where is the money going to come from?

LAMAR

Great empires, Mr. Rusk, do not begin by counting pennies. They begin by zealous, bold initiatives. Courage and vision must be our guides, courage to create what is best, and vision to see what will be best. Our Cherokee president would be content to create a patchwork quilt of nation, puny in outlook, and at war with itself. I see Texas as a

great bulwark of white, Christian civilization, spreading to the pacific.

RUSK
Is not the United States good enough? Why do you oppose union with her?

LAMAR
Can we trust a nation filled with ranting, long-haired transcendentalists in its northeastern cities, panting about the need to deprive southern slaveholders of their liberty? They have the devised the most ingenious form of subjugation, importing European peasants, so they can trample them under their feet, wearing the mask of filthy lucre to hide their shame. I deplore the savants who would turn women into men, and men into women, free men into slaves, and slaves into free men.

BURNET
President Lamar, I admire you sir, for your high ideals.

BURLESON
President Lamar, I salute you as the redeemer of our Republic!

RUSK
So we are going to lead an army and wipe out the Texas Cherokee?

LAMAR
Exactly. You and Burleson will gather an army that we will finance with promissory notes, and wipe them out. And I will not care in the slightest if you make an example of their leader, chief Bowles, by hanging him as high as Haman. I have already warned them. And they only make sport of my words.

Scene 48

CUT TO:

INT. LUNCHTABLE - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Nacogdoches, Texas 1837)

REBECCA

I do believe that President Houston wants your hand very badly

ANNA

(laughing) He has written me that I am the fairest of the fair. And Rebecca, when that man opens his mouth, it is like the whole Republic of Texas is urging me to extend my hand. But . . . serve our people. . . to delight the rogue who hates love?

REBECCA

Anna, I don’t mean to question your principles, but is the kind of love you expect even possible?

ANNA

Of course it is.

REBECCA

We war against Mexico, our slaves, and the Indians, and we war against ourselves. Did you hear what the wife of our Revolutionary War President, David Burnet did when he failed to stay by the fireside, often enough? She burnt the shingles of her house!

ANNA

(animated) Rebecca you must trust that the day is coming when true love will triumph. We maidens have a role as never before in the history of world to separate the sheep from the goats. Men will no longer merely write letters to our parents asking for our hands. In our modern way, we interview men, as they court us. We decide. To virtuous men who will support and love us, we will grant children, a greater civilization, and morality, love, and happiness. To men who will only deprecate the fairer sex, we will consign to bachelorhood, and to the diseases and death that attend their vile affections.

Scene 49

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Nacogdoches, Summer 1837).

HOUSTON
Anna, no star sparkles like your eyes, no flower blooms like your smile.

ANNA
And what about your first wife, Eliza? Did you really love her? Or were you just jealous?

HOUSTON
Anna, I have told you about as much as I am able about that.

ANNA
And where were you when your second wife, Diana, died?

HOUSTON
(looking guilty/angry) I . . . . .

Scene 50

CUT TO:

EXT. DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Cherokee Village, Texas June 1839).

All the women have been weeping and lamenting. They are sitting in a circle. The tears are on their faces, and they continue to mourn. Jennie Due is struggling to control the feminine response to Lamar's Ultimatum

JENNIE
The murderous Texians are coming and our Chief Bowles is fighting, there is no other way around it!

HIAWASSEE
(weeping) But is there no home for us? Why are our lives turning into one never-ending lament?

Hialeah
I fear for our children!

JENNIE
(commanding tone: H and H are overly emotional and implicitly critical of Cherokee leadership)) Hiawassee, Hialeah, stay out of this!

Jennie pushes them both from inner circle

AMA
(pleading) But have we heard anything more about Houston?

JENNIE
(anxious to do battle with Ama) That traitor! He doesn’t care about us any more than he cared about my Diana.

IMMOOKALEA
We need to flee north at once! Let the men fight it out.

AMA
(ignoring Immookalea) Our stores are not ready for this, and I blame you Jennie, for not letting me know about this in time! We must wait for the Green Corn Festival. (looking around for support to Hialeah and Hiawassee) Tell the chief.

IMMOOKALEA
Ama, give the fields up.

