LARAMIE

"THE GENERAL MUST DIE"

(9-4-59)

8-10-59

REVUE PRODUCTIONS, INC.
UNIVERSAL CITY
CALIFORNIA

PROD. #12225
August 10, 1959
REV. 9/4/59

LARAMIE

"THE GENERAL MUST DIE"

Teleplay

by

John Dunkel

Story

by

John C. Champion

PROPERTY OF:

REVUE PRODUCTIONS

PLEASE RETURN

WESTERN

LARAMIE

"THE GENERAL MUST DIE"

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CAST

SLIM
JESS
JONESY
ANDY

WHIT MALONE
"COLONEL" BRANTON
SHERIFF MORT CORY
COWLY - (HENCHMAN)
YATES "
COLLINS "

STATIONMASTER (TEASER-BIT)
MOSE (STAGE DRIVER - BIT)
SECRET SERVICE AGENT #1 (BIT)
SECRET SERVICE AGENT #2 (BIT)
WILSON (TAG - STAGE DRIVER BIT)
GENERAL SHERMAN (TAG - BIT)

SECRET SERVICE AGENT #3 (BIT)
SHOTGUN RIDER (SILENT)
SHOTGUN RIDER (TAG - SILENT)

SETS

INTERIORS:

SMALL RAILROAD STATION (TEASER)
SHERMAN RANCH
LIVING ROOM, KITCHEN, ETC.

EXTERIORS:

SHERMAN RANCH BUILDINGS, YARD, CORRAL, ETC.
HILLSIDE (NEAR SHERMAN RANCH)
ROAD "
ARROYO "

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FADE IN

1 EXT. SMALL RAILROAD STATION - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING SHOT (STOCK) 1 -
It is a very small and lonely station on the wide expanse of prairie. A telegraph line leads in.

2 INT. RAILROAD STATION - NIGHT - FULL SHOT 2 -
A small waiting room and behind a low railing, a station master's office, with a telegraph key on the desk next to the bay window overlooking the track. At the moment only two people are here. One is the STATIONMASTER who is at the desk. The other is WHIT MALONE, a hard and lean man of about thirty, looking a little the worse for wear, and disgruntled as he slumps on a bench in an attitude of waiting. It looks as if he has waited a long time, for he is nervously whittling on a piece of wood and he has quite a pile of slivers on the floor beneath him. Suddenly the telegraph key begins to click. Instantly Malone looks up in inquiry. The Stationmaster nonchalantly listens to the code coming over the wire, but it stops quickly. He turns and gives the man waiting a shake of the head. Malone slumps back, whittles again. After a brief moment of silence the telegraph begins to click again. Malone looks up again, not so electrified this time, a little bit on the hopeless side. The Station-master again listens but this time he takes pad and pencil and begins to write. Observing this, Malone gets up and goes to the railing, watching.

3 CLOSE SHOT 3
The telegraph clicks and the man writes. Then it stops. For a moment, the Stationmaster studies what he has written, his face a mask. Impatiently, Malone asks:

MALONE
Well? Is it for me?

STATIONMASTER
(blandly)
Your name Malone?

MALONE
(suppressing anger)
I've only been waiting here in this dump for two days -- you know it is.

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED (contd) 3

STATION MASTER
(playing stupid)
White Malone?

MALONE
Whit! Whit Malone. Give that to me.

He leans over the rail and snatches the paper from the hand of the Stationmaster, who only grins blandly -- a man in a lonely job must take his amusement where he finds it.

STATION MASTER
I can tell you what it says.

MALONE
I can read.

STATION MASTER
(ignoring him)
It says -- "Your plan for trip satisfactory. Proceed to Laramie. Will arrive vicinity Thursday night. Signal if situation as expected." And it's signed just "B." I've got a good memory.

Malone has read the message and is looking thoughtfully at the stationmaster. He draws a gun from under his coat, unhurriedly.

MALONE
Yes, you have.

He raises the gun and fires, once.

4 CLOSE SHOT - STATION MASTER
As he is shot and dies, falling out of the chair.

4A MED. SHOT 4A
Malone reverses the gun in his hand and begins smashing the telegraph key to bits with the gun butt, as we

FADE OUT

(MAIN TITLE)

ACT I

FADE IN

5 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH YARD - DAY - FULL SHOT - STAGE 5
As the stage comes rumbling into the yard. SLIM, ANDY and JONESY are there, ready to change the horses. The stage driver and Messenger wave down to them.

6 CLOSER ANGLE 6
As Slim approaches the lead horses and Andy goes to open the door of the stage to let the passengers out. In b.g. Jonesy is leading the already harnessed horses up to the stage.

SLIM
Howdy, Elmer. Good trip?

ELMER
No complaints, Slim. But folks all up and down the line is all fidgety about tomorrow.

SLIM
Tomorrow?

ELMER
Ain't you heard who's comin' through special?

SLIM
No. Who?

ELMER
Why, old "marchin' through Georgia" hisself. William Tecumseh.

SLIM
Sherman? Commander of the Army?

CONTINUED

6 CONTINUED (contd) 6

ELMER
(nodding)
Comin' through on an inspection tour of the forts. Special coach at the regular time -- four o'clock.
(confidentially)
Ain't supposed to be common knowledge. They got secret service and all.

This is said confidentially principally because of the new presence of one of the passengers who has stepped down. Others follow, including a middle-aged woman. And now as Slim unharnesses, and Any moves to help him, a male passenger gets down whom they don't notice. It is Whit Malone. He pauses to check his pocket watch. Then:

7 ANOTHER ANGLE - FEATURING MALONE 7
As he watches Slim carefully edges around the back of coach to get in a position behind Slim. No one notices, but Malone's hand is menacingly near his gun.

8 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM 8
With Malone in b.g., he is in position now and ready. Slim is about to lead the horses away when:

MALONE
All right, Yank. Go for it!

Slim reacts in surprise and automatic reflex. His face shows his surprise but he whirls and acts as if drawing, forgetting that he is not wearing a gun. Malone's draw is very fast and he has his gun in his hand quickly, aimed at Slim.

9 CLOSEUP - ANDY 9
His terrified reaction as he sees Slim's position.

10 CLOSE SHOT - JONESY 10
looking on helplessly, holding the new horses.

11 FULL SHOT 11
including the astonished and frozen passengers who are staring at the tableau of the two men as they stand, Malone's gun covering the empty-handed Slim. And suddenly Andy moves, yelling:

ANDY
No, don't.

He throws himself in front of Slim and at the same time, Jonesy, acting in desperate haste, grabs up a single tree or something and heads for Malone.

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED 11

JONESY
Drop that gun ---!

It is then that Slim and Malone break down. Malone starting to chuckle and then guffaw and Slim also. They are soon laughing so hard that they stagger a little as they move toward each other, everyone watching them in astonishment. They very nearly fall into one another's arms, still laughing.

SLIM
Whit -- Whit, you old baboon!

MALONE
How are you, old boss?

SLIM
(turning)
Andy -- Jonesy, it's all right. This is Whit Malone. My old sidekick from the 23rd Volunteers. Man, it's good to see you!

MALONE
It's been a while, hasn't it, Slim?

SLIM
Sure has. This is Andy, my brother.

The two shake hands, Malone grinning in friendly fashion and Andy bug-eyed to meet the man he's heard much about.

SLIM (contd)
And this is Jonesy, my foreman.

They shake hands, less admiring of each other.

MALONE
Well, I'm glad to see you're well protected. You don't need to wear a gun.

SLIM
(laughing at himself)
You sure made me look foolish on that old game, didn't you? Hey -- you're gonna stay! You can't come this far and not stay a while!

MALONE
Well, now I was hopin' you'd ask me. Matter-of-fact, I counted on it. Got my passport right in my bag.
(a wink)
Marked fragile -- handle with care.

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED (contd) 11

He moves toward the stage to get it as it is handed down by the shotgun messenger. The LADY PASSENGER is regarding him with a jaundiced stare.

LADY
I never saw such a thing -- I'd say shooting a man wasn't a thing to joke about.

MALONE
You're absolutely right, lady. I'm a bad influence and you'd better pray for me, all the way in to Laramie. Meanwhile -- my friends and I'll be holdin' a little prayer meeting of our own.
(pats the bag)
With refreshments brought all the way from old Kentuck!

Scandalized, she boards the stage again as Malone grins, and the others smile with him, and:

DISSOLVE

12 INT. SHERMAN RANCH LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - GROUP SHOT 12

The four are seated around the table -- the meal has been long finished and now Slim and Malone are drinking and talking as the other two listen. Already the drink seems to be taking some effect on Slim, he never gets sloppy, but his speech thickens noticeably.

SLIM
And you remember the time Tucker found the wine cellar and tried to drink it up all by himself?

MALONE
And how about Hadleysburg? And that redhead ---

They both are reduced to laughter, secret and suggestive. Jonesy, faintly tipsy and amused, gives a look.

JONESY
Seems we're learnin' things about Slim we didn't know before.

MALONE
You mean you never heard of his reputation with the ladies? Why, from Illinois to Virginy -- when the mothers heard the 23rd was coming -- they'd lock their daughters up!

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED (contd) 12

Slim grins foolishly at this lefthanded compliment. Malone takes up the bottle of whiskey and starts to pour into Slim's glass.

MALONE
Have another.

But Slim puts up a hand in protest, trying to keep control.

SLIM
Now wait ---

MALONE
You haven't gone soft on me? I never knew Slim Sherman to refuse a drop of Kentucky Elixir.

