

# **SIX WINTER DAYS**

by

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FADE IN:

INT. TENT - DAY

Generals George WASHINGTON, Hugh MERCER, Roche FERMOY, and Captain Warren MURPHY talk around a table.

Mercer wears a clean uniform, like Washington. Fermoy is ragged and unshaven.

SUPER: DAY ONE, SUNDAY, DEC. 29<sup>TH</sup>, 1776

SUPER: BRISTOL, PA.

WASHINGTON

We're going back.

MERCER

Sir?

WASHINGTON

Caldwalater's over there with 800 men.

MERCER

We scored a great victory, Sir. I respectfully recommend we go into winter quarters here.

General Henry KNOX comes in.

KNOX

We've got the prisoners shipped out.

Knox looks at Mercer, then at Washington.

KNOX

What?

WASHINGTON

Caldwalater's at Trenton. Get the men back across, Henry. You have more time than last week, but no later than tomorrow night.

FERMOY

Sir, I agree with Hugh. The British will be there this time, not the Hessians.

WASHINGTON

It was a raid, gentlemen. I'm not going to hear everybody say we cheated and then ran like rabbits. We're going back.

FERMOY

Why put the men through that?

WASHINGTON

You want to know the real reason?

The officers stare at him.

WASHINGTON

This army is going home when their enlistments expire on Wednesday. I'm going to get another fight out of them if I have to march 'em to New York on Tuesday.

MERCER

Yes, sir.

WASHINGTON

Fermoy, send an officer over there. Tell Caldwellater to stay put. Have him send some men up to the ferry and help unload. I'll be over tonight.

MURPHY

I'll go, sir.

All exit except Fermoy and Murphy. Murphy is 40 and handsome. Fermoy writes an order. Then he takes a long swig of whiskey from a flask.

FERMOY

This is the biggest mistake he ever made, which says a lot.

Fermoy hands Murphy the order.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A mother, MAGGIE (37), and her son, ISAAC (17), argue.

MAGGIE

No, no. You can't. You can't do that to me.

ISAAC

Calm down, Ma. You're getting hysterical again.

SUPER: TWO MILES EAST OF PRINCETON, NJ.

Maggie is attractive, but strands of greasy hair hang down into her eyes. Pieces of cloth and half-sewn garments clutter the tables and chairs. Her dress is torn.

MAGGIE

I have bills. Your father isn't here any more. What am I to do with the children? You always do this to me. You want to go off and fight.

ISAAC

I can't stand working in that shop. All those old women. I'm going to get out.

MAGGIE

No. You'll be killed. What about your brother? Who will care for him? I don't have time to run the shop and care for everybody.

Maggie's other son, TOBY (14), enters the room.

ISAAC

He's fourteen, for Christ's sake. Why do I have to care for him?

MAGGIE

Because he's your brother, that's why. And don't you use the Lord's name like that.

ISAAC

I told you, I'm joining the Tories. The rebels are going to die. The Reverend says so.

MAGGIE

No, no. You'll be killed. There's rebels everywhere. Or British, or Hessians. Everybody's gone mad.

Maggie paces. She rips her dress some more on the arm of a chair.

TOBY

Ma, don't cry. Isaac, stop.

MAGGIE

Hang those rebels. I had a home and a family. Now there's people with guns killing everybody. You'll get killed, Isaac. And Toby, too.

TOBY

Ma, no. Don't cry. Isaac, you're staying here.

ISAAC  
 Don't tell me what to do, you  
 little runt.

Maggie turns to scold Isaac.

Heavy footsteps STOMP up the porch.

MAGGIE  
 Boys, get out of here.

Isaac gets behind the front door. Toby stands there,  
 terrified. The door opens.

British Corporal Nigel LAWRENCE barges in. The open door  
 obscures Isaac from his view.

Lawrence looks at Maggie, then at Toby.

LAWRENCE  
 You a rebel?

TOBY  
 No. Ma?

LAWRENCE  
 Got any other rebels in here?

MAGGIE  
 He's not a rebel. He's only  
 fourteen.

LAWRENCE  
 Old enough to die. I'll shoot you  
 right here.

Lawrence points his gun at Toby.

MAGGIE  
 No. I told you he's not a rebel.  
 You put that down or you'll lose  
 something you don't want to lose.

Maggie reaches into her pocket and discretely pulls out a  
 small paring knife.

She moves her eyes to Isaac, behind the door, and shakes  
 her head 'no' very slightly.

MAGGIE  
 Toby, move away from the officer  
 and go in the kitchen.

LAWRENCE  
 I ain't no officer.

Lawrence goes over to Maggie, eyes her closely and runs his hand through her hair and down her neck.

LAWRENCE

I ain't that polite.

Lawrence laughs wickedly and turns to Toby.

LAWRENCE

Get out of here, rebel. Your mum  
and me want to be alone.

Toby backs up in terror. The soldier rubs his face against Maggie's cheek. She raises her eyebrows at Isaac.

Lawrence turns around. Isaac charges the soldier. The door SLAMS shut. Isaac knocks Lawrence against a wall.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A British officer, Major Stephen DERRING, and several troops 30 yards away hear a door slam in one of the houses. They proceed up the street.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Isaac, Maggie and Lawrence struggle. Isaac punches him. Maggie grabs Lawrence by the hair and cuts his neck slightly with the knife. Lawrence screams.

Lawrence pushes Isaac back. Isaac falls against the door and grabs the doorknob.

The door opens as Isaac hits the wall.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The men outside see only Maggie and a British soldier through an open door. Lawrence pushes her away and gawks at Derring.

Maggie kicks him hard on the rump with her foot.

Lawrence sprawls onto the porch and falls at the hooves of Derring's horse.

Maggie throws the gun out after him.

MAGGIE

And stay out, you damn bastard.

Maggie SLAMS the door. The troops laugh.

DERRING

What's your name, soldier?

LAWRENCE

Lawrence. Corporal. Welsh  
Fusiliers. That woman has rebels  
in there.

DERRING

Figures. Never thought much of the  
Fusiliers anyway. Now I know why.  
Beat up by a woman. Get in line.  
We've got rebels to fight, not  
their mothers.

Lawrence wipes the blood off his neck with his hand, looks  
at the blood, and then clenches his fist.

LAWRENCE

I'll get you. I'll get you, you  
rebel bitch. You and your rebel  
boys. I'll burn down your house  
with you in it. You'll see, bitch.

Derring shifts in his saddle and kicks Lawrence in the  
back. The other soldiers smirk.

DERRING

I'll kick you all the way to  
Princeton if you don't fall in.

The other soldiers laugh again. They all move down the road  
toward Princeton.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

MAGGIE

Oh, no. He'll come back. Oh, God,  
what to do. He'll kill you boys.  
Isaac, are you hurt? Toby? Where  
are you?

Isaac picks himself up. Toby runs to his mother and hugs  
her.

TOBY

Is he gone?

MAGGIE

Now you boys have to get out.

ISAAC

Good. What I wanted all along.

MAGGIE

No, you won't fight. I won't have  
it. You'll get killed. If he comes  
back, they'll hang you both.

Maggie paces.

MAGGIE

Hang those rebels. Hang that  
Washington. Hang the whole lot of  
them.

She rips her dress walking around a chair.

MAGGIE

Franklin, too, that scoundrel,  
that traitor.

ISAAC

Calm down, Ma.

MAGGIE

Don't 'calm-down' me. Poor  
Richard. Yes, Poor Richard. Did  
his stupid almanac say we'd all  
get killed by the British? What  
about poor Maggie? Hang him, that  
Franklin. And Washington.

She peeks out the window to see if the British are still  
there.

MAGGIE

They did this to us, put the  
British against us. You boys have  
to get out of here. They'll come  
back.

TOBY

No, Ma, they won't come back.

MAGGIE

(to Isaac)

You have to go to Allentown.

ISAAC

What?

MAGGIE

Aunt Rose and Uncle Bernie can  
take you. You know where it is.

ISAAC

What? I am not going to Allentown.

MAGGIE

Get Toby there. And the two of you  
stay there until this is over.

Maggie peers out the window again nervously.

ISAAC

No, I'm not going. Especially not with this fool.

MAGGIE

Do as I say, Isaac. Take your brother there. Do it.

ISAAC

No. I'm going to fight the rebels. The war'll be over before I -- I can't go. No. I won't. The Reverend is waiting for me.

MAGGIE

Hang the Reverend, too. Do what I tell you.

Maggie leaves the room.

ISAAC

Oh, no, no. I can't do this. I have plans. I have to get out of here.

TOBY

Where's Allentown?

ISAAC

Pennsylvania, you idiot. Now you've done it to me again.

Isaac sits in a chair. He holds his head in his hands.

ISAAC

Wait a minute. Sure, I'll go. I'll go to Allentown. It'll get me out of this hellhole.

TOBY

You want to go? You'll stay there too, right?

ISAAC

No. As soon as you're there, I'm coming right back here and fight the rebels. This is the last time I'm taking care of you.

Isaac turns toward the other room.

ISAAC

Sure, Ma. I'll take him to Allentown. But I'm not coming back.

TOBY

You can't leave me there. You have to stay too. Ma says.

ISAAC

I'll get you there and then come back, or wherever the Reverend tells me to go.

TOBY

No, you can't. You can't do that. I can't stay there by myself.

ISAAC

I'm coming back and shoot all the rebels I can find. And I'm not coming home again. And I don't want to see you again, either. You've ruined my life for the last time, Toby.

Isaac walks away.

TOBY

Isaac. Isaac. I can't stay there by myself. Isaac!

SUPER: DAY TWO, MONDAY, DEC. 30, 1776

EXT. DELAWARE RIVER - DAY

General Henry Knox stands in the mud. He shouts orders to the boats coming ashore.

KNOX

Stop. Let your neighbor in there. You, turn left. Come ashore over there. That's it. Easy now. Get a rope out there.

Henry walks up to a tangle of boats and men. They strain to lift cannons out of boats and drag them to dry ground.

He points to a boat offshore and motions for it to go to his right. Men spill out of boats into the water and slosh up to the shore.

Captain Murphy rides up on a horse.

MURPHY

The General sends his regards.

KNOX

How are ya, Murph?

Murphy surveys the confusion.

MURPHY

So, how's it going?

KNOX

Fairly, so far. Seems like I'm always dragging guns around. Do you know how many times I've crossed this river? I wish I'd get to shoot these once in a while.

MURPHY

You might get your chance pretty soon, Henry. Sorry, I mean General.

KNOX

Aw, that's fine.

MURPHY

So, what do you think?

KNOX

We should be in Trenton tonight. If nothing goes wrong.

MURPHY

What could go wrong?

KNOX

Ha. Any word on the enemy?

MURPHY

Nothing so far. We have sentries all over the place.

KNOX

Tell the General I'm sending Sullivan's division into town.

MURPHY

Yes, I saw Sullivan on the road.

Henry shouts at some men on shore who stand idle.

KNOX

You, get those crates out of there. Yes, you. You heard me.

Ropes fly through the air from the shore and the boats. Henry picks up a rope and pulls hard. The men fall backward and out of the boat.

KNOX

It helps to have a little oomph.

Murphy salutes with a smile.

MURPHY

See ya, General.

Murphy rides down the shore toward Trenton. A CAPTAIN on horseback directs a group of men trying to unstick a cannon.

Murphy rides up to him.

EXT. MUDDY SHORE - DAY

CAPTAIN

Push. Harder. Jackson, take the wheel. You have to push harder, damn you.

MURPHY

What are you doing?

CAPTAIN

Trying to get this gun out, obviously. Jackson, no. Push on the wheel, you stupid imbecile.

MURPHY

Why don't you help them?

CAPTAIN

I am helping them. Satchel, put your weight into it, for God's sake.

MURPHY

Why don't you help them push?

CAPTAIN

I'm an officer. I don't push.

Murphy gets off his horse, takes a rope that's looped on the officer's saddle, and ties it to the saddle horn.

CAPTAIN

What do you think you're doing?

MURPHY

Trying to get this gun out, obviously. Turn your horse.

CAPTAIN

Get out of here. I outrank you. Who do you think you are?

Murphy finishes tying the rope.

MURPHY  
 Captain Warren Murphy, First  
 Pennsylvania Riflemen. Turn your  
 horse, Captain.

CAPTAIN  
 You're Murphy?

The officer hesitates, then turns the horse around. Murphy ties the other end of the rope to the axle. He gets behind the gun in the mud and yells, to the officer,

MURPHY  
 Go. (to the men) Push.

Murphy pushes as hard as he can. He slips, falls in the mud, gets up, and pushes again. The gun gets unstuck. Murphy and JACKSON stop on dry ground, panting, while other soldiers untie the rope.

JACKSON  
 You're an officer?

MURPHY  
 Yes, Captain Murphy.

JACKSON  
 You think we'll see any British?

MURPHY  
 I reckon we will, son.

JACKSON  
 Good. I didn't join the army to  
 serve in the navy.

EXT. TRENTON ROAD - DAY

Toby and Isaac trudge west toward Princeton.

TOBY  
 Why do you hate everybody?

ISAAC  
 It's only you I hate.

TOBY  
 Me? Why? What did I do to you?

ISAAC  
 Aw, you're such a coward. Always  
 'yes, Ma. No, Ma,' just like John.

TOBY

And why did you call him 'John?' I called him 'Father.'

ISAAC

He wasn't my father.

TOBY

You know, the little ones noticed you never called him that. They asked me. I couldn't explain it to them.

ISAAC

My father left a long time ago. I hate his guts too.

TOBY

I miss him. He taught me how to shoot.

ISAAC

Never mind that. I tell you, Toby, I've got to do something. I'm not going to waste my whole life in that dress shop.

The boys walk along in silence. They see a four-story building with twenty windows per floor to their left.

ISAAC

That's Princeton.

TOBY

Let's eat.

ISAAC

All right, we'll stop here.

Isaac opens his pack. He takes out some silverware, a bible, a knife, and a coil of string.

ISAAC

Why did she pack all this stuff?

Isaac looks amusedly at the coil of string. They dig farther into their packs and get some food. They stuff all the other things back into the packs and eat.

ISAAC

Let's go.

They walk down the road a half mile in silence. They see a bridge ahead. They get there.

EXT. TRENTON ROAD - PRINCETON BRIDGE - DAY

The bridge is 40 feet long and crosses Stony Brook Creek, a fast-flowing stream 30 feet wide and ten feet below the bridge.

TOBY

Here it is. The Princeton Bridge.

ISAAC

Yes. Gosh. Haven't seen it in years.

It's a wooden bridge. Two pilings on each side and two in the middle support the bridge.

Logs and boards make the road. There's a wooden railing on both sides.

The bridge is far enough out of the water to get under without getting wet.

The boys put their guns and packs down on the ground. Toby goes under the bridge. Isaac follows him. They look around.

TOBY

Remember we used to play soldier under here? Look, here's your initials, IM. Here's me, TM.

Isaac inspects a different log.

ISAAC

Ha. This is where you hit your head. I thought you were going to take the bridge down. Ha.

Toby comes over and looks at the log.

TOBY

Yeah. Let's play 'Charge.'

ISAAC

No, that's ridiculous. We're too old for that now. We have to go.

TOBY

Aw, Why not? You be the charger.

ISAAC

No, I don't feel like playing.

TOBY

That's because you'll lose.

ISAAC

That's because you cheat. No, I won't play. We have to go.

