

# *BOOM*

"Pilot"

Written by

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## **BOOM FACTS**

***The Bakken is the single largest oil discovery in American history. If predictions hold true, it will yield an even bigger oil treasure than Saudi Arabia.***

***The ability to extract oil from the Bakken is creating U.S. energy independence and a fundamental shift in geopolitical power in favor of the West.***

***Vladimir Putin and the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei are not happy... China is not particularly thrilled either.***

***According to The Economist, Williston, North Dakota is the fastest growing small city in America.***

***There will be a city the size of Dallas in North Dakota by 2030.***

***The oil fields of the Bakken are so vast that they're visible from outer space.***

***North Dakota's unemployment rate is currently ZERO, yes 0%.***

***The story of BOOM is the story of American hope and ambition -- of boom to bust to boom, and all over again. Indeed it is the story of America.***

***The Chanel Boutique in Williston was so crowded last week, you had to take a number to get in. The wait time: 35 minutes.***

***A millionaire each and every day is created in the Bakken.***

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

OUR CAMERA pans a sky pocked by a trillion galaxies.

CARD 1

The largest oil discovery in  
American history is happening right  
now.

Behind our legend, stars streak past the frozen void as --

CARD 2

More oil exists in the Dakotas than  
in Saudi Arabia, and prospectors  
are coming from everywhere to  
strike it rich.

-- we land on a lone OIL DERRICK, its flare stack, AFLAME.

BLACKOUT.

*GRR-RRR-RRR-RRR-RRR* -- it's the high-pitched REVVING of truck  
engine in overdrive.

EXT. NORTH DAKOTA PLAINS - US 85 - DUSK

Tracking low at blacktop level, we're in-between two OIL  
TANKERS roaring up an incline. It's deafening -- they're on  
BOTH sides of the road -- one passing the other as --

From the OTHER DIRECTION, a RED PICKUP pulls a trailer  
covered by a tarp -- and it's heading towards the TANKERS.

Inside are: BILLY LEFEVER, 20s (young Josh Brolin), and his  
wife, KELLY, 20s (young Reese Witherspoon).

HONNNNNK! HONNNNNK! The 18-wheelers crest the ridge -- Kelly  
sees the tankers first, screaming a warning to Billy as he  
swerves, sending their rig FLIPPING!

We go to SLOW MOTION as the red pickup gets AIRBORNE.

BILLY (V.O.)

Kelly and I want to say thank you  
for this send-off.

Twisting in the air, Kelly and Billy are in a SILENT SCREAM.  
A field of summer wheat is where the sky should be --

BILLY (V.O.)  
 And for investing your hard earned  
 money in us. We won't let you down.

Out the windshield, in SUPER SLOW-MOTION, three MAYTAG  
 WASHING MACHINES spin past like weird, square asteroids.

PRE-LAP: friends CHEER in a sound TRANSITION/FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. APALACHICOLA, FLORIDA EMERALD COAST - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

A spirited backyard farewell party is in progress. On a  
 cooler, Billy addresses his middle-class family and friends.

BILLY  
 We're opening three Mr. Sudsy's  
 this year, then expanding into car  
 washes, then we'll diversify into  
 Chick-fil-A franchises until we've  
 returned 10X your money!

More HOOTS and HOLLERS from the gathered throng.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
 It wasn't the miners who struck it  
 rich during the Gold Rush, it was  
 those selling picks and shovels!

INT. PICKUP - DUSK - **PRESENT**

Back in SLOW-MO inside the inverted pickup, Kelly's got a  
 death grip on an HEIRLOOM DIAMOND PENDANT around her neck.

BILLY (V.O.)  
 We're betting big on ourselves --  
 and we're going to win big!

EXT. APALACHICOLA - BACKYARD - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

WANDA, 55, Kelly's mom, presses that same DIAMOND PENDANT  
 into Kelly's hands.

WANDA  
 You take care up there, baby girl.

Kelly turns it over, visibly moved.

KELLY  
 But this was your grandma's --

WANDA

Great, great grandma's. It's for good luck... She went West to San Francisco for the Gold Rush. She was a wild one, just like you.

(hugs Kelly)

My modern day prospector.

Still on the cooler, Billy scans the crowd for his wife.

BILLY

But mostly I want to thank Kelly, my high school sweetheart, my wing-woman, my best friend --

COUSIN ERNIE

Your common sense!

BILLY

-- for joining me on this grand adventure of a lifetime.

KELLY

For better or worse, Billy. For better or for worse...

EXT. NORTH DAKOTA PLAINS - U.S. 85 - DUSK - **PRESENT**

WE RELEASE SLOW-MO INTO A VIOLENT REAL TIME CRASH.

The pickup and the trailer roll *over and over and over* cascading into a ball of BLUE SPARK and WRENCHING METAL. It comes to rest in a ditch, wheels spinning -- a DOZEN Maytags lie scattered down the highway like TUMBLED DICE.

The OIL TANKERS power over a hill and disappear, oblivious to the wreck they just caused behind them. A BORDER SIGN stands silent witness in the setting Sun -- "WELCOME TO NORTH DAKOTA: HOME OF BOOMTOWN, U.S.A."

We PUSH INTO its center, to one word:

**BOOM**

Upside down and dazed, Billy pulls his bruised face from an AIRBAG and looks at Kelly -- she's unconscious --

BILLY

*Kelly!*

He kicks out some glass and pulls her from her window, laying her on the blacktop as --

BILLY (CONT'D)

Talk to me baby, *please*.

Kelly's eyes blink open, and after a groggy beat:

KELLY

Nice driving, Dale Jr.

Billy embraces her in relief and she winces -- she's busted up and scratched, but otherwise okay. They look at the pickup -- it's **TOTALED**, a trail of junk left like a yard sale.

LATER -- Billy's hand shakes as he dials 911 while Kelly gathers up their things from the ditch.

RECORDED VOICE

*Due to overwhelming call volume, it  
may take the Williston Police  
Department 24 hours to respond.  
Thank you for your patience --*

*24 hours?* Billy's dumfounded by this first indication that boom towns operate by rules all their own.

KELLY

We'll call home in the morning,  
tell them we hit a rough patch.

BILLY

And say what? Sorry you invested  
\$37K in our big entrepreneurial  
plan, but we screwed the pooch  
before we even got up there?

He swallows hard, determined not to let this beat him.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I don't think so, Kell.

Billy walks out to the destroyed washers and **KICKS** one in frustration -- a jackpot of quarters spills across the road. Kelly looks at him, wondering...

KELLY

You had these machines insured,  
right?

Billy doesn't answer, he just starts scooping up the quarters -- and in that moment, she knows.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Because I remember we could either have insured all the equipment, or you could have purchased three more washers.

(pissed)

And I distinctly remember we decided to insure them.

Billy kicks another washer -- more quarters spill out.

BILLY

I need help, Kell.

(sheepish)

To pick up our insurance.

She doesn't find it funny -- not at all.

LATER -- LONELY SILHOUETTES against the Milky Way, Billy and Kelly hoof it down the highway.

KELLY

We're not even there yet and we've lost everything...

She stops, tears of frustration flooding over.

BILLY

Whoa, whoa, easy there.

He gently pulls her into him.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Baby, did the Great Recession knock us out? No. We figured out how to save Dad's excavator business, and we're gonna figure this out too.

He cups her face in his hands, calming her.

KELLY

You were the one who figured that out, Billy...

BILLY

(smiles)

Just gotta know how to talk to bankers is all. We got knocked down, it's true... But we'll get up again. It's what we were born to do. I know it.

She looks in his eyes. She loves his confidence, his certainty -- and she loves this man.

KELLY

I'm betting on you. Always will.

BILLY

This whole trip is a giant bet on ourselves, Kell. There's no going back for us, only forward.

He kisses her and she kisses him back.

LATER -- Lugging broken suitcases of salvaged essentials, they top a rise to a PRAIRIE LANDSCAPE dotted by countless PLUMES of BLUE FIRE -- it's beautiful and surreal... The GAS FLARES are so vast, they're visible from outer space.

KELLY

What are those flames from?

BILLY

Natural gas. It comes up with the oil. They're just burning it off.

KELLY

Why don't they collect it?

BILLY

They're making so much money up here, it's not worth the bother to pick up loose change.

Billy sees a SLOW-MOVING TRAIN crossing the prairie below -- it's headed towards Williston.

BILLY (CONT'D)

C'mon!

He grabs Kelly's hand and pulls her along with him.

MOMENTS LATER -- They clamber aboard a slow-moving BOXCAR, laughing at the adventure.

INT. BOXCAR - HOURS LATER

Kelly dozes against pallets piled chock-a-block with massive flat-screens and cases of expensive champagne. Billy stares out the double doors at the approaching city lights -- he's intent, expectant, hopeful...

BILLY

(whispers)

Baby. We're here.

EXT. CITY OF WILLISTON - MAIN STREET - LATER

It's a 24/7 LIT-UP BOOMTOWN. Billy and Kelly weave their way through the sparkling neon of new dance clubs, restaurants, outfitters, fancy casinos -- all framed by new construction. It's sexy, exciting, and bursting with life and new luxury.

Hollywood-style SPOTLIGHTS rake the sky and help wanted signs dot windows, evidence of Williston's sizzling-hot economy -- it's a modern day GOLD RUSH, 2015.

BILLY

Look at this place, Kell. It's going off up here, so much better than I thought. The American Dream is alive and kicking. I told you!

A NEON COWGIRL MARQUEE presides over the busiest bar in town -- THE BUCKHORN BAR AND SOCIAL LOUNGE. They head inside.

INT. THE BUCKHORN - 2 A.M.

As if from the Gilded Age, Billy and Kelly enter a turn of the Century marble and mahogany saloon with classic zinc bar and crystal-cut chandeliers. Much higher end than we expect, iPads serve as cash registers -- all a reflection of the mountains of money spent in this boomtown each night.