SLIM
(weakening)
Well ---

Malone pours for Slim, then turns to replenish Jonesy's glass.

MALONE
Jonesy?

JONESY
Well, now, that stuff's a mite stronger than I'm used to.

MALONE
(a wink)
For medicinal purposes only.

JONESY
(nods understandingly)
I been feelin' a little poorly.

Slim is looking at Andy as Malone pours whisky for Jonesy, and evidently he has some dim feeling that Andy shouldn't be here under these conditions.

SLIM
Andy. Maybe you'd better go to bed.

ANDY
I want to hear more about what you did in the Army. He won't talk much about it.

MALONE
Won't, eh? Well, we sure had good times.

CONTINUED

12 CONTINUED (cont'd) 12

ANDY
Didn't you do any fighting in the war?

MALONE
Fighting? You bet. The 23rd was the fightingest outfit in the whole blamed Army, eh, Slim?

SLIM
Practically won it ourselves. Could've sent the rest home.

ANDY
Slim's told me a lot about you, Mr. Malone. About what a great fighter you were.

MALONE
He did, eh? And what about him? He tell you the time he won a medal -- took out a whole Reb battery by himself?
(to Slim)
You remember that?

Slim is looking as if the memory is not pleasant.

SLIM
Yeah.

Malone looks at Andy and for a moment, he, too, is serious.

MALONE
It's the fighting part, son, that you'd rather forget. Remember just the good times. And we had 'em.

SLIM
You remember that honky-tonk carnival?

Both men dissolve into secret laughter. Andy, Jonesy exchange a look.

12A EXT. ENTRANCE TO RANCH - NIGHT - FULL SHOT - (STOCK) 12A -
A horseman is seen coming through the gate.

13 ANOTHER ANGLE 13
SHOOTING from the kitchen area, where Jonesy is washing and Andy wiping the dishes. In b.g. Slim and Malone are still at the table and still drinking. Slim is looking a little more the worse for wear.

CONTINUED

13 CONTINUED (contd) 13

SLIM
That was just before you left the 23rd for Branton's staff, wasn't it?

MALONE
Just about, I guess.

JONESY
Branton? Wasn't he the Colonel who got court martialed?

This reminder brings a sudden and terrible change to Malone's face, he looks suddenly murderous.

MALONE
That and more. Cashiered, imprisoned for five years, disgraced for life.

JONESY
(mildly)
I read somethin' about that. Didn't he abandon two hundred of his men under fire?

MALONE
(icily)
I know what happened. I was there. Branton was the most brilliant man I've ever known -- a far better soldier than Sherman. That's why Sherman wanted to ruin him.

SLIM
Oh, now, Whit -- aren't you a little bit prejudiced? After all, Branton gave you a field commision, and raised you to Brevet-Captain.

MALONE
(tightly)
Even if he hadn't, I'd've been proud to serve under him.

CONTINUED

13 CONTINUED (contd) 13

There is a moment of embarrassed silence and then Malone grins and relaxes again.

MALONE (contd)
But that's all over and done with anyway. Nothing for us to argue about.

SLIM
Have another drink?

MALONE
No, thanks.

He gets up and walks to the window.

14 ANOTHER ANGLE 14

SHOOTING PAST him as he stands at the window, glancing carefully out and around the landscape.

MALONE
Aren't you wondering why I showed up just now?

SLIM
(in b.g., fuzzily)
Why, I hadn't thought much 'bout it.

15 FULL SHOT 15

As Malone turns back to the room, smiling and affable again.

MALONE
Well, I'll tell you. I'm a rancher now, myself -- got a little place up in Montana -- prettiest place you ever saw.

ANDY
Prettier than this?

MALONE
(grins, shrugs)
Higher, more trees, big firs and pines. And a stream comin' down crystal clear from the mountains, jumpin' with trout.

15 CONTINUED (contd) 15

SLIM
You're paintin' a mighty temptin' picture.
(to Andy)
How's it sound to you?

ANDY
Gee. Sounds wonderful.

MALONE
Why don't the two of you go take a look at it? Tommorrow. Stay as long as you like.

SLIM
What about this place?

MALONE
I can stay and help your foreman, here. The two of us can take care of things, couldn't we, Jones?

JONESY
Why, I guess we could.

Malone is watching Slim closely, but with nonchalant casualness; Jonesy and Andy are a little puzzled.

SLIM
'Course, then, there's Jess. He'll be back.

MALONE
(alerted)
Jess?

SLIM
Our other partner. He's off deliverin' some beef to the fort up north.

MALONE
When'll he be back?

SLIM
Most any day now. Tomorrow, next day, maybe. What d'ya think, Andy? What about a little skylarkin' in Montana? Just you and me?

ANDY
You mean it?

MALONE
Sure, he means it! You can pack in the morning and be gone.

CONTINUED

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15 CONTINUED (contd) 15

ANDY
(looking out window)
Somebody's outside.

Quickly, Malone comes to look past him.

16 OMIT (omitted) 16

17 BACK TO SCENE 17
Malone is staring with hard eyes that surprise Andy.

MALONE
Who is it?

ANDY
It's the Sheriff, from Laramie.

MALONE
(startled)
Sheriff? What's he doing here?

JONESY
(humorously)
Probably hungry, or thirsty.
(glance at bottle)
He sure came to the right place.

Jonesy goes to the door, exits to the porch.

17A EXT. PORCH (STAGE) - MED. SHOT - NIGHT 17A
SHERIFF ZACK McCORD, a big, phlegmatic, rather friendly man, mounts the porch and smiles as Jonesy shakes hands with him and says:

JONESY
Evening, Zack. What brings you 'way out here?

SHERIFF
(smiling)
Just checkin' up on you boys. Seein' you ain't rustlin' anybody's cows or anything.

JONESY
(grinning, opening door)
Come on in.

17B INT. LIVING ROOM - MED. SHOT 17B
Malone is tense as the Sheriff enters. Slim gets shakily to his feet, is very cordial and cheerfully drunk.

SLIM
Hi, there, Sheriff! Meet my old sidekick from the Army -- Whit Malone.
(contd)

CONTINUED

17B CONTINUED (contd) 17B -

SLIM
(contd)
(to Malone)
This is our Sheriff.

MALONE
(carefully)
Pleasure, Sheriff.

SHERIFF
(nods; grows cooler)
Mr. Malone. Just drop in for a visit, did you?

MALONE
That's right. Came in on the afternoon stage.

SHERIFF
Where'd you come from?

MALONE
Why, my home's in Montana -- but I came in from the East, where I'd been on business.

SHERIFF
What kind of business, Mr. Malone?

MALONE
(tightly)
That any concern of yours, Sheriff?

SHERIFF
It might be.

SLIM
Now, wait a minute, Sheriff. I don't think I like you comin' in here and askin' my friends all kinds of personal questions.

SHERIFF
(steadily)
Seems you've had a little too much of that whiskey, haven't you, Slim?

SLIM
No business of yours. Now -- why are you askin' him questions?

CONTINUED

17B CONTINUED (cont'd) 17B -

SHERIFF
(a reluctant look)
I'm checking all the stage stations at this end of the line. Especially any strangers around.

SLIM
You mean -- 'cause of that special comin' through tomorrow -- ol' William Tecumseh Sherman?

The Sheriff looks sourly at Slim, but can't deny it.

MALONE
(faint smile)
That's no secret, Sheriff. I heard about it on the stage. With a man that important, it's hard to keep quiet.

The Sheriff only studies him coldly.

JONESY
You think somebody might do harm to General Sherman?

SHERIFF
It's possible. Somebody with a grudge. There're always a few soreheads, crackpots.

Jonesy and Andy, remembering, give Malone a look. The Sheriff follows them, not sure what it means, but suspicious. But Slim bursts in again.

SLIM
Well, everything's fine here, as you can see. And nothing'll go wrong tomorrow at four o'clock.

SHERIFF
(looks at bottle)
Unless you finish that tonight, and sleep through.

SLIM
(trying to stand)
Now, look here, Sheriff ---!

But he can't quite make it and his belligerence vanishes as he collapses back and Jonesy catches him, holding him.

CONTINUED

17B CONTINUED (contd) 17B -

JONESY
Calm down now, Slim. He's right. You've had a little too much.

MALONE
(stepping in)
We've got to face it, Slim, we're out of practice, we can't hold it like we could in those days, old buddy. I think you're gonna need that time off.

SHERIFF
(alert)
What time off?

MALONE
He's going to take Andy fishing up at my place for a few days. Leaving tomorrow maybe.

SHERIFF
(looks sharply at Slim)
That so? Who's gonna take your place here?

MALONE
I am. Jonesy'll show me the ropes and we'll manage just fine. Don't worry, we'll get Sherman through, too.

The Sheriff doesn't like it, but there's not much he can do.

SHERIFF
All right. Good night.

CONTINUED

17B BCONTINUED (contd) 17B

MALONE
Good night, Sheriff.

Jonesy goes to the door with him, exits to porch.

17C EXT. PORCH (STAGE) - NIGHT - TWO SHOT 17C
The Sheriff, glancing back at the sleepy Slim, says:

SHERIFF
You better take care of Slim. He doesn't look like he'll be goin' anyplace for a while.

JONESY
I will, Zack. Good night.

SHERIFF
'Night, Jonesy.

As the Sheriff exits,

DISSOLVE

18 INT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - MED.SHOT 18
Jonesy emerges from the bedroom, carrying a lantern, which he puts down on a table. Slim is absent. Malone and Andy are waiting. Jonesy, indicating bedroom, says:

JONESY
He'll be all right in the morning. A little unhappy, but I guess nobody ever died from a hangover. Come on, Andy -- time for you to get to sleep. Finish up your chores.

