

TREATY

"Pilot Episode - Severed Treaty"

a proposed limited TV series

by
Tom Stohlgren

Based on his novels "Severed Treaty," "The New Sons of Liberty,"
and "Battle for the Black Hills"

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INT. UNIVERSITY LECTURE HALL - DAY

SUPER: "Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, early spring"

Shy, handsome, and poorly dressed PROFESSOR WES POWELL, 30, warmly smiles as he enters the room with his brand Laptop Computer. He adjusts the thermostat on extra high, and places buckets of dry ice creating FOG in the small lecture room filling with students.

WES

Take your seats. I'm in a rotten mood. Got shot at twice this morning.

STUDENT #1

Shot at in this cow-town? Doubt it.

WES

They were flu shots. Don't laugh or I'll get even on the mid-term exam.

The students LAUGH. FOG fills the air. Breathtakingly beautiful mixed-race teaching assistant, MAGGIE ESPOSITO (24), enters the room like a rock star.

WES (CONT'D)

Take notes, students. Maggie, hit the lights, please.

(beat)

Since 1930, rainmakers have charged millions of dollars to increase rainfall and snow in the arid west.

The students chuckle as the professor STRUGGLES with the electronics on the podium before he gets his first slide to appear.

BEGIN SERIES OF SHOTS -- THE PROFESSOR'S LECTURE SLIDES (A-E)

A) DUST BOWL PHOTO

WES (CONT'D)

Swindlers even shot surplus World War I cannon to bilk farmers with the promise of rain.

B) CANON BEING FIRED BY RAINMAKER

WES (CONT'D)

Proving P.T. Barnum was right.

C) 1970 AIRPLANE SPREADING SILVER IODIDE

WES (CONT'D)

We fall for cloud seeding scams
because weather predictions are no
better than the Farmer's Almanac.

D) OLD SCIENTISTS AT CHALKBOARD WITH EQUATIONS

STUDENT #2

One looks like you, Professor.

WES

Unable to predict the weather,
scientists, like my father, tried
to control it.

E) COLORADO SKI RESORT OFFICIALS PAYING MONEY

WES (CONT'D)

Cloud seeding in the Rockies leaves
below average snowfall in the
plains, as far away as Sand Creek
and on into Kansas.

The fog gets worse. It's almost raining. The electronics on
the podium short out with sparks. Students laugh.

WES (CONT'D)

There's an old Cheyenne saying - a
woman's heart is like the weather,
unpredictable.

The class chuckles. Maggie swoons.

WES (CONT'D)

Faulty projector, so we're done
today. Remember, Ms. Esposito will
lead class Wednesday, while I'm in
Las Vegas at a water conference.

Students hoot and laugh as they begin to exit.

WES (CONT'D)

Always remember...

(beat)

The land not only talks...

STUDENTS & MAGGIE

It cries!

Maggie swoons as Wes stops to stare at a map of the Western
States. His eyes zoom in on the Little Arkansas River,
Kansas.

WES

We talk about our water. But it was all Native American water here until the treaty was signed on October 17, 1865.

MAGGIE

Heard it.

Wes continues as Student #1 and #2 stop and turn to listen.

WES

Probably around a small campfire with Kit Carson, William Bent, that murderous Colonel Chivington from the Sand Creek Massacre, and a dozen ragged Cheyenne and Arapaho.

Maggie turns to the students.

MAGGIE

Can't stop him when he gets like this.

WES

Oral histories swore the bottom of page one promised the Cheyenne and Arapaho the snow-covered mountains of the Colorado Territory. That was Ute land. The Cheyenne and Arapaho were buffalo hunters!

Maggie mumbles, like she's heard it all before.

MAGGIE

Page two...

WES

Page two let them keep some dry land by Sand Creek to La Junta. But the same oral histories say by the time the treaty made it to Washington, the bottom of page one was cut off and all the Cheyenne and Arapaho got was the dry land.

MAGGIE

No proof, right?

WES

Old Chief Black Kettle swore he handed one copy of the treaty to bright, young fifteen-year-old, Wakan Long River for safekeeping.

MAGGIE & WES
But it was never found.

TITLE FILLS THE FRAME: TREATY

SUPER: "Episode 1 - Severed Treaty"

While the title's show...

EXT. PRAIRIE - NIGHT

Four FRONTIERSMEN (40s-50s) and one Calvary Officer, COLONEL CHIVINGTON (50), sit around a campfire as a small band of NATIVE AMERICANS (10 adults to 2 teens, all male) sorrowfully scatter in all directions in the night.

FRONTIERSMAN #1
Got the razor?

Colonel Chivington furnishes a straight-edge razor and ceremoniously hands it to the treaty agents. One agent SLICES the bottom line from page one off the treaty.

FRONTIERSMAN #2
Them mountains of Colorado belong to us again. They wouldn't of gone for it in Washington no-how.

FRONTIERSMAN #1
Colonel, it's up to you to find the Injuns' copy and burn it.

COLONEL CHIVINGTON
Leave it to me.

FRONTIERSMAN #2
No witnesses neither. This is the only treaty they'll ever see.

FRONTIERSMAN #1
What about Carson and Bent?

FRONTIERSMAN #2
Colonel knows what to do. They ain't exactly friends.

The agents laugh as they mount up slowly.

The trail taken by Wakan Long River leads to the area now known as Stillwater, Oklahoma.

We see time advancing 145 years with roads, trees, and crops appearing, followed by the building of a university.

INT. UNIVERSITY LIBRARY - NIGHT

SUPER: "Oklahoma State University Library -- Present Day"

Two black-clad figures steal a 1904 printed copy of the 1865 treaty with the Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and Apache Indians from a locked glass case. They are proud of their accomplishment.

One of the thieves, JAVIER SENERO (40), makes a smartphone call to evil-sounding CLAYTON WEGNER (60), CEO of California Water and Trade, Sacramento, California.

SENERO

We got the freakin' treaty, Boss.

(beat)

Yes, we know how much a third of Colorado and all that water is worth today. Freakin' lots. Don't worry boss, we got it.

WEGNER (V.O.)

Don't be smug, you idiots. If it says nineteen-hundred-and-four, it's not the original. I must have the original Cheyenne copy from eighteen-sixty-five. Got it?

SENERO

Got it boss. Don't worry. We'll find it. Bound to be easy -- they leave things in plain sight.

WEGNER (V.O.)

Hidden for one-hundred-fifty years, so far. Where the hell is it?

BEGIN FLASHBACKS:

INT. AUCTION HOUSE - EVENING

SUPER: "Winter 1952, Saxby's Auction House, Atlanta, Georgia"

We hear a noisy, black-tie antique auction. Dapper CHAD HASTINGS II (35) is eager to spend old money.

AUCTIONEER

Item twenty-two. An eighteen-sixty-four, Henry repeating rifle holding fifteen, forty-four caliber rounds. Bidding starts at five-hundred...

CHAD HASTINGS II

Five-thousand dollars.

The usually brash bidders go SILENT.

AUCTIONEER
Going once, twice, thrice, sold.

Chad Hastings II is surprisingly SILENT until Lot 27.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)
Lot Twenty-seven, crate of books,
unopened, nineteen-hundred-and-four
shipment. Let's start at five-
hundred dollars.

This time, a bidding war hop-scotches the bid to \$1200.

CHAD HASTINGS II
Five-thousand dollars.

The crowd is SILENT once again.

AUCTIONEER
Very charitable, Mr. Hastings.

INT. ESTATE LIBRARY - NIGHT

A crackling fire is burning. Chad Hastings II pries open the crate of books when his gorgeous wife, SAMANTHA (24), sways in wearing a silk pajama top.

CHAD HASTINGS II
Y'all look fabulous, Pumpkin.
Wanna see my new ol' books?

SAMANTHA
No, Dumplin'.
(beat)
Wanna make Chad Hastings the Third?

CHAD HASTINGS II
Looky here. A leather Excelsior
journal from 1864 in Colorado.

SAMANTHA
Looky there. That Yankee trash is
falling apart like my nightie, and
I'm walking upstairs. Y'all want an
heir to your silly book collection?

Chad sees his lovely wife climbing the stairs seductively.

CHAD HASTINGS II
But the whole last part of the
journal is different handwriting.
(MORE)

CHAD HASTINGS II (CONT'D)

Don't ya want to know who that
Captain S. J. Johnson was?

SAMANTHA

Don't y'all wanna do the dirty
deed?

CHAD HASTINGS II

Don't ya care about who finished
writing this journal?