Mouths agape, Billy and Kelly lower their suitcases at the packed cross section of Bakken society -- Oil Co. suits, wildcatters, roughnecks and entrepreneurs of every stripe.

On a small stage, A WILDCATTER who's just hit a gusher drinks from a boot in front of a PROP OIL DERRICK. AN ELEGANT DANCER in a sexy jumpsuit and matching hard hat dances around him as the BEVERLY HILLBILLIES theme blasts over the massive P.A.

*"Then one day he was shooting at some food, and up from through the ground come some bubbling crude..."*

The derrick sends "oil" raining over them -- the crowd goes BERSERK, laughing and pushing for more. At the bar, Billy has to yell to the striking BARTENDER.

BILLY

We're looking for a place to stay.

Meet JULES JACKMAN, 28, the sexy and savvy proprietor of this madhouse (and a few other businesses in town).

JULES

Let me guess? You rolled into town with no reservations?

(MORE)

JULES (CONT'D)  
 (off Billy's nod)  
 Got one option. Patchwork Hotel, by  
 Walmart. You'll love it. Five star.

A WILD-EYED patron pushes up to the bar.

ROUGHNECK  
 Anybody want to see Cowboys versus  
 Indians, better get outside!

A crowd exits, sweeping Billy and Kelly up with them.

EXT. THE BUCKHORN - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

WICK BOYD, 25 (James Dean), is on the hood of his CHERRY RED RANGE ROVER, facing off an angry crowd of MANDAN INDIANS. Wired on something, he's got a dead WHITE MOOSE lashed to the roof of his Rover as his roughneck friends tip beers, high five the popular scion of a local oil fortune on his TROPHY.

A bottle thrown from somewhere SMASHES his windshield.

WICK  
 Deductible's out of your reach  
 Cochise!

A giant of A MAN pushes through the crowd. JERRY LAFRAMBOISE, 30, is a Falstaff-like patch legend. Wick's eyes brighten at the approach of a man he wants to impress.

WICK (CONT'D)  
 Sick, right? 300 yards! One shot.  
 Had to show my hunting buddy first.

With a meaty paw, Jerry YANKS Wick down, warns:

JERRY  
 You shouldn't have taken a white  
 moose, Wick --

WICK  
 State record, I'm telling you!

JERRY  
 You're gonna have to leave the  
 state to keep from getting your  
 head kicked in!

A feisty Native American woman, STEPH BLACK CROW, steps up.

STEPH  
 Whoever kills a spirit animal is  
 cursed.

WICK

Then that spirit animal shouldn't  
have been on Boyd land.

Steph begins to untie the moose as the Indians surge forward.

WICK (CONT'D)

Take your hands off my trophy!  
Unless you want to get shot.

Wick pulls out his HUNTING RIFLE, levels it at her as the Indians pull concealed weapons from every pocket, jacket and boot. GUN FIRE RICOCHETS!

The COWGIRL SIGN EXPLODES in a shower of sparks and the crowd spooks -- some hit the deck, others run. Billy pulls Kelly behind a truck and they peek out at the chaotic, rampaging scene all around them.

BILLY

(stoked)

It's the Wild West all over  
again...

But Kelly is properly terrified, their contrasting expressions speaking volumes as --

*BLAM! BLAM!* TIP HAMILTON, 50 (Tommy Lee Jones), the SHERIFF of WILLISTON COUNTY, fires his pistol into the air and the crowd quiets. Worldly-wise, Tip's survived other booms -- if he weren't so understaffed, he'd enjoy this one too.

TIP

Everybody take one of them damn  
yoga breaths! On the count of three  
I want you to put down your  
weapons. One. Two...

(eyes Wick)

Anybody ain't stood down by three,  
gets shot by me personally.

Guns get concealed and Wick lowers his rifle.

TIP (CONT'D)

Show's over. I recommend everyone  
get back to civilized drinking.

Tip spins Wick, cuffs him with a roll of DUCT TAPE.

WICK

What are the charges?

TIP

Drunk and disorderly, disturbing  
the peace, being a constant pain in  
my ass... For starters.

He drags Wick to his patrol car past Billy and Kelly. In the  
B.G., Steph and the Indians take possession of the WHITE  
MOOSE as Billy pulls a shaken Kelly away from the chaos.

BILLY

Let's go check out that hotel...

EXT. WALMART - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A MINI-CITY has risen in the parking lot. Its SIGN made of  
license plates from all 50 states spells it out: "PATCHWORK".  
Here, amber light glows from campers, trailers, tarps and  
tents laid out into lines, some illuminated by strings of  
tiny CHRISTMAS LIGHTS. It's a POP-UP NEIGHBORHOOD of American  
pilgrims full of hope and aspiration for a better life.

KELLY

Maybe not the Four Seasons, but it  
sure beats a boxcar...

They slip through a narrow alley when a Nigerian man, KESS  
EZE, 30, approaches -- an ominous figure in such a setting.

KESS

Stay here, don't move.

He disappears into a tent. Billy and Kelly look at each other  
with concern. Instead, Kess emerges with a FIRST AID KIT.

KESS (CONT'D)

(to Kelly)

There's a cut on your forehead.

Their apprehension melts as --

INT. KESS'S TENT - LATER

Billy and Kelly eat from a tray of Nigerian BBQ as Kess's  
wife ADA, 30, helps her kids stoke a SMOKER -- it's a small  
makeshift restaurant where several locals eat in the B.G.

BILLY

We're going to pay you back, just  
as soon as we can.

KESS

Just help the next one coming.

ADA

That's how it works in Patchwork.

Kelly sees a Luke 6:31 tattoo on Kess's forearm, "Do unto others..." She's touched by these generous, kind people.

KELLY

You're life savers... Thank you.

BILLY

This barbecue is unbelievable.

KESS

It's my secret red pepper sauce.  
We're saving to open a restaurant.

Billy winks at Kelly: *we aren't the only ones with dreams.*

ADA

C'mon, I got beds made.

LATER -- Under a tarp, Billy and Kelly cuddle in sleeping bags off to the side, finding refuge in each other's arms.

KELLY

Just when I'd about given up on  
humanity, we meet someone special.

She props up on an elbow, studies Billy's face -- he's deep in thought, thinking through their next moves...

KELLY (CONT'D)

You okay?

BILLY

In the morning, Kess's taking me to  
where they parcel out rig jobs.

KELLY

Gonna jump in, start roughnecking?

BILLY

Those washing machines aren't going  
to replace themselves, Kell.

He pulls her close and she closes her eyes. We PULL UP AND AWAY -- their tarp getting lost in Patchwork's QUILT OF HOPE.

INT. BLACK YUKON - NEXT DAY

A.J. MENENDEZ, 25 (Gael Garcia Bernal), Hap Boyd's Mexican driver, sits behind the wheel as Wick slides in back, newly released from custody. The Sheriff's office is in B.G.

WICK

Ain't you supposed to keep this  
thing stocked with water, *amigo*?

A.J. cuts Wick a look in the rearview -- he doesn't care for his boss's spoiled brat son. A.J. hands him back a water.

WICK (CONT'D)

(presses it to his cheek)  
Ever hear of refrigeration?

(then)  
Surprised my old man didn't bail me  
out himself. Never misses a chance  
to deliver one of his lectures.

A.J.

Mr. Boyd was too upset to come.

Off A.J., quietly relishing Wick's predicament.

EXT. BOYD RANCH - HELICOPTER SHOT - DAY

Massive and magisterial, we fly low over 10,000 acres speckled by a private bison herd. The BOYD RANCH has a pool bubble in back, a skeet range and a helipad -- all nestled on the banks of the Ruby River. The Boyds are rich -- oil rich.

The black Yukon snakes up the half mile driveway to the MAIN MANSION at the top.

INT. BOYD RANCH - GREAT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Wick walks through with a dissatisfied gait as a maid stokes an enormous stone fireplace. Out a window in the far distance, 100 oil derricks pump in mesmerizing unison...

LACEY

Nice job with the sacred moose,  
bro. Meat is murder, by the way.

Wick turns as his stunning sister, LACEY BOYD, 21 (Emma Stone), an idealistic college grad in a "No Fracking Way" tee and black skinny jeans, lounges on a sofa.

WICK

Where's Marie Antoinette?

LACEY

Maxing out her carbon footprint in  
the jet helicopter.

In the distance, Wick sees his father, HAP BOYD, 60 (Robert Duvall), putting a struggling calf in the bed of his pickup. Backlit against the sun, Hap Boyd casts an iconic image.

WICK

Like we don't have staff for that.

LACEY

That's the point. Dad's a legend because he still chases strays down himself. Like you.

Lacey returns to her reading -- THE MONKEY WRENCH GANG by Edward Abbey.

EXT. BARN - LATER

MAHOGANY STABLES fit for a King house millions in Arabians. Hap rubs down a prized sire as Wick walks up, rueful.

HAP

You stepped in it last night, boy.

WICK

Stepped in it? That bull had 200 points -- the rack's 9 feet wide!

Hap struggles to contain his ire, keeps rubbing.

HAP

You know how much land the Mandans control around here? How excited do you think Chief Joe's gonna be to see a Boyd Oil truck driving up the road after what you just did?

WICK

I wasn't current on Native American superstition. Sorry.

(wounded)

You've taken trophies all over the world... I thought you'd be proud of me.

HAP

(rises)

The next time you make me proud, it'll be the first... I wasn't proud when you flunked out of three colleges. And I ain't proud I got a 25 year-old son lazing around on a sugar tit, thinking I'm just gonna toss him the keys to the kingdom.

Wick looks away, waiting for the lecture to end.

HAP (CONT'D)  
I'm taking a different tack,  
putting you to work on the rig.