AMA
we do not have enough supplies for flight or battle. We need a harvest, we need a good ambassador, we really need another year and . . .

JENNIE
(shaking her) Ama, Ama, come to your senses. The white men are gathering right now to fall

on us, and they will kill and molest us and our children with more eagerness than they will fight our braves. Hang it up! We cannot keep farming as we are. (letting go with some wrath) Get that through your head!

AMA
No, never! Do you not care for our man, Bowles? Are you not deserting him? Am I the only one?

JENNIE:
Our tribe . . . is more important than the chief--and the war party.

IMMOOKALEA
(Yelling for attention) Our tribe is more important than all of the men! Women are the true Cherokee. Let us flee to the north now! We can be like the Tonkawa. Exchange old men for new.

AMA
NO!

IMMOOKALEA
(turning on Ama) You were the one who were so eager to give up our Cherokee ways!

JENNIE
Ama, Moo, Listen to what I say! We will gather the women and children for flight, but we shall wait for news of the battle. We will gather what we have, and share for now. But we will not bereave our women and children if the braves cannot win an early victory.

Scene 51

CUT TO:

EXT. Garden, Nightfall. *(Text on Screen: Marion, Alabama 1839)*

Houston is departing Alabama but stops to talk to Margaret.

HOUSTON

So you were in the crowd, that saw me, the so called hero of San Jacinto, disembark.

MARGARET

I knew at that moment. It was not only me, it was God, it was right, that you, the hero of San Jacinto, that you . . . (eyes shining)

HOUSTON

Margaret your kindness in wanting to talk and spend time with me does not make sense. (semi-gruff, as in providing her an out from this conversation)

MARGARET

I don’t believe that the world has to make sense (smiling).

HOUSTON

True, but I mean . . .

MARGARET

(penetrating eyes darting into Houston) What do you mean?

HOUSTON

Margaret . . . if I told you that a certain, so-called hero has been an addict of fame, liquor, and even (uncertain). . . women. . . that he has lived in a fog of selfishness, wouldn’t that cause any good woman to spurn such a wretch?

MARGARET

That depends. It sounds to me, in your story, that . . . the sinner knows what he is about, and is repenting. In that case,(pause) Wouldn’t a good woman start from the standpoint of our Savior, (speeds up) Christ Jesus, who has forgiven us all our iniquities, and . . . (realizes Houston is looking away)

HOUSTON

Gazes deeply and meaningfully into her eyes. A romantic connection. Looks away, and then, as if suddenly dazzled.

O Margaret . . . Look at that star!

Houston points, Margaret looks. Camera does cut-away to star. However the producer could also supply this image-—whichever is best.

Could you, when you see that star, remember the Lone Star of Texas, . . . and me?

Scene 52

CUT TO:

INT. ? - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: (Letter sent to Houston Agent Kendall Lewis, four miles south of today's Northeast Texas Community College, 1839.)

Agent Kendall Lewis (we see only his back as he reads the letter. Houston's voice is heard)

KENDALL
My dear Mr. Lewis, I am entrusting you as my agent while I travel from Alabama. You must tell my Cherokee sisters and brothers that I have not forgotten them, and that they live in my heart.

Scene 53

CUT TO:

INT. TABLE - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Houston reads late-arriving letter 1839)

Houston receives a letter and opens it Oolooteka narrates the letter.

OOLOOTEKA
27 March 1838: I have not been hearing direct from you. I shall be happy to hear of your

prosperity, for I hope it is prosperity that you have been given. You have not written me in 20 winters. What great thing has kept you from us these long years? I still remember when you first came to us, such a young Raven then, eager to become one of us. You came to us as a bridge between two peoples. You have always said that you would make sure your people would treat us fairly; and as your power grew among the white men I have grown ever more hopeful that one day our two peoples could live in peace together. But the longer you are away from us the more fleeting that peace seems. The days grow ever shorter for me my son, and soon I will pass on. Come back to us soon Raven; remind me before I go of that peace. Let me die content knowing that my people will be safe. I do not write on behalf of Bowles, but he asks a question that all of my people wish to know: Will the Cherokee have a country set apart for them, and separated in their rights?

Houston breaks down into tears

HOUSTON

Dear God, Forgive me.