SAMANTHA (O.S.)

Put your peepers on. Not a stitch
on me.

Chad runs upstairs, leaving the journal open to the wind from
an open window before the fireplace. The pages turn to
"December 3, 1864."

The spirit of WAKAN LONG RIVER (V.O.) reads from his journal.

WAKAN LONG RIVER (V.O.)

My Chief, Black Kettle, told me
that when I was born fifteen
winters ago, I peed a great river
right away, so my mother named me
Long River. But, when he saw my
eyes were so clear after birth, he
said I was a seer, a Wakan, touched
by the supernaturals.

We hear Chad and Samantha giggle.

The wind advances the journal to "1858"

WAKAN LONG RIVER (V.O.)

My older brother and I were nearby
when gold was discovered. At eight
winters old, I spoke what the
whites call Cheyenne, Ute,
Arapahoe, Apache, Sioux, English
and Spanish. I remember all words
easily.

We hear Chad and Samantha moan in delight.

The wind advances the journal to "Lower Sand Creek, December
1, 1964"

WAKAN LONG RIVER (V.O.)

They whipped us hoping we would
tell them where Chief Tall Bull and
Chief Little Raven were, but we did
not speak. I understand them.

(MORE)

WAKAN LONG RIVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They brag about the Henry's firing fifteen shots for each one musket ball the old men fired from our camp. They laugh at the white flag and American flag above Chief Black Kettle's lodge. They want all of Colorado. Chivington leaves saying the Farmer's Almanac didn't say anything about snow. God damn snow, he says. Johnson writes more stories in his journal then whips us more. Who will save you now? He writes to preserve thoughts. I admire that about him. Then, he was shot with two arrows in the heart. Hotamitaneo, my brother said. Dog Soldiers, I said. Tall Bull and Wolf that Howls came to save us! I took Johnson's journal to write my thoughts in it.

The wind advances the journal one page "Two Days ago - Cheyenne Reservation, Sand Creek, November 29, 1864"

TEARS are drawn around the page.

WAKAN LONG RIVER (V.O.)

This land not only talks. It cries. Before sunrise the day of the massacre at Sand Creek, Chief Black Kettle sent me and my older brother by two winters, Blackbird at Night, to hunt antelope. Colonel Chivington and six-hundred men, many cannons, and Henry rifles, gunned down two-hundred of our band, mostly women and children. They gutted them and wore scalps, ears, and sex-parts as war prizes. The few surviving members of our band disappeared like crows at night.

Upstairs, we hear Chad and Samantha moan one last time.
END FLASHBACKS

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Wes and Maggie, in wet clothes, stare at Wes's computer.

MAGGIE

What do think happened to the original treaty? The copy the tribes were given?

WES

Local historians think the signers of the treaty were slaughtered and the treaty burned, but rumors persisted.

MAGGIE

Like what?

WES

Kit Carson and William Bent were there at the treaty signing but both knew the Native Americans would eventually have no land in Colorado or anywhere else.

MAGGIE

Awful!

WES

In 1867, the Medicine Lodge treaty gave the Cheyenne a tiny reservation in Oklahoma, which the U.S. Supreme Court recently upheld.

MAGGIE

That was big!

WES

A year later, a young Lieutenant named George Armstrong Custer and his troops massacred Black Kettle's and his whole band and burned any treaties and the Cheyenne village to the ground!

MAGGIE

Then it was over?

WES

Over a year later where Tall Bull and the last Cheyenne Dog Soldiers were slaughtered at Summit Springs, Colorado, but stories of the old treaty resurfaced in Denver in 1904, according to a college buddy of mine, Johnny Greyfeather. I've just been too busy to follow up with him.

Maggie looks sad, while Wes looks at email.

WES (CONT'D)

Here's that e-mail from Silver Whitehorse, the attorney from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. She wants my help tracking the historical spread of smallpox.

MAGGIE

Maybe she's a crackpot. Do you think it would work, Wesley?

WES

I told her I'm heading to Vegas and will respond later. Let me know if we get that snow proposal funded.

Wes is not listening as he grabs papers and his laptop and shoves them in his shabby leather briefcase.

MAGGIE

Okay, Wesley. If we do, I'll bring it to you in Vegas personally. What happens in Vegas...

WES

(interrupts)

Thanks for taking my class.

Powell heads out of the office, oblivious to Maggie's come-on.

INT. DENVER COTTAGE - NIGHT

A dilapidated cottage is rented by a Ute Indian, JOHNNY GREYFEATHER (32). The MEOW of a kitten welcomes the tired teacher.

JOHNNY

Well, Black Kettle, another long night of Indian charity work.

He scoops up the charcoal kitten and drinks a beer.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

One more book sold. That makes a hundred in five years.

He picks up his book entitled "Giving it Back: the Re-appropriation of Stolen Indian Lands" and gently flings it toward his packed bookshelves.

There is a loud knock on the front door. The kitten runs to the bedroom as Johnny drags himself to the front door and opens it for Javier Senero in a trench coat flashing a badge.

SENERO

John Greyfeather? I'm Agent Gomez,
FBI. Your doorbell's busted.

JOHNNY

Thanks. I'll fix it by Halloween.
You got a warrant?

Senero FORCES his way past Johnny.

SENERO

Know about the theft of an eighteen-
sixty-five Indian treaty with the
Cheyenne?

JOHNNY

Theft was of the land, not the
treaty.

SENERO

A smart-ass Indian, huh?

Senero drops the act, and with one martial arts move, he has Johnny on the ground beneath his leather boot with a gun at his head, while wiping a clear goeey substance on the back of Johnny's neck with a rubber-covered finger.

SENERO (CONT'D)

Maybe I'll come back in a day or
two when you're gone. I'll get to
the bottom of this treaty bullshit.
Who's gonna save ya now?

Senero leaves Johnny in pain, but not dead.

INT. BUSINESS OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: "California Water and Trade, Inc., Sacramento,
California"

DANIEL WHITEHORSE (25), attorney and personal assistant,
brings coffee to CEO CLAYTON WEGNER, the most powerful man in
California.

DANIEL

The Governor is calling, sir, on
security issues again.

WEGNER

Tell him I'll talk to him in Vegas
at the Water Conference.

DANIEL

Anything wrong, sir?

WEGNER

More water shortages predicted by
the Farmer's Almanac. We must own
more primary water rights! Can you
imagine the eighth most powerful
nation without water?

DANIEL

Yes sir, I mean no, sir.

WEGNER

Our mission at CWT is to enhance
California's economic superiority.
See to it that I'm not disturbed.

DANIEL

Too late sir, I mean, you have a
call on your secure line two.

Wegner pauses for the solid doors to shut. He checks the
phone's security readings. It's MONTY MONTREAU (45), Security
Chief.

PHONE CONVERSATION BEGINS

WEGNER

I hope you and Senero put an end to
that Indian treaty nonsense.

MONTY (V.O.)

Yes sir, we're on it.

WEGNER

My job is to get California more
water, plain and simple.

MONTY (V.O.)

We're on Dr. Greyfeather in Denver
to see what he knows.

WEGNER

Good. Don't forget about the
primary water rights owned by that
old Chief Passing Cloud in Utah. If
I own those water rights, I can
trade them.

MONTY (V.O.)

That's where Senero is going next.

Wegner hangs up and smiles.

PHONE CONVERSATION ENDS

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C., GOVERNMENT OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: "Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C."

Over-stuffed Undersecretary for Treaties and Rights, BOB MILLS (62) PACES with the morning newspaper.

Young attorney, SILVER WHITEHORSE, 28, looking like a Disney Indian princess in a business suit, SWAYS in with the same newspaper.

SILVER

Isn't it great? Part of an eighteen-sixty-four journal written by a Cheyenne surfaced in Atlanta. What an archaeological find. Wonder what else is in it?

BOB MILLS

Weeks to retirement. It's hard helping five-hundred tribes on sixty million acres. We owe them billions, and now this. To top it off, Dr. Greyfeather called again.

SILVER

About the eighteen-sixty-five treaty again?

BOB MILLS

This time, he claims to have actual evidence that a third of Colorado should be returned to the Indians.

SILVER

Imagine that. I'm heading to Vegas to get help on my smallpox research. Could stop in Denver?

BOB MILLS

The least you could do is make these rumors go away until I retire. No waves. No waves.

SILVER

You got it, Bob. But I want to see
this Cheyenne's journal.

