

SKULLS

Story by

Patrick Aison & Dan Trachtenberg

Screenplay by

Patrick Aison

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The following is a transcription of a draft of Prey (titled Skulls at this point) dated August 3rd 2021. The actual script contained revision markers, and page headers that denoted which revised draft they came from. I was unable to preserve these, but I have left the page breaks and in one case two iterations of the same scene intact.

I hope you all enjoy!

Aaron Percival aka Corporal Hicks.

1 OMITTED

1

2 TITLE: **SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS, SEPTEMBER 1719**

2

A HAWK soars high above the plain. The rhythmic FLAP of its wings resounds.

Suddenly an ARROW cuts through the air. It zips toward the bird -- then misses, blown off course by the wind. *

The arrow arcs silently and falls back to the ground below where a young Comanche woman, NARU ["nah-doo"] (23), watches, holding her bow. She's pissed. Naru's name means "fighter," which she earned by perpetually refusing to do as she's told. Naru has a SCAR running diagonally across her right shoulder.

She fires a second arrow. It misses. There's only one more arrow left in her QUIVER. She nocks it. Shoots. Misses with that one too. Argh.

To add to Naru's frustration her younger brother, TAABE ["tah-bay"] (21), stands beside her shaking his head in admonition. He has a scar on his shoulder that matches Naru's.

Taabe fires his arrow, then turns to face her -- so confident in his marksmanship he doesn't need to watch. Taabe's name means "sun" like the star in the sky. Lets you know his standing in the group.

TAABE
Patience, pâtsí.

Taabe offers a wry grin as he uses the Comanche word for big sister.

Above them -- **SKUUP** -- Taabe's arrow pierces the hawk's torso sending out a plume of feathers. The bird drops the fish as both fall back to earth. There's always another predator.

TAABE (CONT'D)

You would have hit it if you waited.

NARU

Don't give me that 'big sister' crap. You only hit because you used my shots to gauge the wind.

Taabe smiles.

TAABE

That's true.

WASAPE ["wah-sah-pay"] (20s), big with a stubborn face, his name means "bear", comes running out to meet them. He looks at Taabe.

WASAPE

You left without telling me.

TAABE

We left when we were ready.

NARU

We don't need your permission to hunt.

Wasape glares at her.

WASAPE

You shouldn't even be here. Hunting is men's work.

A second man, HUUPI ["whoo-pee"] (20s), crooked teeth, runs just behind Wasape, following him.

Taabe is proud of his sister.

TAABE

She's the one who spotted the hawk.

Taabe starts toward where the bird landed in the tall grass.

Naru steps past Wasape, ignoring him. She makes a sound by sucking her teeth -- **Tich-Tich**. The grass parts at her feet and SARII ["suh-dee"], Naru's dog, appears.

He's a small pup, about 30 pounds, unknown breed -- looks a little like a black lab and terrier cross. He's got short dark hair with a lone white stripe down the center of his forehead.

NARU

Petsuh!

Sarii bounds off into the grass to retrieve the fish.

Naru walks to the stream.

She refills her water bladder.

Wasape makes his way to her.

WASAPE

You think you're a good hunter?

Naru looks up at him. He points to Taabe.

WASAPE (CONT'D)

You're only here because you're his sister.

NARU

And you're only here because you're the warchief's son.

Ouch. Huupi looks away.

Naru seals up the water bladder. Steps around Wasape, walks toward Sarii.

A group of YOUNG COMANCHE are nearby using the stream's reflective surface as a mirror as they wash and braid their hair. They watch Taabe, in awe of his hunting acumen.

He picks up the downed HAWK. Taabe handles the bird with reverence as he slides his arrow out of its body.

Taabe gestures to a KID nearby with a BOW and a QUIVER over his shoulder.

TAABE

Show me your tools.

Nervous, the kid hands over his quiver.

Taabe examines the ARROWS inside. The FLETCHING (the feathers at the back end) is worn and uneven.

Taabe carefully removes a cluster of FEATHERS from the hawk. He hands them to the kid.

The kid looks thrilled. He smirks back at his friends who look on jealously.

As he walks back toward them Taabe stops him. Hands him more feathers.

TAABE (CONT'D)
Fix theirs too.

The kid's smug looks falls off his face. Taabe smiles at him.

TAABE (CONT'D)
The practice will make you better.

As the kid walks back to his friends they smile and hand him their old arrows.

Naru walks to meet Sariii. He's got the TROUT that the hawk was carrying in his jaw. Naru takes it from him. Wasape laughs at her.

WASAPE

Your brother soars like a hawk.

(beat)

And you smell like a fish.

One man, PUHI ["poo-he"] (20s), laughs loud and long at Wasape's dis. The others laugh too, but not Taabe.

Ignoring them, Naru walks to Wasape with Sariii at her heels. She looks at the big man, stone-faced.

NARU

You'd eat it if I let you.

Like many of the men Naru interacts with, Wasape doesn't know how to handle her ferocity or candor. The big man swallows hard and blushes, drawing another hard laugh from Puhii.

Wasape shoves Puhii. He falls, but keeps laughing. Wasape looks at Huupi who glares at Puhii then turns away to avoid getting caught laughing too.

Naru smiles and starts to walk away. Following after her, Sariii looks expectantly at the fish, but she ignores him too.

3

EXT. NARU'S CAMP - DAY

3

The home to a small band of Comanche. A few dozen TIPIS set up on the plain near the edge of a dense forest. A pack of HORSES graze in a field beside the camp.

Naru and Sariii walk through the TIPIS.

Two CHILDREN play a game: one rolls a wooden HOOP, the other attempts to throw LANCES through the hoop as it passes.

Another DOG runs up to Sariii looking to play. Sariii ignores it, staying with Naru as she moves quickly through the camp.

An ELDERLY WOMAN passes carrying a bundle of roots. She gives a sideways glance at Naru carrying the fish and makes a disapproving SOUND.

Naru gives the old woman an insolent look then enters a TIPI.

4

INT. NARU'S TIPI - DAY

4

The interior of the structure is laid out for function, not design. It's ready to be packed up and moved with no notice.

A fire smolders in the center hearth. A pile of softball-sized stones are stacked in the burning embers, glowing red.

A tripod constructed with sticks is set up near the fire. A "pot" made of buffalo stomach hangs from the three legs. The vessel is filled with steaming liquid.

Naru peers into the pot. Uses a wooden spoon to sample the stew. Quickly pops her head back out the door flap and spits out the mouthful. Yuck.

Wiping her mouth, Naru watches Sarii walk in a circle at the foot of one of the buffalo hide beds laid out by the inside edge of the tipi. Satisfied, the dog curls up on it.

Naru kneels on the hide next to him and puts down the trout. The dog stares longingly at the fish.

Naru takes off her pack. Sets her bow and quiver to the side.

She walks to her BUFFALO SKIN bed. Folds back the top half. Hidden underneath is a leather SATCHEL.

She lifts out the bag, opens it and grabs a flint KNIFE from inside. Naru cuts off the back third of the trout and tosses it to the edge of the tipi.

Sarii waits for Naru. She nods and he leaps after the fish's tail and begins to devour it.

Naru reaches back into the satchel and pulls out a TOMAHAWK.

She handles it lovingly. Places it next to her bow. The two handmade weapons have matching carvings.

A moment later Naru's mother, ARUKA ["ah-dah-kah"] (40s) not a smiler, enters the tipi. Like her children, Aruka has a diagonal scar on her shoulder.

Aruka is carrying a bundle of root vegetables which she sets by the stew pot.

The two women don't speak or even greet each other. The tipi is a small place to ignore someone; it is clear from their interaction -- or lack thereof -- these two don't get along.

Naru takes a section of rolled buffalo leather out of the satchel, grabs a pointed stick and her flint knife and sits by the fire.

She unrolls the thick leather hide, drapes it over her thigh, presses the flint edge against the leather and uses the pointed stick to break tiny flakes from the blade, sharpening its edge.

Continuing to ignore her daughter, Aruka uses forked sticks to lift a red-hot stone from the fire and drop it into the stew pot. She adds some of her root vegetables to the mix and stirs.

Aruka samples the stew. She doesn't spit it out, but she clearly doesn't like it any more than Naru did.

She looks down at the trout. Picks it up. Tosses it out of the tipi.

ARUKA

Keep your dog's food outside.

Sarii gives Aruka a fearful look. Naru glares at her mother.

NARU

You're too good to eat fish?

ARUKA

Of course I am. And so are you.
It's not our way.

NARU

Is it our way to go hungry?

Aruka sets down her sticks and turns to Naru.

ARUKA

The buffalo will return.

NARU

You said that last year.

ARUKA

And I was right. They will.

NARU

You have an answer for everything!

Sarii looks at Naru, then Aruka. He picks up his piece of fish and exits the tipi -- "you two have fun, I'll be outside."

ARUKA

Don't be mad I know more than you,
I've been around longer.

NARU

A lot longer.
(beat)
The world changes.

Aruka smiles at Naru's sass.

ARUKA

That's why you listen to the people
that have seen it change before.

Naru gives her mother a defiant stare.

NARU

And go hungry?

ARUKA

This isn't hunger. We still have
stew. You've never known hunger.

Aruka stirs the stew.

ARUKA (CONT'D)

You think hunting will make you
great?

NARU

I think I'm good at it.

ARUKA

There are bigger things than
hunting.

She picks up Naru's bow. Runs her hands over the carvings.

ARUKA (CONT'D)

We all have a role. Those are your
father's tools.

Aruka tosses Naru a small leather MEDICINE POUCH.

ARUKA (CONT'D)

These are ours.

Naru examines the pouch. It has a CRESCENT MOON painted on
the side. She sets it down. Looks at her mother with
defiance.

ARUKA (CONT'D)

Your brother is the hunter.

NARU

My *little* brother.

ARUKA

Taabe is not little anymore. And he
follows your father. You follow me.

NARU

I'm better at hunting than I am
with medicine.

ARUKA

That's not saying much.

On Naru's face we see the unique aggravation that only comes from being needled by your mother. Aruka sees her daughter's frustration and softens.