Scene 54

CUT TO:

EXT. BATTLE FIELD - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Battle of the Neches, 16 July 1839).

RUSK

Charge!

Burleson shoots Big Mush. Bowles is shot from behind, and scalped and re-scalped.

Scene 55

CUT TO:

INT. DINNER TABLE - EVENING (Text on Screen: Houston, Texas July 1839)

Lamar stands and raises his glass.

LAMAR

a toast to the victory over the Cherokee, and congratulations gentlemen

RUSK

‘‘The sword shall mark the boundaries of the Texas Republic.’’

LAMAR

Indeed it shall. I foresee a great people, who will conquer, subdue, and assimilate all who may oppose it. Texas will become the greatest of the Christian nations, as white as snow and as powerful as thunder.

Scene 56

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSTON HOME - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: San Augustine, Texas, 1840)

Burleson approaches Houston who is sitting outside his house whittling.

BURLESON

Mr. Houston, I have a few items, gifts that you gave to the late Chief Bowles, that I thought you would like returned.

Burleson gives him the sword, vest, and the sash. Houston looks the other way.

BURLESON

Oh, and there is some money involved too.

Houston looks at Burleson with disgust

HOUSTON

And who got that, Lamar?

BURLESON

No, its yours.

Burleson hands Houston the counterfeit coins that the camera zooms in on. Houston is visibly moved. In disgust he throws the coins at a tree.

Scene 57

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSTON HOME - DAYTIME: *(Text on Screen: St. Augustine, Texas 1840.*

Houston and Margaret, Married, Discuss Bowles' death, and Houston's spiritual dead ending. Burleson has returned Bowles Hat with its counterfeit coin attached to Houston, and this sets up discussion. Houston walks in the door

MARGARET
It is so wonderful to have my husband home again smiles, caresses his arm.

They sit

HOUSTON
Dearest, a friend of ours in Nacogdoches secured this bracelet, this golden band (holds it up), and I want you to wear it, because there is something eternal and remarkable about your love for me.

MARGARET
holds it up, looking at it

Love, love, forever . . .

her smile become ethereal and searching, smiling triumphantly, she puts it on

HOUSTON
Smiling at Margaret but also with a look of confusion on his face, and as if to rescue his confusion, and an

inner compulsion to weep). (Houston pulls out the red sash of Bowles from the coat pocket over his heart).

I suppose you heard too what happened to my friend last year. I picked this up too on my travels.

MARGARET

Your friend! (looking at the sash, resigned) Yes, I heard.

HOUSTON

In death, he presented ‘‘a magnificent picture of manhood.’’ ‘‘Chief Bowles was a better man than his murderers (holding out the red sash)’’

MARGARET

It is dreadful that Lamar showed such hatred toward them.

HOUSTON

The armies were only a few hundred smaller than San Jacinto (looks away).

MARGARET

You feel guilty about it don’t you. You did promise him his land in Texas, but I know you did everything you could.

Houston

I lifted a few fingers. (resigned) I’m not a very good Cherokee though

drops sash into her hands, and turns away.

MARGARET

(softly) Sam, if being a Cherokee means getting drunk, if being a Cherokee means gambling with your life, if being a Cherokee means extolling some deceitful spirit, Why?

HOUSTON

(enraged). These people cared for me, being Cherokee doesn’t have to mean these things.

MARGARET

Then don’t let it mean such things

Gives Houston the sash back.

Scene 58

CUT TO:

EXT. BY CABIN - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Ripley Massacre 1841, Four miles east of Mount Vernon, Texas by Ripley Creek.

Hialeah and Hiawassee Stalk outside of Cabin.

HIAWASSEE

Reassure me again, Hialeah.

HIALEAH

We need to stay with our new Choctaw husbands, and support their effort to strike back at the whites who stole our land in Texas. We also need to replenish the things we left behind.

HIAWASSEE

Shakes with fright.

We don’t even have a tribe

HIALEAH

We are going to rob this undefended settlement. We don’t need help. Having more braves would only give us away. I was the one who spied this homestead well while you were trying to save Jennie. We will then flee across what the whites call the Red River.

HIAWASSEE

So if the women come out of that cabin to aid their men in the field, we should kill them?