EXT./INT. PALACE HOTEL, LAS VEGAS - DAY

The Palace Hotel is a monstrous, new, water-guzzler in the
desert.

BEGIN MONTAGE - LAS VEGAS WATER USE

-- Desert scenes near Las Vegas (sparse vegetation)

-- Wasteful watering of golf courses.

-- Wasteful water fountains in front of lavish Palace Hotel
and leading into the auditorium.

END MONTAGE

INT. PALACE HOTEL AUDITORIUM - DAY

The auditorium is packed. The front row seats are reserved
for governors and guest speaker, but Wes Powell is absent.

WEGNER

Good morning esteemed governors,
ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to
the water conference. I'm Clayton
Wegner, CEO of California Water and
Trade. Water is the transparent
gold of the West...

Wegner GLARES at Powell's empty chair.

WEGNER (CONT'D)

As Professor Powell would say.

INT. PALACE HOTEL VEGAS-TIME-SHARE VACATION SALES OFFICE

In second-floor offices at the same hotel, an assortment of
vacationers listen to a high-powered female SALESPERSON (40).
Wes Powell sheepishly enters and sits near the exit.

SALESPERSON

Some of you came for the donuts and
coffee, or the cheap voucher for
staying here, but we can offer you
luxury all over the world.

Silver Whitehorse, dressed poorly in a jogging suit sneaks sits next to Powell like a mountain lion stalks a deer.

SILVER

Hi, I'm Silver Whitehorse. Tracked you down for statistics help?

WES

(shyly)

Why, why, yes. What are you doing here? I'm just here to save our university two-hundred dollars in travel costs.

SILVER

Same thing, I guess. And to get your help. Let's get out of here. Follow my lead.

We see a short promotional video, during which Silver whispers to Wes, as top salesman, REGGIE, 35, eyes his prey.

REGGIE

Hi, I'm Reggie Washington, personal investment professional. How long ya been married?

WES

Oh. We're not even...

SILVER

(interrupting)

Employed.

(beat)

And he has an incurable brain tumor. Forgets to zip up. And I'm joining the Peace Corps. To hell with all those student loans. Can we leave early, so he can take his medicine for incontinence?

REGGIE

You won't get the complementary gift basket or camera.

Reggie reluctantly stamps their vouchers. Silver grabs Wes's arm and drags him out a side door to the lobby.

WES

(shyly)

You saved my life in there. Can I buy you coffee?

(MORE)

WES (CONT'D)

Even with the brain tumor, I remember seeing a coffee shop in the lobby, and my Depends can hold up to a quart.

SILVER

Well, zip up and let's go. But don't you have a talk to give?

Wes checks his watch, swears, and runs to the auditorium.

INT. PALACE HOTEL AUDITORIUM - DAY

Wes races in just in time for his big talk.

WEGNER

(spouting his favorite cliché)

In the West where 'Whiskey is for drinkin', and water is for fightin' over.' And now, without further ado, give it up for Professor Wes Powell.

Wes passes Wegner on the way to the podium.

WEGNER (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Where the hell were you? Despite your behavior, I need you to join me in my suite for lunch.

Wes approaches the podium, where he is at ease. Large crowds don't bother him like intimate settings do.

WES

I thank you for the invitation. And I thank my research team who make me look smarter than I really am. Let me begin with some slides I just showed my class...

The male Governors of California and Colorado (60) pay particular attention to the PHOTO of Maggie Esposito.

WES (CONT'D)

Water is the transparent gold of the West, with entire economies based on supply, demand, and primary ownership rights...

Wes continues his spiel, while Wegner receives urgent text messages scrolling on his brand smartphone.

INSERT - TEXT MESSAGE ON SMARTPHONE, which reads: "bad news. hacked by a geek in seattle. fired lacey chow, network security. good news. print of treaty was authentic. 1904. senero found nothing in denver. greyfeather won't talk, ever again that is."

Wegner TAPS a series of angry texts in return. Minutes pass.

WES (CONT'D)

In conclusion, our climate models are improving, but they need a mathematical breakthrough. Until then, water conservation is the key to our survival. Thank you.

APPLAUSE. Security guards are waiting to brush Wes past the governors for handshakes, then up to Wegner's penthouse suite.

INT. PALACE HOTEL WEGNER'S PENTHOUSE SUITE - DAY

A white-topped chef, Two cute female Servers (22-25) and a BARTENDER (40) stand behind three tables of gourmet foods.

WEGNER

Professor Powell, just thirty years old and the world's best climate predictor. Make yourself at home.

Wes eyes the incredible opulence of the penthouse suite and the food, but avoids eye-contact with the servers.

WES

At home? Right. Call me, Wes. Everything looks delicious.

SERVER #1

Thanks, handsome. Want a drink?

WES

Iced tea would be lovely.

SERVER #1

Las Vegas Iced Tea coming up.

WEGNER

Look Wes, we've had a team of experts from Princeton, MIT, and Cal Tech analyze your newest spatial models. Best they've seen.

WES

Really? Thank you.

WEGNER

They say you're just one equation away from accurate ten- to ninety-day forecasts. The first ever!

WES

Hope they're right. Hey, what's in this tea?

SERVER #2

There's a tiny splash of rum flavoring for fun. Have some more.

She fills the glass and flirts.

WEGNER

I'm prepared to offer you ten times your current salary to work exclusively for us.

WES

My parents might roll over in their graves, but no. I like teaching.

WEGNER

I won't take 'no' for an answer, Wes. This envelope contains the three-grand honorarium plus a little extra. Be my guest in this suite tonight. I'm returning to Sacramento. Enjoy the food, drinks, and extras. All charged to my suite.

WES

I couldn't, sir.

WEGNER

Sure you can. Save a couple bucks. Here's my card. Call me tomorrow. Won't take 'no' for an answer.

Wegner exits with the lunch staff, but the two luscious servers stay behind. The Las Vegas Ice Teas take effect. Wes is so tipsy, he falls asleep as the servers make him "extra comfortable." A hidden security CAMERA in the ceiling records it all.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. PALACE HOTEL WEGNER'S PENTHOUSE SUITE - DUSK

Wes wakes up, alone, hung-over, and ridden with guilt, when his brand smartphone rings.

BEGIN PHONE CONVERSATION

SILVER (V.O.)

Hi Wes. We didn't have time for coffee. Can you meet me in the lobby and help me with my statistics?

WES

Fine, but I'm a little groggy.

SILVER (V.O.)

Have you been drinking?

WES

Iced tea, or so I thought. I'll be right down.

END PHONE CONVERSATION

INT. PALACE HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

As Powell nervously joins Silver in the lobby, she senses something is wrong with him.

Across the lobby, matching photos of both Wes and Silver on her smartphone is tough AGENT CHARI CHANTELL, 35, from the Department of Homeland Security.

SILVER

There you are. You don't look so good.

WES

I don't do well one on one. Sorry. And Wegner's company wants to hire me for a lot of money. They set me up in a big suite, and gave me drinks, an envelope of money...

SILVER

(interrupting)

So, you're on the take?

WES

No,

(beat)

(MORE)

WES (CONT'D)

No, I don't know, and I have a headache. Can we work on your statistics later? I'm sorry. Maybe at dinner. It's on the house.

SILVER

Maybe that would be better. I'll just see you at dinner then.

Silver walks away DISILLUSIONED. With her badge pulled, Chari pounces on Wes.

CHARI

Professor J. Wesley Powell?

WES

I think so. I mean, 'yes'.

CHARI

I'm Agent Chari Chantell with Homeland Security. How well did you know John Greyfeather?

WES

Johnny Greyfeather? Played intramural football together at Cal Berkeley.

CHARI

Did you know he was found dead?

WES

No, I haven't seen him since college.

CHARI

He lived just an hour south of you.

WES

Come all this way to tell me that?

CHARI

How well do you know Silver Whitehorse?

WES

She e-mailed me once. We met this morning. We almost had coffee.

CHARI

She telephoned Greyfeather monthly. Both are involved in an Indian activist group called Endagen. Know anything about it?

WES

Nothing. Ms. Whitehorse wanted some help on statistics. That's all.

CHARI

Endagen's on our watch list of potentially subversive groups.

WES

What does that have to do with me?

CHARI

If you find out anything more about Greyfeather's death, or anything 'de-stabilizing' -- here's my card.

WES

De-stabilizing?

They're interrupted by Maggie Esposito bouncing into the lobby wearing a tank top, tiny blue jean shorts, and backpack.

MAGGIE

Wesley, it's me! Can't believe I found you so quickly. It's fate.