Andy nods and moves toward the kitchen area. Malone, whose coat is off and hanging on a hook, rummages through his coat pockets and says unhappily:

MALONE
Can't find my pipe. Must've dropped it outside.

Jonesy pays very little attention to him as Malone picks up the lantern and moves outside with it.

19 EXT. PORCH AND YARD (STAGE) - NIGHT - MED. SHOT 19
Malone emerges from the house, with the lantern. A few yards from the porch, he stops and waves the lantern slowly from side to side, looking up and off toward the o.s. hillside.

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20 INT. SHERMAN RANCH KITCHEN - NIGHT - MED. CLOSE SHOT - ANDY
He comes INTO SHOT carrying an armful of wood kindling, dumps it by stove. As he straightens, his glances goes out the window and is caught by the swinging light of the lantern. He stares a moment, goes to the door.

21 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH YARD - NIGHT - CLOSE SHOT - MALONE 21
He is signalling and his back is turned to the house as Andy comes out in b.g. and stares at him. Then he turns a little and sees the boy. He sweeps the lantern closer to the ground, as if he is searching.

ANDY
Found it yet?

The boy's voice sounds so innocent that Malone's face relaxes and he forces a smile, starts walking toward boy.

22 REVERSE ANGLE 22
As Malone approaches the boy, talking as he comes.

MALONE
Nope, Guess it's gone for good.
Doesn't matter, anyway.

Andy turns and goes back into the house, and Malone follows, turning back at the door to stare up at hills.

23 EXT. HILLS - NIGHT - LONG SHOT 23
High on hill, out of blackness, a tiny light winks on.

24 CLOSE SHOT - MALONE 24
He smiles a crooked smile of triumph, and goes in.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

25 EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY - LONG SHOT 25
Looking down on the ranch -- a curl of smoke comes up from the chimney -- the breakfast fire. It looks quiet and peaceful. And then, into the f.g. comes a horse and rider, dressed in ominous black, back to CAMERA. As he passed down, another appears, and another.

26 REVERSE ANGLE - RIDERS 26
Four black-dressed riders come down and stop in a group in a vantage point where they can overlook the ranch. They are partly protected from view by foliage -- and we are far enough from them that we can't see much of their faces. But they look ominous and cold. -

27 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH YARD - DAY - RED SHOT - SLIM 27
He comes out, looking a little rocky, and goes to the shower.- enters, removes his pants and hangs them over the door. He starts taking a shower, gasping at the cold water.

28 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANDY 28
He is coming running in from the barn, very exuberant, carrying the pail in which he has taken feed to animals. In sheer animal spirits he jumps over some lumber and comes running in, slapping the shower door. -

ANDY
Yahoo!

Slim winces noticably at the noise, and pauses, dripping.

ANDY
Oh, mornin', Slim! You feelin' better this morning?

SLIM
I was until the Indians arrived.

ANDY
Indians? What Indians?

SLIM
Never mind. Go on, get ready for breakfast.

He reaches for a towel and dries himself as:

ANDY
I already had mine. Had to get things done early, in case we wanted to leave for Montana.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED: (contd) 28

SLIM
Montana?

Andy gives him a half-amused, half-disgusted look. Slim starts putting pants, boots, etc. back on.

ANDY
Jonesy was right.

SLIM
(irritably)
I wish you'd talk sense. Jonesy was right about what?

ANDY
He said you probably wouldn't even remember this morning.

SLIM
Remember what?

ANDY
About going to Montana.

SLIM
(getting grim)
Who's going to Montana?

ANDY
Why, us -- you and me. To fish for trout on Whit's place. That's what you said.

SLIM
(remembering, unhappily)
I didn't say positively. And I do remember. We can't go.

Slim is pretty ashamed now -- he hates to hurt the boy. He comes out of the shower.

SLIM (cont'd)
It was pretty foolish of me even to talk about it. We've got too much to do around here. You understand, don't you?

CONTINUED

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28 CONTINUED (contd) 28

Andy's face has fallen, but he nods, understandingly. He's bearing up so well that it makes Slim feel worse.

ANDY
(bravely)
Sure, Slim.

SLIM
I ought'a be kicked for last night. You wanta do it?

He takes the proper position but Andy grins and shakes his head -- that was what Slim intended. Andy starts for the house and Slim straightens.

SLIM
Be in in a minute.

He goes back to his washing and Andy goes toward house.

29 CLOSE SHOT - ANDY 29

As he comes up to the door, Whit is coming out, Andy hurries past him, not wanting to speak now, and have to tell him they're not going. Whit doesn't seem to notice -- once Andy has passed him and gone into the house he pauses and sends a swift glance around the hills and then he turns and goes down toward Slim.

30 CLOSE TWO SHOT 30

As Whit joins Slim at the wash bench -- Slim looks up.

MALONE
Mornin', How's the head?

SLIM
(holding head)
It's workin' fine. I used it just a minute ago.

30 CONTINUED 30
Whit grins and gives him a sidewise glance.

MALONE
You decided about Montana?

SLIM
Oh, that was just the whiskey talkin', Whit. Thanks for the offer but I couldn't leave right now. Maybe some day --- I'd sure like to see it -- but thanks anyway.

Malone is not smiling now, he bends over and douses his face before he speaks, and his voice is cold.

MALONE
I'm sorry you won't go.

SLIM
(slightly chilled)
Well, I'll probably regret it, but ---

MALONE
Yes, you probably will.

He says it so coldly, and with such strange certainty, that Slim is held for a moment, not sure how to take it. But after all, some people are too sensitive and there's nothing he can do about that. He turns away.

SLIM
Breakfast'll be ready, soon as you are.

MALONE
(washing)
In a minute.

Slim goes on in, Malone straightens, dries on the towel quickly and looks around to the hills. He sees:

31 EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY - VERY LONG SHOT - RIDERS 31
They still stand there -- watching him, from a distance.

32 BACK TO SCENE 32
Malone, using the towel in his hand, waves a "come on in".

33 MED. LONG SHOT - RIDERS 33
The leading rider (Branton) gives an acknowledging wave and turns, giving orders. One rider breaks away (Collins).
And then the remaining three start down the hill, toward CAMERA.

34 BACK TO SCENE 34
Malone smiles a little, turns and goes into the house.

WIPE TO:

35 INT. SIBERIAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY —FULL SHOT 35
In b.g. a clock on the wall registers 7:30 o'clock. The three men are seated at the table and Andy is in b.g. doing some household chore. Malone is already served and Jonesy is just finishing serving himself from a dish -- he hands it to Slim who refuses it.

SLIM
No, thanks. I'm not hungry.

He clutches his coffee rather desperately, and sips. The others just give him a faintly humorous look and go on eating. Malone addresses Jonesy, carefully fishing.

MALONE
You said this fella Jess might be coming back today.

JONESY
Might.

Jonesy is playing it dumb, but he's not quite that dumb. He knows Malone is fishing, and he'd like to know why, so he keeps forcing him to ask more questions.

MALONE
Well, what does he look like?
(as both look puzzled)
Is he short or tall?

JONESY
Little of both, I guess. Shorter'n you, taller'n me.

CONTINUED

35 CONTINUED: (contd) 35

ANDY
(nodding)
Kinda medium, I guess you'd say.

MALONE

Nice lookin' fella?

JONESY
Well, the girls in Laramie say he's handsome.

SLIM
(grouchily)
Some girls are crazy.

ANDY
All girls are crazy.

MALONE
(giving up, disgusted)
Well, I guess I'll know him when I see him.

JONESY
(studying him cagily)
Why worry? We'll point him out to you.

MALONE
(impatiently)
Sure. Sure.

Andy has moved back toward kitchen and in passing the window has looked out and now:

35 CONTINUED (contd) 35

ANDY
Speakin' of somebody comin' -- here're three men.

SLIM
Who?

ANDY
Strangers. Never saw 'em before.

Slim and Jonesy are instantly interested, get up to go to the window.

36 CLOSE SHOT - GROUP 36
SHOOTING THROUGH the window as Slim and Jonesy join Andy to look out.

37 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH YARD - DAY - THEIR POV - RIDERS 37
As the three men -- later identified as BRANTON, COWLY, and YATES -- come riding straight up toward the door.

38 CLOSE SHOT - MALONE 38
SHOOTING PAST him, toward the three at the window in b.g. Malone is sitting with his back to them, sipping his coffee in seeming unconcern and disinterest. But he is tensely aware of what is going on.

SLIM
Mighty early to be travelin'.

JONESY
And I don't like the look of them, either.

He turns and gives a look at Malone's back -- a look deeply suspicious, but unsure. Malone goes on sipping. Slim leaves the window and goes to the door, followed by Jonesy and Andy. Malone sits quietly.

39 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - FULL SHOT 39
As Slim comes out to meet the three horsemen -- Jonesy and Andy stop in the doorway and watch. Branton is the spokesman for the group, who do not dismount.

SLIM
Morning.

BRANTON
Good morning, sir. This is the stage station, isn't it?

SLIM
That's right.

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39 CONTINUED (contd) 39

BRANTON
We plan to take the stage on in to Laramie from here. We'd like to wait inside if we may.

SLIM
(slowly, struck by the strangeness of this)
It won't be here before afternoon. You could easily ride on in to Laramie before then.

