

TARAPACA © 2020

by
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SUPER: TARAPACA DESERT. NOTHERN CHILE. 1880.

EXT. DESERT - PRE-DAWN

The Atacama desert.

A rocky landscape of almost unnatural beauty dotted with scattered Tamarugos trees.

EXT. TAMARUGO PAMPA - DAY

A CHILEAN ARMY PATROL taking positions behind small tamarugo tree. Their sun-faded, dusty and ragged uniforms, once bright red jacket and blue pants blend easy with the surroundings.

The men leave all their guns and pistols on the ground.

They move stealthy pulling their knives: a corvo. A medium size bush knife with its point curved inward.

As they get ready, we pan from face-to-face, counting six men in the group.

A rugged VETERAN kisses his corvo's blade as his eyes a YOUNG MAN with wide eyes laying low under the cover of Tamarugo tree. They get ready for the killing.

Next, to him lays a HUMAN fortress of a man. He smiles at the youngster as he pulls his large corvo as he leaps across the trees, landing close to a CHINESE man who looks at him is disgusts of his yellowish teeth.

A few feet from them lays another chilean SOLDIER, who squats a fly out of his oily and dirty face. He looks at the dead fly with childhood fascination.

He throws the fly away as he senses a powerful gaze of a man, staring at them all.

Corporal DANILO FUENTES, 30's, tall, haggard face of a hard-working man. A veteran soldier tired of war, eyes each man, from under the shade of a Tamarugo tree, holding a pair of binoculars.

His face is expressionless.

EXT. TAMARUGO'S LINE - CONTINUOUS

The men look at Fuentes anxiously and expectantly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A non-verbal dialogue ensues between them and Fuentes as he checks their positions.

The men gets a sense of reassurance from Fuentes sight.

Satisfied, Fuentes lifts his binoculars and scans a soft slope of Tamarugo trees that ends in a depression, a clear valley below, a few yards ahead.

Suddenly his expression turns hard. Fuentes pockets his binos and grabs his Mauser rifle.

He signals his man with his right hand: GO!

The men understand.

They crawl toward the valley below, as snakes moving across the field.

EXT. TAMARUGOS - PERUVIAN CAMP - DAY

Below a small PERUVIAN unit. Resting. Six. White uniform, some men are bare footed. Their rifles are stacked in an upright position making a triangle in the middle of the clearing.

Across their camp, a small cooking fire. An AYMARA, 20's, tends it. Unaware of the perils lurking around him, he plays a mournful TUNE in his SAMPONIA; a wooden flute.

Around camp, every soldier rest quietly.

Opposite to the troop, a horse.

Below him rests an AYMARA indigenous man wearing an PERUVIAN ARMY OFFICER's uniform, 30, stocky. He cleans his .45. Next to him lays a machete.

EXT. TAMARUGOS - CONTINUOUS

From a tamarugo tree, Fuentes watches his men intently as they move toward the enemy camp.

Fuentes's eyes locks on his men as...

They crawl silently from one small shrub to another.

As we move with them, the landscape shows clusters of desert flowers: yellow, red, and green. This is evidence of the season - Spring. Some of the flowers still have some morning dew, dampening the red jackets and the white pants of the Chilean soldiers crawling toward the enemy.

CONTINUED:

As they get closer to the enemy camp, each reach cover, behind a Tamarugo tree. And wait.

Looking around as his men deploy for the killing, Fuentes joins them and advances stealthily.

EXT. VALLEY - PERUVIAN CAMP - CONTINUOUS

The Chilean soldiers look like a pack of wolves waiting for a signal from their leader.

All eyes fall on the platoon leader: Fuentes.

He nods.

Then, in a synchronized and well choreographed action, the Chilean soldiers take down their enemies.

Throats cut. Silent death for many.

The Samponia's TUNE stops abruptly.

In seconds, the killing is done.

EXT. PERUVIAN CAMP - LATER

The Chilean soldiers look exhausted, dirty, and somewhat aghast, moving quietly and slowly amongst the dead.

EXT. PERUVIAN CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes approaches the dying Aymara, as he steps closer: In the middle of his chest, he sees a wound oozing blood; he is dying.

Desperately, the Aymara tries to reach for his machete. Fuentes steps on it.

The Aymara's face sweats and his eyes are wide open in pride and hate. Fuentes kicks the machete away, then he stares at the gushing blood coming out from the man's chest for a moment as their eyes are locked.

The young Aymara recites something in a low voice.

Fuentes ignores him, and reaches for the young Aymara's leather pouch. He opens it up: a map.

Fuentes studies the map. Then he pockets it.

CONTINUED:

He stands up and about to move from the Aymara, but something catches his eye a few yards away: A young dead CHILEAN SOLDIER, lying a few feet away from the dying Aymara. He still holds his corvo in one of his hands.

A SOLDIER approaches: this is ESTEBAN, a rugged veteran, with education; the men call him "the professor." In his thirties, Esteban has seen too much war. He spits tobacco.

In the b.g., we see the rest of the soldiers:

JORGE, the youngster, about sixteen but who looks much older until his smile reveals his real boyish age. He holds his rifle half hanging over his shoulder. He sips water.

PEDRO, the human fortress, about thirty, with years of dust over his rugged, and leathery face; his smiles show his stained yellow teeth with a pipe hanging on his lips.

HUGO, the CHINESE man, smiles. A man with a small frame, almost fragile. He hugs his Mauser rifle as if he were making love to it. Hugo's age borders the late forties. His jet black hair is almost gone, and a thin layer of it is running across his otherwise large head.

And finally, MARCOS. About 24, but it's hard to tell because he has not taken a bath since the beginning of the campaign: Five years ago.

Esteban stands next to Fuentes as he holds dog tags.

ESTEBAN

Luis.

(pauses, he looks down)

This one still alive; shall we take him?

FUENTES

No time.

Esteban leaves.

Fuentes grabs Luis's dog tags, puts them in his pocket, and walks off.

The Aymara tries to speak to Fuentes. His voice is hoarse.

YOUNG AYMARA

(in Aymara)

Tupac...Tupac. Freedom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Fuentes stops for a moment. He turns and stares at the dying Aymara. He waits until he is dead. He turns around with certain indifference, and walks off.

EXT. PERUVIAN CAMP - LATER

Fuentes' patrol marches off from the Peruvian camp into the desert.

EXT. HILL - DAY

We pan on a hill covered by Tamarugo trees - suddenly a pair of highly polished calvary boots fill the screen.

We pan up from the boots to take in a tailor made Chilean officer's uniform, then we stop at the face of CAPTAIN HORACIO BUSTAMANTE, 40's, white hair shows on his temples, in contrast to his tanned and healthy face.

He is gazing through a pair of binoculars. His expression is severe, almost grim.

Behind stands Lt. MARTIN GUTIERREZ, 24, an educated yet quiet man, self described: "as an officer by accident."

Lt. Martin's expression shows no great liking of the Captain. His lips are tight as Bustamante scans the hill moving the knobs of the binocular slowly.

Bustamante stops. He straightens and looks at Lt. Martin whose expression changes to one of impassivity.

Bustamante looks at the hill.

BUSTAMANTE

(angry)

Stupidity -- nothing but
stupidity. That hill should be on
the map, and most of all, it
should be cleared of all
vegetation. Those tamarugo trees
should have been burned.

LT. MARTIN

Excuse me, Sir. But we retreated
way too fast for such a luxury.

BUSTAMANTE

I don't agree with you Lieutenant
Martin. I should report this to
headquarters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A beat.

Bustamante pulls a cigarette. He lights it up.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)

Do you think the Aymara or
Peruvian regulars are hidden there
in those trees?

LT. MARTIN

We'll know it soon, sir. Corporal
Fuentes is on a reconnaissance
patrol.

BUSTAMANTE

Recon patrols have the bad
reputation of not returning.

LT. MARTIN

Fuentes has a good reputation
among the troops. He'll be back.

BUSTAMANTE

I didn't ask for your opinion Lt.
Martin.

Lt. Martin says nothing. He waits for Bustamante's next move with a mix of curiosity and anxiety.

A SOLDIER approaches. He strikes a military salute and clicks his heels.

SOLDIER

Capt. Bustamante? Colonel
Barnechea would like to see you at
his headquarter, sir.

Bustamante nods. The soldier makes an about face and leaves.

Bustamante gazes sharply at Lt. Martin, and walks off. He throws the cigarette butt away.

INT. BUNKER - DAY

Two OFFICERS lean over a table covered by a large and dusty map. Other maps cover the walls of the bunker. Several candles shine some light inside. A bottle of Pisco serves as a map holder on the table.

One of the officers is Colonel HUMBERTO BARNECHEA, 60, an old school soldier, lean face, white hair, with a thick dark mustache.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The other is Captain SOLO MUNOZ, 40, an old desert fox; a man disillusioned with the war. His face is deep lined with fatigue and warfare. He sips Pisco. Almost constantly.

CAPT. MUNOZ

What about the civilians left at Illo? Should we help them?

COLONEL BARNECHEA

High Command is running the war from Santiago. They can worry about civilians, we need to worry about covering our retreat -- Any news about our recon platoon?

CAPT. MUNOZ

Captain Bustamante should be here soon with news about Fuentes' patrol.

Colonel Barnechea lowers his gaze, worried.

EXT. ILO OASIS - MORNING

A green fertile oasis. Untamed. Willows arch over a gently curving creek. The water runs clear.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

A large vineyard extends alongside the creek.

Two white men work on the vineyards: NATHAN, 40, and CHARLES, 35, pick grapes in large baskets and carry them to a cart, where they unload them, methodically.

In the center of the vineyard we see a house, built of wood, it is a well-constructed and well-maintained, Victorian mansion.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

On the front porch, we see MARIA, an AYMARA, 16, dressed as a European maid.

She serves tea to two women: SARA, 25, and THERESE, 30, white and British both look wealthy, high class.

Sipping tea they watch the men working on the fields; Half bored.

EXT. FIELDS - DAY

From time to time, Sara gazes at the fields in front. While Therese reads a book.

At the end of the vineyard, a solitary RIDER appears. He looks over the men for a moment.

Then, from behind, another one and then a few more ride in. Six in total. They watch Nathan and Charles.

EXT. HOUSE - PORCHE - CONTINUOUS

From the porch, Maria stares at the riders. She drops her tea pot. Startled, and annoyed, Sara walks towards the edge of the porch. She shields her eyes from the sun.

EXT. FIELDS - CONTINUOUS

Nathan and Charles stop working as they become aware of the riders. They sense danger and run back toward the house.

At that moment, the riders, begin to gallop toward the house cutting through the fields.

We close in on them: these are AYMARA bandits; hard men, strong, cruel and excellent horsemen. They are armed to the teeth. Each carry a German Mauser rifle and several .38 Guns. Some of them carry machetes as well.

These are the most frightening horsemen imaginable.

As they gallop, they pull their guns and start to shoot at the white men running in front of them.

Charles takes a hit on his back and falls dead. Nathan runs behind. He stops and checks on him: no use. He starts to run, faster, towards the house.

EXT. PORCH - CONTINUOUS

From inside the house an old man shows up, LORD HARRINGTON, 60's, buff and large, patrician looking. He holds a rifle. He stands next to the sisters.

Sara watches in shock as Lord Harrington stands by her side.

SARA

Papa!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRINGTON

Sara. Go inside. With your sister.

She hesitates, and scans her dad's eyes.

SARA

-- The Chileans said they would
protect us!

HARRINGTON

(somber)

They left. Go now!

The sisters look at each other in disbelief. Harrington steps forward, takes a deep breath and kisses them on their forehead. A silent farewell.

HARRINGTON

I love you both, girls.

(pauses)

Go! Get inside!

Sara takes her sister, who is shaking uncontrollably, inside the house. Maria runs with them. She is the last one to get inside. Before closing the main door, she looks back at the riders as they encircle Nathan in the field.

From the porch, Harrington watches Nathan as well.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

The bandits kill Nathan; Cold blooded. One SHOT.

After that, their leader, a strong, dark and nasty man, rides towards the house. His name is TUPAC KATARI, 40. Imperious, no temper, just harsh cold authority. Sweat on the man's skin. Tupac wears a faded white Peruvian Officer's jacket. Around his waist there is a small belt with red, green and white beads. A long-handled machete is stuffed in his belt.

As he reins his horse, we see in his arm a tattoo of a condor flying.

The rest of the bandits follow him.

EXT. PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Harrington loads his rifle and aims at the bandits. He FIRES. One of them falls dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tupac aims at Harrington from about 200 feet, and FIRES as he gallops.

The bullet ricochets near Harrington's head. He takes cover behind the porch, waits for a moment, loads his rifle and gets up to fire. But a second bullet strikes him on his shoulder. He falls, wounded, dropping his rifle.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The riders split flanking the front of the house: one of them circles toward the back.

INT. HOUSE - SAME

Sara walks straight to a drawer, opens it and grabs a gun, a .38, she checks the gun's chamber: loaded. She hides it in her dress. Suddenly, she HEARS a scream.

THERESE

Papa!

Sara walks toward the window and sees...

Mr. Harrington wounded on the ground. Therese tries to go outside, but Sara and Maria stop her.

SARA

Therese! We must go.

They turn and run toward the back door. Maria follows them carrying some blankets.

Sara reaches the back door, opens it.

EXT. BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS

And faces an Aymara bandit. He aims his gun at them. Sara, Therese and Maria stop. They hug each other shaking.

Maria smiles pitifully at the man but he SHOOTS her in the head. She drops dead.

Sara and Therese stand frozen staring at the man.

The man grins at them.

Sara calmly steps forward, as the man dismounts. She walks toward him, locking her blue eyes with his.

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CONTINUED:

Therese stays behind.

Sara gets closer to the man. He lowers his gun, confidently.

Sara smiles at him, and stops, eyes full of hate. They stare at each other for a moment.

She pulls out her gun, SHOOTS, and kills him. He falls back; dead.

Quickly, Sara turns to Therese who is paralyzed with fear.

SARA
Sister! We must go.

Therese zombie like stares at the dead.

Sara grabs her shoulders tenderly. Their eyes lock and in a silent bond of agreement they run away from the house.

We follow them as they run on the field.

In the b.g, we HEAR some SHOOTING.

EXT. HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY

While running, Therese turns briefly to see what's going on at the house.

Therese's POV: Harrington's body is dragged to the front of the house. An angry Aymara SHOOTS Harrington in the back of his head.

The rest of the men finish him off with their machetes; HOWLING.

Tupac watches them butcher Harrington.

EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Therese SCREAMS in horror.

EXT. HOUSE - SAME

The Aymara posse turn at her SCREAM and realize that the sisters are running away.

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CONTINUED:

Tupac looks coldly at the sisters on the field. He pulls his gun and aims at them. He FIRES. A bullet flies and hits...

EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Therese in the head. She drops dead.

Sara stops; frozen in fear.

Her eyes locked on her sister's dead body at her feet.

Back at the house: Tupac cocks his gun again. He aims, and SHOOTS: we HEAR the bullet whistling, in the air.

Sara looks up towards the posey, as if she is in trace. Her face is pale and then -

Her head BURST in blood. Sara falls dead on her back.

We pull back to see: Sara's body. She lies on the ground, eyes open looking toward the sky. Blood oozes from the back of her head making a pool.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

For a moment, Tupac stands motionless, almost somber, looking at the bodies of the dead sisters laying on the field.