HIALEAH

We will kill them in that case, before our men do. Just remember, Hialeah, how Texians molested and killed Jennie and Ama. Remember how Immookalea deserted us and is probably living in a house like that one, which some rich white man right now.

Both women listen. Gunshots are heard. Camera focuses on resolution in the face of Hialeah, mounting adrenalin and outrage on the face of Hiawassee.

(whispers)) Our men have attacked! We must be sure their women don’t come out of the house to aid them.

Two white women emerge from cabin with rifles. Hialeah, and Hiawassee wait for them to pass. Follow them and club and knife them to death from behind.

Scene 59

CUT TO:

EXT. MULTIPLE - DUSK DREAM SEQUENCE

A ghoulish looking indifferent Bowles holds up sun glass, and Houston is burned. Houston prostrates himself before Eliza who is arm and arm with Burleson. Burleson kicks him when he is down, and Eliza laughs. Diana holds a torch with a flame and seems ready to burn Houston. Anna turns her back. William white looking pale with a bullet hole in his gut stands over him and shoots him in the chest. Houston wakes up:

HOUSTON

Ahhhhh!

Scene 60

CUT TO:

INT.

Margaret writes a letter to Houston.

MARGARET

Oh my husband! My husband what language shall I employ to express the intense interest that I feel for the welfare of your soul! Time hurries on, and the cold grave will soon receive our lifeless forms. If your soul is unprepared, will the nation that you have built up extend an arm to save you? No, the world itself shall flee before the face of him that sitteth upon the throne.

Scene 61

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSTONS BEDROOM - DAYTIME

Houston is lying down while Margaret prepares for bed.

MARGARET

Husband, the reason why we don't need to worry about dying is that God died for us.

starts fixing pillow under Houston's head

Don't you believe in what Jesus did? Is not His everlasting love

fixes pillow so that Houston's head is again on it

the cornerstone on which even our life is built, together?

Scene 62

CUT TO

INT. HOUSTONS HOUSE - DAYTIME

Houston sits at a table looking extremely ill. Margaret sets down a steaming mug of liquid. Houston looks at it.

HOUSTON

So you think this will help me (fingers some herb)?

MARGARET

(takes leaves off) well not the stems. But Samuel, nothing will help you like the waters of Baptism.

Scene 63

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVER - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: 1853)

The crowds gather at the river. Most are dressed in white. Houston stands in line waiting to be baptized. The crowd sing a hymn. Houston walks into the water and the Reverend speaks.

(the crowds are around)

REVEREND
I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Hymn Crescendo. Houston peers up toward heaven.

Scene 64

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - DAYTIME (Text on Screen: Nacogdoches, Texas 1854)

HAMILTON walks up to Rusk and Anna and shakes their hands.

RUSK
We thank you for coming up from Huntsville, to settle some of Mr. Houston's accounts.

ANNA
I am impressed that Mr. Houston lodges such confidence in you.

HAMILTON
Mr. Sam done buy me from a drunken slaveholder, when he wasn't even lookin to buy a slave. It's a miracle Missus. I do believe I am the most fortunate black man in Texas.

ANNA
I wonder what Mr. Houston had in mind. And what about his marriage-—how many times does he get drunk and abuse her?

Hamilton

Its an amazing thing Missus. I have never seen such love birds as Master Sam and Margaret.

Camera peers into Anna's look of shock

Scene 65

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSTON HOME - DAYTIME

Houston, and Margaret Educate and Emancipate Jeff Hamilton. The camera points to the rising sun. CUT TO inside the Houston house at dinner.

HOUSTON

Good Morning, Jeff, come join us at the table. My wife and I want to tell you something.

MARGARET

Jeff we would like you to have this (gives him a few coins).

HAMILTON

What is this?

HOUSTON

Jeff, that is your salary, such as it is for the last month. And you look at this too (hands Hamilton a document)

HAMILTON

You done grant me my freedom?

MARGATRET

Jeff we want you to know that you are free to stay with us just as before as long as you wish, with this salary every month. But you are to regard yourself as a free man, who can leave us, whenever that seems best to you.

JEFF

Massa, Missus. I don't know what to say? How can repay you for the way you have treated me! No one of my race, has such wonderful masters!