ARUKA (CONT'D)

If you practiced with me, you would be a great healer. You're my daughter.

NARU

I'm my father's daughter too.

Aruka sits next to Naru.

ARUKA

I held your father as the life ran out of him.

She touches the scar on her daughter's shoulder.

ARUKA (CONT'D)

You think I want to hold you back? I don't. I just want to keep you from suffering.

Naru goes back to sharpening her knife.

NARU

You want to keep me from everything.

Aruka sighs. She stands and puts the rest of the vegetables in the pot. Tastes it again. Pulls a sour face. Nudges Naru with her foot.

ARUKA

OK, brave fish-killing-hunter, go hunt us up some breadroot. This stew tastes like crap.

Naru stares at her mom. Then gets up and reaches for her bow.

ARUKA (CONT'D)

You don't need a bow for breadroot.

Leaving her bow, Naru grabs the satchel and the tomahawk and exits.

Aruka watches her daughter leave, a small look of regret on the older woman's face.

Naru walks along the plain searching the foliage under the scrubby cottonwood trees near the edge of the forest. Sariii keeps pace at her side.

She stops at a cluster of purple flowers. Using the tomahawk she deftly hacks the breadroot out of the ground. This is the wrong the tool for the job but it keeps it interesting.

Naru places the root in her satchel and moves on.

She sees another breadroot and digs it out as well. Watching her we see why Naru would rather be hunting. The gathering process is boring and tedious.

Naru spots more purple flowers and moves closer to the edge of the forest. Sariii lies in the grass watching as Naru digs up the roots.

Naru drops a root into her satchel. She sets the bag down and looks at the tomahawk in her hand.

She turns quickly and throws it. The tomahawk flips end over end and -- **THUNK** -- sticks into a tree trunk.

Naru walks to retrieve the tomahawk. We see the tree trunk is scarred with dozens of HATCHET MARKS, this is where Naru practices with her weapon.

She walks back to where she stood originally.

Facing away from the tree she pivots, throws sidearm -- the hatchet slams into the tree at the exact same point, creating a perfect X with the mark from the previous hit.

Naru pulls the hatchet and returns to digging for breadroot.

She stops suddenly. Studies the ground. Spots DEER TRACKS in the dirt.

Naru looks at Sariii. He stands up. She gestures to him with her chin and Sariii bounds into the woods to explore. She follows, holding the tomahawk at the ready.

Sariii moves quickly through the trees, on the scent of something. Naru stays with him. Deep into the woods.

It's darker here. The forest is dense. Naru looks back. They're far from home.

Naru pauses for a beat, considers heading back toward the safety of more familiar land. But she's on to something and Sari is going after it quickly.

Naru moves even farther into the woods.

Sarii stops abruptly. Naru looks around. She spots it before we do -- a large eight-prong BUCK grazing in the shade. The deer is unaware it's being watched.

Naru stays hidden. Downwind. She reaches for her bow -- damnit, it's not there. She grips the tomahawk. Signals Sarii to sit. Naru starts in. Quietly. Moving to within the tomahawk's range.

She creeps toward the deer.

Slowly.

A dozen yards out.

Presses against a tree.

She can hear the deer breathing. It doesn't know she's there at all, let alone within striking distance.

Naru peers around the tree. Cocks her arm back, readying the tomahawk.

Suddenly a BARN OWL sails out of the tree, SCREECHING.

The buck instantly bolts. Naru throws. The tomahawk slips past the huge deer -- slicing off a tuft of hair.

Sarii leaps after the buck, barking.

Naru runs to her weapon. Yanks it out of the tree. Gives chase following Sarii.

The dog races after the deer, the two animals bounding between the trees ahead of Naru.

The dog lunges to catch the buck's hind leg.

He misses. Leaps again.

When he comes down -- **CLINKK** -- a metal SNAP.

Sarii freezes. Yelps in pain. The buck keeps going.

Naru arrives at her injured dog. She stops. Listens to the sound the buck's hooves receding on the forest floor.

Naru kneels by Sarii. His tail is pinched in the metal jaws of a FUR TRAP. She examines the rusty steel device. Sarii whimpers.

Naru spreads the jaws. The dog jumps free, turns and barks angrily at the trap.

Naru turns the small trap over in her hands. She yanks on it. A long rusty chain is attached to one end. It wraps around a tree. She tries to pull it free. The chain doesn't give.

Naru pulls her knife and jams it into a chain link. She turns the blade. The knife breaks. Damn!

Sarii barks at the trap again. Naru sets it down and checks the dog's injured tail. Sarii is calm, allows her to investigate.

The wound is bleeding. In the modern world a veterinarian might suture it shut. Sarii is lucky, the trap just barely clipped his tail. Had it closed on a leg his injury could have been way worse.

Sarii watches as Naru stands and begins to search the ground.

She finds the plant she's looking for. Tears off some leaves. Then Naru pulls moss off a tree. She presses the moss and leaves together between her palms, rubbing quickly.

She pulls out the medicine pouch Aruka gave her. It hangs from her necklace.

Naru spills its contents into her palm. Sorts through the assorted FLOWERS and HERBS and removes a tiny pinch of what she wants.

She takes a water BLADDER off her belt, mashes the pinch of medicine together with the leaves, moss, and water and bends down to Sarii's tail.

The dog lets out a loud yelp as she applies the poultice. Naru gives him a look.

NARU

Shush. Are you a dog or a rabbit?

Sarii whimpers at her admonition, then goes silent.

Naru presses the poultice onto his tail and waits. After a long beat she lets go. The bleeding has stopped.

Sarii licks her face. Naru scratches behind his ears. She wipes her hand on a tree then walks back to the trap.

Searching the ground again she finds a large rock.

Naru lifts the stone and pounds on the chain. Over and over. Nothing. Naru pounds harder. She swings down with all her might. The rock breaks. Damn.

Naru lifts the chain, examines it.

A loud NOISE overhead -- a turbine whirring. Naru looks up.

Something way up in the sky catches Naru's attention but her view is obscured by the dense trees.

Dropping the chain, she moves toward a clearing to get a better look.

6A

EXT. CLIFFS - DAY

6A

Naru steps out of the bushes and peers up.

A quick glint of sunlight as something big tears across the sky with a white CONTRAIL streaming out behind it.

Naru's eyes narrow. What the hell was that?

Sarii growls softly. Naru looks down at the dog.

When she looks up, the ship is gone.

She looks back at Sarii.

NARU

We're far from camp. We should head back now.

Spooked, Naru walks quickly. Sarii follows.

7

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF NARU'S CAMP - DAY

7

Moving quickly, Naru steps out of the woods.

As she walks through the tall grass, two men from her band, ITSEE ["eat-say"](20s), squat and powerful, TABU ["tab-oo"](20s), nervous and jittery, run past her.

Naru watches them. Then picks up her pace.

NARU

What happened?

ITSEE

A lion. It took Puh.

When Naru arrives Taabe, Wasape, Huupi, Itsee, and Tabu stand with PAAKA ["paah-kah"](19), fast and lithe, facing an older man.

This is WARCHIEF KEHETU ["keh-heh-tuh"](60s), Kehetu has lived a brutal life through decades of battle. He looks tired, moves like a aging athlete whose body is giving out after the strain of years of physical abuse.

Standing beside Kehetu is his wife, SUMU ["suh-muh"] (50s), graceful and calm. He slips and she helps steady him.

The young men look nervously at their warchief. Kehetu whispers to his wife. We don't hear what he says but the words seem sharp and they register on Sumu's face with dismay.

Deep in thought, Sumu leaves. The warchief watches his wife walk to their tipi, then turns to the young men.

Naru observes from a distance as the warchief stands in front of the men, sizing them up.

KEHETU

Puhi was at the tree line when it came. The big cat took him and headed east into the forest. He won't have gotten far.

The men seem to know what's coming next and it doesn't sit well with them. Their faces show their apprehension. Naru looks at Taabe. He's the only one who remains unshaken.

WASAPE

If the cat has Puhi, he's probably dead already.

Kehetu looks at his son with a hint of disappointment.

KEHETU

Maybe. But I'm not sending you after Puhi. I'm sending you after the cat.

PAAKA

The woods are full of lions.

Naru looks at Paaka.

NARU

But most know never to come near the camp.

The men turn to Naru, surprised she dared to speak.

Kehetu stares at her as well. But he's impressed.

KEHETU

That's right. And when one forgets
we need to remind it.

Wasape looks from Naru to his father.

WASAPE

You said you're sending us? You're
not coming?

Kehetu deliberately addresses all of the men.

KEHETU

I've protected you all since you
were children. It's your turn now.

The importance of this statement registers on Naru's face. If the men were apprehensive before now some are outright fearful. Kehetu smiles reassuringly.

KEHETU (CONT'D)

The time for standing behind your
elders when you are in danger is
over.

Kehetu still speaks to all of them but is now looking at his son Wasape directly.

KEHETU (CONT'D)

It's time to earn your place in our
band. Go hunt. Kill the beast that
threatens us.

Wasape nods slowly. He turns to the others and lets out a powerful WAR WHOOP.

As the other young men join in, HOWLING to overcome their fear, Taabe stares silently at Kehetu.

The warchief meets Taabe's gaze. They lock eyes for a meaningful moment. Kehetu gives a faint nod, then walks to join his wife in their tipi.

Wasape steps out and stands where his father stood. He looks at the young men, then to the horses beside the camps.

WASAPE

The cat is in the woods so we go on
foot. Get your weapons, we'll leave
now.

The young men run toward their respective tipis.

Naru still watches from the side. Her brother is the only one who didn't rush off. As he turns we see why, his bow and quiver are on his back -- where they always are.

Naru holds for a beat, deep in thought. Then she heads back toward her tipi.

9

EXT. NARU'S CAMP, KEHETU'S TIPI - DAY

9

As Naru passes the warchief's tipi she sees a young GIRL struggling to restring a BOW.

Naru stops. Gestures for the girl to hand her the weapon.

She inspects it. Rubs her fingers along the string. They come back dirty.