Then, his men HOWL; they celebrate their kill.

Tupac celebrates in silence. Behind his impenetrable solitude, we sense an imposing intelligence.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The house burns.

The cadavers of the Harrington family lie scattered on the fields.

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Fuentes and his men arrive at the camp.

The men are weary and tired.

They huddle waiting around Fuentes, some of the men smoke cigarettes. Lt. Martin approaches them.

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CONTINUED:

The men don't pay much attention to him.

Fuentes turns and faces Lt. Martin with an icy stare, he pulls the dog tags off out of his pocket and handle them to Lt. Martin.

FUENTES

(icy)

One dead.

LT. MARTIN

Partisans? Aymara?

FUENTES

The usual.

A down beat.

LT. MARTIN

We have a new commander, corporal.
He expects your report.

Fuentes looks at Lt. Martin unconvinced. Then, he walks off toward the barracks.

Lt. Martin's gaze follows Fuentes, as he holds the dog tag in his hand.

LT. MARTIN

It's an order, Fuentes!

Ignoring him, Fuentes keeps walking.

The platoon follows Fuentes, leaving Lt. Martin standing alone.

INT. REGIMENTAL HUT - DAY

A CORPORAL announces Bustamante as he stands at the entrance.

CORPORAL

Capt. Bustamante, sir.

Colonel Barnechea and Capt. Munoz looks at Bustamante as he straightens up and salutes them in a more military fashion.

Barnechea and Munoz glance at each other.

Bustamante stands at the threshold. Barnechea returns his salute.

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CONTINUED:

COLONEL BARNECHEA
Come on in, Captain. Is there any
news on Fuentes?

BUSTAMANTE
Yes, he is back. Sir.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
Very good.
(pauses)
Have a sit, Captain.

Munoz clears some maps off the table.

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)
Do you know my adjutant, Capt.
Munoz?

BUSTAMANTE
Of course. How are you Capt.
Munoz?

Bustamante extends his hand. Munoz nods at him and keeps drinking.

Bustamante sits. Munoz sips Pisco.

CAPT. MUNOZ
Well, I don't know. How am I
supposed to feel? Terrible?
Relieved? War is almost over.

Barnechea LAUGHS and serves Pisco to Bustamante. He accepts and drinks.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
To our health gentlemen.

They all drink.

CAPT. MUNOZ
To the end of the war. The
glorious war of absurdity ...

Barnechea glances at Capt. Munoz.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
Incidentally, Capt. Bustamante,
why did you ask to transfer to the
Northern front? The war is almost
over here. We're playing fire
brigades with the Aymara and some
confederates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUSTAMANTE

Well, I was missing the action back at home. Training cadets is not precisely war, although sometimes they are stubborn. The soldiery needs a strong commanding hand you know. Like a mob.

CAPT. MUÑOZ

Toast to the mob and their masters.

Bustamante reacts with a faint and icy smile.

COLONEL BUSTAMANTE

Is Fuentes back from his mission, Captain?

CAPT. MUÑOZ

No. Sir.

Bustamante waits, then --

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)

What's with Fuentes?

Munoz looks at Bustamante closely for a moment. Then, he reclines in his chair, examining his glass.

CAPT. MUÑOZ

Fuentes is a problem ... for some. A great soldier. First class. And sometimes one tends to look the other way.

Bustamante stares vacantly at them.

BUSTAMANTE

I see...

Capt. Munoz coldly sips his drinks and gazes at Bustamante, then at Colonel Barnechea.

Bustamante straightens up his collar.

BUSTAMANTE

Well ... a first rate soldier with a problem -- sort of -- lack of discipline, I sense. Forgive me Colonel, but I have just arrived here and I feel -- well -- a sort of - insubordination around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

COLONEL BARNECHEA

Really?

BUSTAMANTE

Well, I call it -- a lack of respect.

CAPT. MUÑOZ

Lack of respect?

COLONEL BARNECHEA

Respect for what, Capt.

Bustamante? The high command? The politicians? The enemy?

BUSTAMANTE

The uniform, sir.

CAPT. MUÑOZ

The uniform?

BUSTAMANTE

Yes, Capt. Muñoz, the uniform.

CAPT. MUÑOZ

Well said. Well, said, Captain. The uniform. I'll drink to that.

Bustamante face is white with anger; he glares at Capt. Muñoz.

Barnechea takes a swig.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

-- And how do you intend to bring respect to the uniform Capt. Bustamante?

Bustamante's relaxes his face. Colonel Barnechea leans forward.

Muñoz stares at the Captain, intently.

BUSTAMANTE

Firm hand, Colonel. Firm hand. Showing the soldier who's in control here. After all, we're the victorious Chilean army...

CAPT. MUÑOZ

So far, not yet. We're still fighting the Aymara.

Bustamante dismisses Muñoz's comment.

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CONTINUED: (4)

BUSTAMANTE

The Aymara. They are a bunch of uncivilized barbarians. Tactics of the modern army will bring 'em down.

CAPT. MUNOZ

At the beginning of the war, we saw them retreating back to the altiplano. We pressed them to the high desert, only to find out that your so called "barbarians" have become an infallible fighting machine. I feel for the poor front soldier ...

BUSTAMANTE

At this moment, and with the state of affairs in our country, that sounds like treason, Capt. Munoz. I subordinate my ideas to the high command and interest of my country.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

(icy)
We're still doing our duty, Capt. Bustamante.

Silence. Bustamante gets up.

BUSTAMANTE

Well, if you'll excuse me.

Barnechea nods. Munoz raises his cup, empty now.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

Before you leave, Captain Bustamante. Capt. Munoz's platoon has been transferred to your command now. That includes corporal Fuentes.

A beat.

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)

Captain Munoz will give you the details of your new orders.

Bustamante eyes Capt. Munoz, stretches his uniform and gives them a stiff military salute.

BUSTAMANTE

Very well. Colonel. Captain Munoz.

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CONTINUED: (5)

Bustamante leaves.

A silent beat.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
What do you think of our new
Captain?

Munoz thinks for a moment.

CAPT. MUNOZ
Clearly, he comes from wealth. He
must have the most exclusive
tailor in the army. He looks
immaculate.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
Mm. I know his father. A wealthy
and quite an ambitious man.

CAPT. MUNOZ
The apple does not fall ...

COLONEL BARNECHEA
And clearly our new Captain won't
rest until he gets a medal.

CAPT. MUNOZ
Gets? Hmm. In my book, a soldier
normally earns a medal.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
Fortunately, we're not on his
book, Capt. Munoz.

They smile at each other grimly.

INT. CAPTAIN BUSTAMANTE'S BUNKER - DAY

Fuentes stands at attention in front of Bustamante's desk.

Fuentes notices a file on Bustamante's desk with his own name on it: DISCIPLINARY BATTALLION NUMBER 5. He ignores it and stares dead ahead.

Bustamante looks at Fuentes with curiosity.

BUSTAMANTE
Morning Corporal.

Fuentes looks at Bustamante and raises his hand to salute: a very unenthusiastic military salute.

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CONTINUED:

FUENTES
Good morning, sir.

In turn, Bustamante salutes Fuentes with a very stiff movement.

BUSTAMANTE
Sit down, Corporal.

Fuentes sits. At that moment, the *Cross of Tarapaca* shines briefly on Fuentes's uniform. Bustamante catches it's glare, and for a split second, his eyes light up with lust.

Bustamante recomposes and stares at Fuentes's haggard but clean face.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)
(stern)
Fuentes, I am Captain Horacio Bustamante, your new commander. Capt. Munoz will take leave for medical reasons.

Fuentes remains impassible.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)
I understand you know the territory well enough. And you have brought the Aymara and the confederate renegades to a certain control.

FUENTES
You mean killing 'em sir?

BUSTAMANTE
Precisely. Do you agree?

FUENTES
It is not my place to agree, sir.

Fuentes stares at Bustamante.

FUENTES (CONT'D)
What is this about, sir, with all due respect?

Bustamante places his hands on a map in front of him. The map has some clear red dots and a line. He points at the line.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUSTAMANTE

Corporal, do you know the town of Illo and the nitrate plants there?

FUENTES

Yes, sir. It's near the border --

BUSTAMANTE

-- Yes. It is. We have reports of a band of marauders and Aymara bandits harassing and attacking villages and English Nitrate factories that were under the control of our troops. Are you aware of that?

FUENTES

I am well aware of it, sir.

BUSTAMANTE

The High Command has decided to put an end to their vicious attacks.

(pauses)

So, we will depart on a mission tomorrow morning.

A beat.

FUENTES

A mission? Do you mean a recon patrol, sir?

BUSTAMANTE

No. A mission to capture the leader of a wretched Aymara bandits that have murdered innocent civilians; British citizens. a heathen named... Tupac. Or something.

Fuentes stirs uneasy on his chair.

BUSTAMANTE

(pauses)

Fuentes, I count on you for this, your expertise and cooperation will be appreciated -- I will lead the platoon. You speak their dialect?

FUENTES

I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BUSTAMANTE

Well then; It's settled. Lt.
Martin here will supervise the
arrangements.

Fuentes turns and stares at Lt. Martin. Then, he turns and looks at Bustamante.

FUENTES

With all due respect, sir. I will not lead any unexperienced officer into enemy territory. That, sir, will be a sure death, to me and to my men.

Bustamante looks at him. Grave.

BUSTAMANTE

Let me take care of the soldier's welfare, corporal. You just need to obey my orders!

Fuentes stares back at Bustamante.

FUENTES

I'm not obeying it. Sir. My men lives are not worth saving any British ones.

Dead silence.

Bustamante's face drops in anger and shock.

Across the room, Lt. Martin stares at Fuentes in disbelief. His hands are on his holster. Bustamante eye balls Lt. Martin, he shakes his head. Lt. Martin relaxes.

Then, Bustamante turns to Fuentes, pauses for a moment. Thinking it through.

BUSTAMANTE

(calmly)

Fuentes, this war has become something of economics. We're living in a different era now. The British exert enormous influence in how we conduct this war. Therefore, our government consider the Nitrate and the welfare of the British citizens a national interest. The Aymara are...

At that moment a cockroach crosses the table. Bustamante slaps it hard with Fuente's files!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BUSTAMANTE
This damn fucking place...Filthy.

FUENTES

--

Across the room Lt. Martin looks at Fuentes and shakes his head. He stands up and walks toward Fuentes.

LT. MARTIN
You know well their trails between here and the altiplano, do you not?

Fuentes turns to look at Lt. Martin.

FUENTES
Yes, sir I do. I have been there.
(to Bustamante)
-- But I - I can't obey your order, sir.

Tension rises. Fuentes is quiet.

Martin looks at Bustamante, incredulous.

Bustamante SLAMS his hands on the table.

BUSTAMANTE
It's a fucking order, Corporal!

FUENTES
Captain, your order is fucking suicide.

BUSTAMANTE
You know Tupac?

FUENTES
I know him. I watched him cut many of my men merciless.

BUSTAMANTE
You are no angel yourself, Fuentes. These are just a band of Aymara renegades.

FUENTES
Your band of Aymara are a cutthroat brood of bastards partisans roaming the Tarapaca desert. You have any idea who's that fucker is and what he's done to us?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

LT. MARTIN
 Fuentes. We're the good men
 here...

FUENTES
 (To Martin, bitter)
 He is a butcher!
 (to Bustamante)
 And I've got a cemetery full of to
 danm many "good men" to testify.
 (angry)
 Too damn many!

Fuentes angrily stares at Bustamante's uniform. For a moment his anger subsides.

FUENTES (CONT'D)
 If you think you'll capture him by
 sending just a platoon, it's a
 suicide.

BUSTAMANTE
 Corporal! I really don't give a
 damn about your personal opinions
 and feelings about this war, and
 much less 'bout that Tupac. This
 is an order and you will follow
 it. You will follow because it is
 my command and your duty as a
 soldier. I intend to follow my
 orders and you will too. So you
 have 24 hours to get your shit
 together. Or -- or I'll have you
 arrested and sent you right back
 to your former disciplinary
 battalion. This will be done!
 (pause)
 You're dismissed!

Fuentes leaves.

Bustamante's face is red with anger, shaking his head.

BUSTAMANTE
 (to himself)
 A fucking corporal!
 (to Martin)
 Keep and eye on him, Martin. He is
 an unpredictable man.

LT. MARTIN
 Yes. Sir. He is...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

Bustamante takes a swig of pisco. He unbuttons his jacket.

BUSTAMANTE

This damn heat.

(to Martin)

That's all, Lt. Martin.

Lt. Martin salutes and leaves. Bustamante salutes back at him, sharply.

EXT. FUENTES'S TENT - DUSK

Fuentes's tent is part of small tent military camp mushrooming in on a gentle slope looking down at the miner town of Pisco.

Esteban and Fuentes sit outside the tent smoking a cigar. A small campfire burns next to them.

ESTEBAN

Tupac?

FUENTES

Hm. Hm.

ESTEBAN

The men got the jitters. They won't go...

FUENTES

In the distance we hear the WHISTLE of a distant train.

ESTEBAN

(hearing the whistle)

My wife has waited for me for five long years. I have a job back there, kids...

FUENTES

I pulled you from hell before...We'll get the job done this time.

ESTEBAN

There is a new Captain...

FUENTES

We'll manage --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ESTEBAN

What makes you think there'll be a
next time for us?

Fuentes's face twist hearing Esteban's comment.

FUENTES

Because, I'm all you've got...

(then softly)

Because I know Tupac...

(bitter)

Because you know I'll get him, and
I'll kill him rather face a court-
martial.

A beat.

ESTEBAN

You know why we are here? No
because we are good -- because
they want us to die for them
glory. I'm not a fool. None of us
are...

FUENTES

(after a moment)

I'll get him -- and you will see
your wife and kids soon -- I give
you my word.

Esteban stare at Fuentes's face for a moment, then he
looks up into the night sky.

EXT. TOWN/CAMP - SUNRISE

A pack of loaded mules stand behind the entire troop.

At front: The platoon stand at attention: Pedro, Esteban,
Marcos, Hugo and Jorge. Fuentes walks in front of them.

Fuentes stops momentarily in front of Esteban. Their eyes
meet.

FUENTES

We'll make it back.

ESTEBAN

Yeah. I know.

Esteban looks up to him, pleased.

Fuentes' eyes fall on Jorge standing next to Esteban.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jorge looks eager, ready for action and proud of being on the patrol.

FUENTES
Soldier.

JORGE
Ready for the journey, sir.

FUENTES
So, I see.

Fuentes takes a step back, then he salutes the troop.

FUENTES
Good morning.

PLATOON
Good morning, sir.

FUENTES
As you were.

Satisfied, Fuentes turns and faces Bustamante who sits on top of his horse. His uniform is impeccable.

Lt. Martin mounts his horse and waits next to Bustamante.

Fuentes stands at attention between the troop and the officers.

In the background, we see the Chilean flag flapping on the flagpole.

Fuentes salutes Bustamante. He returns it with a stiff and solid military salute.

BUSTAMANTE
At ease.

Fuentes stands at ease.

FUENTES
Captain. Lt. Martin.

BUSTAMANTE
Troop.
(to Fuentes)
Provisions?

FUENTES
A load of dry meat. A load of flour, tea and coffee, sugar and water, sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUSTAMANTE
'munitions?