BRANTON
(cold-eyed)
Our horses are tired and we'd rather wait for the stage.

SLIM
Won't do any good -- there won't be any room on it today.

BRANTON
Oh? And how do you know that?

SLIM
I know it, that's all. There's no use you waiting.

BRANTON
(thin smile)
That's not very friendly of you, young man.

40 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM 40
As he eyes Branton with a calm, blank face.

SLIM
You're welcome to wait outside if you want. But it won't do any good.

MALONE'S VOICE
All right, Yank. Go for it.

There is a deadly menacing sound to it. Slim almost automatically obeys -- he has a brief instinctive reaction, his hand starting up toward his empty hip. And then he realizes, freezes, and at the same time hears the ominous click of a pistol cocked (INSERT CLOSEUP?) Slim's face changes as he has a growing knowledge that something is not right, there is something here he doesn't understand. And slowly, face set, he turns toward Malone's voice.

41 FULL SHOT - GROUP 41
The three horsemen watch, somewhat amused. Jonesy and Andy have frozen -- a step away and facing Malone in the doorway, as Slim completes his turn and faces Malone. Whit stands with his pistol cocked at Slim -- a thin, hard smile on his face, his eyes cold.

MALONE
I'd let the gentlemen come in,
if I were you, Slim.

SLIM
Whit ---?

MALONE
Sorry, old buddy. They're
friends of mine.

SLIM
(angering)
What friends?

MALONE
(faint smile)
Afraid their names just slipped
my mind. They don't matter, anyway.

Now Branton turns to Yates and hands him his reins. Cowly does the same. Then both dismount, taking rifles from their boots.

BRANTON
(to Yates)
Be sure the horses are out of sight.

Yates nods and leads the horses toward the barn. Branton smiles at Slim, once again the polished officer and gentleman.

BRANTON (contd)
Shall we go inside, Mr. Sherman?

Slim stares daggers at Malone, but under the menace of the guns he can do nothing. He goes in, followed by all the others.

42 INT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - FULL SHOT 42
As they all come into the room -- Branton looks them over carefully.

BRANTON
This is all of them, Malone?

CONTINUED

42 CONTINUED 42

MALONE
There's one more -- expected back any time. We'll have to watch for him.

SLIM
What is this, Whit. some kind of joke?

MALONE
No joke. Anything but a joke. I was hoping you'd take me up on goin' to Montana.

SLIM
That was a wild goose chase, wasn't it. You probably don't even have a ranch.

MALONE
No. But it would've been better for you, if you'd left.

BRAXTON
(easily, sitting)
No need to be threatening, Malone. The simple truth is, Mr. Sherman, we need to use your stage station for a short time.
(a smiling look)
Sherman? No relation to the General, I trust?

SLIM
No, except I served under him. Is that why you're here -- General Sherman?

BRAXTON
That's none of your business. But we have good reason. And, if you cooperate with us, there need be no unpleasant consequences.

SLIM
Cooperate? How? In what?

BRAXTON
Just in doing what we tell you. Believe me, gentlemen, it's in a good cause.

He exits.

CONTINUED

42 CONTINUED 42

MALONE
That's so, Slim. If you knew, you'd cooperate.

SLIM
Would I? Then why didn't you ask me, why'd you have to pull a gun on me?

MALONE (exiting from shot) -
You always did ask too many questions. -

ANDY
(brightly - looking after Malone) -
Maybe they're secret service agents.

JONESY
(hopefully)
You suppose it could be legitimate? They're here to take over the station to be sure he gets safe passage?

SLIM
(shakes head)
Why wouldn't they trust us? Especially Whit? And why wouldn't I have been notified -- by the stage company or the government? No, I don't think it's **anything legitimate.** -

JONESY
Too bad. That means, whatever it is, it's something big. They don't look like ordinary road agents.

SLIM
No, they're not.

JONESY
And that means -- they got plans for us, too.

SLIM
(gives him a look)
I'd just like to know something about what they're trying to do.

He glances out the window and points.

SLIM (contd)
He must be talkin' over the plans with Whit out there.

They look out.

43 EXT. LONG SHOT - THEIR POV 43
Branton and Malone are standing, talking in the yard.

44 BACK TO SCENE 44
Slim reacts to this -- looks around at men in living room and then carefully slides the window open a crack, as the others watch breathlessly. And suddenly they can HEAR Branton talking.

BRANTON
-- and we'll post Yates in the yard.

Outside Malone nods and starts to turn away, but is stopped by:

BRANTON (contd)
Oh, and Malone.

MALONE
(turning back)
Yes, Colonel?

Inside, Slim and Jonesy exchange a quick look.

Malone turns away, goes back to Branton, both move off in another direction as Slim and Jonesy look at each other.

SLIM
Colonel -- it must be Branton.
His old Colonel.

JONESY
Branton -- the one who was court martialed. The one he was talking about last night.

SLIM
That's the answer! Someone who hates Sherman -- someone with a grudge, like Zack McCord said. It was Sherman who had Branton court martialed.

JONESY
Then -- that must mean -- they're going to ---

CONTINUED

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4/4 CONTINUED (contd) 4/4

He looks at Andy and stops. But Andy is up with them.

ANDY
To do something to General Sherman?
Maybe kill him?

SLIM
Something like that, Andy.

For a moment they all stare at one another. Yates looks in from the other room and for a moment they all have to get busy again -- working with the food, or seeming to. Then, when Yates goes back, they talk again, guardedly, still keeping their hands busy.

JOINSY
Who do you suppose the others are?

His nod indicates Yates and Cowly. Slim shrugs.

SLIM
What was one of his staff officers -- maybe they were, too. Or maybe they're only paid gunmen.

ANDY
Slim -- We've got to do something.

SLIM
(helplessly)
Right now, Andy -- I don't know what we can do.

ANDY (pause)
They won't want any witnesses left afterwards, will they?

They meet his stare with reluctant eyes.

SLIM
Now, don't worry. That stage won't be here until four o'clock. A lot can happen between now and then.

ANDY
(scared)
But -- what are we gonna do?

SLIM
I don't know yet. Seems to me our best chance is Jess.

45 EXT. ROAD - DAY - MED. PAN SHOT - JESS 45
As he rides TOWARD CAMERA, his horse walking and he looking tired and grimy but happy to be home. He slaps horse.

JESS
Whooee! Home. Ain't that a sight for sore eyes?

CAMERA PANS them past and we see he's riding in to the Sherman Ranch.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT II

ACT III

FADE IN

46 INT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - LONG SHOT 46
shooting through window, Jess is riding up road toward house.

BRANTON'S VOICE
You know him?

47 CLOSE SHOT SLIM 47
at window, looking out, Branton beside him, watching his reaction closely. Slim's face betrays no reaction.

SLIM
I never saw him before.

BRANTON
(studies him)
All right.

48 FULL SHOT - GROUP 48
as Branton turns back to the room where the others wait and watch him. He glances around, settles on Jonesy.

BRANTON
You. Get rid of him. Go with him, Malone.

He draws a pistol and stares at Jonesy significantly. Jonesy gulps, gives Slim a look and goes, followed by Malone.

49 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - MED. SHOT 49
as Jonesy and Malone COME OUT.

MALONE
I wouldn't try to tell him anything, if I were you. I can use this real well.

He pats his gun, Jonesy nods, goes on, hurrying a little.

50 FULL SHOT - INCLUDING JESS 50
Jonesy hurries out to intercept Jess before he can call or do anything revealing. Ordinarily, feeling good Jess might have shouted a welcome, but the sight of the stranger, ominously dressed and looking cold, has given him pause and he is studying Jonesy's unusual activity and demeanor. And Jonesy takes advantage of the opportunity -- as they near one another:

CONTINUED

50 CONTINUED (contd) 50

JONESY
No use stoppin' here stranger,
whoever you are!

Malone gives him a sharp look, Jess is staring, but Jonesy goes right on, jabbering like a magpie.

JONESY
Whatever it is you're sellin' --
we don't want any.

JESS
Now what would I be sellin'?

JONESY
Well, you ain't buyin', that's
for sure, 'cause we got nothin'
to sell. So if you was thinkin'
of stopping, you'd better just
keep right on a-goin'.

JESS
(amused)
That so?

JONESY
(so far, so good)
And if you was thinkin' of taking
the stage, that's no use either,
because there won't be one today.

JESS
You don't say?

He is amused, playing it for fun, still, and thus Jonesy is not sure if he gets the drift, and neither are we. But he has not said anything revealing yet.

51 CLOSER SHOT - ALL THREE 51
as Malone steps in closer, narrow-eyed, not sure. He sees the large initialed "J.H." burned in the leather of Jee's saddle.

MALONE
And what's your name, mister?

Jess cocks his head and gives him a look. Jonesy holds his breath -- but Malone's attitude is enough to tip Jess.

CONTINUED

51 CONTINUED (contd) 51

JESS
My name. Why -- Johnny.

He has followed Malone's glance to those initials. And now he is staring the man down.

MALONE
Johnny what?

JESS
(hesitates)
Hart. If it's any of your business.

MALONE
And what's your business here?

JONESY
He's got no business here --

MALONE
Let him talk!

He turns back to stare dangerously at Jess. Jess hesitates, almost ready to come back with some dangerous retort, but now he fully senses that something is wrong and he has to play it cool. And so he relaxes, playing a part.

JESS
I got a tired horse -- thought
I might get him fed, watered.

JONESY
He looked a little lame, too. On that off rear. You notice that?

JESS
I know. I was gonna take a look at that. He threw a shoe a ways back. Probably sore.