They get out from under the bridge.

TOBY

You afraid I'll beat you?

ISAAC

Afraid of what? You? Ha. That's ripe. You're going to beat me at charge. Without cheating. Let's go.

TOBY

All right. If you're afraid.

ISAAC

I'm not afraid. Of you or anybody else.

TOBY

I understand.

ISAAC

Ah! Fine. You're the shooter. And don't cheat. You can't load faster than 30 seconds. Get a stick. And watch out, 'cause I'm coming.

Toby gets a long stick.

Isaac walks into the field. Toby lays the two muskets in the grass and points them in Isaac's direction. He tests the feel of grabbing them quickly.

Isaac goes 20 yards away and crouches down in the grass. Toby turns his back to Isaac, according to the rules of the game.

ISAAC

Whoop whoop. I'm coming.

Isaac rises up and runs toward Toby. He shouts as he runs and holds his right hand in the air as if he has a knife. Toby turns frantically, aims his stick, and yells,

TOBY

Pow. Got ya.

Isaac is hit. He clutches his shoulder with his right hand, reels in simulated pain, spins around, falls forward, and tumbles into the snowy grass.

Toby reloads the stick. He pours the powder in and smashes it down with a ramrod. Isaac gets up and charges again. He's wounded, and in pain, but determined to take out his foe. Toby fires again.

TOBY

Pow. Got ya again. Two for me.

Isaac is hit again, in the leg this time, but he keeps going. He clutches his leg with one hand and his shoulder with the other, wincing in theoretical pain.

Isaac slows, stops, turns, and falls to the ground on his back, struggling in agony. But...

He miraculously gets up with the last ounce of his mortal strength. As soon as he does,

TOBY

Pow.

ISAAC

No. You didn't have time to load.  
I'm taking that back.

TOBY

I know how to load a gun.

Isaac rushes again, Whoop, Whoop. Toby watches him come.

Isaac is about to stab Toby with the make-believe knife when Toby reaches down and brings up both real guns. He holds them tight against his hip. Isaac's face turns pale.

TOBY

Pow. (He shakes the left gun)  
Pow. (He shakes the right gun)

Isaac stops, relieved, then stares angrily at Toby. Toby grins.

ISAAC

You cheated. Where would you get two guns, anyway? And you could've killed me, for Christ's sake. I won. Let's go.

TOBY

I didn't cheat. I had two guns.  
They weren't loaded.

ISAAC

And where would you get two guns?  
I'm not playing with you any more.

The boys walk back up to the bridge, Isaac in front. Toby trails with the two guns under his arms.

Toby

Pow. Pow.

Imaginary bullets slam into Isaac's back. Toby laughs.

ISAAC

Grow up, Toby.

The boys cross the Princeton Bridge.

Just as Isaac walks off on the Trenton side, he pauses and rubs the right railing of the bridge fondly.

ISAAC

So long, old bridge. Don't know if I'll ever see ya again.

Isaac goes across. Toby follows.

Toby rubs the railing in the same place that Isaac did.

The road bends to the left after 30 yards.

The boys disappear behind the trees at the bend.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Washington writes at an overturned box he uses for a desk. Mercer comes in.

MERCER

How are you, George?

WASHINGTON

I'm giving a speech tomorrow. Have the men assembled, will you, Hugh?

MERCER

You're giving a speech?

WASHINGTON

What, I can't give a speech?

MERCER

Of course you can, George. What are you going to say?

WASHINGTON

I'm going to offer them a bounty.

MERCER

Oh, no, George, don't do that.  
Congress won't pay. You know that. The  
men know that. Everybody knows that.

Washington bellows,

WASHINGTON

Then I'll pay them myself.

MERCER

Ah, George, no. You can't. It will  
ruin you.

Washington ignores the comment and writes.

MERCER

What do you have so far?

WASHINGTON

'My fellow soldiers. You have done all  
that I asked you to do, but we know  
not how to spare you.' That's all I  
have, except for the bounty.

MERCER

I like that, 'We know not how to  
spare you.' Good. But I'd change  
that first part. Maybe, 'My brave  
fellows.' It's more fatherly.  
That's how they think of you,  
George, like a father.

WASHINGTON

I don't think they'll stay except  
for money.

MERCER

Go for the patriotism. Or better,  
explain how we don't have to win,  
we just have to not lose. That's  
what I'd say. Something like that.

Washington writes.

MERCER

Just don't say anything about  
money.

WASHINGTON

I'll see. Good night, Hugh.

MERCER

Good night, George.

SUPER: DAY THREE, TUESDAY, DEC. 31<sup>st</sup>, 1776

The last day of 1776 dawns cold and gloomy for Corporal William Jackson and his men, the soldiers who unstuck the cannon on the Delaware. Jackson rouses his men. They groan.

SOLDIER

What's that smell?

Jackson smells it too. He rushes over to Satchel.

JACKSON

Oh, my God.

Beads of sweat pour down Satchel's face. Jackson feels his brother's neck.

JACKSON

He's burning hot. Help me get his pants off.

Satchel is a robust boy, 17, and not easy to lift. Jackson's men struggle to get Satchel's pants off. Another soldier stirs the embers of the fire.

SOLDIER AT THE FIRE

Give 'em to me.

The soldier at the fire holds his nose against the smell of Satchel's soiled pants. He throws them on the fire.

Jackson wraps a blanket around Satchel. Three men help drag Satchel away.

Their captain rides up on a horse.

CAPTAIN

What're ye doing?

JACKSON

He's sick. We have to get him some help.

CAPTAIN

Leave him.

JACKSON

What?

CAPTAIN

Leave him. Damn, he stinks.

The officer turns his head in disgust.

JACKSON

I can't leave him, he'll die.

CAPTAIN

Leave him. He's tetched, anyway.  
You men are on ditch-digging duty.

JACKSON

Oh, no, please. Let us just get  
him some place warm.

The officer pulls a pistol out of his pocket and aims it at Jackson.

CAPTAIN

Which one of you do you want me to  
shoot, Mr. Jackson, him or you?

JACKSON

No, please. He's my brother.

CAPTAIN

Your choice, Mr. Jackson.

The soldier at the fire picks up his musket. CLICK.

The other soldiers cock their guns. CLICK. The officer  
looks around and behind. All the men aim muskets at him.

CAPTAIN

This is mutiny.

SOLDIER AT THE FIRE

This ain't mutiny, is it Jack?  
Ain't that when you throw the  
captain overboard?

OTHER SOLDER

No, this ain't mutiny. That's only  
on a ship. We ain't on a ship.

CAPTAIN

I'm your superior officer. I'll  
have you all hanged.

The soldier at the fire adjusts his aim.

SOLDIER AT THE FIRE

We didn't elect you our officer,  
so ain't nothin' you can do but  
get shot. Them's the rules.

JACKSON

Put the gun down, Harry.

SOLDIER AT THE FIRE

Ah, Jack, let me shoot him.

JACKSON

Put it down, Harry. All of you.

The men lower their guns. The officer gallops away.

JACKSON

You can't do that. Damn. He's an officer. Now we're in deep trouble.

OTHER SOLDIER

Ain't my officer.

The men shake their heads in agreement.

SOLDIER AT THE FIRE

You're our officer.

JACKSON

How many time I have to tell ya? I ain't no officer. I'm a corporal. You're privates. Then we have captains, majors, generals. They're officers. Damn. He's an officer. We're in trouble.

The men pick up Satchel and carry him away.

SOLDIER AT THE FIRE

Ain't my officer.

INT. BARN - PRINCETON - DAY

A FARMER comes into his barn and sees hay drifting down from above. He raises his musket.

FARMER

What're you doing up there? Git down here.

ISAAC

(whispering)

Toby, Toby, get up.

FARMER

You git down here, or I'll blast you.

Toby wakes up. The boys are cold. POW. Buckshot rips through the floor of the loft. The farmer reloads.

ISAAC

Toby, shhh. Get out.

Isaac pushes the backpacks out a small window. He looks down, but it's way too far a drop. He throws down the guns. The guns CLANG against each other as they hit.

The farmer runs outside toward the sound.

They scramble down a ladder, run out the barn door and see the farmer near their backpacks. The farmer fires. POW. Miss. The boys run around the barn. The farmer reloads.

The boys go all the way around the barn, no guns in their hands. The farmer sneaks around behind, looking for them.

The boys see their backpacks and the guns ten feet away.

ISAAC

Get the guns. I'll get the packs.

Toby rushes and picks up the guns. Isaac runs and picks up the backpacks. POW. The farmer fires again from behind them near the barn. He hits the barn. Splinters fly. Toby panics. They run to the road. Toby's ahead with the two guns.

Toby turns right on the road toward Princeton. Isaac gets to the road.

ISAAC

Toby. Turn around. This way. Toby.  
You're going the wrong way.

Isaac drops the backpacks and runs after him. Isaac catches up, tackles Toby.

Isaac grabs Toby by the back of his shirt, picks him up forcibly, and turns him around. Toby cries. Isaac wipes some dirt off his face.

ISAAC

You're going the wrong way.

They walk back down the road, pick up the backpacks, and go down the road toward Trenton.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Washington on horseback faces the men. Officers are at his side. The men are lined up for a speech.

Washington rides to a point halfway to the men.

WASHINGTON

My brave fellows. You have done all that I have asked you to do. But your country is at stake, and we know not how to spare you.

I'm asking each of you to reenlist for six weeks. In six weeks we can put this campaign behind us and raise a new army for the summer.

Washington rides back and faces the men. The soldiers look at each other nervously. Some mumble. Many kick the ground. Nobody comes forward. Washington rides out again.

WASHINGTON

We don't have to win. We just have to not lose. But we have to have an army. As long as we have an army, we can't lose.

Nobody moves.

WASHINGTON

I'm authorizing a bounty of ten dollars for every man who will reenlist for six weeks. And I'll guarantee it with my own personal fortune.

Washington rides back again. Some men come forward, slowly, then others. Eventually all of them do.

WASHINGTON

Sign 'em up, Lieutenant.

EXT. TRENTON ROAD - DAY

ISAAC

Let's get off the road for a while. It's too muddy. Maybe the woods'll be drier.

They scoot under some underbrush to the right into a dense woods.

ISAAC

We'll keep the road in sight on our left. It'll be better, easier going than the mud.

They come to a clearing.

ISAAC

Let's stop here to eat.

The boys pull out the stuff from their backpacks again, including the string in Isaac's pack.

They get some bread and eat.

TOBY

Tell me why you hated our father so much.

ISAAC

Which one?

TOBY

The last one.

ISAAC

I didn't really hate him. It's just that he was so, so, I don't know, so unmanly, I guess, or something. He never stood up to anybody.

TOBY

He was always nice to us, to everybody. He wouldn't hurt nobody, not even a bird.

ISAAC

I don't want to talk it about it any more. I'm going to just rest. We'll go in a minute. Stay here.

Isaac falls asleep against a tree. Toby puts a blanket around him from the backpack.

EXT. TRENTON ROAD - FIVE-MILE RUN - DAY

Sergeant Borg SWANSON rides up on a horse. Three soldiers come out of the woods on each side of the road.

They confer with Swanson.

SWANSON

I hear from Colonel Hand. The regiment is be here tonight. Orders is no shoot. Anybody hear, see, back to camp. No shoot. Orders is report, no shoot.

The soldiers acknowledge and go back into hiding in the woods.

EXT. TRENTON ROAD - BOYS' LOCATION - DAY

POW. A shot from the road. Isaac wakes up.

Isaac looks behind the tree and sees Toby on the road 20 yards away, target practicing at a lonely twig on a winter tree. Toby reloads.

ISAAC

Toby, what're you doing? Toby?

Isaac watches Toby aim his gun. POW. Another twig disintegrates at a significant distance. Toby's a good shot. Toby takes a bullet out of his pocket and reloads.

ISAAC

(mumbling)

Jeez, the whole world will be here in a minute.

Isaac gets up. A shot comes from the other side of the road. A tree branch splinters near Toby.

Major Derring gallops onto the road. Toby looks around. He can't run. Toby looks at his gun. Derring draws his sword and charges. Toby stands there paralyzed.

Toby ducks as the sword swings. It hits a tree. Derring rides past a few feet.

Toby stands in the middle of the road with a loaded gun, facing Derring on his horse.

Isaac slips behind a spruce tree and watches in horror. He carefully retrieves his gun and backpack a few feet away.

Derring stops ten yards from Toby and faces him from the Princeton direction with a drawn sword. Toby aims his gun at Derring. Toby's gun shakes.

Derring slowly trots his horse up to Toby and puts the point of his sword one inch from Toby's throat. Three other British soldiers come up behind Derring.

LAWRENCE

Caught a fish, I see. Cheery-ho.

DERRING

Drop it.

Toby drops his gun. Derring nudges Toby with his sword toward the other soldiers. They grab Toby by both arms.

DERRING

Take him back for questioning.

Derring turns around and heads back toward Princeton.

LAWRENCE

You're that rebel from Sunday  
night. You're going to get it now.

Lawrence twists Toby's arm.

Isaac points his loaded gun through the spruce tree. He looks down the barrel at Lawrence, then at the other soldiers one at a time. He can't decide.

Toby faces Princeton. Lawrence faces Trenton. All the British have their backs or partial backs toward Isaac. Toby doesn't see Isaac either, even though he's looking that way.

LAWRENCE

Where's your rebel brother?

TOBY

We ain't rebels.

Lawrence slaps him in the face. Toby falls to the ground, crying.

LAWRENCE

Where's your damn rebel brother?

Lawrence picks him up by the hair.

TOBY

We ain't rebels. We're uh, you know, uh, Tourneys.

LAWRENCE

Tourneys? Ha. What's that, a circus clown?

Lawrence slaps Toby again. The other British soldiers laugh nervously.

LAWRENCE

Maybe you're one of them jousters. They stick each other with them poles. So, Mr. Tourney --

Isaac reaches into his backpack, takes out the string, and studies it. He cuts the string with his teeth and ties the barrel to one branch and the butt end to another branch.

Lawrence fixes a bayonet to his musket and holds it against Toby's neck. He runs his fingers along the length of it.

LAWRENCE

You ever get stuck with a knife, rebel? I've done it a hundred times. The blood is all over, boy. You can't believe it. Squirts out all over the place.

Isaac aims the musket at Lawrence, too close to Toby, then again at a soldier. A branch is in the way. Isaac ties the branch back with another piece of string.

LAWRENCE

I once stuck a Frenchie in the ass. Man, did he howl. Would have took him days to die.

Isaac's aim is too high. He adjusts the string holding the butt end of the gun, raising the gun and lowering the aim. He ties it off.

LAWRENCE

Bleeding all over the ground. I had to stomp on his face 'cause he wouldn't hush up. And he wouldn't stop bleeding. Ha.

Isaac ties a string around the trigger

LAWRENCE

And as soon as I get that brother Tourney of yours, it's going to be his turn. I'll stick him right in the ass. 'Course, you'll be dead before that.

Isaac meanders through the brush with the string toward Toby, slinking, crawling, and crouching out of sight.

At a bush Isaac has to decide to go toward the road or away from it. He goes away from the road. He's moving parallel to the road in the direction of Trenton.

LAWRENCE

And after all you rebel bastards is stuck in the ass, then I'm going back and see that pretty little mum of yours.

The soldiers laugh again politely.