FUENTES
Enough to take Arica back, Sir.

Bustamante grins. Proud.

BUSTAMANTE
Any questions before we start this
mission?

Silence.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)
It's a good day to depart. We'll
hopefully reach Illo within a
week's journey, Lord willing the
weather holds.

At that moment, Colonel Barnechea approaches Bustamante.

Bustamante salutes him.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
I hope this duty will give you the
front line experience you were
looking for, Captain.

BUSTAMANTE
It's an honor to serve my country,
sir.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
At least you're leaving this shit
hole earlier.

BUSTAMANTE
(nods at Barnechea)
Good day, sir.

Colonel Barnechea salutes Bustamante, then turns and walks toward Fuentes who is mounting his horse.

Bustamante and Lt. Martin exchange looks.

EXT. CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Barnechea stands next Fuentes.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
When a soldier gets an order, the
soldier executes it, Corporal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fuentes considers Barnechea a moment, as he reins his horse.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
Have a good trip, Corporal.

Barnechea looks up to him.

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)
You're a good soldier, Fuentes.

FUENTES
I'm not so sure, sir.

Fuentes rides off toward the troop.

The troop is already mounted and waiting.

Bustamante and Lt. Martin turn their reins and head on toward the end of the camp.

BUSTAMANTE
Platoon! March!

Fuentes follows them, behind the troop and the mules.

EXT. PISCO OUTSKIRTS - CONTINUOUS

As the platoon marches across town, Fuentes looks at a YOUNG AYMARA BOY, 9, sitting next to an old man watching him passing by. Behind them an ANCIENT AYMARA WOMAN pays no attention as she SLAPS tortillas into shape. Two SMALL CHILDREN watch, big-eyed.

Fuentes eyes full of hate pierces thru the boy. In turn the boy stares at Fuentes impassible.

Fuentes rides ahead in silence.

Behind the platoon, the Boy scuttles quickly into an alley.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS - CONTINUOUS

The platoon reaches the last hut at the end of the town.

Fuentes stops his horse. On his saddle he turns around: one last look at Pisco.

In the distance he sees Aymara, Chilean Miners, English Men and their wives and kids filling the streets, going around in their own business.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the b.g., A tall chimney spits black smoke.

A siren HOWLS for the miner's shift change.

Fuentes takes all in, after a moment, he spurs his horse and rides off.

EXT. PLAINS - DAY

A SERIES OF LONG SHOTS/TIME LAPSES.

- Morning: The platoon rides thru the large esplanades of the desert. High peaks dominate the horizon.

- Afternoon: The platoon seems to be a small line of dark dots marching under the heavy sun.

- Sunset: The platoon makes a thin line cutting through an immense valley.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CREEK - DAY

The blue sky is bright and the sun hits the platoon.

They reach a creek in the middle of a green valley surrounded by huge boulders. The place is a natural fortress, one entrance and a narrow exit at the end.

Bustamante looks exhausted and sweats profusely.

Lt. Martin seems to be in better shape.

Fuentes and the men are not even breaking a sweat.

EXT. CREEK - CAMPSITE - LATER

A camp.

Tents and small fires make a semi-circle.

Across the tents, Pedro stands guard.

Fuentes rests near his tent's entrance, chewing COCA LEAVES. Reads a book: Caesar's Campaigns.

Above, on a boulder, Esteban scans the horizon.

Bustamante and Lt. Martin rest outside their common tent.

CONTINUED:

Jorge tends a cooking fire. He bakes biscuits.

Marcos takes care of the horses and mules.

Suddenly, a SHOT.

Up on the boulder, Esteban CRIES and falls.

A deep silence engulfs the camp. The men stand still. Expectant, exchanging tense looks.

Across the camp, Pedro shifts his gaze to Fuentes. In fact, all eyes are on him.

ON FUENTES: Fuentes rises slowly sensing the situation. He says nothing, watching. He spits the coca leaves.

Across Fuentes' tent, Bustamante and Lt. Martin scan the boulders anxiously holding their guns.

EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly, another SHOT. This time everyone scrambles. Fuentes reaches for his guns, looking in all directions.

FUENTES'S POV: BOULDERS. SKY. SILENCE.

We pan across the entire camp. Everyone gets ready, looking in all directions, guns cocked.

BACK TO SCENE

Across Fuentes's tent, Bustamante and Lt. Martin stare at Fuentes.

BUSTAMANTE

(to Fuentes)

What's going on? Are we under attack? Aymara?

FUENTES

Tupac. Sir.

Suddenly, a HOWL from hell echoes thru the entire camp.

Bustamante's face turns pale. He looks around trying hard to pinpoint the HOWL origin. He can't.

Lt. Martin locks and load his gun. Ditto Bustamante.

EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS

The Aymara riders show up charging close enough for us to see their faces, aiming their rifles and SHOOTING.

Jorge aims his rifle at one Aymara man. He SHOOTS once and misses.

JORGE

Fuck! Fuck!

The man rides straight toward him.

Jorge SHOOTS again. The Aymara and his horse fall to the ground. The rider is dead.

Jorge is in shock. He looks at the dead man.

A bullet ricochets near his foot, Jorge reacts and dives, SHOOTING his rifle almost blindly.

After a moment, he gets up and runs, taking cover behind a lame horse laying on the ground. He keeps SHOOTING.

Across the camp, Pedro and Marcos repel the attack the best they can.

Pedro takes a knee and SHOOTS.

Marcos lays flat on the ground; He SHOOTS fast.

The Aymara raiders ride through the camp, destroying and burning their tents.

EXT. BOULDERS - CONTINUOUS

Reaching the far end of the camp, the Aymara raiders turn their horses' reins and charge them back.

EXT. CAMPSITE - CONTINUOUS

An AYMARA MAN dismounts and takes the reins of the mules. He gets back on his horse and rides with the mules away.

Pedro SHOOTS at him. He misses. The Aymara runs off with the mules.

PEDRO

Fuck. The mules! They're taking the fucking mules!

CONTINUED:

Jorge gets up from behind the dead horse and SHOOTS at the Aymara.

From his position, Fuentes's gaze follows the mules, but not time for the mules, his gaze is locked on the Aymara rider leading the mule pack.

Fuentes aims his gun. But he notices Jorge standing in his line of fire.

Angry, he lowers his guns.

FUENTES
Fuck! Jorge get out of there!

Jorge can't hear Fuentes: he is loading his gun.

The Aymara raiders gallop fast passing him leaving him unscathed.

EXT. CAMP/BOULDERS - CONTINUOUS

From behind the boulders Esteban limping and badly wounded, raises and aims his rifle at the Aymara men. He is about to open fire - when a bullet hits him on his back. He winces in pain and lands flat face on the ground. Lifeless.

EXT. CAMPSITE - SAME

An Aymara raider HOWLS as the party gallops away.

Across, Fuentes sees Esteban body. He runs toward him.

He reaches Esteban as he keeps SHOOTING at the Aymara.

Fuentes reaches his friend: Too late...

Angry, Fuentes aims one of his gun at a galloping Aymara. He follows him and SHOOTS.

The howling Aymara falls dead. His horse runs off.

Fuentes's gaze follows the horse's crazy galloping. But his gaze stops at a boulder.

Tupac stands on his horse watching the attack. Calm.

Fuentes aims at him: CLICK. CLICK. Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FUENTES
(to himself)
Fuck!

Fuentes reloads his gun, then he lifts his gaze, aims his gun. But, Tupac is gone - And with him, all the raiders.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Fuentes kneels near Esteban's body.

He takes Esteban's dog tag and walks toward Bustamante and Lt. Martin.

Bustamante and Lt. Martin are watching him expectantly. They don't dare to move.

Across the camp, Pedro, Hugo, Marcos and Jorge are gathering around Esteban's cadaver.

EXT. BUSTAMANTE'S TENT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes stops close to Bustamante's face, almost snarling with rage.

Fuentes opens his hand --

Bustamante glances to --

Esteban's dog tags hangs in the air, making a CLANKING metallic sound.

FUENTES
One dead.

Carefully, Bustamante takes the dog tags from Fuentes' hand. He looks at them -- He raises his eyes to look at Fuentes, but he is walking back to his men.

Bustamante stare falls on the group of men gathering around Esteban's body.

Lt. Martin, stands next to Bustamante and stares at Esteban's body and the dead Aymara scattered across the camp.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

A somber Jorge stands next to Esteban's grave; a crude mound of dirt and rocks. A wooden cross signals the place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fuentes stands next to him. In the b.g., The men are watching.

FUENTES
You can go back now.

JORGE
Yes. Sir.

Jorge bends his knee.

JORGE (CONT'D)
He taught me how to read --
(pauses, sobbing)
This fucking war, sir. This
fucking stinking nitrate war, just
to die like that...

Jorge wipes his eyes and swallows. He presses his head against his shovel and stays motionless for a moment.

JORGE
This is not good, sir. Are these
Aymara, sir?

FUENTES
Tupac's men.

Jorge nods with lifeless eyes. He gets up and walks off back to the campsite.

Hugo, Pedro and Marcos, keep their eyes glued to the ground.

We hear a SHOT in the distance. Everyone looks tense.

Hugo looks at Fuentes -- Jorge turns back, scared.

JORGE
It's that them?

The men stare at Fuentes.

FUENTES
They're not far, and they'll be
back for revenge.

Jorge lowers his head, and starts to walk again; he kicks a rock on the ground: it hurts.

JORGE
Damn it!..For fuck's sake!

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

A meeting. Bustamante, Fuentes and Lt. Martin kneel circling a map on the ground.

Bustamante points at the map.

BUSTAMANTE

Here is where we are. And here is Illo.

Fuentes and Martin look intently at the map.

INSERT - MAP

Bustamante's finger points at a large mountain region that ends at the edge of a huge desert.

BACK TO SCENE

Lt. Martin sighs.

LT. MARTIN

...It's a long way.

BUSTAMANTE

We can make it!

Unsure, Bustamante scans Fuentes' face.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)

Fuentes. What do you think? You know this place; There must be an oasis near or a town before we get to Illo?

Fuentes looks at the map. He thinks.

FUENTES

There is a small miner's town across salar blanco, before Illo. But --

BUSTAMANTE

-- But? What is it man? Speak!

FUENTES

We are better off heading toward the coast. Sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUSTAMANTE

The coast? Are you crazy? The coast is about thirty or forty miles away in the other direction. It's not even on my fucking map, Corporal.

Lt. Martin looks at Bustamante.

LT. MARTIN

With all due respect, Sir. I believe Corporal Fuentes is correct --

BUSTAMANTE

-- What?

LT. MARTIN

We have no mules, and no horses.

BUSTAMANTE

Listen to me Martin. This map is accurate. There is a small miner's camp across the plains, great. Regardless, we must make it across and reach Illo. Look.

Bustamante points at the map.

INSERT - MAP

We follow his finger across the map, from the camp site to a point way off the desert. His finger stops at Illo.

BUSTAMANTE (V.O.)

Here we are. If we move across, we could meet with our lines. Here. We should come across the miner's camp. Here. Illo is here.

(pauses)

Only fifteen miles away across the desert...

BACK TO SCENE

Bustamante folds the map. He standing up displaying a false confidence.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)

We should be able to reach Illo and get some provisions. The locals will help us.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)

They are British. Loyal to our cause.

(pauses, then)

We are going back to Illo.

Fuentes. Order the men to get ready. We march in fifteen.

Fuentes looks at Bustamante doubtfully for a moment, then salutes him.

FUENTES

Yes. Sir.

Fuentes leaves. Lt. Martin stays. He is worried.

LT. MARTIN

A word. Sir?

BUSTAMANTE

(stern)

No. Get ready.

LT. MARTIN

Yes. Sir.

Lt. Martin leaves.

Bustamante stands alone. The wind of the desert blows on his face. He takes a sip from his canteen.

Bustamante looks up to the merciless sun, shading his eyes.

EXT. CAMPSITE - MOMENTS LATER

Fuentes checks the provisions and the men. Hugo, Jorge and Pedro get ready.

FUENTES

(to all)

Drink plenty of water. Carry what you can. Make sure to have enough bullets. Be alert.

Fuentes walks up to Jorge, who is struggling with his equipment.

Fuentes strips him off all unnecessary gear: bandoliers, and backpack.

Jorge looks at him in disbelief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FUENTES

Son; You don't need these. Get
your back pack ready. Have water?

JORGE

Yes, sir.

FUENTES

Good.

Jorge stares at Fuentes while he checks his military gear.

JORGE

Sir?

FUENTES

Hmm...

JORGE

Will we make it, sir?

FUENTES

You'll make it soldier. We'll all
make it.

JORGE

(sorrowful)

I only want to see my mother back
in Concepcion. Sir. I'm a huaso. I
miss my cows. I hate the desert.

FUENTES

So, do I.

Fuentes looks at Jorge's scared young eyes.

FUENTES (CONT'D)

I'm from Rengo. And I swear to
you; You'll make it. Now, get in
line and get ready.

JORGE

(confidently)

Yes. Sir.

Jorge leaves and meets up with the rest of the men. They
make a line and get ready for inspection. Fuentes stands
next to them: chins up.

Bustamante and Lt. Martin walk in.

FUENTES

Soldiers! Present...Arms!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

All men's rifles are pushed forward. The men stay at attention parade.

Wind blows.

A confident Bustamante stares at the men standing in attention.

BUSTAMANTE

That's what I want to see, men. A proud Chilean soldier, *mierda*!

He turns to Lt. Martin.

BUSTAMANTE

Lt. Martin! Get them ready!

LT. MARTIN

(proud, saluting)

Yes, sir.

He turns to the men.

LT. MARTIN

Soldiers!... Attention!

At once we hear the loud CLICK of their heels.

LT. MARTIN

Face: Right. Salute.

The men salute Bustamante. He returns a stiff salute.

BUSTAMANTE

Men. At ease. We are going to make history. We will return to our lines safely. Understood?

ALL MEN

Yes. Sir.

BUSTAMANTE

Good. Lt. Martin.

LT. MARTIN

Yes. Sir.

BUSTAMANTE

Prepare to march.

LT. MARTIN

Men. Attention.

The men stand at attention.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LT. MARTIN (CONT'D)
 Get ready. Shoulder. Arms!

At once the men load their rifles on their shoulders.

LT. MARTIN
 Men. Face right! March!

Bustamante marches ahead. Behind, marches Lt. Martin and the platoon.

Suddenly, Fuentes starts to sing.

FUENTES
*Un Cura viejo y seco en mi pueblo
 confesaba...*

ALL MEN
 (In Spanish)
*A beatas, viejas, sapas y señoritas
 del lugar...
 Échale pimienta a las pantrucas
 vieja sapas...
 Para que el Cura olvide la sotana,
 si ayayay...*

The platoon exulting marches into the desert...

EXT. DESERT - DAY

We pan across the bare desert: rocks, and more rocks.

In the distance, we see the men marching across the emptiness. They're swallowed by the immense emptiness.

ALL MEN (O.S.)
*"Un Cura viejo y seco en mi pueblo
 confesaba...
 A beatas, viejas, sapas y señoritas
 del lugar...
 Échale pimienta a las pantrucas
 vieja sapas...
 Para que el Cura olvide la sotana,
 si ayayay..."*

The singing slowly fades as the wind BLOWS.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The men march in silence, tired.