WES

Maggie, this is Chari Chantell. Ms. Chantell, this is my graduate student, Maggie Esposito. What are you doing here? Something wrong?

MAGGIE

No, something's right. We got the snowfall distribution grant. I brought papers to sign. Can I crash in your place, the hotel's booked?

WES

What? I don't know. I guess so.

CHARI

Gotta run. Nice meeting you both.
(mumbling to herself)
What happens in Vegas...

WES

(interrupting)
Yes, nice meeting you Ms. Chantell. Maggie, let me check on my room.

Wes waits nervously in line until a male CLERK (30) is free.

CLERK

Your things have been moved to Mr. Wegner's suite. We just gave your room to that woman you were just speaking with.

WES

Any other rooms available?

CLERK

No. Booked for the water convention. Mr. Wegner paid for your suite anyway.

WES

Great. Okay Maggie, I guess it'll be fine for one night.

Maggie follows Wes like a puppy to Wegner's suite.

INT. PALACE HOTEL, WEGNER'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

MAGGIE

Wow. This is a palace. Look at all this food. And, there's a hot tub.

The unabashed Maggie drops her backpack and sheds her clothes on the way to the hot tub on the veranda.

WES

Maggie, not a good idea...

MAGGIE

(interrupting)

Papers you need are in my backpack. There's another express mail envelope, so I brought it too.

WES

Look, I've got dinner plans. I'm going to shower and head to dinner. Will you be fine here alone?

MAGGIE

Don't give me another thought.

Maggie splashes in the hot tub.

WES

Yeah. Right.

Wes pulls two express mail envelopes from the backpack. He opens the one from an R. Lindbloom from Denver.

He's shocked to find an authentic-looking Indian treaty from 1865 signed by Kit Carson. The treaty is protected in plastic covers.

WES (CONT'D)

Got to show this to Silver.

He tosses both mail envelopes on the table next to Wegner's envelope containing stacks of bills. He races to the shower.

After a few minutes in the shower, there is a KNOCK on the door. Maggie grabs a small kitchen towel and romps to the door. It's Silver.

SILVER

Is Professor Powell here?

MAGGIE

Hi. I'm Maggie, his Ph.D. student.
Wesley's still in the shower.

SILVER

Oh yes, grad student. Of course.

Wes races to the door, dripping wet with a towel around his waist, fumbling for words.

WES

I can explain. Silver Whitehorse,
this is my grad student, Maggie
Esposito. Maggie could you please
change into something more
appropriate. Maggie had some
important papers for me to sign, so
she took a plane out.

Maggie giggles and races to get her clothes.

Silver checks out Wes's body.

SILVER

Imagine she passed right through
security, and the other passengers
must have been thrilled.

WES

I was about to call you to show you
something important.

Silver sees the envelope of bills.

SILVER

The envelope full of money?

WES

No, I was sent a treaty signed by
Black Kettle and Kit Carson.

Silver is perturbed with Wes, but interested in the treaty.

SILVER

Can I see that? If this is real, it
could radically alter the political
and economic face of the West.

WES

Mailer's name is R. Lindbloom from
Denver. I bet Johnny Greyfeather
had this sent before he died.

SILVER

You knew Johnny was killed?

WES

Killed? I'm so sorry.
(examining the treaty)
And now we might know why.

The hidden security camera in the ceiling captures it all.

INT. PALACE HOTEL RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Silver, in a simple blue dress, leads shy, poorly-dressed
Wes, who carries his laptop computer into the fine
restaurant.

WES

Thanks, Silver, for the opportunity
to explain.

SILVER

I'm going to tap your brain,
(beat)
If there's anything left. Then,
I'll go.

A MAITRE D' (50) in a tuxedo guides them to a private room
with a panoramic view.

WES

We didn't...

MAITRE D'

(cheerfully interrupting)
It's all comped by Mr. Wegner. Tip
and all. Enjoy.

The Maitre d' leaves as a Waiter (35) brings champagne.

SILVER
Who are you, Professor Powell?

WES
I can explain, honest.

Over dinner, Wes explains and Silver slowly accepts the super-shy professor.

WES (CONT'D)
And I think I can help analyze your
smallpox data. But not tonight.
I'm...

SILVER
(interrupting)
Busy?

WES
Exhausted!

SILVER
Tomorrow then. On the way back to
Denver.

Silver smiles politely until the two "servers" dressed in slutty outfits see Wes leaving the restaurant.

SERVER #1
Howdy, Professor. Watch out for
those iced teas.

SERVER #2
And Clay's Ecstasy's a killer.

Wes realizes he was set up.

SILVER
Good night, Professor Powell.

Silver storms off across the lobby. Wes slumps with humiliation and guilt.

INT. PALACE HOTEL LOBBY - EARLY DAY

Silver reluctantly meets Wes and Maggie heading out of the lobby to catch a cab. Chari is viewing security camera VIDEO of Silver's hallway and the lobby, and she checks Silver's phone calls. Chari calls her faithful assistant, ANITA ROMO (32).

BEGIN PHONE CONVERSATION

CHARI

Anita, have 'em shadowed in Denver.

ANITA (V.O.)

Already set up, Ma'am.

CHARI

Did you intercept the security video of Wegner's suite?

ANITA (V.O.)

Not yet, Ma'am. Wegner's elusive.

CHARI

Don't take 'no' for an answer. Find me all of Mr. Wegner's connections.

ANITA (V.O.)

Will do, Ma'am, but I bet he's a very well-connected sleazeball C-E-Ho.

END PHONE CONVERSATION

INT. CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE -- EARLY MORNING

Fresh from the water conference, an impatient well-dressed GOVERNOR of California (60) meets with Wegner. The two powerful, greedy men jockey to be the lead dog.

GOVERNOR

Keep it clean in here. Did you hire that climate predictor from Colorado? Don't tell me 'no'.

WEGNER

I'll get him. Don't worry.

GOVERNOR

If we have those models, and nobody else does, we'll be in a much more powerful position economically.

WEGNER

That's not our only problem.

GOVERNOR

(whispering)

That treaty story re-surfacing? Who's in your way?

WEGNER

Based on my own security from Vegas, we think it might be Powell.

GOVERNOR

(controlling anger)

Never heard of him until this week, and yet he stands between me and the Presidency. Make him a deal.

INT. DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - LUGGAGE AREA - DAY

Wes and Silver wait for their luggage, while Maggie snickers with her tiny backpack on. Wes holds his tattered briefcase.

MAGGIE

Seriously? Who checks bags these days?

Silver glares at Maggie in her skimpy shorts and tank top.

SILVER

People who wear clothes?

The luggage arrives and Wes's suitcase has the tip of shirt sticking out. He and Silver notice and look around suspiciously as they exit.

Watching them from a distance are Two male Homeland Security Agents, EAVESLY (38) and PADILLA (35), and Clayton Wegner's henchman, Javier Senero.

EXT. AIRPORT PARKING LOT - DAY

Wes, Maggie, and Silver reach Powell's 1959 two-tone Chevy station wagon in the lot. The back seat is folded down. Maggie LEAPS into the front bench seat next to Wes.

Silver rolls her eyes in disgust as Wes loads the bags in the back of the car.

INT. CAR - DAY

Wes drives from the airport towards Denver and perspires in the close quarters with the two women.

WES

We're agreed then. We'll grab a quick lunch in town, then swing Silver back to the airport.

SILVER

With a quick look-see at Johnny Greyfeather's house, right?

MAGGIE

Count me in. Like to live dangerously.

WES

May well be. Somebody searched our suitcases at the airport.

EXT. DENVER, JOHNNY GREYFEATHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Winds HOWL and SNAP the yellow crime tape crossing the door. Several windows are broken in the dilapidated cottage.

Wes, Maggie, and Silver PEEK in the windows of the looted house.

MAGGIE

Crappy neighborhood for a community college teacher.

SILVER

All of us donate much of our salaries back to Indian charities.

WES

Who's we all? Endagen?

SILVER

How did you know? End-a-gen is short for End a Genocide of Indians. It's a charitable organization over a century old.

WES

It's not a militaristic organization or a subversive group?

Silver is defensive.

SILVER

What White person told you that? No, it's dedicated to restoring Indian lands and self-governing. Johnny was involved. So am I. We spoke on conference calls, but we never met.

MAGGIE

Can we go in? It's a crime scene.

A kitten MEOWS.

SILVER
Did you hear that?

MAGGIE
A kitten! Trapped!