LAWRENCE

You should see this bitch. Wild as a hornet. Man, I'm going to like stickin' that bitch. Ha.

Isaac is near Toby and Lawrence, but still obscured by the dense shrubbery. He pulls on the string. The bush to his left moves. A British soldier, alarmed, sees the bush.

SOLDIER 1

Who goes there?

Lawrence turns and looks at the bush.

Isaac tugs again. The soldiers see the bush move again.

SOLDIER 2

Rebels!

The soldiers back up toward the Princeton direction. Their muskets point at the bush.

ISAAC

(to himself)

Go off, please go off.

Isaac tugs again, hard. The bush moves a lot. Both soldiers fire at the bush. Isaac's gun goes off from 20 yards to his left, next to the soldiers. POW. A bullet splinters a log on the road. Isaac sprints toward Toby and Lawrence.

The soldiers see smoke from the spruce tree to their immediate right, a bush swaying ten yards toward Trenton, and a figure running toward the road ten yards farther down. Lawrence doesn't see Isaac running.

SOLDIER 1

Ahhieeee! Rebels. All over.

The soldiers turn and run up the road toward Princeton. Lawrence calls to them,

LAWRENCE

Get back here, you cowards.

Lawrence turns slowly to his left. Isaac is two feet away.

LAWRENCE

Ahhieeee!

Isaac plows into Lawrence at a full run. Lawrence sprawls into the woods on the other side of the road and drops his gun. Isaac tumbles, falls, but he's not hurt.

ISAAC

Toby, run.

Toby runs down the road toward Trenton. Isaac runs behind him. Isaac looks back and sees the two soldiers running in the opposite direction.

Isaac stops, runs back to the gun and picks it up. Isaac goes quickly over to the dazed Lawrence and rips the powder horn off his chest.

Isaac runs down the road toward Trenton. Lawrence recovers, walks over to the spruce tree and sees the string on the gun. He shakes his fist toward Trenton.

LAWRENCE

Damn rebels. I'll get you. And your mum, too.

A tree rustles in the breeze. Lawrence hustles off toward Princeton.

EXT. TRENTON ROAD - DAY

The boys stop running, stooped, panting. Toby cries.

TOBY

I want to go home.

ISAAC

We can't go home. How could you be so stupid? You damn near got us killed. Shooting a gun in the middle of the road. Now we have no packs, no food, one gun, and a long way to go.

TOBY

I want to go home. We can just go home.

ISAAC

No. We can't go home. And we're not Tourneys, we're Tories.

TOBY

But what if that soldier goes back to the house? Ma's there. He'll kill her. And the little ones.

ISAAC

Shut up. You have any bullets?

Toby reaches into his pocket.

TOBY

Yes, I have some.

Isaac hands the gun to Toby.

ISAAC

Load it. I can't wait to get rid of you in Allentown.



AIDE

Sir, he's buried.

CORNWALLIS

So, dig him up and shoot him again.  
Then send his miserable carcass back  
to London in a box. Let the King see  
what contemptible incompetence our  
money buys these days.

The aides look at each other anxiously.

CORNWALLIS

Tell Mawhood to stay in Princeton.  
Send the Fusiliers to Maidenhead.

AIDE

It might take some time to get the  
guns up. The roads are muddy.

CORNWALLIS

Damn the mud. I want 8,000 men in  
Trenton on Thursday morning. Keep  
three regiments at Princeton,  
1,400 in reserve.

AIDE

Yes, Sir.

CORNWALLIS

The Fox made his biggest mistake this  
time, coming back. Huge mistake. Now I  
don't even have to cross the river.

Cornwallis writes an order. He hands it to an aide.

CORNWALLIS

What a fool he is to come back  
here. And only a fool would miss  
this chance to crush him. And I  
sir, am no fool.

EXT. TRENTON ROAD - PENNINGTON CROSSROAD - DAY

Isaac and Toby come to a crossroad. Toby looks to the left.

TOBY

Is that the back road?

ISAAC

Now how can that be the back road?  
How can the back road go off in  
the wrong direction from the front  
road? That's the Pennington Road.

TOBY

Where does it go?

ISAAC

It goes to the back road, and it's not the back road, it's the Quaker Road.

TOBY

I thought you said it's the Pennington road.

ISAAC

This! is the Pennington road. The back road is the Quaker road.

TOBY

Why don't we take the Quaker road?

ISAAC

'Cause you're too stupid, that's why. The back road... Ah... the Quaker road... goes below Trenton. We can't cross the river below Trenton.  
(mumbles) Stupid.

EXT. FIVE-MILE RUN - DAY

The boys pass the Pennington crossroad, walk a mile farther, and arrive at a small stream called Five-Mile Run. It's ten feet wide and only inches of water. They slosh across.

EXT. FIVE-MILE RUN - 50 YARDS WEST - DAY

Several rebel soldiers sit on the road. Sergeant Swanson rides up on a horse.

SWANSON

Off road. Watch. You see, run back. No shoot.

The men get off the road and into the brush on both sides.

EXT. FIVE-MILE RUN - BOYS' POSITION - EAST - DAY

TOBY

Isaac, I'm tired. How much longer?

ISAAC

That was Five-Mile Run, so it's five miles to Trenton. And it's getting dark. Damn, we're probably going to have to stay out here all night. Damn.

EXT. FIVE-MILE RUN - SWANSON'S POSITION - WEST - DAY

SOLDIER 1  
Did you hear that?

SOLDIER 2  
Yes. Somebody's coming.

The soldiers hide in the brush.

TOBY  
Isaac, can't we stop? I'm tired. I  
can't walk no more.

ISAAC  
What do you want me to do? We have  
to keep going.

SOLDIER 1  
Halt. Drop your weapons.

Six soldiers appear on the road. Toby runs. A soldier  
fires. Isaac runs. Another shot. Sergeant Swanson rides out  
of the woods onto the road behind the boys.

SWANSON  
No shoot.

Toby gets past him and splashes across the stream. Swanson  
maneuvers his horse so Isaac can't get past. Isaac runs  
under the horse.

The horse rears up on its hind legs. Swanson hits his head  
on a branch and falls softly to the ground. Isaac runs  
across the stream. More shots.

SWANSON  
No, no. No shoot. Let them go.

Sergeant Swanson sits up, holds his head. Some blood. A  
soldier gets a cloth and ties it around Swanson's head.

SWANSON  
Ah. They know we here now.

The boys are gone.

EXT. TRENTON ROAD - PENNINGTON CROSSROAD - DAY

TOBY  
Now can we go there?

ISAAC  
Aw, shut up.

The boys go to the right down the Pennington Road.

EXT. PENNINGTON ROAD - DAY

TOBY  
Who were those men?

Isaac looks puzzled.

ISAAC  
I don't know. Probably some  
militia, or stragglers.

TOBY  
Maybe they was rebels.

ISAAC  
No. The rebels are in Philadelphia.  
Hurry, Toby, keep up. We have a long  
way to go, especially now.

EXT. PENNINGTON ROAD / QUAKER ROAD JUNCTION - NIGHT

ISAAC  
Here's the Quaker Road.

The boys turn right and go 50 yards. They hear a HONKING sound, a goose, off to the right. Isaac goes off the road and looks for the goose.

ISAAC  
There's dinner. Here, goosey,  
goosey, goosey.

TOBY  
Isaac, come back. Where are you?

Isaac slips in the mud, falls on his back, tries to get up. He can't get up. He sees the goose running toward the road. It's deep mud.

ISAAC  
Toby, shoot the goose. Shoot it.

Isaac slips and slides in the mud. Toby is on the dry road. The goose runs toward Toby. Toby panics. He points his gun at the goose and watches the big bird come at him.

The goose comes up to Toby. Toby points the loaded gun right at it. Toby backs up slowly.

TOBY  
Don't you come no closer.

ISAAC

Toby, shoot. Shoot.

The goose bites Toby.

TOBY

Ah, Ah. Get away from me. Ah.

Toby kicks at the goose, doesn't hit it, falls down, gets up, kicking. The goose avoids the kicks and attacks again.

Toby runs away from the road 20 yards. The goose chases him all the way, pecking. It's smashed-down cornstalks, dry terrain.

ISAAC

Shoot the goddamn dinner, Toby. Ha.

TOBY

Isaac, Ah. Get him off me. Isaac.

A single SHOT shatters the night air. The goose is obliterated, feathers all over the place.

Toby looks toward the sound of the gunshot, 20 yards away. Isaac stops struggling in the mud.

A figure strides quickly and confidently toward them through the darkness. Both boys freeze. Closer... closer... closer... Then to Toby,

ANNA

Gimmee that gun.

It's a girl in baggy men's pants and a hat. She takes the gun from Toby and drops her unloaded musket on the ground. She walks onto the road, cocks the gun (CLICK) and points it at Isaac.

ANNA

Get out of there.

Isaac struggles out of the mud and gets to the road. ANNA is 17 and attractive. Anna and Isaac look at each other as Isaac passes. Isaac goes in front, Anna behind. Isaac catches up with Toby.

MOMMA (O.S.)

Anna, Anna. Where you? Whas you do? Who shoot?

ANNA

I'm here, Momma, I'm safe. We have trespassers.

TOBY

Where we going?

ANNA

To the house. Momma's there.

TOBY

You have anything to eat there?

INT. TRENTON TENT - NIGHT

Murphy signs papers at a desk. He wears glasses. Jackson enters.

JACKSON

Cap, I need a favor.

MURPHY

Ah, you're the kid who was stuck in the mud. What can I do for you, son?

JACKSON

You've got to get us out of there.

MURPHY

Out of where?

JACKSON

That regiment. Captain Hawkins is crazy. You saw him.

MURPHY

I don't know what I can do.

JACKSON

We want to fight, me and my men. We want to join your regiment.

MURPHY

I don't know as you'll see much fighting with me. I mostly push papers, not cannons.

JACKSON

I heard you can do anything.

Murphy smiles.

MURPHY

Thanks, but I don't know. You're not riflemen.

JACKSON

I can shoot. So can Satchel. He's my brother. He's sick now, but he'll get better.

MURPHY

Shooting a rifle is different than shooting a musket. It takes a long time to load.

JACKSON

We can learn.

MURPHY

I don't think we have the time.

Murphy stares at Jackson for a moment.

MURPHY

How old are you, son?

JACKSON

Eighteen.

MURPHY

I have a boy about your age. Two boys.

JACKSON

Are they here?

Murphy pauses a long time, shakes his head, and looks down at his papers.

MURPHY

No, they live with their mother. I haven't seen them in years.

JACKSON

Can't you get us out of that regiment? We'll do good. Please, sir. You can do it.

MURPHY

I'll see what I can do.

Jackson salutes and leaves. Murphy watches him go.

INT. / EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A matronly woman sits in a chair at a table with a gun across her lap. A curtained window behind her is next to a door going out back.

A fire burns in a fireplace with a pot over it. Steam comes out. A grandfather's clock is in the corner.

Anna enters with the two boys. They're caked with mud.

MOMMA

EEK! Whas you do, girl? Who this?  
Neina come in my house. Get out.

ANNA

Momma, they're hungry.

MOMMA

We no let strangers here, Anna.  
You father shoot them. Go away.

ANNA

Momma, they're just boys. They  
haven't eaten in days.

Isaac and Toby frown at each other. MOMMA looks suspiciously at them and Anna. Isaac, Anna, and Toby are lined up. Momma, six feet away, gets up and points the gun at them.

MOMMA

Whas you name, boy?

ISAAC

Isaac. He's Toby. We're brothers.

MOMMA

Where you from?

ISAAC

Near Princeton.

MOMMA

Whas you do here?

ISAAC

We're trying to get to Allentown.

MOMMA

Sit.

The boys sit at the table. Anna sits in a chair. Momma puts the gun to the side and gets some food out of a cabinet. The boys eat ravenously.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Momma goes out onto the back porch and overturns a large wooden tub, circular, three feet in diameter, two feet tall. She turns it upright. She comes back in.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Momma takes three large pots out of a cabinet.

MOMMA

Take these, girl, get water.

ISAAC

I'll go with you.

Isaac and Anna scurry out the back door.

Momma stares suspiciously at Toby, scooping food into his mouth faster than he can swallow it.

TOBY

Can I have some more potatoes?

Momma gets some.

MOMMA

Why you go to Pennsylvania?

TOBY

Our mother wants us to get away from the war.

Toby wolfs down the last of the food.

TOBY

We're Tories.

MOMMA

Einaa Tory, Mas Niecht. Out. Get Out. I shoot.

Momma picks up the gun and points it at Toby.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Isaac and Anna walk toward an outdoor pump.

ANNA

Allentown? Isn't that in Pennsylvania? And why do you want to be Tories?

ISAAC

I don't know. Our mother hates Washington. And Franklin. She really hates Franklin. He started the war.

ANNA

What?

ISAAC

Franklin. He started the war. And Washington.

ANNA

What?

ISAAC

They started the war.

Anna shakes her head.

ANNA

Don't you know anything about this war, Isaac?

ISAAC

I don't know -- maybe not --

Anna recovers from Isaac's stupidity.

ANNA

Don't tell Momma you're Tories. She'll shoot you.

ISAAC

I don't know who we are any more. The British are trying to kill us, the rebels are shooting at us, farmers. Gosh, even you. I don't know anymore.

ANNA

You don't know too much, do you, Isaac?

Isaac hangs his head.

ANNA

My father's in the army.

ISAAC

Really? He's a rebel?

ANNA

Yes. He fought here last week at Trenton. We saw him after that, but then he had to go back.

Isaac listens intently.

ANNA

Momma and Papa came over here from the old country before I was born. They wanted to get away from, you know, all that stuff.

ISAAC

What stuff?

ANNA

Never mind. Papa's a great patriot. He loves Franklin. He used to read to me from the almanac. 'Little strokes fell great oaks.'

ISAAC

I don't know about that.

ANNA

I miss Papa terribly. I hope he's safe. 'God helps them that help themselves. No gains without pains.'

ISAAC

Yes, I've heard that one.

ANNA

Oh, you have, huh? 'It's hard for an empty bag to stand upright.'

ISAAC

What? What in hell does that mean?

Anna laughs.

ANNA

Oh, Isaac, you're funny.

They look at each other for a moment.

ANNA

We better get the water.

Isaac holds a bucket under the pump. Anna pumps the water into it. The water splashes all over Isaac.

ISAAC

Ahhieeee. It's cold.

Anna takes some water from the bucket in her hands and throws it on Isaac.

ISAAC

Hey. Stop that. It's cold.

He scoops some water out with his hand and throws it at her. She runs away laughing, then comes back.

ANNA

Now don't you do that anymore. You got me wet.

Anna throws another blast of cold water from the bucket at Isaac. He lunges backward to avoid it.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

TOBY

Isaac. Isaac. Help. Put it down.

MOMMA

You Tory, I shoot.

Toby looks at the back door, no Isaac. He looks at the gun. The hammer is down on the pan, so it's not cocked.

TOBY

I don't think it's loaded.

MOMMA

You think I no kill you with empty gun?

Momma holds the gun by the barrel and raises it over her head. Toby looks frantically around. He's trapped between the clock and a corner. There's nowhere to go.

TOBY

No, wait. We fought the British on Sunday, and again today.

Momma pauses.

TOBY

Isaac shot them, the British. He shot them with a string. On a gun. I mean, with a gun on a string.

MOMMA

I smash you head.