Bustamante marches a few feet ahead of the platoon, scanning the horizon. He also looks tired but determined.

As he walks, he looks at the sun. Then, he scans the horizon in all directions. He is unsure of his bearings. He looks ahead: nothing an empty solitude.

The men keep their pace.

EXT. DESERT - THAT DAY

The sun hits the desert like an anvil.

The platoon marches scattered and walking in silence. Bustamante marches ahead.

Fuentes marches in the rear. He scans the horizon in both directions. He is alert. He looks solid.

Fuentes bends and picks up a pebble: He puts it in his mouth and chews it. He resumes his march.

In front of him; We see the boots of his men, as they drag their feet and rifles.

EXT. DESERT - LATER IN THE DAY

The men are exhausted, dusty and weak. The thousand yard stare has settled in on their eyes.

Suddenly, in front of Fuentes, Pedro falls. Fuentes runs forward and helps him.

FUENTES

Get up, amigo.

PEDRO

I can't man. My boots are killing me. Compadre: I'm a sailor. I really don't know what the fuck I'm doing here...I miss the sea...

FUENTES

You'll see the ocean again sailor. Now. Get up!

CONTINUED:

PEDRO

My feet are bloody, with blisters.
I can't feel my feet. I want to
take my boots off...

FUENTES

No. Don't do it. Unless you want
to become a cripple. And I don't
have a saw to cut your foot.

(shouts)

Lt. Martin!

Alerted Lt. Martin stops and half turns to Fuentes and Pedro.

The men stop and look back at Fuentes helping Pedro.

Lt. Martin turns to Bustamante.

LT MARTIN

Sir. We need to stop.

Bustamante turns looks over the men and sees Fuentes and Pedro lying on the ground.

The platoon use this moment to rest. They fall to the ground; dog tired. Some of them drink from their canteens.

EXT. DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Bustamante walks towards the rear where is Fuentes. As he walks by, he sees the men drinking from their canteens.

BUSTAMANTE

(coldly)
Stop drinking water!

The men look at each other. Confused.

JORGE

But. Sir. I'm thirsty.

BUSTAMANTE

(to all)
If you want water; pee. And piss
in your canteen.

He walks off.

All of them pee in their canteens.

EXT. DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Bustamante and Lt. Martin reach Fuentes and Pedro.

BUSTAMANTE

What's going on?

FUENTES

Pedro can't walk anymore, sir --

BUSTAMANTE

What?

(to Pedro)

Can you walk, soldier?

PEDRO

No. Sir.

Bustamante pulls his gun and points it at him.

Fuentes' face spell horror.

FUENTES

What are you doing? He is not a
lame horse! He is one of us!

A deaf Bustamante aims his gun at Pedro.

Fuentes jumps and slaps him on the face; he deflects the
SHOT, and holds Bustamante's gun pointing up.

They struggle. It turns personal. A battle of wills.

EXT. DESERT - CONTINUOUS

From the distance, the men look at Bustamante and Fuentes
fighting. Exited and curios, they get up and run up to
them.

As Fuentes and Bustamante struggle for the gun Pedro
watches them from the ground.

Quickly, Lt. Martin drags Pedro away from danger.

The men arrive and make a close circle.

As Fuentes holds the gun high. Bustamante's face is white
with rage. He holds his gun tight.

Finally, Fuentes gains the upper hand and disarms
Bustamante with a quick move. Holding the gun, he takes a
few steps back aiming at Bustamante.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The men stares impassibly at Bustamante.

Bustamante looks around at the men; frightened.

BUSTAMANTE
Stopping for one man can kill us
all!

Silence.

Lt. Martin after leaving Pedro, comes back and stands in between Bustamante and Fuentes.

LT. MARTIN
Hugo. Marcos. Jorge walk away easy
now...

EXT. DESERT - SAME

Hugo and Jorge lift Pedro up and carry him away in their shoulders. Marcos trails behind holding Pedro's rifle.

A few feet away, they stop to rest. Exhausted. They plop to the ground. Pedro sips from Jorge's canteen. Pedro spits the liquid in disgust.

PEDRO
Fuck. Piss.

JORGE
Bustamante's orders

PEDRO
(shakes his head)
Idiot.

EXT. DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Lt. Martin walks back toward Fuentes.

LT. MARTIN
(re: the gun)
Put it down, Corporal -- Give it
to me.
(soft)
Fuentes? The gun...

Fuentes glares at Bustamante; he is shaking. His face is white chalk.

Fuentes hears Martin's commands. He lowers the gun, slowly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FUENTES
 (to Bustamante)
 You're going to kill us all,
 Captain.

Lt. Martin takes the gun away from Fuentes's hand.

LT. MARTIN
 Corporal?

Fuentes glares at Lt. Martin as he takes the gun off from Fuentes's hand.

Lt. Martin walks away from Fuentes and hands the gun back to Bustamante. They stand still for a moment.

FUENTES
 (re: Bustamante)
 He is lost. He is fucking lost!

Lt. Martin lowers his gaze. Bustamante man up and steps in.

BUSTAMANTE
 Nonsense. We must be near the town. Or the camp. If your Captain says it then it must be true. That's the way the army works, Corporal.

FUENTES
 We passed the miner's camp three miles back - Captain. You didn't see it because you were scanning the fucking horizon. You forgot the flanks. Illo is due east.

BUSTAMANTE
 Why didn't you say anything?

FUENTES
 You're the Captain.

Lt. Martin looks at both of them.

LT. MARTIN
 So. Are we lost now?

BUSTAMANTE
 No!

FUENTES
 Yes!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LT. MARTIN

Yes? No?

(to Fuentes)

What do you mean, Corporal? Do you have a plan? Speak! Damn it!

FUENTES

(reluctant)

I would follow the hills due west.
Cut through the salar's edge and
reach a small valley near Illo.
That's our only hope.

BUSTAMANTE

That's crazy.

Lt. Martin aware of the men listening near by gets close to Bustamante.

LT. MARTIN

(sotto)

Sir, Fuentes is right. If we keep going due north; We're doomed.
We'll be lost.

BUSTAMANTE

(screams)

We're not lost, Lt. Martin!

From a distance, the men stare at Bustamante with scorn in their eyes.

Bustamante looks around, and quickly SLAPS his gun into his holster -- and quickly moves away. But his hand is never away from the weapon.

BUSTAMANTE

(angry)

Fuentes! At front. Lead the platoon.

Lt. Martin's turns to face Fuentes as he puts his rifle over his shoulder and walks toward the men.

They get up and ready to march.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Lt. Martin marches with Bustamante.

LT. MARTIN

I think it was a good decision,
Sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bustamante stands motionless for a moment.

BUSTAMANTE

(angry)

Shut up, Martin. I told you to keep an eye on him. As soon as we reach Pisco, I'll court-martial his ass. Even if he has the fucking Cross pinned on his uniform.

Bustamante marches off quickly, leaving Lt. Martin standing alone.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The platoon marches. Fuentes leads.

Bustamante and Lt. Martin march behind Fuentes.

Pedro lags behind limping on one feet with his arms across Jorge's shoulders.

Fuentes half turns facing the platoon.

FUENTES

We are not dead yet soldiers! Sing with me...Sing!

Fuentes produce a hoarse SONG. Bustamante and Lt. Martin look at him, disconcerted.

Fuentes ignores them.

FUENTES

(in Spanish)

"Debajo de un limon verde..."

The men look at each other for a moment, and - one by one - they begin to SING with their voices ECHOING thru the desert...

FUENTES (CONT'D)

(louder)

C'mon! "Debajo de un limon verde..." Sing with me!

BEGIN SERIES OF SHOTS

- The platoon marches on the desert.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALL MEN (V.O.)
 (in Spanish)
*"Debajo de un limon verde.
 Donde el agua no corria...
 Le entregue mi corazon...
 A quien no lo merecia..."*

- The sun sets in the horizon and we see the first stars raising in the sky.
- The men SING the song as their voices fade with the distance.

ALL MEN (V.O.)
 (in Spanish)
*"Veinticinco limones tiene una
 rama y amanecen ciencuenta por la
 manana...Limon maduro...
 Ay si...Pa' hacerle el Carinito
 con disimulo..."*

END SERIES OF SHOTS

EXT. DESERT/HILL - SUNSET

A solitary RIDER enters the scene: An Aymara scout. He looks at the men marching on the desert plain below.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

The place is almost quiet, except for the noise of the water RUNNING through the stones.

Fuentes kneels next to someone's body lying on the ground: he wears a ragged Chilean military uniform. Fuentes's back is turned against us.

EXT. CREEK - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes stares down at a young man's blurred face.

FUENTES
 It will be easier if you take your last breath now.

Lying on the floor, we close in on the eyes of the young man.

The two men hold a stare...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Until Fuentes moves his powerful hands over the mouth and nose of the young man.

FUENTES (CONT'D)
I can help you...

He covers them slowly...He holds them there, just inches above.

FUENTES (CONT'D)
Just blink..if you want me to do it.

Fuentes locks his eyes on the young man; both men unblinking. The young man's face sweats profusely in agony, and with pain.

A tear falls from Fuentes's eyes. It falls, and lands on the young man's face.

They continue to stare at each other. We can see the young man's mind racing. After a tense moment, the young man slowly and deliberately blinks...

A sigh of relief from Fuentes.

FUENTES (CONT'D)
(compassionately)
I hope the Lord embraces you quick...

Then he slowly covers the young man's mouth and nose...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ILLO OASIS - DAY

We have been here before. The burnt Victorian house still stands.

We focus on Bustamante's face. His eyes stare at something or someone in horror.

We pull back from his face, revealing:

All the men making a circle around the decomposing body of Mr. Harrington.

They look at him hopelessly. Millions of flies buzz around the dead.

INT. HARRINGTON'S HOUSE - DAY

The men explore the house. Everything is burned: Charred portraits, chairs, pictures, books and dresses.

Jorge bends and picks up a burned picture that miraculously still intact. He looks at the picture, fascinated.

INSERT PICTURE

The Harrington's dressed in Victorian fashion.

BACK TO SCENE

Hugo walks by Jorge.

HUGO
They're all dead.

JORGE
I know...It's just their faces.

HUGO
Their faces too.

JORGE
Idiot.

Jorge puts the picture frame carefully on top of the mantelpiece. He walks away.

We stay on the picture.

INT. HARRINGTON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marcos kneels and picks up a rag doll, burned. He holds it for a moment. Then he walks away with it.

Lt. Martin stands at the door; scanning the destruction of the room.

INT. HARRINGTON'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes goes to the back. He opens the door.

EXT. HARRINGTON'S HOUSE/BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS

He sees the body of an Aymara woman: Maria. Decomposed. He looks around; in the open field something catches his eye: the bodies of the sisters.

Fuentes stares at them for a while.

Bustamante comes from behind and stands next to Fuentes. He holds a book and some papers. He makes a sweep of the room...He looks down at the body of Maria.

BUSTAMANTE (V.O.)

Savages!

Fuentes stands besides Bustamante, his gaze fixed on the field. He says nothing.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)

This house used to belong to the Harrington's. Supporters of the war. A good family.

Fuentes shakes his head.

FUENTES

(coldly)

Not anymore.

Bustamante steps forward scanning the field. He holds a charred book and shows it to Fuentes.

BUSTAMANTE

(re: book)

Hmm. The Aymara did not take anything. They just burned and killed: pure evil.

FUENTES

Their justice.

A beat. Bustamante is annoyed.

BUSTAMANTE

Call formation.

FUENTES

Yes, sir.

Bustamante leaves.

A sorrowful Fuentes stares at the dead bodies lying on the field.

EXT. HARRINGTON'S HOUSE - PORCH - LATER

The men stand at attention in front of the house.

Bustamante turns to Lt. Martin.

BUSTAMANTE

Lt. Martin. We'll camp here. Look for anything eatable. Provisions. Water. Grain. Set a perimeter and guard. Get some flour and prepare dinner inside the house.

LT. MARTIN

Yes, Sir.

BUSTAMANTE

Fuentes. Grab some able men, shovels and bury 'em all.

Fuentes turns to the men.

FUENTES

Hugo. Jorge. Grab them shovels and come with me. We dig.

The men nod.

A limping Pedro follows Lt. Martin as they walk toward the house.

EXT. MAKESHIFT CEMETERY - SUNSET

The platoon stand near a row of FOUR graves. They are simple dark mounds of dirt.

Bustamante unmoved stares at them.

Then, he steps forward.

BUSTAMANTE

A few words for our Christian brothers: *For he will conceal me in the shelter of his tent ... Even now my head held high above my enemies from every side ... Praise the Lord. Amen. Rest in peace.*

ALL

Amen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The men drop one by one back to their posts with a respectful silence.

Hugo leaves the rag doll on the tomb of the sisters.

EXT. HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

Fuentes approaches the house. He enters.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A couple of wax candles illuminate the otherwise dark room, scattering yellow shadows.

Fuentes stands at attention and salutes.

Bustamante stares at Fuentes while he looses his collar.

BUSTAMANTE

Sit down. You believe in God,
Corporal?

FUENTES

If you order me to believe, sir.
Then, I do.

Bustamante grins.

BUSTAMANTE

I'm interested in your personal
opinion, Fuentes...

Fuentes stares Bustamante for a moment, puzzled. He shuffles on his chair.

FUENTES

Yes. I do, sir. But...

BUSTAMANTE

Yes?

FUENTES

But I have to believe that he has
been blind to us and to what's
going on here. For a long while.

Bustamante moves a wax candle closer, so his face is illuminated by an eerie yellowish shade.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUSTAMANTE

I believe in God, Corporal. And I believe that in times like this when we should strengthen our faith in him. Our sacred bond with him. A man without faith is empty. If you have no faith, what do you have?

FUENTES

A corvo, sir.
(pauses)
Anything else, sir?

Bustamante shakes his head.

BUSTAMANTE

Do you have a family, Fuentes?

FUENTES

That's private, sir.

BUSTAMANTE

Come'on. We're soldiers. We must trust each other. Do you trust me, Corporal?

FUENTES

Is that another order, sir?

BUSTAMANTE

Listen, Fuentes, I get it. We don't get along...

Fuentes' face shows no expression. He knows what Bustamante has in mind.

FUENTES

If that is not an order, then I am free not to answer your questions.

A beat. Bustamante controls himself. He smiles.

BUSTAMANTE

Well, good. Let's discuss the next operation.

FUENTES

There is not much to discuss, Sir.

BUSTAMANTE

What is your opinion of the situation?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FUENTES

Judging by their tracks, they're not many of 'em around. I say it is a small party.

BUSTAMANTE

Well, then -- we can wipe 'em off in no time.

FUENTES

Wouldn't say that, sir.

BUSTAMANTE

Well, then ...

(points on the map)

Let's move to Alto Hospicio. There is a railroad and a telegraph post. The town is in our hands. We can wait, get ready for them there.

FUENTES

Seems possible, sir.

Bustamante can't reach this man.

He looks up. Fuentes stands up slowly.

FUENTES

Is that all, sir?

BUSTAMANTE

That's all. Yes.

Fuentes leaves. Lt. Martin steps in. He sits.

BUSTAMANTE

I have studied the situation, and I have decided to stay here for the time being. We give the men time to rest and we'll depart in two days' time. Meanwhile, I think we should send someone to Pisco, alert the troops and save us all.

