

BILLIE THE KID
Written by
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FADE IN:

INT. BILLIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Cowboy boots slip onto a pair of feet. A weathered cowboy hat is taken from a shelf. A shoe box is pulled from a closet. Inside is a leather gun holster. It's strapped on.

The boots cross to a desk. Scattered on it are school books, spur-shaped earrings, a Walkman stereo, and a photo of a woman and a young girl on a race horse.

The Walkman is snapped to the gun belt. The owner digs through a jumbled pile of cassettes, slides one into the Walkman, and pushes "play."

SFX. BON JOVI'S "DEAD OR ALIVE"

INT. HALLWAY

The boots move towards a bedroom door. The door slowly creaks open.

INT. NICK'S BEDROOM

The boots cross the hardwood floor to a dresser. The top drawer opens. Beneath men's underwear is a leather case that holds a revolver and shells. Three shells are snapped into the chamber. The gun slides into the holster. The boots turn and leave.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

The boots exit the house, down porch steps, and onto dry, dusty ground. They cross to a fence, turn, take ten deliberate steps, turn again, and stop.

A hand hangs limp next to the revolver. A twitch. The gun swiftly rises. Three quick SHOTS -- the shooter using the left palm to cock the hammer each time. The BLASTS echo.

On the ground behind the fence lies three stuffed animals: a Nana dog, a purple dinosaur, and a green alligator. It's not the first time they've been used for target practice.

Pretty lips blow the smoke from the gun. The shooter is BILLIE, a 15-year-old "Cowgirl in the Sand" on the verge of womanhood.

BILLIE

Told you I was fast.

Billie slides the gun into the holster, satisfied with her kill.

MELISSA (O.S.)

BILLIE! Cut it out!

MELISSA, 13, precocious, short, frustrated, rushes out of the house. She frantically picks up the stuffed animals.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

What is wrong with you?

BILLIE

Nothing's wrong.

MELISSA

These aren't yours.

BILLIE

They're too cute. They deserve to be shot.

A pick-up truck pulling a horse trailer enters the driveway. On the side of the trailer: Wilson Ranch and Stables.

MELISSA

Dad's gonna kill you.

Melissa runs toward the truck. Billie slowly levels a finger at her, mimicking a gun. A beat. She doesn't pull the trigger.

BILLIE

Not cute enough.

INT. WILSON KITCHEN - EVENING

Billie sits, arms crossed defiantly. On the table is the six shooter. NICK, fortyish, rugged, distant, paces the room.

NICK

What's it going to take? Do you want to kill someone? Is that what you want?

BILLIE

No.

NICK

Maybe you want to kill yourself.

BILLIE

Maybe I do.

NICK

How many times have I told you about the gun?

BILLIE

"Don't use guns." "Don't race horses."
We live on a ranch in New Mexico;
what the Hell am I supposed to do?

NICK

Study. Make something of yourself.

BILLIE

Why can't you accept me for who I am?

NICK

Because I can't believe you want to spend your life playing cowboy.

BILLIE

It's good enough for you.

Nick sits at the table.

NICK

You're turning sixteen next week.
It's time you started having a little respect.

BILLIE

Why? You treat me like I'm a criminal.

NICK

The way you act, what do you expect?

BILLIE

That's right. I'm a real outlaw. If I died tomorrow, the world would be a lot better off.

Billie storms out.

Nick stares at the gun.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Billie walks past Melissa's bedroom. Melissa is on the phone.

MELISSA

I can't believe he said that.

(beat)

No? Really?

(beat)

That's so wild.

Melissa sees Billie. She looks almost sorry about what happened. But she eyes her bullet-riddled stuffed animals and frowns.

INT. BILLIE'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Posters of the films "Young Guns II" and "Unforgiven" line the walls along with a map of New Mexico's historical places.

Billie picks up the photo of the woman from the desk, lies on the bed, holds the picture close, and stares at the ceiling.

INT. SCHOOL ROOM - MORNING

Billie stares out the window.

TEACHER (O.S.)

So the green light on the dock across the bay represented a life Gatsby could never have. It was always out there, but never within his reach --

Two mounted police officers slowly ride on the street outside. Billie fantasizes upon seeing them.

BILLIE'S IMAGINATION - EXT. SCHOOL YARD

The cops wear "Long Rider" coats, ten-gallon hats, and sheriff's badges. They ride on a dusty street in an Old West mining town.

Suddenly, two outlaws cross their path, GUNS BLAZING. The Long Riders give chase, firing.

INT. SCHOOL ROOM

ANGLE ON Billie, her eyes wide with excitement as the dream continues.

EXT. WILSON CORRAL - DAY

MIGUEL, 50, a weathered ranch hand, leads a horse through a workout. The horse is sleek, strong, and frustrated being corralled. Miguel is assisted by his son, TONY, 18, shy.

Billie approaches.

MIGUEL

Como esta? How was school today?

BILLIE

The usual. Dad got an Arabian?

MIGUEL

He's boarding it for a guy from Santa Fe. It's worth a million dollars in stud fees. The newspaper's coming to do a story on him.

BILLIE

I'm sure Dad's real happy. Lucille in the stable? I want to practice for the junior rodeo.

TONY

You're going to ride in it, too?

BILLIE

That's the plan. Okay if I take her for a ride?

MIGUEL

You know your father won't let you ride.

BILLIE

I'm old enough to make my own decisions.

MIGUEL

And old enough to live with the
consequences.

(giving in)

I don't see anything.

BILLIE

Thanks.

INT. STABLES - MOMENTS LATER

Billie walks past several stalls to an older horse.

BILLIE

Lucille... what's the matter? Did
you miss me?

You almost wonder if the horse says "yes."

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Let's run.

EXT. RANCH - DAY

Billie bolts from the stable, riding Lucille. She deftly
maneuvers the horse into a field.

Miguel smiles, pretending not to see. Tony watches.

EXT. FIELD

Billie gallops straight for a fence. She pulls the reins
back and throws them to the right. Lucille quickly turns.
Billie snaps the reins and the horse moves to full speed.

Another fence. Billie pulls back the reins, but as Lucille
makes her turn, a hand reaches out and grabs the reins.

Lucille rears as she's pulled to a halt.

NICK

Get off the horse.

BILLIE

I'm practicing!

NICK

Get off the horse, now.

She dismounts.

NICK (CONT'D)

What did I tell you about the horses?
Huh?

BILLIE

I want to be ready for the rodeo.

NICK

You're not riding in any rodeo. Not
while you're living in my house.

BILLIE

Don't worry, it won't be much longer.

NICK

As soon as you turn eighteen, you're
free to go.

A CELLULAR PHONE RINGS in Nick's pocket.

NICK (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Hello? ... Yes, Mr. Spano, the Arabian
is fine.

Billie walks away, disgusted.

NICK (CONT'D)

Well, I'm out in the field right
now. Let me give you a call a little
later. Right, talk to you then.

MIGUEL

You okay?

NICK

Don't let her race the horses.

MIGUEL

She's a good rider --

NICK

I have the guys who work for you to
thank for that. Don't help her disobey
me. Got it?

MIGUEL

Yeah, sure thing.

INT. STABLES - MORNING

Billie pours feed into Lucille's stall.

MELISSA (O.S.)
The bus is coming!

BILLIE
All right, all right.

Billie gives Lucille a carrot.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
Why's life have to be so hard? It
wasn't always like this.

Billie stops to look at the Arabian: sleek, powerful, a
champion.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
I bet you're fast.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Billie picks up her backpack.

MELISSA
You know, the more you break the
rules around here, the better I look.

BILLIE
If I didn't break the rules, Dad
wouldn't notice either of us.

MELISSA
That's mean.

BILLIE
It's true. The only reason he talks
to you is to find out the trouble I
get into.

MELISSA
Don't worry, I only tell him half
the things. He cares. You just don't
see it.

The bus pulls to a stop.

BILLIE

Why do you think he makes us go to
summer school when we don't have to?

MELISSA

So we'll learn more.

BILLIE

No. It's to get rid of us.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - MORNING

Melissa sits down and chats it up with a FRIEND. Billie passes
a surly BOY.

BOY

You smell like a horse.

The kids stop talking.

ANGLE ON Melissa -- "not again."

BILLIE

(to Boy)

You say something?

BOY

Every morning you smell like a horse.

BILLIE

Better than smelling like a cow. Is
that from your mother's side?

The Boy pushes Billie into a seat. She jumps up and tackles
him into a crowd of students. The pair wrestle to the floor,
Billie on top, flailing away.

Melissa tries to shrug it off.

MELISSA

She does this all the time.

FRIEND

Your sister is so cool.

MELISSA

She is?

The Friend nods. Melissa turns to see Billie winning the fight.

INT. WILSON KITCHEN - EVENING

Billie sits, arms crossed, a suspension letter on the table. Nick hands her a brochure.

NICK

I'm sorry. I have no choice.

BILLIE

Whitman School for Girls?

NICK

You can come home for visits every few months if you want to.

BILLIE

You're getting rid of me?

NICK

You did it to yourself.

BILLIE

Why do you hate me so much?

NICK

I should ask you the same question. Pack your bags. They're picking you up in the morning.

BILLIE

Mom wouldn't have done this.

NICK

Well, she's not here, is she? Deal with it.

Billie crumbles the brochure and stands.

BILLIE

It wasn't my fault.

She rushes out. Nick rubs his forehead, pained.

INT. BILLIE'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Billie, near tears, enters. From her closet she pulls an old saddlebag and throws it on the bed. She packs clothes and a sleeping bag. She grabs the photo from her desk.

The bedroom door creaks open. It's Melissa. Billie takes the New Mexico map off the wall and jams it into her bag. She walks past her sister without saying a word.

INT. STABLES - LATER

Billie, saddlebag in hand, cautiously enters the darkened stable. She stops at Lucille's stall.