TOBY

No, wait. See, Isaac can't shoot, so he -- They had a knife to me. They was trying to kill me. Us, I mean. The British. Me and Isaac. Isaac shot 'em with a string on a gun. Isaac, get in here.

Momma raises the gun.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

ANNA

We better get this water back.

They carry the buckets of water to the back porch and put them down. Anna glances at the tub. She takes Isaac's hands in hers.

ANNA

You know, Isaac, it'll be midnight pretty soon. It's customary in the old country to kiss a person you like in order to bring good luck in the coming year.

Isaac panics.

ISAAC

I, uh, uh, I never kissed a girl before.

ANNA

Well, you have a few minutes to get used to the idea.

They hear a CRASH from inside the house

ANNA

Sounds like Momma and your brother have been talking.

Isaac and Anna rush inside. Toby huddles against the clock. Momma's gun hovers in the air. There's a broken plate on the floor.

ANNA

Momma, no.

MOMMA

I kill all Tories.

ANNA

He's not a Tory, Momma. He's just a boy.

Isaac and Anna go over to Toby. He shakes in fear. Anna strokes his head in consolation. Isaac helps Toby get up. Isaac whispers,

ISAAC

Shhh. We're not Tories anymore.

TOBY

Yes, I know. Jeez. Thanks.

Momma's face scrunches into a threatening snarl.

MOMMA

You. Take pot off fire. Out back.

ANNA

Do as she says, Isaac. Take the pot off the fire. Don't get burned.

ISAAC

Why?

ANNA

Just take it out back to the porch with the other water. You'll be all right, I promise you.

MOMMA

Sit.

Anna cleans up the broken plate, then sits in the chair by the curtained window. She stares innocently around the room.

Momma opens a cabinet and takes out a dark, brick-like object and a very large knife.

ISAAC

Anna?

ANNA

Hmmm?

Isaac gets the steaming water off the fire and walks out back. Toby follows.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Momma faces the boys. They stand next to the tub. She moves the knife up and down in the air.

MOMMA

Off.

ISAAC

What?

MOMMA

Off. Now. Neicht.

The boys look at each other in confusion.

MOMMA

Clothes. Off, now.

Momma shakes the knife violently. Toby and Isaac are wide-eyed.

ANNA (O.S)

Better do it, boys.

They take off their shirts slowly, then stop, as if that might be enough. Momma gestures toward the tub with the knife.

MOMMA

In there. Clothes.

The boys throw their shirts into the tub. Momma turns and faces away from them. She pours some hot water into each of the cold-water jugs. Then she takes the knife and slices pieces of soap from the brick into two of the jugs.

She swishes it around to make bubbles. She turns and faces the boys. They have their shirts off. They shiver.

MOMMA

Eicht. Off. All off. In tub.

The boys look at each other again.

TOBY

She's crazy, Isaac.

The boys take off their pants and throw them into the tub. Now they're in their underwear.

Momma puts down the soap and knife and goes back into the house. She glances at Anna to her left. Anna gazes innocently around. Momma goes into another room.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Anna gets up quickly, pulls aside the curtain, and sees the boys with their backs toward her in their underwear. Momma comes back. Anna scrambles into the chair.

Momma emerges with towels and clothing under her arm. She gives Anna a cold stare as she passes. Anna looks at her fingernails.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Momma goes back outside and puts the clothes on a bench between the tub and the window. The boys hold their shoulders against the cold. She picks up the knife and shakes it inches from their groins.

MOMMA

Off. All off.

Isaac and Toby are petrified now. They look at Momma, at the knife, then at each other.

MOMMA

Off. All off. Off.

ANNA (O.S.)

Better do it, Isaac.

The boys take off their underwear and throw it into the tub, naked now.

They hold their groins so Momma can't see.

MOMMA

What, you think I no see boys before? Get in tub.

The boys step into the bucket, standing up with their butts toward the window. Momma turns away from them and picks up one of the buckets. She faces them.

ISAAC

No, no. Don't you... Don't you dare. Don't. I swear, I'll --

Momma throws the bucket of water on them.

ISAAC AND TOBY

Ahhieeee! Cold. No.

MOMMA

Is cold, yes. Is good for you.

Anna hears the screams, smiles, and gently pushes the curtain away. She peeks at the boys in all their nakedness from behind. She giggles. Another bucket of water.

ISAAC AND TOBY

Ahhieeee. No. Please.

MOMMA

Scrub.

The boys stand in the tub, freezing, shivering. They scrub themselves all over. Momma turns toward them with the last bucket of water.

ISAAC

Oh, no, no more. Please. No.

Water on them.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Anna watches through the curtain. She giggles again.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Momma points to the towels and the clothes on the bench. They turn toward the window to get them. Anna sees them in all their full-frontal nakedness.

Anna

Oh my goodness.

Anna watches the boys dry off and get into the clothes. Then she scrambles into the chair, crosses her legs and shakes her foot up and down in seeming indifference.

The boys plow back into the house, falling all over themselves. Momma stays outside a minute to wash the clothes.

ANNA

Well, boys, have a good time?

They fall into chairs, panting. Momma comes in with their wet clothes. They watch as Momma puts the clothes by the fire to dry. Toby's eyes droop.

ANNA

Momma, they have to stay here tonight.

MOMMA

Nein. They go. You father shoot them.

ANNA

Momma, it's late. You can't send them out in the cold. They'll die.

MOMMA

They die you father find out.

ANNA

Momma, we won't tell Papa. It'll be our secret. Please, Momma. They can stay in my room. I'll sleep with you.

MOMMA

No, Anna. No. I no think --

Anna kisses Momma on the cheek. Anna turns to Isaac.

ANNA

Come. Let's get Toby to bed.

MOMMA

Nein, you stay, they go.

ANNA  
 (whispering)  
 Momma, I have things in there. I  
 have to get them out.

Momma stares in disapproval, then goes back to drying the clothes. Anna and Isaac get Toby out of the chair. They walk him down a hall to another room. Anna goes in first.

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna picks up some underwear on the bed. Toby crashes into the bed and is fast asleep instantly.

MOMMA (O.S.)  
 Anna, come back here, girl.

ANNA  
 Coming, Momma.

SOUND (O.S.) CLOCK CHIMES

ANNA  
 It's midnight, Isaac. You know  
 what that means.

ISAAC  
 It's 1777?

ANNA  
 Yes.

She takes his left hand and pulls it behind her back.

ANNA  
 It's time.

They kiss.

MOMMA (O.S.)  
 Anna. Come here now.

ANNA  
 Coming, Momma.

Anna rubs Toby's head as she heads for the door.

ANNA  
 Good night, Toby. 'Night, Isaac.

Isaac is too stunned to reply. Anna leaves, giggling.

SUPER: DAY FOUR, WEDNESDAY, Jan. 1, 1777

EXT. QUAKER ROAD - DAY

The boys walk. They spy an open field to their right through the sparse trees. The Assunpink Creek runs parallel to the road at the far end of the field.

TOBY

We almost to Trenton?

ISAAC

The bridge is just ahead, then it's up through town and over to the ferry. We should be in Pennsylvania this afternoon.

TOBY

You think that British guy is around here?

ISAAC

I don't think so. I hope not.

A stone bridge appears ahead.

TOBY

What about them rebels we saw?

ISAAC

The rebels are in Philadelphia. Those were militia. The Tories will take care of them. Ha.

TOBY

I thought we wasn't Tories no more.

ISAAC

Oh, yes. I forgot.

The field comes more clearly into view through the thinning trees. Hundreds of tents line the Assunpink Creek.

ISAAC

Oh, my God. The army's here. Damn. Get down.

The field to their right is filled with wagons, cannons, tents and men. The boys crouch down, out of sight.

Three soldiers come out of the woods behind them.

SOLDIER

Hands in the air.

The boys run. Five other soldiers come out of the woods in front. Two of them grab Isaac. Toby throws his gun at them and plows through. The soldiers throw him hard to the ground.

Toby cries. The boys are marched away.

EXT. TRENTON TENT - DAY

Washington talks with Mercer, Fermoy, and Murphy.

WASHINGTON

Fermoy, where's your regiment?

FERMOY

Colonel Hand's at Five-Mile Run.

WASHINGTON

Shouldn't you be there also?

Fermoy nods and exits. Another SOLDIER comes in and goes up to Murphy.

SOLDIER

(softly)

Sir, we caught some locals coming into camp. They could be spies.

WASHINGTON

I don't trust that man. I wish I didn't have to send him.

MERCER

Colonel Hand's up there. He knows what to do.

WASHINGTON

Murphy, you're with Hand, aren't you?

MURPHY

Yes, sir. I'm working on ordinance. I'm going up as soon as I can get away.

WASHINGTON

All right, gentlemen, let's move. The enemy is already late.

All exit. Murphy and the soldier go into another tent ten yards away.

INT. TENT - DAY

Murphy and the soldier enter the tent. Isaac and Toby sit on boxes. Another soldier guards them.

MURPHY

Who are you?

Silence.

MURPHY

Who are you and what are you doing here?

SOLDIER

One of them said they were Tories, sir.

TOBY

I didn't say we were Tories. I said we were Tories. I mean, we used to be Tories.

ISAAC

Hold your tongue, Toby.

MURPHY

Toby? Your name's Toby? How old are you, boy?

Toby

Fourteen.

ISAAC

Don't tell him anything.

MURPHY

(to Isaac)

What's your name?

Isaac looks at the ground.

MURPHY

How old are you, about eighteen?

TOBY

He's seventeen.

ISAAC

Toby!

TOBY

He was just asking, Isaac.

MURPHY

Oh, no.

Murphy freezes. He looks intensely at the boys.

SOLDIER

What is it, sir?

Murphy looks at the boys in self-absorbed concentration and worry. The soldiers stare at him.

MURPHY

Your mother's name is Maggie?

The boys gape at Murphy in shock.

MURPHY

She runs a fabric shop or something? Your father is John Sinclair?

TOBY

It's a dress shop.

SOLDIER

Captain Murphy, what is it?

ISAAC

Murphy? You're Murphy? Warren  
Murphy? I'll kill you.

Isaac charges off his box and throws a punch at Murphy. Murphy ducks to the side. The two soldiers grab Isaac and throw him back on the box. Isaac rages.

ISAAC

Why did you leave us? Do you know what you did to us? And Ma? I hate you. I swear I'll kill you.

TOBY

You're our father? Pa?

Toby's jaw drops.

Murphy shakes his head. He struggles for words.

MURPHY

Look, I don't have time to explain what happened with your mother and me. Is she all right? And John?

TOBY

He left last year. Went back to England.

MURPHY

I'm sorry to hear that. He was a good man.

ISAAC

He was a coward.

MURPHY

What are you doing here?

TOBY

Ma says we have to go to Allentown. Away from the war.

MURPHY

Ah, yes, her sister.

TOBY

Then Isaac's coming back to fight the...

ISAAC

The Tories. And the British.

MURPHY

No. Nobody's crossing that river for a long time. Isaac, you come with me tomorrow. Toby, you stay here until the fighting's done. Then I'll get you both home.

Murphy turns toward the other soldiers.

MURPHY

Put 'em to work. And keep an eye on 'em.

ISAAC

We're leaving.

MURPHY

No, you're not. I can't take a chance you'll give us away. And there's nobody to guard you.

ISAAC

You can't order us around. You're not -- You can't tell me what to do.

MURPHY

Shoot 'em as spies.

ISAAC

No. Wait. All right, I'll go with you, but Toby comes with me.

MURPHY

I give the orders here.

ISAAC

Ma says.

Murphy exits.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Maggie slices vegetables. Two children, ages four and five, sit at a table and eat soup.

CHILD

Mommy, are you crying?

MAGGIE

It's the onions, dear.

Maggie chops onions with a small paring knife. The children watch her. Tears roll down her face.

CHILD

Mommy, When are the boys coming home?

Maggie's gaze goes past the vegetables, past the table, through the floor and into the deep, dark earth far below. The knife cuts slowly and by itself.

CHILD

Mommy, When are Isaac and Toby --

MAGGIE

OW. OW. OW.

CHILD

Mommy, Mommy?

MAGGIE

I'm all right, children. I just cut... I cut my -- Just a little.

She puts the knife into her pocket. She sobs.

MAGGIE

It's all right. Just my finger.

She runs out of the kitchen into another room.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maggie ties a cloth around her finger. She stares into a mirror above a dresser. Her eyes are red from crying.

MAGGIE

Dear God, I'm sorry. I don't mean to send them away. I drive everybody away. I don't mean to. Please don't take them.

She cries fitfully into her hands.

MAGGIE

Please don't take them. Please,  
please. I'll die if -- I'll just  
die, God. I won't be able to live.

Maggie pleads to the pitiful face in the mirror.

MAGGIE

I promise, God. I promise. I won't  
send them away anymore. Please  
don't take them. I promise. Please  
don't take away my boys ... my men.

She heaves in tearful convulsions, hiccups, gags, grabs a  
pan next to the bed and throws up.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Maggie enters.

CHILD

Mommy, are you hurt?

Maggie wipes her eyes and mouth.

MAGGIE

No, children. Eat your soup.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Toby and Isaac lie in cots, half-asleep. Murphy enters with  
a gun and sits down on a box. They all look at each other  
anxiously for a moment.

MURPHY

You boys get anything to eat?

ISAAC

Yes.

MURPHY

You know, I didn't just up and  
leave you mother. It was a mutual  
thing. We just couldn't get along.

TOBY

You knew about John?

MURPHY

Yes, of course. I liked him. I  
knew he could take care of you.  
It's hard to explain. Don't you  
remember all that yelling?

TOBY

That used to bother me.

MURPHY

Yes, me too. And her. Arguing, yelling, crying, but we really did love each other. Still do, I guess. I send her money whenever I can, even though I don't have much.

ISAAC

You left us with John.

MURPHY

I'm sorry, Isaac. I didn't know it would affect you so much. It just got harder and harder to make up. It's completely my fault. I guess I couldn't handle conflict back then. Now look, we're in a war.

TOBY

What do you do now? You married?

MURPHY

No, not married. I have a small hog farm in West Chester.

ISAAC

I bet that stinks.

MURPHY

Yes, well... I'm with the First Pennsylvania Riflemen. I report to Colonel Hand. We marched 300 miles to Boston, came all the way down here. Lost only a few men so far.

TOBY

You mean they died?

MURPHY

Yes, but many more of us would have died except for this.

Murphy holds up his rifle. Toby looks at it curiously.

ISAAC

It's a gun.

MURPHY

It's a rifle, the Kentucky Long.

Murphy hands it to Toby. Toby fingers it.

MURPHY

Some of our boys can kill a man at 300 yards. Trouble is, it takes a long time to load.

ISAAC

Toby can shoot.

MURPHY

I remember. You used to shoot from your hip, didn't you?

ISAAC

Yes, but he won't shoot. Not even a goose. In the swamp, he wouldn't even shoot a goose when we were starving. If not for Anna, we'd have starved to death in the swamp.

MURPHY

Who's Anna?

ISAAC

She's the girl at the swamp. On the Quaker Road. She lives there. On a farm, next to the swamp. We stayed there last night.

MURPHY

I see. Get some sleep. We leave tomorrow for the point.

Murphy leaves.

EXT. FIVE-MILE RUN - DAY

Two cannons point toward Princeton. On the road, Colonel Hand and General Fermoy sit on horses. Sergeant Swanson stands with a bandaged head.