WES
A kitten? Okay, we'll grab the
kitten and go.

INT. DENVER, JOHNNY GREYFEATHER'S HOUSE - DAY

They crawl under police tape and enter slowly. The floors creak.

Books are scattered all over, but Silver notices the book Johnny wrote is missing.

SILVER
Funny. I don't see Johnny's book.
"Giving it Back: the Re-
appropriation of Stolen Indian
Lands." On the phone he said he
always had several copies around.

MAGGIE
Greyfeather really his name?

SILVER
Given name was John Simonson.
Changed it to reflect his heritage.

WES
And yours? Silver Whitehorse.

SILVER
My great grandparents were ripped
from their parent's arms and hauled
off like cattle to Christian Indian
schools.

WES
Awful!

MAGGIE
Human trafficking!

The kitten MEOWS, and they head toward the bedroom.

SILVER

My mom was given the name Mary Carlisle. She gave me the name Silver Whitehorse.

In the bedroom, Wes pulls back a dresser to find the kitten, and a checkbook that is wedged between the dresser and wall falls next to the black kitten.

Sneaking up behind them is Denver police DETECTIVE ALDEER (42).

DETECTIVE ALDEER

They always return to the scene of the crime.

Wes slips the checkbook into his back pocket as he hands Maggie the kitten.

INT. DENVER POLICE STATION - DAY

DETECTIVE ALDEER

So that's your story? You happened by, and heard the kitten? Would you like an attorney present?

SILVER

I'm an attorney, and we had permission from the owner.

Wes and Maggie are perplexed by the news.

DETECTIVE ALDEER

Ma'am, I've been in this business seventeen years. The owner's dead, and I got a hundred bucks that says you never got the owner's permission.

Silver whips out her smartphone and dials.

SILVER

Dr. Greyfeather rented the home from Mr. Matthew Passing Cloud in Utah.

(into the phone)

Matthew, Silver here. I'm in Denver checking into Johnny's murder. Please tell the nice detective that we had permission to enter your home.

Silver hands the detective the phone.

DETECTIVE ALDEER
Yes, Mr. Passing Cloud, I'm
checking ownership on my computer.
(beat)
I see. Thank you very much.

SILVER
I'll take cash.

EXT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Javier Senero places an eavesdropping bug under the dashboard
in Powell's car.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Outside the station, Wes stops to think. Silver and Maggie stare at him.

WES

Brilliant, Silver. Now look up Rachel Lindbloom. Johnny wrote her his last check for thirty dollars. It cost ten dollars for our express mail envelope, so he may have mailed out others.

MAGGIE

Nice, Wesley. This is great fun, isn't it, Kitten?

INT. CAR - DAY

Powell chugs along with Maggie and Silver in front seat as before.

INT. JAVIER SENERO'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Two cars back, Senero can't make out what they're saying because Powell's old Chevy '59 wagon is too noisy.

INT. CAR - DAY

Powell chugs along smiling over at Silver, while Maggie pets the kitten.

SILVER

Found her. Dialing.

(beat)

I'm looking for Rachel Lindbloom.

Work?

(beat)

The Denver Mint? Can't get inside?

(beat)

Okay. Thanks.

WES

Denver Mint is here on Colfax.

SILVER

She's a tour guide. We can't sign up for a tour, because they're doing a security systems audit so tour guides are meeting briefly with groups outside, but you can't have backpacks, purses, or phones, even outside!

MAGGIE

I'll put the kitten under the seat in my sweatshirt.

WES

I'll put the treaty in my shirt.

Wes parks the car, and lowers the windows a bit. He hesitates at leaving his briefcase and laptop behind.

EXT. DENVER MINT, COLFAX AVENUE - DAY

A tour group of Junior High School Students (12 early teens, various types) and Two Teachers (mixed ages), Wes, Maggie, and Silver wait patiently outside the front door.

RACHEL LINDBLOOM (24), in uniform, greets the tour.

RACHEL LINDBLOOM

Thank you for joining us today, despite the fact that the mint is closed for its annual security systems audit.

TEACHER #1

I remember the tour last year. What would we be seeing if we were inside?

MALE STUDENT

(sneers to his teacher)
You don't remember?

The teacher glares back.

RACHEL LINDBLOOM

We'd be walking slowly past three large black-and-white photographs of the Mint when it opened in 1904.

MALE STUDENT

Do we get free samples?

Rachel smiles at the male student who is busy eyeing Maggie and Silver.

RACHEL LINDBLOOM
 There are no free samples.
 (beat for chuckles)
 The Mint played a central role in
 Colorado history.

Wes, Maggie, and Silver push forward to ask Rachel questions.

Senero has problems advancing because the junior high boys want to be near Maggie and Silver.

WES
 Ms. Lindbloom, we're friends of
 Johnny Greyfeather. I'm Wes Powell.
 Johnny had you mail me a package.

RACHEL LINDBLOOM
 (whispering)
 Yes, I remember. Poor John. Heart
 attack. Said you were the smartest
 person he knew. Needed your help.

SILVER
 Who else did you mail packages to?

RACHEL LINDBLOOM
 (whispering)
 Don't remember. Just doing a favor.
 (loudly)
 In fact, the stuffed Buffalo Head
 in the gift shop was presented in
 1913 from Dr. Henry Buck in a full
 Cheyenne headdress to commemorate
 the new Indian Head nickel. Native
 American stone masons helped build
 the mint.
 (whispering)
 It was Silver something, I remember
 the name because of the coins.

WES
 (whispering to Silver)
 You've got to catch that plane.

SILVER
 Let's go. Thanks, Ms. Lindbloom.

MAGGIE
 (whispers to Wes)
 I think that creepy guy in the back
 is following us.

SILVER

I agree. How can we lose him?

MALE STUDENT

(whispering)

I'll help you beautiful ladies out.

(loudly)

Security. This man in the brown jacket grabbed my butt and he's taking pictures with a smartphone.

Four well-armed Security Guards (mixed ages) appear from the front door and sides of the building, and cart Senero off.

Silver kisses the smiling young boy on the cheek.

EXT. DENVER MINT PARKING LOT - DAY

Wes, Silver, and Maggie find Wes's car has a broken rear window. His laptop is gone.

SILVER

Oh my God. Your laptop. Your climate model is gone.

Maggie frantically searches the car for the kitten.

MAGGIE

The kitten! The kitten! Oh here it is. Thank goodness.

WES

My laptop can be replaced. The main equations are stored on my rabbit's foot key chain. It's a USB memory drive. The models are useless without it.

SILVER

I have to hurry back to the airport. Package waiting for me.

EXT. DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Wes gets out of the car. Silver grabs her bag from the back. Maggie PLAYS with the kitten in the car. Surveillance cameras capture the moment.

SILVER

Bye, Maggie. Nice meeting you.

MAGGIE

Likewise. E-mail us again if needed.

WES

I'm sorry we didn't get to the stats help, maybe some other time?

SILVER

I know you're busy. I'm heading to visit old Passing Cloud in Utah after I get home, and I'll bet you and Maggie are going somewhere cozy for Spring Break?

WES

No, It's not like that. I'll be working on climate models. Good luck on your research. You can have the document Johnny sent to me.

SILVER

You keep it for now. He must have known it would be safe with you.

Wes and Silver share a moment.

The afternoon seems to pass in slow motion as everyone ponders their next steps.

BEGIN MONTAGE - THE AFTERNOON PASSES SLOWLY

-- Silver gives Wes a thankless hug good-bye at the airport.

-- Maggie snuggles next to Wes to stay warm on the ride back to Fort Collins.

-- Senero is released from the Mint security.

-- Wes drops Maggie off at her apartment. She hands Wes the kitten.

MAGGIE

I can't keep the kitten at my place. No pets allowed!

Wes is unsure about taking the kitten.

WES

I don't know...

MAGGIE

Greyfeather was your friend!

Wes reluctantly accepts the kitten.

-- Wes returns at night to his house with the kitten.

END MONTAGE

INT. COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY, WES POWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Wes faxes the historic document to Agent Chantell and Silver, and prepares for class. The kitten sleeps on the morning newspaper. His phone rings.

BEGIN PHONE CONVERSATION

WES

Wes Powell here.

CHARI (V.O.)

Agent Chari Chantell, DHS. I'm e-mailing you an interesting photo.

WES

Did they find my computer?

Powell sees the photo of he and a dangerous-looking Javier Senero at the Mint.

CHARI (V.O.)