JONESY
(much relieved)
Well, we can't help you here. You just go on in to Laramie and take him to old Zack McCord. He's the man for you.

Jess gives Jonesy a quizzical look, questioning the name.

JONESY
Yes, sir, Zack McCord can tell you what the trouble is. And fix it too. In a hurry.

51 CONTINUED (contd)

JESS
(getting it)
I'll do that. Thanks.

He turns his horse away. Jonesy is almost jubilant, but controlling himself tightly.

JONESY
You're welcome. Sorry we can't help you. But come back again sometime.

Jess moves out, walking his horse naturally, without haste (maybe the horse does limp a little) and parts from them with a little wave. As he turns into the road, the CAMERA MOVES IN on Jonesy and Malone. Jonesy is smiling and Malone is studying him grimly.

MALONE
You're mighty happy.

JONESY
(a quick look - smile doused)
Well -- I didn't get shot.

He turns for the house and Malone follows, not satisfied and a little uncertain. He gives another glance as Jess out in the road.

52 LONG SHOT - JESS 52
as he rides slowly away up the road. Maybe he turns and looks back and gives them another wave.

53 INT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - FULL SHOT 53
as Jonesy comes in -- exchanges a guarded look of relief with Slim and Andy, then moves to occupy himself with some kind of hand work, possibly repairing some harness or something. Branton has relaxed, put away his gun and he and Cowly and Yeates have settled back down to finish their coffee. Malone comes in, glares at Jonsey, still unsure.

BRANTON
Who was it, just somebody travelling through?

MALONE
((absently)
Yeah.
((then, to Slim)
Who's Zack McCord?

CONTINUED

53 CONTINUED (contd) 53

JONESY
(startled, quickly)
Why, he's --

MALONE
(shutting him up)
You be quiet! Let Sherman answer.

For a moment, Slim hesitates. Jonesy is tensely tapping his boot with his finger.

SLIM
Why -- he's a fella -- in Laramie.

MALONE
What does he do?

SLIM
(still very uncertain)
Do?

MALONE
For a living? He sell something?

SLIM
(seeing Jonesy)
Why -- yes. Shoes.

MALONE
Shoes?

Taking advantage of Malone's turned back, Jonesy is shaking the harness he was mending, as frantically as he can without attracting the attention of the other men. Slim notices it, suddenly gets it.

SLIM
For horses. Horseshoes. He's a shoer -- a blacksmith. At the livery stable.

Jonesy is beaming, Malone turns to him with a quick look, and Jonesy douses the smile fast, concentrates on harness, with great innocence. Malone is still uncertain, even more so perhaps, and angry.

MALONE
Where's this Jess keep his things?

SLIM
(nodding to bedroom)
In there.

Apprehensively they all watch as Malone goes to the bedroom.

54 ANOTHER ANGLE - MALONE 54
including a narrow look into the bedroom as he opens the door and goes in. Slim and Jonesy in f.g., exchange a guarded look, as Malone stands in bedroom, looking around. He rummages a little in a dresser drawer -- comes up with something in his hand.

55 CLOSE SHOT - MALONE 55
He holds a belt -- looks at the buckle -- there is an initial in the metal. "J.H." (INSERT IF DESIRED) Malone looks up, hard-eyed.

MALONE
"J.H."

He turns and goes to door of bedroom.

56 FULL SHOT - GROUP 56
as Malone appears at the door of bedroom, the others are staring at him, including Branton and his men, who are now interested in what is going on.

MALONE
What's his last name?

SLIM
Harper.

MALONE
(angry understanding)
Jess Haper. Johnny Hart. Medium height -- taller than --
(look at Jonesy)
-- you, shorter than me. Brown hair, gray eyes. Good looking enough to please a girl.

Grimly he slams the belt down and starts across the room toward the door.

BRANTON
Where are you going?

MALONE
To get Jess Harper!

ANDY
(with sudden terror)
No!!

He runs toward Malone, grabbing him in a tackle as if to stop and hold him.

CONTINUED

56 CONTINUED (contd) 56

SLIM
Andy -- no!

He is on his feet but he can't stop Andy. But Malone does, tearing Andy off and throwing him roughly back to the floor. Then Slim is on Malone -- swinging a haymaker and Malone counters, grabbing him. For a moment they wrestle and then Slim is clipped from behind, hard, on the head. Yates has brought a pistol butt down. And Slim goes to the floor, also down and out. Malone only nods and turns to go. Jonesy rushes to Slim, Andy does too.

BRANTON
Don't let him get away.

MALONE
I won't.

Grimly, he goes OUT.

DISSOLVE

57 EXT. ROAD - DAY - MED. CLOSE SHOT - JESS 57
He is riding along, climbing up from the valley and still going at a walk. Now he looks behind and urges his horse into a trot. They PASS CAMERA.

58 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH YARD - DAY - MED. LONG SHOT - MALONE 58
He comes swinging out of the yard, riding his horse at a fast gallop -- and tears up the road after Jess.

59 EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY - CLOSE SHOT - COLLINS 59
Collins is another of the riders -- one who was detached for outpost duty. And he is posted here just off the road. Watching down the hill he sees something.

60 VERY LONG SHOT - HIS POV 60
of Jess as he jogs up the road. And then, father behind, there is suddenly another figure, coming faster.

61 CLOSE SHOT - COLLINS 61
He is alerted, staring down.

62 MED. CLOSE SHOT - JESS 62
as he jogs along, he looks back and sees Malone coming. And suddenly he spurs his horse into a gallop.

63 MED. SHOTS - MALONE - JESS 63
as they run their horses. Not too far apart.

64 LONG SHOT - JESS 64
with Collins in f.g.

65 CLOSE SHOT - MALONE 65
as he stops -- signals Collins to get Jess.

66 MED. SHOT - JESS 66
with Collins in f.g. -- Jess approaches, doesn't see Collins because he is looking back at Malone. Collins aims, fires.

67 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 67
The shot is close, but he is not hit. He ducks low and the horse bolts off the road. Another shot whistles past, the horse runs as Jess rides low.

68 EXT. EDGE OF ARROYO - DAY - MED. SHOT 68
The horse runs up to the edge of the arroyo -- another SHOT hits it and it rears, throwing Jess. He falls and rolls down.

69 BOTTOM OF ARROYO - JESS 69
as he comes rolling down, hits bottom and stops CLOSE. He raises up a little and we see that he is unhurt. But he hears the men coming to edge of arroyo and so he falls back down and lies still, playing possum.

70 EDGE OF ARROYO - MALONE, CALLINS 70
Both ride up and stop, looking down. Far down in b.g., we see the sprawled figure of Jess, lying motionless. Collins looks at Malone, Malone nods, Collins levels his rifle at Jess and fires deliberately. We see the shot hit and spin Jess's body, rolling him over one complete turn and back on his face. Now Malone nods. They exchange a look of satisfaction and turn their horses away.

71 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 71
He lies motionless for a moment, then he stirs, brings his face up out of the dirt. He looks badly hurt and there is blood on his shoulder. He tries to push up and can't and the pain is too much. He falls back, fainting, and lies still. He may be dead.

DISSOLVE

72 INT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - CLOSE SHOT - CLOCK 72
The clock now registers 10:30.

73 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM, ANDY, JONESY 73
as they wait, watching the door tensely, expectantly. Cowly sits by the door, rifle across knees, watching.

74 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - THROUGH WINDOW 74
Malone can be seen talking to Branton and Yates. Then they nod, Malone comes toward house, others go away.

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75 INT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - FULL SHOT 75
as Malone ENTERS and faces the stares, hostile and yet anxious for news. He gies all three a sardonic grin.

MALONE
How's your head, Slim?

SLIM
No worse than it was this morning.

MALONE
You shouldn't've interfered.

SLIM
It's not my head that bothers me.
Where's the man you were chasin'?

MALONE
(with grim satisfaction)
At the bottom of a canyon.

The news hits all three with terrible force, but worst of all is Andy, and both men turn to him as he fights back the tears and looks as if he will attack Malone.

ANDY
You -- you -- !!

SLIM
Andy.

JONESY
(taking hold of him)
Come on, son -- let's go in here.

He leads the dissolving boy into the bedroom.

MALONE
Leave that door open.
(to Cowly)
Watch 'em.

76 CLOSE TWO SHOT 76
Cowly nods in b.g., and Malone turns back, perhaps moving to brush off the dust from his ride and, during scene, pour himself a cup of coffee, or light a cigar.

SLIM
(watching him; acidly)
You must be real proud of yourself.
What's happened to you?

CONTINUED

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76 CONTINUED (contd) 76

MALONE
What do you mean, nothing's happened to me.

(a sardonic look)
You never knew me, that's all, like you thought you did.

SLIM
Yes. You were a decent man - a little wild, maybe, and crude maybe. But basically decent.

MALONE
I don't have to listen to a sermon from you. You don't know what this is all about.

SLIM
I do, though. You're going to kill a lot of innocent people, including the Chief of Staff of the United States Army -- just to satisfy the vengeance of a crazy man.

MALONE
(viciously)
You watch your tongue. And how do you know who he is?

SLIM
What does that matter, we know. What I'd like to understand is -- why don't you kill us now? Because you're going to have to later.

Their eyes meet for a long moment, Malone shrugs.

MALONE
I tried to get you to go to Montana.

SLIM
But why haven't you done it already?

MALONE
We need you. There's a dummy stage coming through ahead of Sherman's at four o'clock, with secret service agents aboard.