Murphy walks up from the Trenton direction. Isaac and Toby walk behind him. Swanson faces Princeton, talking to Hand, so he doesn't see Murphy yet. Murphy hands Fermoy a note.

MURPHY

From the general, sir.

Fermoy reads it once to himself, then again out loud so Murphy can hear it.

FERMOY

Report back the instant there's contact.

Fermoy looks down at Murphy. Murphy frowns.

MURPHY

What? Report back the instant there's contact. What?

FERMOY

Yes. Report back. The instant there's contact.

MURPHY

Who me? I can't go back. Send somebody else back. You go back. You're the goddamn general.

Murphy turns his back on Fermoy and walks toward Swanson. Fermoy points his finger at Murphy.

FERMOY

You can't talk to me like that.

The torque of Fermoy's outstretched arm causes him to fall out of the saddle. He grabs the saddle horn with his other hand, which balances his position, but twirls the horse around, facing Trenton.

FERMOY

Whoa, there girl.

Fermoy brings the horse back to the correct direction. Murphy looks back with disgust.

MURPHY

Sergeant.

Swanson turns and recognizes Murphy. He sees Isaac.

SWANSON

Ach du yungen.

Isaac sees Swanson and turns to run. Murphy grabs Isaac by the shirt as he sidesteps to avoid Toby.

MURPHY

What's going on here? You know each other?

SWANSON

He try and kill me. He give me this bump on head. I shoot this rascal.

MURPHY

Wait a minute. Sergeant, wait. Borg, I don't know what's going on here, but these are my sons.

SWANSON

You sons? What sons you have try  
and kill me? You no say you habben  
sie kinder here.

MURPHY

It's a long story, Borg. I'll tell  
you all about it after the war.  
Right now I need you to take care  
of them. Don't get 'em shot. A  
favor for me, Borg.

Swanson glares menacingly at Isaac.

SWANSON

Agreed. But they do as I say, or I  
shoot them myself.

MURPHY

Fair enough.

SWANSON

(to Isaac)

A word to the wise is enough.

ISAAC

Yeah, sure.

SWANSON

But many won't fill a bushel.

Isaac scrunches up his face. He looks at Toby. Toby shrugs.

Indiscernible shouts come from the direction of Princeton.  
Three soldiers come into view.

SOLDIER

British. British.

Everybody turns toward Princeton. Fermoy trots up just as  
the soldiers stumble in.

SOLDIER

British. Hundreds of them. Five  
hundred yards up. Coming this way.

FERMOY

I have to warn the general.

Fermoy turns his horse and bolts toward Trenton as fast as  
he can ride. Everyone watches him go in shock and  
disbelief.

SUPER: DAY FIVE, THURSDAY, Jan. 2, 1777 2:00 PM

SUPER: THE BATTLE BEGINS

MURPHY

I guess you're in charge now.

HAND

Damn. Go back and warn the regiment. Take charge 'till I get there. Get them off the road into the woods. We'll be there shortly.

Hand gets off his horse, Murphy gets on it and rides back. Toby and Isaac look at each other. Swanson runs off the road to the right.

HAND

Off the road, men. You know what to do. Keep track of the sun.

The sun is two thirds of the way across the sky.

SWANSON

You, boys, git here.

The boys go into the woods with Swanson and several other soldiers.

SWANSON

Git down. When we fire, run back through woods. No road.

The British, lots of them, come down the road in file. They get close to the point where the guns are, past Swanson, the men, and the boys. Hand watches them go past from the other side of the road.

HAND

Fire!

Bullets fly from both sides of the road. Many British fall. Swanson's group fires. Isaac hits a tree. Toby doesn't shoot. The two cannons go off. Many more British fall.

SWANSON (to Toby)

Boy, why you no shoot?

Toby has a loaded gun. He freezes, watching the British through the trees. Swanson takes Toby's gun, fires, hits.

SWANSON

You shoot, boy. All back. Keep with the guns.

Swanson's group moves quickly through the woods toward Trenton. More British come up to the dead and wounded. Americans in the woods on both sides reload while running.

The American cannons fire again. BOOM BOOM.

More British are hit. Lots of leafless trees and branches get hit also. Blasts of British bullets CRASH through the trees and branches.

EXT. ROAD, CLOSER TO TRENTON - DAY

Murphy stands in the road with other soldiers. Hand comes out of the woods on the left side of the road with lots of panting Americans.

Swanson comes out on the right with the boys, his men, and others. The two cannons come from ahead.

HAND

We have a few minutes. They'll bring the artillery up now. Everybody reload, then back into the woods. Anybody hurt? (no). Good. Get the guns back 50 yards.

The Americans reload and disperse into the woods. Hand goes to the left. Murphy turns his horse toward Trenton.

ISAAC

Pa.

MURPHY

Stay with the sergeant, boys.

Murphy passes the guns. Toby and Isaac watch him. The boys go into the woods to the right with other soldiers and Swanson.

EXT. ROAD, CLOSER TO TRENTON - DAY

Murphy arrives at the next group of soldiers down the road. Jackson sits on a log with his head in his hands.

JACKSON

I can't never go home.

Jackson's men stand around. Heavy eyes sympathize with their leader. A soldier sees Murphy approach.

SOLDIER

Jack, get up. Our officer's here.

MURPHY

What happened?

SOLDIER

Satchel died.

JACKSON

How am I gonna tell my ma? I was supposed to take care of him.

Jackson looks up at Murphy. Jackson cries.

MURPHY

I'm sorry, son.

Murphy looks back up the road. Musket shots come closer and more frequently.

MURPHY

Jackson, can you get up?

Jackson slowly stands. His men help him. Jackson looks at Murphy with watery eyes.

MURPHY

I'll help you tell your mother. I promise you, son.

SOLDIER

Jack, it'll be all right. He's our officer. He'll help.

MURPHY

Yes, I'm your officer. I'll help you tell you mother, Mr. Jackson. But right now I need you and your men to do something. It's important.

Murphy looks at Jackson's men for some display of approval. They shake their heads, yes. Jackson wipes his eyes.

MURPHY

They'll try and outflank us on the right. Get out there and stay low, about 20 yards up, 50 yards in. Blast 'em and run like hell back here. Keep the sun on your right.

Jackson and his men move into the woods on the east.

Thirty GUNSHOTS CRACKLE from ahead.

Cannons BOOM BOOM.

Colonel Hand crashes out of the woods with scratches on his face.

Hand falls down on his hands and knees at Murphy's feet. He huffs and puffs.

HAND

Hi, Murph. Everything going according to plan?

MURPHY

You really shouldn't be on the point. You'll get killed.

HAND

Get back down, take care of the next group. I'll be sending British your way. Here come the guns.

The two cannons come rumbling down the road. Ten men follow them. Murphy directs them past him, toward Trenton and then follows them.

Isaac, Toby, Swanson, and others come out of the woods. Other men emerge from the other side of the road.

BOOM BOOM BOOM. Cannon fire from the Princeton direction, solid shot. Trees go down. Branches are torn away. Twigs, branches and leaves fall all over everybody.

Pause, then another volley. Many men come into the road from both left and right.

HAND

They've got the guns up.

Hand and others disappear into the woods.

SWANSON

Boy, you shoot. You hear me?

TOBY

I can't shoot a man. I just can't. I'm sorry, I just can't.

Swanson looks at Toby, then Isaac. Isaac shrugs.

SWANSON

Then you load. (To Isaac) You shoot.

Swanson, the boys and others go off to the right. British cannons and soldiers appear on the road.

EXT. JACKSON'S LOCATION, WOODS - DAY

Jackson and his men lie down in the light snow and hide behind trees and bushes. They can just see the American cannons on the road to their left, 50 yards away.

Ten British appear in front and to the left. The British walk hunched over, looking to their right, very cautious. One soldier loads as he walks.

LAWRENCE

Forget the gun. Use the bayonet.

The British pass Jackson's position. Jackson is to their left, so the British have been outflanked themselves.

JACKSON

Fire.

Five shots. Leaves fall. Five British crash into trees and fall. The others scoot back. Jackson and his men reload as they run.

MONTAGE

- Americans shoot and run back into the woods.
- Isaac fires, hits the trees. Toby loads frantically.
- Swanson yells to his men, points.
- British cannons tear up the trees with solid shot.
- American cannons fire from the road. British fall.
- The American cannons pull back. Murphy directs them.
- Murphy sends men off to the left and right.
- Isaac shoots again and again, misses. Toby reloads.

END MONTAGE

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Isaac, Toby, Swanson, and others run fast through the woods. Toby is behind the group. Isaac trails. Toby trips. He lands on a dead British soldier. He stares fearfully at the man's face.

Isaac faces Princeton. He doesn't see that Toby is down. Isaac sees a glint of sunlight reflect off a bayonet 50 yards away.

Isaac reaches his arm backward, without looking at Toby.

ISAAC

Toby, give me a gun.

Toby takes the soldier's gun and puts it in Isaac's hand. Isaac aims it at the lone soldier creeping toward them, and keeps it aimed.

There are too many trees to shoot. He doesn't recognize...

Lawrence sees an American soldier aiming a gun at him. The brush and trees obscure the fact that it's Isaac.

Lawrence sees another rebel, Toby, on the ground. Lawrence thinks better of the situation and runs back.

Isaac  
So, I guess I showed him -- Toby,  
what are you doing?

Toby stares at the dead soldier.

ISAAC  
He had it coming.

Suddenly, there's nobody there, no shots, no sounds, no soldiers, eerie silence.

ISAAC  
Where are we? Where is everybody?

TOBY  
Sergeant, sergeant. Where are you?

Silence. Isaac points toward Princeton.

ISAAC  
We should go that way.

TOBY  
No, look at the sun.

The sun is low in the sky behind them.

ISAAC  
You're right.

Toby gets up, stumbles and falls. Isaac helps him. They stop for a minute and reload both guns.

ISAAC  
There's some houses down there.

The boys emerge from the woods and see the town. Trenton is a sleepy village with two parallel streets running south from where they are.

Twenty houses and shops line the streets.

The end of the town in the distance gives way to a wide, open field a hundred yards deep.

The road that they're on leads to a stone bridge over the Assunpink Creek, a mile away.

The American army is on the other side of the creek.

Soldiers pour out of the woods far to the right, running through town toward the bridge.

ISAAC

Let's get to that house and work  
our way down.

The boys run through a small field in the open.

A SHOT rings out from behind them.

A bullet rips into Isaac's left arm. Blood and flesh shoot out the other side. Isaac spins around and plows into the house.

His face and body smash against the building. He sinks down to the ground and passes out in shock.

TOBY

No, no, no! Isaac, no. Get up. No.  
Help. Somebody help.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Toby grabs Isaac by the chest and drags him to the Trenton side of the house. Toby leans Isaac against a porch. Isaac slumps down. Toby runs back toward the woods.

TOBY

Help. Help. Somebody help.

Jackson and his men run by, not interested. Three British soldiers come out of the woods toward the house. They see Toby. The soldiers run toward Toby.

Toby ducks back to the porch of the house, terrified. He looks around. The soldiers split up, covering both sides of the house.

Toby carefully balances the two muskets on the railings of the porch. He grabs one gun in his left hand, the other in his right as he did at the Princeton Bridge. Ok. He cocks them, CLICK.

Toby waits, facing Trenton. Tears stream down his face.

TOBY

Hold on, Isaac.

One British soldier appears on the left, running away from the house toward Trenton. Toby aims from the hip, shoots. POW. The soldier falls.

Another soldier appears from the right, hears the shot, turns and faces Toby. POW. Toby shoots him from the hip. A third soldier appears from the left.

Toby slings his right-hand gun at him. The soldier ducks. Toby flings the left-hand gun. The butt of the gun hits the soldier in the face. He falls.

Toby grabs Isaac's good arm and drags him backward toward the bridge, far away. The dazed soldier gets up and aims his musket at Toby, dragging Isaac away.

POW. The soldier falls dead. Swanson appears.

SWANSON

Oh, mein God.

Swanson frowns at Isaac's arm.

Murphy appears.

SWANSON

Bad. Very bad. We get him to bridge.

Murphy and Swanson carry Isaac through the town toward the bridge. Toby follows.

MONTAGE

- Lots of Americans run toward the bridge. They stop, turn, reload, and fire.
- British pursue, firing, falling.
- British cannonballs crash into the retreating Americans.
- Several Americans fall.

END MONTAGE

EXT. FIELD TO BRIDGE - DAY

A lonely Washington sits on a horse in the middle of the bridge a hundred yards away from the boys and the men. Americans rush past Washington in the distance. He says things to them, points. The sun is on the horizon.

EXT. TRENTON BRIDGE - DAY

Isaac and the group get to the bridge. Hand and his men are ten yards behind.

Swanson supports Isaac, but loses him in the shuffle as they cross.

Isaac slides along the right side of Washington's horse. Isaac falls, turns, and grabs the horse's mane with his right (good) arm to keep from going down. He spins backward and falls to the ground on his back.

Isaac looks up and sees Washington on the horse through fuzzy, teary, pain-filled eyes.

WASHINGTON  
 (pointing to the right)  
 Colonel Hand, form your men in  
 that field.

Hand and others go to the right. Swanson and Murphy pick Isaac up and go off the bridge. Toby follows.

EXT. AMERICAN SIDE - DAY

All the Americans are across. Washington rides back toward the American lines behind the creek. Hand's men are on the right. Hundreds of British come out of the town and run toward the bridge. Forty British come onto the bridge.

American cannons explode from behind. Cannonballs hit the bridge. Columns of water shoot high in the air.

American riflemen mow down the British from far and near. The British retreat. Many are dead.

The firing stops. British come onto the bridge and drag away the dead and wounded. The walls of the bridge are still intact. Washington is 50 yards back from the bridge.

WASHINGTON  
 You. You men, cover the exit. You too. Up to the bridge. You, over there, off to the right. Report to Colonel Hand, over there.

The British form furiously on their side. A British officer points to the bridge. Another 50 British charge with bayonets pointing.

American artillery opens up again, BOOM BOOM. Hundreds of American muskets go off. A cannonball smashes the bridge's stone railing, creating a gaping two-foot hole in the side.

Buckets of British blood pour through the opening into the water. British soldiers tumble off both sides into the creek.

Colonel Hand and an OFFICER watch from the right.

OFFICER

Shouldn't we send some men over there, sir?

HAND

That would be about the stupidest thing we could do.

The British form for another attack.

The British artillery opens up, BOOM BOOM. Cannonballs fly overhead, strike the mud, and scamper around through the American lines.

Another 30 British charge the bridge. Cannonballs and bullets slaughter them. They fall into the creek.

Simultaneously, a hundred British rush to the Americans' right, Hand's men defending, and enter the creek. Henry Knox, with the artillery, points them out to his gunners.

Hand's men blast them with rifles. Cannonballs splash into the creek from Henry's guns. Arms, legs, and mangled bodies gurgle to the surface.

The firing stops. Major Derring wades into the freezing water to retrieve a wounded soldier. Hand takes aim.

Derring looks down the barrel of a Kentucky Long Rifle a mere 30 yards away. Derring stares coldly at Hand for a long three seconds. Hand lowers his gun. Derring pulls the soldier out.

EXT. BRITISH SIDE - DAY

Cornwallis and another officer appear on horses at the far edge of the field.

OTHER OFFICER

We'd better hold off for tonight, sir. It's getting dark.