WICK  
The step-witch got to you.

That cuts it. Hap gets up in Wick's face, eye-to-eye.

HAP  
Son, you cast some more aspersions  
on my wife, see what happens.

Wick can't hold his stare -- this lion is still King.

HAP (CONT'D)  
That's what I thought. You start  
working the rig in the morning.

INT. STAFFCARE EMPLOYMENT OFFICE - DAY

It's CHAOS as men push and position for gigs as a WHITE BOARD of jobs changes constantly as good ones get filled. Billy and Kess elbow up to the counter, have to shout to be heard.

CASE OFFICER  
Sorry boys, roustabout gigs are  
gone.

BILLY  
I need work that pays cash. Today.

CASE OFFICER  
(off his clipboard)  
You could push mud. Pays \$100 per.

KESS  
(warns)  
Lotta guys can't last half a day  
doing that.

BILLY  
How hard can it be?

ROUGHNECK  
Come back tomorrow, you tell us!

Roughnecks ROAR with laughter: *Piece of cake! No sweat!* But Billy's jaw is set -- he nods his assent to the Case Officer.

EXT. ROOSEVELT CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Only in the Bakken does a JET RUNWAY lead to the doors of a super-exclusive PRIVATE CLUB for oil field mega high-rollers. Hap stands in front as a Gulfstream G500 whines to a turbo stop. The door opens and DARLA BOYD, 40, Hap's intensely brilliant and ultra-glamorous wife (Robin Wright) deplanes, taking a deep inhale of pristine, crisp, North Dakota air.

DARLA

Back to the land of the living!  
 (gives Hap a kiss)  
 Darling, you know that bald,  
 weasely VP from Morgan?

HAP

That's every VP at Morgan. You mean Singer? Your old boss?

DARLA

I was his boss, darling. He mentioned a new report coming out of U.S. Geological. Says it's gonna "reorder the map" on mineral rights around here. Says it's a bombshell.

HAP

Since when does some New York bankster have patch intel we don't?

DARLA

Since they got a deep thermal map using new JPL satellites... He talked about it like I already knew, so I just stove-piped him and he kept going --

HAP

It didn't inhibit our fund-raising?

DARLA

Luckily, they didn't inquire as to how well positioned we are, or aren't... We're gonna get eyes on that report before it gets released.

HAP

Lemme guess. You already invited our dear friend Myron the Oil Commissioner to my gala?

DARLA

He's seated right between us.

EXT. BAKKEN OIL FIELDS - DAY

The expanding iron grid of OIL DERRICKS stretches to the horizon, an engineering feat on the scale of the pyramids.

A 20' tire wipes FRAME as Billy's almost run over by a TRUCK driving through the NASTIEST MUD of all time. BURLY WILSON, an Australian Tool Pusher, i.e. The Head Guy, tosses him a shovel, points at A MAN standing up to his knees in muck.

BURLY

Do like a pregnant woman and push.

Burly cackles, loving his lame joke. Billy wades in, starts shoveling like a man possessed as --

WICK

Slow down, son. They don't pay you by the shovelful...

BILLY

(recognizes Wick)

You had every gun in town aimed at your back, last time I checked.

WICK

Wasn't worried. Mandans can't shoot straight.

BILLY

Your name's Boyd, right? Too bad you're not Hap's son.

An ironic smile crawls across Wick's face...

WICK

Yeah, too bad. My dad owns the company. So technically, you work for me.

Billy stops, excited --

BILLY

The Baron of the Bakken's your old man? I've read all the stories... Sharecropper's son, wildcatter -- man's a legend.

Hearing this kind of praise of Hap makes Wick wince.

WICK

Only if you don't know him.

There's nothing about Wick that adds up to Billy.

BILLY

What're you doing out here with the fish?

WICK

What's that bastard say? Learning the business from the muck up? What does he know, anyway... I could blast through this shale faster than any tool pusher he's got. Waste of my goddamn time.

Wick sticks his shovel into the muck, fishes for a smoke. Billy stares for a moment, then goes back to his shoveling.

INT. MISSOURI FLATS MOTEL - STAIRWAY - DAY

Swinging her keys, a perky young REALTOR leads Kelly up to the second floor of an overflowing MOTEL COMPLEX.

REALTOR

The owners retrofitted each unit with a kitchenette, so it's really more like an apartment.

PRE-LAP the sound of a LOCK turning as Kelly looks around the motel complex with growing dread.

INT. ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kelly stares speechless at this small, dilapidated apartment. The "kitchenette" is an unplugged MICROWAVE next to the bed which is a twin mattress on the floor, no sheets.

REALTOR

I promise you, with the demand up here, this won't last the week.

(checks her iPhone)

Somebody stole the frame on that one. It sleeps just fine.

KELLY

How much is it?

REALTOR

Two thousand a month. Firm.

A wave of NAUSEA rises up in Kelly -- she steadies herself.

KELLY

I'm sorry, I'm feeling sick --

REALTOR

That's what all the newbies say  
when they hear the prices up here.

Off Kelly, green at the gills.

INT. BOYD RANCH - DARLA'S CLOSET - DAY

In a mirror, Darla checks for any imperfection on her perfect body as Houston society's stylist, MCKENZIE STEWART, 35, holds up two outfits for her client to consider.

DARLA

It's Hap's 60th, McKenzie, not some  
Badlands hoe down.

MCKENZIE

More upscale, then?

DARLA

Of *course* more upscale then! The  
oil business A-list is coming to  
ogle, sweetheart. Let's give them  
something to hate.

McKenzie pushes a button to a mechanized closet spinning options -- there's 2500 dresses from LANVIN to CHANEL to McQUEEN. A.J. MENENDEZ, Hap's driver, knocks, leans in.

A.J.

You wanted to see me, Mrs. Boyd?

A look passes between Darla and McKenzie -- *he's hot*.

DARLA

A.J., I want you to keep Lacey away  
from the party tonight.

McKenzie pulls a dress from the very latest Chanel "Cowboys and Indians" collection. Darla nods: *Perfect*.

DARLA (CONT'D)

Take her to a movie. Shoot rats at  
the dump, I couldn't care. Just  
make sure our resident leaf licker  
isn't fund raising for the Nature  
Conservancy during cocktail hour.

INT. WHITE PHARMACY - WILLISTON - DAY

Kelly enters, still woozy, finds the store packed with ROUGHNECKS waiting on prescriptions.

The shelves are almost empty like it's been looted -- another boomtown reality. Pharmacist IRV YOUNGERMAN, 50, is behind the counter.

ROUGHNECK

Eczema's killing me, Doc. Can't you put a rush on it?

IRV

I ain't a doctor and everything's on a rush around here!

From the back of the line, Kelly overhears, offering:

KELLY

Corticosteroid cream mixed with coconut oil will knock back eczema.

Irv peers over his bifocals. *Who is this girl?*

IRV

Coconut oil, you say?

Off Kelly's genuine smile we --

EXT. BOYD OIL RIG - WELL PAD - AFTERNOON

It's POURING so hard it's like Armageddon. Billy, in a yellow slicker, pushes the seemingly unending, multiplying mud...

*BEEP! BEEP!* A TANKER reverses across the muck. Wick's driving and distracted on his cell. Billy looks up, sees Wick's tanker closing in on GUY WIRES anchoring the derrick's base.

BILLY

Ho! STOP!

But Wick's oblivious, he just keeps backing up as -- *SNAP!* -- the tanker CUTS a wire and the derrick begins to tilt! 100 FEET UP, a FLOOR HAND slips on the wet rig, swinging out dangerously as Wick keeps backing into ANOTHER WIRE as --

BILLY (CONT'D)

WHOA!! WHOA!!

Billy grabs a WRENCH and smashes it into Wick's window. Wick flinches, jerking the tanker to a stop -- but it's too late. As the derrick BUCKLES in the raging winds, Hap Boyd lowers his BINOCULARS on a nearby ridge -- seeing it all.

The FLOOR HAND falls 50 feet onto the drilling mud, narrowly avoiding being impaled by a shard as the tower crashes down in a SLOW MOVING cascade of iron, oil and steel.

It's TRIAGE MODE as workers scatter, pulling off pieces of derrick, helping the Floor Hand from the wreckage as Wick hops from the cab to take a look. Burly tears ass around the corner, pushes up to Wick in the torrential rain.

BURLY

Bloody hell! You almost killed us!

WICK

It's on him. He was backing me in.

BILLY

I had nothing to do with it.

BURLY

You! You're fired.

BILLY

He's lying, it's not what happened.

BURLY

It's the spotter's responsibility --

BILLY

I wasn't his spotter --

BURLY

You're done here. Turn your credentials into the office and go!

Billy spins on Wick, sopping wet.

BILLY

You just cost me a job --

WICK

-- *pushing mud*. Please. I just did you a favor.

Off Billy, enraged -- the birth of a vendetta.

SLAM TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. BOYD OIL RIG - WELL PAD - CONTINUOUS

Right where we left them -- furious, Billy stomps off as --

HAP (O.S.)

Wick Boyd!

Hap sloshes up, the rain and wind pelting him.

HAP (CONT'D)

I saw you back that truck in,  
jerking off on that goddamn phone.  
That's a million dollar mistake!

Roughnecks look up from the wreckage, stopping their cleanup.

WICK

It wasn't my fault --

Hap pushes him down into the mud, hard.

HAP

I saw what happened, Wick... You'd  
think, after all you been born  
with, all you've been *given*, that  
you'd work harder than the others.  
Show you can earn it. But you  
don't. You just want it easy.

Wick pulls himself up, anger flaring --

HAP (CONT'D)

You don't deserve to be my son.

It's perhaps the cruelest thing he could say, and enraged,  
Wick takes a wild swing at his father.