LT. MARTIN

Pisco? It's about fifteen miles on foot cutting through the desert. Who do you have in mind?

BUSTAMANTE

Fuentes, naturally.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LT. MARTIN
It's risky.

BUSTAMANTE
For him.
(pauses)
Listen Martin, we can't stay here indefinitely. We have no provisions and the savages are out there howling at the moon and getting ready for carnage: Our carnage. I'm not going to die here Martin. Neither are you. If Fuentes reaches Pisco -- We may have a chance of being rescued.

LT MARTIN
If not?

BUSTAMANTE
Then, he won't be a problem anymore.

Bustamante pours Pisco in two glasses. Lt. Martin takes one.

BUSTAMANTE
Salud!

LT. MARTIN
Salud.

They drink.

EXT. HOUSE/BARN - NIGHT

Fuentes walks toward a barn across the house. It's pitch black.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

A candle throws some pale light in a corner.

The barn is in a state of severe decay.

Fuentes enters the barn.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes reaches Hugo's cozy straw nook where Hugo leans, cleaning his rifle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUGO

Welcome to my palace.

Across, and in the shadow sleeps Pedro.

FUENTES

Pedro?

HUGO

Yes. He snores like a fucking bull. I have to turn around his lazy ass a few times. Otherwise, the whole fucking Aymara party will hear us.

Pedro FARTS. They LAUGH.

FUENTES

Nah! They'll think we have artillery.

HUGO

Ha! That makes me feel safer!

FUENTES

Jorge? Marcos?

HUGO

With Lt. Martin. Guarding a post. It will be my turn in an hour or so.

Fuentes nods. He pulls his boots off. He relaxes. He takes off his gear and rifle. He shakes his hair off; almost white. He leans back and sighs: tired.

The candle throws a yellowish flickering light into the face of the two men.

Hugo prepares his corn pipe: lights it up and puffs many times: nonchalantly.

Fuentes looks at him.

FUENTES

Stop the puffing and tell me what's your opinion of Bustamante. You're a good judge of people, Hugo.

HUGO

Because?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FUENTES

Because, I know you for five long
fucking years.

Hugo stops smoking. He looks at Fuentes, his eyes glare.
He answers noncommittally.

HUGO

I've heard some stuff. I will tell
you, Fuentes. He's a dangerous
type.

FUENTES

(wryly)
Too bad. I like him...

HUGO

He could mean trouble for you. For
all of us.

FUENTES

I've survived many like him. I'll
survive this one.

Hugo puts his pipe aside. He thinks for a moment before
he gets ready.

HUGO

This one is different, Fuentes. He
wants his orders obeyed not
because of his rank, but because
he is upper class. He thinks he
stands way above us, morally and
ethically.

FUENTES

Then his chances are slim with me.

Hugo shakes his head.

HUGO

You asked for my opinion.

FUENTES

Yeah. And?

HUGO

You're worst than a burro.

He gets ready, picks up his rifle. He shifts his pipe and
puffs.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Time for my guard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FUENTES
Don't fall asleep.

Hugo walks away from the light. He suddenly stops and without looking at Fuentes.

HUGO
Be careful, Fuentes. Be careful with this one.

Hugo leaves.

Fuentes stares at the candle. Pensive. Pedro FARTS again. Fuentes grins and falls asleep.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Bustamante walks toward the barn. He enters.

Fuentes is awake. He sips hot mate with Jorge and Marcos who cleans and oils his rifle.

BUSTAMANTE
Fuentes.

Startled, Fuentes, Jorge and Marcos get up and stand at attention.

FUENTES
Sir.

BUSTAMANTE
A word. Outside.

FUENTES
Yes, sir.

Bustamante turns and walks outside. Fuentes follows him. The men stay inside looking at them with curiosity.

EXT. VINEYARDS'S EDGE - DAY

Bustamante stops at the edge of what once was something resembling vineyards. He looks at them for a moment and takes a deep breath.

BUSTAMANTE
My family have vineyards like this in Chillan. It belongs to my boy now -- not a hard working man, but bright enough to make good wine -- My father loves a good wine.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)
(shifting tone)
Do you drink wine Fuentes?

FUENTES
Sometimes yes, sir.

He stares at Fuentes.

BUSTAMANTE
Fuentes. I will cut to the chase
with you. Our situation is bad.
(pauses, meets his
eyes)
You will scout to Pisco and bring
reinforcements from Colonel
Barnechea. I suspect, at the time
you - hopefully- arrive at Pisco,
the army will have moved from Alto
Hospicio to Pisco and meet with
Baquedano's zapadores. That will
be even better. We will wait here
for your return.

Fuentes looks at Bustamante for a moment.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)
I know the risks. I would send
someone else but you are the most
experienced soldier...

FUENTES
I will do it, sir.

A beat. Bustamante takes a step back, pleased.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)
I'll make you Sergeant, Fuentes;
Once we meet at Pisco.
(pauses)
Well. Then; Get ready. See Lt.
Martin for details.

Fuentes salutes.

BUSTAMANTE
Good luck, soldier.

Bustamante salutes him back. Fuentes leaves.

Bustamante stares at Fuentes for a moment, then he turns
and stares at the dry vineyards.

EXT. ILLO OASIS - SUNSET

Fuentes drips his canteen in the creek, fills it.

Then, he grabs mud and splashes it on his faded white pants. Also over his red jacket. He takes off his hat and folds it inside his rucksack.

He grabs his Mauser and gets up. He looks around and sees the peaks of hills that surround the oasis. He walks toward the hills.

EXT. ROCKHILL - NIGHT

Full moon. The desert shines like a mirror. We can see every detail in the terrain. Fuentes lays flat on a rock surface.

From his vantage point, Fuentes looks at the valley below, where the creek runs. Water shimmers on the creek. A few hundred feet from the creek, a muddy water terrain, beyond that the salar.

He scans further up. A dirt road runs parallel to the creek. Fuentes looks up and down the road.

Suddenly, he HEARS the CLATTER of dozens of hoofs coming on the road below --

He adjust his gaze to the dark night.

Profiled against the dark, he clearly distinguishes --

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

-- A detachment of twenty mounted PERUVIAN troops riding on horses...Behind march men pull machine guns mounted on wheels.

He narrows his eyes and sees: Aymara troops run on foot behind the main battalion.

EXT. ROCKHILL - SAME

Fuentes lowers his head. He takes this in for a moment. He slips away.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

Two men approach down the road.

CONTINUED:

One of them is Tupac. The other a Peruvian GENERAL, ANDRES CACERES. He's in his early forties. He is tough, arrogant, principled and reactionary. His uniform shows signs of battle, but he is proud of these battle-wounds.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Caceres and Tupac walk side by side at slow pace.

They reach a spot at the side of the road, and stop.

In silence and for a moment, they watch the troops marching in front of them.

Caceres turns to Tupac.

GENERAL CACERES

(in Aymara dialect)

For my children and the sons of the true faith, my friendship with you is boundless...

(beat)

I would give you the chance to restore your people's name. Soon we will sing the war song together in a great battle with your people and mine.

Tupac considers Caceres for a moment, quiet.

Caceres looks off, then --

GENERAL CACERES (CONT'D)

(in Aymara)

How are things with the Chilean party?

Tupac exhales in derision.

TUPAC

(in native Aymara dialect)

We followed to them Illo. Up to the white man's house. We will kill 'em all and then join you at Pisco.

Caceres shifts on his boots. He steps closer to Tupac.

GENERAL CACERES

(in Spanish)

The Chileans are invaders to our land, Tupac.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GENERAL CACERES (CONT'D)

I've swear to my leader in Lima to
expel them from our territory
wagging war against them. Your
people are helping us. For that we
recognize your loyalty.

(pauses)

But your war is seems to be rooted
deeply in your soul...

Tupac turns and stares at Caceres with fierce eyes.

TUPAC

(in perfect Spanish)

-- Tupac's nation was wiped out by
the white man's greed. Tupac's
land is dying; No more corn to
feed his people. Only cheap Pisco
to swallow their pride.

Caceres think for a moment.

GENERAL CACERES

(in Spanish)

You had your time at the town of
La Concepcion. Your men made them
pay: an eye for an eye --

TUPAC

-- They were only seventy seven...

GENERAL CACERES

And by killing them, you made them
martyrs...

Tupac stares at the night, thinking.

Caceres gets it.

GENERAL CACERES

My army is moving through the
night. We'll reach Pisco in two
days time. Tupac, take your men
and march ahead.

(pauses)

You'll have your opportunity.

TUPAC

Tupac has unfinished business at
Illo first.

Caceres takes this in -- he nods.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - LATER - NIGHT

Fuentes' corvo is full of blood. He cleans it in the dirt. Next to him a dead Peruvian SOLDIER.

He leans and checks the soldier's uniform; in one of his pockets he finds a map folded carefully. He unfolds it; he can't see much but judging by his expression its valuable. He folds it back and puts it in his chest's pocket.

He looks at the dead soldier's boots; he mentally checks their size against his. He is about to take them off, but he stops. Then, he looks in both directions; clear. He turns and runs off.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Cicadas BUZZ in the fields. A breeze blows. Tupac stands at the side of the road looking at the crescent moon over the horizon. His eyes travel down the road to find -- a dozen of his men waiting.

Tupac walks towards them - he raises his machete high. The men stare at him -- he points it forward...

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Tupac and his men run across the field -- the moon is gone.

EXT. BARN - NIGHT

It's pitch dark. Pedro takes on his guard duty.

He turns and sees Fuentes standing almost next to him pointing at him with his rifle.

FUENTES

You're dead.

Pedro sees the tip of the gun and stutters, nervously.

PEDRO

I -- You -- Shit! You're back!

Fuentes lowers his rifle.

FUENTES

Shut up and listen: there is a side road about ten miles west.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FUENTES (CONT'D)
 It runs parallel to the main one.
 It leads to Pisco.

PEDRO
 Wait! A side road? To Pisco? So if
 it is open...

FUENTES
 -- Not so fast. Gather the men.
 Tell 'em about the road. I'll talk
 to Bustamante.

Fuentes leaves.

Pedro looks alert and afraid looking in all directions.

INT. HARRINGTON'S HOUSE - LATER

Fuentes, Bustamante and Lt. Martin lean toward the Peruvian map spread on a table.

Two candles throw some pale yellow flickering light.

INSERT - MAP

Fuentes' finger starts on Illo and slowly crawls on the map alongside a road half way between Illo and Pisco.

FUENTES (V.O.)
 There is a battalion moving fast
 toward the west. Some regulars,
 some Aymara. Heavy loads and
 machine guns. They are using the
 main road.

BACK TO SCENE

Bustamante frowns.

BUSTAMANTE
 Uh, confident!

FUENTES
 My guess is they are marching to
 Pisco --

LT. MARTIN
 Bastards! They're in our way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FUENTES
If we want to reach Pisco before
they do.
(pauses)
We need to cross 'em.

Bustamante's face gets tense.

LT. MARTIN
You mean we have to cross through
an entire battalion?

Silence. Wheels turning.

FUENTES
More or less. If we get through
the creek, we only need to kill a
few of them. And make our way
through the mountains until we
reach Pisco.

BUSTAMANTE
That's the plan?

FUENTES
Either that or march through the
desert.

Tension floats in the room.

Bustamante thinks hard for a moment, biting his lips.

He turns to Fuentes and Lt. Martin.

BUSTAMANTE
Then, we must fight our way out.
Lt. Martin!

LT MARTIN
Yes, sir!

BUSTAMANTE
(to Fuentes)
Prepare the men.

Fuentes, nods salutes and leaves.

Bustamante's gaze follows Fuentes as he retreats: it
stops at Lt. Martin standing by the door.

Both stare at Fuentes walking off.

INT. BARN - DAY

Fuentes walks in: Marcos, Hugo, Pedro and Jorge stare at him. They are fully loaded and ready for instructions.

EXT. OLIVE TREES/EDGE - DAY

A dozen Aymara men move in deep silence. They are nineteenth century VietCong moving through the rain forest.

Tupac walks ahead attentive. He abruptly stops. The others freeze in their tracks.

TUPAC'S POV:

A hundred yards away, Tupac sees the Harrington's house and the barn. He sees a Chilean soldier standing outside the barn.

BACK TO SCENE

Tupac slowly raises his rifle and emits a war WHOOP. They all WHOOP!

EXT. FIELD/HOUSE - DAY

The WHOOP cry crosses the field --

EXT. BARN - SAME

At the barn, everyone springs to alert. They look at the olive tree's edge and see -- A hundred feet away, Tupac and his men charging them at full speed.

TUPAC
Kill 'em all!

Some of Tupac's men direct his attention to the barn where Fuentes and his men stand, staring at them.

On the run, Tupac signals with his hand toward the right flank -- SIX of his men detach from the group and run toward the house. The other six, run with Tupac.

EXT. BARN/FIELD - SAME

Seeing Tupac charging, Fuentes reacts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FUENTES

They're back! -- Marcos, Hugo and Jorge get inside. Fire at will...Pedro, with me.

The men scramble inside the barn and open fire at the Aymara.

As Fuentes and Pedro run toward a grave located half way in between Tupac and the barn.

EXT. MOUND - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes and Pedro reach the grave and taking cover. He waits for the right moment to open fire upon the charging Aymara. But he sees six Aymara running toward the house...Fuentes realizes the danger.

Quickly, Fuentes turns towards the barn. He WHISTLES as he circles his right arm in the air.

INT. BARN - SAME

Marcos hears Fuentes' unmistakable WHISTLE. From the barn's door, he peeks out and sees Fuentes circling his arm in the air. Marcos gets it and turns to his men.

MARCOS

(to all)

We'll be surrounded. Get ready.
Jorge upstairs. Hugo cover the right flank.

Everyone nods and take positions.

EXT. MOUND/FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes opens fire at the first group of Aymara storming him. The Aymara SHOOT back while running...

EXT. BARN - SAME

From the barn, Hugo, Marcos and Jorge open fire at the Aymara.

EXT. MOUND - CONTINUOUS

In the fog of the battle, Fuentes sees Tupac advancing towards him gliding through the field.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fuentes aims his gun and FIRES at Tupac. He misses.

An Aymara man falls dead instead.

Tupac's men reach the mound. A hand-to-hand combat ensues.

EXT. MOUND - CONTINUOUS

Locked in hand-to-hand combat Fuentes grabs his corvo and cuts an Aymara's stomach with a slashing side-to-side cut and comes right back at his chin with a second and powerful upper cut.

The man falls dead.

Fuentes picks up his rifle and looks around: Pedro is also locked in a hand-to-hand combat. The odds are against them: they are over run on their position and are forced to retreat.

Fuentes SHOOT the Aymara fighting Pedro.

FUENTES
(to Pedro)
Run to the barn!

Pedro nods.

They run away, as Tupac and the rest of his men approach the grave.

EXT. MOUND - SAME

From the top of the grave, Tupac watches Fuentes and Pedro run. He calmly aims his rifle...

Tupac SHOOTS at Fuentes --

EXT. FIELD - SAME

As Fuentes runs, a bullet hits him on the side of his back. He winces in pain, but pumped up with adrenaline, he keeps running, with Pedro running next to him.

EXT. MOUND - CONTINUOUS

Angry, Tupac drops his rifle and pulls his machete. He walks now towards the barn following Fuentes while some of his men run past him reaching for Fuentes and Pedro.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Midway from the barn, Tupac's men cut them off.