CORNWALLIS

Yes, I know. No matter. I'll bag the Fox in the morning.

OTHER OFFICER

I'll notify the commanders of a dawn attack.

Cornwallis doesn't reply.

OTHER OFFICER

Sir, how shall I report the casualties to General Howe?

CORNWALLIS

There were no casualties today, my good man.

EXT. AMERICAN SIDE - ARTILLERY SECTION - DAY

Henry Knox spies Cornwallis in the distance. He points him out to a battery. BOOM. A cannonball plows into the mud near Cornwallis and splatters the officer.

CORNWALLIS

For God's sake, man, clean yourself up.

EXT. AMERICAN CAMP - NIGHT

Isaac lies on the ground, conscious, but writhing in pain. Swanson kneels and inspects Isaac's arm. Toby and Murphy stand behind.

MURPHY

How is it, Borg?

SWANSON

The bullet go clean through. No hit the bone, I think. Maybe he be good. Maybe not. I wrap it up. We see.

MURPHY

Not yet. I'll be right back.

Murphy turns around and walks off quickly.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

General Fermoy sits on his cot. He takes a swig from a half-full bottle of whiskey. Murphy barges in.

MURPHY

Gimmee that, you bastard.

Murphy grabs the bottle and stares threateningly at Fermoy.

FERMOY

Cheers, old chap.

Fermoy reaches under his cot, pulls out an open box with several bottles, and gets another one.

MURPHY

Do you know how many men want to shoot you dead?

Fermoy shrugs. Murphy exits.

EXT. ISAAC'S LOCATION - NIGHT

Swanson holds a cloth against Isaac's arm.

TOBY

Isaac, don't die. Please don't die.

Murphy comes up with the whiskey and kneels down next to Swanson.

SWANSON

Good. Good.

Murphy pours some whiskey over Isaac's wound. Swanson bandages him up.

SWANSON

That help.

Murphy places the bottle to Isaac's lips.

MURPHY

Drink a little. It'll take away the pain.

Isaac drinks, coughs, drinks again. He likes it. He drinks some more.

MURPHY

Whoa, boy, a little at a time.

Jackson comes up with his men.

JACKSON

Hey, Cap, maybe we could have a taste of that, eh?

MURPHY

No, this is medicine.

Jackson frowns.

MURPHY

But I know where you can get some more. Lots more.

Jackson's face brightens

MURPHY

Fermoy's drunk. There's a box of whiskey under his cot. Sneak around the back of his tent and drag it out underneath. Don't tell anybody or you'll lose it.

JACKSON

Gosh, thanks, Cap.

SWANSON

I get some water.

Swanson leaves. Jackson leaves.

Isaac lies on the ground on his back. Washington and Mercer ride by, talking. Isaac's eyes get wide. Murphy turns around. Washington sees Murphy and trots up with Mercer. Murphy holds a salute. Washington returns it.

WASHINGTON

Hi, Murph.

MURPHY

Sir.

WASHINGTON

These your boys? I heard about them today.

MURPHY

Yes, sir. Boys, the General.

The boys are speechless.

MURPHY

Salute. Like this.

Murphy salutes. Washington returns it. The boys salute. They return the salute before Washington does.

MURPHY

I'll work on that with 'em, sir.

Washington smiles.

WASHINGTON

How'd you boys get here, anyway?

ISAAC

The Quaker Road.

Now Washington gets surprised. He looks around and behind him to see if anyone is listening.

WASHINGTON

You cross the swamp?

ISAAC

Yes. I got stuck in the mud. I couldn't even get up.

Washington's face sours in disappointment.

ISAAC

Toby got chased by a goose. You should've seen him. Running all around, this goose quacking, biting him. Toby was running for his life. Ha. From a goose.

Washington spots the bottle of whiskey next to Isaac.

WASHINGTON

Steady, soldier.

(to Toby)

How are you running around if it's all mud?

TOBY

I was on the other side of the road.

Washington's face gets more curious.

WASHINGTON

What's on the other side of the road?

ISAAC

Anna's house.

WASHINGTON

(to Isaac)

What was the ground like, soldier?

ISAAC

The ground? Corn stalks, I think. (to Toby) Right? Smashed-down corn stalks. We walked straight to Anna's house. (to Toby) Right?

TOBY

Yes. We didn't have no trouble. I mean, we just walked.

WASHINGTON

Which side of the road at the swamp was mud?

ISAAC

Coming here, on the right.

Washington looks at the boys piercingly.

WASHINGTON

You boys forget this conversation. If you say anything to anybody about the Quaker road or the swamp before tomorrow --

Washington shakes his head in stern admonition.

The boys show in their faces that they get the message.

WASHINGTON

Murphy, come here. Hugh.

Washington turns his horse. The three men gather out of earshot of the boys.

WASHINGTON

Murphy, get Sullivan, Greene, and Caldwellater up to my tent.

MERCER

You thinking of taking the back road?

WASHINGTON

I've been thinking about it all day, but I didn't think we could cross the swamp. The enemy would come down the Pennington road and that would be the end. Now it's different.

MERCER

The boy said the mud's on the left going up. You think that's true?

WASHINGTON

It doesn't matter. We know at least one side of the swamp is passable. We'll get some men out ahead.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Washington sits at an overturned box. Murphy enters.

WASHINGTON

Hello, Murph.

MURPHY

Sir, I'd like you to sign something for me, if you would.

Murphy pulls out a letter and hands it to Washington.

MURPHY

One of my men. His brother died today. Consumption.

Washington puts on his glasses and reads out loud,

WASHINGTON

Dear Mrs. Jackson:

It is with deepest regret that I inform you of the death of your son, Satchel. I can only say that he died honorably and in the company of his friends.

Though it is of little comfort now, I promise you that one day we will look back with fond remembrance of those who died, and look ahead to those who will die, and say solemnly, "to them we owe our country."

God speed you through your grief.

Sincerely,

Gen. George Washington, Esq.

Washington signs it. He reads it again to himself. Washington hands it back to Murphy.

MURPHY

Thank you, sir.

WASHINGTON

Murph --

MURPHY

Sir?

WASHINGTON

We have to keep up the charade, you know. Keep the fires burning.

Murphy waves the letter in the air.

MURPHY

I have just the man for it, sir.

EXT. CAMP BY CREEK - NIGHT

Jackson's group of soldiers drink heavily, laugh, lots of noise. Murphy walks up. Jackson is absorbed in thought, not drinking.

Murphy hands the letter to Jackson. He reads it. He looks up at Murphy.

JACKSON

Thanks, Cap. Thanks. Thank you.

MURPHY

You boys stay here tonight. Keep the fires burning. All night.

SOLDIER

All night? We get to sleep, right?

MURPHY

No, not tonight.

SOLDIER

That ain't fair.

MURPHY

Here's what's fair. Tomorrow morning, go home. Stay there a week, no more. Then find out where the army is and get back to us.

The soldiers think for a minute.

SOLDIER

We still get our bounty, right?

MURPHY

Yes, I'll authorize it.

SOLDIER

What if you get killed?

Murphy sighs.

MURPHY

I'll authorize it before I get killed. Fair?

The soldiers shake their heads. That's fair. Jackson reads the letter again. Murphy taps him on the chest.

MURPHY

Mr. Jackson, look at me. Do not  
let the fires go out. Do you  
understand, Mr. Jackson?

Jackson looks into Murphy's eyes.

JACKSON

Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. Harry,  
get some wood.

EXT. BRITISH SIDE - NIGHT

Lawrence looks through a spyglass and sees many of the  
Americans with no shoes, torn clothes, filthy dirty, ragged  
beyond belief. He shouts across the creek,

LAWRENCE

Hey, Reb, how ya gonna fight a war, ya  
don't even have decent clothes.

MURPHY

(shouting)

We don't put on our good clothes  
to butcher pigs.

Silence.

MURPHY

Get down!

Everybody hits the dirt. BOOM BOOM. British cannonballs fly  
overhead. American artillery responds. Nobody gets hurt.

Jackson and the men get up, laughing.

MURPHY

Slow down on the whiskey. And make  
some noise. Can you boys sing?  
What's that song, Yankee Doodle?

They sing, to Yankee Doodle Dandy.

MEN SINGING

GENR'L HOWE, HE'S LIKE A COW,  
THE KING OF ALL THE PORKERS,  
TRIED TO BED A GIRL WHO SAID,  
I DON'T DO FAT NEW YORKERS.

INT. CORNWALLIS TENT - NIGHT

Cornwallis wakes up. An aide rushes in.

CORNWALLIS

What in hell was that?

AIDE  
Just a small skirmish, sir.

EXT. AMERICAN SIDE - NIGHT

Jackson directs the men as if in a choir.

MEN SINGING  
COLONEL RAHL HE TOOK A FALL, AND  
WHILE THE RAIN WAS POURING,  
GENR'L HOWE HE FOUND OUT NOW IN  
BED HE WAS A-BORING.

Other groups of soldiers join in for the chorus.

MEN SINGING  
YANKEE DOODLE KEEP IT UP  
YANKEE DOODLE DANDY  
MIND THE MUSIC AND THE STEP  
AND WITH THE GIRLS BE HANDY.

Laughter peals from the American side. Many soldiers from various locations squeeze fantasy breasts, 'handy.' Murphy walks away laughing.

MURPHY  
Keep singing, boys. All night.

INT. CORNWALLIS TENT - NIGHT

CORNWALLIS  
They'll sing a different tune in  
the morning.

EXT. ISAAC'S LOCATION - NIGHT

Toby sits on a box. Isaac lies in a cart of straw on a blanket.

ISAAC  
Whew. It's getting cold, isn't it?

TOBY  
I suppose. How's your arm?

ISAAC  
(drinking)  
This helps. Thanks for getting me  
out of there. I wish I could shoot  
like that. You're good. Sorry,  
for, you know, talking like I do.

TOBY

You did the same for me with the string on the gun. I gotta tell Pa that.

ISAAC

Let's just keep that to ourselves.

TOBY

Ha. You shoot better when you ain't got a gun. Wait 'till the sergeant hears about that. Ha.

ISAAC

Toby, you tell anybody that and I'll get some more string.

Toby laughs. Murphy comes up.

MURPHY

So, how ya feeling? How's the arm?

Isaac looks down at it.

ISAAC

I don't know. I don't really feel it any more.

TOBY

He's drunk.

ISAAC

You know, Pa, I want to ask you sumpshin... sumpsin... sump...thing. Ah! Do you still like Ma?

MURPHY

I don't know. Is she still the same?

Isaac and Toby look at each other.

TOBY

Well, yeah.

MURPHY

Then I guess so.

They laugh.

ISAAC

Another thing, Pa...

MURPHY

What?

ISAAC

When I crossed the bridge, I fell against Washing's... Uh, Wash..., uh, Washr... ing... son's horse.

MURPHY

Easy, Isaac.

ISAAC

Wait. The horse didn't move. Doesh...n't a horse always move when you touch it, at least look around? Shr...wanson's horse did. I shr...lid along the side of Wash... you know, his horse. It never moved, kept staring straight ahead. Like the general.

MURPHY

Well, it must be a pretty good horse. Or a pretty good general.

MEN SINGING (O.S.)

SWEETIE CRIED AND CRIED THAT DAY,  
SHE WOULDN'T LET ME GO. CRIED SO  
HARD SHE POPPED HER GUARD, HER  
BREASTS WERE HEAVING SO.

Laughter from afar. Isaac falls asleep.

MURPHY

I saw you shoot those British at the house. That was unbelievable.

TOBY

I never shot nobody before. When I thought Isaac was dead, I... I don't know, I got really scared.

MURPHY

I know. It was a very brave thing. I'm glad to see you boys are close. I'm so sorry I couldn't watch you grow up.

TOBY

We're not close. He hates me.

MURPHY

No, not true. He's just a young man who sees the world passing him by and he's afraid he'll miss it. You'll get there too.

Toby looks at Isaac, sleeping.

MURPHY

Although what you've been through today should last you a lifetime. Not so with me.

TOBY

What?

MURPHY

I've never actually killed a man.

TOBY

What? How can that be? You're in the army. You're an officer.

MURPHY

True. I'm a competent, well respected staff officer.

TOBY

What's that?

MURPHY

I make sure everybody knows what to do. I make sure they have bullets and powder. But I don't shoot anybody. Even coming down from Boston, I never shot anybody. Not even today.

TOBY

Are you afraid?

MURPHY

I think I'm more afraid of being afraid.

TOBY

What?

MURPHY

If a bayonet comes at me, I hope I can be as brave as you were today, not run away. That's all.

Toby stares at him.

MURPHY

Sorry to bore you, son. Try and get some sleep. We're leaving in a couple of hours.

TOBY

'Night, Pa.

Murphy nods and exits.

EXT. AMERICAN ARTILLERY SECTION - NIGHT

Henry Knox moves silently among the guns. He whispers orders. Men wrap cloth around the wheels of the cannons.

SOLDIER

Sir, why are we --

KNOX

Hush.

SOLDIER

Sir, what are we doing, putting knickers on the guns?

Other soldiers laugh quietly.

KNOX

Never mind. Just do it. And quietly.

EXT. QUAKER ROAD - NIGHT

Cannons and men move east. The cannons' wheels are wrapped in cloth.

It's misty and cold. Many men have feet wrapped in cloth. The road is snowy, but no mud.

They shuffle slowly, huddled against the now-present cold. Cannons are interspersed among them.

Officers give orders silently, pointing. Sleeping men are awakened by their comrades, fall into line and shuffle off.

All up and down the line, men get orders from officers. Sergeants point, whisper hoarse shouts, 'Go.'

Men acknowledge, move through fields, reach the road and go east. Cannons get in line among them. Men far away sing, to 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.'

MEN SINGING

LIFE IS FREE IF LIFE'S TO BE.  
OH, PLEASE JESUS, CARE FOR ME.  
THROUGH THE DARKNESS I CAN SEE.  
NOW I KNOW MY GOD AND THEE.

Campfires illuminate the bloody Assunpink.

SUPER: DAY SIX, FRIDAY, Jan. 3, 1777 2:00 AM

EXT. QUAKER ROAD - BACK OF THE LINE AT TRENTON - NIGHT

Toby, Isaac and Swanson get in line and reach the road.  
Isaac goes off to the side and throws up.

TOBY

Isaac, are you sick?

ISAAC

I feel like hell.

TOBY

How's your arm?

ISAAC

It's killing me.

Isaac comes back to the road and wipes his mouth. He looks around, then ahead.

ISAAC

This is the road. Anna's road.  
Maybe I can see her again.

TOBY

You better not let the sergeant  
see you get out of line.

ISAAC

You have to help me. I have to see  
her.

The army marches toward Princeton. Soldiers stumble over rocks and tree stumps, hurt their feet, and stop. Men behind crash into them. They fall down, get up, and go on.

Many men actually sleep as they walk.

A few drift off the side of the road and fall, then get up and go back to the road.

There are frequent stops, and men sleep while standing.

The snow turns red from the bloody feet of the soldiers ahead.

EXT. QUAKER ROAD - NIGHT

Washington and Mercer sit on horses at the front of the line.

MERCER

It's really bad. We've got the militia up front, the regulars in the middle, and the riflemen in the back. The guns are all over the place.

WASHINGTON

I know, Hugh. I'm looking for a place to straighten it out. We need the regulars in front. They'll be the first to hit.