Hap sidesteps it and delivers a FOREARM SHIV that catches his  
son FLUSH, sending him back down into the mud. Humiliated,  
Wick feels the eyes of the roughnecks on him. Hap kneels,  
hisses in Wick's bloody face as the rain mixes in with it.

HAP (CONT'D)

As of today I'm cutting off all  
financial support. Cards, clubs,  
everything. You're out, son. Out of  
the will. Into the deep end.

Hap gets up, screws on his sopping wet Stetson. He shoots  
Wick one last look, then heads off to deal with the wreckage.

EXT. PATCHWORK - PARKING LOT - DUSK

A BOYD OIL transport VAN pulls up and Billy steps off, exhausted, defeated, angry -- the rain matching his mood.

LATER -- He arrives at a tiny, egg-shaped camper strung with blinking X-MAS LIGHTS -- it's magical. Kelly exits with two cold beers in hand, the best thing Billy's seen all day.

BILLY

You're robbing banks.

KELLY

It was only a thousand... For the security deposit.

BILLY

Where'd you get the cash?

KELLY

I got offered a job at the pharmacy in town -- Mr. Youngerman advanced me my first pay check.

BILLY

But you dropped out of pharmacy school after two years --

KELLY

Apparently that's good enough up here. He told me he'd take every waking hour I could give him.

Billy smiles, shakes his head.

BILLY

Look at Kelly Lefever marching down the field throwing first downs. Which is good because I just got fired.

Kelly puts a gentle hand to his face, leads him inside.

INT. BOYD RANCH - WICK'S WING - SAME

Wick stuffs belongings into a duffel while Lacey looks on.

WICK

He's got the attention span of a gnat. This thing'll blow over and then we can throw our biggest-ever welcome home party. For me.

LACEY

I don't know brother, it feels different this time. I overheard the Queen talking last night... They're marching in lock-step against you.

WICK

Bring it on.

But Wick's insouciance irks her so she presses in --

LACEY

You know I love you, Wick, I do. But Dad isn't the problem. You are. You think you're stuck in his shadow, but that's just in your head. It's up to you to show the world what you can do... Or not.

She's put her finger on the truth and Wick knows it. But all he can do is stuff more clothes in harder.

EXT. BOYD RANCH - EVENING

Welcome to the billionaire's Bakken. Range Rovers and Bentleys off load guests adorned in the finest *couture* -- Tom Ford, Vuitton, and Chanel. It's a world unlike we've seen -- oil money as sophisticated as Paris, New York or anywhere.

Down at the corner of the driveway, in a sulk, Lacey climbs into a waiting Yukon -- the door being held by A.J.

LACEY

Get me out of here.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

Flo Rida and Willie Nelson (yes, them) have the Dom Perignon sipping crowd singing along to "Whiskey River". Hap, with Darla's arm around him, spies A MAN in the corner.

HAP

Wanna flush some Mormon pheasant?

DARLA

Don't ask me twice, darling.

Out of his depth, Oil and Gas Commissioner, MYRON STIPPLE, 45 (William H. Macy), glances jealously at the posh crowd as Darla approaches like a jungle cat.

DARLA (CONT'D)  
 Commissioner! Hap and I are so glad  
 you said yes to us.

MYRON  
 I've heard rumors about Boyd Ranch  
 for years, but I've never been.

DARLA  
 Then c'mon, let me show you around.

As our CAMERA CIRCLES them in one shot, the Queen of the  
 Scene leads Myron deeper into the party. She passes SHERIFF  
 TIP HAMILTON, cool and easy in any crowd, even the elite.

DARLA (CONT'D)  
 (winks)  
 Find any concealed weapons,  
 Sheriff, you slide 'em over to me.

TIP HAMILTON  
 Don't you worry. In the meantime,  
 I'll be concealing a few cocktails.

They share a laugh as A WAITER passes with champagne flutes --  
 Darla grabs two, spins Myron around as they move deeper in.

DARLA  
 (whispers)  
 C'mon Commish. Cut loose!

She links her arm through his until they're CROSS-CUPPED --  
 Myron's caught off-guard as the room's most beautiful woman  
 flashes her HIGH-BEAMS. She takes a sip, eyes him.

DARLA (CONT'D)  
 Hang 'em high.

Myron pours his champagne into her's, declining the drink.

MYRON  
 The Elders would be unhappy.

DARLA  
 Don't drink, don't smoke -- what do  
 you do, Myron?

MYRON  
 I'm boring, Darla. It's what makes  
 me so good at my job.

DARLA  
 I adore boring.

EXT. EARTH CONSERVANCY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Down a hallway, A.J. and Lacey come to an office door. A poster in its window reads, "PLANET EARTH IS NOT FOR SHALE."

A.J.

To think Hap Boyd's daughter... A card carrying 'fracktivist.'

INT. EARTH CONSERVANCY - OFFICE - NIGHT

Fluorescents flicker on as they enter the tiny office piled high with boxes of eco-pamphlets and bumper stickers.

LACEY

To think Marie Antoinette picked you to escort me. Six months in and they still have no idea about us.

She throws her arms around her "driver" and plants a deep, wet, lingering one... It's a beat before A.J. pulls away.

A.J.

We can't let them find out. It'll cost me my job.

Lacy PUSHES everything from her desk onto the floor.

LACEY

I've got a job for you.  
(seductive)  
Shut those off, they hurt my eyes.

A.J. turns off the lights to a room moon-lit INDIGO...

A.J.

What would Mr. Boyd say if he knew his daughter had fallen for a Mexican?

She unbuttons his shirt, kissing his neck, then his chest, working her way down to his belt buckle...

LACEY

He wouldn't freak because you're Mexican.

She pushes him onto the desk, unfastening her blouse, snap by snap by snap...

LACEY (CONT'D)

He'd freak because you're a closet environmentalist.

Laughing, loving him, she descends out of FRAME.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

On the dance floor, our CAMERA swirls around Darla and Myron.

DARLA

I hear Salt Lake's putting a squeeze on you to get a new temple built in Williston.

MYRON

I'm squeeze proof, Darla.

DARLA

Well, Bucky Carmichael's got the Lutherans all riled up. Said, "over his dead body" would there be a Mormon temple up here.

MYRON

You're LDS?

DARLA

No, I just like helping friends... Word is our dear Governor's been "hiking the Appalachian trail".

She allows Myron to twirl her, then comes back even closer.

DARLA (CONT'D)

When that scandal goes public, it's gonna be a recall. The good people of North Dakota like their politicians a little more boring...

MYRON

Let us pray for spiritual guidance.

DARLA

You don't need spiritual guidance, Myron. You've got me... A smart Oil & Gas Commissioner with the right backers could be sleeping in the governor's mansion right quick.

Darla moves in, sweetening her trap.

DARLA (CONT'D)

Oh, and that temple? The Governor gets to approve whatever he wants.

Off the incorruptible Myron, thinking about taking the bait.

INT. LEFEVER TRAILER - PRE-DAWN

Billy sits up, disquieted by the sound of thunder and rain. Kelly's feverish and wan -- she pulls the covers tight.

KELLY

I've never felt like this. I must have caught a bug...

BILLY

I'm gonna take care of you today, get you better.

KELLY

I've gotta go to work. I'm the only one with a paying gig right now.

Pained by that truth, Billy spoons into her even tighter.

BILLY

I'm gonna fix that. I swear it.

KELLY

*Shhh.* We've still got 2 hours left.

She closes her eyes as Billy stares on, even more determined.

EXT. HIDDEN BADLANDS TRAIL - HIGHWAY 22 - NEXT DAY

Gas rigs flare off in the distance on this lonely road, pock-marked by frost boils. A.J. pulls up next to a pickup with a STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA, MINERALS COMMISSION seal on its door.

The Yukon's window rolls down. Darla flashes a smile as Myron Stipple reaches across, hands her a MANILA ENVELOPE.

MYRON

This won't be made public for a month. If a copy gets out, I'll tell the State Police you stole it.

DARLA

Let's not have a copy get out then.  
(hands him an envelope)  
By the way, I took the liberty of starting a new Super PAC for your gubernatorial campaign.

CLOSE on the envelope's logo -- "RESTORING AMERICA'S TRUST".

INT. BOYD RANCH - GUN RANGE - NIGHT

In shooting goggles, Hap squeezes off rounds from an antique .45 Colt Revolver -- Wyatt Earp's, bought for \$225,000. Darla approaches, has the USGS REPORT in hand, reads from it.

DARLA

*"In conclusion, the richest areas of Bakken shale are on land previously thought barren."* That's the Four Bears Indian Reservation.

She slides Hap a map -- he looks it over, skeptical.

HAP

Those plots are a wildcatter's graveyard. Been drilled harder than a Tulsa whore.

DARLA

According to this imaging, the old wells never went deep enough.

Hap puts down the Colt, wipes his brow with a towel.

HAP

The tribe ain't gonna be happy to see a Boyd Oil truck coming. Not after Wick shot that damn moose.

DARLA

They don't get a say. There's a contiguous property for access.

She points to a parcel on the map: MCCUTCHING RANCH.

HAP

Whoever gets a straw into that oil will be the richest in the Bakken.

DARLA

The meek shall inherit the earth, but not its mineral rights.

Darla picks up the pistol, aims it and FIRES.

INT. WHITE DRUG PHARMACY - DAY

RICHARD FORD, 35, in a crisp HAPCO cap and a striped button-down is next up in a long line -- he knows he's handsome.

RICHARD

Prescription pick up. Richard Ford.

KELLY

Are you in our system, sir?

RICHARD

Wouldn't you like to know, honey.  
My digits are in there too... What  
time do you get off?

His cell RINGS -- he holds up finger: *hold that thought.*

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Ford, here. Yes, sir... Driving out  
to the McCutching Ranch right now.