The least thing out of order, they'll
(contd)

CONTINUED

76 CONTINUED (contd) 76

MALONE
(contd)
sound the alarm. You've got to handle that first stage like nothing was wrong. Absolutely routine.

(smile)
And you will.

SLIM
And after that? You won't need us.

MALONE
(beat)
No.

SLIM
With friends like you, a man doesn't need enemies.

MALONE
(flaring)
Friends! I've got no friends, I never had any. I never had anything -- until I put on a uniform that made me as good as anybody else. Better -- when he gave me bars.

SLIM
(sarcastic)
An officer and a gentleman.

Malone shoots him a dirty look.

SLIM (contd)
-- with a gun.

MALONE
(hard)
Yes, with a gun. That's one thing the war taught me to use. And when it was over and he was in prison and there was nothing again, I used it.

(as Slim stares)
That's something you didn't know, isn't it? I'm wanted in three states -- so I've got nothing to lose.

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76 CONTINUED (contd) 76

SLIM
And now you're gonna go in for high treason and mass murder.

MALONE
(relaxes back)
Make quite a name for us, won't it?

SLIM
He's got you thinking like he does.

Malone shrugs.

MALONE
(a hard look)
And why not? This is a great man. A genius -- who was insulted, injured, ruined, disgraced, by another, jealous man. Sherman -- promoted to Major General. And Branton? -- Court martialed. When it should have been the other way around.

SLIM
As I remember he was accused of disobeying orders, of deliberately deserting three full companies -- sacrificing them to cover his own blunders.

MALONE
I'm not going to argue with you. There's no point. It happens that now, the tables are turned, and Colonel Branton is in charge.

SLIM
And it doesn't bother you that a lot of innocent people are going to die?

CONTINUED

76 CONTINUED (contd) 76

MALONE
Too bad. That's war.

And he turns and goes out, leaving Slim to stare helplessly.

DISSOLVE

77 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH YARD - DAY - MED. SHOT - YATES 77
He sits at the edge of the porch and surveys the yard, his rifle across his knees. Now, in the b.g., on the hillside on other side of house from the barns, we see a little movement. A man drops down, from one bush to another, taking advantage of Yates looking toward the barns. When Yates looks back his way, the movement stops.

78 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 78
as he crouches behind a bush on the other side of fence. He watches again until Yates is looking the other way, then makes a sprint for the fence. His arm dangles helplessly, his shirt is all bloody.

79 MED. SHOT - YATES 79
He looks around quickly, as if detecting some movement. But there is nothing to see now. Jess has ducked behind frence and some protecting brush. Yates looks, then away.

80 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 80
He considers what to do. Picks up pebble -- and with good arm throws it.

81 MED. SHOT - HORSE 81
A horse in the corral is hit and stung and jumps, making a bit of rumpus.

82 MED. SHOT YATES 82
He gets up and goes to look at the horse in the corral. As he goes, Jess makes a break across the open space to the house, behind Yates" back. Yates stares at horses. Then comes back, shaking his head. But Jess is safely behind the side of the house and he now proceeds toward back.

83 INT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - FULL SHOT 83
Slim sits at a back window, reading a book. Cowly is further toward the front, but on guard. Jonesy enters from the bedroom and crosses toward the kitchen area.

JONESY
You want something to eat, Slim?

SLIM
No, thanks, Jonesy.

He glances up to the clock.

84 INSERT - CLOCK 84
It reads 2:10 now.

85 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM 85
as he goes back to his reading. We see that the book is entitled "Battles of the Civil War" or something like it. Now, as Slim reads, there is the sharp CLICK of a pebble thrown against the glass. He looks up, not sure he heard anything, looks out, sees nothing, goes back to reading. After a moment, there is another CLICK. This time he is sure and, also, he senses that it is important. He glances in at Cowly before he looks out and this time he knows he is looking for something.

86 SHOT THROUGH WINDOW - JESS 86
A few feet away, partially hidden by bushes, Jess gives Slim a little wave, nods for him to come out somehow, and toward barn. Slim, in b.g. nods, he gets up, turns into room.

87 CLOSE SHOT - KITCHEN AREA 87
Jonesy is preparing some food, probably sandwiches. Slim enters, coming close.

SLIM
Maybe I will take just a piece
of bread.

Then he gives a look toward Cowly and sees he is not looking closely. So he smiles at the surprised Jonesy and winks as he says:

SLIM
Tell Andy he better stop wating
tears on Jess. We've got enough
to worry about without that.

With a final wink, he goes on, munching the bread. Jonesy turns an astonished stare after him and then, as the meaning penetrates, his face breaks into a grin.

JONESY
I'll tell him.

88 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - MED. SHOT 88
Malone and Branton are standing in front of the house, looking off up the hill and talking, as Slim comes out the front door. They look at him and he says:

SLIM
Better get the horses in and feed 'em.
So they'll be ready for the stage.

Malone nods and signals to Yates in b.g. to watch Slim. Slim goes toward the corral.

89 ANOTHER ANGLE - SLIM 89
as he passes Yates, he stops and holds that man's attention.

SLIM
I'm going out in the corral and bring in the horses for the stage... feed 'em. You want to come along? Watch me?

In b.g., Jess is making the break across the open space to get to the barn (or horse feeding stalls). Yates gives a little glance around and almost sees him but doesn't.

YATES
I can see you from here. Why should I move?

SLIM
Suit yourself.

Jess is safely across now and Slim grins at Yates and moves on. Yates shakes his head, shrugs.

WIPE TO

90 EXT. CORRAL CORNER - DAY - MED. SHOT - SLIM 90
as he hazes some horses in through the corral gate and closes the gate after them. Then he goes around by the barn and picks up a bucket of feed. The feeding trough is along the fence nearest the barn and Slim goes over and dumps the feed into the trough from outside the fence. Thus as he dumps he comes close to the corner of the barn.

91 LONG SHOT - SLIM 91
from Yates' POV -- he can see his movements.

92 MED. SHOT - SLIM 92
as he works, he never looks, but only talks laconically to Jess.

SLIM
Jess.

JESS
Here.

CAMERA SHIFTS JUST ENOUGH TO REVEAL Jess half-hidden behind horses, around the corner and in the door of the barn.

SLIM
You hurt?

JESS
I'll make it. Who are they?

CONTINUED

92 CONTINUED (contd) 92

SLIM
Too long a story. Killers --

JESS
Who're they going to kill?

SLIM
Us, later...and General Sherman, coming on stage.

He pauses, looking out at Yates.

93 LONG SHOT - HIS POV 93
Yates has gotten up and come a little closer where he can see better.

94 MED. CLOSE SHOT - SLIM 94
he goes on with the work, being careful not to show that he is talking.

SLIM
Gotta warn the stage.

JESS
Yeah, but how? Maybe I could get up the hill there, hide beside the road.

SLIM
(doubtfully)
Too much could go wrong.

JESS
(agreeing)
And they've probably got a man up there, too, like they have on the Laramie side. If only we could signal them somehow.

SLIM
Signal. That's it.
(looking around)
White wash.

He has spotted a sack of whitewash against a wall of the shed.

JESS
Sure, that's it.

SLIM
On the wall of the barn.

CONTINUED

94 CONTINUED (contd) 94

JESS
On the other side -- where they can't see it -- but the stage can, coming in. Get me a pail of water... and that broom over there.

SLIM
All right.

He dumps last of feed and turns away to go.

WIPE TO

95 SAME SCENE - SLIM 95

He is coming back from the pump, carrying a pail of water. Yates watches him from b.g. He brings it in and pretends to dump it into the horse trough -- but he only dumps a little and then he carries the pail over and into the barn setting it inside the door out of sight. All this time he is talking to Jess.

SLIM
You still have your pistol?

JESS
Yes.

SLIM
Better leave it in the barn where I can get it. Won't do you any good out there.

JESS
All right. I'll put it right in the corner, in the hay.

SLIM
Good.

He has now put the sack of whitewash inside the barn, also, and taken up a broom. He brushes at the ground a little, talking.

SLIM
Better write something like -- "Stop! Branton." They'll understand that.

JESS
What about "Ambush?"

CONTINUED

95 CONTINUED (contd) 95

SLIM
Better. Write it big and ---.

He stops abruptly and stares. Yates has come much closer and is looking at him queerly, rifle poised.

YATES
You talking to someone?

SLIM
The horses. Always talk to the horses when I'm working around 'em. Keeps 'em from getting scared.

Deliberately he places the broom inside the barn door, out of sight. He grins at Yates and walks over to him, going toward the house. Yates follows him with his eyes, looks at the barn suspiciously, goes and looks in.

96 EXT. SIDE OF BARN - DAY - MED. SHOT 96
Jess has slipped outside and stands against the wall beside the door, just out of Yates' sight -- perhaps we can even see him in the barn looking around. Then he goes back out and appears in the front again. In b.g. we can see him go toward the house. Jess slips back in the barn and comes out with the pail. Then he goes back in and brings out the sack of whitewash, dumps some in pail. Goes back and brings broom, stirs with it. Yates strolls out to the front fence and for a moment Jess must duck back in the barn. But Yates goes back to the porch and out of sight and now Jess comes out and starts to paint.

WIPE TO

97 INT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - CLOSE SHOT - CLOCK 97
The clock now reads 2:50.

98 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM 98
As he sits near a window, his book on his lap, but he is not reading. His glanceskeeps flicking out the window toward the barn. But he can't see anything.

99 CLOSE SHOT - BRANTON 99
Branton comes in and looks over at Slim, who then pretends to be reading. Branton approaches him.