MERCER

You know, the boys said there's a field off to the right at the swamp. Maybe there.

WASHINGTON

That's what I'm hoping for. Coming up.

Murphy rides up on a horse.

WASHINGTON

Murphy, you have good timing.

MURPHY

I just came from Greene a hundred yards back. He's wondering if the militia should be up front.

WASHINGTON

According to your boys, there's a dry field ahead to the right. Tell Greene I'll get the militia off the road. Get the regulars up front.

Murphy salutes and rides back. Washington and the troops come to a flattened cornfield on the right. Soldiers ten feet off the road to the left guard the swamp.

MERCER

Halt. Militia off to the right.

MILITIA SOLDIER

Why are we getting held back?

MERCER

You want to be the first into combat?

The militia hustle into the field.

WASHINGTON

Hugh, I'm giving you the militia.  
Take some of the riflemen, too,  
and cover the rear. I'll take the  
regulars right into town. Get to  
the bridge and tear it down.

MERCER

Yes, sir.

INT. ANNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Anna hears voices far away. She gets out of bed. Momma  
hears them too and gets up. Anna looks out a window and  
sees figures standing around in the dark, misty, early-  
morning distance.

ANNA

Momma, I think the army's here.  
Maybe Papa's here.

EXT. QUAKER ROAD - NIGHT

ISAAC

This is it. Anna's house is just  
over there to the right.

SWANSON

You boys come wit me. You, boy, I  
get you fixed.

Swanson walks toward his house.

ISAAC

Oh, no. It can't be. No.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

The boys fall in behind Swanson. They lag 20 yards. Anna  
appears on the doorstep. She watches her father come toward  
her. Momma comes out too.

MOMMA

Borg?

ANNA

Papa?

Anna runs toward Sergeant Swanson and throws her arms  
around him. Swanson hugs her.

ANNA

Papa, Papa.

MOMMA

Borg, that you? Oh, mein God.

They hug. Momma looks at the bandage on his head.

MOMMA

Borg, hast du kopf geshaden?  
(What happened to your head)

SWANSON

Aw, ist ein kleiner schnitt.  
(It's a little cut)

He throws the bandage on the ground. Anna sees two figures over her father's shoulder. She stares intensely at them.

ANNA

Isaac? Toby? Is that you? Isaac?

Anna rushes toward the boys. She crushes Isaac with a hug and rubs Toby's head.

SWANSON

What? How she know? What goes on?

MOMMA

They came here Tuesday night. I gave them food. I explain later.

ISAAC

Ow! My arm.

ANNA

Oh no, you're shot. Oh my God, Momma, he's shot.

SWANSON

Greta, these boys of Captain Murphy. I need you fix him up.

MOMMA

Anna, get them in house. Boy, you shot too?

TOBY

Not yet.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Isaac lies on the table. Momma gets a knife out of the drawer and the hot water off the fire. She carries the water to the table and inspects Isaac's arm.

ANNA

You're not going to cut it off,  
are you?

MOMMA

Nein. No hit the bone.

ISAAC

You gonna give me another bath?

MOMMA

Nein, too cold now. You stink, though.

Anna holds Isaac's hand. Swanson leaves the room. Momma washes Isaac's wound. He winces in pain.

A needle and thread come through the air. Toby holds Isaac's bad arm down. Anna holds his other arm.

Momma pokes the needle through. Anna watches with fascination. Another stitch. Isaac shudders.

ANNA

Momma, can I try?

Momma hands the needle to Anna. Anna pokes it through the wound and out the other side.

Momma

Good. Now pull string, loop. Good,  
good girl. Careful. Good.

Anna loops the string. Momma shows her how to make the knot. Another plunge and a loop by Anna.

MOMMA

Good. Now we take this flap, pull  
over, sew up.

Momma grabs a piece of ragged skin and cuts off part of it with the knife. She stretches the flap over the open wound. Isaac screams. Momma wipes some blood away.

MOMMA

Sew here, girl.

Momma points. Anna stabs the needle through and out the other side of the flap of skin.

MOMMA

Good girl. You make good doctor.

Anna smiles.

ISAAC

Ooowwww.

Momma

You want I cut it off?

Swanson comes back in with a jug of whiskey.

SWANSON

The stitch in time save nine.

ISAAC

I've heard that. Oh, Ooowwww. I should have known.

Momma takes the jug and pours some on the wound. She bandages Isaac's arm. Swanson offers some of the jug to Isaac.

ISAAC

No. It makes me sick.

Swanson smiles. A KNOCK at the door. Swanson opens it.

MURPHY

Borg. The boys here? Colonel Hand saw you come in here.

SWANSON

Yes, Cap. Come in. This my wife, Greta. This my daughter, Anna.

MURPHY

How do, ma'am. You've got a fine man there. Thanks for doing this.

Momma fastens the bandage around Isaac's arm.

MURPHY

And you're the famous Anna.

Anna blushes.

MOMMA

How you do, Warren. Borg say many good things on you. Sank you take care of him.

MURPHY

Not so. He takes care of me. Borg, we're moving out in a few minutes.

SWANSON

I figure.

MURPHY

We're with the militia in the rear. The regulars will hit first.

ANNA

Momma, the boys have to stay here.

SWANSON

Nein. No boys in my house wis my daughter.

Momma and Anna look at each other.

MURPHY

No. There could be British all over here tomorrow. If they find militia-aged boys here, well, they'll be safer with the army. You'll be safer without them.

ANNA

Momma?

Momma shakes her head 'no.'

MURPHY

Borg, our orders are to take out the bridge. We should be safe in the rear. You have any axes or anything?

SWANSON

Yes. I get them.

MURPHY

We must have some, but I have no idea where they are.

Swanson goes outside.

TOBY

No, please, Pa, not our bridge. We used to play there. Do we have to?

MURPHY

No, of course not, Toby. You can just stand there in the middle of it when eight thousand British come across from Trenton.

Swanson comes back with several axes and hatchets.

MURPHY

Good. Toby, get 'em outside. Isaac, can you walk?

ISAAC

Yes.

Anna helps Isaac walk outside. Toby follows with the axes and hatchets.

Toby drops an axe and stoops to pick it up.

Anna and Isaac kiss.

TOBY

You two kissing? Ah, no.

Anna smiles, wipes her tears, and hugs Isaac and Toby together. She rubs Toby's head.

EXT. QUAKER ROAD - FRONT OF THE LINE - DAY

Washington stops at the point of a long line of marching Americans. The column proceeds. Men salute as they pass, so weary they can barely raise their arms.

EXT. QUAKER ROAD - BACK OF THE LINE - DAY

Isaac holds his arm as he rides in an ammo wagon. Murphy, Swanson, and Toby shuffle along side.

Mercer rides a horse ten yards forward. He wears a clean red and gold uniform. He points his arm to the left and looks down his finger as if he's aiming it.

MERCER

The bridge should be right about there. Get 'em moving.

EXT. PRINCETON BRIDGE - DAY

Four hundred British soldiers cross the bridge heading toward Trenton. British COLONEL Charles MAWHOOD is about to cross when, to his left, he peripherally sees a glint of sunlight off metal.

He peers through the mist and fog at the distant trees, a thousand yards away, but sees nothing.

He looks at the bridge as he crosses. Another peripheral glint to the left. Mawhood stares. Another glint, then another.

COLONEL MAWHOOD

Back. Get back. Back across.

British soldiers hustle back across the bridge.

COLONEL MAWHOOD

Faster. Get back here.

Mawhood moves off the bridge and onto the side of the road. He points to the men to fall in. An aide rides up.

AIDE

What is it, sir?

Mawhood points. There's nothing there.

COLONEL MAWHOOD

I saw muskets. There. Probably  
just a scouting party, still --  
Get the men lined up.

EXT. AMERICAN SIDE - DAY

Five hundred Americans come out of the thin woods and go up a road that curves toward the right. They don't see the British yet because of the fog.

After four hundred yards Mercer sees what looks like a thin line of British.

MERCER

British. There. Charge.

The American soldiers in front look at each other. Their faces show they're not particularly good at charging. They proceed reluctantly but quickly toward the British.

More British become apparent as the fog clears.

The Americans get 60 yards away from the British and fire. A couple of British fall. The British fire.

Toby, Murphy and Swanson, without Isaac, come into the group of Americans. They fire. All the Americans now reload.

COLONEL MAWHOOD

Charge.

Two hundred British cross the field with fixed bayonets. The Americans load in panic.

Murphy puts a packet into the barrel. His hands tremble. The packet breaks. Powder spills all over the ground.

SWANSON

Easy, Cap.

Murphy looks around at the approaching British. Then he sees two cannons to his right and behind. Men struggle to get them in place.

MURPHY

Sergeant, get to those guns.

SWANSON

No, sir. I stay with you.

MURPHY

No. Toby, you too. Both of you.  
Go. That's an order. Defend those  
guns. Go.

Toby and Swanson take off to the right. The British are ten yards away. Murphy pushes another packet into the barrel. He pulls the ramrod out.

Murphy can't get the ramrod into the barrel. His hands shake too much. A British bayonet comes into Murphy's view, pointing at his stomach.

Murphy swings the ramrod. He deflects the bayonet. The soldier careens to the right. Murphy slashes him in the head backhand with the ramrod. The soldier falls.

Another British soldier charges from the left. Murphy shoves the butt of his rifle at him, hits him in the chest, then swings the ramrod at his head. Blood all over.

He jumps out of the way of another bayonet. The soldier goes past. Murphy swings around and clips him in the back with the gun.

He ducks another one coming at him from the right. A retreating American smashes that one with his musket butt and disappears in the smoke.

Of the very few Americans in Murphy's vicinity, most run back. Others get killed in hand-to-hand combat as multiple British soldiers gang up them.

MERCER

Retreat. Retreat.

Mercer sits against a large tree to Murphy's left. Blood pours out of his leg, a bullet wound. Five British rush up to him with bayonets fixed.

BRITISH SOLDIER

It's Washington. Surrender, you  
damn rebel.

MERCER

Not in your bloody lifetime.

The British lunge. Mercer is covered in blood. He sinks lower against the tree. The British go south looking for American blood.

EXT. ISAAC'S LOCATION - DAY

Isaac watches from the wagon. Thirty yards away hundreds of Americans run toward him.

Beyond, the British slaughter the Americans with bayonets. To the right Isaac sees Toby at the guns.

The American guns go off, BOOM BOOM. The British in Mawhood's line concentrate their fire away from the Americans and toward the guns.

POW. A British volley. BOOM, another volley from the American guns. The British in the field fall back toward their lines.

EXT. MURPHY'S LOCATION - DAY

Murphy shoves the ramrod down the barrel and takes a deep breath. He fixes the ramrod back into its holder. He pours the powder into the pan. His hands don't shake anymore.

He looks to his right and behind. There, Toby and Swanson fire their guns. To the left he sees Mercer dying. Farther left he sees Americans running away and a few British pursuing.

Then he spots Isaac in the wagon.

MURPHY

Isaac. Isaac.

EXT. ISAAC'S LOCATION - DAY

Two British soldiers charge fast for Isaac in the wagon. Isaac struggles to get a gun, up forward in the wagon. He gets it as one soldier gets within ten yards. Isaac aims hastily. His arm hurts. He fires. He misses.

EXT. MURPHY'S LOCATION - DAY

Murphy aims and fires. He hits one soldier in the back.

EXT. ISAAC'S LOCATION - DAY

The other soldier is within feet of Isaac.

Isaac scrambles backward in the wagon to get away. The soldier stops to get the momentum to plunge. He does plunge.

Isaac looks at the bayonet coming at him. There's nothing he can do about it.

POW. A bullet shatters the soldier's left temple and blows his brains out the top. Isaac looks to his right. Murphy looks to his left.

Sergeant Swanson raises his Kentucky Long Rifle in the air and reloads.

The American cannons fire again.

The British fall back to their lines. The Americans pull back. Murphy runs back with the others toward Isaac in the rear.

An open field appears 30 yards wide revealing hundreds of dead and dying Americans.

A lone figure on a horse gallops up fast from the right. He rides straight into the no-man's land between the militia and the British.

Everyone looks at Washington.

COLONEL MAWHOOD

I can't believe it.

Hundreds of Americans arrive from the right. They go behind Washington, mixing with the retreating Militia.

Hundreds more appear, then hundreds more, and hundreds even more, until eight hundred Americans form a long line from west to east facing the four hundred British.

Washington is alone in the field between the two armies.

WASHINGTON

Fire.

Both sides fire. A thousand bullets cross the field. Smoke obscures everything. Murphy puts his hands over his eyes.

MURPHY

Oh, my God, the General.

The smoke clears. Murphy uncovers his eyes. The British run away to their left.

## WASHINGTON

It's a fine fox chase, boys.

Washington spurs his horse after the retreating British. He slaps them with the flat of his sword. They fall. Pursuing Americans pick them up. The British run toward Princeton. The Americans capture them. All of them.

EXT. FERMOY'S TENT, TRENTON - DAY

General Fermoy wakens to the faint sounds of cannon fire far away. He listens.

## FERMOY

What in the name of --

Another blast from the east. He emerges from his tent and looks across the creek. Five thousand British soldiers point their guns at him. He looks to his right. Jackson's men run south.

EXT. BRITISH SIDE - DAY

Cornwallis hears the heavy guns and looks left. Across the creek are only a few dozen Americans running away.

## CORNWALLIS

Damn him. Damn the Fox. Get 'em on the road. Double time. Damn him.

Fermoy goes back into his tent and reaches under his cot for his box of whiskey. It's gone.

EXT. PRINCETON, MERCER'S LOCATION - DAY

Hand and other officers come up to Mercer.

## MERCER

(struggling to speak)  
Get to the bridge. Take out the bridge.

EXT. PRINCETON, A THOUSAND YARDS EAST - DAY

Two hundred British soldiers run toward the battle. They go down into a ditch.

The British aim their muskets. Two thousand Americans march relentlessly toward them with exhausted faces, filthy clothes, and bandaged heads.

## BRITISH OFFICER

Fire.

The British fire. Some Americans fall. The Americans charge the ditch.

BRITISH OFFICER

Fix bayonets.

The British do. The British in the ditch look left and right. The Americans are like ants, all over. Now the Americans are at the ditch.

BRITISH OFFICER

Pull Back.

EXT. AMERICAN SIDE AT THE DITCH - DAY

The Americans reach the ditch and go down into it. The British scramble up the other bank.

The Americans open up with muskets at point-blank range on the British in the ditch and those trying to get out. Many British are hit.

The British who do get out run fast to a stack of logs in their rear. Another two hundred British hurry from the town to reinforce them at the logs.

EXT. BRITISH SIDE AT THE LOGS - DAY

The British fire a round at the Americans. A dozen Americans fall. The British reload. The British officer surveys the field.

To his right, Americans are already behind him, heading for town, ignoring his position.

The officer takes a handkerchief out of his pocket, attaches it to his bayonet, and holds it up.

EXT. PRINCETON COLLEGE - DAY

Nassau Hall is 30 yards away with 20 windows per floor. There's an elegant two-story mansion to the right.

BOOM.

A cannonball plows into the side of the building. Shattered bricks fly all over. White flags appear in the windows and also from the mansion. Americans rush up. British come out. They're taken prisoner.

EXT. MURPHY'S POSITION - DAY

Murphy, Swanson, Toby and Isaac listen. The firing stops.

TOBY

You think it's over?