(winks at Kelly)

Copy that, sir. I will not chisel  
him. Premium dollar. I'll close it  
today. Thank you, Mr. Boyd.

He clicks off as Kelly says so everyone can hear:

KELLY

Here's your hemorrhoid cream, Mr.  
Ford. Apply twice a day. Next!

INT. THE BUCKHORN - JULES'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jules Jackman lives in a stylish apartment on the second  
floor. Going through payroll and inventory, she hides her  
surprise when the front door opens to Wick Boyd.

JULES

You usually only come around if you  
want something...

Wick drops his duffel -- he's in a dark mood, been drinking.

WICK

You gonna kick me out too?

Curious about his new vulnerability, she approaches slowly.

JULES

You know me. I'm a giver.

Jules puts her arms around his neck but he pulls away --  
she's always been the chaser and he, the chased.

WICK

Hap cut me off.

JULES

Oh baby, that'll blow over. You two  
get in fights all the time.

WICK

This time's different. Apparently.

JULES

So what if he cut you off? There's opportunity everywhere up here. I started this place with a keg of beer and two thousand in cash.

Preoccupied, he's too angry to even hear her.

WICK

Hap thinks I'm gonna bolt, too scared to stick around on my own --

JULES

Who cares what Hap thinks... I'm here for you, Wick, no matter what. You know that, right?

WICK

I'm glad he did it. Take his money, he owns you. Fine then, you ancient sonofabitch, I'll make my own way.

JULES

When you put your mind to something, you're unstoppable...

WICK

I'm not going after penny ante stuff either, scrimping to open a goddamn laundromat. Boom towns offer bigger paydays than that.

JULES

(takes his measure)

So what's your play?

A new darkness in his soul illuminates a wicked smile.

WICK

To get mine.

She leans in for a kiss, Bonnie auditioning for her Clyde.

JULES

To get ours.

SLAM TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. SAKAKAWEA FALLS - AFTERNOON

Lacey and A.J. weave over boulders and mossy grasses down the middle of an empty river bed. They come a shimmering waterfall spilling into a turquoise glacial pool below.

LACEY

The fracker's already sucked the river dry below the Sakakawea reservoir. If the Earth Conservancy hadn't stepped in to save the falls, this would be gone too.

A.J. looks around -- the beauty here is simply magical.

A.J.

Same as it ever was. A small group of passionate people are the only ones who can change the world.

Her smile is warm and loving -- he really gets it, and her.

LACEY

I don't know what I would have done if you hadn't come into my life. It gets lonely up here, swimming against the tide.

He pulls her into him as --

A.J.

You're the strongest, most principled person I've ever met, which is such a good thing --

A.J. cuts himself off. Lacey sees something's troubling him.

A.J. (CONT'D)

There's a new oil report coming out that's going to "reorder the map in the Bakken."

LACEY

Hap and Darla already have it.

A.J.

Of course they do. Tough for us to stay ahead of big oil when they get the information first...

A.J.'s got Lacey thinking...

INT. BILLY AND KELLY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Billy enters, banging his head on the door jamb. Dejected, he collapses on the edge of the bed next to Kelly.

BILLY

You get on the wrong side of Boyd oil, nobody will touch you.

KELLY

You know what you need?

BILLY

A job.

KELLY

A wife who loves you.

She kisses him deeply, then rolls on top of him.

LATER -- Under covers and cozy, they spoon after making love.

KELLY (CONT'D)

I overheard this land man in line at the pharmacy. He was talking to Hap Boyd on his cell.

BILLY

So?

KELLY

Well, it seemed Mr. Boyd wanted him to pay top dollar for this McCutching Ranch, or something. It felt like it was some big secret, he said they had a "team" there... The guy was a blabbermouth, but it sure sounded important.

BILLY

A team? This was in line today?

KELLY

Mr. Boyd said the deal had to be done today. Crash job.

Billy nods, working on putting these pieces together...

INT. WILLISTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE - MAP ROOM - NEXT DAY

A FINGER traces along a row of leather volumes of LAND DEEDS for the City of Williston, North Dakota. It stops at "M" and a hand pulls out a massive, BOUND BOOK.

LATER -- Billy's finger moves down the page and stops at the only "McCutching" on it. *Bingo*.

TIGHTER -- his finger moves along a map-line of an L-SHAPED parcel clearly marked, "EASEMENT" -- it's directly adjacent to the McCutching property...

WIDER -- The COUNTY CLERK stands over Billy's shoulder, inspecting the map with him. Billy looks up, eyes on fire.

BILLY

This road here, what's that?

CLERK

It's actually an old Continental Railway access road. No longer in service.

BILLY

So, if I have this right, it's the only way to get in or out of the McCutching Ranch?

CLERK

Yup.

BILLY

The railroad still own it?

CLERK

Continental went tits up forty years ago. This little parcel here, 826? It's currently owned by --

He pulls over another book, opens it, scans...

CLERK (CONT'D)

A Mr. Clifton P. Lundegren.

INT. WHITE DRUG PHARMACY - DAY

Behind the counter, feeling queasy, Kelly's moving slow.

IRV

Kelly, we just got in a bunch of product that needs to get stocked on aisle three.

LATER -- Stocking shelves, Kelly fills up a row of CLEARBLUE pregnancy tests and comes face-to-face with what she's been avoiding all along.

She takes a deep breath before taking one.

INT. WOMEN'S REST ROOM

Kelly goes into a STALL and locks it. She sits on the toilet, her heart beating out of her chest. With an emotional mixture of fear and happiness, she opens the blue box.

EXT. CLIFTON P. LUNDEGREN HOUSE - DAY

In a rental car, Billy pulls up to a rusted tin mailbox that reads, "LUNDEGR-N". He can make out an old dilapidated farmhouse at the end of the overgrown SOY FIELD.

Billy pops a wrapper on a NEW TIE -- he's upgrading his look.

PRE-LAP: TICK-TOCK, TICK-TOCK -- it's a Grandfather clock.

INT. CLIFTON P. LUNDEGREN HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Billy warms his hands on a mug of Joe opposite an old farmer. CLIFTON P. LUNDEGREN, 70 (Bruce Dern), sits in a kitchen last re-modeled 45 years ago. A GIANT RUSTY DRILLING STANDPIPE juts up from the middle of the worn linoleum floor...

BILLY

I never knew mineral holders have the right of way, even inside a person's house.

CLIFTON

I didn't either. Fine print, see. Them old boys rolled me pretty good last time.

Clifton cuts a hunk of chewing tobacco with a pocket knife, nestles it in his lip. He regards the young feller askance...

CLIFTON (CONT'D)

Which bunch of goddamn oil thieves you work for?

BILLY

I did a spell on the rig, but now I'm branching out on my own.

CLIFTON

You're pissing up a rope wildcatting out here, son.

BILLY

Just looking to develop this spot.  
(lies)  
For a car wash.

A beat then Clifton EXPLODES IN LAUGHTER -- the crazy idea tickles the shit out of him. Billy tries to explain --

BILLY (CONT'D)

I haven't seen a clean car or truck since we got here --

CLIFTON

Hell, I been here 70 years and I ain't seen one yet! Boy, you know this land's ten miles out of town, right?

BILLY

Williston's booming. This could be a retail strip in a few years.

Clifton eyes Billy as if he's got a major screw loose.

CLIFTON

I had a young man sitting here near 30 years ago tell me some of them same damn things.

(his eyes narrow)

Coulda sold it then. Didn't.

He knows Billy's bluffing, decides to call it.

CLIFTON (CONT'D)

Tell you what, young buck. I'll option you this land. Cost you a pretty penny tho. \$70K.

BILLY

That's too rich for my blood --

CLIFTON

\$75K. It goes up every time you try to counter. Just keep talking!

He leans back and chews, eyeing Billy who tries to conceal the fact that this parcel, even at \$75,000, is a steal.

BILLY

Let me see what I can do.

CLIFTON

In cash, please. Hundreds will be fine. Ain't no point sending money to them geniuses in Washington to have 'em piss it all away!

He explodes in more LAUGHTER as Billy nods in agreement, wondering how he's ever going to raise that kind of cash.

INT. STORAGE WAREHOUSE - PRE-DAWN

Jerry LaFramboise lifts up a metal door and flips on the lights -- inside's a massive stash of brand new OIL DRILLING equipment. Wick enters and takes in the DRILL BITS, WELL HEADS, BUBBLERS and MONKEY BOARDS -- an oilman's paradise.

WICK

Rumor's a Halliburton semi got  
jacked south of 85 last week...

JERRY

Hadn't heard that.

WICK

Whose gear's this?

JERRY

A little deal I run on the side.  
Strictly to the trade.

Wick knows the equipment's hot. He picks up a pair of RED CASINO DICE from Jerry's desk, rolls them around in his hand.

WICK

How much would a jacked truck net?  
Hypothetically speaking, that is.

JERRY

Depends on the equipment. Used rigs  
and rods, \$25K per. Hypothetically.

WICK

That's chump change, bro. You're  
playing pickpocket when there's a  
jewelry store across the road.

JERRY

What're you talking about?

WICK

Siphoning.

JERRY

That's a whole other deal. Rig  
keys, codes, inside access --

Wick holds up a set of shiny KEYS, jingles 'em.

WICK

A tanker of Dakota sweet crude's  
worth 20 of your little stagecoach  
jobs. I get us in. You get it sold.

JERRY

You're gonna steal oil from your old man?

WICK

You mean the old man who just cut me off? That guy never showed up for a single thing my entire life. Ever. Always chasing the next deal.

(then)

I'm getting into business. You in?

Jerry eyes Wick, sees how serious he really is...

JERRY

I guess everyone wants to kill his old man sooner or later.

He slaps his big paw on Wick's back -- *he's in*.