NARU

You have to keep it clean. Always.

The girl nods. Naru points to a frayed spot.

NARU (CONT'D)

You have a fresh one?

The girl nods again.

NARU (CONT'D)

Bring it to me.

The girl runs off.

Naru continues to examine the bow. She spots a ROUGH EDGE on the notch where the string attaches. Pulls her flint knife, begins to carve it smooth.

From inside Kehetu's tent she hears an argument.

SUMU (O.S.)

But why now!?

Kehetu speaks softly. With love.

KEHETU (O.S.)

I had no say in when the lion would come.

Naru peeks through the open flap. Inside Kehetu is attempting to comfort his wife. They're caught up in the moment and don't notice Naru.

The warchief lowers himself to sit on a skin rug. We see that his body is failing him, he winces with each small movement.

SUMU

He's not ready! Why did you send him?

KEHETU

I sent them all. Wasape might fail alone, but together they will kill that lion.

SUMU

It's not just the lion. The white men move in the eastern woods. They set their traps closer and closer.

A look of recognition registers on Naru's face when Sumu mentions the traps, but she stays silent.

KEHETU

All the more reason it is time to test our young. I can no longer be at the front of every battle. We need a new leader.

Sumu processes the significance of what her husband is telling her. We watch it land on Naru as well.

KEHETU (CONT'D)

It does not matter that Wasape is our son. Leadership cannot be inherited. It must be earned.

Outside, the girl returns with the new BOW STRING and hands it to Naru.

Using her legs for leverage, Naru deftly bends the wood -- loops the bowstring into place -- releases it. She hands the restrung bow to the girl who smiles and runs off.

Naru begins to move on, then stops as she hears Kehetu continue to explain to Sumu.

KEHETU (CONT'D)

There are those that protect, and those that need protection.

The warchief takes his wife's hand. He grimaces in pain as he lies back on the rug.

KEHETU (CONT'D)

I sent them now so I will still be here to help sort between the two.

Outside the tipi we see Naru's face. She knows which category she wants to be in.

The empty pine trees are dark and foreboding. The sounds of the forest fill the air.

A man's silhouette appears. It's holding a weapon.

The figure steps out of the shadows. It's Taabe. He's followed by Wasape and the others in the hunting party: Huupi, Itsee, Tabu, and Paaka.

As they come into clearer view we see their faces are painted. Each has their own distinct pattern made with red, white and black clay.

Taabe's is the most striking in appearance, it is ominous and deadly looking -- a THICK WHITE BAND running ear to ear across his face with a THIN BLACK SLIT intersecting each eye.

The group of Comanche walks in unison, quietly stalking.

A10A

OMITTED

A10A

A10B

EXT. FOREST - DAY

A10B

The hunting party continues through the forest on the other side of the stream, undaunted by the threatening feel of the woods.

There's a rustling noise behind them. Taabe stops and turns. The others hear it a moment later and turn as well.

Paaka draws back an arrow, Taabe grabs his hand. Paaka turns to him, anger in his eyes. Taabe gestures for Paaka to look in the direction he was about to fire, he does and Naru steps out of the shadows.

She's carrying her bow and wearing her own unique face paint scheme -- hers is primarily black with a JAGGED RED OUTLINE.

NARU

You're off the cat's trail.

Taabe cocks his head.

Sarii comes out of the woods. He stops at Naru's feet and stares back. Naru makes the sound -- **TiCh-TiCh** -- Sarii headsback in.

Taabe nods and starts after Sarii. Wasape stops him.

The empty pine trees are dark and foreboding. The sounds of the forest fill the air.

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A10A

EXT. FOREST STREAM - DAY

A10A

The warriors crash through the river maintaining their formation.

A10B

EXT. FOREST - DAY

A10B

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She's carrying her bow and wearing her own unique face paint scheme -- hers is primarily black with a JAGGED RED OUTLINE.

PAAKA

You could get shot sneaking up like that.

NARU

Who is sneaking up? I was loud enough for an old man to hear.

Taabe smiles enjoying his sister's chutzpah. Paaka gives her a dirty look.

WASAPE

Why did you come? We won't be gone long enough to need a cook.

Paaka laughs. Naru looks like she'd love to shoot him. She chokes back her anger and turns to Taabe.

NARU

You're off the cat's trail.

Taabe cocks his head.

Sarii comes out of the woods. He stops at Naru's feet and stares back. Naru makes the sound -- **Tich-Tich** -- Sarii heads back in.

Taabe nods and starts after Sarii. Wasape stops him.

WASAPE

Hunting is men's work. We'll need silence. Not woman's chatter.

Paaka laughs. Taabe doesn't.

TAABE

She should stay. She tracks well. And if we find Puhi alive she knows medicine.

Wasape doesn't like being challenged but he knows the others respect Taabe. He nods, moves on. The others continue on as well.

Naru looks down at Sari. Taabe walks to her. Speaks so only she can hear.

TAABE (CONT'D)
You have to find that cat now.

NARU
I will.

TAABE
I know.
(beat)
Because you have to.

10A OMMITED

10A

11 EXT. FOREST - DAY

11

Taabe and Naru are on one side of the group, Wasape is on the other.

They move with speed and grace. A deadly squad. Cruising over the terrain with stealth and precision, a cohesive unit of trained hunters.

Naru is watching as Sari stops. Sniffs the ground. Taabe catches sight of it too -- the dog found something. He's smelling a pile of animal DROPPINGS.

WASAPE
Oh good. Your dog found shit.

PAAKA
We're not looking for wolves.

Taabe steps closer.

TAABE

It's not wolf. See the crushed
bone? That's lion scat. It's fresh.
And the cat that made it was big.

Naru scratches Sariii behind the ears. She reaches into her satchel and pulls out a hunk of PEMMICAN (the Native American version of MREs; highly portable food that doesn't spoil). Naru gives Sariii the food as a reward.

Naru examines the plants nearby. She shows Taabe who touches them, then walks back to the others.

He shows Wasape the blood on his fingertips, then returns to the blood trail. The others follow.

12

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

12

The hunting party moves deeper into the woods. The vegetation is thicker here. It's darker.

Sariii runs back to Naru and pants, awaiting her attention. When she looks, Sariii darts ahead into the woods -- he found something else.

Naru moves forward quickly. She pulls her tomahawk. The others draw their weapons too.

Naru points. Taabe follows her line.

He stops. Signals for the others to stop. Naru taps her ear, gesturing "listen". The hunting party is still and quiet.

A faint sound. WHEEZING. Taabe slowly turns his head, trying to locate the source.

Taabe moves to the base of a huge Douglas fir -- Puhii is lying in the dirt below.

His shirt's torn off. His torso covered in claw marks. Four deep puncture wounds surround Puhii's neck -- evidence of the lion's canine teeth closing on his throat.

Staring at the wounded man, Wasape looks as if he's going to be sick. He steadies himself, holding on to a tree.

Naru puts her ear by Puhii's mouth. She listens for breath. Hears it. She nods to Taabe.

12A

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

12A

The hunting party snaps into action as a team:

Taabe positions Paaka and Itsee to stand guard.

He finds a PINE CONE.

Coats the cone in SAP.

He cuts a branch off the tree. Chops out a three-foot section.

Splits the top twice, forming an X.

Shoves the cone into the X.

He strikes a rock with the back of his flint tomahawk -- a spark ignites the cone -- Taabe rises holding a TORCH.

Naru scans the area for medicinal plants.

Wasape and Huupi begin to fashion a STRETCHER using branches and a pelt.

Naru presses the herbal medicine into Puhi's wounds.

After a beat, she stands and regards his condition. She's not satisfied.

She searches the ground near the base of a tree. Finds a cluster of MUSHROOMS. She pulls a handful. Puts all but one in a POUCH on her belt, then walks back to Puhi.

The others watch as Naru lifts the small medicine pouch from around her neck. She carefully sorts out some bright orange FLOWER PETALS.

Tabu regards the orange flowers with fear.

TABU

He needs that?

NARU

Yes.

She takes the water bladder from her belt. Using the water, she mixes the crushed mushroom and the orange petals together.

Naru opens Puhi's mouth. As she reaches to place the medicine on his tongue, Itsee grabs her wrist.

ITSEE

So much could kill him.

Naru stares into Itsee's eyes, firmly confident.

NARU

Yes it could. But without it he'll
die for certain.

Naru pulls her hand free and puts the flowers in Puhi's mouth, pours water in after, massages his throat, manually forcing the injured man to swallow.

They watch. Puhi lies motionless.

He convulses suddenly -- it's like he's been hit with shock paddles. He twitches wildly, bouncing on the dirt floor, the muscles in his chest squirming inside his skin.

Puhi's eyes pop open. He gasps deeply then wraps his arms around himself as if bracing, naked, from a freezing wind.

TAABE

He's got to be brought home.

WASAPE

(nervous)

What about the cat?

Taabe hands Wasape his torch.

TAABE

I'll find it.

Wasape looks at Taabe, conflicted. He's eager to leave the danger behind but doesn't want to appear afraid.

WASAPE

Should I stay?

Taabe reads Wasape's fear and gives him a way out.

TAABE

He will need more medicine than
Naru can give him here. We have to
get him home fast, and we need your
strength to do it.

The others watch, recognizing that the warchief's son is taking direction from Taabe. Wasape nods and begins to load Puhi onto the stretcher.

NARU

(to Taabe)

I'll stay with you.

Taabe sees the concern on Naru's face. He speaks quietly to her as the others finish loading Puhi onto the stretcher.

TAABE

I can handle the lion.

NARU

It's not just the lion. Why is Puhi alive? Something scared the cat away from its den.

TAABE

I've got this.

(smiles)

Your little brother is grown now, pâtsí. Stay with Puhi, he needs your help too.

Wasape approaches Naru and interrupts angrily.

WASAPE

We have no time to waste talking.

We need to get him home. Now.

When Naru turns back to Taabe he's gone, disappeared into the forest. Naru's face shows her deep concern for her brother.

Paaka and Huupi grab the heavy stretcher and lift. On Wasape's cue, the hunting party moves out carrying Puhi.