Fuentes and Pedro stop in their tracks facing FOUR Aymara warriors.

EXT. FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes and Pedro look around; they are surrounded. Devoid of energy, and trapped in the middle of the circle, they wait. Fuentes's mind races; then, he lowers his rifle. Confused, Pedro looks at him.

FUENTES

Just lower your rifle. Slowly.

Pedro nods. He lowers his rifle and places it on the ground, next to Fuentes's.

Suddenly, and from behind of the circle of his own men, Tupac emerges holding his machete. Fuentes stares at him.

Tupac walks closer to Fuentes as the circle of Aymara closes behind him. He stops. On his right hand he holds his machete, on his left his beads. He stares coldly at Fuentes.

FUENTES

If you give yourself up right now...The army might give you clemency..

TUPAC

(as if considering)
clemency?

FUENTES

Your life...
(re: Aymara)
...and theirs.

Tupac looks at Fuentes derisively.

TUPAC

Not enough.

FUENTES

What's enough?

TUPAC

The death of all white men in my land.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Disdainfully, Tupac drops his machete, steps forward and pulls his knife.

Fuentes sees Tupac's action, takes a step back and pulls his corvo.

At that moment, Tupac's men step back widening a battle circle as Pedro takes watches the duel.

Suddenly, everyone's else is irrelevant; they fall back expectantly.

Now, two men, face each other in hand-to-hand combat.

Tupac - confidant and pumped up - bluffs with his left hand, as his knife appears on his right hand, sweeping backhand jam up to Fuentes's gut. Fuentes is dead. Except...

He isn't there. He rolled and, on one knee with his back to Tupac, his hand slams rearward and his corvo lands on Tupac's lower back. Tupac SCREAMS.

Tupac is stunned. He turns to cut Fuentes with his knife, aiming at his chest.

But, Fuentes leaps back and stands tall facing Tupac. His corvo intercepts Tupac's knife in mid-air, stopping it, breaking Tupac's momentum.

For an instant, both men hold their weapons in mid-air, facing each other.

And, with the momentum, Fuentes spins his corvo and cuts Tupac's chest, then he swings his corvo up and with a light-speed movement, he cuts Tupac's chest down making a double cut.

Fuentes holds his corvo, waiting.

Tupac stares at Fuentes in awe. His body bleeds from the chest, but he still stands. He looks into the eyes of Fuentes, the man who has defeated him.

Pedro's eyes are wide open. He steps forward.

PEDRO
Fuentes!

And Fuentes makes his move; he lines up his corvo and cuts Tupac's throat. Blood comes gurgling from Tupac's throat.

After a moment, Tupac falls dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

All of Tupac's men stare at their leader's body in shock, eyes downcast. It's over.

In the midst of the Aymara grief, Fuentes and Pedro run toward the barn.

INT. HOUSE - SAME

Bustamante has no idea what's going on. No idea what to do, and no idea in which direction to hide.

Lt. Martin crouches behind a large box.

Bustamante looks at a puddle of piss: Lt. Martin has puddle himself.

Disgusted, Bustamante opens his mouth, but a bullet RICOCHETS near a window. Bustamante ducks for cover.

Now both are pinned down in the house, as bullets fly destroying everything around.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Inside, from a window's corner, an incredulous Bustamante sees Fuentes and Pedro running toward the barn. And sees Tupac dead on the ground!

The Aymara men, in pain, SHOOT in anger in all directions.

Then, it dawns on Bustamante: His face turns red.

BUSTAMANTE

(sotto)

Motherfucker...He just killed him!

Then - A bullet ricochets near his face; he ducks for cover.

But the bullet has stopped at Lt. Martin's right leg. He touches it and looks at his hand; blood. His face turns white with terror.

He stares at Bustamante across the room.

LT. MARTIN

Sir. Sir! I'm wounded.

BUSTAMANTE

I can see that Lt. Martin!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LT. MARTIN
I'm running out of bullets. Should
we join 'em?

BUSTAMANTE
Who?

LT. MARTIN
Fuentes, Sir.

Bustamante's wheels are turning: he sees an opportunity. He stares at Lt. Martin for a moment. Bustamante's face turns hard.

BUSTAMANTE
Listen to me you coward! If you
wish to join Fuentes and his men
and run away from your superior
officer -- it's fine by me. But as
soon as we get to Pisco, I'll make
sure you get court martialed!

Lt. Martin stares at Bustamante vacantly.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)
But...If you trust me, you will
survive.
(pauses)
Do you trust me Martin?

Lt. Martin thinks hard.

LT. MARTIN
What do you want me to do, Sir? I
don't want to die here...

Bustamante grins.

INT. BARN - DAY

Fuentes and Pedro enter the barn.

Pedro flops on the floor, near a stove. He winces in pain from his feet.

Hugo kneels next to Pedro. He offers a swig of Pisco from his canteen. Pedro takes a long swig.

Hugo looks up to Fuentes.

HUGO
(to Fuentes)
Corporal, you killed Tupac!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PEDRO
The fuck he did!

HUGO
Shut up and drink!

From behind, Marcos steps forward and looks at Fuentes's jacket: blood pours from its side.

MARCOS
You're wounded!

FUENTES
I know.

Marcos steps back. He stares at Pedro.

MARCOS
Can you walk?

PEDRO
Yes. Just a few more drinks, and
I'll be fine.

Hugo and Marcos LAUGH.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes walks around, no time to waste.

He eyes a small stove burning on the floor.

FUENTES
(wryly)
You should have coffee ready.

MARCOS
You should have brought the
biscuits.

Fuentes now turns to the men.

FUENTES
Get your gear: we're leaving!

He looks around. Everyone is scared. Fuentes' face relaxes. He notices the men watching him attentively. He shifts gears.

FUENTES
Anyone wounded?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUGO
No. We're fine. You're bleeding.

FUENTES
Superficial.

HUGO
Where are we going?

Fuentes walks to the opposite end of the barn.

He reaches a door. Waits for a moment. He opens the door slowly and peeks outside. Nothing. He turns.

At that moment, Jorge comes in running.

JORGE
The Aymara are mourning Tupac! He is dead.

ALL MEN
We know. Shut up!

Jorge shuts up and stares at them.

FUENTES
Marcos! Stay by the door. Everyone else, come.

Hugo, Jorge and Pedro reach the door and stand next to Fuentes. Pedro gets close to Fuentes.

FUENTES
(to Pedro)
Do you see that tree line?

Fuentes points at the tree line.

PEDRO
I see it...

FUENTES
Good. You remember the road on the map?

Jorge steps forward.

JORGE
What map? Pisco?

HUGO
(to Jorge)
Don't worry about it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Fuentes looks back at Pedro, waiting for his confirmation.

PEDRO

Yes. Due west. Side road. Wide berth. Twenty miles. Avoid the Peruvians. Beyond... Pisco.

FUENTES

Good. Now. Run like hell! I'll meet you there...

MARCOS

(to Fuentes)

What about the officers?

Fuentes looks at Marcos. He stiffens.

FUENTES

I'll take care of 'em. Now -- run!

At the door: Pedro runs away toward the tree line.

Hugo runs. Jorge waits his turn next to Fuentes.

Fuentes grins, satisfied, then he turns to Marcos who stands at guard on the opposite side of barn.

FUENTES

Cover us!

From his position, Marcos nods and keep an eye out for the Aymara outside.

INT. BARN/BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes flings the back door open and motions to Jorge to run. He squeezes past Fuentes at the door.

Fuentes turns to Marcos who is still across the barn.

FUENTES

(in Spanish with
English subtitles)

Marcos, move your ass
motherfucker! What are you waiting
for?

Marcos runs towards the back door. He runs past Fuentes, and goes outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

When they are all gone, Fuentes walks toward the small stove: he kicks it! It falls over, spilling the embers on the floor.

Suddenly, he feels a sharp pain: He touches his abdomen: blood.

FUENTES
(winces)
Fuck!

But, no time for pain.

Fuentes runs across the barn, reaches for the back door and goes outside closing the door behind him.

EXT. TREE LINE - LATER

Hugo, Marcos, Jorge and Pedro huddled together under the trees waiting for Fuentes.

Fuentes comes running into the scene. He jerks his head in the direction he wishes Pedro to take them.

Without a word, he starts off in the direction of the house.

The men look confused, they exchange glances, but no one says a word. They are scared.

Pedro steps in.

PEDRO
Let's go!

JORGE
Fuentes?

PEDRO
He'll show up later, if not then
God knows...

MARCOS
And Bustamante and Lt. Martin?

PEDRO
What about 'em?

MARCOS
Should we wait for them?

Pedro shrugs and walks off. Marcos ignores him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hugo steps in, upset.

HUGO

I tell you what: as far as the Captain is concern, we're through. Dead. And gone. So I say, we march.

He has a point. Everyone looks at Pedro.

JORGE

Where?

PEDRO

Pisco.

JORGE

Which way.

PEDRO

(re: Aymara)
Away from them...

They look at each other in a silent agreement.

In the distance they hear the Aymara WAILING breaking the air.

A sudden chill strikes the face of the men as they trudge off swallowed by the tree line...

INT. HOUSE - SAME

Bustamante HEARS Tupac's men WAILING. It's chilling.

He peeks through a window, and sees the Aymara lifting the dead body of Tupac from the ground and carrying him up back to the tree line opposite to the house.

EXT. TREE LINE - DAY

Fuentes approaches the back of the house where Bustamante and Lt. Martin are still hiding.

Fuentes stops fifty yards from the back of the house and takes cover in the bushes.

From his position Fuentes can only see the back of the house, but he hears the WAILS of the Aymara in the front.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fuentes is about to move away when he sees Bustamante BURSTING the back door open and running away from the house.

Fuentes's gaze follows him running. He lays low and waits.

Lt. Martin comes limping after Bustamante.

Fuentes' gaze follows them in the open field.

Suddenly, a sharp pain from his wound makes him wince. He touches his wound and sees blood oozing.

FUENTES

Oh, fuck!

Fuentes faints. He falls back and roll down toward a creek cutting thru bushes and shrubs. He ends face up at the edge of a creek. Unconscious. Blood gushes from his side.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Lt. Martin falls, exhausted. He looks at his leg: blood oozes from it.

Instinctively, he covers his wound with his hand.

He looks around hoping to get help from Bustamante. But he sees him running away from him.

LT. MARTIN

(sotto voice)

Fucking coward!

Lt. Martin thinks for a quick moment. He gets up and limps away.

EXT. FIELD/CREEK - SUNSET

An Aymara funeral. A pyre is erected, Tupac's body lays on top of it.

An OLD Aymara CHAMAN CHANTS a lament song. As the Aymara silently walk in circles around Tupac's pyre.

From behind the mass of Aymara, a BOY, the same one from Pisco, holding a torch runs and lights up the pyre. The men, women and children WAIL in sorrow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly, a HUGE flame rises from the pyre toward the starry night sky.

We follow the embers floating ethereally into night sky full of stars.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CREEK - NIGHT

The night sky seems to explode with stars.

A faint light falls over the creek and bounces back from the water waves creating an almost mystical dancing light. Everything is peaceful.

EXT. CREEK - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes lays immobile at the edge of the creek bathing in starlight.

EXT. OLIVE TREES - NIGHT

Bustamante comes running thru the trees. He looks exhausted, ashen.

He stops to catch some air.

He holds his pistol in his right hand.

The night is quiet, but he is agitated.

He finally catches his breath. He pauses and looks around.

Convinced that he is alone, he sits with his back against an olive tree.

He double checks and looks around. Not a sound. No one.

He sighs and leans his head on the olive tree trunk. Finally some rest. He holds his pistol in his lap, at ready.

His eyes are tired and slowly exhaustion takes over.

Bustamante finally shuts his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OLIVE TREES - DAWN

A SOUND. Bustamante jumps. Holds his pistol high looking around.

Then - He looks up sees a horse standing a few feet from him.

He looks confused. A saddled horse.

Slowly, Bustamante approaches the horse; He touches the animal's neck softly. Calming it down.

The horse SNORTS.

BUSTAMANTE
(covering the horse's
mouth)
Hush. Hush. My friend.

Unbelievable luck!

As Bustamante examines the horse's side, he sees a SUN and a CONDOR branded on the horse's neck.

BUSTAMANTE
(softly)
So, you're an Aymara horse...
(pauses)
Well, now you my friend, belong to
the Chilean Army Cavalry Division.

He mounts the horse, reins him in and rides off.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

Fuentes MOANS in pain. He tries to open his eyes.

He looks up. The sun is blinding him. He sleeps.

EXT. DESERT - DUSK

Warm amber light bathes the desert.

A few yards away a deep canyon hidden by dunes of sand. It looks treacherous.

EXT. SAND - CONTINUOUS

In the distance, we see a solitary figure limping slowly towards the canyon. This is Lt. Martin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He has not seen the canyon yet and he keeps on limping, blinded by the harsh sun light reflected from the sand.

His face looks ashen, exhausted, parched, dry lips, sun burns all over his face.

Martin's uniform is torn apart, bleached by the sun, dirty, sweaty and bloody.

On his right leg, we see a stain of caked dry blood.

As he limps, his eyes are fixed on the horizon...

Suddenly, he falls into the canyon.

EXT. CAYON'S WALLS - CONTINUOUS

His fall is brutal, painful. He stumbles down like a heavy rock, on his way down he hits cacti, rocks, and shrubs.

He finally lands heavy at the bottom of the canyon.

A beat. He stays immobile for a minute, mentally checking his body.

After a moment, he tries to move: A guttural SCREAM escapes from his parched mouth.

He looks down at his legs and sees both femurs sticking out of his muscles. Horrible.

His SCREAMS echoes throughout the canyon.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

Fuentes leans painfully towards the running current and extends his hand to reach it. He does.

He tries to reach his canteen from his belt...His face contorts with a sharp pain.

He reaches for his ribs. He pulls his hand towards his face: fresh blood.

Fuentes turns and faces the sky as he rests for a moment. He pulls a bullet from his Mauser's chamber. He counts them: six.

A beat.

He loads the bullet *back* into his rifle's chamber.

CONTINUED:

Fuentes tries to take a closer look at his wound, but his coat blocks it.

He shifts to his left side, but more blood pours out. He pulls his jacket off. His shirt is soaking with blood. He pulls it off and sees it: an exit wound.

He looks around and sees his rucksack.

He painfully extends his left arm and reaches it, dragging it towards him. He empties the content of the his rucksack on the ground: a flare, a flask of Pisco, coca leafs, a white ground powder: Saltpeter.

He grabs the coca leafs and chew them quickly and hard, while takes a swig of Pisco looking at his wound: blood keeps oozing from it.

He pours Pisco into the wound - he winces in pain.

While the wound still wet from the Pisco, Fuentes empties the pouch content into the open wound. As soon as the saltpeter mixes with the Pisco: it fizzes! He winces in pain, but quickly spits the coca leaves from his mouth into the fizz and it stops.

He grabs his shirt and tears it off, making a makeshift bandage.

Exhausted, Fuentes leans back and gulps a long shot of Pisco, as swallow fatigue takes over him. He sleeps.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

Fuentes's face, eyes closed.

He slowly wakes.

For a moment, he is disoriented. He looks around. No one.

He slowly begins to stretch his limbs; His arms first, then his legs. He pauses surprised at the absence of pain.