No, but you may be in some danger. The man stalking you is Javier Senero, a private security agent indirectly linked with Mr. Wegner at CWT.

WES

Hold on, I've got a call on line two, my conference call line.

SILVER (V.O.)

Hi, Wes. This is Silver.

WES

Silver, I have you on speaker. We have Agent Chari Chantell, Homeland Security on the line also.

CHARI (V.O.)

Professor, this is most irregular.

SILVER (V.O.)

Hi everyone. Wes, thanks for the fax. We're checking it out at the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

(MORE)

SILVER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Anyone see today's newspaper? Front
page in the Times and Associated
Press?

Powell grabs the local newspaper from under the kitten.

We see a jet over Colorado.

WES
Same Cheyenne journal writer from
one-hundred-forty-five years ago.

CHARI (V.O.)
So it is.

SILVER (V.O.)
In three-hundred words, he claimed
that preachers and missionaries
were gullible, and as unnecessary
as stone churches, soldiers, and
warmongers. Causing quite a stir.

WES
Who is this guy, Wakan Long River?

CHARI (V.O.)
Professor Powell, your first
concern is this Senero fellow. Just
stay put until my team and I
arrive. We're about to land in
Fort Collins.

WES
I've got to get over to the
greenhouse for today's class on
Colorado vegetation zones.

SILVER (V.O.)
Call me later, Wes. Bye.

Powell checks his watch and calendar, drops his phone, and
races to teach his last class before Spring Break.

CHARI (V.O.)
Professor Powell, stay put until I
get there. That's an order.

END PHONE CONVERSATION

INT. COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY GREENHOUSE - DAY

Wes meets Maggie at the door of the greenhouse and hands her the kitten. Maggie is dressed in skimpy summer clothes for the hot greenhouse, which pleases the males in the class.

WES

I know it's warm in here but try to focus on the plants and their scientific names, because they'll be on the exam after Spring Break.

Camera follows the Ten Students (mixed types) as Wes gives a tour of greenhouse plants.

Two rifle SHOTS shatter the greenhouse roof. Wes COVERS Maggie who COVERS the kitten. Everyone is scared, but no one is hurt.

LATER

Police are interviewing everyone, and Agent Chantell enters the greenhouse with her team, Agents Leavesly and Padilla.

CHARI

That's it, Professor. You have to disappear for a few days. We'll use your home as a trap.

WES

Disappear? I can't. My car's in the shop getting a new back window.

CHARI

We have a vehicle for you, and a new smartphone, and even a new ID and credit card. Take Ms. Esposito for her safety too. Get to an isolated area, quickly.

WES

How far away? When can we return?

CHARI

We'll call you. Just disappear.

MAGGIE

Let's go Wesley. It's Spring Break. We can use my laptop for modeling. It's got all of your programs on it anyway. Come on, kitten.

WES

Credit card too? Why go through all
this trouble?

CHARI

The Joint Chiefs. The military
would like your climate models.
They want us to keep you alive.
Now, go!

Wes heads out RELUCTANTLY. Maggie and the kitten are only too
HAPPY to tag along.

MAGGIE

Where are we going to hide, Wesley?

WES

To the most desolate area in the
least-populated region near us, the
Powder River Basin, Wyoming.

EXT. SUSSEX, WYOMING, OLD GAS STATION - DAY

After a four-hour drive, much of it back roads and gravel,
Wes and Maggie pull into a gas station.

SUPER: "Powder River Basin, Sussex, Wyoming"

Local historian and proprietor, CYRUS WELLDON (72) pumps the
gas, and talks everyone's ears off.

CYRUS WELLDON

Yep, Cheyenne Indians would hide
from soldiers here, all winter.

While old Cyrus talks about Native American history, Wes
daydreams.

DREAM: Two Native Americans ride horses in the windswept
basin, hunting antelope in peace.

CYRUS WELLDON (CONT'D)

The B&B is right across the street.
Tell my grandson I sent ya.

INT. SUSSEX, LOBBY BED AND BREAKFAST - DAY

BILLY WELLDON, 17, drools as Maggie walks in. Wes follows
with two small bags of clothes.

BILLY WELLDON

Welcome to the Aunt Elope B&B. I'm Billy Welldon. One room with a view of the historic Powder River?

MAGGIE

I'm sure we'll be very cozy.

Wes shows great discomfort masquerading as a married couple.

WES

We have a lot of work to do. Have you got two rooms?

BILLY WELLDON

Let's see. Our next reservation is in two months. Ma'am, I can bring up an extra antelope-soap-on-a-rope if you need it.

MAGGIE

Thanks Billy. How about a bowl of milk for our kitty?

BILLY WELLDON

No problemo. And I'll ask Marie Thunderhills, to whip up some fry-bread, rice, red beans, and coffee. No place to eat for miles.

WES

Thanks, Billy. Maggie, you can continue working on your dissertation. Get busy.

Maggie stomps upstairs to her room, but she smiles when she sees the rooms have a connecting door.

Downstairs in the lobby, Wes's new smartphone rings.

WES (CONT'D)

Hello?

CHARI (V.O.)

Chari here. How's the Powder River? We've intercepted phone messages from your Mr. Clayton Wegner. He tries to encrypt everything, and he has dangerous friends.

WES

I met two of them.

CHARI (V.O.)

He's offering you millions for exclusive climate models. Don't contact him. Our trap is set. Stay hidden. Oh, Ms. Whitehorse has been calling. I wouldn't call her.

WES

Right. Stay hidden. Got it. Bye.

Wes hangs up and walks up to Billy. He pulls out the envelope of cash given to him by Clayton Wegner in Las Vegas.

WES (CONT'D)

Billy, here's five-hundred bucks in advance. May I use your smartphone?

BILLY WELLDON

Sure, Mr.
(beat)
Smith?

WES

It's really Powell.

Wes dials Silver and strolls out on the porch for privacy. The view of the Powder River brings instant tranquility.

BEGIN PHONE CONVERSATION

SILVER (V.O.)

You're using William Welldon's phone? Been trying to reach you all day.

WES

Sorry. I can explain.

SILVER (V.O.)

Somebody, who fits Senero's description, tried to kill Passing Cloud this afternoon. We're escaping to your place, even if we have to drive all night.

WES

I'm not there. I'm at the Aunt Elope Bed and Breakfast near Sussex, Wyoming, hiding out.

SILVER (V.O.)

Alone?

WES

No. With Maggie, but it's not what you think. Agent Chantell told us to get lost. Someone shot at us. Chari gave us a car and everything.

SILVER (V.O.)

We have no choice. We need your help. We're driving from Utah.

She checks the map by her side. Wes hears the car screech.

SILVER (V.O.)

We can get there by morning if we drive all night.

WES

Be safe. Use this number. Homeland Security knows where we are. No telling who else does.

END PHONE CONVERSATION

INT. SUSSEX, LOBBY B&B - DAY

The next day, Silver and an ancient Ute Indian, PASSING CLOUD, 80, exhausted from an all-night drive, drag themselves into the lobby. Wes and Maggie are eating a fabulous breakfast with Billy Wellldon.

BILLY WELLDON

Welcome to the Aunt Elope Bed and Breakfast. One room with...

WES

(interrupting)

I'm so glad you're okay. You didn't call. I was worried.

MAGGIE

What's she doing here?

SILVER

Hiding out. Like you. We didn't want to tip off our location. You never know who's listening. This is Matthew Passing Cloud, or just, Passing Cloud, a Ute elder.

PASSING CLOUD

I smell fry bread and coffee.

BILLY WELLDON

Come join us. We're honored to
serve an elder.

MARIE THUNDERHILLS (45), the cook, brings two plates of food,
and cups of coffee. While eating quickly, they hear a large
car screech into Cyrus Welldon's gas station across the
street. Wes peeks out the front door. It is Javier Senero.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. SUSSEX, LOBBY B&B - DAY

Wes races to the others.

WES

Is there a back door?

BILLY WELLDON

Yep. Through the kitchen.

WES

It's Senero. Cyrus will stall him with local history, but we have to leave now. Billy, bring Silver's jeep around back. Here's one-thousand dollars. That's a dangerous man after us.

MAGGIE

I'll get our things from upstairs.

SILVER

He couldn't have followed us.

WES

That's why we're leaving the DHS car behind. Security leak.

Billy brings Silver's jeep to the back. Wes, Maggie, Silver, Passing Cloud and the kitten sneak out and load into the jeep. Senero storms into the lobby.

BILLY WELLDON

Welcome to the Aunt Elope Bed and Breakfast. One room with view of the historic Powder River?

SENERO

In this rustic dumpster? Who else is staying here? Describe them.

Before Wes drives off, Maggie sneaks around front with a Swiss Army knife and cuts a few hoses under Senero's hood.

BILLY WELLDON

Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, nice black couple. Wilma Gruinheimer, big woman. Left days ago. That's it.

Senero sees the breakfast dishes, smiles, and takes out a five-dollar bill for Billy.

SENERO
I'll just look around for myself.

BILLY WELLDON
Wow. Five dollars. Thanks.

Senero checks upstairs, but hears the jeep drive off.

SENERO
Who just drove off?

BILLY WELLDON
Milk delivery. Small town.

SENERO
Don't think so. I'll be back to ask
you a few more questions, punk.

Senero races to his big Cadillac and is in hot pursuit south
down a dirt farm road. Fluids drip.

EXT. DIRT ROAD NEAR SUSSEX WYOMING - DAY

Wes calls Chari.

BEGIN PHONE CONVERSATION

WES
Being chased by Senero.

Wes guns it. Dust flies on the bumpy old road.

CHARI (V.O.)
Can't be! Your car is stationary in
Sussex.

BAM. Senero shoots a .45 and grazes Silver's rental jeep.

WES
They're shooting at us. They knew
where we were. What do we do?

CHARI (V.O.)
Swerve. A lot. I'll send a copter.

The chase proceeds. BAM. BAM. BAMS. There are several near
misses. Finally, one loud bang. Senero's car freezes.

Powell and company get away.

Senero calls Cyrus Welldon's tow service.

SENERO

I've got car trouble, about twenty miles south on a freakin' dirt road. Get here freakin' quick.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUSSEX, OLD GAS STATION - DAY

CYRUS WELLDON

Be right there, sir. Yes, sir.

Cyrus ignores the call, waving to Billy across the street.

INT. CLAYTON WEGNER'S OFFICE - DAY

In Sacramento, CWT Security gets a report of Wes Powell driving south to Douglas. Monty informs Wegner.

MONTY

Senero fired shots and missed.

WEGNER

The old Indian in Utah didn't die either. Senero's a liability now. Send a clean-up crew in a chopper. Powell is your problem now.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Faster than Chari's team, a BLACK helicopter descends on Senero's Caddy. Two mercenary Thugs (35) shoot Senero.

Chari's team arrives in their chopper. After a shoot-out, they arrest Wegner's hired guns.

EXT. DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL, WYOMING - DAY

Powell and company are shaken from the events of the day.

WES

We have to get totally off the grid. We have to change clothes and ditch the smartphones.

MAGGIE

I'll find some volunteers.

WES

Offer one-thousand dollars cash for clothes and a smartphone. We'll mail them back.

Maggie sizes up the lunchtime crowds and speaks with a few kids who look like they could use the money. In no time at all, Wes (or Clayton Wegner) is out four-thousand dollars. But Wes FINDS the bugging device Wegner put in the envelope of money. He HANDS the tracking device to a student.

WES (CONT'D)

Hey, kid, put this in your principal's car. Here's a hundred bucks.

Wes TOSSES Chari's smartphone into a soda pop delivery truck.

SILVER

Where to now?

WES

Laramie to trade cars with a former grad student. Somebody has to return this rental jeep to the Salt Lake City Airport.

SILVER

That's right, I almost forgot. Might be looking for it. Supposed to return it this morning. We're such a burden on you.

WES

We'll all be fine. We just need a better place to hide.

Department of Homeland Security satellites lose Silver's jeep among all the other jeeps in the high school parking lot, and Chari gets a text message saying they lost them.

Likewise, a BLACK CWT chopper overhead cannot pinpoint Powell.

EXT. LARAMIE WYOMING HOME - DAY

Next to Interstate 80, the old Oregon Trail, Wes waves good-bye to his former grad student and another four-thousand dollars as she drives to Salt Lake City to return Silver's jeep. Wes and company get in the former student's old car, and it BACKFIRES. Everyone is unsettled.

SILVER

Another gorgeous female grad student. You got a harem?

WES

She's a great spatial modeler.

MAGGIE

Cram it, Silver. Wesley's a mentor, that's all.

SILVER

I'm sorry Maggie and Wes. I'm exhausted and scared. I spoke without thinking.

MAGGIE

I know. But it's not easy hiding four people.

SILVER

I'm sorry, okay? But I'm still scared, and we need to hide too.

PASSING CLOUD

Try the mountains. We Utes hid there for centuries.

WES

We'll head to Pingree Park, to our snow lab up the Poudre River Canyon. Our other grad students can hide us for a while.

INT. CHARI'S TEMPORARY OFFICE, FORT COLLINS - DAY

Chari's assistant, Anita Romo, tracks Silver's car rental agreement and has the rental company PING the lost car. It's in Laramie, but heading back to Salt Lake City.

CHARI

Let Ms. Whitehorse return the car.

Then pick her up for questioning.

ANITA

Will do. I'll have a team meet her.

CHARI

What was she doing in Laramie? And where's Powell?

ANITA

Powell's smartphone is making stops at several gas stations in Douglas, Wyoming. Maybe he has the runs?

CHARI

He ditched the phone. Damn him. The bad guys will know where he is, and we won't. Bring me the thugs who killed Senero.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD, COLORADO - PRESENT DAY

Wes stops at a convenience store to buy food, beer, and a newspaper before heading up the Poudre Canyon to the snow lab. He dreams of the same geography in the past.

DREAM -- Wes dreams of a Ute trail being used by Wakan Long River to hunt for gold nuggets in the Poudre River canyon.

Wes exits the store with great enthusiasm and a newspaper.

WES

Front page again. Associated Press.

MAGGIE

What?

WES

The same Cheyenne journal keeper. The treaty, then he slams religion, and here he writes a "how to" guide for finding gold in the Colorado Rockies. Who is this guy?

SILVER

That could start another gold rush.

WES

And, there's a map.

MAGGIE

Why are you staring so intently at the map? Going after gold now?

Wes pulls into heavy traffic up the usually empty rural mountain road due to modern gold rushers.

WES

Huh? The Indian's map shows a double clustering pattern of gold locations.

EXT. PINGREE PARK FOREST AND SNOW LAB - NIGHT

It's SUNSET, SNOW is falling. The long, treacherous road tires them all. Wes approaches the lab with the beer. Grad student, JOSH, 24, answers after SEVERAL KNOCKS.

JOSH

Pizza's here. Hi, Professor Powell. Surprise science inspection?

WES

Drop the formalities, Josh. We just need a place to hide out.

JOSH

You get the bags. I'll carry the beer. s that Maggie? Wow. And another hottie?

WES

An attorney friend, Silver, And a Ute elder, Passing Cloud.

JOSH

You're just in time for our Spring Break beach party. Welcome.

INT. SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA, OLD BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

LACEY CHOW, 26, fired CWT computer security lead, orders a drink, as Daniel Whitehorse walks in. They recognize each other.

LACEY CHOW

Daniel. Over here.

DANIEL

What are you doing here?

LACEY CHOW

Hiding out. I think Monty wants to kill me. How about you?

DANIEL

The same. I left today feeling Wegner and Monty were after me for no reason, honest.

LACEY CHOW

Those two are the criminals. Extortion, bribery, maybe worse.

(MORE)

LACEY CHOW (CONT'D)

I saw files they didn't want me to see after we got hacked by a fellow geek from Seattle named C-four of all things.

DANIEL

We could hide out at a friend's place in Davis. He's skiing Tahoe.

LACEY CHOW

Good idea. After my drink, let's talk treason. Let's bring 'em down.

DANIEL

Wegner and Monty? Literally?

LACEY CHOW

No. Electronically.

DANIEL

Count me in.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. SACRAMENTO, CLAYTON WEGNER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Wegner calls an emergency e-meeting. He and Monty are speaking on a high-security conference call with a THUG.

WEGNER

We have him. He's at the Snow Laboratory in the mountains west of Fort Collins up the Poudre Canyon.

MONTY

One road in and out.

THUG #1 (V.O.)

How can you be sure it's Powell?

WEGNER

We have our ways. It's Powell's group.

MONTY

We're moving vehicles and supplies for a strike tomorrow night.

WEGNER

Powell must be taken alive to finish his climate models. He must think the others are unharmed.

THUG #1 (V.O.)

Got it. Use our offshore account.

The Thug hangs up.