EXT. ZIEGLER'S USED EQUIPMENT & PAWN - DAY

BUFFALO ZIEGLER, 45, negotiates with Billy over a used JOHN DEERE EXCAVATOR. The price-tag on the windshield: \$100,000.

BILLY

I can put \$10,000 down.

Buffalo switches sides fast with a toothpick in his mouth.

BUFFALO

We might could make that work.

INT. ZIEGLER'S USED EQUIPMENT & PAWN - MOMENTS LATER

Billy swallows before he hands over his CREDIT CARD to Buffalo, who's punching feverishly on his calculator.

BUFFALO

Lemme guess, you're doing it for the frequent flier miles?

BILLY

Something like that.

MOMENTS LATER - A signature page slides over to Billy. He shakes his head before signing next to the amount: \$90,000.

EXT. SOUTH WILLISTON TRADE LOT - DAY

The JOHN DEERE EXCAVATOR sits among other construction vehicles for sale. Billy's got an EAGER CUSTOMER on the hook.

EAGER CUSTOMER

You sure there isn't anything wrong? It just seems so cheap...

BILLY

Liquidity crisis, ya know? I got to let her go for \$75K cash. Today. One man's misfortune is another man's windfall, ya know?

INT. KELLY AND BILLY'S TINY TRAILER - DUSK

A candle-lit, fried chicken dinner awaits inside Eggbert... Kelly places two Black Eyed Susan's in a coke bottle on the little table as Billy BURSTS in, a big grin on his face.

BILLY

I told you sooner or later our luck was going to change, right? Well things have changed, Kell! Thanks to you, we got a line on a bottleneck play that Hap's going to have to pay through the nose for... I already tracked down the old man that owns it and worked out a deal for \$75 thousand.

He's so amped, he misses the special dinner she's laid out.

KELLY

That's great, hon. I have news too.

Ignoring, Billy pulls \$75K from a bag, sets it on the table.

BILLY

I had to borrow from Peter to pay Paul, but it's all gonna pan out.

Kelly does a double take, finally getting it...

KELLY

You borrowed seventy five thousand?

BILLY

I know, I know. It's crazy. But a *miracle* just fell into our lap. It's a *sign*, Kell!

(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

That cash is going to look like  
pocket change once we lock up that  
parcel tomorrow.

The world's spinning faster than she can manage. She sits,  
unable to hold off on her news any longer either --

KELLY

Billy, I'm pregnant.

Billy looks at her: *For real?* She nods and he clocks the  
candles, the flowers... It all comes clear -- he's in shock.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RENTAL CAR - NEXT MORNING

In deep thought, Billy's behind the wheel. He and Kelly drive  
in silence through the frozen prairie, still trying to get  
their heads around their PREGNANCY. He puts his hand on her  
belly in gentle reassurance.

BILLY

It's all gonna come up roses, Kell.  
You'll see.

Emotional, she gazes out the window at the wide-open vista.

BILLY (CONT'D)

We snap up this plot, then lease it  
back to Hap for a down payment on  
one of those brand new homes just  
south of Williston -- with a big,  
beautiful nursery.

She shakes her head, smiling -- there's no stopping him.

INT. CLIFTON LUNDEGREN'S FARMHOUSE - LATER

CLOSE on \$75,000 in stacks, wrapped in rubber bands. Clifton  
hefts one up, fans it and leans back in his chair... Billy  
and Kelly sit opposite, eager to speed things along.

CLIFTON

(smirks)

All for a car wash, huh?

KELLY

Somebody's gotta keep America  
beautiful, right?

That was a little too eager -- Clifton looks them over...

CLIFTON

Yesterday after you left, this pretty boy land man from Boyd Oil come by here and offered \$150,000 for the option on that easement.

The color in Billy's face drains away. Kelly closes her eyes.

BILLY

I had to go all in to get your money! You can't back out now, sir.

CLIFTON

I ain't backing out. Boyd Oil's the outfit screwed me over the last time. But I can't sell at a discount for no reason neither.

He feels their dread, sees they're on tenterhooks...

CLIFTON (CONT'D)

Tell you what. Give me \$100,000 for the deal, and 25% of whatever business you plan on putting out here in East Jesus, cuz I'm damn sure it ain't no car wash.

Billy flashes hot -- the price has just risen and he's got a new business partner.

BILLY

I don't know if I can do \$100,000...

CLIFTON

Suit yourself. Boyd man's coming back tomorrow at noon. Get here first, we got ourselves a deal.

Kelly looks at Billy, he can't hold her eyes -- but the clock has been set.

BLACKOUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. WILLISTON - MAIN STREET - DAY

As workers finish repairs on the NEON COWGIRL above the Buckhorn, Billy and Kelly walk down what is now a boulevard of broken dreams. With the clock ticking, his mind is racing. But Kelly stops, needs to say something.

KELLY

We gave it our shot and it didn't pan out... There's no shame in that but we're living in a parking lot with our unborn baby! I know coming up here was our dream. But this --  
(indicates her belly)  
-- changes everything. Maybe this is our sign, Billy. The *real* sign.

BILLY

We can't just go home, Kell... Tail between our legs, having lost our friends and families's money, buried in debt? I can't do it.

KELLY

Can't or won't?

Hiding tears, she turns and walks back towards Patchwork, leaving Billy to his boulevard, alone.

INT. THE BUCKHORN - BACK ROOM CASINO - LATER

CLOSE -- a ROULETTE WHEEL spins round and round as we PULL BACK. Billy stares at it, desperate.

He counts out \$25,000 and pushes it ALL IN on Black. Uncertain, he moves his money to RED, then back to BLACK.

He turns away, unable to watch as Kelly's and his baby's life is decided with this one, fateful spin.

CROUPIER

Last chance!

Billy closes his eyes as the CROUPIER REACHES FOR THE WHEEL.

Then, he opens them -- he's decided. He scoops up the money and bolts -- he's a gambler, not an idiot.

INT. THE BUCKHORN - BAR - LATER

Jules settles up last night's take as Billy sits down at the counter, racking his brain for any kind of solution.

JULES  
What can I get you?

BILLY  
\$25,000 in the next 45 minutes,  
please. And a coffee.

Jules smiles -- she's seen this before. She pours a cup, sliding it in front of him.

JULES  
Opportunity of a lifetime, hun?

BILLY  
Maybe five lifetimes...

JULES  
Those come around twice a week up  
here.

BILLY  
I'll never have another one like  
this. Ever...

JULES  
You can't swing a cat in this town  
without hitting a loan shark. Lotsa  
folks are happy to stake you for a  
"modest" 300 per cent.

Sipping coffee, he wonders if he should go down that road.

BILLY  
Yeah... You know any?

JULES  
You're looking at one.

BILLY  
You have \$25,000? In cash?

JULES  
Why do you think I keep armed  
guards around here?

BILLY  
Then let's make a deal --

JULES

Slow down, cowboy. I'm not into flyers. I'm serious about that interest. That's 300 per cent per week. As in, you bring me 75 on my 25, next week.

Billy's mind reels -- he's getting in real deep...

JULES (CONT'D)

And I'm gonna need some collateral. In case you abscond, that is.

BILLY

There is an insurance policy I could put up...

JULES

Uh-hun. So you mean you've got nothing of actual value to put up? Besides an honest face.

Billy deflates -- he's cashed, broke, and almost out of time.

BILLY

No. But this one can't miss...

Jules likes the look of Billy, even thinks he's cute... But she shakes her head: *No dice*.

JULES

Don't worry. You're not the first pilgrim this place has spit out.

Just then a VOICE from behind them speaks up:

VOICE (O.C.)

What about this?

Billy and Jules turn to see Kelly -- in her hand she's holding her Heirloom Diamond Pendant.

BILLY

Kell... You can't give that up.

Offering a smile, Kelly goes all in.

KELLY

And you can't miss, right?

Kelly puts the pendant on the bar. Jules picks it up, runs her fingers over its row of little diamonds.

KELLY (CONT'D)  
Platinum. And that's over two full  
carats right there...

Jules notices the engraving on the back.

JULES  
Who are Judith and Stephen?

KELLY  
My great, great grandparents.

Seen it all, even Jules feels the poignancy of the moment.

EXT. WILLISTON STREET - MINUTES LATER

Holding hands, Billy and Kelly race to their rental car as he  
stuffs Jules' loan into his pocket.

BILLY  
Thanks for that, Kell. I mean it.

KELLY  
For better or for worse, Billy.  
For better or for worse...

BILLY  
(looks at watch)  
I can just make it if I put the  
hammer down.

Kelly opens the passenger door, but Billy puts a hand on her  
stomach.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
To risky to have a baby on board.

Kelly watches as he hops in and PEELS OUT.

KELLY  
Seat belt!

SLAM HARD TO:

EXT./INT. BILLY'S RENTAL - WILLISTON STREETS - DAY

CAMERA tracks at blacktop level -- Billy fishtails corners,  
zipping in and out of traffic. *BEEEEEP! BEEEEEP!* He slams up  
to a red, gunning his engine, ready to bolt. He picks up his  
cell, punches in numbers -- a machine picks up. *SHIT.*

BILLY

Mr. Lundegren, I'm on the way...  
I've got the cash. I'll be there in  
15. This is Billy!

RRRRRRRRR! He peels out, hangs a left past on-coming traffic, his phone sliding off the dash between the seats -- lost.

A TRACTOR bottlenecks the highway up ahead. Cursing, Billy pounds the wheel, drives into oncoming traffic. Cars swerve and he guns it -- only to be confronted with TWO SIDE-BY-SIDE OIL TANKERS cresting the ridge heading right for him.

It's an eerie replay of the wreck at the pilot's beginning.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Not this time...

Hoping the tankers blink first, he *FLOORS* it, his overmatched rental SHRIEKING. Coming, *coming* -- a SPLIT SECOND BEFORE IMPACT, the tanker in his lane swings wide onto the shoulder giving Billy some daylight.