He looks down. A trail.

He gets up and a small object falls from his chest. He bends and pick it up: It's his Saint Gabriel Archangel wooden figure.

He kisses it and places in his breast pocket.

Then - he begins to walk towards the trail...

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Fuentes slowly advances along the trail...

EXT. TRAIL - LATER

Fuentes still walking on the trail...

He sees some rocks ahead. He squints his eyes and sees...

The trail ends at the beginning of a canyon. The canyon stretches as far as he can see. He feels a cool breeze coming from the bottom of the canyon...an oasis.

Suddenly, he HEARS water running...

Curious, he walks towards the sound of the water, and through some bushes he sees someone lying flat on the ground. He pulls his corvo.

Fuentes blinks, he can't see clearly if he is an Aymara resting or...

He changes his angle... and sees an army cap hanging from a brach; He grabs it: it's Chilean.

He advances stealthy towards the body. As he gets closer, he notices the face of Lt. Martin. Fuentes puts his corvo away.

Lt. Martin sleeps...or may be he is dead. Fuentes does not know.

EXT. CANYON - LATER

Fuentes sits next to Lt. Martin. He takes a look at his legs wounds. No hope. Fuentes covers them.

He lifts Lt. Martin's head carefully. He's in incredible pain. Fuentes delicately pours some water from his canteen into his mouth. Lt. Martin sips and coughs the water. It's no use. Torture.

Fuentes lays Lt. Martin's head back down onto a pillow he made out of his own jacket.

Martin MOANS.

LT. MARTIN
(Barely audible)
Help...me...please....Fuentes...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fuentes stares at Lt. Martin's youthful face for a moment. He shakes his head...commiserate.

Lt. Martin closes his eyes; he realizes that his end is near.

LT. MARTIN
(to himself, barely
audible)
It's funny! A fucking
lawyer...I've never been cut for
an infantry man...Fuentes...

Fuentes leans his head closer.

FUENTES
Yes?

LT. MARTIN
I'm useless...Will I feel any
pain?

He burst into painful tears...

Fuentes gently closes Lt. Martin's eyes as he covers his mouth, softly.

Then - Fuentes starts to asphyxiate him.

Lt. Martin's eyes are wide open. His natural reflexes kick in, gasping for air, as Fuentes exerts pressure over his mouth.

After a moment, Lt. Martin stops struggling as his life comes to an end...

Fuentes holds his powerful hands over Lt. Martin's face...

Lt. Martin stops his fight for life.

After a moment, his eyes become glassy and devoid of life. He is gone.

Fuentes takes his hands off Lt. Martin's face and closes his eyes with a soft movement of his hand.

EXT. CANYON - LATER

Lt. Martin's body lies immobile covered with his red jacket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fuentes stays close to him. Staring straight ahead.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. CHILEAN FIELD HEADQUARTERS - PISCO - DAY

A massive Chilean army encampment.

Hundreds of well armed veteran troops. Large detachments of Zapadores, wearing blue, red and white chilean army uniforms, march through a long line of rows of tents. Some of their uniforms are worn, others fresh troops moving around.

EXT. PISCO DEFENSIVE LINE - DAY

Colonel Barnechea and Capt. Munoz observe several men carrying heavy wooden crates. They open them up revealing new machine guns. Capt. Munoz takes a closer look at them.

CAPT. MUNOZ

Machines guns. Who knew? Finally we're a modern army!

COLONEL BARNECHEA

General Baquedano and the High Command are betting on these machines to enhance our defensive positions...

CAPT. MUNOZ

Defensive? We should be on our way back to Santiago...

A dismissive, Colonel Barnechea turns to Capt. Munoz.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

So the son-of-the-bitch is alive, uh?

CAPT. MUNOZ

He reached our front lines alone, Sir. Riding an Aymara horse.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

Did you question him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAPT. MUÑOZ
 Yes sir. I'll hold my personal opinion for now, Sir. His report is on your desk and Capt. Bustamante is inside. He insisted on seeing you personally, to give you his own account.

BARNECHEA
 His own?

Barnechea inquisitively stares at Munoz for a moment.

INT. BARNECHEA'S HEADQUARTERS - PISCO - DAY

We see OFFICERS, CLERKS and AIDES DE CAMP working. They're in a good mood.

Colonel Barnechea walks straight toward a table full of maps.

Everyone's gaze falls of him as he approaches a table. He reaches the edge of the table, takes off his hat and carefully places it on the side of the table.

An AIDE DE CAMP, 20's, comes in with a bottle of Pisco and a glass. Colonel Barnechea reaches for the bottle, pours some Pisco and drinks. The Aide de Camp leaves.

Meanwhile, Captain Munoz rolls out a new map on the table.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
 (to all)
 Gentlemen.

The officers gather around the map.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
 (pointing at the map)
 I have personally made a recon around this area. The map does not show adequately the position of the troops. We shall re-draw it, Captain.

CAPT. MUÑOZ
 Sir.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
 The campaign is not over, neither for us nor the enemy. We're in the middle of a new style of warfare.
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)

The Aymara and some regulars are attacking the north of the nitrate plants as our army retreats south.

INSERT - MAP

Colonel Barnechea's finger travels along a dotted line on the map. His finger stops at the Altiplano mountains.

BACK TO SCENE

He frowns. He looks up to his officers.

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)

They attack and run back to the altiplano. As we retreat, we are forced to rely on our supply lines from the port of Antofagasta, which is a long and very vulnerable road. We only secure them using small patrols that run alongside the supply lines up to the northern frontier.

OFFICERS

(multiple)

Yes, sir.

Barnechea turns to his adjutant, Capt. Munoz. Then to his officers.

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)

Some rouge and desperado Peruvian army regulars are riding toward us, we must use our best troops for the tasks ahead of us. Nonetheless, we need to remember that this is guerrilla warfare.

Capt. Munoz looks at Barnechea proudly.

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)

These men are dangerous, but when this conflict is over we will reestablish commerce with them in our new territory, but at this moment, we will not give any quarter to the guerrillas. Our mission now is to protect the civilians working the nitrate plants.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)

And chase the Aymara away or
neutralize them for once. Here
at Pisco. Captain.

Capt. Munoz steps forward.

CAPT. MUNOZ

The enemy is mobilizing a large
number of regulars for a counter
attack in our lines. It is
important for us to be prepared
for anything. We are deploying
machine guns along the north front
of Pisco. That should deter them.
And perhaps turn the tide of war
in our favor.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

Gentlemen, the huns are not
totally defeated. If we hit 'em
hard enough here at Pisco, we
might end this war for once.

The officers shift uneasily.

Colonel Bustamante looks around; eying-balling everyone.

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)

I expect the best from you. Have I
made myself clear, gentlemen?

Barnechea looks at his officers.

OFFICERS

(multiple)

Yes, sir.

Barnechea shifts his eyes to Capt. Munoz. Then he turns
his eyes toward a corner of the room. Capt. Bustamante
sits on a chair. He looks in good shape, and in good
spirits.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

(to the officers)

Capt. Munoz will take care of the
details. Good day, gentlemen.

The Officers salute and direct their attention to Capt.
Munoz, who points at the map.

EXT. TRAIL - LATER

Barnechea and Bustamante walk on a trail.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The trail extends around the Barnechea's Headquarters. It follows an idilic line of trees. A breeze shakes their leaves.

COLONEL BARNECHEA (O.S.)
So here you are back in the fun.
How are you, Captain?

BUSTAMANTE (O.S.)
Better, sir. The desert gave me a little shake, but I managed to beat it. Now, I'm back reporting to duty. Sir.

COLONEL BARNECHEA (O.S.)
So, I see.

They stop. From their vantage point we see the town of Pisco extending across the desert like an oasis. The Chilean army executes drills. We hear COMMAND VOICES in the distance.

Across town, we see the Nitrate plants are at full throttle. A long WHISTLE comes from the south.

EXT. TRAIL - CONTINUOUS

Colonel Barnechea turns and faces a tense Bustamante who snaps to attention. Colonel Barnechea pulls a small case of cigars. He opens it.

Bustamante takes one. He nods at Colonel Barnechea politely.

Barnechea lights it up for him. He also lights one up for himself.

They take a puff of their cigars.

BUSTAMANTE
Thank you, Colonel. This is what this country really needs: good manners.

COLONEL BARNECHEA
Sometimes, Captain, a cigar is juts a cigar.

Colonel Barnechea puffs off his cigar, dismissively.

He turns to Bustamante.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLONEL BARNECHEA

In your report, Captain, you stated that Corporal Danilo Fuentes is dead. That he was killed in a duel with an Aymara...

BUSTAMANTE

Tupac. Sir. That is his name.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

..And this one called Tupac killed Fuentes. Correct?

BUSTAMANTE

Yes, sir. That's correct.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

...And you witnessed all that from a house? Your defensive point, right?

BUSTAMANTE

That's exactly how it was, sir.

Barnechea looks at the trees for a moment, thinking.

He stares at Captain Bustamante. He nods.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

All is good, Captain but I am in a little predicament.

Bustamante stops and listens carefully.

BUSTAMANTE

How so, sir?

COLONEL BARNECHEA

I'll be straight with you Captain. You ought to know this and I need your entire cooperation and honesty with this matter.

(pauses)

I believe you have somewhat overplayed your role.

A beat.

BUSTAMANTE

Overplayed, sir?

COLONEL BARNECHEA

During the attack, you were wounded -- right?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)

At what point did you decide to abandon your position and leave your men behind? Did you see Lt. Martin escape?

BUSTAMANTE

Hmm. I did not see him.

(pauses)

I wasn't there, sir. The situation got complicated and I ordered Lt. Martin to retreat...While I stayed behind covering his escape...

COLONEL BARNECHEA

Lt. Martin is dead. Did you order a counter attack?

BUSTAMANTE

Yes, sir. Actually the counterattack - more a repelling attack was lead by me sir, with my enlisted men: infantryman Jorge, corporals Hugo, and Marcos. All of 'em soldiers from my platoon. I sustained heavy losses, sir.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

I see. So according to your report, Captain Bustamante, Corporal Fuentes, Lt. Martin and everyone else died. You - you alone managed to escape from the siege. Is that correct, Captain?

BUSTAMANTE

That's correct, sir.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

I see...And for your brave actions facing an overwhelming enemy, I shall recommend you for the Cross Of Tarapaca?

BUSTAMANTE

I...I think. I think, I am entitled to the medal, sir. Yes.

Colonel Barnechea takes it all in.

COLONEL BARNECHEA

Captain Bustamante, if indeed your actions were brave, as you described in your report...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

COLONEL BARNECHEA (CONT'D)

(pauses)

I must abide to military law,
Captain. And the law requires two
witnesses. You have none.

BUSTAMANTE

I know, sir. But I beg you to
consider...Under special
circumstances a soldier...

COLONEL BARNECHEA

(interrupting)

-- Yes, I know Captain.

(pause, then coldly)

I will consider these special
circumstances; meanwhile, you are
assigned to a defensive position
unit. Captain Munoz will get back
to you with my decision. You are
dismiss.

Colonel Barnechea salutes him and walks away.

Bustamante's eyes are vacant, and his face is pale as a
ghost.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Wide. A sea of dunes.

A solitary figure walks across the dunes.

The sun hits the shape of a man. There are no shadows,
not a single tree. Nothing. This is the deep desert.

EXT. DESERT - CONTINUOUS

The shape of the man is Fuentes. He drags himself heavily
thru the sand. He holds his canteen firmly in his right
hand. On his left, he grips his rifle.

Fuentes's face is gaunt, sunburned and dry. But in his
eyes, we see a fierce determination to survive.

As he presses on his march, Fuentes takes sips of water
from his canteen.

On the sand, his footsteps are slow and agonizing.

EXT. DUNES - DUSK

The sun sets on the horizon, as Fuentes continues marching on the dunes.

As the sand dunes swallow his footsteps, Fuentes projects a long shadow on the sand.

He stops for a moment, sips from his canteen, but there is no more water. He shakes it trying to get the last drop. There is none.

Fuentes raises his eyes toward the sky. He sees a single star. He grins and forces himself to continue to walk following the lonely star.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Fuentes sleeps under the cover of his jacket. The sky is clear and cold. Fuentes shivers. He looks up at the horizon: the night sky and the land are one. He grins.

EXT. DESERT - ROAD - DAWN

Fuentes reaches a dirt road. He kneels and scans the ground. He sees horse tracks, several of them. He looks closer and sees many boots and men on bare foot marching. He raises his head and follows the road.

FUENTES
(hoarsely)
Pisco.

He gets up and walks faster following the tracks on the dirt road.

He looks up, and in the distance, he sees a tree line of Tamarugos covered by a thick layer of rolling fog.

Fuentes marches on.

EXT. TAMARUGO TREE LINE - SAME

A steep slope.

Dew covers the trees and the short desert grass. Some ice builds on the tree branches.

The Camanchaca fog - a heavy marine layer rolls in dampening everything in its path: bushes, rocks, grass, and Tamarugo trees.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pedro, Marcos, Jorge an Hugo reach the end of the Tamarugo tree line.

All of them are in bad shape: bearded, tired, thirsty. They look like men lost for weeks in the high desert.

When they finally reach the outskirts of the city, what seems to be a mirage in the distance: the town of Pisco.

They see a cluster of adobe houses. Telegraph posts, a train station, a tall chimney, and some army fortifications. This is the Chilean line. The Northern border of Chile.

Pedro steps forward, he narrows his eyes and sees --

A large trench encircles the town. Chilean army's defensive positions.

In front of the trench, a soft hill rolls up, creating a soft slope, from where all the rocks and obstacles have been removed. This is no man's land.

They all stare at the city, almost in disbelief. Jorge impulsively begins to weep.

PEDRO
You oughta be proud of yourself,
kid. You made it.

HUGO
We made it.

JORGE
Yeah...

MARCOS
Thanks to Fuentes. You bastards!

Marcos inhales deep and smiles. After a moment his smile turns dark. Pedro clocks it.

PEDRO
We just followed orders from
Fuentes. Just orders.

JORGE
We shall honor him...

HUGO
The man is probably dead by now.
The bastard could have done the
same for himself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARCOS
Fuck! Fuck, this fucking war...!

Pedro's eyes are on the front lines.

PEDRO
Listen to me! Look, we did what we
had to do to survive.

JORGE
I'm sure as hell they have no idea
we are here, or where we're coming
from. Maybe they'll think we're
Peruvians.

MARCOS
They'll shoot us like dogs!

HUGO
What?

Pedro steps in.

PEDRO
All of you shut up! So for now we
wait, until dawn. Hear me? No one
moves and inch. So get warm, the
night is cold. I'll take the first
guard.

Everyone agrees.

EXT. TAMARUGO TREE LINE - NIGHT

The men are sleeping.

Pedro stands guard a few feet away. His jacket covers his head and partially his back. He scans the city across the large expanse of no man's land.

EXT. TAMARUGOS HILL - NIGHT

The Peruvian army, lead by General Parades, moves in silence across the Tamarugos hill. Several army soldiers pull cannons and machine guns. The Aymara marches at front.

EXT. PISCO - SAME

A trench line covers about a half a mile long and runs across the town's main entrance facing north.

EXT. TAMARUGO - TREE LINE - DAY

A raven CAWS in the sky. Pedro startled by the caw, jumps up pointing his rifle at the bird, while scanning his surroundings intently. He sees nothing.