BILLIE

I wish you were going with me, girl,
but I need to get away fast.

She opens the Arabian's stall. She tosses her saddlebags on the horse. It stammers a bit, but Billie calms it down.

The stable door opens. Tony enters, broom and dustpan in tow.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

(covering)
Thought I'd sneak in another ride.

TONY

(not caring)
It's not my horse.

From his pocket he pulls out a silver compass. He hands it to her.

TONY (CONT'D)

You might need this. My dad gave it
to me. East's my favorite. There's a
lot to see.

BILLIE

A compass?

TONY

You never know how far you might go.

BILLIE

Yeah, I guess you don't.

She leads out the Arabian from the stall.

EXT. RANCH - EVENING

Billie quietly rides the Arabian off the Ranch into the afterglow of the setting sun.

Tony watches.

EXT. HILLSIDE - EVENING

Billie maneuvers the horse up a rocky hillside. Below, the lights of the valley's ranches twinkle. Billie looks back.

BILLIE

See ya.

INT. MELISSA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Melissa is on her bed, reading while listening to music. Nick enters.

NICK

Where's Billie?

Melissa cringes.

EXT. STABLES - NIGHT

Tony closes the stable door.

NICK

Where's Billie?

TONY

I don't know, sir.

Nick flings open the door.

INT. STABLES

Nick searches the stalls.

The Arabian is gone.

NICK

Damn it!

EXT. STABLES

Nick exits the stables, both angered and deeply concerned.

NICK

Where is she?

TONY

I don't know.

NICK

Don't cover for her... where'd she
take the Arabian?

TONY

I don't know!

Miguel enters.

MIGUEL

What's going on?

NICK

Billie's gone. She took Spano's
Arabian.

MIGUEL

Maybe she just went for a ride?

Nick shakes his head.

NICK

She ran away.

MIGUEL

From home?

NICK

From me.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - NIGHT

Billie ties the Arabian to a tree. She's in a clearing with
a commanding view. The sky is washed with stars. She rubs
her arms to ward off the night air.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Nick is at the wheel. Miguel hangs on in the passenger seat.

NICK

She just pushes me and pushes me.

MIGUEL

She's not a bad kid.

NICK

Running away? Stealing a horse? I'd say that falls on the "bad" side of things.

MIGUEL

She just wants your attention.

NICK

She picked a hell of a way to get it.

Nick slams on the brakes. There's something in the road.

EXT. TRUCK

The men cross in the wash of the truck's headlights. On the road is a dead deer.

Nick looks into the darkness.

NICK

She's going to get that horse killed.

INT. MELISSA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Melissa sits on her bed holding the green alligator Billie shot. She looks out her window towards the mountains.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - NIGHT

Billie huddles in her sleeping bag. Her tired eyes dart back and forth with every sound.

EXT. WILSON RANCH - DAWN

Miguel, Tony, and two other ranch hands are on horses. Nick stands next to his truck.

NICK

I'll go into town and check the rodeo grounds. If she went into the hills, she didn't get far.

MIGUEL

What if she doesn't want to come back?

NICK

Then get the horse and let her stay
out there. If that's what she wants.

Nick tosses his cellular phone to Miguel.

NICK (CONT'D)

Call me if you find her.

A "Whitman School for Girls" van pulls into the driveway.

NICK (CONT'D)

Damn.

MIGUEL

C'mon, Lucille. Let's go find Billie.

The riders head for the hills. Melissa walks onto the porch
and watches them go.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - DAWN

Billie looks down on her ranch in the valley. She sees the
riders heading her way. She looks at Tony's compass.

BILLIE

East is as good as any.

She rides away, looking back over her shoulder.

EXT. VALLEY ROAD - DAY

Nick pulls the truck alongside JOE, who's repairing a fence.

JOE

How's it going?

NICK

Not so good. You seen Billie?

JOE

No. Something wrong?

NICK

She took off last night.

JOE

Hasn't been by here.

NICK

Give me a call if you see her. Would you?

JOE

Sure thing.
(beat)
Everything okay?

NICK

This time it's not. By the way, she's riding an Arabian.

Nick drives off. Joe shakes his head and laughs.

JOE

Just like her mother.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY

Miguel, Tony, and two RANCH HANDS plod their way up the rocky path.

HAND #1

She's not up here.

MIGUEL

Quit your complaining. We'll go to the top of that ridge. If we don't see her, we'll turn back.

(to Tony)

Some cowboys.

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

Billie stops at the top of a ridge. The other side of the mountain range spreads out before her, a tableau of red, orange, yellow, brown, and blue. She surveys the horizon and smiles.

EXT. RODEO GROUNDS

Nick talks with a rodeo worker. The phone in Nick's truck rings.

NICK

(on phone)

Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP - DAY

Miguel looks over the valley below.

MIGUEL

(on phone)

We found her tracks. It looks like she rode east.

NICK

East?

MIGUEL

We're going back for supplies. This may take a while.

EXT. RANCH - DAY

On the porch is RANDY, reporter's notebook in hand. Nick pulls up.

RANDY

Mr. Wilson?

NICK

Yeah?

RANDY

Randy Slater. The reporter from the Daily Chronicle.

(beat)

I'm here to do the story on the Arabian.

NICK

Now's not a good time.

RANDY

It was a long drive. I can wait.

NICK

I don't think you heard me. It's not a good time.

Nick enters his home.

Frustrated, Randy gets in his Jeep.

Melissa comes from behind the house and approaches Randy.

MELISSA

My sister stole that horse. Her name's
Billie.

EXT. SOUVENIR SHOP - AFTERNOON

ANGLE ON a white tombstone: "William Bonney, aka 'Billy the
Kid.' Born November 23, 1859, Died July 15, 1881."

Billie eyes the tombstone located next to the run-down
souvenir shop. A tumbleweed rolls by.

Welcome to nowhere.

BILLIE

It can't be.

A truck rumbles in the distance. Dust kicks up on the road.
Billie grabs the Arabian and hides behind the shop. She runs
into dozens more "Billy the Kid" tombstones.

A battered pick-up lumbers to a halt. A bespectacled OLD
TIMER gets out carrying a bag of groceries. He curses the
heat, the ride, and anything else that comes to mind.

He stops.

Something's not right. He sniffs. His eyes dart. He turns
towards the side of the shop.

Closer -- sniff.

Closer -- sniff, sniff.

His nose SMACKS the Arabian's rear end.

OLD TIMER

AH-HA!!!

BILLIE

AHHHH!

OLD TIMER

I knew I smelled horse! I knew it.
Man alive, it's good to smell a horse.

He walks to the front of the shop.

OLD TIMER (CONT'D)

There's a certain smell that can't
be duplicated and that's a horse.
Heck, some have tried, but when you
get a whiff of the real thing, there's
no mistakin'.

Billie peers around the corner.

INT. WILSON KITCHEN - DAY

Miguel and Nick study a map laid out on the table.

MIGUEL

The tracks were here...

NICK

A couple of little towns. Highway 60
bends around there.

MIGUEL

Maybe she knows somebody out there.

NICK

She never said anything.

MIGUEL

She didn't say a lot of things.

The PHONE RINGS. Miguel answers.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Yes.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)

(to Nick)

It's Spano. He wants to see his horse.

Nick steams for a moment, then POUNDS his fist on the map.

NICK

I'm going to kill her!

INT. HALLWAY

Melissa leans against the wall, listening.

INT. SOUVENIR SHOP - DAY

The place is an Old West museum: paintings, photos, trinkets, rifles, tomahawks, head dresses, wanted posters, cowboy clothes, etc. The Old Timer putters behind the counter.

Billie slowly enters.

OLD TIMER

Nothing like the smell of a horse,
you know.

BILLIE

(cautious)
Nothing like it.

OLD TIMER

They should make a cologne that smells
like a horse. Heck, I think they
already do.

Billie smiles, not sure.

OLD TIMER (CONT'D)

That your horse out there?

BILLIE

Yeah... sort of.

OLD TIMER

Thought so. What with you being the
only person around here. Ha, other
than me, that is. Yep, fine animal,
a horse. You can tell by the smell.

BILLIE

What is this place?

OLD TIMER

You wanna buy it?

BILLIE

No. Where'd you get all this stuff?

OLD TIMER

I stole it. I'm a bad dude.

Billie looks -- what?

OLD TIMER (CONT'D)

Nah, I didn't really. Just found it lying around different places over the years. Most of it's stuff people didn't want anymore.

Billie picks up a Native American headdress.

BILLIE

Can't imagine anyone not wanting this.

OLD TIMER

The New Agers like the Indian stuff.
(pulls a tomahawk from a case)
Something about connecting with their life force, whatever the hell that means.

He puts the tomahawk down.

OLD TIMER (CONT'D)

But I think it's time for me to sell what's left and get a condo in Santa Fe.

BILLIE

You can't do that.

OLD TIMER

You don't like condos?

BILLIE

This is important stuff.

OLD TIMER

A hundred years ago, maybe. Today, a condo is important.

There's a "Billy the Kid" wanted poster on the wall.

BILLIE

Is Billy the Kid really buried here?

OLD TIMER

Wish he was. It'd be good for business. Then again, cemeteries make me nervous.

BILLIE

There's a tombstone out there with his name on it -- a lot of them.

OLD TIMER

They're for the race over at Fort Sumner. That's where Billy's buried. Strangest damn thing, a bunch of folks running a race carrying tombstones.

BILLIE

That's my name, you know, Billie. But I spell it different.

OLD TIMER

Billy was a killer, he was. A horse thief, too.

(impressed)

A real hero of the Old West.

BILLIE

Did he really die on July 15th?

OLD TIMER

Far as I know.

BILLIE

That's the day I was born.

OLD TIMER

Well, happy birthday.

BILLIE

Thanks.