Naru looks at Sariii, then moves to catch up with the others.

12A

OMMITED

12A

13

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

13

Wasape and the others continue back toward camp, crashing through the woods, choosing speed over stealth.

A few yards back Naru and Sariii move with them. Ever vigilant, she makes as little noise as possible.

Puhi begins to MOAN. He convulses again. Paaka stops. Naru moves forward to check on him.

He's soaked and shivering so badly his teeth are chattering. Paaka reaches to re-cover Puhi with buffalo hide cloak that has drifted down to his legs. Naru stops him.

NARU

The cold is good. The medicine
slows his blood. If he gets warm
he'll bleed out.

Wasape stares at Puhi shivering, he looks miserable. Even
Sarii watches seemingly with sympathy.

NARU (CONT'D)

Do you want him to be comfortable
or alive?

As the party moves on, Naru spots something on the ground.

She lowers her torch to get a better look. Follows the trail
a few steps off.

14

EXT. SMALL CLEARING - NIGHT

14

Naru continues on, studying the ground.

She stops. Spots a dead MOUSE. Bending closer she sees two
FANG marks in its body.

Curious, she looks past the mouse to the base of a thick
tree. Something near the roots catches her eye.

She moves closer. Examines it -- a peeled MUSCULAR SYSTEM of
a DIAMONDBACK. The cuts are surgical, strange. As Naru
explores it, the dead snake slithers.

She sets it down. Lowers her torch. In the light she spots
two large FOOTPRINTS.

They're huge, larger than any man's. At the front end of each
print there are four distinct claw marks -- these are
PREDATOR TRACKS.

Studying the tree's trunk Naru sees fresh GOUGES in the bark;
claw marks from something heavy climbing up.

There's a CRACK above her. A tree limb groaning under weight.

Looking up, Naru stands frozen and stares, unable to make
sense of the view. There's something there, she just can't
see it.

PREDATOR POV -- the alien stares back at Naru, he too is
stock still, observing.

Naru moves backward -- bumps into something -- she whirls --
it's Wasape. He smiles, enjoying having startled her.

WASAPE

We don't have time to wait for you.
Keep up.

He starts back to the others. Naru stops him.

NARU

Look.

15

EXT. SMALL CLEARING - NIGHT

15

Paaka, Huupi, Wasape, and Naru look at the Predator's footprints.

PAAKA

Could be bear tracks?

NARU

Maybe. But that's a big bear.

Huupi and Paaka nod agreement. Naru looks around.

NARU (CONT'D)

And why was it only on hind legs?

Wasape looks the others. There's a quickness in his voice. Fear he's trying to cover.

WASAPE

We need to keep moving.

Naru stares at him. Then starts back in the direction they've been traveling away from.

NARU

I have to warn my brother.

WASAPE

Warn him of what?

NARU

Whatever left these tracks is what scared off the lion.

WASAPE

You don't know that. And unlike you, your brother can take care of himself. We need to get Puhi home.

Naru continues back toward Taabe.

NARU

You'll get him there. I have to help Taabe.

Wasape gives a disdainful snort.

WASAPE

He doesn't need your help.

Naru does not waste time slowing to respond. Wasape watches her getting father away. He's pissed.

WASAPE (CONT'D)

Shit!

(to Paaka)

Go with her. Taabe won't want her out alone.

Paaka runs to catch up with Naru. Wasape kicks the Predator's footprints, obliterating them.

High in the tree above Wasape, still cloaked, the Predator stares down. He's holding the diamondback's SKULL. Attaches it to his loincloth.

16 EXT. FOREST TRAIL - NIGHT

16

Naru and Sariii run through the trees. It's dark now. They pass over the enormous downed tree and a few other landmarks we recognize -- they're going back, away from safety.

There's a look of determination on Naru's face. She moves with stealth but she's eager to get to her brother quickly.

50 yards back Paaka struggles to keep up.

17 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

17

Still tearing through the foliage, Naru slows suddenly. Sariii follows her lead and moves at a deliberate pace by her feet.

Taking advantage of their reduced speed, Paaka manages to catch up. In his haste Paaka steps on a branch, snapping it. Naru gives him an admonishing look, then keeps going.

She steps around the huge Douglas fir and arrives back at the mountain lion den. Sariii sniffs the ground where they found Puhi. Staying silent, Naru listens to the forest.

Sariii continues searching the ground for Taabe's trail.

Naru and Paaka follow the dog as he moves deeper into the woods, his nose hovering above the ground.

Naru hears a noise. Sariii runs back to her. She stops. Listens. This time we hear it too. It's faint but distinct. Something moving in the leaves.

Paaka continues to stomp loudly through the foliage. Then suddenly his torch goes out.

Naru looks back toward where Paake was. When she turns back Taabe is there. Smiling.

TAABE

Pâtsí.

A look of relief comes over Naru. Paaka is standing behind Taabe, his torch on the ground by his feet.

TAABE (CONT'D)

We don't need torches. They'll scare the cat. We're in its hunting grounds.

Naru puts hers out.

TAABE (CONT'D)

Why did you come back?

NARU

I found tracks. Maybe bear. Maybe something else. I wanted to warn you. It's what scared that cat off. That's the only reason Puhii was alive when we found him.

TAABE

I'm not frightened of a bear.

Naru hesitates. She looks at Paaka then decides she has to tell Taabe.

NARU

I don't think it was bear.

He looks at her -- really?

NARU (CONT'D (CONT'D))

I don't know what it was. I've never seen tracks like that.

Taabe considers this. He knows Naru is a great tracker.

TAABE

Whatever they were, the lion thinks
it owns this range.

NARU

That's why it came so close to the
camp.

TAABE

Yes. It won't think we're hunting
it here, it will think it's hunting
us. We'll turn its strength into
weakness.

18 OMITTED

18

18A EXT. DENSE BRUSH - NIGHT

18A

Taabe, Naru, and Paake crawl through tall grass to a mound
overlooking a game trail.

Naru looks out past the brush up into a huge dead cottonwood
TREE that stands above the trail.

NARU

You said this is the lion's hunting
grounds?

Taabe nods.

NARU (CONT'D)

If it's come through this pass
before, it will again.

Naru points up into the tree's branches.

NARU (CONT'D)

We climb up. Wait for it.

Paaka looks at Naru with disdain.

PAAKA

A hunter doesn't wait. He hunts. We
could be here all night.

He looks to Taabe for back up, but Taabe's expression is
blank. He's considering.

NARU

We could stalk the forest without
spotting it too.

PAAKA

If you're too afraid to hunt, go
back to camp where you belong.

Taabe stands. Looks back into the woods.

TAABE

We'll try it Naru's way.

Naru looks at Paaka -- "I told you".

TAABE (CONT'D)

We'll bait it. Then I'll lead the
cat to you.

Taabe walks back into the woods.

Naru looks down at Sarii.

NARU

Home, Sarii, now.

She signals him -- **Tich-Tich** -- and the dog heads back toward
camp.

19

EXT. COTTONWOOD TREE - LATER

19

There is a dead POSSUM on the ground near the tree. It's been
positioned carefully in the path.

The possum's blood trail runs down the trail, leading the
lion to the trap.

Naru and Paaka wait in the old tree, braced against the
sturdy limbs. Dappled moonlight filters through the leaves.

Naru sharpens her lance. Judging by the pile of wood
shavings, they've been waiting a long while. The eerie
silence of the forest is all encompassing.

PAAKA

It won't matter how sharp it is if
you're too afraid to use it.

Naru ignores him. Paaka shakes his head in disgust.

PAAKA (CONT'D)

Women don't hunt. When your brother
comes back he and I will find the
lion and kill it.

There is a hint of movement in the grass below. Naru's eyes
narrow.

What was it?

Suddenly, Paaka is yanked off his branch -- disappears into the grass.

Naru instantly grabs her bow. Nocks an arrow. Steps forward.

She scans the tall grass. What took him?!

There's nothing. Just tension. And fear.

The MOUNTIAN LION springs up out of the grass -- leaping at Naru in the tree.

It lands on a low branch.

Naru fires an arrow at the huge lion.

It moves forward, undaunted.

Naru grabs her lance.

Backs up farther into the tree.

The lion climbs closer. And closer.

She jabs the lance at the angry, snarling beast.

He backs her farther up the branch.

She's so far out -- the branch SNAPS.

As Naru falls she throws her lance.

She hits the ground. Springs up to her feet.

And runs.

At. Full. Speed.

Her skin shreds as she bounces off the sharp bark of the trees. But Naru does not care. She just stared the devil dead in the face -- and it pounced.

ARUKA (O.S.) (PRE-LAP)
Where is your brother?

Aruka and Naru are standing in the warchief's tent. Sumu and a few other camp ELDERS are there as well. Kehetu is still lying on his buffalo skin mat.

Naru looks at her mother, fighting to hide her shame.

NARU
We got separated.

She stares at the elders, feeling the pressure of their judgement.

NARU (CONT'D)
I made my way back alone.

The others look away. Kehetu turns to Aruka. With great effort he manages to sit up.

KEHETU
He will return.

His words sound like hope, not fact.

NARU
How is Puhi?

SUMU
The medicine you gave him kept him alive.

GIRL (O.S.)
Auntie Sumu! Auntie Sumu!

The adults turn to look as the flap of the tipi opens. The young girl steps in. Stops halfway. Stares at the elders.

She's struck silent, surprised to see so many faces.

Kehetu looks at her. Gives the smallest of smiles.

KEHETU
What is it, little one?

The girl blurts her excitement.

GIRL
Come. Come see!

She runs back out of the tipi. The others follow.

The girl runs to the edge of the camp clearing and points out into the plain.

With Wasape's help, Kehetu walks out of the tipi. Joining him, Naru and the others peer out to where she's indicating.

In the far distance, a lone figure walks through the tall grass toward them.

He's carrying something large in his right hand. A bundle of some sort. We can't quite make it out.

Kehetu looks at the little girl. She smiles back at him. He looks back into the field.

And now we can see. It's Taabe. His body is soaked in blood.

As he moves closer we see -- the white band of paint on Taabe's face has been replaced with the blood of the lion.

In his right hand he grips the head of the beast -- the evidence of his successful hunt. The huge animal's pelt is draped over his shoulders. The rest of the lion is dragging behind him on a makeshift travois bound to Taabe's waist.

Kehetu looks at Wasape, then to Sumu. Sumu nods, she stares at her son, he looks away.

Taabe lays the hunting trophy at Kehetu's feet.

As more of the Comanche learn of Taabe's achievement they come running. The young men get as close as they can, women watch from nearby.

Kehetu puts his hands on Taabe's shoulders. Stares into Taabe's eyes.

An enormous BONFIRE is burning outside Kehetu's tipi. Its light flickers on the faces of the Comanche in the camp.

A member of the band plays a HAND DRUM while SINGING softly.

Naru stands alone, observing from a small, self-imposed distance.

Kehetu is at the front of the crowd, he's holding a carved STAFF, gripping it tightly to help hold himself up.

The entire camp watches as Kehetu gestures for Taabe to step forward and join him at the edge of the fire.

Naru looks to the fire. She watches Taabe walk to Kehetu. The warchief hands the carved staff to Taabe who turns back to face the camp holding it.

The other young men all step forward. They raise their arms and let out loud WAR CRIES.

Taabe smiles back in appreciation. He notices that Wasape is not celebrating. His eyes harden slightly.

Sumu nudges Wasape. He lets out a big WAR CRY.

The rest of the crowd joins in. The women LULU loudly.

Taabe basks in the moment. This is his coronation. He looks at the beaming faces around him.

Kehetu holds up a hand to silence them.

KEHETU

A new leader stands before us. We honor him. But remember, one alone does little. We each have a job to do.

(looking at Wasape)

We don't always choose our role. Some follow, some lead. But to survive we must all do our part.

The old warchief stares into his son's eyes. Wasape nods his acceptance.

KEHETU (CONT'D)

There is honor in all our work.

The warchief is speaking to his son but we see how his words affect Naru.

Kehetu raises Taabe's arm. The crowd erupts again. The old warchief rests his hand on Taabe's shoulder. Looks into his eyes. Then heads back to his tipi.

Naru watches the other young men surround her brother. She stares for a loaded beat. Then cuts through the crowd, heading back to her tipi.

Taabe looks past the men surrounding him. Sees his sister walking away.

He rushes forward to meet her.

TAABE

I did it, Naru.

Naru stops.

They stand alone together for a moment. Taabe is beaming. He gives his sister a wide smile. Then sees the apprehensive look on her face.

TAABE (CONT'D (CONT'D)

I was young when our father died.
You taught me how to hunt. And
fight. Raised me to where I am. And
I'm grateful, pâtsí. Forever.

(beat)

Because of you I am ready for this.

Naru looks at him. Shakes her head.

NARU

Something scared that lion off. Why
else would it leave its den? And
whatever it is, it's still out
there.

Taabe's face shifts.

TAABE

The forest is full of dangers. It
always will be.

NARU

This is different.

Taabe looks at her for a beat. Then he smiles knowingly.

TAABE

Naru, it's done. The challenge was
given. And met.

NARU

What?

Taabe places his hand on her shoulder.

TAABE

Don't be jealous of what I've
achieved. You helped make it so.

NARU

Jealous? I'm trying to protect you.

TAABE

I don't need protection. I'm not your little brother anymore. I'm your warchief.

Taabe gives her a loving look.

TAABE (CONT'D)

You heard Kehetu, we each have a role to play.

A woman carrying breadroot passes by.

TAABE (CONT'D)

There is honor in all of our paths.

Taabe starts to walk away. Naru grabs him.

NARU

Listen to me ...

Taabe turns back to her, there's anger in his face.

TAABE

I did listen, pâtsí. There will always be threats. A good warchief doesn't chase every noise in the woods. I am the one who leads now. If we need another hunting party I'll send it. Right now, we don't.

He nods indicating the finality of his word, steps around her and joins the other young men who greet him warmly.

Naru glares at Taabe and the other men celebrating.

The bonfire reflects in her eyes, its intensity matched by her fury.

24

INT. NARU'S TIPI - DAWN

24

It's early and quiet. The cheers from Taabe's coronation party have grown silent.

Naru lies asleep on in her bed. Aruka nudges her with her foot. Naru's eyes pop open. She glances at the hearth in the center of the tipi, the fire has gone out.

Yawning, Naru grabs a buffalo hide firewood BAG.

She glances over at Taabe sleeping peacefully on his bed, then heads out, a look of frustration on her face.

25 EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF NARU'S CAMP - DAWN 25

Naru looks at the half-dozen other young Comanche WOMEN heading to do their chores. Among them is a YOUNG MOTHER, her BABY strapped to her back.

The young girl who announced Taabe's return exits her tipi rubbing sleep from her eyes and begins her chores as well.

They are all headed in the same direction. Walking toward the river.

Naru watches for a beat. Then she stops.

26 INT. NARU'S TIPI - DAWN 26

Naru enters. Drops the empty bag back by the fire. Grabs her bow. Quickly and silently packs up her gear.

Sleeping by the door, Sarii cracks an eye as Naru exits. He springs to his feet and follows her out.

26A OMITTED 26A

26B EXT. NARU'S CAMP - DAWN 26B

As the woman of the camp all head to do their chores, Naru walks in the opposite direction, followed by Sarii.

26C MONTAGE -- VARIOUS WOODED AREAS - DAY 26C

Naru and Sarii walk along a creek.

They continue through the wildness, beginning their journey.

27 EXT. PRAIRIE'S EDGE - DAY 27

Naru and Sarii move along the edge of the FOREST.

They walk.

And walk.

Naru comes through the tree line and is able to see into a vast, open plain.

Small red MOUNDS dot the landscape. A curious expression comes across Naru's face.

28

EXT. PRAIRIE - LATER

28

As Naru and Sariii get closer we see what the mounds are - skinned BUFFALO CARCASSES. Dozens of them litter the plain.

Naru looks out at the rotting remains. No Comanche would perpetrate this type of slaughter.

Looking closer she spots a BULLET HOLE in the SKULL of the animal before her. Naru examines it closely -- the wound is nothing like any she's seen before.

She kneels and places her palm between the horns. Closes her eyes and incants a small, quiet prayer.

Naru stands, a look of disgust and outrage flooding her face.

She walks to a charred spot in the grass. Evidence of a smallcampfire. Naru feels the embers, she puts her hand right in, they are long cold.

Scanning the ground she spots something -- the chewed BUTT of a rough-hewn CIGAR. Naru picks it up, sniffs it, makes a sour face, tosses it away.

NARU

We're going to find whatever it is
out there.

She looks down at Sariii.

NARU (CONT'D)

And we're gonna kill it.

29

OMITTED

29

30

EXT. FOREST - DAY

30

There's movement in the trees above. A limb creaks under the weight of something heavy.

The Predator's big feet splash down into the creek we saw Naru pass as she headed out.

From behind the alien we see him studying the ground. He spots Naru and Sariii's tracks.

31 OMITTED 31

32 OMITTED 32

32A EXT. PINE GROVE - LATER 32A

A COTTONTAIL pops its head up out of a broken stump, sniffs the air, eats a fallen berry.

SHUNNKK -- Naru's tomahawk slams into the stump -- a half * second too late. The rabbit is gone.

As Naru goes to retrieve her weapon a second rabbit scurries across the leaf-covered ground right in front of her. Damn.

She dives to grab the tomahawk, pivots and hucks it at the rabbit -- a shortstop turning a double play. The hatchet skips off the ground, and just barely misses the second cottontail.

Sarii looks on as Naru sits in the leaves. Two more rabbits cross right by her. Damn it.

She dusts herself off and picks up the hatchet. Turns it over in her hands, regarding the weapon, thinking of something.

33 EXT. PINE GROVE - LATER 33

Sarii watches as Naru manufactures a natural rope:

Using her flint knife, she splits a thin branch.

Braids the lengths of cut material together.

Stretches them taut.

Examines the length of finished ROPE.

Ties it carefully around the tomahawk's handle.

33A EXT. PINE GROVE - DAY33A 33A

Naru feels the weapon in her hand. Finding its center of balance.

She throws -- the hatchet sticks into a tree -- she yanks the rope -- the weapon sails back toward her -- but she misses catching it!

Naru picks it up. Throws. Hits. Pulls back. This time she catches it.

She throws again. It hits. She pulls -- catches -- throws. Pulls -- catches -- throws. Pulls -- catches -- throws.

Naru stands between two trees. There's an X in each one.

There's a faint RUSTLE behind her. Two cottontails run along the forest floor. Naru smiles.

34 SCENE 34 HAS BECOME SCENE 36 34

35 OMITTED 35

36 EXT. GRASSLAND BELOW MESA - DAY 36

Naru walks out of the woods into the open land. There's a rope slung across her back, FOUR RABBITS hanging from it.

Sarii eyes them hungrily. Lets out a small yelp. Naru gives him an admonishing look.

NARU
Come on, we'll eat soon.

She moves on, heading toward a distant MESA with sparse trees growing on the side slopes.

36A EXT. PRAIRIE'S EDGE - DAY 36A

A heavy branch on a tall pine by the tree line bordering the prairie CREAKS as it bends.

A THUD as the Predator drops into the dirt below.

We stay on his feet as he walks into the field and stops at a buffalo carcass. He too examines the dead animal, touches its skull.

He scans the ground. Sees the faint evidence of Naru's footprints in the matted grass.

37 EXT. MESA TOP - DAY 37

Naru walks the edge of the flat topped hill. The view is astounding. She studies the miles of surrounding land.

She grabs up some kindling and heads back into the tree line away from the mesa's edge.

She's prepping a small FIRE. Naru drops the kindling in. Crouches and lights it.

38 EXT. MESA TOP FIRE - DUSK 38

Three skewered cottontails roast over the flame of Naru's fire. Sariii stares at the feast, his wet tongue dangling in anticipation.

Naru turns the skewer, pulls a cooked rabbit and tosses it to the dog. As Sariii devours it, Naru looks at the tomahawk lying on the hide by her thigh and smiles.

She pulls some food for herself. Rolls out her buffalo hide. Settles in for the night.

39 EXT. MESA TOP FIRE - MORNING 39

Naru and Sariii sit looking out at the view.

She gets up and begins to break camp. Filling in the fire pit, scattering the sticks.

Sariii watches as Naru packs the last cooked rabbit into her satchel. She walks to the edge of the mesa.

Naru shields her eyes with her hand as she peers down at a distant STREAM running through the woods. Sunlight glints off the surface of the moving water.

She looks back at Sariii, who still lies on the ground. She shakes her head at him.

NARU

Come on.

The dog doesn't move.

NARU (CONT'D)

I like it up here too. But we're gonna find what left those tracks.

She starts down the side of the mesa. Sariii follows.

40 EXT. FOREST, TRAIL, SPIKY STUMP - DAY 40

An ominous-looking TREE STUMP with numerous SPIKY, BROKEN PIECES jutting upwards.

Its gnarled roots meet the ground by a faint TRACK in the dirt. [Note: this is a bear track that Naru reads as a possible Predator footprint, they are similar in appearance.]

Naru studies the print.

Sarii walks over carrying a long STICK.

She takes the stick from him, measures the distance between the print and the one that preceded it.

Naru breaks the stick at the matching length then uses it to find the faint outline of the next print moving forward.

41 EXT. MESA TOP - DAY 41

From behind we watch the Predator examine the ground. He finds the charred BONES from Naru and Sarii's meal.

He de-cloaks.

Attached to his loincloth, next to the snake's skull, he now has the skull of a WOLF.

The Predator removes his BACKPACK. He reaches inside and takes out two types of METALLIC OBJECTS. One is a spherical shape (END), the other a coiled, sectional device (CUT-CLAMP). He attaches a few of each to his loin cloth.

He reaches back into the ruck and withdraws a strange WEAPON. The sun gleams off of its razor-sharp projectiles.

As he assembles the device we see what it is: a Predator CROSSBOLT -- the analog version of the Predator's classic three pronged laser cannon.

The Predator activates the weapon. Loads it. Moves on.

42 OMITTED 42

43 OMITTED 43

44 EXT. MUD PIT - DAY 44

Naru steps out of the plants into the open space. Sarii wanders off laterally, darts after something in the trees.

Naru scans the terrain. The ground in the small clearing is covered in moss. But oddly there's no stream. A quiet RUMBLE fills the air. The low gurgle of rushing water.

Naru takes a step forward toward a ROCK FORMATION on the other side of the moss -- but suddenly the moss below her gives way -- Naru sinks knee deep into the mud below.

Naru yanks her leg free but in doing so her other foot breaks through the moss, sending her further into the sinkhole. Both her feet are now submerged in thick, viscid mud.

She drops her bow and uses her hands to try to pull herself free -- but it only worsens her position.

Naru scrambles to free herself but it has the opposite effect -- she sinks chest deep into the liquid clay. The sound of the underground stream is louder now as muddy water bubbles up and Naru sinks deeper and deeper in.

The mud is up to her neck now. Naru continues to drop. Her chin dips below the muck. Naru's mouth fills.

Her face contorts as Naru strains with great effort, her movements concealed under the surface of the mud.

Just when it looks like she's going under for good -- her arm pops up out -- holding her tomahawk.

Naru grunts as she maneuvers. She wipes mud from her eyes. Cocks her arm back. Throws the tomahawk as hard as possible.

The hatchet sails through the air, strikes the base of the rock formation and slides off. Damn it.

Naru reels in the rope. Throws again.

This time the hatchet blade wedges itself into a small crevice in the rocks. Naru pulls hard. The rope digs into her wrist -- but it works.

She hauls herself up out of the mud until she's lying flat on the moss and then reels her body toward the rocks.

45 EXT. BASE OF ROCK FORMATION - DAY 45

Naru, caked in mud, stands at the base of the rocks, freeing her tomahawk from where it's wedged.

She gets it out. Examines the blade.

46 EXT. POND'S EDGE - DAY 46

Naru sits by the edge of the small pond. She's clean but wet, having washed off.

Naru wipes the mud off of her bowstring. She cups a handful of water from the pond to clean the weapon.

Sarii walks back out of the trees, carrying a small ANIMAL in his mouth.

NARU
There you are.

Studying the ground she finds more tracks [Note: these prints are the same as in scene 40, bear tracks that Naru thinks are the Predator's]. Back on the hunt, she follows the trail.

47 EXT. FOREST, CLIFF BY MOUNTAINSIDE STREAM - DAY 47

Naru steps out of the woods looking down from a low cliff at a stream below. The tracks are clearly visible in the wet dirt by the bank.

Naru looks up ahead. A gigantic BROWN BEAR is moving up the stream toward a BEAVER DAM. The fur on the bear's belly and legs is clotted with mud -- this is the animal Naru has been tracking.

NARU
(to herself)
It was a bear.

Naru looks at the grass on the side of the stream. The wind is bending it back toward her.

NARU (CONT'D)
(to Sarii)
Stay downwind.

Staying behind the bear, she moves toward it.

48 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY 48

Naru keeps her eyes on her target. The bear rounds a corner at the bottom of the mountain, nearing the beaver dam.

She checks the grass. Sees the wind is still working in her favor. She moves closer to the bear.

49 EXT. OPPOSING HILL - DAY 49

From across the stream we watch Naru. Below her, around the base of the rocks, the bear continues to examine the beaver dam, sniffing it.

Suddenly a blurred outline steps into view. The Predator.

He uncloaks and stares out at the view. Turning on his Predator vision, he watches Naru.

50 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE LEDGE - DAY 50

Ready to take her shot, Naru pulls her bow.

Nocks an arrow.

Draws back -- the wet bowstring snaps! Shit!

Immediately she surveys the damage to her bow. Attempts to restring the weapon.

Below her, the bear explores the dam.

Then suddenly -- the wind shifts!

The bear sniffs -- then turns -- it sees Naru! Roars.

Her cover blown, Naru scrambles to quickly fix her bow.

51 EXT. OPPOSING HILL - DAY 51

In Predator vision, the Predator watches Naru, zooming in on her as she works to repair her weapon.

Then he pans over. Watching the giant bear as it begins to head up the steep incline toward Naru.

52 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE LEDGE - DAY 52

Still scrambling to retie her bowstring, Naru watches the bear move closer.

The bear is almost to her -- her bow remains untied -- suddenly Sariii runs down into the woods -- barking madly.

The bear turns. It charges -- chasing Sariii toward the trees.

Naru gets the bow restrung -- slides down the slope, off the edge as she nocks an arrow.

Aiming, Naru scans the woods for Sariii and the bear.

Suddenly Sariii bolts back out.

Behind him -- the bear.

Naru fires. Her aim is true. The arrow lodges into the bear.
But it keeps charging.
Naru turns. Runs.

53 EXT. STREAM BANK - DAY 53

Naru scrambles, sprinting down the stream. Sari is just ahead of her. Beyond him, the beaver dam.

Racing through the knee-deep water, Naru looks back at the bear. Her arrow juts out of its thick hide, a mere annoyance to the mighty beast.

Naru plows on -- reaches the beaver dam -- dives under and in.

54 INT. BEAVER DAM - CONTINUOUS 54

Naru pops up into the small darkened dam.

She pulls herself farther in. Turns onto her back. Looks up at the tangled nest of heavy branches that form the dam.

Outside she hears the huge bear SNORT and SNIFF.

Suddenly a paw tears into the dam -- its thick claws swipe just above Naru's face.

55 EXT. STREAM - DAY 55

From behind the bear we watch as it menaces the dam, furiously trying to get to Naru inside.

56 INT. BEAVER DAM - DAY 56

Naru looks up in terror. The bear shoves its huge snout down into the gap it created with its paw. Its jaw snaps open as it snarls angrily at Naru.

Then suddenly the bear steps back.

Naru peers out through the jagged opening in the dam.

The bear is snarling and circling -- it's facing off against something. But what? From inside, Naru's view is limited.

The huge beast circles. Goes up on its hind legs. Roars.

Naru looks out, struggling to gain vantage.

The huge bear crashes backwards into the water -- leaps back up to its feet -- swipes at the air.

Glowing GREEN BLOOD MARKS appear -- floating where the bear's claws scratched the invisible Predator's skin.

The alien, still cloaked, crashes down into the stream.

The bear moves around it -- blocking Naru's view.

Then suddenly the huge bear backs up. It moves closer and closer to Naru -- she retreats back from the hole in the dam but is stuck in its confines -- the bear crashes backwards down onto the dam, smashing the structure apart.

The huge animal is still. Dead. Naru stares into its lifeless jaws.

Then suddenly, the bear's body rises. The enormous animal floats, suspended in the air above the shattered dam.

Cowering inside the tangle of wood, Naru watches as the bear's blood runs down, revealing what's holding up its carcass --

The Predator. His outline made visible by the bear's blood.

Naru stares in awe of the powerful alien.

Wrenching her eyes away, she turns. Scrambles through the wrecked dam, fleeing. She submerges into the stream -- pops up outside of the dam, and paddles downstream.

57

EXT. STREAM - DAY

57

Swimming hard, Naru moves away from the dam.

Sarii appears at the bank of the stream, barking.

Naru tries to swim to him but the current is quick here. She's pushed farther along. Rounds a bend. The stream widens. It's a river here. Rapids.

Naru is drifting fast. She looks back at Sarii who recedes into the distance. The water is moving very quickly -- she's swept along.

Seeing she can't make it to the bank in time, Naru takes a deep breath -- crashes into the intense rapids.

58 EXT. RIVER BEYOND RAPIDS - DAY 58

The water is more mellow here. Naru's head pops up above the waterline. She inhales deeply. Swims towards the bank.

59 EXT. RIVER BANK - LATER 59

All of Naru's warpaint has washed off. She wrings the water out of a soggy leather boot. Slips it back on and steps into the woods.

60 EXT. FOREST TRAIL - DAY 60

Naru walks stealthily. The light that filters through the tree tops is dappled and diffuse. Creepy.

Still wet from the river, she squeezes water from her braids. A noise to her side -- a branch SNAPPING.

Naru draws her tomahawk. Moves in.

She sees Itsee aiming his bow back at her.

NARU

What are you doing here?

Itsee lowers his bow. Wasape steps out of trees with Huupi, and ANIA ["Ahneeah"] (21).

WASAPE

Looking for you. Your brother sent us to bring you home.

NARU

That's a waste of time.

WASAPE

(mean smile)

I agree. But he's warchief now.

NARU

Where is he?

WASAPE

Searching for you on the other side of the pass.

Naru starts to walk away.

WASAPE

Where are you going?

Itsee moves in front of her. Naru stops. Turns to Wasape.

NARU

I saw it.

WASAPE

Saw what?

NARU

The beast that made the track in the camp. The one that drove the lion off.

WASAPE

The bear?

NARU

A bear. And another. Something huge.

WASAPE

What?

Naru struggles to find words to describe the Predator.

NARU

It was invisible. But when it killed the bear its body showed in the blood. It was a ... I don't know ...

(goes for it)

A moopits.

There's silence for a beat. Then Wasape breaks into a loud laugh. The others join in.

WASAPE

You saw a monster from a children's story?

The warriors give Naru incredulous looks.

NARU

It fought the bear with just its hands. Killed it easily.

Wasape shakes his head.

WASAPE

Enough. We're not safe here. There are real dangers.

(MORE)

WASAPE (CONT'D)

Not just demons from stories that
frighten little girls.

He walks to Naru and grabs her arm.

WASAPE (CONT'D)

We're going home now. Don't worry,
I'll tuck you in if you have any
more bad dreams.

Naru jerks her arm free, draws her tomahawk and glares at
him. Wasape gives her a big, dumb smile -- I dare you.

Naru slowly lowers the weapon. Starts to walk again.

NARU

I'm going to finish my hunt.

Wasape steps in front of her.

WASAPE

Hunting what? A monster? I don't
know what you saw. But even if it
is real, you tried this already
with the lion. You ran.

Naru's face falls. Wasape nods knowingly, enjoying this.

WASAPE (CONT'D)

Your brother told me.

(beat)

It's time to come home.

Naru looks into Wasape's eyes. She screws up her courage --
she is not going to back down.

NARU

I saw it. And I am going to finish
my hunt.

She looks past the big man, into the faces of the other
warriors.

NARU (CONT'D)

Would you leave a hunt?

They stare back in silence, unable to answer.

Naru turns away and starts back on the trail.

Wasape rushes forward and blocks her way again.

WASAPE

We're going back to the camp.

NARU

You are.

A standoff. Tense. They stare with hatred.

Wasape lurches toward Naru -- who pivots and, using the big man's mass against himself, sends him to the ground.

Wasape reaches up and brute-force hauls her down too.

They grapple. Naru is a ferocious competitor. Knowing she can't beat him on strength, Naru fights smart. She's undaunted by the 50-plus pounds Wasape has on her.

Using her fists, knees and elbows she rains down a storm of well placed strikes on any unprotected pressure point. She lands a particularly well-aimed punch to Wasape's crotch, folding the big man over.

Furious, Wasape charges, fist cocked back -- Naru retreats and at the last second, jukes, and trips Wasape -- sending him crashing to the floor again.

Enraged, the huge man springs up. He lurches forward -- and finally connects with a punch -- sending Naru staggering back.

Itsee calls to Wasape.

ITSEE

Careful, someone will get hurt.

Naru shakes her head to clear it -- and charges Wasape.

NARU

Yes, someone will!

Wasape smiles as Naru tackles him to the ground. He ties her up in a firm hold.

Naru strains to get free, overpowered by his mass. Wasape hauls her in front of him and slips the nook of his meaty arm around her neck -- squeezing her into a choke hold.

Naru's face begins to redden. She moves her head -- chomps down, biting hard into his forearm. Wasape jerks away instinctively. Naru leaps to her feet.

The big man gets up. He looks at Naru standing before him -- fists up, ready to go. They're both breathing heavily.

Wasape studies the teeth marks on his arm. Relenting, he raises his hands with his palms out -- OK, enough.

61 EXT. FOREST, NEARBY - SAME 61

Perched on the branch of a tall tree, the blurred outline of the Predator appears. He stops. Looks down at the Comanche below.

In Predator vision he scans the warriors. Zooms in on Wasape.

62 EXT. FOREST TRAIL - DAY 62

Wasape rubs the bite mark on his arm. Glares at Naru.

WASAPE

Fine. You want to leave, go.

Naru looks at him for a beat. Licks her split lip and spits. Then she lowers her fists.

The instant she does, Wasape springs forward and hammers a right cross directly into her jaw.

Naru drops, woozy. Before she can recover, Wasape grabs her. Bends her arms back. Binds her wrists with a leather strap.

63 EXT. FOREST, NEARBY - SAME 63

The Predator watches Wasape haul Naru up to her feet where she stands on shaky legs. Wasape shoves her forward, Itsee grabs her arm.

64 EXT. FOREST TRAIL - DAY 64

Wasape leads Naru to sit with her back against a downed tree trunk. Itsee gives him a look.

WASAPE

You like being bit? She fights like a man, she can fall like a man.

Wasape checks the bite mark on his arm. Gives Naru a dirty look. He reaches down and takes Naru's tomahawk. He examines the customized weapon, a derisive smile on his face.

WASAPE (CONT'D)

You need a leash so you don't lose it?

Naru doesn't give him the satisfaction of a response. Wasape tucks the hatchet in his belt then grabs her water and empties it over the bite mark.

WASAPE (CONT'D)

We rest a minute, then head back.
Staying together.

ITSEE

What about Taabe?

WASAPE
He'll meet us at the camp.

Itsee steps into the woods. Wasape shoots him a look.

WASAPE (CONT'D)
I said stay together.

ITSEE
I'm going to take a crap. You want
me to do it here?

Wasape lets him go. Then turns to Huupi.

WASAPE
(demanding)
Water.

Huupi gives Wasape a defiant look but tosses him his canteen.
Wasape drinks.

65 EXT. DEEP FOREST - DAY

65

Itsee adjusts his breechcloth and kicks a pile of leaves over
the small hole he just used.

As he walks back toward camp he pulls leaves off a bush, rubs
them briskly between his palms and tosses them aside.

Continuing, he slows. A funny look comes across his face. He
stops. Turns slowly.

Itsee stands silent in the forest, listening.

The sound of BRANCHES moving.

Itsee stares up at the trees, a terrified look on his face.

66 EXT. DEEP FOREST TRAIL - DAY

66

Naru flexes her jaw while peering up at Wasape. She checks
her surroundings. The other warriors are packing up to move
on.

Naru starts to get up. She's unsteady on her feet. Uses the
log for balance as she rises.

WASAPE
You don't need to get up.

Naru continues to get to her feet. Wasape puts his hand on
her shoulder and firmly pushes her back down against the log.

WASAPE (CONT'D)

Just sit.

Naru slips back to the ground. Wasape touches his lip where it's split from his fight with Naru. He reaches down and tears her medicine pouch off her necklace.

Naru strains to get up -- then stops suddenly and listens.

There's a rustling in the woods. Something moving.

Naru snaps into action -- she instantly ducks down beside the log.

The other Comanche warriors look nervously to Wasape for what to do. He just stands still, watching Naru.

The sound gets closer -- and suddenly -- a family of POSSUMS scurries through the camp.

Ania shoots one of the possums with his bow.

Wasape breaks into a fit of laughter. The other Comanche start laughing too. Naru doesn't change her expression.

Hysterical, Wasape points at her.

WASAPE (CONT'D)

You should see your face.

NARU

What do you think drove the possums toward us?

Wasape just laughs. He strolls arrogantly toward the woods where the possums exited.

Looking back at Naru he grins -- what are you afraid of?

Three bright red LASER POINTS appear on his chest. They instantly spread out -- one over his heart, one over his liver and one on his eye socket.

Wasape reaches up, examines the light on his hand -- **THWIIP!!**

Three razor sharp arrows pierce the big man, right on target.

As Wasape drops, the Predator steps into the camp.

The remaining Comanche warriors stare in stunned silence, they look at Naru -- holy shit, she was right!

NARU (CONT'D)

Cut me loose.

Ignoring her, the warriors stare into the clearing, searching for the cloaked Predator.

HUUPI

Stay down.

Naru crawls to where she can peer over the log. Watches the battle unfold.

Huupi draws his bow -- fires arrows with incredible speed. Three of them careen off the invisible blur as the Predator closes the distance between himself and the warrior.

The Predator steps to within a foot of Huupi -- who draws his flint knife and charges -- the Predator sidesteps. Huupi turns and moves back toward his foe holding his knife at the ready.

The Predator's cloak flickers again. He looks at the weapon in Huupi's hand then slides out his wrist blades.

Huupi waits. When the Predator flickers into view, he lurches forward, lunging to stab.

Using his gauntlet to block, the Predator deflects the knife then slices his wrist blades across Huupi's abdomen -- Huupi doubles over as the Predator brings the blades back up. And cuts Huupi's head off.

He turns to face Huupi, who grips a lance.

Naru looks from the fight over to Wasape's body. Sees her satchel under his body.

The Predator activates his COMBISTICK. Ania watches the alien weapon extend, then the cloak activates again, concealing the Predator.

Ania charges and the two foes duel, parrying with their similarly shaped weapons.

Seeing her opening, Naru runs to Wasape's body. Her wrists still bound, she works to get her tomahawk free from his belt.

Back in the fight, Ania manages to slam the flint blade of his lance into the center of the Predator's chest plate -- the weapon's crude flint tip shatters on his armor.

Ania rotates the lance. Using the other end -- a sharpened wooden point -- he spears down -- the spike drives into the Predator's foot, his cloak flickers off. He lets out a roar of pain and steps back, kicking the lance loose.