100 CLOSE TWO SHOT 100
As Branton stops before Slim, Slim glances up from book.

BRANTON
You're a cool one, Sherman. Most men wouldn't be reading at a time like this.

CONTINUED

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100 CONTINUED (contd) 100

Sli shrugs, and Branton continues his book.

BRANTON
"Battles of the Civil War" -- well!
You're interested in such things?

SLIM
(unfriendly)
I was in a few of them. And I'm
learning a lot from this book.
For instance, about the "Raid
on Hackettstown".

BRANTON
(stiffening)
You won't find the truth there.

SLIM
You want to tell it to me? What
did you hope to gain from disobeying
Sherman's orders and raiding Hackettstown?

BRANTON
Hope to gain! Why, the capture of
Bragg's headquarters. The battle,
the campaign, perhaps even the war.
If Sherman hadn't been a fool he
would have seen the opportunity
himself.

SLIM
But it didn't work.

BRANTON
Only because he didn't support me.

SLIM
It jeopardizes his whole plan of
battle. And it was very risky.

BRANTON
(shrugs, contemptuously)
I could have pulled it off, if he
hadn't forced me to retreat.

SLIM
And so you left three companies
to cover your retreat. You must've
known they'd be wiped out.

Branton smiles.

SLIM (contd)
And there was no need. You weren't
under attack yet.

CONTINUED

100 CONTINUED (contd) 100

BRAITON
(smile fades)
Sherman, what was your rank in the army?

SLIM
I started out a private, and ended up a second lieutenant.

BRAITON
(icily)
Very commendable, but I don't propose to argue military technique with a second lieutenant.

SLIM
I guess you lost that argument anyway, Colonel, some time ago.

BRAITON
(a cold stare)
No. We'll see the end of it today.

In b.g. Malone bursts in the door, they turn to look.

MALONE
Collins is signalling from the hill. Something about the barn.

BRAITON
Well, go look!

Slim is staring in anguish, there is little he can do. They all start out.

101 EXT. SILSBEE RANCH YARD - DAY - FULL SHOT 101
As they all come out of the house -- Malone and Yates, and followed by Branton, go toward barn. Cowly stays to cover Slim and Jonesy and Andy who come to door. Slim stands irresolute a moment not knowing what to do and then, at the last minute, he yells.

SLIM
Jess! Jess, run!

102 EXT. BARN, NEAR - DAY - FULL SHOT 102
Jess has the sign almost finished -- "Stop! Ambus --" as he hears the cry and drops the brush, turning to run, but it is too late -- Malone turns the corner of the barn and aims his gun at Jess.

MALONE
No, you don't. Stop!

CONTINUED

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102 CONTINUED (contd) 102
Joss with his injury, can do nothing else.

MALONE
(malicious smile)
You're sure hard to kill. But we'll manage.

WIPE TO

103 INT. SHERMAN RANCH HOUSE - DAY - FULL SHOT 103
Joss and Slim, both spotted with whitewash, and looking weary, come in the door. The others are all there -- Jonesy, Andy, Branton, Malone. Branton looks up from the table.

BRANTON
You get it all painted out?

They nod hopelessly, look up at clock.

104 INSERT - CLOCK 104
reading 3:20.

105 BACK TO SCENE 105
Yates appears in the doorway b.G.

YATES
Hodges is signalling again. The first stage is coming.

BRANTON
All right.
(to Joss)
You and the boy will stay in here with us.
(to Jonesy)
You and Sherman will have to handle it alone. And you'd better do it right.

He draws his gun and cocks it, idly covering Joss and Andy. Slim and Andy stare at one another. Then Slim turns and goes out, followed by Jonesy.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

FADE IN

106 EXT. ROAD - DAY - LONG SHOT - STAGE 106
The first stage is coming down the road approaching the Sherman Ranch.

107 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH YARD - DAY - MED. CLOSE SHOT 107
Slim and Jonesy wait with the horses all harnessed and ready and behind them, Malone is just in the doorway of the barn.

MALONE
Remember now, I'll be able to hear every word -- don't speak unless spoken to -- don't say anything you don't have to say.

Slim and Jonesy exchange looks. The Stage is rumbling into the yard, Malone ducks back out of sight.

108 FULL SHOT - STAGE 108
As it rumbles in and to a stop, beside the new horses. The driver, MOSE, waves down to Slim and Jonesy with high good humor.

MOSE
Howdy, Slim -- Jonesy!

SLIM
Howdy, Mose. Cal.

The Shotgun messengor waves down too. Jonesy purposely only nods and hurries to unloosen the stage horses.

MOSE
How's everythin' around here?

SLIM
Just fine.

Mose looks down at him working at the harness, and he is a little rebuffed at such a cold reception from two old friends.

MOSE
Well, you two sure ain't very talkative today.

He looks back and sees the three Secret service agents who have gotten down and are kind of moseying out, looking around. They are dressed city style and look about as natural around here as a madame at a weinie bake.

CONTINUED

108 CONTINUED (contd) 108

MOSE
(grinning)
My passengers scare you? They're pretty glum-faced.

The Agents give him a dirty look -- he's not exactly as impressed with all this as he should be. Mose chuckles.

SLIM
I hadn't noticed.

MOSE
(disgusted)
You're right glum-faced yourself.

Slim tosses a nervous glance at the barn and then leads off the horses.

109 INT. SHERMAN HOUSE - DAY - PAN SHOT 109
Starting at the window, looking out at the scene as Slim backs the new horses into the stage -- PANS AROUND to Andy, who sits rigidly, the gun at his head, and Branton as he waits. Cowly is in b.g. watching out another window.

110 BACK TO YARD - FULL 110
Slim and Jonesy are now tying in the new horses. One of the agents, stone-faced, approaches Slim.

AGENT
Somebody try to whitewash the barn?

SLIM
That's right.

AGENT
(flatly)
Didn't do a very good job.

SLIM
He was interrupted.

MOSE
Bet it was Andy done it. That's what I told 'em -- it was the kid done that. Where is he?

SLIM
Inside -- he's not feelin' so good.

MOSE
Too bad. Say howdy for me.

Slim nods, but he is watching in apprehension as one of the agents approaches the barn door, behind which Malone hides.

111 INT. BARN - DAY - MED. SHOT 111
Malone, just inside the door, flattens himself back out of sight as the Agent approaches, strolling up to the door. He looks in, but doesn't come in quite far enough to see Malone. There is a long moment of suspense as Malone levels his pistol, but doesn't fire, waiting for the man to step in. Instead, he turns away.

112 BACK TO YARD 112
SHOOTING THROUGH horses -- Jonesy, close, and Slim, beyond, heave a sigh of relief as the Agent, in b.g. moves away from the door. Then Jonesy, as he works, is conscious of another Second Agent standing over him, watching him. He looks up, looks around, and then says quickly, in half whisper.

JONESY
Brantonl

SECOND AGENT
(staring, loudly)
What'd you say?

Jonesy, shocked at the loud tone, knows he can't get it across to this knucklehead without getting shot.

JONESY
Nothing. Just mumbling. I always mumble when I work.

He finishes and moves disgustedly away. In b.g. Slim is finished too.

113 ANOTHER ANGLE - FEATURING SLIM 113
As Jonesy comes around to his side and the agents converge to get back in. Slim nods up to Mose.

SLIM
All set.

AGENT
Where's the other man?

MOSE
He means Jess.

SLIM
He's away -- delivering some cattle.

SECOND AGENT
Is anything wrong here?

JONESY
Wrong? No -- 'course not.
What would be wrong?

CONTINUED

113 CONTINUED (contd) 113

The Agents study them a moment and then turn and get back onto the stage. The moment of tension is past. Rose grins down at the white-faced Slim.

ROSE
Ain't they somethin'? Oh, say -- you'll have to get 'nother relay of horses ready, Slim. There's a second stage comin' through today.
(wink)
Company's doin' fine.

He slaps the reins and the horses take off. CAMERA MOVES IN ON a hopeless looking Slim and Jonesy as they stare wistfully, helplessly, after the stage.

SLIM
There goes our last chance.

JONESY
Maybe we should've risked it, we had nothing to lose.

SLIM
I know. But I kept seeing Andy's face.

He shakes his head and Jonesy nods, it was the same with him.

SLIM (contd)
(grimly thoughtful)
If only there was a way to give <u>him</u> a chance.
(then remembering)
If I could just get into the barn.

He turns and looks but Malone is there, coming toward them and he has no chance.

JONESY
Looks like time's up, for all of us.

He nods toward the house and Slim looks, too.

114 ANOTHER ANGLE 114

SHOOTING TOWARD the house as the others come toward the CAMERA . Andy and Jess leading at the gunpoint of Yates and Cowly. Malone comes up beside Slim and Jonesy, and smiles sardonically at them.

MALONE
And you could be halfway to Montana by now.

CONTINUED

114 CONTINUED (contd) 114

Slim only gives him a preoccupied look. The others come in.

BRANTON
(cooly)
There are shovels in the barn. That'll be as good a place as any.

Malone and Yates push Slim, Jonesy, Jess and Andy toward the barn. Cowly points off toward the hill.

COWLY
Here comes Collins.

BRANTON
His orders were to come in once the first stage had passed. Cowly, you go out and meet him and the two of you watch for the stagecoach. We can handle this.

Cowly seems not too unhappy to go. Now Branton waves them all on toward the corral, and they go.