The Old Timer leans forward and whispers conspiratorially.

OLD TIMER

You wanna see something, birthday girl? I mean really something?

He motions for her to follow into the back room.

INT. SOUVENIR SHOP - BACK ROOM - DAY

The old man holds an old cigar box with a piece of masking tape across it. On the tape is written "Billy." He pulls a pair of spurs out of the box.

OLD TIMER

Billy's spurs. At least one pair. He probably had a few.

(pulls out a belt buckle)

Here's his belt buckle. One of them, anyway. Probably had a few of them, too.

Billie's eyes widen as the Old Timer hands her each item.

OLD TIMER (CONT'D)

And this --

(pulls out a huge
pearl-handled revolver)

-- Was Billy's gun. He probably had a few of those, too. Ha!

BILLIE

Wow.

OLD TIMER

They say Billy killed five men with this gun. You want it?

BILLIE

What?

OLD TIMER

Take it.

BILLIE

I always wanted my own gun... My dad wouldn't let me.

OLD TIMER

For your birthday. You're "Billie the Kid," ain't ya?

BILLIE

No.

OLD TIMER

Sure you are. Your name's Billie.
You got a horse. You're riding the
desert alone. You look like you're
running from something.

(pushes the guns
towards her)

You need it more than I do.

EXT. SOUVENIR SHOP - DAY

The Old Timer hands the gun to Billie.

OLD TIMER

It might be a bit heavy for you.

She lets the gun fall to her side.

In the distance a Native American headdress sits on a phony
tombstone. Three feathers point upward.

Billie snaps the GUN up and UNLOADS THREE SHOTS.
The feathers fly.

OLD TIMER (CONT'D)

Then again, it might be just right.

BILLIE

(shrugs)

Just something some ranch hands taught
me.

OLD TIMER

You should take that gun to his grave.

BILLIE

Why?

OLD TIMER

Make it sacred. Billy'd like that.
He was sentimental.

BILLIE

I thought he was a killer.

OLD TIMER

He was.

(beat)

A sentimental killer.

Billie looks at the gun, then out at the hills.

BILLIE

How far's Fort Sumner?

EXT. PAYPHONE - DAY

Randy talks on the phone, notebook flipped open.

RANDY

(on phone)

I'm not kidding. The rancher's kid
just rode it into the hills.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

SKIP, an editor, chews nervously on a #2 pencil.

SKIP

(on phone)

I'll give you a rewrite. We can still
make the afternoon edition.

(mimics a headline)

"Boy Swipes Stud."

RANDY

It's not a boy, Skip. It's a girl.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Billie slowly rides. She wears Billy's spurs and buckle.

A THUD. The revolver is on the ground. She dismounts and
tucks the gun in her pocket.

It falls out.

She jams the gun in her saddlebag.

EXT. TRAIL - LATER

Billie rests at a ridge. Below is a two-lane highway. A market and a bar & grill are the only signs of life.

A pick-up truck with a horse trailer sits in front of the bar.

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Billie cautiously rides to the side of the building. She ties the horse to a water meter.

She looks at the road. A sign says "HIGHWAY 60."

BILLIE

I didn't get very far.

Billie steps through the market's doors.

INT. MARKET

The store's CLERK, an aging, pot-bellied loner, watches a portable television. He looks over Billie as she enters.

The show "Cops" is on TV and the police cars are in hot pursuit.

CLERK

And what can I do... for you?

The Clerk smiles suggestively. Yep, he's a pervert.

BILLIE

You have a quarter I could borrow
for the phone?

The clerk holds a quarter in front of Billie's face.

CLERK

What's your name.

BILLIE

Billie.

She reaches for the coin. He wraps his hands around hers.

CLERK

You gonna call your boyfriend, Billie?

Billie backs out of the store. The clerk laughs and goes back to the car chase on television.

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Billie puts the coin in the pay phone.

INT. MELISSA'S ROOM - DAY

Melissa is on the phone.

MELISSA

She's so cool.

(beat)

Dad's gonna kill her.

(beep, a call-waiting)

Wait a minute, there's another call...

Melissa clicks the receiver.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Billie holds the phone close to her, and she keeps a lookout for the Clerk.

BILLIE

(on phone)

Melissa?

MELISSA

Billie!? Hold on.

(clicks the receiver)

Jen? I gotta go. It's Billie.

(clicks)

Where are you?

BILLIE

Thank God it's you. Where's Dad?

MELISSA

Rounding up the posse. You okay?

BILLIE

Yeah. Listen, can you get a couple things for me?

MELISSA

Sure.

BILLIE

I need some blankets, a canteen, and my holster.

MELISSA

Your holster?

BILLIE

It's a long story. Can you bring them?

MELISSA

Sure, why don't I just ask Dad to borrow the truck?

BILLIE

Take Lucille.

MELISSA

You know I can't ride like you.

BILLIE

I'm at the market on Highway 60 near Trail Head. Take the path next to the road.

(beat)

Please?

SERIES OF SHOTS

Melissa grabs some blankets from a closet. She digs out a canteen from a utility room. She opens Billie's closet and finds the holster.

She pulls a flowered suitcase from under her bed and packs the blankets, canteen, and holster inside.

EXT. WILSON RANCH - DAY

Suitcase in hand, Melissa sneaks down the porch and crosses to the horses at the fence. She unties Lucille and quietly walks away.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Melissa tries to get on the horse.

No luck.

She tries again. She drops the suitcase.

Finally, she pulls herself up. She awkwardly hooks the suitcase to the saddle's handle and rides down the road.

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Billie sits against the market tossing pebbles. A newspaper delivery truck pulls up. The driver tosses out a bundle of papers. The truck crosses the road. A bundle lands in front of the bar.

Billie looks at the newspapers. A headline: "BILLIE THE KID RIDES AGAIN: RANCHER'S DAUGHTER STEALS MILLION DOLLAR HORSE."

Uh-oh.

EXT. BAR - DAY

A horse trailer pulls up. JAKE, tall, sinister, gets out.

Two men exit the bar. One hands Jake an envelope. The men take two horses from Jake's trailer and put them in theirs.

JAKE

See you guys at the tracks.

They get in their truck and quickly drive away. Jake looks across to the market and sees Billie.

And then he sees the Arabian.

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Melissa trots to the parking lot. Her suitcase drops to the ground.

BILLIE

You moving?

MELISSA

I had to put the stuff in something.
God, I hate riding horses; they smell.

BILLIE

Where's your sense of adventure?

MELISSA

It's in my adventureless butt.

Billie takes out the holster and wraps it around her waist. She pulls the revolver from her saddlebags.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Wow.

BILLIE

It belonged to Billy the Kid -- the real one.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

No way! Can I hold it?

Billie hands her the gun.

BILLIE

He killed five men with it.

MELISSA

Yech.

Melissa tosses it to the ground. BANG.

Jake ducks. So does the clerk.

The clerk picks up the phone and dials.

BILLIE

What the hell's the matter with you?

MELISSA

I didn't know it was loaded!

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - DAY

A DISPATCHER'S VOICE squawks on the radio.

DISPATCHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Unit fifty-two, two-eleven in progress at the Country Market. Highway 60 and Trail Head Crossing.

The sheriff turns on the car's siren and stomps on the accelerator.

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Billie tightens the straps of her saddlebags.

MELISSA

When you coming back?

BILLIE

I don't know. Maybe never.

MELISSA

Dad's in a lot of trouble because you have that horse.

BILLIE

That's not why I took it.

MELISSA

You want Lucille?

BILLIE

I don't know, I...

Billie sees the sheriff's lights in the distance.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

We've got to go.

MELISSA

What?

(sees the cop)

But I don't want to go. There's snakes out there.

BILLIE

You don't have any choice.

Billie smacks Lucille. The horse bolts toward the hills. Billie gets on the Arabian. She spies Jake watching.

She kicks the Arabian into high gear.

The sheriff, unable to drive into the hills, stops in the parking lot. Melissa's suitcase lies abandoned on the ground.

EXT. WILSON RANCH - DAY

Nick leans against a fence shaking his head. Miguel is next to him.

NICK

Melissa, too?

MIGUEL

They must have had it planned.

NICK

I'm calling the police.

A television news truck pulls into the driveway.

NICK (CONT'D)

I'm going to kill her.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

The girls thunder up a hillside.

MELISSA

Wait!

Billie pulls to a stop.

BILLIE

What?

MELISSA

I'm not the one running away.

BILLIE

You are now.

MELISSA

I want to go home.

BILLIE

You're such a princess.

(beat)

Do what you want.

Billie kicks the Arabian and rides over a ridge.

MELISSA

Man, you're such a bitch.

Melissa snaps the reins and takes off after Billie.

EXT. MARKET - DAY

Two sheriff's cruisers screech into the parking lot.

CLERK

They were going to shoot me. She
said her name was Billie.

Across the street, Jake is gone.

EXT. ROLLING TERRAIN - DAY

Billie and Melissa ride fast. Melissa hangs on, grimacing.
They stop at a small river.

BILLIE

(points)
There.

MELISSA

In the water?

BILLIE

We've got to hide our tracks.

Billie kicks her horse to the river. Melissa reluctantly
follows.

EXT. WILSON RANCH - DAY

Nick exits the house in a rush. He finds Miguel.

NICK

Put the horses in the truck!

EXT. DOWNSTREAM - DAY

Billie and Melissa ride through the river.

BILLIE

Wait here.

Billie rides out of the water twenty yards to a rock-covered hillside. She puts the Arabian in reverse and backs to the river.

Fifty yards later, the girls get out on the opposite bank.

MELISSA

Where'd you learn that?

BILLIE

The movies.

EXT. TRAIL HEAD - DAY

Nick, Miguel, and Tony unload the horses where the girls were last seen. A SHERIFF is with them.

NICK

My kids don't own a gun.