WEGNER

Send another team to find Lacey Chow and Daniel Whitehorse. I want you personally to fetch Powell.

MONTY

You got it, Boss.

WEGNER

Fail me and you're gone, Monty.

INT. PRESENT - PINGREE PARK FOREST AND SNOW LAB - NIGHT

SUPER: "One Night Later"

Wes and Silver work all day and into the night on Maggie's laptop. Maggie is doing laundry. Other graduate students, LAURIE, GREG, and TONY (22-26) are working on laptops nearby.

Passing Cloud is outside making homemade snowshoes for his group. He has a vision.

VISION: Passing Cloud imagines a Ute war party in 1866 chasing Cheyenne Indians out of their mountains as the SNOW increases.

BACK IN THE LAB

SILVER

It's true, isn't it?

WES

Very statistically sound.

SILVER

This means that treaties were signed, on average, a year and a half after a smallpox outbreak or a major massacre?

WES

You have a strong case against the U.S. Government for forcing treaties under duress.

SILVER

My boss at the Bureau of Indian Affairs isn't going to like this.

WES

It's Science magazine quality. Submit your paper online.

SILVER

You mean 'our' paper.

Silver SMILES at Wes, whom she is just beginning to trust. Wes turns his attention to the Cheyenne's gold rush map.

WES

Double clustering. He's telling us that gold isn't just found in gold hotspots. He's saying there are hotspots within hotspots.

Maggie wanders in and SQUEEZES between Wes and Silver at the computer bench. Wes is having an epiphany.

WES (CONT'D)
Brilliant. That Indian was a
genius.

MAGGIE
You think he understood double
clustering?

Josh interrupts everyone BANGING a pan with a spoon.

JOSH
Dinner everyone. Tonight we feature
formaggio e maccherone.

SILVER
Sounds exquisite.

MAGGIE
You mean macaroni and cheese?

JOSH
When served with the Professor's
expired generic beer, it becomes a
gourmet Spring Break feast.

WES
You're a great host, Josh. This may
help get you that Ph.D.

Passing Cloud races in with four pair of homemade snowshoes.

PASSING CLOUD
Snowmobiles! Almost here!

Four snowmobiles ROAR up to the building next door. Monty and
Three heavily-armed Thugs (mixed ages) surround the building,
as Monty speaks into a megaphone.

The thugs cock and aim their automatic weapons at the snow
lab.

Next door, Passing Cloud is handing out his snowshoes.

MONTY (O.S.)
Professor Powell, please come out
now and no one will be hurt.

WES
Passing Cloud is right. Let's get
out of here. Josh, can you folks
create a diversion?

JOSH

No problem. Laurie, Greg, and Tony -
out the back! Take your snowshoes
and run up canyon so they barely
see you.

Everyone SCRAMBLES. Powell loads up Maggie's laptop in a
backpack. Snowmobiles ROAR and CHASE after the grad
students.

Maggie grabs the kitten.

WES

Thanks, Josh.

MAGGIE

Yeah! Thanks, Josh. Go out for
Margs next weekend?

JOSH

(laughs)
If we're all alive!

EXT. PINGREE PARK FOREST AND SNOW LAB - NIGHT

Wes, Silver, Maggie, and Passing Cloud are on snowshoes
escaping from Monty and Three Thugs on snowmobiles. Monte is
in the rear.

The forest is too thick, and tree branches knock THUG #1 off
his snowmobile.

THUG #2 gets her snowmobile stuck in a tree well.

THUG #3 is frustrated and stops his snowmobile, take off his
gloves, grabs his automatic rifle and starts firing into to
the forest.

Wes and company hide behind large trees to avoid the bullets.

Monty takes out a pistol and fires it in the air to stop the
Thugs.

MONTY

We need them alive, idiots!
(beat)
Back to the lab. We'll see if they
left anything behind, and we'll
beat them back to the main road on
the sleds.

Monty turns back to the snow lab with his snowmobile.

Monty takes out his pistol and storms into the lab.

INT. PINGREE PARK FOREST AND SNOW LAB - NIGHT

Monty stands in the doorway with his pistol drawn.

Josh enters from the bathroom with his hands in the air.

JOSH
I surrender, Sheriff!

MONTY
Sheriff? Yeah, that's right!
Where's Wes Powell?

JOSH
Drove out an hour ago!

MONTY
Who's with him?

JOSH
Grad student I didn't recognize.

MONTY
Black girl?

JOSH
Dark brown.

Monty shoots the floor to Josh's side and scares him.

JOSH (CONT'D)
Black girl, Sheriff. They in
trouble? Stopped to see if we were
all right. Power's been going out a
lot.

MONTY
Drove out? What's with all these
people on snowshoes?

JOSH
Bobcat sightings. That's what we
do! Map bobcats and measure snow.
Research lab!

Monty cocks his rifle.

MONTY
You could do that in the daylight.

JOSH
Bobcats are nocturnal!

Monty shoots to Josh's other side, as the three Thugs enter the lab with guns drawn.

JOSH (CONT'D)
Nighttime only! Professor Powell
may be back. We cooked him supper!

Josh points to a table behind him with four bowls of hot mac & cheese, and a bottle of rum on the table.

The Thugs lunge toward the mac & cheese and rum.

MONTY
Powell is coming back?

JOSH
Drove to a clearing to make a phone
call. No service here.

Monty checks his phone. "No Service."

The Thugs are already eating and drinking. Monty yells at them.

MONTY
Let's go. We'll catch Powell on the
road.
(stares at the food)
Haven't had mac & cheese in years!
Five minutes! Then, we go!

Monty and the Thugs stuff their faces.

JOSH
Mind if I go look for bobcats?

Monty and the Thugs are too busy eating to notice Josh slipping out.

EXT. PINGREE PARK FOREST AND SNOW LAB - CONTINUOUS

Josh steps outside under a light.

He pulls an empty yellow pill bottle from his back pocket that reads, "Take one for sleep."

He smiles and runs off.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

Wes, Silver, Maggie, and Passing Cloud reach the road.
They unstrap their snowshoes. Silver helps Passing Cloud.

SILVER

What now?

WES

Hitch into town. Hope for a van.

PASSING CLOUD

With heat.

Maggie pulls out the kitten from her sweatshirt pocket.

MAGGIE

And milk.

A BLACK Suburban SCREECHES to a halt beside them.

Wes looks for an escape route, but realizes the limited options for the group.

The two DHS agents, Eavesly and Padilla, jump out and flash their badges.

AGENT EAVESLY

I'm Agent Eavesly. This is Agent Padilla. Hop in.

AGENT PADILLA

We have our boss, Agent Chari Chantell on the speaker phone.

After carefully reviewing the badges, Wes and company hop into the warm, comfortable Suburban.

CHARI (V.O.)

Professor, and you others, we're taking you into protective custody, a safe house down the road.

WES

You should be after the Californians, the bad guys. We're the good guys.

CHARI (V.O.)

It's for your own safety.

Agent Eavesly tears down the road toward Fort Collins.

CHARI (V.O.)

Agent Padilla has a special gun to insert a micro-transmitter in each of you. We're not going to lose you again. Only hurts for a minute.

Just as Padilla is about to shoot Wes, a BLACK Hummer blocks the road ahead of them. Monty and Thug #1 wait on each side of the road, but they look drowsy.

SILVER

Look out!

They narrowly avoid a crash.

Monty and the Thug trudge to the driver's and passenger's doors of the DHS van, open them, and SHOOT Agents Padilla and Eavesly with tranquilizer shots in the neck.

Monty sticks his head in the door and glares at Wes.

MONTY

You're coming with us, Professor.

CHARI (V.O.)

Eavesly? Padilla? What's going on?

WES

I'll come peacefully. Leave the others alone. How did you find me?

MONTY

We have connections, you freakin' idiot.

Wes LUNGES from the back seat, grabs Padilla's micro-transmitter gun, and SHOOTS Monty in the neck.

Monty drops his tranquilizer gun, which Wes trades up for.

Wes shoots Monty in the chest, as Silver swings her door open to hit the groggy Thug #1. Wes throws the car into reverse.

Silver shuts her door then LUNGES forward to steer.

Wes forces Eavesly's foot to the pedal, and the Suburban races backward.

Monty's partner tries to break Monty's fall, then he stumbles after the Suburban.

CHARI (V.O.)

Powell? What the hell is happening?

When Wes thinks he's far enough back, he lays off the gas, and takes the driver's spot.

He races forward, shooting the tranquilizer at Monty's partner as they drive by him.

END OF SHOW