115 INT. BARN - DAY - MED. SHOT 115

As they come through the barn door. With Yates not looking and Branton and Malone behind them, Slim is giving Jess strong meaningful looks, reminding him of the gun in the barn. Jess understands...and as they get to the door of the barn, he hangs back close to where he hid the gun and Slim stops the others waiting for Branton and Malone. Malone has taken out his watch and is looking at it.

MALONE
(to Branton)
Why bother with this? It's almost 3:45 already -- that stage might come in early -- any time now.

CONTINUED

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115 CONTINUED (contd) 115

BRANTON

This will only take
a second -- just time enough to
pull a trigger.

He gives the victims a faint smile, in sadistic enjoyment of his power over them. But Malone frowns.

MALONE

No need to dig, sir.
We can just
hide 'em under the straw, they'd
be out of sight.

SLIM
(sarcastic)
That's our friend talking.

MALONE
(ignores him;
to Branton)
We'll be out of here before anybody
comes looking.

BRANTON
(flaring ego)
Who's giving the orders around
here, Captain? Or have you
forgotten?

MALONE
(stung)
No, sir.

BRANTON
(cocksure)
We're going to do this thing
right. My way.

Now Slim starts talking, and he continues with a strange driving intensity through to the end of the scene, meanwhile constantly moving out into the corral more, to bring the focus of guarding eyes to himself and away from Joss.

SLIM
That's right, Whit, listen to him.
He's an old hand at this kind of
slaughter. Like those two hundred
men he killed at Hacketstown.

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED 115

BRANTON
(acidly)
Young man, you talk too much.

SLIM
So go ahead, shoot me -- then you can dig my grave yourself.

BRANTON
Dig.
(turning to Jess)
You, too.

JESS
(turning limp arm)
I can't -- my arm.

BRANTON
(to Jonesy)
All right -- you.

Jonesy moves to take the second shovel and go out beside Slim. Slim throws a triumphant look to Jess and goes on talking.

SLIM
So this is the man you were so proud of, Whit? The man whose orders you'd follow to Hell and back. Well, that's exactly what you're doing now.

MALONE
(tightly)
You better shut up and dig, Slim.

Under the menace of that gun, Slim starts digging and so does Jonesy -- but not too much. And Slim continues talking -- trying desperately to hold their attention, occasionally throwing a quick glance to Jess.

SLIM
You oughta read more, Whit -- that book on the Battles of the Civil War for instance.

116 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 116
As he edges closer to the hidden gun.

SLIM'S VOICE
Learn all about the raid on Hackettstown -- and your fine Colonel Branton.

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117 FULL SHOT - FEATURING SLIM 117

As he only goes through the motions of digging -- talks, giving Jess a surreptitious glance.

MALONE
I don't have to read about it,
I was there.

Malone is in bad humor, getting more acid each time.
But Slim is daring both he and Branton to shoot.

SLIM
You don't get the same perspective --
don't see the whole picture -- or
learn the motives. And the motives
of Colonel Branton were pretty clear.

Branton is getting white around the mouth, glaring.

MALONE
Shut up! I'm getting sick of listening to you!

He moves a step closer to Slim, levelling the gun. Now, Slim gives up the pretense of digging and just talks, taunting them. He sees Jess is near the objective and he must hold their attention, another moment.

SLIM
He was willing to disobey orders ---

118 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 118

Almost able to reach the hidden gun.

SLIM'S VOICE
-- sacrifice those men, ruin
Sherman's whole plan of battle ---

119 CLOSE SHOT - JESS' HAND 119

As it gropes in the hay on a shelf of wall support -- the gun is just out of reach, his fingers never quite reach it during this shot.

SLIM'S VOICE
-- just to win some headlines and
make himself a big hero.

120 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 120

As he strains even more to reach.

SLIM'S VOICE
He was hoping to win that
Brigadier's star.

121 FULL SHOT - SLIM 121
Malone and Branton are closing in on him and even Yates' attention is drawn.

MALONE
And he should have, too!

BRANTON
Sherman -- you're asking for it, and I'm about to oblige you.

SLIM
Go ahead, you've got a lot of killing to do yet, haven't you, Branton? All the witnesses. Don't forget that, Whit -- or you either, Yates. He won't want any witnesses to what's been done here -- not even you.

Branton might have pulled the trigger, but Malone, furious and not seeing him, steps directly in the way, facing Slim.

MALONE
Shut up!

But Slim can't, the moment is almost here.

SLIM
To a man as crazy and as selfish as Branton -- everybody is expendable -- even a man who would follow him to He ---

His speech is interrupted by Malone slamming him hard, backhand, across the mouth. The blow knocks Slim over. Now as Slim lies stunned and sprawling, Branton steps up and deliberately aims his pistol down at Slim's head -- a SHOT is HEARD and Branton jerks.

122 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 122
A quick flash as he stands, gun smoking and pumps another bullet at Branton.

123 FULL SHOT - BATTLE 123
Furious action breaks out all over, simultaneously. Branton is going down, dropping his pistol. Malone spins to fire at Jess, but Slim is on him, rolling to knock him down and jump on him. Jonesy scoops up Branton's pistol and runs across to throw Andy down, perhaps into the doorway of the barn where he might be safe from bullets. Then, Jonesy joins the fight. When Malone went down, Jess turned his gun on Yates and fired. Yates had to swing around and, though he throws a wild shot, he, too, is hit and goes down, dropping his rifle. Jess then runs to get it.

124 CLOSER SHOT - SLIM, MALONE 124
They are engaged in a terrible wrestling struggle for the pistol. In b.g. Jess scoops up the Yates rifle and is about to pitch in with Slim, although he can see no opening and Slim seems to be holding his own. Just then:

JONESY'S VOICE
(calling o.s.)
Jess!

Jess looks up and runs toward Jonesy and the corral fence.

125 ANOTHER ANGLE - CORRAL FENCE 125
As Jess reaches it and goes down near Jonesy behind it, to fire out at the two men coming across the yard -- Cowly and Collins. These two duck behind some cover and fire back.

126 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM, MALONE 126
As their fight continues while bullets ricochet past. Then somehow Malone gets an advantage, slugs Slim in a brutal way and gets full possession of the gun, swinging up to his feet. As Slim starts up, Malone levels the gun at him. Slim tackles him, and the shot misses.

127 CLOSE SHOT - ANOTHER ANGLE 127 -
The struggle for the gun continues, finally ending in Malone getting shot and going limp. Slim grabs up the pistol and comes running to the fence.

128 ANOTHER FULL ANGLE - YARD 128
As Jonesy, Jess and Slim in f.g. fire at the semi-hidden Cowly and Collins in the yard. Cowly is hit and falls out. That is the signal for Collins to wave a white handkerchief and, as the firing ceases, come out with hands up. The men in f.g. stand up and look at each other and Andy comes running in from the barn and grabs Slim, who puts an arm around him.

129 CLOSE SHOT 129
SHOOTING PAST body of Malone, face down. In b.g. Jess leads the way toward the bodies, the others following. Slim kneels and turns Malone over, lifting him slightly. And Whit's eyes are open, he is still alive.

SLIM
Whit.

MALONE
(a faint smile)
"Go for it, Yank" -- first time -- I ever lost -- that game.

CONTINUED

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129 CONTINUED (contd) 129

SLIM
I'm sorry, Whit. It might've been better if you'd lost it back at Hackettstown.

MALONE
(weakly)
Hackettstown? Branton ---?

Slim looks up to Jess who has moved into b.g. watching. Jess shakes head, and Slim turns back to Whit.

SLIM
He's dead, Whit.

Malone gives a weak nod, and his face has a faint smile.

MALONE
I guess I'm still -- following him.

He stares for just a moment and then relaxes, dead.

130 FULL SHOT - GROUP 130
As Slim stands up, the others grouped around him, as we -

DISSOLVE

131 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH - DAY - FULL SHOT 131 -
Andy and Jess sit, with Jess holding the gun on Collins, unhurt, Cowly, nursing an arm wound, and Yates who is stretched out on the couch, evidently more seriously hurt. And in the corner, on the barn floor a sheet has been placed over the other two bodies. -

132 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH YARD - MED. SHOT 132
The stage sits there as Slim and Jonesy finish putting in the new horses. Now Slim comes back to the side and salutes the driver, as Jonesy is coming around from back.

SLIM
All set, Wilson.

WILSON
(looking at watch)
That was fast, Slim. Exactly four o'clock.

CONTINUED

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132 CONTINUED (contd) 132

SLIM
(at the door)
Have a good trip, General Sherman.

The GENERAL leans a little toward the window, coming INTO VIEW.

GENERAL
You know me, sir?

SLIM
I served under you -- 23rd Volunteers.
Lt. Sherman, sir -- no relation.

They smile at one another.

GENERAL
Glad you're doing well, Lieutenant.
Nice place you have -- quiet and peaceful. I envy you.
(leaning back)
Good luck.

SLIM
Good luck to you, sir.

He salutes, and turns to the driver.

WILSON
Okay, Slim?

SLIM
All set. Oh -- Wilson, when you get to town -- you might just tell Zack McCord to come out here. We've got some business for him.

Wilson's eyes widen a little, but he nods and slaps the reins. But he is still staring curiously as the stage pulls out. We see only the hand of the General as he waves a military kind of goodbye. Slim answers in kind and Jonesy has his hat off. Then the stage is gone and the two men look at one another and sigh.

SLIM
One thing I hope.

JONESY
What's that?

SLIM
We don't have any more visits from "old friends" for a long time.

Jonesy nods "amen" and they start for the house.

FADE OUT

- THE END -