SHERIFF

Witnesses heard a shot fired, sir.
We've got an APB out for them, all
clues point east of here.

NICK

We're going after them.

SHERIFF

That's your prerogative. But we'd
like one of our Search and Rescue
volunteers with you. It's pretty
rugged country. Do you know where
Becker Peak is?

TONY

I know where it is.

Tony shrugs, surprised at himself for speaking up.

SHERIFF

Sheila will meet you there in an
hour.

MIGUEL

Sheila?

SHERIFF

Sheila McCartney.

Nick scowls, gets on his horse and rides off.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

She's highly qualified.

MIGUEL

I know.

Miguel rides after Nick. Tony follows.

On a hillside in the distance, a solitary figure on horseback watches. It's Jake. He turns toward the mountains and rides.

EXT. RIVER - LATER

Nick, Miguel, and Tony come to the river. Miguel scans the banks and the phony tracks. Nick sees them, too.

NICK

They couldn't have gone that way.

Miguel rides downstream and sees the real tracks.

MIGUEL

Over here.

Nick and Tony cross the river.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)

Billie and I watch the same movies.

The men ride off, following the trail.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

The girls saunter on the trail. Billie studies Tony's compass.

MELISSA

Why do you think Mom let Dad name
you Billie?

BILLIE

Guess she wanted a boy, too.

MELISSA

Oh.

(beat)

So when are we turning back?

BILLIE
I'm not going back.

MELISSA
We can't just stay out here. I'm
thirsty. I didn't fill up the canteen.

BILLIE
We'll figure something out.

MELISSA
Gee, you're never optimistic at home.

BILLIE
I know, isn't it great?

MELISSA
Do you have any money?

BILLIE
No. Do you?

MELISSA
No.

Melissa sees a path leading to a valley.

MELISSA (CONT'D)
Sorry. I like food too much. I'm
outta here.

She kicks Lucille and heads off.

BILLIE
Brat.

Billie goes after her.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Melissa comes bounding down the hill, Billie not far behind.
Melissa maneuvers the horse through a tight turn and weaves
down a steep embankment.

Melissa pulls to a stop. Billie catches her.

BILLIE

I thought you didn't like to ride.

MELISSA

Now and then it's okay.

BILLIE

That was pretty good.

MELISSA

It should be. You taught me.

BILLIE

You really want to go home?

MELISSA

I don't know. It'll be hell if Dad
doesn't have you to yell at.

Billie looks straight ahead and smiles.

BILLIE

There's your drink.

An AM/PM mini-mart sits on a lonely desert highway.

EXT. AM/PM MARKET - DAY

Billie and Melissa tie up their horses to a pipe behind the
building. Billie grabs the canteen.

MELISSA

I could really go for a Twinkie.

INT. AM/PM MARKET

The girls enter. A gum-snapping TEENAGE CLERK plays a video
game. He sees Billie and gives a double take -- it's love.

A sign reads "SHOPLIFTERS WILL BE SHOT."

Melissa checks out the candy section.

TEENAGE CLERK

Can I help you?

BILLIE

(hands him the canteen)
Could you fill this?

TEENAGE CLERK

Sure. Never seen you here before.

BILLIE

Never been here before.
(refers to the sign)
You ever shoot anybody?

TEENAGE CLERK

Nah. It's the boss' rule. I'm supposed to, though, if anybody tries to rip us off.

BILLIE

Fort Sumner near here?

TEENAGE CLERK

About 100 miles. Due east.

BILLIE

By car, right?

TEENAGE CLERK

How else would you get there?

BILLIE

Horse. Over the mountains.

TEENAGE CLERK

It'd be a lot shorter. You riding a horse?

He hands her the canteen.

BILLIE

Yep. Thanks.

She heads for the door.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

(to Melissa)

Let's go.

TEENAGE CLERK

Think you'll be back here again?

BILLIE

Maybe.

Billie holds the door open for Melissa.

TEENAGE CLERK

Hey, what's your name?

BILLIE

Billie.

TEENAGE CLERK

Cool.

A package of Twinkies falls out of Melissa's shirt.

TEENAGE CLERK (CONT'D)

Hey, come back here!

He reaches under the counter and pulls out a rickety shotgun.

BILLIE

What are you doing?

MELISSA

I need a sugar rush.

Melissa is loaded with candy and cakes. The Teenage Clerk fumbles with the gun as the girls bolt outside.

EXT. AM/PM MARKET

The girls jump on their horses. The Teenage Clerk rounds the corner.

TEENAGE CLERK

Hey, don't make me shoot you!

BILLIE

Okay.

She pulls her revolver and FIRES.

The shotgun flies from the Teenage Clerk's hand.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Don't want anybody getting hurt over
a couple of Twinkies.

The girls ride off; the Teenage Clerk watches in disbelief.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Nick, Miguel, and Tony maneuver their way through the hills.

MIGUEL

I ran away once. For years I had taken care of my father's '57 Chevy. I loved that car.

MIGUEL (CONT'D)

I washed it and waxed it, changed the oil, tuned it up. He said I could have it when I turned sixteen.

NICK

What happened?

MIGUEL

He sold it. My brother had won a partial scholarship to college, but my family didn't have the rest for tuition. My father tried to explain, but I didn't want to listen.

NICK

How long were you gone?

MIGUEL

A couple days.

NICK

How'd he find you?

MIGUEL

He didn't. I came home. He said if I couldn't understand why it was important to sell that car then I needed some time to myself.

NICK

Is that why you went back?

MIGUEL

Nah. I got hungry.

They laugh.

TONY

That's Becker's Peak.

Seated on a rock at the base of the peak is SHEILA MCCARTNEY, attractive, athletic, about 40.

SHEILA

If it isn't the James Gang.

Miguel gets off his horse. He hugs Sheila.

MIGUEL

It's good to see you.

SHEILA

Who else would you expect in a place like this? How long's it been? Eight years?

NICK

Almost to the day.

SHEILA

(beat, covering)

Yeah, well, how've you been?

NICK

I've been all right... except both my girls have run away and the sheriff says they tried to rob a store.

SHEILA

(holds up her hand
held radio)

Make it two. Deputy just called and said they hit another one. The clerk said Billie took a shot at him.

NICK

(disbelief)

Where'd she get a gun?

SHEILA

Sheriff's taking this pretty serious. The off-road unit's been called out. Cops on dirt bikes.

(beat)

We'll find them first.

MIGUEL

Soon. Let's find them soon.

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

Randy pounds feverishly at his computer. A female REPORTER sits across from him.

RANDY

Man, I needed a story like this.

REPORTER

They're just a couple of kids.

RANDY

You kidding? Two girls steal a million dollar stallion and pull off two armed robberies.

REPORTER

They stole Ho-Ho's.

RANDY

Robbery is robbery.

(picks up the phone)

I've got a friend at "Hard Copy."
They'll pay big for this.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Jake studies the horizon. He pulls a rifle from a saddle holster and checks the chamber for bullets. Satisfied, he snaps it shut.

He continues on the trail.

EXT. ROCK HOUSE - EVENING

The girls arrive at a summit as the sun sets. The Rock House is a make-shift shack of boulders and stones. Lights from distant towns twinkle on the horizon.

MELISSA

It's beautiful.

BILLIE

Now are you glad you came?

MELISSA

No, but it is beautiful.

BILLIE
Stolen food, stolen horses. Just
like real outlaws.

MELISSA
Gee, how retro.

Billie pulls out her map of historical places.

BILLIE
Fort Sumner's right here.

Billie makes an "X" on the map with a piece of sandstone.

MELISSA
That's a kid's map. It isn't going
to help.

Billie crumples the map. She pulls out Tony's compass.

BILLIE
You're right. Outlaws don't need
maps. We just keep heading east.

The girls watch the last rays of the sun disappear.

MELISSA
Dad's beyond pissed.

BILLIE
I know.

EXT. POSSE'S CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Nick and Sheila stare into the fire. Miguel and Tony sleep
nearby. Nick's PHONE RINGS.

NICK
(on phone)
Hello...? Tell him we're still
looking.
(beat)
I don't care. Just tell him.

He slams the phone shut.

SHEILA
Work?

NICK

The owner of the Arabian.

EXT. BILLIE'S CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

The girls lay next to the smoldering embers of the campfire. Twinkie and candy wrappers are on the ground.

MELISSA

Thanks for getting us out of that jam today.

BILLIE

No problem.

MELISSA

Don't you miss Dad a little? I mean, he is our dad.

BILLIE

Are you kidding? For the first time in my life I feel like I'm somebody. All he ever did was say, "Don't do this," "Don't do that," "Don't race horses." Out here's my home now.

MELISSA

You know why he says don't race horses?

BILLIE

Yeah, I know. Mom raced horses.

EXT. POSSE'S CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Nick and Sheila look at the flames.

NICK

I better get some sleep.

SHEILA

Don't you think we should talk?

NICK

I don't think we have much to say.

SHEILA

You haven't changed, have you? It wasn't my fault.

NICK

I never said it was.

SHEILA

So why do you keep blaming me? I haven't seen you in eight years and you act like it just happened.

NICK

Sometimes it feels that way.

Nick unpacks his gear. Sheila grabs him by the arm.

SHEILA

I loved her, too, you know. And I loved those girls.

NICK

They could tell by all your visits.

SHEILA

Wait a minute! You're the one who told me not to come around.

NICK

Look... Julie is gone and there's nothing anyone can do to change it. My girls are in these hills somewhere -- alone. Just do your job and help me find them.

Nick takes his sleeping bag and walks away.

EXT. BILLIE'S CAMPFIRE - DAWN

Billie wakes to the sound of the horses making noise. Both animals are spooked. Billie tries to calm them.

She looks down and sees a rattlesnake coiled near their feet.

BILLIE

Easy... easy. Just relax.

Suddenly, the snake snaps to strike. But before it reaches its mark a rock slams down, killing it.

Melissa looks at the creature.

MELISSA

I hate snakes.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Billie and Melissa sit on a ridge.

MELISSA

What do you think?

BILLIE

Piece of cake.

MELISSA

I hope there's cake.

ANGLE ON a small grocery store at the edge of a backwater town.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Now?

BILLIE

Now.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

The girls slowly ride up on their horses. This time they tie up their animals behind a billboard.

INT. GROCERY STORE

Another hole-in-the-wall joint, but this time the clerk is old MARTHA. Her radar goes on the moment the girls walk in.

MELISSA

This does not look good.

The girls feign smiles. They flip through magazines. A Dolly Madison truck pulls up outside. The DRIVER enters carrying a rack of goodies.

DRIVER

Morning.

MARTHA
(still eyeing the
girls)
Morning.

DRIVER
It's gonna be a hot one today.

MARTHA
It's a hot one every day.

Billie notices a newspaper. The headline: "BILLIE THE KID
STRIKES AGAIN: GIRL BANDITS WANTED IN TWINKIE HEIST."

BILLIE
C'mon, let's get out of here.

Melissa sees the paper.

MELISSA
Dad's gonna kill us.

The Driver loads the display rack. The girls head outside
under the disapproving eye of Martha.

MARTHA
Damn kids.

EXT. GROCERY STORE

Melissa heads straight for the truck. It's the mother-load
of junk food.

Billie takes a quick look back at the store. The Driver and
Martha are not paying attention.

BILLIE
Let's do it.

The girls reach into the truck and grab all they can -- pies,
cakes, cookies, candy bars.

INT. GROCERY STORE

The Driver glances outside and sees his goods being pilfered.

DRIVER
Hey!

He bolts for the door.

MARTHA

Damn kids!

She picks up the phone.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

Get me the sheriff.

EXT. GROCERY STORE

The Driver runs from the door.

DRIVER

Get away from there!

The girls run across the parking lot carrying the stolen food. They disappear behind the billboard.

The Driver follows but is nearly run down as the girls gallop past.

The Driver returns to his truck and slams it into gear, a path of junk food falls from the open door.

The truck gains on the girls.

Billie pulls out her revolver.

MELISSA

Don't shoot him!

Billie fires and blows out one of the truck's tires. The vehicle slowly rolls over in a crashing thud.

The Driver hoists himself from the wreckage and slams his fist on the truck.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Jake surveys the smoldering remains of the girl's campsite from the night before. He finds candy wrappers and Billie's map with the "X" through Fort Sumner.

He tucks the map in his shirt.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Two Sheriff's off-road MOTORCYCLE RIDERS check their gear. They wear helmets, knee pads, and jump suits with "SHERIFF" printed on the back.

Another SHERIFF talks to them.

SHERIFF

They're armed with an old six-shooter.

RIDER #1

They're just kids.

SHERIFF

If they point a gun at you, they're not kids any more. Got it?

The Riders nod and pull down the visors on their helmets. They check the guns at their sides. The Riders rev their bikes and roar into the hills.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Nick's posse rides the trail. Sheila and Tony are at the front.

SHEILA

You known Billie a long time?

TONY

Long enough.

SHEILA

What's she like now?

TONY

She's kind of a tomboy.

SHEILA

Is that why you like her?

TONY

Who said anything about liking her?

SHEILA

If you don't like her, why are you here?

TONY

I'm helping my dad. Tracking somebody
is fun.

SHEILA

Especially if they have blonde hair.

Sheila stops. She dismounts.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

They're been here.

NICK

How do you know?

SHEILA

I'm an expert tracker.

She holds up cupcakes -- still in the package.

EXT. HILLSIDE TRAIL - DAY

The girls ride and eat their stolen goods.

MELISSA

(looking in her
saddlebags)

Did you eat the cupcakes?

BILLIE

(takes a bite of
a cookie)

Nope.

MELISSA

Could have sworn we had cupcakes.

EXT. SOUVENIR SHOP - DAY

The Old Timer stacks the "Billy the Kid" tombstones into the
back of his truck.

Randy pulls up in his Jeep. He hands the Old Timer his
business card.

RANDY

I'm looking for Billie the Kid.

OLD TIMER

Which one?

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Billie studies the compass while the girls ride.

MELISSA

Why are we going to Fort Sumner,
Billie?

BILLIE

Because we're outlaws. Fort Sumner
is where all the outlaws hang out.
That's where the real Billy's buried.

MELISSA

You're the outlaw. I'm just along
for the ride.

BILLIE

You stole a horse. You stole food.
You're getting pretty good at it.

MELISSA

Stealing's not right. Besides, you're
a bigger outlaw. Your horse is worth
a lot more.

BILLIE

I know. Why do you think Dad's even
bothering coming after us?

MELISSA

That's a mean thing to say.

BILLIE

It's the truth. If I were out here
on some pack mule, he'd be at home
making deals. Get it through your
head: he doesn't care.

INT. SOUVENIR SHOP - DAY

The Old Timer shows a bored Randy a hunk of leather.

OLD TIMER

Now this belonged to Wild Bill Cody.

RANDY

What is it?

OLD TIMER

Don't know. Could have been part of his wallet, maybe part of his shoe.

RANDY

You said Billie had been here.

OLD TIMER

Did I? Guess I did. She's a quick one, she is. Lotta brains. Doesn't like condos, though.

RANDY

Did she say where she was going?

OLD TIMER

Sure did.

RANDY

And where's that?

OLD TIMER

To the grave.

EXT. ROCK GROVE - DAY

Billie and Melissa ride.

MELISSA

I can't decide which is worse.

BILLIE

What?

MELISSA

Being a shoplifter or a horse thief.

BILLIE

They used to hang people for stealing horses.

MELISSA

Yeah, but I think that woman back at the store wanted to hang us. I mean, did you see the look on her face when we rode past? She didn't know what...

A SHOT rings out.

The bullet ricochets off a rock. Billie jumps off the horse.

BILLIE

Get down!

The girls hide behind a boulder.

MELISSA

Someone's shooting at us!

BILLIE

Very observant.

ANGLE ON Jake, smiling. He's behind some rocks.

JAKE

(calls out)

Just give me the Arabian, and nobody gets hurt.

Billie peers out.

BILLIE

I saw him selling horses back at the market. I think he might be a horse rustler.

MELISSA

You wanted to be an outlaw...

Billie pulls out her revolver. She returns fire. Jake ducks, surprised.

BILLIE

I'm not giving up Dad's horse. I stole it. It's mine.

MELISSA

That's good logic.

Billie fires another round.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Nick and the posse hear the distant gunfire.

SHEILA

That does not sound good.

EXT. ROCK GROVE - DAY

The girls are still pinned down.

BILLIE

I bet Dad sent him.

MELISSA

Dad wouldn't have somebody shoot at us.

BILLIE

For a million dollar horse I bet he would.

Billie fires another shot.

JAKE (O.S.)

Just give me the horse and you can walk away.

BILLIE

(gets an idea)

The horse!

EXT. ROCK GROVE - MOMENTS LATER

Something stirs. Jake raises his gun.

Billie and Melissa ride out, both leaning over the Arabian. Lucille is pulled behind.

MELISSA

(whispers to Billie)

How do you know this is going to work?

BILLIE

I don't. But if he wants the horse alive, he won't shoot at it.

Jake figures out the scam. He FIRES in the air.

The Arabian and Lucille panic. Billie and Melissa struggle to hold on. Billie snaps the reins and sends the horses flying from the clearing.

Jake jams his rifle into his saddle holster and gives chase.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Billie and Melissa round a bend at top speed.

Moments later, Jake kicks his horse around the same bend.

EXT. LOWER TRAIL - DAY

Sheila looks up into the mountains.

SHEILA

THERE!

On a ridge above are Billie and Melissa.

Jake is close behind.

NICK

Who the hell is that?

SHEILA

I have a pretty good idea.

EXT. RIDGE

Billie and Melissa ride hard.

Suddenly, Billie pulls back on the reins. The Arabian skids to a halt.

They're on the edge of a chasm. It's a 15 foot jump.

BILLIE

I don't think Lucile can make it.

MELISSA

We can't leave her for that jerk.

EXT. RIDGE - MOMENTS LATER

Jake thunders into the clearing. He sees the chasm and snaps the reins hard. His horse gracefully lifts over the opening and lands on the other side.

He gallops out of sight.

INT. CAVE

The girls and their horses are in a cave on the side of the cliff.

MELISSA

That was close.

(turns to inspect the
cave)

B... Bil... Billie!!!

In the far corner is a skeleton. Its clothes are shreds, an empty whiskey bottle is near its hand.

BILLIE

Wow. It's some old cowboy.

MELISSA

I'm getting out of here.

BILLIE

Wait!

They hear voices.

SHEILA (O.S.)

This way.

Billie's perplexed -- she knows that voice.

The sound of HORSE HOOVES are heard striking the dusty ground above the cave.

EXT. CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

The posse arrives.

SHEILA

It looks like they jumped.

MIGUEL

My Lucille can't make that jump.

TONY

Sure she can.

MIGUEL

How do you know?

TONY
(covering)
Well, I think she can.

NICK
We can make it.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

MELISSA
That's Dad.

BILLIE
Shhhh!

The girls listen.

A HORSE GALLOPS toward the chasm. The sound stops for a moment, then starts again on the other side.

Another HORSE GALLOPS.

Silence.

A landing on the other side.

MELISSA
That's Dad up there! We can get away
from the rustler...
(looks at the skeleton)
... And from him.

BILLIE
The rustler's gone -- and he's
harmless.

A third POUNDING of HOOVES begins.

MELISSA
We can go home.

BILLIE
No, you can go home. I got to boarding
school, remember?

Silence. Then the HOOVES HIT the other side.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
If you want to go after them, that's
fine with me.

The last set of HOOVES THUNDER above... then HIT the other side.

Billie moves toward the skeleton. She examines the smiling skull.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Probably was shot by some lawman and just crawled in here to die.

(to Melissa)

Well, go ahead.

MELISSA

Lucille can't make the jump.

BILLIE

Go another way.

MELISSA

No. I'll take the Arabian. You go another way.

BILLIE

Lucille's not fast enough.

MELISSA

You stole the Arabian to get back at Dad, didn't you?

BILLIE

I needed a horse.

MELISSA

He used to not be mean to you. Don't you remember?

BILLIE

Nope.

(picks up the empty
whiskey bottle)

Outlaws don't remember a thing.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

The off-road sheriff's Riders drink water from bottles.

RIDER #1

Could you shoot a 13 year-old kid if she pointed a gun at you?

RIDER #2

A gun's a gun. Doesn't matter who pulls the trigger. You're still dead.

They put their goggles on and head out.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

The posse stops.

The trail veers off in several directions.

SHEILA

She could have taken any one of these to go to Fort Sumner.

She kicks the horse. Sheila rides alongside Nick.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

You wanna talk?

NICK

Not really.

SHEILA

I wish you'd stop punishing me.

NICK

I'm not.

SHEILA

Then stop punishing yourself.

Beat.

NICK

It's not easy to forget.

SHEILA

No one's asking you to forget... just let go.

NICK

I'm constantly being reminded of her every time I look at Billie.

He pulls out his wallet and flips it open.

NICK (CONT'D)

The first one's Billie. The next
one's Melissa.

SHEILA

My God, she does look like her.

NICK

Who's chasing them?

SHEILA

A horse thief named Jake Johnson.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

A modern day rustler. I bet anything
he's after that Arabian.

Nick looks worried.

SHEILA (CONT'D)

He's not violent.

(beat)

They're around here somewhere. Why'd
they take off?

NICK

I was going to send Billie to boarding
school. I couldn't handle her anymore.
I have no idea why Melissa is out
here. Billie probably talked her
into it.

SHEILA

Sounds like you're pretty tough on
Billie.

NICK

She turned wild.

SHEILA

That's what they used to say about
her Mom, remember?

Nick snaps the reins of his horse and pulls away.

TONY

At least we've got good weather to
track them.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

A CRASH OF THUNDER. Lightning flashes outside the cave. A campfire burns. Rain pours down.

Melissa nervously eyes the skeleton.

MELISSA

This place gives me the creeps.

BILLIE

Relax. We're dry, at least.

MELISSA

You be the outlaw. I want access to a phone.

BILLIE

Why?

MELISSA

Because I'm thirteen, that's why. And a shower. I want a shower. I'm starting to smell.

BILLIE

Stick your head out in the rain.

Melissa digs in her saddlebags and pulls out an apple pie. She opens it and gives half to Billie.

MELISSA

It's the last one.

EXT. POSSE'S CAMPSITE - NIGHT

A lonely tent sits in the downpour.

Nick's silhouetted from inside the tent. He talks on his cellular phone.

NICK

Right... They've been heading east but we lost track of them earlier today... great. Thanks.

INT. TENT

Nick turns off the phone.

NICK

A couple of National Guard helicopters
are doing practice runs near here
tomorrow. They're going to take a
look.

WIDEN to reveal Sheila, Miguel, and Tony squeezed in the
small tent, lying side by side.

TONY

Billie won't be able to outrun an
Apache attack helicopter.

SHEILA

Pretty good for a couple of girls,
having to be tracked down by tactical
airlift.

TONY

Yeah, I suppose.

NICK

(to Sheila)

Thank you for bringing the tent...
and the flashlight.

SHEILA

You're welcome. Cowboys can't always
count on camping under the stars.

Nick shoots Miguel a look -- well?

MIGUEL

(begrudgingly)

I'm glad you thought of it.

TONY

Me, too. Thanks.

NICK

Is this tent waterproof?

SHEILA

Yes.

NICK

I think it has a leak.

SHEILA

It does.

(beat)

On your side.

EXT. JAKE'S CAMP - NIGHT

Jake sits under a tree holding a tarp over his head, soaked.

EXT. FIRE STATION - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

The station's lights glow against the rain.

INT. FIRE STATION

The two Rider cops watch television.

TV REPORTER (V.O.)

Sheriff's deputies are still searching
the rugged hills east of Albuquerque
looking for the "Billie the Kid"
bandits.

EXT. CAVE - NIGHT

The girls in their sleeping bags watch the flickering fire.

MELISSA

How old was Mom when she died?

BILLIE

Thirty-four.

MELISSA

That's pretty young to die.

BILLIE

Yeah.

MELISSA

Sometimes I can barely remember her.
Does that happen to you?

BILLIE

Sometimes.

MELISSA

Why doesn't Dad talk about her?

BILLIE

Too painful, I guess.

MELISSA

Seems kind of stupid, her getting hit by a car right in front of the ranch. Do you remember it?

BILLIE

No, I don't remember.

MELISSA

If she could see what we're doing up here she'd freak, wouldn't she?

BILLIE

Yeah. Probably.

Melissa drifts off to sleep. Billie's eyes are wide open. She holds the photo from her desk.

EXT. CLEARING - MORNING

Billie and Melissa lead the horses from the cave to the clearing. Melissa packs her things onto the horse.

MELISSA

First thing we do is find another store and get some more food.

BILLIE

You can take the Arabian. You don't have to stay out here with me.

MELISSA

That's okay.

BILLIE

No, really, I don't mind. I can make it on Lucille.

MELISSA

Why should you be the only one who gets into trouble?

BILLIE

It's not all it's cracked up to be.

MELISSA

Neither is not being noticed.

BILLIE

I think we're only a day away from
Fort Sumner.

MELISSA

Cool.

Suddenly, THUNDERING, like a thousand horses, fills the air.
From behind a cliff rises a MILITARY ATTACK HELICOPTER. If the
pilot took a shot, he couldn't miss.

The girls grab the horses and hide in a crevice. They shout
over the ROAR.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

You're right. Dad must be coming
after that horse and not us.

BILLIE

Why?

MELISSA

There is no way they'd send a
helicopter after somebody for stealing
Twinkies.

The helicopter hovers. The pilot talks on his radio.

BILLIE

Let's get out of here.

EXT. POSSE'S CAMPSITE - MORNING

Nick snaps his cellular phone shut.

NICK

They're on the ridge where we were
yesterday.

SHEILA

The trail is faster, but if they try to give us the slip they may double back. You guys take the trail and I'll circle around.

NICK

Let's do it.

The posse get on their horses and ride.

Sheila heads off alone.

EXT. ROLLING FIELD/HIGHWAY - DAY

Billie and Melissa look at a highway that intersects their path.

MELISSA

That's an interstate. Those cars are going 70 miles an hour.

BILLIE

How fast do you think a horse can go?

MELISSA

You're nuts.

BILLIE

You take the Arabian.

MELISSA

I can't.

Billie gets off the horse.

BILLIE

C'mon.

Melissa reluctantly dismounts and climbs on the Arabian. Billie kicks Lucille and heads for the road.

Melissa follows.

EXT. HIGHWAY

The girls approach the road.

MELISSA

Maybe there's a storm drain or
something that runs under it.

Billie surveys the road for a moment and the rolling field
beyond.

SHEILA (O.S.)

Billie!

Sheila rides fast toward them.

MELISSA

Who is that?

BILLIE

I don't remember.

Billie snaps the reins on her horse and bolts across the
highway.

SHEILA

Stop!

Melissa figures "what the hell" and takes the plunge across
the lanes of concrete.

INT. HIGHWAY PATROL CAR

A Highway Patrolman sees the horses bolting across the
highway. He throws on the car's sirens and picks up the walkie
talkie.

PATROLMAN

Dispatch, this is five forty-two.
I've just spotted two teenagers on
horseback crossing the interstate
eastbound near mile 152. Looks like
the "Billie the Kid" bandits.

DISPATCHER'S VOICE (O.S.)

Ten-four. All units in the vicinity
of the interstate at 152 be advised
the "Billie the Kid" runaways are
heading east on horseback.

EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY

The two Riders hear the call and turn their bikes around.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The patrol car veers off the highway and gives pursuit.

EXT. ROLLING FIELD - DAY

Billie rides hard on the rolling hills. She pulls out Tony's compass, searching for the direction.

Melissa follows.

Sheila crosses the road. She passes the patrol car that bounces on the hills.

At the bottom of a roll, Billie whips Lucille's reins to the right. The horse turns.

A moment later, Melissa comes over the ridge.

BILLIE

Down here!

Melissa stops her horse, sees Billie, and kicks the Arabian down toward her sister.

MELISSA

When this is over, remind me to kill you.

The girls turn to ride.

Sheila rises over the swell.

SHEILA

Billie, Melissa, wait.

BILLIE

We don't know you. We don't want to know you.

Billie pulls the revolver but DROPS the compass. Too late to get it back.

Billie halfheartedly points the gun at Sheila.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

Leave us alone!

MELISSA

What the hell are you doing?

Billie turns Lucille and kicks her into gear.

Melissa follows, cautiously looking back at Sheila as they go.

The patrol car is wedged in terrain, lights flashing, SIRENS WAILING. The Riders cross the highway.

Sheila points...

SHEILA

That way.

The Riders tear off... in the wrong direction.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Billie and Melissa ride fast.

MELISSA

Stop.

They stop.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Why'd you point the gun at that woman?

I think she knows us.

BILLIE

Nobody I know.

The girls round a bend smack into the barrel of Jake's rifle.

JAKE

Howdy, ladies. So glad you could drop by.

EXT. TRAIL - LATER

Jake rides off with the Arabian in tow.

Billie and Melissa are tied to a tree.

MELISSA

Dad's gonna kill us.

BILLIE

Will you stop saying that?

EXT. FIELD

A tow truck pulls the police cruiser from the field.

NICK

Just like old times, huh?

SHEILA

I tried to stop them.

NICK

It wasn't your fault, right? Maybe you ought to leave us alone before someone else gets hurt.

Nick gets on his horse. Sheila chases after him.

SHEILA

That's it. It's time you know the truth.

NICK

About what?

SHEILA

About Julie.

NICK

You're eight years too late.

SHEILA

Billie's a big girl now, she can take care of herself.

NICK

What are you talking about?

SHEILA

You want to know what really happened to Julie? Ask Billie.

A Sheriff approaches.

SHERIFF

We'd like you to discontinue your search.

NICK

They're my girls.

SHERIFF

We're insisting you stop. This is becoming too dangerous. Please go home.

(beat)

We'll call you.

EXT. HILLS - NIGHT

The girls are still tied to the tree. Lucille is in the bushes.

BILLIE

I can't believe I'm going to spend my sixteenth birthday tied to a tree.

MELISSA

You wanted to be an outlaw...

BILLIE

God, you're a pain.

MELISSA

That woman we saw today, she looks like someone I see in my dreams.

BILLIE

You dream too much.

A TWIG SNAPS. The girls look into the darkness.

MELISSA

I'm scared.

BILLIE

I've still got the gun.

MELISSA

You can't move your hands.

BILLIE

Oh, yeah.

A flashlight beam comes into the clearing.

MELISSA

Maybe it's Dad.

Randy enters.

RANDY

Billie?

BILLIE

Yeah?

RANDY

Man, am I glad to see you.

Randy unties the girls.

BILLIE

(who the hell is this?)

Guess I'm glad to see you, too.

RANDY

I'm Randy Slater. I'm a reporter.
I've been following you guys for
days. I got lost and wound up walking
around in the dark.

Randy pulls a notebook from his back pocket.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Can you guys tell me what it's been
like out here?

MELISSA

You want to interview us?

RANDY

Well, yeah. If that's okay.

BILLIE

You aren't going to turn us in?

RANDY

Are you kidding? You're a great story.
I want you to keep going.

BILLIE

But aren't people going to wonder
why you didn't grab us?

RANDY

I'm going to say you pulled a gun on me. You know, keep the legend alive.

EXT. CLEARING - LATER

Melissa puts the finishing touches on Randy's ropes -- now he's tied to the tree.

Billie points the gun at him.

RANDY

Hey. It was just a joke. You aren't going to leave me out here like this?

BILLIE

Gotta "keep the legend alive."

EXT. TRAIL - MORNING

The girls are on Lucille. Billie looks up at the sky.

BILLIE

I'm lost. Which way is east?

The girls run face-to-face into two war-painted NATIVE AMERICANS on horses.

NATIVE AMERICAN #1

Who are you?

BILLIE

Who are you?

NATIVE AMERICAN #1

I asked first.

BILLIE

I'm Billie the Kid.

NATIVE AMERICAN #2

And I'm Geronimo.

MELISSA

Are you going to scalp us?

NATIVE AMERICAN #1

We dress like this for reenactment weekends. It's a hobby. It's cheaper than taking flying lessons. We're guides for the Fort Sumner Calvary, circa 1880.

BILLIE

You're kidding.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Billie and Melissa are led by the Native Americans through hundreds of white cavalry pup tents. Men and horses are everywhere.

Not a sign of modern life.

MELISSA

This is cool. Very cool.

NATIVE AMERICAN #2

Some of these guys really believe it's 1880. If they start sounding strange, just play along. Call the commander "sir" a lot. He likes that.

BILLIE

How long you been out here?

NATIVE AMERICAN #2

Three, four days.

BILLIE

So you haven't seen any newspapers or anything?

NATIVE AMERICAN #1

Not unless they were printed in 1880. Why?

BILLIE

Just curious.

EXT. COMMANDER'S TENT - DAY

The stoic COMMANDER poses for a picture in front of his tent. A flash-powder camera goes off.

COMMANDER

I love these new cameras.

NATIVE AMERICAN #1

Found these two in the hills above
camp, sir. This one says she's Billie
the Kid.

COMMANDER

Billie. Haven't seen you around these
parts lately.

The Native Americans give Billie a look: "play along."

BILLIE

I've been busy... sir.

COMMANDER

Haven't we all. What can I do for
you and your guest?

MELISSA

We're looking for Billy the Kid's
grave... sir.

BILLIE

I'm looking for a horse, sir. An
Arabian. It was stolen from us.

COMMANDER

Stolen!?

BILLIE

Yes, sir; rustled.

COMMANDER

That's a hanging offense.

BILLIE

I'm well aware of that, sir.

COMMANDER

An Arabian is a valuable horse.

BILLIE

Yes, sir, very... you can tell by
the smell.

The Commander grunts in agreement.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

It happened last night, sir.

COMMANDER

I'm afraid your horse will be difficult to find. Any rustler worth his horsehide is long gone by now.

BILLIE

Yes, sir.

COMMANDER

My advice? Write it off on next year's taxes. But we'll keep an eye out for it.

BILLIE

Thank you, sir.

COMMANDER

You know, we could always use an outlaw on our side.

BILLIE

Yes, sir. I'll consider it.

INT. WILSON KITCHEN - DUSK

Nick sits at the table sipping coffee.

A KNOCK is heard at the door. It's Shelia. He walks away from the door; she walks in.

SHEILA

Look, I want to apologize for today. I'm sorry.

NICK

You do show up at the worst of times.

SHEILA

I said I was sorry. Don't try and compare this to what happened to Julie.

NICK

What did you mean today, "ask Billie" about what happened?

SHEILA

It's not important. It was just talk.

Nick chuckles sarcastically and sits at the table.

NICK

All these years and I never realized
it until now. God, was I blind.

SHEILA

What?

NICK

Billie. All she ever wanted to do
was be like her mother. And all I
did was keep her from doing it.
(beat)

NICK (CONT'D)

We never talked about Julie. It was
like she just packed up and moved to
another part of the universe. I
pretended she never existed. Billie
pretended she never went away.

SHEILA

It's how you dealt with the pain.
You survived it. You and the girls,
you pulled through.

NICK

Did we?

EXT. HILLS - EVENING

Billie builds a fire. Melissa plays with Billie's gun, pulling
it out of the holster, pretending to fire at a target on some
rocks.

BILLIE

Dad's gonna kill us.

MELISSA

There's a switch.

BILLIE

I just wanted to borrow the horse.

MELISSA

Dad's got insurance. He'll get over it.

BILLIE

Not this time.

MELISSA

God, that cavalry was the best. Forget being an outlaw, I want to be a cop.

BILLIE

Tomorrow we turn ourselves in.

MELISSA

Why? It's just getting fun!

BILLIE

I want to.

MELISSA

What about the grave? What about boarding school?

BILLIE

What about a shower?

Melissa laughs. She tries to draw the gun from the holster, but it gets caught.

MELISSA

Hey, the gun's stuck.

BILLIE

Take the holster off.

Melissa struggles with the belt. The holster gets twisted behind her. She reaches for the gun, and, without knowing it, cocks the hammer --

BANG!!!

Melissa slowly drops to her knees.

MELISSA

I shot myself...

BILLIE

Where?

MELISSA
(point to her butt)
There.

Billie rips the holster from her sister's waist. A small circle of red slowly expands on Melissa's jeans.

BILLIE
Oh, Jesus.

MELISSA
I don't want to die!

BILLIE
You're not going to die.

MELISSA
Yes, I am; I can feel it.

BILLIE
No, you're not. I won't let you.

MELISSA
If I don't die, Dad's going to kill me.

BILLIE
(examines the wound)
It's not that bad. I don't think the bullet went in.

Billie rips part of her shirt sleeve and puts the cloth into the wound on Melissa's butt.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
Hold your hand right there.

MELISSA
It hurts.

BILLIE
Of course it hurts. Guns do that.
We've got to get you to a doctor.

MELISSA
I can't move.

EXT. HILLS - EVENING

Melissa lies on her back, bouncing. WIDEN to reveal she's on an old Native American canvas sled. The sled is pulled by the cavalry's Native American guides.

They approach a small town.

NATIVE AMERICAN #1

There's one of those "doc in the boxes" here. We took one of our guys there once. He slipped on a tomahawk.

MELISSA

I'm feeling very light-headed.

NATIVE AMERICAN #2

She should be fine. It looks like she was just grazed.

EXT. TOWN - NIGHT

Billie, the Native Americans, and their sled ride down the two-lane street. Ahead is a 24-hour emergency medical clinic.

EXT. CLINIC - NIGHT

Billie RINGS the BELL to the clinic.

BILLIE

We're here.
(beat)
Melissa?

MELISSA

Hmmm? Sorry, guess I dozed off.

BILLIE

Well, stop dozing.
(rings the bell again)
Come on, come on.

MELISSA

If I die, will I see Mom?

BILLIE

You're not going to die.

MELISSA

How do you know?

BILLIE

I know what dying looks like. This
isn't it.

The door of the clinic opens.

INT. CLINIC - NIGHT

The Native Americans carry Melissa into the
examining room. A NURSE follows.

NURSE

Face down.

The Native Americans roll Melissa over.

NATIVE AMERICAN #2

Best of luck.

NATIVE AMERICAN #1

Do yourself a favor -- get rid of
the gun.

The Native Americans exit.

NURSE

The doctor will be right in.

The Nurse exits.

BILLIE

You're going to be fine.

MELISSA

What did you mean, you know "what
dying looks like?"

BILLIE

I was there when Mom got killed.

MELISSA

You were? What happened?

BILLIE

I can't say.

MELISSA

I want to know. She was my Mom, too,
you know.

BILLIE

It was my fault.

MELISSA

What!?

BILLIE

I ran into the road. She tried to
stop me. She got hit by a car.

(beat)

I'm sorry.

MELISSA

You remember?

Billie nods.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Is that why Dad hates you?

BILLIE

Dad doesn't know.

MELISSA

It's okay. Mom did what she did
because she loved you.

BILLIE

Look where it got her.

MELISSA

You better get going.

BILLIE

No, it's over. I'm not cut out for
this stuff. I'm tired and you're
shot. That's enough for one ride.

Melissa grimaces as she rearranges herself on the bed.

MELISSA

I'm fine. But I'm going to be really
mad at you if you don't go to that
grave.

BILLIE

It's not that important.

MELISSA

Yes, it is. You said this is the first time you've felt like somebody. So go be Billie the Kid... Mom would have wanted you to.

EXT. CLINIC - NIGHT

A police car screeches to a halt. Nick, Miguel, and Sheila get out of the car, along with a cop.

INT. CLINIC

Nick, Sheila, and Miguel watch a DOCTOR sew Melissa's wound.

NICK

Don't lie to me.

MELISSA

Sorry, I'm not snitching on Billie any more. Do they have food here?

NICK

(to Doctor)

Is she okay?

DOCTOR

Barely nicked her.

MELISSA

(sees Miguel)

Hi.

MIGUEL

Hola. How's your butt doing?

MELISSA

A little sore.

(sees Sheila)

Who's that?

SHEILA

My name's Sheila. I was a friend of your Mom's.

NICK

Where's your sister?

MELISSA

If I knew, I wouldn't tell you. No offense, but she is my sister.

NICK

I want to know where Billie is and I want to know now.

MELISSA

Billie thinks it was her fault that Mom died. Did you know that?

NICK

What?

(looks at Sheila)

What happened?

SHEILA

I don't really think this --

NICK

One of my girls has been shot. The other is still missing. What happened?

SHEILA

(slowly)

Julie and I had gone out for a ride.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILSON RANCH - FLASHBACK - DAY

JULIE and Sheila ride together.

SHEILA (V.O.)

We were near the ranch. Billie saw us coming. She ran down the driveway. She wanted to see the horses.

(beat)

A car was coming.

Young Billie runs towards the women, onto the road. A car approaches, the driver is distracted.

The action plays out as Sheila describes.

JULIE

Stop!

SHEILA (V.O.)

She didn't stop.

SHEILA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Julie rode into the street. The car swerved to miss Billie. Julie's horse got spooked. She was thrown into the path of the car.

Julie falls from the horse and lands on the hard pavement.

CLOSE ON Julie's face as she turns to see the oncoming car. She closes her eyes as we...

FADE TO WHITE

INT. CLINIC

Everyone is as we left them.

SHEILA

Billie ran away. I never told anyone what really happened.

NICK

Why?

SHEILA

I thought if you knew the truth you'd never forgive her.

EXT. RIDGE - DAWN

Billie looks down on Fort Sumner National Park.

BILLIE

Made it.

As she moves forward down the hillside, she sees something MOVING on the valley floor in the opposite direction of the park.

Men on horses.

Billie moves in for a closer look. A tractor trailer sits next to a desolate section of railroad tracks.

Jake rides the Arabian. A man drives a car out of the semi truck and parks it on the tracks. In the distance a train chugs toward them.

EXT. TRAIN - DAWN

An old locomotive pulls five box cars filled with horses.

EXT. TRACKS - DAWN

Jake eyes the train coming close to him.

JAKE

Right on time.

Jake rides toward the train.

EXT. HILLS

Billie spies Jake.

BILLIE

Oh my God.

INT. TRAIN

The ENGINEER peers ahead and sees Jake and the car across the tracks.

ENGINEER

What the...?

He BLOWS the WHISTLE.

EXT. HILLS

Billie watches as the train bears down on the car.

BILLIE

C'mon, Lucille. We've got to do something.

INT. TRAIN

The conductor hits the brakes.

EXT. TRACKS

The train SLAMS into the car. The wreckage moves several hundred feet down the track and the train comes to a grinding halt. The Engineer gets out.

ENGINEER

What the hell's that car doing out here?

Jake levels his rifle at him.

JAKE

Just relax and nobody gets hurt.

EXT. TRAIN - MORNING

Jake's henchmen unload the horses from the train and into the truck.

JAKE

A lot better than swiping them two at a time, eh boys?

A low RUMBLE.

Jake looks across the flatland. On the horizon is a black and blue blob.

Jake rubs his eyes.

The blob GROWS, the noise gets LOUDER. And LOUDER. His eyes widen as he realizes what's coming.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Can't be...

EXT. FLATLAND

Billie rides in front of a hundred U.S. Cavalry. The Commander is at her side.

The troops are in full regalia, colors, swords, rifles, flags. A bugler BLOWS "REVEILLE."

EXT. TRAIN

Jake does a double-take.

JAKE

Let's get out of here.

Before the men can flee, the cavalry encircles them.
Jake is lost in a sea of blue uniforms.
The cronies are rounded up.

COMMANDER

Is this your horse?

BILLIE

Yes, sir, it is.

COMMANDER

(to Jake)

Horse rustlin's a hanging offense,
young man. And out here I'm the law
of the land.

JAKE

Hey, now, wait a minute.

Jake is pulled from the Arabian.

BILLIE

Could you take care of my Dad's horse
for me, sir? There's something I
have to do.

EXT. FORT SUMNER NATIONAL PARK - DAY

Billie rides into the park.

The Old Timer from the souvenir shop and two park employees
unload "Billy the Kid" gravestones from the Old Timer's truck.

OLD TIMER

If it ain't the birthday girl.

BILLIE

Morning.

OLD TIMER

Here to chase tombstones?

BILLIE

Something like that.

OLD TIMER

Better watch out. The law's everywhere.

BILLIE

Tell me about it.

Billie rides on.

Ahead is the grave of Billy the Kid, surrounded by a small picket fence and sun-bleached stones.

Billie enters the cemetery and looks at the grave. The gun dangles in her hand.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

I guess I wanted to be an outlaw.
Here I am.

She bends down and lets her fingers touch the dirt.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

There's got to be a better way than living like this. I just don't know what it is.

(chuckles)

Maybe I'll join the cavalry.

She stands up and does a quick-draw with the gun, pretending to fire at some unseen enemy.

BILLIE (CONT'D)

BAM, BAM, BAM!

(beat)

Told you I was fast.

Suddenly, the two Riders roar into the park, their guns drawn.

A sheriff's cruiser is close behind.

They screech to a halt.

RIDER #2

Drop the gun.

Billie smiles and looks at the grave.

BILLIE
(to the grave)
Guess we all have to go sometime.

RIDER #1
Drop the gun, now!

Billie stands motionless.

SHEILA (O.S.)
It's okay.

Billie slowly turns. She sees Sheila and Nick.

BILLIE
Dad?

NICK
I know what happened.

Billie looks at Sheila -- the secret's out. Billie's knees start to quiver. Her lips tremble.

BILLIE
I didn't mean it.

NICK
I know you didn't.

Billie starts to cry. She bangs the gun against her leg. She looks at the grave, then back at her father and Sheila.

NICK (CONT'D)
You can come home now.

Billie waves the gun around in the air.

BILLIE
I don't know if I can.

The cops anxiously pull the hammers on their guns.

NICK
(pleading)
Put the gun down. Please? For me?

Billie looks at the gun, then tosses it to the grave.

She runs to her father. She cries on Nick's shoulder. Nick motions for Sheila to join them.

The three of them lock in a hug.

NICK (CONT'D)
I love you.

BILLIE
I love you, too.

Billie sees the cops still nervously eyeing her, guns still drawn.

BILLIE (CONT'D)
You guys can relax, you know. I'm not an outlaw.

EXT. RODEO - ONE WEEK LATER

The stands are filled. Billie sits on Lucille in a chute. Tony, wearing a rodeo number and holding a trophy, approaches.

TONY
Ready to give 'em a run for their money?

BILLIE
I'm always ready.
(beat)
Nice trophy.

TONY
Not bad for a beginner.
(beat)
I got something for you.

He reaches in his pocket and pulls out the compass.

BILLIE

I don't need it anymore. I know where I'm headed.

He tosses it to her.

TONY

Better take it. You never know how far you might go.

BILLIE

Yeah, I guess you don't.

TONY

Good luck.

BILLIE

Thanks.

He heads towards the stands.

Nick and Sheila enter.

NICK

You remember the agreement we made with the judge?

BILLIE

Anything I win goes to pay back the stores.

NICK

And?

BILLIE

And no more guns.

NICK

Just be glad you caught that rustler. It made you look more like a hero than an outlaw.

BILLIE

Never thought that would happen.

NICK

I knew it would -- someday.

They smile.

SHEILA

When you get to the first barrel,
pull hard so Lucille knows this isn't
practice.

NICK

Listen to her. She knows what she's
talking about.

ANGLE ON Melissa and Tony finding a seat in the stands.
Melissa carries a pillow which she gingerly sits on. Billie
waves. They wave back.

NICK (CONT'D)

Stop waving to your fans. I want you
concentrating.

BILLIE

Yes, sir.

INT. ANNOUNCER'S BOOTH - DAY

The ANNOUNCER pulls the microphone close.

At the table is Randy, reporter's notebook open, a begrudging
frown on his face.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentleman, the junior
rodeo barrel race!

EXT. CHUTE - DAY

BILLIE

That's me.

NICK AND SHEILA

Good luck.

BILLIE

Thanks. For everything.

Billie sits up in the saddle.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Hailing from Albuquerque, New Mexico,
our own local legend, "Billieeeee
the KIDDDDD!"

The crowd erupts.

The chute flies open.

FREEZE FRAME - Billie bursts into the arena.

FADE TO BLACK