Suddenly a NOISE. Some branches are broken...

Someone advances on the men.

Alerted, he quickly wakes the men.

PEDRO
(to all in sotto
voice)
Get up you lazy bastards! Someone
is coming!

All the men spring into action.

Pedro points his hand toward a bush behind them, about twenty yards away. He aims his rifle. Everyone does.

They see: Fuentes, his uniform is torn, colorless and dusty. He is extremely gaunt.

The men look at him as if they are seeing a specter. They can't believe it.

Fuentes stares back at them. He grins.

Pedro steps forward, blinking fast. He stops inches from Fuentes's face, scanning him. Convincing himself that he is looking at the real Fuentes not a mirage.

PEDRO
Jesus, you made it. You all
sinner.

HUGO
Glad to see you pulled your
weight. I knew you would.

Visibly moved, the rest of the men gather around their leader.

FUENTES
(harsh voice)
I took the short cut.

Jorge offers his canteen to Fuentes. He takes a long swig and returns it back to Jorge.

CONTINUED:

Fuentes makes his way through the men. He stands still for a moment looking at Pisco in the distance.

JORGE (O.S.)
Can we move now?

Marcos steps forward and stands next to Fuentes.

MARCOS
Pisco is less than a mile away from here. If we move now, we could reach our lines by noon...

HUGO
- Yeah. It seems the road is open for us.

Fuentes turns around and faces the men.

FUENTES
Not so fast. There is a large battalion moving fast behind us. Some Peruvian regulars, some Aymara. My guess is they are marching to Pisco --

JORGE
What? What do you mean?

PEDRO
He means we're trapped.

JORGE
Trapped?

HUGO
Yes. Like a pack of rats.

The men faces are tense, white as chalk. No one speaks.

Hugo breaks the ice.

HUGO
You mean we have an entire battalion racing behind our asses?

FUENTES
Yes.

JORGE
What do we do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PEDRO
(to Fuentes)
Do you have a plan?

Fuentes looks at them, impassively.

FUENTES
They move slow. I figure we could
get through the Tamarugos before
they launch their attack, and...

MARCOS
And?

FUENTES
And we run like hell...

Pedro walks away, visibly annoyed.

PEDRO
The heat fried your fucking brain!

HUGO
That means we race down the hill
and reach our lines?

FUENTES
If we move fast enough, yes.

JORGE
That's the plan?

HUGO
That's no-sense.

FUENTES
Either that or dig our own tombs.

MARCOS
Tombs?

PEDRO
(loud)
He means a hero's death!

The men look at each other in silence for a moment and
come to a silent acceptance.

FUENTES
All right, get some rest. We move
at dawn. We'll use the camanchaca
as cover.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The men put their gear down and rest. Fuentes plops down dog-tired.

Hugo stands guard.

EXT. TAMARUGO TREES - NIGHT

It's very dark still and cold. The moon hangs in the sky.

We see Fuentes' face under a heavy blanket. He stares at Pisco. Next to him sits Pedro.

Fuentes looks up: the moon is almost gone, the sky is darker. Dark clouds are moving in.

He lowers his gaze and sees the camanchaca slowly rolling in over the city.

FUENTES

It's time. Get ready. Get the men.

Fuentes gets up and passes a flare to Pedro.

FUENTES

At my command, fire this.

He walks away.

Pedro holds the flare in his hands for a moment and pockets it.

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - LATER - NIGHT

We see Fuentes' face under a heavy blanket marching ahead silently. Behind him march Jorge, Hugo, Marcos and Pedro.

JORGE

(to Hugo)

Hey! Do you really believe we can slip through?

HUGO

Yes, I do.

Hugo does not sound too convincing to Jorge. He turns to Jorge marching behind. Jorge smiles nervously looks forward and shakes his head.

JORGE

(to himself)

What else can we do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fuentes over hears the men.

FUENTES
(grunts)
Shut up. Keep marching.

Suddenly, the men look up.

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - NIGHT

The moon is covered by dark clouds and everything is pitch black.

JORGE
That's it. The moon is no longer shinning over us - that's bad luck.

PEDRO
That's lucky for us.

The men are swallowed by the dark night as they march off.

EXT. TRENCH LINE - NIGHT

JUAN MACHUCA, 14, horse-face, buck-tooth, flat chest and straight hair manages a machine gun with three SOLDIERS. Machuca keeps looking at the slope. His gaze tries to pierce the darkness in front of him. We follow his gaze, as we scans the field.

In the back, we see Bustamante's shilouette hidden in the shadows. He smokes nervously.

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - NIGHT

Fuentes and his men have reached the edge of no man's land. They lying flat on the ground, separated by six feet.

Fuentes rises his head and scans the trench line in front of him; it's too dark, but he knows the Chileans are there.

Suddenly, his eyes catch something moving over his right flank. He turns and sees: several shadows run across the Tamarugo trees.

Fuentes stays quiet and low. He turns his gaze forward.

EXT. NEAR NO MAN'S LAND - SAME

A group of Peruvians running ahead carrying a machine gun. They stop and set it up pointing at the Chilean trenches.

They have not seen Fuentes' men hidden in the dark --

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes's men stare ahead unaware of the Peruvian's movements. Suddenly, Fuentes HEARS something across his right flank.

A CLICK. The unmistakable sound of someone loading a gun.

Fuentes softly touches Pedro's shoulder, and slowly motions his head over his right shoulder.

FUENTES
(sotto voice)
Enemy movements.

Pedro follows Fuentes's gaze and sees...The enemy moving closer to them.

Their MUFFLED commands can be heard from their position.

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes turns and motions his head at the flare.

Pedro nods. He raises the flare gun and FIRES it.

It rises like a shooting star in the dark sky. The whole slope and the hill turns eerie red.

EXT. TRENCH LINE - CONTINUOUS

The face of Machuca and the men become visible thanks to the flare: they are red. Seeing the flare, Bustamante's expression turns tense and hard.

He puts down his cigarette and jumps forward, staring ahead over Machuca's shoulder. His eyes scanning in front of him with quick movements.

He turns to the men who are manning the machine gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUSTAMANTE

Look sharp. Look sharp...The enemy
is there --

The light of the flare starts to fade away.

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - SAME

Then, we see Fuentes' men running toward the Chilean trenches.

Bustamante sees the men running and realizes its Fuentes and his men. Without remorse, he immediately orders his men to fire upon running men.

BUSTAMANTE

Fire! Peruvians! Fire!!!

The machine gun opens FIRE upon the running men.

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - CONTINUOUS

Fuentes sees the machine gun FIRING at them and quickly drops to the ground. Next to him ducks Pedro.

As the machine gun RATTLES: Hugo falls dead in the middle of his sprint charge.

From his position, he sees Jorge running, waiving his arms and desperately SCREAMING as he heads toward the trenches.

JORGE

Don't shoot! Don't shoot...!

Fuentes tries to SHOUT something at him but the bullets and the RATTLE of the machine gun mutes his voice.

Jorge falls dead.

Angry, Fuentes gets up.

FUENTES

(shouting)

We're Chileans. Don't SHOOT! It's
corporal Danilo Fuentes...!

The machine gun RATTLES again and drowns Fuentes's shouts. He drops flat on the ground and sees..

Jorge's body receiving a full volley of bullets. He MOANS in pain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fuentes turns his head and also sees Marcos falling dead a few yards ahead.

Fuentes's face is contorted with grief and anger.

Then the light is gone and all is dark again. The machine gun goes silent.

Suddenly, we hear a clear SHOUT coming from somewhere in the field.

FUENTES (O.S.)
This is corporal Danilo Fuentes,
do not shoot. I repeat: do not
shoot!

Fuentes rises and runs out of the darkness toward the trenches. Pedro follows him, with his arms upraised holding their rifles above their heads.

PEDRO
Don't fucking shoot!

Machuca sees Fuentes and Pedro running toward the trench.

BUSTAMANTE
Cut them down! Fire! Fire! Fire!

MACHUCA
Cease Fire! It's our men!

Machuca turns to Bustamante.

MACHUCA
Captain! That is Fuentes' patrol.

The machine gun goes silent.

EXT. TRENCH - CONTINUOUS

Hearing this, Captain Bustamante's face turns ghostly white. He stays paralyzed, his face contorted in fear.

Fuentes and Pedro jump into the trench.

EXT. TRENCH LINE - CONTINUOUS

Slumped against the rear wall of the trench, Bustamante stares wildly at Fuentes who is catching his breath. Machuca jumps in front of Bustamante.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MACHUCA

You see, Captain, I was right.
It's our men.

Fuentes stands erect in front of Bustamante. He fixes him with a deathly stare.

FUENTES

Why did you fire upon us?
(savagely)
Didn't you recognize the signal flare?

BUSTAMANTE

(finding his voice)
Fuentes? I--I--it was dark..And, I did..not...expect...

Fuentes steps forward and grabs Bustamante by his collar. He pushes him toward the rear of the trench.

Pedro holds the Chilean troops at bay.

EXT. NO MAN'S LAND - SAME

Suddenly, from behind the no-man's land plain and in front of the trenches, we hear a loud HOWLING.

A massive horde of Aymara run berserk toward the Chilean trenches. They hold machetes, knives, swords, bludgeons, hob-nailed wooden planks and spikes in their hands, but no guns.

In the b.g., The Peruvian Army hold their fire.

EXT. TRENCHES - CONTINUOUS

Instinctively, Fuentes turns and start SHOOTING at the Aymara horde.

Next to him, the machine guns opens FIRE at the mass of Aymara attacking. Scores of Aymara fall dead at the edges of the trenches.

The machine guns SHOOTING stops across the trenches. The Chileans lines ROAR.

The war is over.

A wild celebration ensues.

EXT. NO MAN LAND - SAME

We close on General Parades's long and ashen face. For a moment he is frozen looking at the Chilean lines.

He reins his horse and rides away from the battle. The Peruvian soldiers follow him.

EXT. TRENCHES - CONTINUOUS

In the confusion, Bustamante runs towards the center of the town. Seeing him running, Fuentes runs after him.

EXT. PISCO - STREET - DOWNTOWN - LATER

Fuentes walks holding his rifle, scanning. He sees Bustamante walking fast down a street.

A CHEERING CROWD of Chilean SOLDIERS and CIVILIANS run pass celebrating the defeat of the Aymara and Peruvians.

For a moment Bustamante is out of Fuentes' sight.

Suddenly, he sees him. Fuentes advances aiming the rifle at Bustamante.

He gets close to him.

FUENTES
(shouts)
Bustamante!

Bustamante stops frozen in his tracks. He turns slowly. For a moment their eyes are locked.

Fuentes walks closer.

FUENTES (CONT'D)
Claps your hands behind your head!

Bustamante hesitates. Fuentes makes a menacing move with his rifle. Bustamante puts his hands behind his head.

BUSTAMANTE
Are you aware of what are you
doing? You're dealing with an
officer!

FUENTES
Your class and ranks don't matter
to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUSTAMANTE
-- You'll pay for this!

FUENTES
I don't care ---

BUSTAMANTE
I don't know what are you
thinking. You'll never get away
with this Corporal! The war is
over, for all of us!

FUENTES
In that case, I'll be quick...See,
I am not afraid to die, Captain.
For five long years the desert
couldn't do it. The Aymara
couldn't kill me...But this
fucking uniform did do it...The
Army. This war of nonsense...It
killed me!
(he moves closer)
Just like you killed my men! You
fucking coward!

BUSTAMANTE
We're at war...Accidents happen!

Fuentes ignited with rage, takes a step closer to him
aiming his rifle at Bustamante's head.

FUENTES
Turn! We going back to
headquarters. The Colonel is
waiting...

Surprisingly, Bustamante obeys Fuentes' commands.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

A desolated street. Bustamante walks ahead followed by
Fuentes. The tip of his rifle touches Bustamante's back.

Bustamante realizes Fuentes' intentions. He slows his
pace...

BUSTAMANTE
Colonel Barnechea has nothing to
do with this.
(a beat, then)
Listen Fuentes, I know people. My
family has a large estate...I can
get you a job there...A House.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)

(pauses, think)

No? How about a promotion? I can promote you to Master Sergeant! Full pay...

FUENTES

(dry)

That's not enough.

Bustamante slows his pace even more. Fuentes lowers his rifle a bit.

BUSTAMANTE

No? Not enough?

(pauses)

What do you want Fuentes?

FUENTES

Justice!

Bustamante grins. He's had enough. He stops, turns lowers his hands and stares hard at Fuentes.

BUSTAMANTE

Justice...- ha! Do you realize that I am an Officer of the Chilean Army and you are a soldier...! There will never be justice, Fuentes. Officers are upper class. A superior class. You and I, we are not equal Fuentes. We will never be...

Fuentes says nothing.

At that moment, and with a quick movement, Bustamante reaches for his pistol. He aims it at Fuentes, grinning.

BUSTAMANTE (CONT'D)

Lower your rifle, Corporal. It's over for you...Attempting to murder an Officer...That's bad. Hands up! Up!

Confused, Fuentes lowers his rifle. For a moment he looks defeated. Bustamante grabs Fuentes' rifle and tosses it away.

With his gun, Bustamante gestures at Fuentes to raise his arms.

Incredibly, Fuentes obeys him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUSTAMANTE

Good. Hands up. Up!

Fuentes slowly raises his hands, as if he is under a spell.

Aiming his gun at Fuentes, an arrogant Bustamante raises the gun and points it at Fuentes' head.

In an instant, Bustamante sees Fuentes medal, perched in on his chest.

He blinks and aims for the kill.

BUSTAMANTE

Now. I'll show you justice,
Corporal ---

Fuentes wakes up! He steps back and --

With a quick move, pulls his corvo and cuts Bustamante's throat.

Bustamante falls on his knees holding his throat with both hands as blood oozes from his wound.

He falls on the street, and slowly fades into death.

Fuentes steps back. He looks down and sees his "Cross of Tarapaca" medal on the ground next to Bustamante's dead body.

He bends and grabs it; he looks at it for a moment and then throws it away.

INSERT MEDAL

As the medal lands, dozens of boots stomp over it, over and over.

BACK TO SCENE.

EXT. STRET - DAY

Fuentes walks away.

INT. BARNECHEA'S HEADQUARTERS - PISCO - DAY

The mood is cheerful and LOUD with CRIES from officers and staff celebrating the victory of the Chilean army and their return home.

Except for Colonel Barnechea who sits alone in his desk reading a dispatch.

Capt. Munoz comes in holding a bottle of Pisco and two glasses. He fills two glasses and pushes one toward Barnechea's hand.

CAPT. MUNOZ
Drink...We won the damn war. It's over.

Instead, Colonel Barnechea extends his hand holding a dispatch to Capt. Munoz. He stops drinking and grabs the paper: he reads it in silence.

He lowers the paper and looks at Colonel Barnechea, incredulous.

CAPT. MUNOZ
Missing in action? Fuentes?

COLONEL BARNECHEA
Yes, and Captain Bustamante is dead...apparently an Aymara cut his throat.

CAPT. MUNOZ
Do you really think? --

COLONEL BARNECHEA
-- Come' on Munoz, the war is over.
Let's celebrate...We have a country to build.

CLINK-CLINK to the glasses.

CAPT. MUNOZ (V.O.)
To Fuentes.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: