

# **THE NOWHERE MAN**

Written

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. GRAMPIAN NATIONAL PARK, VICTORIA - MORNING

Tree tops and sun-drenched craggy mountain ranges, plunge down toward a glistening river snaking through the landscape.

A long narrow road cuts into the native bush land. At the roads end is a small army of POLICE RIOT VEHICLES.

A local news station MOBILE NEWS TRUCK is parked off the road and the CREW race to cover the action.

Over a hundred RIOT POLICE, some on horseback, form into lines.

Beyond the police is the access to the park with a half-dozen Aboriginal men and women chained to the gate.

Behind the chained demonstrators is a makeshift campsite with another fifty Aboriginals.

A DOZEN STRINGY CAMP DOGS scamper, agitated, through the camp.

Hand painted signs are tacked up on the trees:

'5000 YEARS, NOT 170' 'LAND OWNERS, NOT LESSEES'

An OLD ABORIGINAL MAN, 60s, very intent, with eyes that seem to take in everything at once, watches the police.

SENIOR CONSTABLE WALKER performs final checks on his riot shield. His eyes lock on the old man and thin smile pushes up the corners of his mouth.

He removes his Baton from his belt and his knuckles whiten with the force of his grip.

The rest of the riders remove their batons and hold them at the ready position.

The police horses snort and rear in anticipation.

Hooves stomp the ground and dust rises into the air.

The police commander puts a whistle to his lips and blows a shrill blast.

The lines of police move forward as one.

The Aboriginals form up behind their people chained to the gate.

Two of the camp dogs jump the fence and charge toward the horses.

The horse's rear and panic as the dogs close on them.

A moment of almost eerie calm descends, before...

One of the dogs reaches the horses, nipping at its forelocks...

The horse rears and stomps the dog to death...

An Aboriginal woman at the gate screams...

The MOUNTED POLICE charge!

The Aboriginal protesters huddle together defiantly.

Walker spots the old man and spurs his horse on.

The mounted riders thunder toward the protesters, jump the fence and chained people, and ride into the other Aboriginals, causing them to break ranks and scatter.

A half-dozen police rush the protestors chained to the gate. They use bolt-cutters to free them and drag them away.

More police scramble over the gate and wade into the Aboriginals with batons swinging against skulls.

Walker charges toward the OLD ABORIGINAL MAN with a savage smile on his face.

Two Aboriginal youths realize Walker's intent and sprint toward him.

The old man refuses to move and remains eerily calm.

There is a murderous glint in Walker's eyes.

At the last possible moment; the two young Aboriginals dive onto the horse and rider. They take the rider to ground and beat him senseless.

A POLICE HELMET rolls across the ground and stops at the old man's feet.

Tears well in his eyes and spill onto his cheeks.

GRAY (V.O.)  
The law of the land...

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

The old Aboriginal man, along with two other young Aborigines, are in the prisoners dock of a Victorian courtroom.

GRAY

A law that governs all  
 Australians, regardless of race,  
 colour, or creed.

The JUDGE watches impassively from the bench while a Half-cast Aboriginal lawyer, GRAY GARRETT, 30s, delivers his final summation to the jury.

GRAY

In this country we have the right  
 to be heard. We have the right to  
 demonstrate, peacefully. But,  
 this was not to be a peaceful  
 demonstration.

Every seat in the gallery is full with mostly Europeans and a smattering of Aboriginal faces.

GRAY

Now, my learned colleague would  
 have you believe this was nothing  
 more than a simple case of land  
 rights. He would also have you  
 believe that it got out of hand  
 when the police allegedly used  
 excessive force - but I am here  
 to tell you that this was not the  
 case.

One white face belongs to LANGE GARRETT, 70s, a studious looking man, who watches Gray intently from the middle seats of the gallery.

GRAY

Roy...(Anapinja)

OLD ABORIGINAL MAN

(In Aboriginal)

We don't own the land, the land  
 owns us.

Gray shoots a look at the accused in the docks and finds the old man looking back at him with piercing intensity.

YOUNG ABORIGINAL MAN

(In Aboriginal)

It's no use father. These people,  
 they only hear white words.

JUDGE

(To defense councilor)

Would you kindly restrain your  
 clients from any further  
 outbursts.

The defence lawyer turns to his clients, but they have already fallen silent.

GRAY

Roy Anapinja, David Marjina and Jacob Marjina were prepared to use violence to make their point. They attacked and severely injured a police officer in the course of his duties.

(A beat)

I believe that it is our responsibility to send the strongest message to the Aboriginal community that this kind of behavior will not be tolerated.

(A beat)

So, I would ask you, the jury, to reach the only reasonable verdict - Guilty on all charges.

Gray returns to the prosecution table where his co-council is in conversation with a well dressed man sitting behind him in the gallery.

MAN

(Whispering)

Using one of their own - bloody stroke of genius.

Gray catches the eye of the man. He has heard, but he lets it slide and sits down.

CO-COUNCIL

Well done, Gray. Nice summation.

Gray nods his appreciation at the comment and then glances back to the old man, but his eyes are diverted to...

Lange gets out of his seat, walks stiffly toward the exit and disappears through the doors without as much as a backwards glance.

INT. LANGE'S HOUSE (LOUNGE-ROOM) - EVENING

The furnishings are expensive. Lots of teak and plush cushions.

The walls have a few tasteful pieces of art hanging on them.

A Grande Piano stands beside the bay window. Its surface is covered with FRAMED FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS.

Only one of Gray, 1, and his mother, a FULL BLOOD YOLNGU WOMAN, on a windswept beach.

Another of Gray and Lange with rifles slung over shoulders, a brace of Rabbits in hand, and Robyn off to the side with a bullet riddled tin-can and a sheepish smile.

Another of Gray in his University graduation gown, flanked by Lange and Robyn.

Another of Gray, Robyn, and Lange surf casting from the beach.

The sound of a KNIFE AND FORK SCRAPING A PLATE comes from the kitchen.

INT. LANGE'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - EVENING

Gray lays his knife and fork across his plate, sits back in his chair and burps loudly.

GRAY

That's me; I'm full as a boot.

Lange is opposite him. His plate has hardly been touched.

LANGE

I don't know where you put it.  
Must have hollow legs.

GRAY

Aren't you eating?

LANGE

Haven't had much of an appetite lately.

Gray burps loudly again and grins.

GRAY

Well, I couldn't fit another bite in.

LANGE

You feel like giving me a hand out in the shed before you head home?

GRAY

You mean you want to talk about today.

LANGE

I've got an ottoman I've been working on for Robyn I'd like to get finished.

Lange picks up both plates and deposits them onto the kitchen sink.

LANGE

Come on. Help the old man out.

He strolls out through the back door.

GRAY

You know this is coercion, don't you?

Gray shakes his head, amused by the less than subtle tactics Lange employs, and then follows him out.

INT. CARPENTRY SHED - DAY

Gray grabs a length of timber from a neatly stacked pile along the wall.

More shelves containing different lengths and sizes run up the wall to the ceiling.

LANGE (O.S.)

Not that, the two by one, next shelf up. It's an ottoman not a barn.

Gray replaces the timber, takes one from the shelf above, and passes it to Lange. An ornate OTTOMAN is slowly taking shape on the work-bench.

LANGE

So, how did it feel?

GRAY

What feel?

LANGE

Winning the case.

Gray shrugs - Just another case.

Lange places the timber into a jig and carefully measures out the section he wants to cut.

LANGE

What happened in that courtroom today...

GRAY

Wasn't Justice? Come on, dad...

LANGE

It was a whitewash, Gray. The Aborigines have a legal historical claim to that land and the bloody crown knows it.

GRAY

Yes, but this case wasn't about land-rights.

LANGE

They were charged upon by mounted police and they defended themselves.

GRAY

They wouldn't have had to defend themselves if they hadn't illegally occupied the park in the first place.

LANGE

That depends upon your definition of an illegal occupation.

GRAY

It's a moot argument anyway. The jury found them guilty - End of story.

LANGE

They were blind-sided.

GRAY

How's that?

LANGE

An Aboriginal lawyer on the prosecution team in a case against Aboriginal defendants - How do you think it looked?

GRAY

You're telling me the only reason I got this case is because I'm a bloody Abo?

LANGE

They were your people in that courtroom.

GRAY

My people?

LANGE

Yes, your bloody people!

GRAY

I represent who I'm paid to represent. You of all people should know that. You drummed it into me all through law school.

Lange seems to deflate.

LANGE

What happened to you, Gray?

GRAY

I live in the real world. You should give it a try some time.

LANGE

You arrogant little...

(A beat)

The time comes when we all have to make a stand for something we believe in, something bigger than ourselves.

Lange has an intense pain shoot through his left arm.

LANGE

What do you - What do you believe in...(son)

He looks into Gray's eyes with a sudden and terrible realization.

LANGE

Oh no...

GRAY

Dad?

Lange falls like a rag-doll, dead before he hits the floor.

GRAY

Dad!

He rushes to his father's side and cradles him in his arms.

The fall has opened up a nasty cut on Lange's forehead and his face is matted with sawdust.

GRAY

Shit...!

Gray quickly feels for a pulse and finds none.

GRAY

Oh no, no, no...

He hugs Lange tightly against his chest.

GRAY

I've got you, dad.

Gray gently brushes sawdust from Lange's face and rocks him back and fourth.

GRAY

You've cracked yourself a real  
beaut, but you'll be alright.

Tears brim in his eyes and roll down his cheeks.

EXT. HOLY TRINITY CHURCH - DAY

The church is an old brick and tile affair, circa 1906.

The sound of male and female voices singing the hymn 'THE  
KING OF LOVE, MY SHEPHERD IS' comes from within.

INT. HOLY TRINITY CHURCH - DAY

The entire congregation are on their feet and the hymn  
ends.

FATHER HIGGINS

Please, be seated.

They all sit.

Gray and his wife, ROBYN GARRETT, 20s, a very pretty  
European woman are seated on the front pew.

The Priest, FATHER ROY HIGGINS, 50s, filled with the  
passion of his religion, stands at the podium.

Lange's coffin is on a raised platform behind the priest.

FATHER HIGGINS

I would now ask Lange's son, Gray  
to say a few words on behalf of  
the family. Gray.

Gray gets to his feet and walks stiffly to the podium.

Father Higgins places a comforting hand on Gray's shoulder.

FATHER HIGGINS

Just take your time.

Gray takes a moment to look at the faces of the mourners  
and collect his thoughts.

GRAY

Last night I tried to write a  
list of the fine attributes my  
father had, but there were so  
many I didn't know where to  
start.

(A beat)

(MORE)

GRAY (cont'd)

I tried to write a few of the moments that described him as the man he was, but the moments were endless.

(A beat)

So, I gave it up as impossible. I couldn't sum up his life on a page or two.

(A beat)

What I can tell you is how much it would have meant to him to know that his family and friends were here, because they were everything to him.

(A beat)

I can tell you that he'd want us to celebrate his life, not mourn his passing. "Crack a coldy and let's get the party started" you'd hear him say.

A few of the mourners smile at the memory invoked by those words.

GRAY

After mum died he raised me on his own. He once told me there was no one for him and he never seemed to mind it just being us.

Gray turns toward the coffin. Tears roll down his cheeks.

GRAY

Well, now he's where he wanted to be, by mum's side again.

He places a hand on the lid.

Gray

(Quietly)

I'll never forget you dad and you'll always have a place in my heart.

Father Higgins steps forward and takes Gray's hand in a warm grip.

FATHER HIGGINS

He'd have been proud of you.

GRAY

You think so, Father?

Gray returns to his seat and Robyn puts her arm around him.

Organ music fills the church as the curtains draw across the coffin.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - DAWN (DREAM SEQUENCE)

Gray is seated on the bank of the river, five feet from the mist shrouded water.

The sound of a BULL-ROARER gently begins to build.

[A Bull-roarer is a piece of carved wood attached to a long piece of hide and swung around above the head to create the sound of a roaring bull]

A series of bubbles break the surface. They move steadily toward Gray.

The tip of a SALT WATER CROCODILE'S SNOUT breaks the surface.

The rest of its eight meter body slowly rises from the murky depths.

Gray remains motionless, seemingly unaffected by the close proximity of this deadly man-eater.

The Crocodile hauls its massive bulk onto the bank until its snout is mere centimeters from Gray's face. Most of its body is still in the water.

The BULL-ROARER reaches a crescendo.

Gray and the Crocodile look into each others eyes and into the core of their souls.

INT. GRAY'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - MORNING

Two slices of toast noisily pop out of the toaster.

Robyn removes the toast, drops it onto a plate, and butters it.

A copy of TIME MAGAZINE is beside the toaster.

Gray slouches into the kitchen looking shattered.

ROBYN

Hey.

GRAY

Hey.

He pours himself a coffee and slumps into a chair.

ROBYN

Did you sleep?

GRAY

Off and on.

She places the toast and a bottle of Vegemite on the table in front of him.

ROBYN

Want to talk me about it?

GRAY

Not much to say.

ROBYN

Maybe it's some kind of race memory.

GRAY

Eh?

ROBYN

Collective race memories are passed down from generation to generation. I read that somewhere.

GRAY

Then mine were all lawyers and they passed down stress, by the bucket load.

Robyn grabs the TIME MAGAZINE from the counter and hands it to Gray.

ROBYN

Well, that's something might be able to take care of...

The cover story reads:

NORTHERN TERRITORY; THE LAST GREAT FRONTIER?

ROBYN

Page twelve.

Gray flips the pages until he reaches page twelve:

INSERT: TWO QANTAS AIRLINE TICKETS ARE TAPED TO THE PAGE.

GRAY

Darwin?

ROBYN

We leave on Friday night.

GRAY

Rob, I can't just drop everything. I've got a backlog of cases - It's nearly Christmas...

ROBYN

Your father has just died. The partners understand, in fact, they insisted. As of Today you're on vacation for a month.

GRAY

Rob...

ROBYN

We arrive in Darwin on Saturday morning, switch flights to Gove, and fly back straight after New Years eve.

He looks at her quizzically.

GRAY

Gove?

ROBYN

I did a little research. That and everything your dad told us points to this being the place your mother's tribe, the Yolngu, come from.

GRAY

So, it's not them fella's down at the pub then?

Robyn is not in the mood for levity.

ROBYN

We'll see out seventy-four in style and welcome in seventy-five under the stars.

(A beat)

Come on, Gray. This isn't just about you.

He knows that this hasn't been easy on her either and their relationship is under pressure.

GRAY

OK, you win. But I'm drawing the line at sampling the local foods. No grubs, lizard, or snake for this black fella' - deal?

ROBYN

Deal.

She turns him around in his chair, straddles his legs, and kisses him passionately.

ROBYN

What ever happened to your sense of adventure?

GRAY

Hell woman, I married you didn't I?

ROBYN

And it was the smartest move you ever made, so best you don't forget it, Mr. Garrett.

GRAY

You're the only bloody tribe I need, Missus.

He holds her tenderly and they kiss again.

EXT. DEPARTMENT OF METEOROLOGY - DAY

A small concrete building dwarfed by a massive radar-dish.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF METEOROLOGY - DAY

A METEOROLOGIST sits at his console and studies a radar screen.

INSERT: RADAR MONITOR - A MASS APPEARS TO THE WEST, NORTHWEST OF BATHURST ISLAND.

METEOROLOGIST

Mike, you might want to take a look at this.

A SECOND METEOROLOGIST wanders over and looks over his work-mates shoulder at the monitor.

METEOROLOGIST TWO

What's the next name on the list?

The first meteorologist takes a look at the check-sheet on his desk.

METEOROLOGIST

Tracey.

METEOROLOGIST TWO

Cyclone Tracey it is then. What's her current heading?

The first meteorologist checks the radar screen.

## METEOROLOGIST

South, southeast. Moving at four KPH. She's headed straight for Darwin.

## INT. ANSETT AIRCRAFT - DAY

Robyn has the window seat and Gray, dressed in a casual suit, is beside her on the isle.

A BOY, 10, looks curiously back at Gray from his seat. Gray grins disarmingly and the boy slowly smiles back.

Robyn excitedly grabs Gray by the arm.

## ROBYN

Look at this.

Gray breaks away from the smiling boy and leans over Robyn to look out of the window.

Far below lies the NABALCO PLANT-SITE, smoke pours out of towering stacks and row upon row of huge storage tanks dominate the landscape.

There are massive man made pools of waste sludge across from the plant and a road between that leads to the town of NHULUNBUY, twenty kilometers away.

## ROBYN

The Bauxite mined here is moved across land to container ships on the longest conveyor belt in the Southern Hemisphere.

## GRAY

Is that right?

## ROBYN

As a matter of fact, yes, it is. And all of its Aboriginal land, leased by the mining company.

Beyond the plant-site is the SHIP-LOADER, connected to the mine, fifteen kilometers away, by a long covered conveyor belt that cuts through the native bush.

## EXT. SHIP-LOADER - DAY

The conveyor belt runs along a long wharf known as a ship-loader.

A FOUR MAN CREW is hard at work at the end point where the Bauxite is deposited into the ships hold.

GREG HOPKINS, 40s, solidly built, intense demeanor, a rough goatee covers his jaw-line, close cropped hair, tightens a locking nut on a bearing assembly.

Three GREEK WORKERS watch him work while they puff away on a shared cigarette.

HOPKINS

You lazy Greeks do anything,  
other than smoke that stink-weed  
you call tobacco and scratch your  
fucking nuts all day?

The men look at him with little comprehension.

HOPKINS

Ass-holes.

Hopkins drops the spanner into his tool kit with a loud clang.

GREEK GUY

(Under his breath)  
Eh fungool pusti malaka.

Hopkins glares coldly at the man.

The roar of a low flying aircraft catches his attention.

He leans precariously over the railing to get a look. The ocean shimmers over a hundred and fifty feet below him.

The passenger plane passes overhead with the sun glinting off its fuselage.

Hopkins watches it drop into its approach run before returning to his tool kit.

He picks it up screwdriver, spins around and holds it threateningly against the mouthy Greek's throat.

HOPKINS

(Coldly)  
Fuckin' mouth off to me again and  
I'll drop your fat fuckin' ass  
over the side.

He pushes the Greek guy back into the railing and strides away with his toolbox in hand, leaving the men to mutter amongst themselves.

EXT. SCOUT HALL - DAY

A dozen topless young boys dressed in scout shorts and shoes, clean the outside of the hall with brooms and a fire hose.

TONY JOHANSON, 40s, heavy set, balding and pale, wearing a scout leaders uniform, leans against his Toyota four-wheel-drive.

The boy with the hose turns it on his fellow scouts. Water, brooms, and suds fly in all directions, as the boys try to soak each other.

Johanson's eyes move hungrily from one wet young body to the next and time seems to slow down.

The plane roars passed overhead and Johanson gives it a cursory glance, before returning his gaze to the boys.

EXT. PIPE STORAGE YARD - DAY

The plane is partially blocked from view by a grimy raised finger.

SCOTTY

Boom Crash'n'burn ya fuckers.

BRETT SCOTT, 20s, skinny, flaming red hair, is on his back with a sandwich in one hand and his middle finger extended toward the plane.

GREG WILKS, 20s, long lean, shaggy hair, slides a heavy pipe from a rack, staggers over to a flat-bed truck, and heaves it on to the tray.

WILKS

Feel free to give'us a hand anytime.

Scotty looks from his half eaten sandwich to Wilks.

SCOTTY

I'm on me fuckin' lunch break.

Wilks shakes his head in resignation, wanders back to the rack, and slides out another pipe.

EXT. GOVE AIRPORT - DAY

The runway cuts through the center of a red dust-bowl made up of massive Bauxite deposits in the soil.

The Ansett propeller powered passenger plane is on its final approach.

The landing gear lowers.

The plane touches down and then taxis to the concourse.

The terminal building is nothing more than a large demountable structure made of steel supports and aluminum siding.

A large sign announces:

'WELCOME TO NHULUNBUY, NORTHERN TERRITORY'

The passengers disembark, with Gray and Robyn coming out near the front of the queue.

INT. HIRE CAR - DAY

Robyn drives the FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE, while Gray gazes out of the window at the passing scenery. He flicks the air-conditioning up to high.

GRAY

Jesus it's hot. You could fry an egg on the bonnet.

A World War 2 BOMBER, fenced in, with a memorial plaque fixed to a slab of Granite flashes past.

GRAY

You think somebody missed the runway?

ROBYN

It's a memorial. There were secret airfields all over this area during the Second World War. Gove Peninsular was actually named after William Gove, a RAAF navigator killed in a midair collision.

Gray turns to her, impressed.

GRAY

Did you wake up this morning and eat the encyclopedia Britannica?

ROBYN

(Laughs)

Yeah, something like that.

She pulls a TOURIST INFORMATION BROCHURE from the door pocket and hands it to him.

EXT. HIRE CAR - CONTINUOUS

The hire car cruises past a sign that reads:

'NHULUNBUY TOWN CENTER 18 KILOMETERS'

EXT. WALKABOUT HOTEL - DAY

The hire car pulls up at the front doors of the reception area.

Robyn goes inside, while Gray gets the bags from the boot.

A group of young Aboriginal girls meander past, giggling and chirping away in their own tongue.

One of them, RUBY, 20s, a pretty young Yolngu girl, catches Gray's eye and smiles at him. It's a moment where they seem to recognise each other, but it quickly passes and the girls move on.

INT. WALKABOUT HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

Robyn is at the reception desk with the FEMALE RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST

Garrett. Gray and Robyn. Here we are. It's just the two of you then?

ROBYN

Sure is.

The receptionist removes a room key from the board behind her.

RECEPTIONIST

I'll bet this is a welcome change from Melbourne weather.

Robyn signs the guest-book and accepts the key handed to her.

ROBYN

It's definitely a big change.

RECEPTIONIST

Don't worry, you get used to it.

Gray enters with a suitcase in each hand, staggering under the weight.

GRAY

Please tell me we're on the bottom floor.

(To the receptionist)

G'day.

The receptionist is momentarily taken aback.

ROBYN

This is my husband, Gray.

GRAY

And part-time pack-mule. Hi. Is it always this hot here?

The receptionist quickly regains her composure and smiles warmly.

RECEPTIONIST

It's the humidity that gets you during the wet season.

(A beat)

We'd better get you folks to your room and turn on the aircon.

GRAY

Air-conditioning. Miss, Lead on.

RECEPTIONIST

Just follow me, please.

The receptionist leads them out to the accommodation wing.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The door opens and the receptionist enters with Robyn and Gray following closely.

RECEPTIONIST

Here we are.

Gray puts the bags down beside the bed and shakes out his aching arms.

RECEPTIONIST

The restaurant is upstairs above reception. It's open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The pool is just outside in the courtyard. Anything else you need, just call reception. Enjoy your stay with us.

ROBYN

Thank you.

GRAY

Thank you.

RECEPTIONIST

You're welcome.

The receptionist turns and quickly exits, closing the door behind her.

Gray dives across the bed and flicks the switch on the air-conditioner. It immediately hums into life.

GRAY

I'm not moving further than the bathroom, unless it's to another air-conditioned room or the pool.

ROBYN

(Grinning)

Harden up, mister! You're in the Territory now.

GRAY

Where the men are men and the Water-Buffalo are nervous.

She picks up a pillow and throws it at him. He catches it and hurls it back at her.

She leaps on him giggling and pins him down.

ROBYN

I didn't know you were so funny.

He flips her over and pins her, turning the tables.

GRAY

Comedy is only one of my many talents.

ROBYN

Pray do tell, Sir.

He slowly undoes the buttons of her top.

GRAY

Sir? I could get used to that.

ROBYN

I'll just bet you could.

GRAY

Come'ere.

They kiss passionately, then strip each other naked, and make love on the bedspread with air-conditioner blowing across them.

INT. HOPKINS HOUSE (BEDROOM) - EVENING

Hopkins stands at the bedroom door and looks into the empty childrens' bedroom.

The closet doors are open and bare coat-hangers dangle from the rail.

LITTLE GIRL (V.O.)

(An excited whisper)

Daddy's home! Daddy's home!

Hopkins smiles sadly at the sound of the phantom voice in his head.

INT. HOPKINS HOUSE (LOUNGE-ROOM) - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Hopkins carefully places a large cardboard box on the dining-table.

His TWO YOUNG DAUGHTERS watch with burning curiosity.

His wife watches from the kitchen.

LITTLE GIRL  
What is it daddy? What is it?

Hopkins tears open the box and lifts out a new TELEVISION with a flourish.

HOPKINS  
Ta da!!

He places the TV on the table in front of the girls.

GIRLS  
A TV?

HOPKINS  
Yeah, but not just any TV. It's a magic TV.

GIRLS  
Magic?

HOPKINS  
Sure is.

He plugs the TV in and presses the power switch.

The tube flickers into life and SESAME STREET appears on screen in colour. BIG BIRD is the focus of attention.

LITTLE GIRL	OLDER SISTER
(Wide-eyed and stunned)	(Wide-eyed and stunned)
Big Bird's yellow.	Big Bird's yellow.

Hopkins grins past the girls to his wife, but she isn't buying into it. She looks back at him with cold disinterest.

HOPKINS  
Come on...

An African American present appears on the TV screen and the youngest sister giggles.

WIFE  
What's so funny baby?

LITTLE GIRL  
Niggers are the same in colour  
momma.

SHARON  
Your room - Now!

The youngest looks confused "Did I do something wrong?"

SHARON  
Now!

The youngest bursts into tears and hurries to her room and the eldest follows.

HOPKINS  
We started punishing the kids for  
telling the truth now?

Sharon glares at Hopkins.

WIFE  
I'm taking the girls home.

HOPKINS  
We are home.

WIFE  
Back to the States.

HOPKINS  
So the jungle bunnies can burn us  
out again - Is that what you  
wanna go back to, huh?

WIFE  
That was nine years ago. This  
place. The drinking. You. I can't  
take it anymore.

HOPKINS  
Weak as fucking piss.

He grabs the TV and hurls it into the wall. Big Bird fills the screen, until the plug is ripped from the socket.

WIFE  
Please, Greg...

Hopkins is in a rage as he advances on Sharon.

HOPKINS  
Fuck that shit! We're never going  
back! You're not taking my kids.  
I'll fucking kill you first.

He grabs her by the throat and slams her against the wall.

HOPKINS  
Nobodies driving me out again!  
You fucking hear me? Nobody!

He drops her, strides into the kitchen, rips open the fridge door, grabs a beer, and chugs it down as he exits the house.

HOPKINS  
Cunt.

Sharon slides down the wall sobbing to the sound of Hopkins car roaring down the road.

EXT. HOPKINS HOUSE - MORNING

A taxi and a Police car escort pull away with Hopkins little girls looking back at him through the rear-window.

Hopkins is visibly cold, his expression unreadable.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - MORNING (DREAM SEQUENCE)

The sound of a BULL-ROARER fills the air.

Gray stands on the bank of the river and watches the sun glisten off the surface of the water.

He strides in up to his knees and dives underwater.

The sound of the bull-roarer builds.

Gray swims to the bottom and hovers there neutrally buoyant.

The Bull-roarer rises to a crescendo.

Out of the murky depths appears the BULL CROCODILE. It swims past Gray, close enough for him to touch.

He fearlessly trails his hand along its scaly hide.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Gray's eyes snap open. He sits up in bed. The room is in darkness.

Robyn is fast asleep beside him.

He looks at her peaceful face and smiles, then picks up his watch from the bedside table and checks the time.

INSERT: THE WATCH READS 10.00 P.M.

Gray gets out of bed, quietly dresses in a pair of jeans, polo-shirt, and a pair of loafers, before he slips out of the room.

EXT. WALKABOUT HOTEL - NIGHT

The dull sound of many voices and rock music come from the front bar.

Gray exits the reception area and crosses to the rear entrance of the main bar.

INT. MAIN BAR - NIGHT

The jukebox pops out a load rock number.

The cigarette smoke filled bar is packed with drunken miners and contractors. Most of them are dressed in their work clothes, a mix of khaki shirts, long pants and khaki shorts and blue singlet. All are dirt and grease stained.

A POOL TABLE takes up the back quarter of the room. The side of the table is lined with coins from the challengers.

A dozen men watch two other miners play pool.

There are four high number balls and the black left on the table.

Hopkins lines up the black ball.

Johanson is directly behind Hopkins. He watches the game over his shoulder.

JOHANSON

Easy shot, mate. It's all yours.

Hopkins deliberately and forcefully drives the cue back, catching Johanson solidly on the hip-bone.

HOPKINS

(Quietly)

Ass-hole.

Johanson slips back behind the other onlookers to cover his embarrassment and the fact that the strike hurt like a bastard.

Hopkins lines up the shot again.

SCOTTY

Come on, mate. Take yer bloody shot already.

Scotty maneuvers into Hopkins line of sight in an effort to put him off his shot.

HOPKINS

It's all over bar the shouting.

SCOTTY

You won't sink this mate. There's no fuckin' hair around the hole.

HOPKINS

Hole's...

Hopkins drives the cue smoothly across the bridge of his hand.

HOPKINS

...A hole.

The white slams into the black ball spearing it into the top right corner pocket.

SCOTTY

Fuck it!

HOPKINS

Schooner of Carlton.  
(To the waiting men)  
Next?

The door opens and Gray enters. He heads straight to the bar, oblivious to the stares of every patron in the place.

The constant drone of voices dies out and only the music from the jukebox remains.

Scotty grabs Hopkins by the arm and turns him toward Gray.

SCOTTY

Check this cunt out.

Gray reaches the bar and waits for the BARMAN to come over and serve him. He looks at the miners leaning against the bar looking at him.

GRAY

G'day.

Nobody responds. Their faces remain impassive and unreadable.

GRAY

(To the barman)  
Any chance of getting a cold beer?

The barman doesn't move an inch.

GRAY  
Before Christmas.

The barman leans across the bar, until he's face to face with Gray.

BARMAN  
(Quietly)  
None. And if you'll take my advice you'll turn around and leave, before...(there's any trouble)

The jukeboxes power cord is pulled from the wall and the music dies instantly.

HOPKINS (O.S.)  
Hey Scotty. Why do they call Abos' bungs?

Gray turns and finds himself facing Hopkins and Scotty.

SCOTTY  
Donno mate. What do they call Abos' bungs?

HOPKINS  
Cause it's the sound they make when they bounce off your fuckin' Roo-bar.

The crowd laughs, but there is no warmth in it.

GRAY  
Look I've just came in for a quick beer. I'm not looking for any trouble.

HOPKINS  
Well, listen to this - Where are you from, Jackie-Jackie?

GRAY  
Melbourne.

HOPKINS  
What, the Victorian government don't think we've got enough Coons of our own, they're exporting theirs up here now?

GRAY  
Like I said, I'm not looking for any trouble. I'll just get my beer and leave.

Hopkins takes a slow menacing step closer to Gray.

HOPKINS

What's the rush? We not good enough to drink with?

BARMAN

I don't want any of your shit tonight, Hopkins!

HOPKINS

(To the barman)

Mind your own fucking business, Bazz. We're just - chatting.

(To Gray)

You one of those educated blacks, Jackie-Jackie?

The barman reaches beneath the counter and hastily rummages around.

GRAY

If you mean, can I read and write, yeah. How about you?

A wolfish smile pushes up the corners of Hopkins mouth.

HOPKINS

If I didn't know better, I'd think you were mouthing off to me. Is that what you're doing, Jackie-Jackie?

GRAY

Look, all I'm trying to do is get a beer, mate.

Hopkins goes from Zero to rage in an instant.

HOPKINS

I AM NOT YOUR FUCKING MATE, YOU BLACK CUNT!

He swings a vicious punch at Gray's head and Gray just manages to avoid it.

Gray raises his fists to defend himself. He is aware that the whole pack could turn on him in a flash.

BARMAN

THAT'S ENOUGH!

A battle scarred CRICKET BAT under Hopkins chin stops the second punch from launching.

Hopkins tries to swat it aside, but the barman is ready for him and avoids the move.

BARMAN

Try it! I'll knock you for six!

Hopkins glares angrily at the barman, but does as he is told.

HOPKINS  
When did you turn Coon lover?

The barman jams the cricket bat harder under Hopkins chin.

BARMAN  
I oughta take your bloody stupid  
head off.  
(Quietly)  
Not in here - Got it?

Hopkins keeps his mouth shut and his eyes glued malevolently on Gray.

BARMAN  
(To Gray)  
You still want that beer? Go to  
the garden bar.

HOPKINS  
Out back with the rest of the  
fucking tribe!

BARMAN  
Hopkins!

GRAY  
Thanks for the hospitality. No,  
don't worry...

Gray slowly backs out of the bar.

GRAY  
...I'll see myself out.

A BIG MINER makes a point of bumping him on the way to the exit.

BIG MINER  
Problem?

Every eye in the place follows him until he leaves.

BARMAN  
The rest of you bastards can  
settle down or I'll close the bar  
- I fuckin' mean it!

The men break up and go back to their drinks. The drone of a dozen conversations starts again.

The Jukebox starts playing again.

Wilks strolls out of the toilet doing up his fly and oblivious to the events that have taken place.

The barman takes the cricket bat out of Hopkins face.

BARMAN

Am I gonna get anymore grief out  
of you tonight?

Hopkins spits on the floor.

BARMAN

You just don't know when to stop,  
Hopkins.

The barman shakes his head and returns to the bar.

HOPKINS

(To the barman's back)  
Prick!

Wilks wanders over to Hopkins and Scotty.

WILKS

What'd I miss?

SCOTTY

(Looking at Wilks shoes)  
The trough. You've pissed on ya  
fuckin' shoes.

Wilks takes the bait and looks at his feet. They're dry.

SCOTTY

(Laughing)  
Dumb bastard!

Hopkins stares out of the window at the darkness beyond.  
His eyes are filled with intense hatred.

SCOTTY

You gonna let that black cunt get  
away with that?

Wilks looks at Hopkins and shudders. He's seen this look  
before and it makes him uneasy.

INT. BLACK BAR - NIGHT

The back bar is badly lit and dotted with ant-eaten wooden  
garden furniture.

Drunken, full-blood, Aboriginal men and women sit on the  
floor, bench seats, anywhere they can. All of them drink  
Victoria Bitter straight from the can.

The bar is nothing more than besser-block box with a window  
and a metal roller-door.

A weary, battle tested BARMAID, 30s, serves with all the enthusiasm of a wet dishcloth.

Gray stops in the entrance and looks around at the lolling patrons.

An OLD MAN, long grey hair and beard, scarred chest, throws up on his own legs. He seems not to notice, nor does anyone else.

Gray carefully negotiates his way through the mass of bodies to the bar.

BARMAID

What'cha want?

GRAY

A cold beer would be a good start.

The barmaid pauses, not sure if she heard correctly.

BARMAID

Eh?

GRAY

It's been a bloody long night.  
All I want is a beer, so  
please...

A few feet away, an ABORIGINAL WOMEN watches through bleary drunken eyes.

ABORIGINAL WOMAN

(Got a cigarette?)

Ga' ngarali?

The barmaid pulls a can of VB out of the fridge, but holds her hand out for the money first.

BARMAID

That's two-fifty.

Gray hands her the money and she gives him the can.

GRAY

A glass?

ABORIGINAL WOMAN

(Got money?)

Ga' rrupiyah?

The barmaid looks at Gray like he's just grown a second head.

BARMAID

No glasses in the coon - garden bar. It's the rules, a can or nothing.

GRAY

As long as it's cold I don't care.

The Aboriginal woman staggers over to the bar and stands, unsteadily, beside Gray.

ABORIGINAL WOMAN

(Got a cigarette?)

Ga' ngarali?

GRAY

I'm sorry; I don't understand...(you)

She pauses and looks into his eyes, then reaches out and rubs the skin on his arm.

ABORIGINAL WOMAN

There a white fella' under there?  
Come out white fella'. Go marrtjina.

Gray steps away from her disgusted by her appearance and nauseated by her smell.

GRAY

Here.

He pulls out a ten dollar note and tosses it at her. It bounces off her chest and falls to the ground.

GRAY

Just take it and leave me alone.

The woman tries to focus on him. Her face turns into a scowl and she points a gnarly, weaving, finger at his face.

ABORIGINAL WOMAN

Not black fella. Not white fella'  
Know what you are? You a nowhere man.

Gray backs away and leaves the beer untouched on the bar.

Every drunken eye in the place turns to him and he feels on the outside for the second time tonight.

ABORIGINAL WOMAN

NOWHERE MAN!

Gray turns and hurries out of the bar.

BARMAID  
What about your beer?

Gray disappears from sight.

BARMAID  
Jesus...

The barmaid reaches for the beer to bin it.

ABORIGINAL WOMAN  
(No! Give it here!)  
YAKA! GA'!

The Aboriginal woman turns and snatches the can with a speed that belies her drunken state.

She skulls half the can in one go, before picking up the money from the floor and disappearing into the throng of bodies.

ABORIGINAL WOMAN  
(Mumbling to herself)  
Nowhere man.

The barmaid goes back to her previously bored state and reads the Gove Gazette.

EXT. WALKABOUT HOTEL (BOTTLE SHOP) - NIGHT

Gray hurries around the corner, almost breaking into a run to get past the front of the bar and around the corner that leads to the hotel reception.

The night is pierced by vehicle spot-lights...

Gray is caught in the glare...

The roar of an engine echoes across the car park...

Tires squeal and the lights leap forward...

Gray dives out of the way at the last possible moment, landing hard...

A short-wheel-base Toyota Land Cruiser, kitted out with a roll-bar and spot-lights roars past.

SCOTTY  
GET OFF THE FUCKIN' ROAD, BUNG!

Gray catches a glimpse of Scotty in the passenger seat and Hopkins at the wheel, before the vehicle reaches the street and disappears around a corner.

SCOTTY  
(Laughing)  
BUNG! BUNG! BUNG!

Gray gets to his feet and limps painfully toward the reception area.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Gray quietly enters the room and goes straight to the bathroom. He closes the door and a moment later a slither of light appears.

Robyn wakes, slips out of bed, and opens the bathroom door.

She finds Gray washing gravel from some nasty looking abrasions on his arms.

GRAY  
I didn't mean to wake you.

ROBYN  
What happened?

She goes to him and takes over cleaning the injuries.

GRAY  
It turns out that I'm a one pot screamer.  
(Feeling the sting)  
Ow!

She sits back and waits for the truth.

GRAY  
They don't seem to like my kind in their bar.

ROBYN  
You're not serious?

GRAY  
Does this look like I'm joking?

ROBYN  
We have to go to the police.

GRAY  
No police. I just want to forget it happened.

ROBYN  
Gray...?

GRAY  
What will it achieve? Let it go.

Robyn finishes cleaning him up and hands him a towel. He carefully pats dry the abrasions.

ROBYN

You'll need antiseptic on those  
or they'll get infected. I'll  
pick some up in the morning.

She takes his hand and leads him back to bed, switching off the bathroom light on the way.

Gray crawls between the sheets and flops his head onto the pillow, facing away from Robyn.

GRAY

There was an old Aboriginal  
woman. She called me a nowhere  
man. Not white. Not black...  
(Drifting to sleep)  
A nowhere man...

She looks at him for a moment longer, before turning out the light, and gently hugging him.

EXT. CONTRACTORS VILLAGE - NIGHT

Hopkins slides the four-wheel-drive around the corner of the dirt road and almost loses control.

HOPKINS

YEAHAAAA!!

He fish-tails it up the road and then swings into an overgrown driveway.

SCOTTY

LOOK OUT!

Hopkins hits the breaks and pulls up just shy of the demountable building that serves as the standard contractor accommodation.

SCOTTY

You're fuckin' crazy, mate!

HOPKINS

Damn straight.

SCOTTY

Next time I'm drivin'

HOPKINS

You couldn't drive a greasy stick  
up a dead Dingo's ass.

Hopkins spills out of the drivers seat and flops into a well-worn deckchair.

Scotty remains in the passenger seat. He grabs a carton of Victoria Bitter from the back and removes two cans.

HOPKINS

Did you see the look on that  
black bastards face?

Scotty tosses one to Hopkins and then cracks the tab on his own.

SCOTTY

Like a fuckin' Rabbit frozen in  
the high-beam.

Hopkins opens his beer and guzzles most of it in one go.

HOPKINS

We were working out at the  
caustic farm last week. Dug a  
waste pit, big as a fucking  
football field. Took us a couple  
of days with a full crew. Cleared  
the lot, all except for this one  
boulder, big bastard too. We were  
gonna have to blast, so we  
figured it'd be best left till  
last.

SCOTTY

Makes sense.

Scotty takes a long chug of his beer.

HOPKINS

Course it fucking makes sense.

Hopkins takes another long pull of his beer, tosses it aside and holds his hand out for another.

HOPKINS

Live one.

Scotty tosses him a replacement and Hopkins cracks it, catching the spray again.

HOPKINS

We were just working out the best  
places to drill for the charges  
when the site boss drives up with  
an Abo tribal elder. Turns out  
the boulder's fucking sacred and  
we can't touch the bastard.

SCOTTY

Sacred my fuckin' arse.

Scotty finishes his beer and stretches out in the seat.

HOPKINS

Day after fucking day, we break  
our backs turning this shit-hole  
into something.

SCOTTY

Too right.

Hopkins skulls the rest of his beer and stares, bleary  
eyed, at Scotty

HOPKINS

The Coons call themselves the  
children of the land. They're the  
fucking defilers of the land, if  
you ask me. They use it as a  
bargaining chip to suck more and  
more money into their own grubby  
pockets, then they just piss it  
up against the fuckin' wall.

Hopkins crushes his can and hurls it into the darkness.

EXT. EAST WOODY BEACH - DAY

The golden sandy beach stretches for as far as the eye can  
see and the crystal clear blue waters gently wash over it.

It is low tide and the sandbar across to East Woody Island  
is above water.

Gray and Robyn stroll hand in hand across the sandbar.

EXT. EAST WOODY ISLAND - DAY

Gray and Robyn jump across the rocks until they reach the  
ocean side of the Island.

An ABORIGINAL TRIBESMAN, 20s, tall, strong and proud, spear-  
fishes off the rocks.

Gray and Robyn stop and quietly watch him, hand in hand.

The Tribesman is statue-like with his spear held ready to  
let fly.

A movement in the water catches his eye.

He drives the spear into the water and then hauls it back  
with a good sized Trevally impaled through the gills.

An ABORIGINAL GIRL, 15, hurries over and takes the catch  
from him, then hurries back to the shade of a large tree.

Gray and Robyn watch her wrap the fish in palm leafs and  
add it to a pile of ten or more caught earlier.

The rest of the Tribe, twenty in all, sit in the shade and chat quietly to each other in their melodic native tongue.

They look up and catch Gray and Robyn watching them.

One of the older women smiles and waves to them.

Robyn and Gray wave back, feeling a little like voyeurs.

The older woman turns to the teenager and quietly speaks to her.

The teenage girl picks up the freshest fish and hurries across the rocks to them.

ROBYN

Hi.

GIRL

(Take it)

Ngay'

She shyly thrusts the fish into Robyn's hands and quickly scampers back across the rocks to the others.

ROBYN

(To the teenager)

Thank you.

(To the older woman)

Thank you.

The old woman gives her an off handed wave, as if to say "It's nothing" and goes back to chatting with the others.

INT. WALKABOUT HOTEL (RESTAURANT) - NIGHT

A WAITRESS, 20s, carefully pushes through the kitchen doors and maneuvers through the tables with the steaming Trevally on a large serving platter.

A WOMAN, 50s, and her HUSBAND, 50s, stare past her as she reaches the table where Gray and Robyn are seated.

She places the platter on the table between them.

There is already a half bottle of WHITE WINE and two half-full glasses on the table.

ROBYN

Thank you very much. And could you please thank the chef for us?

WAITRESS

Sure will. Enjoy your meal.

The waitress hurries back to the kitchen to fetch the next order.

The older couple looks their way again and it is quite blatant.

Robyn visibly bristles.

GRAY  
Let it go, Rob.

Robyn swallows her anger with difficulty.

GRAY  
What's the name of this place  
we're going to?

ROBYN  
The Goyder River.

GRAY  
And the Barramundi; they're as  
big as you say they are?

ROBYN  
Big as VWs.

GRAY  
Is that the Beetle or the Kombi?

This gets a smile out of Robyn.

GRAY  
To us.

Gray picks up his glass and holds it up for a toast.

GRAY  
We got off to a rocky start, but  
I think we're back on track.

Robyn raises her glass and clinks it against his.

ROBYN  
This is going to be an experience  
we'll never forget.

They take a sip of the wine, while looking into each others eyes over the rim of their glasses.

ROBYN  
Kombis.

Gray burst out laughing and almost chokes on his wine.

EXT. TOWN CENTER - NIGHT

The town clock is a four meter grey raised aggregate concrete monolith.

INSERT: CLOCK FACE. THE TIME IS ONE-FIFTEEN A.M.

The town center is completely deserted and deathly silent.

FOUR ABORIGINAL GIRLS, 20s, wander quietly past the clock, and along the path beside the Post Office.

A vehicle turns into the street and cruises up to the girls.

It's Hopkins four-wheel-drive. He pulls up beside the girls, leans out of the window, and does a quick scan of the area to make sure no one else is around.

One of the girls, RUBY, 20s, wearing a dirty summer frock and nothing else, slinks over and leans against the drivers side door.

RUBY

Hey Hopkins, you out late.

HOPKINS

Too hot to sleep Ruby. God damn air-con's on the blink again.

RUBY

You got anything to drink?

HOPKINS

Might do. You wanna send your sisters home and we can go get one.

Ruby looks back toward her friends, then leans in closer to Hopkins and whispers in his ear.

RUBY

You make it a whole carton this time I fuck you good, better than last time.

HOPKINS

Fair enough. Might even toss in a pack of smokes, if you do.

Ruby hurries back to the other girls and quickly chatters to them in her native tongue. They hug and then head off down the street.

Ruby hurries around to the passenger side and climbs in.

HOPKINS

Keep your head down and stay out of sight until we get to my place.

RUBY

Sure.

Ruby leans over, unzips Hopkins, and gives him a blow-job.

Hopkins drives away and passes the three giggling girls as he takes the corner and disappears from view.

INT. HOPKINS HOUSE (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Hopkins hammers away at Ruby. She moans loudly and pushes up to meet his urgent thrusts.

He cums loudly and drives harder, pushing Ruby uncomfortably against the wall.

Hopkins rolls off her, pulls the sheets around his waist, and climbs from the bed.

HOPKINS

Cartons on the table.

Ruby gets to her knees, shuffles across the bed, and reaches out for his softening penis.

RUBY

Don't have to go now, if...

Hopkins angrily slaps her hand aside and glares at her.

HOPKINS

Don't let the door hit you on the ass on the way out.

Ruby, pouting, slides off the bed and quickly pulls her frock over her head.

INT. HOPKINS HOUSE (LOUNGE-ROOM) - MOMENTS LATER

The light comes from the street-light outside.

Hopkins watches Ruby from the bedroom door.

She picks up the carton and searches the table for the packet of smokes promised to her.

HOPKINS

I said, if you were good.

RUBY

I fuck you real good. You cum bloody hard.

HOPKINS

I've had better wanks. Now take the piss, before I change my mind.

Ruby protectively slings the carton under her arm.

RUBY

You take me back to town?

HOPKINS

Yeah, I could do that - It'll cost you that carton though.

Ruby looks at him and wonders how anybody could be such a complete bastard.

She slouches over to the door and opens it a crack, before looking back at him over her shoulder.

RUBY

(Quietly with venom)  
Fuck you, Hopkins. Bloody white bastard.

She hurries out and slams the door behind her.

HOPKINS

(To himself)  
Yeah, fuck you Hopkins.

Hopkins pauses in the doorway for a moment. Rage hits him in an instant. He punches a hole in the door.

INT. HOPKINS HOUSE (BATHROOM) - LATER

Hopkins is in the shower. The water is very hot. Steam fills the bathroom.

Hopkins soaps and scrubs himself raw, paying particular attention to his genitals.

Blood flows from a series of minor cuts across the knuckles of his right hand. It mingles with the water and swirls down the drain.

EXT. WALKABOUT HOTEL (RECEPTION) - MORNING

Gray drives the four-wheel-drive up to the doors where Robyn and the receptionist are waiting.

RECEPTIONIST

Where are you two off to?

ROBYN

The Goyder River.

RECEPTIONIST

You be careful out there. It's a long way back to town if anything goes wrong.

GRAY

(Through the window)  
The Leyland brothers could learn  
a thing or two from us. Come on  
Mike!

ROBYN

(To the receptionist)  
You'll have to forgive him, he's  
an idjit.

The receptionist laughs at their playfulness.

GRAY

An idjit maybe, but deaf I'm not.

Robyn climbs into the vehicle and the receptionist speaks  
to them through the passenger side window.

RECEPTIONIST

Listen, I heard about the  
incident in the bar the other  
night. I just want you to know,  
well, we're not all like that up  
here.

GRAY

I know. Thank you.

The receptionist leans through the window and turns on the  
CB RADIO, mounted below the dash.

RECEPTIONIST

Keep your CB on twenty-four by  
seven. You never know...

ROBYN

Will do. See you in a couple of  
days.

RECEPTIONIST

Oh hey - Merry Christmas.

GRAY

Yeah, Merry Christmas to you too.

The receptionist waves them off and watches as they drive  
away.

The barman staggers out of the rear entrance of the main  
bar with a garbage bags in each hand.

Gray and Robyn pull into the PETROL STATION fifty meters  
away.

The receptionist looks at the barman with contempt.

BARMAN  
 (Self-consciously)  
 I have to live here.

He tosses the bags into a large wire skip and slouches back into the bar.

The receptionist goes back into the reception area.

EXT. PETROL STATION - MORNING

Gray fills up the tank and then the four Jerricans sitting by the rear-quarter-panel. His view of the petrol station office is blocked by the vehicle and vice-versa.

ROBYN  
 Do you want anything?

GRAY  
 I'm good.

Robyn wanders into the office to pay for the fuel.

INT. PETROL STATION - CONTINUOUS

Robyn enters the office and stands behind a customer paying the ATTENDANT for his fuel.

A SECOND CUSTOMER, wearing a baseball-cap, has his back to her, as he searches through a rack loaded with fan-belts and radiator-hoses.

There is a dusty old AWA RADIO mounted on a shelf in the corner.

RADIO  
 It's the twenty-fourth of  
 December and the time is seven-  
 forty-five in the AM. Tropical  
 cyclone Tracey is currently  
 situated two-hundred and ten  
 kilometers west, north, west of  
 Darwin and moving south at four  
 kilometers per hour. The center  
 is expected to be...

The attendant reaches up and changes the channel to a classical music station - The only other station.

CUSTOMER  
 Think we'll get any of that?

ATTENDANT  
 Nah, reckon she'll slide right  
 past, same as Selma.

CUSTOMER  
(Pocketing his change)  
You're probably right. Later.

The customer exits and Robyn steps up to the counter to be served.

ROBYN  
We're heading out to the Goyder  
River today. Are you sure it's  
going to miss us?

ATTENDANT  
Sure I'm sure. Even if she does  
hit, Darwin's a long way from  
here. I reckon the most we'd get  
would be a bit of a blow job.

He winks salaciously at her and grins.

ROBYN  
(Sarcastically)  
There's a first time for  
everything I suppose. How much do  
I owe you?

The smile slides from the attendant's face.

ATTENDANT  
That'll be thirty-two bucks.

Robyn pays him, takes her change, and leaves.

The second customer follows her out with his eyes,  
partially covered by the peak of his cap and locked onto  
her arse - It's SCOTTY.

He watches Robyn stop at the four-wheel-drive. She loads  
one of the Jerricans into the back.

Gray steps out from behind the vehicle with a Jerrican in  
each hand and passes one to her.

SCOTTY  
(Quietly to himself)  
You've gotta be shittin' me.

He turns back to the rack to conceal his face from Gray and  
grins.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (START) - DAY

Gray and Robyn turn into the track marked with a weather  
ravaged sign: GOYDER RIVER TRACK.

A moment later, the four-wheel-drive disappears from sight  
amongst the dense bush.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK - LATER

The four-wheel-drive maneuvers through a dry river bed and narrowly missing a pack of WILD PIGS, as they burst out from the underbrush.

Gray stops the vehicle and Robyn leans out of the window to click off a few shots with her camera.

There is a LARGE CRATER filled with churned up mud where the pigs have been wallowing.

A BIG BOAR with six inch tusks stands its ground while the rest of the pack escapes into the surrounding scrub.

GRAY

Jesus! It's Porky Pig on steroids.

The Boar insolently stares at them before it turns and trots after the pack.

GRAY

Bags I sleep in the truck - You get the tent.

ROBYN

(Grinning)  
Coward.

They drive on.

EXT. PLANT SITE (KILNS) - DAY

Hopkins has a smoke on the catwalk above the kilns. Behind him is a sign warning that smoking is HIGHLY RESTRICTED.

Below; The SHIFT SUPERVISOR leads Scotty into the area.

The Supervisor glances around, spots Hopkins up on the catwalk, and points him out.

Hopkins takes a long drag on the cigarette and then flicks it out into space toward the two men.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK - LATER

Gray brings the vehicle to a standstill and Robyn quickly jumps out with her camera in hand.

In the distance: A big male WATER-BUFFALO lumbers along, oblivious to their presence.

Robyn clicks off a couple of shots.

ROBYN

Look at it. It's amazing.

Gray joins her, but hangs back out of her light.

GRAY

Yeah, imagine the size of the steaks.

She turns to him with a look of mock horror.

ROBYN

You wouldn't?

Gray hurries back to the vehicle and pretends to hunt through the interior.

GRAY

God-damn-it! Where's ma gun, woman.

The Water-Buffalo looks in their direction and pauses for a moment, then gallops away to the cover of the trees.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - AFTERNOON

Gray hammers in the last of the tent pegs and steps back to survey his handy-work.

Robyn staggers out of the bush with a load of firewood stacked up to her chin and dumps it in the clearing.

GRAY

Fire. Food. Shelter. I am a hunter/gather. I AM MAN!!

ROBYN

Come on, Tarzan. We need a lot more firewood than this.

She turns and heads back into the surrounding bush.

GRAY

But honey, I put up the tent.

He follows her, grinning.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (WET PLAIN) - EVENING

The most amazing sunset colours the sky a vivid red and casts a warm glow over the wet-plains.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - NIGHT

Gray and Robyn sit with their backs against a log in front of a roaring fire.

Gray stares into the dancing flames, mesmerized. He is struck by a sudden, albeit, amusing thought.

ROBYN

What?

GRAY

I reckon we should have gone in search of my roots in Mauritius.

ROBYN

I'm missing something.

GRAY

An Island two thousand Ks of the South-Eastern coast of Africa.

ROBYN

I know where it is, but why would we be going there?

GRAY

If you ask any kid from my era at St Kilda primary where I come from they'll tell you Mauritius.

Robyn puts an arm over his shoulder and snuggles in close.

ROBYN

It's not the colour of your skin that defines you as a person.

GRAY

That's a nice fairy story, but the realities a bit different.

ROBYN

Children can be cruel, but they can be quick to accept too. Maybe you just didn't give them a chance.

GRAY

Maybe.

Gray turns his attention to the flickering flames.

GRAY

I don't know if I can go back to the firm.

ROBYN

I was wondering when you'd get around to that.

GRAY

It's just seems that everything I've ever done was to please somebody else. I knew dad wanted me to follow in his footsteps, so I did. Don't get me wrong, I mean, I love the law...

(A beat)

I just don't know where I'm headed.

ROBYN

So, is there an answer?

GRAY

I wish I knew.

She rests her hand on his leg and they sit huddled together, watching the flames rise into the air.

ROBYN

Well, that's OK. I'll be here when you work it out.

INT. WALKABOUT HOTEL (RECEPTION) - MORNING

The receptionist watches the news on a small TV with a worried look on her face.

ANCHORMAN

At six a.m. CST Tropical Cyclone Tracey was centered west, northwest of Darwin and moving south at four KPH. The center is expected to be one-hundred-kilometers west of Darwin at six p.m today.

She picks up the phone and calls the local police.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - MORNING (DREAM SEQUENCE)

The fire has burnt down to a smoldering pile of ashes.

Robyn and Gray are asleep in the tent with the flaps open.

Gray opens his eyes and sits up.

He is face to face with the BULL CROCODILE.

INT. TENT - MORNING

Gray jolts awake and sits up. He searches for the Croc, but finds nothing.

The flaps are closed.

Robyn is asleep beside him.

Gray slides out of the sleeping bag and quietly exits the tent.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Gray hurries over to the river for his morning ablutions.

He pees into the river, while yawning, stretching, and trying not to pee on his feet.

Something on the far bank catches his eye and freezes his bladder mid-stream.

He backs away from the water, turns and scurries back to the tent.

INT. TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Gray rips back the tent flap and sticks his head in.

GRAY  
(Whispering excitedly)  
Get up! Quick!

Robyn wakes, startled.

ROBYN  
What?

GRAY  
(Whispering excitedly)  
Come on. Grab your camera.

ROBYN  
I'm sleeping. Go away.

He tosses his sleeping bag at her.

ROBYN  
Gray...

But Gray has already gone.

ROBYN  
This had better be good, mate.

Robyn scrambles out of the sleeping bag and grabs her jeans and camera on the way out.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - CONTINUOUS

Gray is at the waters edge looking across at the far bank.

Robyn hurries over to his side.

ROBYN  
OK, I'm up. What  
so...(important?)

She looks across the river. It takes a moment for her to snap out of it and start clicking off shot after shot.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (FAR BANK) - CONTINUOUS

A huge eight meter BULL CROCODILE is sunning itself on the far bank.

INT. GOVE HOUSE (JOHANSON'S ROOM) - MORNING

The room is pokey. There is barely enough room for the single bed, desk, and wardrobe that occupy it.

There are dozens of SCOUTS POSTERS on the wall, along with photographs of Johanson in his Scout Masters uniform at a Jamboree with some of the boys by his side.

A backpack and hunting rifle lie on the unmade bed.

Johanson sits at the desk looking at a pile of amateur photographs, wearing his Scout bandana and Toggle, mixed with his civilian clothes.

INSERT: THE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE OF NAKED AND PARTIALLY NAKED CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN 8 AND 12.

Johanson's face is covered with a light sheen of sweat and he is in an obvious state of excitement, as he slowly flicks through the photographs.

The door bursts open and Wilks enters carrying a backpack in and rifle in one hand.

WILKS  
Grab ya swag, they're outside!

Johanson quickly covers the pictures, gathers them together, and drops them into the desk drawer, before he grabs his own backpack and rifle from the bed.



Gray walks up behind her, unseen, and watches the painting taking shape on the canvas.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (START) - DAY

Hopkins speeds past the sign at the beginning of the track.

An empty beer can slams into the sign and ricochets off into the scrub.

EXT. ANT HILLS - DAY

Robyn lays down the final brush-stroke on the canvas and takes a step back to look at it.

GRAY (O.S.)  
It's perfect.

She spins around to find him leaning against one of the ANT HILLS.

ROBYN  
How long have you been there?

GRAY  
Awhile.

ROBYN  
Then you won't mind carrying this lot back to the campsite?

She takes the canvas from the easel, collapses the legs, and hands it to Gray.

GRAY  
And the pack-mule saves the day again.

They wander back toward the campsite.

EXT. STRATOSPHERE (ABOVE AUSTRALIA) - DAY

CYCLONE TRACEY swirls above the ocean just off the coast as it moves directly toward Darwin.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (WET PLAIN) - DAY

A WATER BUFFALO and its CALF graze together.

The mother's legs fold beneath her and she goes down with a thud. A thousandth of a second later - A shot rings out.

The CALF bolts in terror, but stops when it realizes that its mother is not with it.

The Calf cautiously meanders back to the mother's body and nuzzles it.

Hopkins strides across the plain with his rifle.

Scotty, Wilks and Johanson remain behind the truck.

Hopkins nears the body of the Buffalo.

The Calf is fifty meters away and quickly backs up.

Hopkins snaps the rifle up to his shoulder and shoots the Calf in the head. It drops instantly.

Hopkins stops at the Calf's body, leans his rifle against it, and pulls a wicked looking knife from the sheaf on his belt.

He kneels down, cuts the head from the body, and carries it back to the others.

He tosses the headless body into the Dinghy.

JOHANSON

Aren't we going to butcher the cow?

SCOTT

(Grinning)

Ain't buff meat we're after.

Johanson looks from Scotty to Hopkins and the penny drops.

JOHANSON

Tell me you're not poaching bloody Crocs? Even you're not that stupid, Hopkins.

Hopkins closes the distance between himself and Johanson in the blink of an eye and pins him against the vehicle.

HOPKINS

Listen up, lard-ass. I'm sick of your fucking whining. You want out? Towns back that way. Should only take you a day of two on foot.

JOHANSON

I didn't say that. I'm just worried about rangers. That's all.

Hopkins pats Johanson's cheek and releases him.

HOPKINS

You've got nothing to worry about then. There isn't a ranger within a hundred miles of us.

Hopkins pulls an esky from the four by fours tray, removes a beer, cracks it, and gulps it down.

Johanson doesn't look convinced.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (UP RIVER) - AFTERNOON

Hopkins vehicle is parked beside a make-shift corrugated-iron shed, surrounded by rusty boat and car parts.

The DINGHY is anchored near the bank and the trailer unhooked nearby.

Johanson, Wilks, and Scotty sit on a felled tree and load their rifles.

Hopkins strides out of the shed, rifle in hand, and heads down river.

HOPKINS

(Over his shoulder)

Wait here.

He picks up the pace and quickly disappears around a bend in the river.

JOHANSON

(Doing a Nazi salute)

Yavul mine Fuehrer!

SCOTTY

Fuck you're a sorry prick. Why'd ya come if you can't stand him?

JOHANSON

I didn't say that. I just wish he'd stop treating me like a big pile of steaming pig shit, that's all.

Scotty pushes the last bullet into the magazine and then chambers one.

SCOTTY

If the shit fits...

Scotty ambles over to the Dinghy.

JOHANSON

(Quietly)

And you can go fuck yourself too!

Wilks watches Johanson quietly as he slips another round into his magazine. What he saw in the room is eating away at his gut.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (FAR BANK) - AFTERNOON

Hopkins finds a fork in a tree with enough foliage to conceal him from view and uses it as a tripod for his rifle.

(POV) HOPKINS RIFLE SIGHTS:

Gray and Robyn fish from the bank, oblivious to Hopkins presence.

HOPKINS (O.S.)  
(Quietly to himself)  
How easy would it be? Bam!

The wind suddenly picks up buffeting Hopkins and sending a surge across the river.

The BULL CROCODILE lumbers to his feet and slides into the water.

Gray and Robyn look up at the sky and Hopkins follows their gaze.

A massive wall of black and green storm clouds roll toward them.

HOPKINS  
Storms coming.

Hopkins slings his rifle and hurries back the way he came.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

Lightning cuts across the sky. The wind howls. Trees sway dramatically.

Gray and Robyn hurry back to the four-wheel-drive and climb in.

INT. HIRE CAR - CONTINUOUS

Gray removes the CB hand-piece from the clip and depresses the send button.

GRAY  
Gove base. Gove base. This is  
Sierra, Whiskey, two - Over.

The CB crackles with static.

CB  
Sierra, whiskey, two, this is  
Gove Base. Over.

GRAY  
Gove Base, what's the weather  
situation? Over.

Rain hammers into the windscreen. There is no slow build up. It comes down in a deluge. The noise on the roof is deafening.

CB  
We've got a major cyclone about  
to hit Darwin. She'll be on them  
by midnight. We're looking like  
we'll cop the tail. What's your  
position? Over.

GRAY  
We're at the Goyder River  
crossing. Over.

CB  
Suggest you pack it up and get  
back into town as fast as you  
can. Over.

GRAY  
Understood. Moving out now.  
Sierra, whiskey, two. Out.

Gray hangs the hand-piece back on the clip and turns to Robyn, who looks concerned.

GRAY  
Hey, we're OK. We've got enough  
time to get back before it gets  
too bad. Come on, let's pack it  
up.

Gray grabs a couple of raincoats from the back seat and hands one to Robyn.

ROBYN  
Time to get wet.

They jump out of the vehicle, pulling on the jackets, and quickly strike the tent.

EXT. STRATOSPHERE (ABOVE AUSTRALIA) - EVENING

CYCLONE TRACEY moves in from the north, northwest as it cuts a path of destruction on its way to Darwin. The swirling, broiling, mass is almost upon the city.

EXT. HIRE CAR - NIGHT

Robyn jumps into the passenger seat.

Gray tosses the last of their equipment into the back, closes the door, races around to the driver's door, and scrambles in.

Gray turns on the windscreen wipers.

Hopkins and Scotty are in front of the vehicle with their rifles pointed at them.

HOPKINS

OUT! NOW!

GRAY

(To Robyn)

Get down!

Gray reacts quickly. He turns the key. The starter motor cranks over.

Hopkins fires a shot into the front driver's side tire, shredding it, and then aims at Gray's head.

HOPKINS

I WON'T FUCKING TELL YOU AGAIN!

Gray takes his hand off the keys and holds it up.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (UP RIVER) - NIGHT

The surrounding trees bend and groan under the onslaught of the howling wind.

Johanson and Wilks are seated around a blustery roaring fire, dressed in green ponchos. The rain hammers down, beating the flames down.

JOHANSON

(Yelling to be heard)

This is insane. You heard the weather report. We've gotta get back to town.

Hopkins and Scotty march Gray and Robyn into the campsite at rifle-point with nooses around their necks.

HOPKINS

Nobody's going anywhere.

Startled, Johanson and Wilks jump to their feet and spin around.

JOHANSON

What are you playing at, Hopkins?  
Who the bloody hell are they?

ROBYN

Please, help us.

SCOTTY

SHUT UP SLUT!

Scotty pushes her hard enough to cause her to stumble and fall to her knees.

Gray takes a swing at Scotty, but Hopkins rifle butt stops him. He hits the mud beside Robyn, semi-conscious.

ROBYN

Gray!  
(To Scotty)  
Bastard!

JOHANSON

Jesus Christ! Have you lost it?  
You can't do...(this)

Hopkins strides over to Johanson and pushes the barrel of the rifle into his fat gut.

JOHANSON

Jesus, Hopkins...

HOPKINS

IN OR OUT? WHICH IS IT, LARD-ASS?

Johanson looks into Hopkins eyes and sees that he is beyond reason. He knows that the alternative will be share the fate of the two captives.

JOHANSON

(A whisper)  
In.

HOPKINS

I can't hear you.

JOHANSON

Fuckin' in!

Hopkins takes the rifle away from Johanson's gut and turns to Wilks with the same question still hanging in the air.

WILKS

You know me...

HOPKINS

Tie the bitch up and dump her in the hut, then rope off the Calf's corpse. Hang it in the river.

(MORE)

HOPKINS (cont'd)  
That oughta ring the dinner bell  
nice and loud.

GRAY  
Hopkins, it's me you want. Let  
her go. She's done nothing to  
you.

HOPKINS  
She's a coon lover, a white  
fucking gin.

Wilks grabs a length of rope from the vehicle and hurries  
over to Robyn.

HOPKINS  
(To Scotty)  
Strip him and tie him to a tree.  
Lard-ass, help him.

Johanson reluctantly joins Scotty and helps him roll Gray  
onto his back.

JOHANSON  
You're not going to kill them are  
you?

HOPKINS  
Fuck no. That'd be murder.

Johanson looks relieved.

HOPKINS  
People have accidents and  
disappear out here all the time.

Johanson stomach drops through the floor. He looks like he  
just shit his pants.

HOPKINS  
First I want him see how a real  
man fucks his white gin.

Gray rolls to one side, knocks Scotty off balance,  
scrambles to his feet and punches Johanson in the face.

He pulls Robyn to her feet.

WILKS  
Hey!

Wilks swings the butt of his rifle at Gray's head.

Gray ducks the blow and punches him in the face.

GRAY  
(To Robyn)  
RUN!

Gray pushes Robyn in the direction of the trees and she runs as fast as her legs will carry her.

Hopkins snaps the rifle to his shoulder and brings it around to aim at Robyn.

GRAY

NO!

Gray charges Hopkins and barrels into him. The rifle fires wide.

Hopkins lands on the waterlogged ground with a bone-jarring thud.

Gray races toward the river to distract them and give Robyn time to escape.

Hopkins rolls onto his knees and snaps the rifle up to his shoulder.

HOPKINS

One less Coon...

It is a quick and poorly aimed shot, but it finds its target.

Gray is hit in the head. He is spun off his feet and lands in the river. An explosion of water marks his entry.

Johanson is on his knees with one hand holding his nose to stem the flow of blood.

JOHANSON

Oh Christ!

Hopkins strides over to Scotty and kicks him.

HOPKINS

It's gone too far! No witnesses!  
GO!

Scotty scrambles to his feet and grabs Wilks on his way into the trees.

Johanson can't drag his eyes from the spot where Gray went into the river.

HOPKINS

Watch this.

Johanson vomits.

Hopkins walks over to the river and scans the far bank.

HOPKINS

Today's Abo...

The BULL CROCODILE cruises past, heading down river.

HOPKINS  
...Tomorrows Croc shit.

In the background; Johanson throws up again.

EXT. RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

Gray is face down in the water. He slowly slips below the surface.

Blood trails from a long wound across his left temple.

The BULL CROCODILE slips below the surface and picks up speed with a flick of its muscular tail.

Gray opens his eyes and sucks in a lung-full of water. He turns just in time to see the Croc coming straight toward him.

The Croc rolls on its side and slides straight past Gray.

Gray watches the Croc disappear into the gloom before kicking for the surface.

He uses the last of his strength to swim to the far bank and grab onto an exposed tree root.

His vision blurs and he begins to lose consciousness again.

Strong brown hands grab him from above.

GRAY  
(Weakly)  
Don't hurt her. Please...

Gray struggles weakly, but he has no strength left to fight.

More hands join the first and he is hauled onto the bank.

A lightning strike rips through the clouds turning night to day and showing Gray's saviors.

TRIBESMAN ONE  
(Come here, brother)  
Go, wawa.

Four ABORIGINAL TRIBESMEN painted in WHITE PAINT and RED OCHRE, wearing loin-clothes, pull Gray from the river.

TRIBESMAN ONE  
(Lets go)  
Gul'

They carry Gray between them and vanish into the dense bush.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (BUSH) - NIGHT

Robyn races headlong through the bush.

Branches rip at her face and arms.

She trips on a log and goes down hard.

The tree tops bend alarmingly in the high, shrieking, wind and driving rain.

Lightning streaks across the sky turning the night to day for an instant.

SCOTTY (O.S.)  
Where ya goin', love?

Robyn quickly scrambles to her feet and runs back the way she came, totally disorientated.

SCOTTY (O.S.)  
Ain't nowhere to run out here.

She races headlong down an embankment and loses her footing, tumbling end over end to the bottom.

Robyn, dazed and bleeding, drags herself into a sitting position. She looks around trying to get her breath.

ROBYN  
(Pitifully/lost)  
Gray...

The Lightning crackles across the sky again.

Wilks strides toward her with his rifle held across his chest.

Robyn quickly gains her feet, adrenaline fuels her muscles. She spins and takes the first step in the opposite direction.

Scotty is already there. He grabs her and forces her to the ground.

ROBYN  
Get off me!

Wilks races over and helps hold her down. She thrashes violently.

SCOTTY  
A fighter, yeah, I like that.

Scotty looks her over. Robyn's wet clothing clings to her leaving little to the imagination.

SCOTTY  
Fuckin' nice.

ROBYN  
Please, no.

WILKS  
Scotty, wait up...

Scotty tears open her top exposing her breasts, then looks up at Wilks with a salacious grin on his face.

SCOTTY  
You think Hopkins will leave us any? Nothin' worth rootin' at any rate.

Robyn's hand inches across the ground toward a thick tree branch.

ROBYN  
Don't - Don't do this. I'm begging you, please.

WILKS  
I don't know...

SCOTTY  
You goin' faggot on me?

WILKS  
Fuck no!

Wilks holds her upper body while Scotty takes off her boots and rips down her jeans.

SCOTTY  
Not too fuckin' bad for a white gin.  
(A beat)  
See'n as it's Christmas, I've got a stockin' stuffer for ya.

Robyn's fingers curl around the tree branch.

ROBYN  
FUCK YOU!

She hammers the branch into the side of Scotty's head, sending him staggering off her.

Robyn springs to her feet and runs...

...but Wilks blocks her way and grabs her.

ROBYN  
Please - Let me go - Please.

WILKS  
I'm sorry...

SCOTTY  
COME'ERE!

Scotty looms up behind Robyn, spins her around, and punches her in the face.

SCOTTY  
I'M GONNA FUCK THE ARSE OFF YOU,  
BITCH!

He holds a KNIFE to her throat, drops his pants, and brutally enters her.

Robyn screams!

His blood mingles with the rain-water and drips from his rage contorted face onto hers.

EXT. STRATOSPHERE (ABOVE AUSTRALIA) - NIGHT

CYCLONE TRACEY moves steadily toward Darwin.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (DREAM SEQUENCE) - NIGHT

The images are surreal. Ghosted.

Gray slides through thick mud in the same way a Croc would.

He has a knife in his hand. The blade is long and rusty.

A WILD PIG cautiously approaches the river bank.

Gray darts forward, tackles the pig, pulls its legs from beneath it, and cuts its throat with a quick, brutal, slash.

The pigs dying squeal fills the air and echoes across the river.

Gray drags the pig into the water and slips below the surface.

EXT. ABORIGINAL CAMPFIRE (DREAM SEQUENCE) - NIGHT

A Tribesman plays a haunting tune on a DIDGERIDOO.

Twenty ABORIGINAL TRIBESMEN and WOMEN watch as two others perform a dance.

The story depicts a Crocodile stalking its prey.

The Tribesman pretending to be the Crocodile swoops in close arms snapping like the jaws of the beast.

A blinding white flash hides the conclusion of the dance.

INT. COURTHOUSE (DREAM SEQUENCE) DAY

Lange gets out of his seat, walks stiffly toward the exit. His shoes strike the floor with an unnaturally loud boom.

He disappears through the doors without as much as a backwards glance.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (DREAM SEQUENCE) - NIGHT

Gray stagger through the bush. Wind tears at his clothes and rain drenches him.

He pulls at the clothes until he is naked.

His skin is dotted with WHITE and RED OCHRE in the pattern of a skeleton.

Gray falls to his knees and crawls to the rivers edge.

He stares at his reflection in the surface of the water.

A Lightning strike lights up the sky.

The water ripples and Gray's reflection disappears.

INT. CARPENTRY SHED - NIGHT

Lange falls like a rag-doll, dead before he hits the floor.

Wood dust billows into the air.

EXT. BLACK BAR (DREAM SEQUENCE) - NIGHT

The Old Aboriginal Woman hisses drunkenly and spits saliva in a fine spraying.

ABORIGINAL WOMAN  
(Words slurred/drawn  
out)  
Nowhere man.

INT. HOLY TRINITY CHURCH - MORNING

The curtains slowly draw across Lance's coffin.

INT. CAVE (DREAM SEQUENCE) - NIGHT

Gray's eyes blink open. He is disorientated.

LANGE (V.O.)

The time comes when we all have  
to make a stand for something we  
believe in.

A Lightning strike lights up the caves walls. They are covered in Aboriginal paintings of Crocodiles, Wild Pigs, Kangaroos, and Aboriginal hunters.

GRAY

Robyn!

The face of an ABORIGINAL TRIBESMAN, missing his front teeth, appears before him.

He offers Gray water from a cup and watches as he drains it.

GRAY

Where is she?

The Tribesman reaches out, touches Gray's chest and runs his fingers over the smooth skin.

GRAY

What are you doing?

The women stand as one and exit the cave without a sound or a backward glance.

GRAY

Talk to me! Where are they going?

The Tribesman removes a KNIFE from the DILLY-BAG hanging across his shoulder.

The wind shrieks past the opening and water seepage drips from the ceiling.

Gray tries to move, but his muscles will not respond.

GRAY

Don't..!

The fire dances and flickers, casting eerie shadows over the cave walls.

The other Tribesmen watch from the flickering shadows. Their eye, piercing, all knowing.

GRAY

No!

The Tribesman slices the skin across his chest in a series of V shaped cuts all pointing upward.

Gray screams silently.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Gray opens his eyes and looks around, disoriented and light headed.

It is as if the TRIBE had never been there.

The fire is nothing more than a mound of cold ashes.

Gray pulls himself up into a seated position with his back against the damp wall.

EXT. WALKABOUT HOTEL (RECEPTION) - NIGHT

The RECEPTIONIST watches an emergency broadcast on the TV mounted behind the reception desk.

On the screen: A stern faced ANCHORMAN stares out at her.

ANCHORMAN

(Filtered)

Tropical cyclone Tracey was located by radar at two a.m. CST eighteen kilometers west, northwest of Darwin moving east, southeast at six KPH. The eye of the storm is expected to move over Darwin soon. Winds should become lighter to calm for a period of up to one and a half hours before rapidly strengthening to its previous intensity from the opposite direction. Residents are being advised to batten down their homes and remain inside, until the all-clear is given.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - NIGHT

The river flows strongly. The wind howls. The rain comes down in sheets.

Gray's four-wheel-drive roars toward the river.

At the last moment, Hopkins jumps clear, hits the mud, rolls, and quickly regains his feet.

The vehicle catches the side of the embankment and skews sideways into the air. It hits the water and sinks quickly.

Johanson joins Hopkins, looking worried.

HOPKINS

It'll look like they lost it and  
crashed into the river. They'll  
figure the Crocs got the bodies.

He glances up at the sky.

HOPKINS

There'll be no trace of us ever  
being here when this bitch's  
done.

Lightning streaks across the sky momentarily freezing both  
men its stark glare.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (UP RIVER) - NIGHT

The wind tears at the corrugated-iron roof on the shed.

Scotty and Wilks fill sandbags with mud and place them onto  
the iron sheets. The wind tears at their ponchos. They  
barely manage to stay upright.

Hopkins and Johanson stagger into the camp, fighting the  
wind with every step.

HOPKINS

WHERE IS SHE?

SCOTTY

(Smirking)

INSIDE. SHE WON'T GIVE YOU ANY  
TROUBLE NOW.

HOPKINS

COULDN'T FUCKING WAIT, COULD YOU?

WILKS

Don't look at me.

Hopkins pushes past Scotty and enters the shed with  
Johanson following closely behind.

INT. SHED - CONTINUOUS

Hopkins and Johanson enter the shed.

A couple of OIL LAMPS hanging from the roof light the  
interior.

Robyn, streaked with mud and blood, is huddled up in the  
corner on a filthy sleeping-bag.

A set of Buffalo horns adorn one wall and an old skillet-stove sits beneath them.

A rusty children's bunk-bed lines another wall and a hammock is strung across the center, above a filthy makeshift wooden table.

The shrieking wind seems duller in here.

Scotty and Wilks squeeze in behind Johanson and Hopkins.

HOPKINS

You useless pair of cunts! Look at her!

Robyn looks at her knee, totally fixated on the single constant drip of water that explodes onto her skin.

SCOTTY

What?

HOPKINS

Be damned if I'm fucking a veg, especially after you two turds have been there.

(To Johanson)

How about you, lard-ass.

JOHANSON

Nah, I'll pass.

Hopkins turns to him, puzzled.

HOPKINS

Pass? When was the last time you fucked anything other than Mrs. Palmer and her five daughters?

JOHANSON

(Trying to keep it light)

You know how it is, I don't want to root a veg either.

HOPKINS

No I don't know how it is.

SCOTTY

You'd root a knothole if we stuck some fluff around it.

WILKS

She doesn't do it for ya does she, ya fuckin' dirty prick?

Wilks pushes past Scotty and drives his fist into Johanson's face, sending him crashing back against the table.

Johanson loses his grip on his rifle...

...THE RIFLE CLATTERS TO THE FLOOR.

WILKS

She's got more than one fuckin'  
pube!

Scotty grabs Wilks and holds him back. Wilks tries to kick out at Johanson.

JOHANSON

Get him off me!

Hopkins maneuvers himself between the two men.

HOPKINS

What the fuck are you on about,  
Wilksy?

Robyn covertly looks up, unseen by the men, who are too busy fighting amongst each other.

WILKS

Ask him about the photos of the  
kids in his fuckin' room. Naked  
kids. Go on, ask him!

Robyn's eyes move to the discarded rifle.

JOHANSON

You don't know what you're  
talking about!

Hopkins turns to Johanson with the question hanging in the air.

JOHANSON

It's bullshit...

Johanson takes a step back, catches the edge of the table, and falls on his arse.

JOHANSON

It's just some photos.

Hopkins takes a menacing step toward him.

WILKS

Of kids...!

Wilks hawks up a mouthful of phlegm and spits at Johanson.

JOHANSON

It's just photos - I swear.

Hopkins stops dead. His blood freezes in his veins.

HOPKINS

You've been in my house - with my kids.

JOHANSON

I'd never hurt a hair on a child's...(head)

Hopkins stomps Johanson's ribs with his boot.

Johanson shrieks in pain and bites his own tongue. Blood flows between his lips.

He gasps for air and holds out his hand, imploring Hopkins to cease.

HOPKINS

MY FUCKING KIDS!

Hopkins drives his boot down again and breaks Johanson's arm - Johanson screams in agony.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER - NIGHT

Gray races along the riverbank, staying low.

He passes the rear of his vehicle just as the rushing waters pick it up and carry it further down river.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

Johanson cradles his broken arm and injured ribs as he sobs pitifully.

HOPKINS

(To Johanson)

Get up!

Hopkins picks up his own rifle and loudly chambers a round.

JOHANSON

(Blubbering)

Please, I'm sick. I'm not well.

HOPKINS

I'll just put you out of your misery then.

WILKS

Christ, Hopkins, you can't just kill him.

SCOTTY

Fuckin' oath we can. What's one more...(body?)

Part of the roof lifts off and the wind shrieks in.

The OIL-LAMP nearest the gap falls to the floor, breaks, and a fire spreads quickly.

HOPKINS  
GET THAT!

Wilks and Scotty hurry to extinguish the fire.

Robyn seizes the opportunity and grabs Johanson's rifle from the floor.

SCOTTY  
OI, WATCH HER!

Hopkins swings the rifle away from Johanson and moves to cut Robyn off.

Johanson, stumbles to his feet, crashes across the top of the table, and escapes through the door.

Robyn backs away to her original position against the wall with the rifle.

HOPKINS  
Now what, huh?

ROBYN puts the barrel of the rifle under her chin and slips her thumb over the trigger.

HOPKINS  
Go ahead...

Scotty and Wilks watch from the other side of the shed.

HOPKINS  
...do it!

Robyn screams, turns the gun on Hopkins, and pulls the trigger without the slightest hesitation.

It doesn't go off.

ROBYN  
No!

Hopkins hand snaps out and wrenches the rifle from her grip.

SCOTTY  
Fuckin' intense!

HOPKINS  
Next time remember to flick the safety off.

He flicks off the safety, and fires the rifle with the muzzle beside her ear - The bullet tears through the wall.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (UP RIVER) - CONTINUOUS

The bullet slams into a tree less than a foot from Johanson.

JOHANSON

Christ!

He changes direction and scurries away into the raging storm.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

Robyn watches the three men and listens to their muted conversation. The rifle blast has temporarily deafened her.

Wilks finishes dousing the flames with a final hiss.

WILKS

What about Johanson?

Hopkins hands the spare rifle to Wilks.

HOPKINS

How far do you think he'll get?  
If the storm doesn't get him,  
we'll pick him up at daylight.

The roof flaps crazily in the wind.

HOPKINS

Scotty, do what you want with  
her, then put a bullet in the  
back of her head and dump her in  
the river.

(To Wilks)

You and me are on the roof.

Hopkins leads Wilks outside. The door closes behind them.

SCOTTY

Waste not, want not.

He advances on her, grabs her by the hair, and drags her to her feet.

Robyn cries out in pain.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK - NIGHT

A Lightning strike lights up the darkness and the thunder blends with Robyn's cry.

Johanson runs as fast as his injuries and the storm will allow him.

A lightning strike turns night to day.

Gray is on the track, shirtless, covered in red and white ochre.

Johanson slides to a halt.

A second Lightning strike cuts across the sky - The road is clear.

JOHANSON

Lord, I swear, you get me out of this...

He has the feeling that somebody is behind him and turns slowly...

Gray is there, looking tribal and quite terrifying.

JOHANSON

It - it -it wasn't my fault.  
Hopkins...

Johanson is terrified. He slowly backs away.

JOHANSON

I never touched your bloody missus. I swear, I didn't.

A bestial snarl comes from somewhere deep inside Gray, as he stalks his prey.

JOHANSON

It's Hopkins you want, not me.

Johanson turns and sprints as fast as his legs will carry him.

Gray lopez after him, purposefully allowing him to gain some distance.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (PIG WALLOW) - MOMENTS LATER

Johanson looks over his shoulder and finds the track behind is clear. He stops, exhausted and out of breath.

JOHANSON

Oh, dear God. Thank you. Thank you.

He takes a moment to regain some strength, eyes constantly survey the track.



WILKS

It was the Abo, painted up all  
white and shit.

A second strike lights up Gray.

HOPKINS

Son of a bitch!

Gray sprints back into the bush before either man can  
react.

HOPKINS

COME ON!!

Hopkins grabs his rifle and gives chase.

Wilks snatches up his rifle and follows on the run.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (BUSH) - MOMENTS LATER

Hopkins and Wilks are spread out twenty feet apart moving  
fast.

HOPKINS

YOU SEE ANYTHING?

Wilks holds his hand up motioning that he hasn't.

They move deeper into the bush and further down river.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

Robyn is naked, almost completely catatonic, curled into  
the fetal position on the bottom bunk.

Scotty backs away from her, pulling his jeans up, and  
zipping the fly.

SCOTTY

Bet you didn't get it like that  
from coon, did ya...

The door opens behind him allowing the wind to scream in.

SCOTTY

Fuckin' hell! Were you wankers  
raised in a...(fuckin' tent?)

He turns toward the door with a self satisfied grin on his  
face.

SCOTTY

Fuck me...

Gray is at the door with a sharpened branch leveled at Scotty's chest.

SCOTTY  
COME ON THEN!

Gray drives the branch into Scotty's chest and forces him back against the table.

The table collapse under their combined weight and Scotty is pushed further back, until he is stopped by the bunk-bed.

Blood spurts out between Scotty's lips. His hands grasp the spear, trying to stop it going any deeper.

SCOTTY  
Fuck you...

Gray relentlessly pushes forward.

SCOTTY  
Fuck...

Scotty gurgles and throws up a mouthful of blood.

Gray rushes past Scotty's corpse and reaches for Robyn.

She doesn't seem to recognize him or react in any way.

GRAY  
It's me. It's Gray.

He gathers up her clothes and dresses her.

He takes Scotty's PONCHO, RIFLE & KNIFE, drapes the poncho over Robyn's shoulder, takes her hand and leads her out of the shed and into the raging storm.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (UP RIVER) - CONTINUOUS

Gray almost has to carry Robyn up river, deeper into the bush.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (PIG WALLOW) - NIGHT

The water has risen to Johanson's chin. He struggles to keep his head above water.

JOHANSON  
SOMEBODY!! ANYBODY!!

Muddy water enters his mouth and he chokes on it.

JOHANSON  
HELP ME!!

INT. SHED - LATER

Hopkins and Wilks stand in the doorway looking at Scotty's corpse with the branch in his chest, fixed eyes staring.

HOPKINS  
I'm going tear that bastard's  
fucking heart out.

Wilks looks around the shed floor for Scotty's rifle.

WILKS  
He's got Scotty's rifle. What do  
we do now?

HOPKINS  
Nothing's changed. The game just  
got more interesting.

Hopkins turns and strides into the raging storm.

WILKS  
Game?

Wilks takes a moment longer to break away from the grizzly sight.

WILKS  
Fuckin' hell Scotty. What'll I  
tell ya mum?

Wilks backs away and hurries to catch up to Hopkins.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (UP RIVER) - CONTINUOUS

Hopkins searches for a clue as to which direction Gray has gone. He finds a piece of Scotty's poncho caught on a branch.

HOPKINS  
THIS WAY!

Wilks hurries over to his position, passing Hopkins vehicle on the way.

WILKS  
WHY DIDN'T THEY JUST TAKE YOUR  
TRUCK?

Hopkins digs into his pocket and pulls out the keys.

HOPKINS  
YOU THINK I'D BE STUPID ENOUGH TO  
LEAVE THEM WITH YOU ASS-HOLES?

A wind gust hammers through the campsite with incredible force.

Hopkins and Wilks are knocked off their feet and sent crashing into the bush.

The vehicles keys land in the mud beside the campfire.

The shed is torn apart. Sheets of corrugated iron spin up into the air and disappear into the pitch-black night.

It is over almost as suddenly as it began. The shed and all of its contents are gone.

Hopkins scrambles to his feet and checks his rifle.

HOPKINS

Let's go kill that fuckin' Coon.

WILKS

(Under his breath)

Before he kills us.

Hopkins takes off at the trot with Wilks close behind him.

EXT. CAVE - NIGHT

Gray helps Robyn up the steep rock-face to the cave a hundred feet above them.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Gray leads Robyn into the cave and settles her into the far end of the cavern, well out of the weather.

GRAY

I'm going to lead Hopkins away  
and go for help. I need you to  
stay here.

His words fall on deaf ears as she stares vacantly past him.

GRAY

I will be back for you.

Gray kisses her cheek and hurries from the cave.

She stares at the aboriginal wall paintings and a tear slides down her cheek, cutting a path through the dirt.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (ANT HILLS) - NIGHT

Hopkins and Wilks stagger through the torrential downpour in the blackest part of the night. Their visibility is down to a couple of feet.

A streak of lightning shoots across the sky lighting up the night.

The ANT HILLS are brought to life by the flash, creating the illusion that they are moving.

Wilks see movement to his right, spins and fires, hitting a two meter Ant-hill and blowing a fist sized hole through it.

Hopkins turns to add his firepower, but pulls up short when he sees the target.

HOPKINS

Jesus!

He leans into the wind and closes the distance between himself and Wilks.

HOPKINS

(Into Wilks ear)

Don't lose it on me Wilksy. We've gotta keep our shit packed tight.

WILKS

I thought I saw something.

HOPKINS

Don't think - Know! I don't want to end up getting shot because you can't hold your wad.

They trudge over to the tallest and thickest of the ant-hills and rest up, using it as a wind break.

Hopkins checks his watch.

HOPKINS

It's just gone six, and it's still darker than a Coons asshole. All that cloud covers not helping. We'll wait for awhile, see if it lightens up.

Wilks ejects the spent cartridge and hesitates before removing the mag from the rifle.

HOPKINS

What the fuck are you doing?

WILKS

Me mum always said I'd die broke and stupid.

Wilks pockets the mag.

WILKS

I reckon this is my chance to  
prove her wrong.

HOPKINS

That black bastard killed Scotty,  
and you're just gonna let it  
fuckin' slide?

Wilks mulls it over for a moment.

WILKS

After what we did to him and his  
missus...

Hopkins casually swings his rifle barrel toward Wilks.

HOPKINS

You're in this as deep as I am.  
You don't just get to walk away.

The early morning light shows faintly through the cloud  
cover, but the rain and wind continue unabated.

WILKS

I just wanna go home and  
take...(whatever comes)

A bullet punches through Wilks's leg, just above the knee  
and exits through the hamstring.

The bang follows a millionth of a second later.

Wilks goes down with a grunt.

Hopkins instinctively drops to the ground, grabs Wilks by  
the collar and drags him to cover around the far side of  
the ant-hill.

WILKS

Jesus! I've been shot. I've been  
fuckin' shot!

HOPKINS

And he'll do it again if you  
don't start looking for something  
to shoot back at.

Wilks rolls onto his stomach and scans the treeline.

WILKS

Jesus, it fuckin' hurts!

The light has got a little better and the visibility with  
it.

Rain pours into Hopkins eyes. He wipes it away and scans  
the treeline.

HOPKINS

We can't stay here. All he has to do is keep flanking us and he'll eventually pick us off.

WILKS

I don't think I can walk.

Wilks pulls his belt from his pants, uses it as a tourniquet, and moans loudly.

Hopkins covers Wilks's mouth with his hand.

HOPKINS

Suck it up for fuck's sake!

(A beat)

This is exactly what he wants. Why do you think he shot you in the leg and not the head?

Hopkins removes his hand.

WILKS

How do you know he didn't just miss?

HOPKINS

Nah, he's playing with us. He's letting us know he's in control now.

Hopkins scrambles closer to Wilks and whispers in his ear.

HOPKINS

I need you to lay down covering fire for me.

WILKS

You're not gonna just leave me here?

Hopkins takes the mag from Wilks's pocket and clips it back into the rifle.

HOPKINS

Just long enough to get to the treeline, come up behind him, and put a bullet in his skull.

WILKS

What if that's what he's hopin' you'll try? What if he's waitin' out there, waitin' for you?

HOPKINS

Maybe he is, but we can't just sit out here with our thumb up our ass.

Wilks manages to laugh through the pain at the irony of their situation.

WILKS

How did this all get turned  
around so fast?

HOPKINS

It ain't over till it's over.

WILKS

It is for me. Go. I'm done.

HOPKINS

Weak as fucking piss!

Hopkins races for the treeline.

Wilks fires every round he has left into the air, lays down his rifle and closes his eyes.

For a brief moment there is total blackness, no sound, nothing, just sweet oblivion.

Slowly, the sound of the driving rain, and shrieking wind, penetrates his subconscious and drags him back to the real world.

Wilks opens his eyes and discovers Gray standing in front of him, dripping wet, with the rifle aimed at his head.

WILKS

I guess me mum was right.

Wilks leans his forehead against the muzzle of the rifle and closes his eyes.

WILKS

Gonna die stupid...

Gray's finger begins to squeeze the trigger.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (BUSH) - MOMENTS LATER

Hopkins is stopped in his tracks by the sound of a single rifle report from behind him.

HOPKINS

Wilksy...

He starts off again, quickly picks up speed, and runs toward the river.

EXT. CAVE - MORNING

The rifle shot echoes around the cliff as Robyn stumbles out of the cave and shuffles toward the edge.

Images of the Gray being shot and the rape flash through her mind.

She stands on the edge shaking uncontrollably with tears streaming down her cheeks.

A final image enters her consciousness; Hopkins laughing at her and his cold words.

HOPKINS (V.O.)  
Next time remember to flick the  
safety off.

She shuffles dangerously close to the edge and closes her eyes.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (PIG WALLOW) - MORNING

The sound of a rifle shot echoes across the landscape.

Johanson stretches to keep his mouth and nose above water.

A section of the wallow gives way and the water drains off.

Johanson sucks in a much needed breath of air.

The hammering rain eases off.

JOHANSON  
(Laughing)  
I beat you. I FUCKIN' BEAT YOU!

EXT. STRATOSPHERE (ABOVE AUSTRALIA) - MORNING

CYCLONE TRACEY blows out. Eighty percent of Darwin has been wiped out.

EXT. DARWIN (FILE FOOTAGE) - DAY

The streets are littered with the ruins of flattened houses.

People begin to emerge dazed and in shock.

They have lost everything in one night - Christmas night.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (UP RIVER) - MORNING

The rain and the wind have stopped.

Hopkins bursts from the bush and makes a bee-line straight for the DINGHY, but the OUTBOARD MOTOR is missing.

He nervously scans the dense bush.

HOPKINS  
COME ON! I'M HERE!

There is nothing, save the flowing waters of the river, unnaturally loud in the stillness.

HOPKINS  
LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH!

Gray emerges from the bush with his rifle aimed at Hopkins.

HOPKINS  
You can take the Coon out of the bush...

Hopkins has Gray in his sights - a Mexican stand-off.

The sound of murmuring ABORIGINAL VOICES comes from the trees.

GRAY  
It's you, Hopkins.

Hopkins is startled. He quickly sweeps the area, while keeping the rifle pointed at Gray.

HOPKINS  
What's me? Who's out there?

Gray slowly lowers his rifle.

GRAY  
You're the nowhere man.

Hopkins turns his focus back to Gray through the sights.

HOPKINS  
And you're a dead man.

The TRIBESMEN AND WOMEN appear from the bush behind Gray.

GRAY  
Now what? Are you going to kill us all?

HOPKINS  
If I have to.

The Tribe gather around Gray and he is lost amongst them.

GRAY  
It's over, Hopkins.

HOPKINS

It's over when I say it's over.

He fires and wings one of the Tribesmen sending him spinning to the ground.

The rest of the tribe and Gray scatter into the bush.

Hopkins fires wildly and hits a tree.

He sweeps the area looking for a target - nothing.

GRAY (O.S.)

(Whisper)

Hopkins!

Hopkins spins toward the river, fires, the bullet finds empty space.

GRAY (O.S.)

(Whisper)

Over here!

Hopkins spins toward the direction of the voice, fires and hits another tree.

On the opposite bank: Gray darts from the cover of one tree to another.

Hopkins snaps off a shot hitting the tree where Gray's head was a millisecond before.

GRAY (O.S.)

(Whisper)

You're going to have to do better than that, Hopkins.

HOPKINS

Stick your head out. I guarantee I won't miss again.

Hopkins strides down the embankment, into the river, and wades toward the opposite bank.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (DOWN RIVER) - CONTINUOUS

The big BULL CROCODILE stirs. Its eyes snap open, alert. It lumbers to its feet and slips quietly into the water.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (UP RIVER) - MOMENTS LATER

Hopkins pushes through chest deep water to reach the far bank.

Gray rises from the water behind him.

Hopkins senses danger. He turns around, too late.

Gray knocks the rifle aside with one hand and holds the knife to Hopkins throat with the other.

Hopkins drops the rifle and wraps his hands around Gray's knife hand.

HOPKINS  
You're fuckin' dead!

For a brief moment they are locked together like macabre lovers in some twisted Greek tragedy.

The far bank is lined with the Tribesmen and women, who watch impassively.

Gray breaks Hopkins grip. The knife falls free and disappears beneath the water.

Gray forces Hopkins to his knees and drives his head beneath the surface of the water.

Hopkins thrashes around as he runs out of air. The thrashing begins to diminish.

Gray pulls him up and looks him dead in the eyes.

HOPKINS  
Do it! Fuckin' finish it!

He releases Hopkins and pushes him backward into the water.

GRAY  
You are finished.

Hopkins glares at him with burning hatred.

HOPKINS  
You gutless black bastard!

Hopkins floats a little way down river and sinks below the surface.

Gray watches a trail of bubbles break the surface, but Hopkins does not reappear.

Gray turns and wades toward the bank.

Hopkins rises out of the water with the rifle aimed a Gray's back.

Gray turns, but it's too late to do anything.

Hopkins grins and squeezes the trigger...

But the rifle never gets to fire...

A bullet tears onto Hopkins right-side chest throwing him back into the river.

Robyn is on the bank with the smoking rifle in her hands.

ROBYN  
(Giggles)  
I didn't forget the safety this  
time.

Hopkins weakly struggles to regain his feet and aim the rifle at Robyn.

HOPKINS  
Fuckin' bitch...

The BIG BULL CROCODILE explodes from the water...

Its jaws slam shut around Hopkins torso and drives him beneath the surface.

EXT. UNDER WATER - CONTINUOUS

The Crocodile takes Hopkins down and savagely snaps his spine in a violent death-roll.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (FAR BANK) - MOMENTS LATER

Gray takes the rifle from Robyn's hands and she giggles again.

ROBYN  
(A whisper)  
Didn't forget this time.

GRAY  
No you didn't. Come on. We're  
going home.

Gray picks Robyn up and carries her back toward Hopkins vehicle.

EXT. DARWIN (FILE FOOTAGE) - DAY

The survivors of cyclone Tracey sift through the wreckage of their homes.

A survivor pulls a weather beaten wire and tin-foil Christmas tree from the wreckage.

He straightens it as best he can and stands it on his driveway.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER (UP RIVER) - DAY

Gray helps Robyn into the campsite and puts her in the passenger seat of Hopkins four-wheel-drive.

He hurries around to the driver's side and catches sight of the keys lying in the mud beside the campfire.

He scoops them up, climbs in, and they drive away.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK - MOMENTS LATER

The four-wheel-drive picks up speed as it cruises along the soggy track.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK - DAY

A lone figure hobbles along on a crutch crudely fashioned from a twisted gnarly tree limb...

...It's WILKS, alive and well.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (ANT HILLS) - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Wilks leans his forehead against the muzzle of Gray's rifle.

WILKS

I guess me mum was right.

Gray squeezes the trigger, but can't finish it.

He points the rifle into the air and fires a bullet at the swollen clouds.

INSERT:

The Bullet explodes from the muzzle slowed down to milliseconds and spirals skyward.

EXT. GOYDER RIVER TRACK (PIG WALLOW) - DAY

The sound of a PHANTOM RIFLE SHOT echoes across the landscape.

Ahead lays the wallow swarming with WILD PIGS.

The Pigs scatter as Wilks approaches, except for the BIG BOAR, who stands his ground for a moment longer.

WILKS

GO ON! GET OUT OF IT!!

The Boar arrogantly trots away revealing...

...Johanson's partially consumed body, still trapped in the mud. Flaps of skin hang in tatters from his face, shoulders and chest.

WILKS

Bush, bloody, justice.

He stares at the corpse for a long moment, before hobbling away.

In the background; The pigs trot back into the wallow to finish their meal.

EXT. ARNHEM HIGHWAY - DAY

Hopkins four-wheel-drive cruises along the track toward Katherine.

It becomes a dot in the vast remoteness of Arnhem Land.

FADE TO BLACK.