He SHOOTs the gap, but the back of the tanker fishtails, clipping Billy's bumper. His rental PINWHEELS into a 360, SLAMMING through a fence, coming to a stop in a SOY FIELD.

INSIDE THE RENTAL

Billy blinks to make sure he's still alive. Dazed, with his windshield spider-webbed, he pulls down his rearview, sees BLOOD coming from a GASH in his forehead.

Gathering himself, he looks in the direction he was going, sees Clifton's house tucked away a mile across the prairie. He checks the clock -- he's got *6 minutes* left.

In the distance, Billy sees a BOYD OIL SUV turning onto the access road to Clifton's house, a dusty plume rising behind it. He turns the key and the engine sputters to a cough.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Come on, come on...

He pumps the gas, easing it -- it turns over! He slams it in drive and takes off, bouncing violently across the soy field, swerving through a FLATTENING SEA of crops as he guns it.

Triangulating the SUV, Billy punches out the spider-webbed windshield to see better, SLAMMING into an irrigation ditch, going AIRBORNE. It's a split second of DEAFENING SILENCE before he PLOWS into the muddy far bank, his wheels spinning.

Bloody and bruised and clock ticking, he squeezes out the window... Limping badly, Billy monkey climbs up the bank, topping the muddy rise. He swallows when he sees the Boyd Oil SUV arrive at Clifton's house -- and THREE MEN in suits exit.

He starts to run.

Stumbling, Billy loses a shoe, TUMBLING into the mud. Picking himself up, he limps into a GALLOP, his lungs BURNING FIRE.

INT. CLIFTON LUNDEGREN'S FARMHOUSE - MINUTES LATER

The Boyd Oil men, led by a cocky Richard Ford, sit around the kitchen table. Clifton looks up at the clock -- it's 12:05.

RICHARD FORD

Let's sign it, get done with it.

Clifton's waited long enough. With an air of reluctance, he picks up the pen to sign when a pained VOICE speaks up.

BILLY

...Traffic was terrible.

Billy has to hold himself steady -- hyperventilating, bloody, muddy and missing a shoe. Richard Ford just looks at this derelict with abject hatred as Billy holds up a wad a CASH.

BLACKOUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. BOYD RANCH - NIGHT

In a new rental, Billy pulls up the stone driveway. He and Kelly exit and head to the entrance -- the mansion's front door is framed by MARBLE STALLIONS made into FOUNTAINS. Billy reaches for Kelly with a look of CONFIDENCE.

BILLY

It took them 12 hours to track us down. That's how important that access road is to them. Hap invited just me, but I told him I don't go anywhere without my wife -- we're a team.

(beat)

We're gonna have a place as big as this one day.

KELLY

(laughs)

I don't doubt it, T. Boone.

Billy rings the bell, the chimes sounding like a CATHEDRAL. Lacey opens the door, gives them a disdainful once-over.

LACEY

You must be Billy Lefever.  
Congratulations on your plan to rape and pillage Mother Earth, by the way.

INT. BOYD RANCH - CONTINUOUS

They follow Lacey into the mansion as Darla, looking Soho sensational, comes down the GRAND STAIRCASE.

DARLA

I'm Darla Boyd, Hap's wife. Welcome to the ranch.

Hap enters, swirling a MACALLAN 25 in a low-ball.

HAP

You got some brass ones on you, don'tcha, son?

(then)

What happened to your face?

Saving her husband, Kelly interjects.

KELLY

You should see the other guy.

INT. BOYD RANCH - DINING ROOM - LATER

As SERVANTS clear dishes from the gold-plated dinner, Hap pushes back, lights a COHIBA -- it's time to deal.

HAP

Let's get down to brass tacks, son.  
Do your worst.

BILLY

The land's not for sale, sir.

Darla reaches for a COGNAC decanter, offers it to Billy.

HAP

Lease then.

Billy pours a cognac, but not for the pregnant Kelly -- an omission that's not lost on Darla.

BILLY

Sir, I haven't been in North Dakota long, but I've learned a few things. It's about location and leverage. And right now I've got both.

DARLA

I wasn't aware they offered a wildcatting course online, did you darling?

It's turning mean. Billy swallows, and makes his play.

BILLY

I'll offer you a three year lease for \$1 million dollars. Sir.

Hap ashes his cigar, looks at Darla, then back at Billy.

HAP

Non-starter. We don't know if there's even oil down there.

Kelly sees this could be heading South, decides to interject.

KELLY

You bet big on the McCutching land. And that's right next door. Why'd you do that?

Hap's incredulous -- now they're both jumping in? Billy reaches for Kelly's hand: *that's my girl.*

BILLY

Without our access parcel, your McCutching land is worthless. It's the price of the ticket.

Darla's eyes flash anger -- peasants don't dictate terms.

DARLA

Mr. Lefever, this is an ambitious play you're attempting, but you've got a little problem... We're just gonna wait you out. We can drill that land next month, or next year. Or ten years from now.

Darla smiles demurely at Kelly, ready to spring her trap.

DARLA (CONT'D)

Do you have that kind of time, Kelly? What, with a new baby on the way, a young family to provide for?

Kelly and Billy sit shocked -- how could she know?

DARLA (CONT'D)

I noticed you're not drinking.  
(then)  
You picked a name yet?

Damn, Darla's good -- but Billy has other bullets in his gun.

BILLY

I've come to learn lease holders have 60 days to commence drilling or mineral rights get transferred to the next highest bidder. That's the law.

(coy)

I believe its called a "Top Bid" or something. Is that the correct terminology, Ma'am?

(beat)

Seems we're both short on time.

Hap and Darla stare unblinking -- they know good and goddamn well how a Top Bid works. Hiding a smile, Kelly interjects:

KELLY

We also want a working interest going forward.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)

(beat)

A "piece of the pie", is it?

Billy holds a poker face -- he loves his wing-woman.

BILLY

So, how's a 2.5% cut of whatever oil you bring up on McCutching for that easement sound to you?

KELLY

Let's make it 5%.

She looks at Hap and Darla, her smile as sweet as lemonade.

HAP

I'll give you \$500 thousand.

Billy quick glances at Kelly, buoyed high by her tenacity.

BILLY

Price goes up every time you try to counter. So please. Keep talking.

INT. WILLISTON BANK - DAY

Giddy, thrilled, Billy and Kelly come up to the counter.

KELLY

We want to make a deposit.

The teller slides over a deposit form as Billy hands over a Boyd Oil check -- it's in Billy's name for \$1,100,000.00. Apparently Hap kept talking -- and the price went up. The teller's eyes widen.

BILLY

They say the first million's the hardest.

Billy grins, despite the pain from his bumps and bruises.

INT. PATCHWORK - KESS'S TENT - NIGHT

100 roughnecks form a patient dinner line for Kess and Ada's now Patchwork-famous barbecue ribs and tips. Kess smiles as he piles plates for Billy and Kelly.

BILLY

Is a check okay?

Billy places a folded check on the counter.

KESS

(gentle)

It's cash only, brother.

KELLY

It's all we have. Open it.

Kess unfolds it and his body gets covered in goose bumps -- the check is written out for FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS.

BILLY

It's for your new restaurant.

Ada comes over and sees it too. Tears well up among these new friends -- Kess and Ada in shock at their generosity.

EXT. CENEX GAS STATION - NIGHT

Jerry rumbles up in a menacing OIL TANKER painted flat black. Emerging from the shadows, Wick hops in the cab.

INT. OIL TANKER - CONTINUOUS

Jerry's got some Patsy Cline going low on the radio.

JERRY

Prince of Darkness. Right on time.

WICK

What Prince? The King!

Jerry grins, tosses Wick a knitted SKI MASK.

INT. A.J.'S APARTMENT - SAME

A.J.'s home watching TV. Angry, Lacey enters, a BOUND FOLDER in her hand -- it's the USGS REPORT ON BAKKEN OIL RESERVES. She holds it up as if it were filled with evil.

LACEY

This is our worst nightmare.

She tosses it to him.

A.J.

You *got* the report --

LACEY

It says there's *ten times* the amount of reserves here! More than the Middle East!

(MORE)

LACEY (CONT'D)

The destruction of the Bakken is about to become *parabolic*.

A.J. devours the report, confirming his suspicions. Lacey sits next to him, distraught.

A.J.

I know. I almost didn't tell you about it. I didn't want to discourage you.

LACEY

It's better to know honestly. What we're up against... But it's bad. Big Oil's like a Pit ready to break off the chain.

A.J.

So we use the report to rally the troops... And prepare for war.

Lacey looks at him with love -- he's her soul mate, lover, and fellow environmentalist. Off a REVOLUTIONARY KISS we --

INT. MISSOURI FLATS MOTEL - HALLWAY - DAY

Laughing, Billy carries Kelly across the threshold of their new apartment. She takes in the TOTAL TRANSFORMATION from the last time she saw it -- freshly painted, furnished, clean and bright, there's a wall knocked down to make it a two-bedroom.

KELLY

How'd you pull this off...?

BILLY

Your man knows his way around a punch list.

Loving her new home, Kelly swims around the room.

KELLY

I thought you wanted to splurge on a big, fancy house up here?

BILLY

Let's be careful now, so we can be filthy rich later.

Kelly opens the door to the SECOND BEDROOM in back.

BILLY (CONT'D)

The nursery. I didn't know what color to paint it.

The reality of what's coming catches her. She locks eyes with Billy -- *this is real* -- they're going to be parents.

*HONNNNNNK! HONNNNNNK!*

EXT. MISSOURI FLATS MOTEL - BEATS LATER

Billy and Kelly lean over a railing to the street below where Hap and Darla idle in their fancy, duel-cab Ford F-350.

HAP

(yells up)

Christen her later! C'mon partners,  
I wanna show you something.