MURPHY

Yes, I think so. You boys have been through a lot.

TOBY

And you, too. I guess you're a combat soldier now.

MURPHY

I can't believe how scared I was. My hands were just shaking. Then it went away.

SWANSON

It get easier now.

ISAAC

I want to write a letter to Anna, tell her I'm alive.

Swanson frowns at Isaac.

SWANSON

Ah, is good. You good boy. No can shoot, though.

ISAAC

I don't know how to write a letter to a girl.

MURPHY

Your mother can help you with that.

TOBY

We're going home?

MURPHY

Yes. I'll drop you off there. I expect the army will move north. I have to go with them.

ISAAC

I want to go with you.

MURPHY

No, you've got to heal that arm.

ISAAC

But I'm a soldier now. The General called me that.

MURPHY

I don't know. We'll see.

TOBY

Can you stay a few days with us? I mean, with us and Ma?

MURPHY

I don't know. That depends on your mother.

ISAAC

Wait'll she finds out we're all rebels.

TOBY

She'll scream.

ISAAC

No, she'll get a gun.

They all laugh.

MURPHY

All right, here's what we do. Toby, infiltrate from the rear and distract her. Isaac, take the right flank and wait for my signal.

Swanson shakes his head and smiles.

SWANSON

She's a wild one, eh? Like my Greta.

MURPHY

Swanson, you take the left. I'll hold the riflemen in reserve. I'm going in through the front.

ISAAC

No, Pa. No. You'll be slaughtered. Oh, no, the blood.

MURPHY

If I fall, you come in from the flanks. It's all I can do for my country.

They all laugh. Colonel Hand rides up.

HAND

Murphy, get a wagon up there. Mercer's bad. Then get some men and take out the bridge.

MURPHY

Yes, sir. Isaac, get out.

Isaac gets out of the wagon. It takes off.

ISAAC

Wait.

The wagon stops. Isaac struggles up to it and gets the axes and hatchets out. He throws them on the ground. Then he sits down on the ground, holding his arm.

MURPHY

Toby, get those tools up to the bridge, then get away. Swanson, Get your men behind and cover the bridge.

Toby grabs the hatchets and axes and runs toward the bridge.

MURPHY

Isaac, stay here.

EXT. PRINCETON BRIDGE - DAY

Murphy runs toward the bridge behind Toby. Toby gets there. Men at the bridge work to dismantle it. They untie the ropes and pull hard at the railings.

The men take the tools and hack away at the ropes and logs. Toby takes a hatchet and chops at the ropes on the Trenton side of the bridge.

A log in the middle falls away into the creek. Toby and the men dance on the shaky logs.

Toby laughs.

TOBY

Woah, Nellie.

MURPHY

Toby, get out of there.

Murphy loads his rifle. Swanson and a few men come up from the right. Other men come up slowly from a hundred yards away.

SWANSON

He no should be there. Bad bridge.

MURPHY

I know. Toby, get back here now.

TOBY  
Pa, this is our bridge.

MURPHY  
Toby, get out of there, right now.

Toby walks off the bridge toward Trenton. He goes ten feet down the road and exaggerates a long, slow, follow-through salute.

TOBY  
So long, old bridge.

MURPHY  
Toby, get back here. Now. Toby.

EXT. ISAAC'S LOCATION - DAY

Isaac is a hundred yards away. He sees movement through the bare trees behind the bend in the road at the bridge.

EXT. PRINCETON BRIDGE - DAY

Murphy glimpses red uniforms coming up the road.

MURPHY  
Toby, Toby, get back here. Right now. Sergeant --

Swanson sees the red uniforms.

SWANSON  
I get more men.

Swanson takes off as fast as he can go.

Toby looks right and sees Isaac across the creek, far away, waving at him.

TOBY  
Hey, Isaac. Look.

Toby salutes the bridge again, laughing. He looks at Isaac across the creek. Isaac swings his good arm in the air.

Toby  
What? What? I can't hear you.

Toby looks at the bridge. It sways precariously. Men clamor to get off. Murphy gestures frantically.

TOBY  
I'm coming, I'm coming.

Toby walks onto the bridge gingerly. BOOM BOOM. From the Trenton side, two cannonballs fly over head. One hits the mud on the Princeton side, another splashes into the creek.

BOOM.

Another cannonball plows right through the planks of the bridge. Toby ducks. Another shot, BOOM. A wagon splinters to pieces in the field. The driver flies through the air. BOOM. The railing is hit. Toby takes some splinters in his face. He looks across the bridge at Murphy.

TOBY

Pa, help.

EXT. ISAAC'S LOCATION - DAY

Isaac walks up the road with a gun in his good hand. He staggers from dizziness. He falls to the ground.

ISAAC

Toby, get away.

EXT. PRINCETON BRIDGE - DAY

Murphy runs to the bridge. A few other soldiers follow him with muskets, but they're 80 yards away.

BOOM. This one hits the middle piling that keeps the bridge out of the water. Toby falls onto his hands and knees, holding on to the railing.

The bridge sways. All the logs come loose. Toby dangles among the falling beams, trying to maintain his grip and balance.

The middle of one side of the bridge is in the water. The other side is intact. Both bank supports are still standing. Several logs fall into the creek.

Murphy gets to the bridge on the Princeton side. He puts his gun down. He tries to walk across, but it shakes too much from the weight. He goes back.

MURPHY

Toby, try and edge across. Hold on to the railing. You can do it.

TOBY

Pa.

MURPHY

Just take it slow, slow.

Murphy glances behind Toby nervously.

The British come into view. Toby manages to steady himself on the very shaky railing. He turns gingerly around and sees the British, and...

LAWRENCE

That one. Kill him.

Toby turns violently in terror. He moves fast on his hands and knees toward Murphy. The bridge shakes.

TOBY

I can't make it.

MURPHY

Easy, easy. You're doing fine. Go slow.

EXT. ISAAC'S LOCATION - DAY

Isaac gets up. He shakes off the dizziness. He moves toward the bridge. He's still 70 yards away.

ISAAC

Toby, jump. Jump.

EXT. PRINCETON BRIDGE - DAY

Murphy picks up his gun. Behind him, the Americans line up.

MURPHY

Toby, get down.

POW. Smoke fills the air. Many British fall. The British fan out, away from the Americans, all except Lawrence and two other soldiers. They stay 20 yards from the bridge on the Trenton road.

Toby looks behind him. He sees the British stop and line up. The British point their guns at the Americans.

The British fire. A dozen bullets hit the bridge.

Toby falls down hard to get out of the way. The north side of the bridge sways farther into the creek. The south side gives way altogether.

The logs dangle. Toby hangs onto the north railing for ten seconds, then slides down a log into the icy-cold water. The entire bridge collapses, north and south.

Toby goes under water.

MURPHY

Toby, Toby.

Murphy, alone on the Princeton bank, searches the water for signs of Toby. Logs clog the stream.

Murphy climbs down the bank into the water. It's freezing cold.

Lawrence shoots, misses. He reloads on the opposite bank, 30 feet away. The other two soldiers appear behind him. They aim.

Murphy scrambles back up the bank, but slips and falls into the creek. One soldier shoots and hits the bank where Murphy would have been.

An arm reaches down the bank and grabs Murphy by the collar and drags him up. It's Swanson.

Toby's head appears above a floating log on the opposite bank. He struggles to get onto the log. He stands up in the water, holding the log. It's only four feet deep.

MURPHY

Toby. Toby. Come here, Toby. Come across.

Toby shakes uncontrollably. He clutches the log tighter.

SWANSON

Come here, boy.

POW. POW. Two bullets hit the log near the initials IM and TM. Toby slips back under the water.

MURPHY

Get off him. Get off.

Swanson shoots. POW. One soldier is hit and falls backward. Murphy shoots. POW. Now there's only Lawrence. Murphy and Swanson move with the stream. They search the water for Toby.

Lawrence on the opposite bank moves with them. Murphy and Swanson have long rifles, harder to load.

Toby's head reappears. Lawrence points his loaded musket at Toby, only a few feet away.

MURPHY

Get off him, you bastard.

Murphy flings his unloaded rifle across the creek, going nowhere near Lawrence. Lawrence chuckles as he watches it sail through the air.

POW.

Lawrence is hit in the chest. He falls face down into the creek and floats south.

Murphy looks to the left. Isaac, ten yards away, is on his back with a smoking gun resting between his knees.

Murphy plunges into the creek, wades across, reaches underwater, and grabs Toby's shirt. He pulls Toby up. Murphy walks Toby across to the Princeton side.

Isaac reaches down to pull them out of the water. Swanson gently pushes him back.

SWANSON

Take care of that arm.

Swanson pulls Toby out first, then Murphy.

Toby struggles to breathe. He lies face down on the Princeton bank, but then he coughs, sputters, spits, comes alive, and turns on his back.

ISAAC

Who says I can't shoot?

MURPHY

Nobody now.

SWANSON

How you shoot wis bad arm?

ISAAC

I shot from the hip.

TOBY

(Cough, cough). No you didn't, you liar. (Cough) Not at that distance. (Cough) You're lying.

ISAAC

Toby, just because you can't...

TOBY

He's lying, Pa. (Cough) He couldn't shoot from there.

MURPHY

Not exactly from the hip, more like from the knee.

TOBY

You (cough) probably (spit) put the gun on the ground and pulled a string (cough).

ISAAC

Ah, Toby, I'll teach you how to do it some day.

MURPHY

Borg, I have to get back to Hand. Can you take care of them?

SWANSON

Yes. I bring them along.

Murphy reaches down and rubs Toby's head as he leaves.

TOBY

Everybody's always rubbing my head.

ISAAC

Pa, wait.

Murphy waits for Isaac to catch up. Isaac gets there.

ISAAC

I can't stop thinking about that horse.

MURPHY

What horse?

ISAAC

Washington's horse. At the Trenton bridge. It never moved. And the General didn't either. They both just stared straight ahead.

MURPHY

And why do you think that is?

ISAAC

I don't know.

MURPHY

Determination. Everyone you see here is determined not be to enslaved by a foreign government.

Isaac thinks.

MURPHY

I don't know about the horse, but that includes, foremost, the General. And maybe even the horse.

ISAAC

I want to join the army. After my arm heals, will you come back and get me?

MURPHY

Yes, I'll come back for you. You have to learn how to shoot, though.

Isaac smiles.

ISAAC

Do you think we can win?

MURPHY

Well, we've got that horse.

Murphy hugs Isaac, then leaves.

EXT. NORTH OF THE BRIDGE - DAY

Hundreds of Americans reach the bank of the creek.

More Americans come up. Bullets fly sporadically across the creek from both sides.

Hand is there. Major Derring rides up on the Trenton road. Hand aims his gun at Derring from 30 yards away. Derring doesn't see Hand yet. A bullet hits a tree dangerously close to Hand.

DERRING

Cease fire. There's no bridge. It's just murder now.

Hand lowers his gun.

HAND

Cease fire.

Derring spots Hand, gets off his horse and walks up to the creek. Hand walks up to other bank.

DERRING

When are you rebels going to learn how to fight a war like real men?

HAND

You don't like the way we fight a war, then get out of our country.

DERRING

You can't defeat the British army.

HAND

No? Can your men march all night  
in the freezing cold, half-asleep,  
blood all over the road, just to  
get to the battlefield?

Derring pauses.

HAND

Can your men fight two battles in  
18 hours and march twelve miles in  
between?

DERRING

No. Not unless there's rum  
involved.

HAND

Ha. I know about that. You see  
those soldiers down there?

Hand points to his left at Toby, Isaac, and Swanson.

HAND

That boy is only fourteen. But he  
can shoot a bird out of a tree at  
30 yards. With a musket.

Derring looks right, 50 yards away.

DERRING

I know that boy. I delivered him  
at sword point to that maniac  
floating downstream. You will  
express my apologies to him, sir.

HAND

Yes, I will. Good luck to you, sir.

DERRING

And to you.

They salute, turn, and walk away.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Three figures walk up to Maggie's house. She comes out onto  
the porch and recognizes everybody. She holds her bandaged  
hand up to her mouth.

MAGGIE

Oh, my God. Oh, God. Thank you,  
God, dear Lord. Thank you.

TOBY

Hi, Ma.

MAGGIE

Toby. Isaac. Warren? Is that you?  
Oh, Warren.

She hugs both boys at the same time.

MAGGIE

Oh, no, Isaac. You're hurt.

ISAAC

Sorry, Ma. I got shot. Toby saved  
me. You should have seen the  
little runt.

Maggie's eyes fill with tears.

MAGGIE

I'm so sorry. I was so upset when  
you left. I shouldn't have sent  
you. Oh, Isaac, what happened? Are  
you hurt?

ISAAC

I'm all right, Ma. Anna's mother  
sewed me up.

MAGGIE

Sewed you up? Who? Who's Anna?

TOBY

Isaac's got a girl friend.

ISAAC

She's a girl. I need you to help  
me write a letter to her.

Maggie looks at Murphy affectionately.

MAGGIE

Oh, Warren, I never thought I'd  
see you again.

MURPHY

Ah, Maggie. Good to see you. I'm  
sorry, so sorry.

Maggie cries. She turns to Murphy. He puts his arms around  
her. She wraps her arms tightly around him.

MAGGIE

Yes, yes. Warren. Oh, Warren. Are you in the war? Were they in a battle?

She wipes some tears.

MURPHY

Ah, what a battle. You raised some fine boys here, Maggie. You can be proud of yourself.

ISAAC

Ma, I need you to write this letter. Let's go. She probably thinks I'm dead. Hurry, Ma.

MAGGIE

A letter, yes, Oh, Isaac, you know, the mail's very bad. I'm sorry. The war.

MURPHY

I think I can persuade Sergeant Swanson to take a letter there.

ISAAC

Yes, he can do that. He can do anything, Ma. Right now, Ma.

Maggie cries some more against Murphy's shoulder as two small children come out. One hugs Isaac's leg, the other Toby's leg.

ISAAC

That's our father.

Murphy gets on his knees and shakes their little hands. The children look away. Maggie smiles. She wipes some more tears. Murphy gets up.

MAGGIE

Oh, Warren, I'm so sorry.

She hugs Murphy again, then Isaac and Toby individually, emotionally. She kisses each of the boys on their heads.

TOBY

Ah, Ma, you can't kiss us no more. We're soldiers now.

MAGGIE

No, you're my boys.

Murphy sneaks his left hand down and gently touches Maggie's right hand. She clutches Murphy's hand tightly.

The child to Isaac's left gingerly fiddles with Isaac's bloody bandage. He takes her hand.

ISAAC

Careful, there, Missy. I got shot.

Isaac holds one child's hand, Toby the other's.

MURPHY

It's all right, Maggie. We're all safe now.

Murphy gently squeezes Maggie's hand. She smiles sheepishly.

MAGGIE

Let's go in. Come in, children.

They walk into the house. Toby trails. The child clutching Toby's hand looks up.

CHILD

Is he our father too?

Toby rubs the child's head. They go in.

FADE OUT:

SUPER: Congress paid the bounty.

SUPER: SUNDAY, JAN. 12, 1777

SUPER: General Hugh Mercer dies of his wounds at Princeton.

SUPER: SATURDAY, OCT. 20, 1781, Yorktown, VA.

SUPER: Cornwallis to Washington: You didn't win the war here on the Chesapeake, but on the banks of the Delaware.

THE END