INT. HAP'S F-350 - HIGHWAY 55 - NIGHT

Chet Atkins croons on the radio as Billy rides shotgun, Darla and Kelly in back. The vibe between the couples has changed from contentious to collegial.

HAP

Gotta be honest, son. That little  
bottleneck play of yours reminded  
me of myself, back in the day.

BILLY

I gotta be honest too, sir. I was  
sweating bullets negotiating with  
you. Your life story's the  
inspiration for Kelly and me coming  
up here in the first place.

HAP

I hope we hit a damn howler out  
here, make us a pile, Billy. You  
seem like you've got your head  
screwed on real straight.

(beat)

I wish my son was more like you.

Darla POPS a champagne cork in the backseat.

DARLA

Enough with the mutual admiration  
society up there, it's time to  
christen our new partnership.

Hap turns a hard left, bumping down a DESOLATE DIRT ROAD.

EXT. NIRVANA #22 OIL DERRICK - SAME

Wick and Jerry pull up in the diesel. Jerry shuts the headlights and they hop out, working without a word. Wick couples the FEEDER HOSE into the tanker's BELLY, while Jerry loosens the FLOW VALVE. It's so cold, their breath plumes.

INT. HAP'S F-350 - SAME

Off the feeder road, the pickup approaches Nirvana #22, pumping silently against the frozen, inky night sky.

HAP

This rig down here? She's called Nirvana #22, our highest producer.

DARLA

Until McCutching starts flowing.

Billy puts his arm around Kelly -- she snuggles in tight.

EXT. NIRVANA #22 OIL DERRICK - SAME

As Boyd Oil flows into the tanker, Wick spies Hap cresting a ridge, his headlights arcing. Jerry hears it, HISSES at Wick.

JERRY

Close the valve and get in!

HAP'S TRUCK -- Hap sees the unmarked tanker, slows down...

HAP

Nobody's supposed to be out here at this hour.

He stops, pulls out a .357 from the glove box.

HAP (CONT'D)

Wait here.

Billy goes for his door, but Kelly stops him.

KELLY

He said to wait, Billy.

BILLY

It'll be fine. Back in a sec.

Billy hops out, and he and Hap approach cautiously from a distance.

THE TANKER -- Wick pulls down his SKI MASK, moves behind the diesel for cover as Jerry hides behind Rig Control.

HAP

Hey, partner! What y'all doing out here?!

Wick knows the voice instantly -- his worst fears confirmed.

HAP (CONT'D)

Hey! I'm talking to you! Step on outta there!

Wick slides into the cab, slinks down low as Hap and Billy get closer... Hap spies someone in the tanker with a mask on, then sees Jerry move around to the other side...

No more time for questions -- Hap pulls his gun and FIRES, blowing out the tanker's side window!

HAP'S TRUCK -- Darla and Kelly flinch at the GUNFIRE.

DARLA

Down.

RIG CONTROL -- Creating a diversion, Jerry unhooks the DRILL BIT, unleashing a TORRENT of pressure from inside the Earth.

TANKER CAB -- Wick pulls his pistol and ducks, FIRING a volley through the broken window -- forcing Billy to cover!

THE FIELD -- Defiant, Hap stands tall, returning fire like a gun fighter. BANG! BANG! BANG!

THE WELLHEAD -- The pressure Jerry's created BLOWS the CAP -- metal ROCKETS UP in a shower of SPARKS and FLAMING OIL!

THE FIELD -- Hap sees LIQUID FIRE RAINING down and looking around, he sees the ground is SATURATED IN OIL...

HAP

Christ.

The mud catches fire and Hap's right in the middle of it. Billy rises from his crouch, sees the situation --

BILLY

HAP!

He sprints toward him, but the heat forces him back as BOOM!!

The SHOCKWAVE from the erupting wellhead blows windows on the tanker, the F-350 and the Control Room! Darla and Kelly duck to avoid the SHATTERING GLASS as --

DARLA

Close your eyes!

THE FIELD -- it's RAINING FIRE.

Peering through the flame and dense smoke, Billy sees Hap making a run for it -- but his clothes catch fire!

THE TANKER -- Jerry hops in, manic --

JERRY

GO, GO, GO, GO!

Wick shoves it in gear, guns it. He looks at his father, sees he's covered in BURNING OIL -- and something dark arrives. There's ONE WAY out for Wick -- and the F-350's blocking it.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Drive through 'em!

THE FIELD -- Billy sees the tanker headed straight for Kelly and Darla. He SPRINTS along the field, triangulating the tanker, getting to the road in-between them as --

HAP'S TRUCK -- Kelly turns, sees the diesel bearing down on them. She flings open her door, yells to Darla.

KELLY

GET OUT!

THE FIELD -- Billy stands his ground as Wick closes in -- and at the last minute, Wick flinches, SWERVING the big rig as Kelly and Darla leap clear, and Billy dives out of the way. The tanker PLOWS into Hap's truck, BLASTING it aside, driving through it to the escape route as --

Billy, Kelly and Darla cover themselves from flying debris as the tanker BANGS up the dirt road, disappearing from sight!

IN THE FIELD -- Hap Boyd is still alive.

He staggers forward, covered in little TUFTS of fire as Billy, Kelly and Darla race out to save him and our CAMERA begins to PULL UP AND AWAY and ALL SOUND disappears and OUR SCORE RISES as --

They pad out Hap's burning clothes, Nirvana #22 standing sentinel, consumed in a FIELD OF RAGING FIRE.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HIDDEN WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Jerry pulls the battered tanker into a bay, parks it next to a SECOND TANKER. Manic, wired, Wick hops out, pulls a SIPHON TUBE over to the second tanker as Jerry inspects the truck.

JERRY

We gotta get rid of this bitch...

But Jerry hasn't spoken to Wick about Hap and the fire --

JERRY (CONT'D)

How you doin', bro?

Wick sticks the siphon into the INTAKE of the second tanker.

WICK

What's done is done. Karma's a real killer.

JERRY

Hap's your dad, man...

WICK

(turns)

We're just getting started. You and me? We're gonna build ourselves a Cowboy Mafia. So dry your eyes.

PRE-LAP: BOOOOM!

EXT. SAKAKAWEA RESERVOIR - PRE-DAWN

In the middle of the frozen reservoir, the battered tanker is ON FIRE. At the shore, Wick lowers his HUNTING RIFLE as the ice SHATTERS from the explosion. The truck sinks in a SIZZLING HISS of SMOKE and STEAM as Wick turns to Jerry.

WICK

That water's too deep. They're never gonna find it.

INT. THE BUCKHORN - JULES'S APARTMENT - MORNING

It's Williston's KUMV-TV Morning News and Tip Hamilton fills our screen in front of the still-burning Nirvana #22.

TIP HAMILTON (ON TV)

The good people of Williston should know a full investigation's already underway.

(MORE)

TIP HAMILTON (ON TV) (CONT'D)

Those responsible will be caught,  
and they'll be brought to justice.  
I guaran-goddamn-tee it.

A KNOCK on her back door -- Wick's outside. She opens it --  
he's covered in mud and soot and in a state of extremis.

WICK

Who was with you last night?

JULES

Nobody.

WICK

Wrong. I was.

Jules smiles, happy to be doing Wick a favor. She puts a hand  
to his face, but he PINS her with a deep kiss.

INT. A.J.'S APARTMENT - SAME

A.J.'s been watching Tip Hamilton's interview on TV, too. He  
mutes the remote and pulls out an ENCRYPTED SATELLITE PHONE.  
Punching in a code, he waits for the uplink to connect. He  
speaks a foreign language -- Arabic with subtitles:

A.J

*As-salamu alaykum*, Your Highness.  
We have a problem... If the new  
report is accurate, the Bakken  
reserves are projected to exceed  
those of the Kingdom's.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. RIYADH POLO CLUB - SAUDI ARABIA - DAY

A perfect, emerald green polo field lies next to the KINGDOM  
CENTRE, the second tallest skyscraper in the Middle East.  
FAHDA AL SUDAIRI, 45, the Crown Prince, impeccably astride a  
polo pony, is on the other end of the line to A.J.

AL SUDAIRI

The King will not be pleased.

OUTSIDE -- Lacey parks her car, her face stained with tears.

A.J.

It's time we seek a partnership  
with the Mandan Indians. From one  
"tribe" to another.

AL SUDAIRI  
 (sly smile)  
 Your King will be pleased.

A.J.  
 Tell father hello.

A.J. hangs up, concealing the phone as Lacey enters. Seeing her condition, he pivots, projecting a practiced concern.

A.J. (CONT'D)  
 Lacey, I heard -- I am so sorry...

EXT. MANDAN INDIAN RESERVATION - NIGHT

In full TRIBAL DRESS, Mandans Ghost Dance in a mystic circle around the WHITE MOOSE HIDE hanging over a roaring BONFIRE.

STEPH BLACK CROW  
*Great spirit -- we summon you to  
 cleanse the earth with your fire.*

As sparks circle and crack, Steph Black Crow leads her tribe into a frenzy, the hide rendering to cinder and ash.

STEPH  
*Vengeance will be ours...*

EXT. NIRVANA #22 OIL DERRICK - LATER

The oil fire burns unchecked, as Sheriff Tip Hamilton wades into the mire in his RED PROXIMITY SUIT, scanning the ground for clues. Kneeling, he scoops up some oily, smoking muck...

Pushing the mud away, he uncovers a charred RED CASINO DIE -- half of the ones Wick put in his pocket earlier. *BOOM!!* The rig EXPLODES AGAIN, sending firefighters ducking for cover as Tip stands unflinching, impervious to the heat.

OUR CAMERA RISES, PULLING UP AND AWAY, and like an ETERNAL FLAME, the fire rages, not to be put out anytime soon.

FADE TO BLACK.

END PILOT