It sails over to where Naru is retrieving her hatchet.

Naru pulls it free -- spins it so the blade is against her leather bindings -- jams the flint edge through the cord -- catches the handle in her now-free hands.

She grabs her medicine pouch, ties it back around her neck.

The Predator swipes the bladed end of the combistick -- slicing Ania's chest.

Undaunted, Ania squares up against the invisible Predator. He stares past the alien at Naru. Slowly, ominously, the Predator turns, following Ania's gaze.

His camouflage flickers as he locks eyes with Naru. Then he turns invisible again. Naru runs.

Behind her, our only understanding of the Predator comes from the combistick which splits into two pieces mid-air.

We see the floating combisticks fell Ania.

Naru tears through the trees, running at full force away from the battle.

67 EXT. TALL GRASSY PLAIN - DAY

67

Naru emerges from the tree line sprinting.

The tall, pale grass whips against her skin. She runs hard without looking back.

About 100 paces into the grass, Naru YELPS as she's tripped, brought down by someone hiding in the field.

68 INT. INSIDE THE TALL GRASS - DAY

68

Itsee is lying in wait in the grass. He signals Naru to be silent.

For a tense beat they sit, covered by the grass, breathing deeply. Waiting. There is nothing but the sound of the wind passing through the grass.

Then footsteps. Heavy footsteps.

Naru and Itsee peer out. The grass by the tree line parts -- driven aside by the Predator's invisible form.

He gets closer.

And closer.

Stops 20 feet in front of them -- he is right there.

clickclickclickclickclickclickclickclickclickclickclick

Itsee reaches to his quiver -- nocks his arrow -- draws it back -- aims through the tall grass.

ITSEE
(whispering)
We have him.

Naru shakes her head.

NARU
No. He has us.

As she says the words, the Predator's red lasers shine through the tall grass -- Naru grabs Itsee's arm -- turns -- yanks him with her -- the Predator's arrows miss by inches.

Naru and Itsee sprint away -- the grass behind them parts -- the Predator is running after them.

Naru pulls ahead -- the Predator gains on Itsee -- he's closer -- and closer -- inches away --

Itsee drops -- blood sprays the grass -- Naru keeps running -- behind her the Predator gives chase, his faint outline coated in Itsee's blood.

Naru sprints for the next patch of TREES. She clears the edge of the grass -- leaps over a downed log -- **CLINKK** -- Naru jerks back -- slams to the ground like she's hit the end of a leash.

We come over the log and see what stopped Naru: her ankle is clamped in the metal jaws of a SMALL FUR TRAP.

Naru uses her free leg to stand. She bends down to examine the trap. Blood trickles from where the metal teeth have pierced her flesh. She pulls her flint knife from her boot.

The trap shattered the blade, but her wound is less serious than it could have been. Naru grabs the trap. Tries to open it. Stares back at the edge of the grass.

The tall blades part -- the invisible Predator arrives -- it steps over the log -- the chain connected to the trap on Naru's ankle floats as the Predator lifts it off the ground.

clickclickclickclickclickclickclickclickclickclickclick

Naru stares at the gap in the tall grass.

Suddenly, behind her, the sound of FOOTFALLS. Lots of them.

The chain drops with a CLANG. The grass parts -- the outline of the Predator disappears back into it.

Naru returns her attention to prying open the trap.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Regardez ici.

Naru looks behind her -- A pack of French FUR TRAPPERS aim their smoothbore MUSKETS at her face.

A large, HEAVILY BEARDED trapper (30s) with a rough CIGAR clenched in his teeth, steps forward. Examines Naru.

[NOTE: THE TRAPPERS SPEAK FRENCH WITH SUBTITLES]

BIG BEARD
(surprised)
A woman.

A trapper with a WAXED MUSTACHE (30s), joins his compatriots. He's holding a rope LEASH -- at the end of it is Sari. He's muzzled and pulling against the trapper.

WAXED MUSTACHE
What's she doing out here?

Big Beard shakes his head. He looks into the grass in the direction where Naru came from.

WAXED MUSTACHE (CONT'D)
She'll slow us down.

Big Beard hammers the butt stock of his musket down onto Naru's head. She crumples to the ground unconscious.

BIG BEARD
I'll carry her. The way she was running, I think she's seen it.

69

EXT. BEAR CAGE, TRAPPERS' CAMP - NIGHT

69

Naru's eyes open as she comes to. She doesn't move. She peers out of wood slats. A rough-hewn crate. She's folded up on the bottom.

Naru adjusts her position in the crate to get a better look through the slats. Sariii is next to her, lying on his side, still bound. The dog looks up at Naru.

Naru reaches out and touches his nose. Then she feels the wooden box surrounding her. The crate is old and worn but it's solid enough to keep her in.

She touches the spot where the trapper hit her face. Winces. She's got the beginnings of a black eye. Naru shifts her body. Looks down at her leg.

The puncture wounds from the trap are swollen and continue to bleed. She examines the cuts.

She peers out of the crate. In the distance she sees the two men that captured her. They are seated by a small fire with TWO DOZEN TRAPPERS. Several HORSES graze in a small field near the fire.

The men are speaking French in hushed tones. They're far enough away that she wouldn't be able to tell what they're saying even if she spoke their language.

The man with the big beard is giving orders to the others, who are making adjustments on a large piece of equipment. Naru can't see what it is but we hear what sounds like CHAINS being coiled on the ground.

Laying prone on the cage floor, Naru rocks back and forth. She whispers a quiet prayer.

NARU

Taabe, brother, please, come help me.

Naru slowly sits. Through gritted teeth she finishes her angry prayer.

NARU (CONT'D)

Help me kill *all of them*.

Naru opens her eyes. She adjusts her position in the crate. Studies the trapper's camp. There's not much to it. A hastily put together outpost.

Bloody, half-cured ANIMAL SKINS lie in piles throughout the camp. Hunks of rotting meat nearby. Flies buzz around a mound of ENTRAILS.

The trappers have set their long guns in a pyramid by the rest of their gear. Coils of ROPE and CHAIN sit next to a series of TRAPS. Tall stacks of BUFFALO HIDES are piled high.

Sarii lies on the ground near the gear. The rope around his muzzle keeps him from barking. His four feet are bound together as well -- all he can do is watch powerlessly.

Across from Naru there's another CRATE.

Naru returns her attention to her wounded leg. She pulls her medicine pouch and begins to separate out the appropriate herbs.

Checking to see that they're not watching, Naru looks back at the trappers. Two of them are stacking TRAPS, they have a lot of them.

Big Beard watches them work. He nods with satisfaction then points to Naru's crate. The trappers walk toward her. Seeing them coming, Naru quickly stashes her medicine.

As the men approach, Naru stares defiantly into their ugly faces, unafraid. She sees the stub end of a rough CIGAR in the corner of Big Beard's mouth, recognizes it from the camp near the buffalo slaughter.

Waxed Mustache leans over Naru's cage and peers in at her. He turns to Big Beard.

WAXED MUSTACHE

What's a woman doing so far out?

Big Beard picks up a stick, slides it into the crate and pokes Naru. As she recoils the trappers laugh, showing their decaying teeth.

BIG BEARD

Let's see what she knows.

Big Beard signals to two of his men and they step forward to get her out of the crate. As the lead man reaches in to Naru she kicks him back -- hard. The second man stops.

Big Beard shoves the stick into the crate and jabs at Naru's wounded leg with it. When she grabs for the stick, he withdraws it quickly then swings it back in, smacking her on top of the head.

Big Beard turns to one of his men, RAPHAEL (20s), pasty-faced. He says something in French. Raphael turns to Naru.

RAPHAEL

Will you come out?

[RAPHAEL SPEAKS FRENCH WITH HIS CREW AND COMANCHE WITH NARU]

Naru looks at him. Surprised to hear the man speaking her language.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
I speak a lot of languages.

Still she gives no reply.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
You are coming out of there one way
or another, why make it hurt?

Naru glares at him without responding.

Raphael looks at Big Beard and shakes his head.

BIG BEARD
(to his men)
Get her out of that damn box.

Four trappers attempt the task and it takes all four of them to yank Naru out and hold her. Big Beard speaks French and Raphael translates.

RAPHAEL
You should be helping us. We may
hurt you. But that thing out there
will peel you alive.

Naru's face shows her surprise that they know about the Predator. Big Beard spits out more French.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
We know it made your camp. That's
what you were running from.

Naru's expression shows Big Beard that his guess was right.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
You were going to hide from it?

Naru's eyes light up with anger. She looks at Big Beard with pure defiant rage.

NARU
I was going to kill it.

Raphael translates.

Big Beard gives a hearty laugh. He gestures to one of the men who hands him something.

The big trapper leans in close and puts what he's holding right by Naru's face -- a LEAF -- covered in bright green PREDATOR BLOOD. Raphael translates.

RAPHAEL

You? You think you could kill this beast?

Naru stares at the green blood on the leaf.

NARU

If it bleeds, I can kill it.

Big Beard smiles and shakes his head. He tells Raphael what to say in French.

RAPHAEL

If you were smart you'd help us. It killed your whole party.

Naru looks up at him defiantly.

NARU

It didn't kill everyone.

Raphael turns to Big Beard and translates. The big man looks at Naru. He gives an ugly smile. Then walks to the crate across from her. Kicks it open.

There is someone inside. He turns to Naru. It's Taabe.

His arms and legs are bound. He's clearly taken a beating at the hands of the trappers. The pain in his eyes is palpable.

The sight of Taabe imprisoned is devastating for Naru. She may not say it but Taabe is her hero, her rock. And now he's boxed in like an animal. Naru has never been angrier in her life.

Big Beard says something to Raphael. He translates for Naru.

RAPHAEL

One way or another, you are going to help us.

Big Beard signals to his men and they drag Taabe out.

Naru strains in fury against the trappers holding her but she can not overpower them. The men bring her hands together as Big Beard walks behind her.

He pulls a length of rope from around his waist and deftly binds Naru's wrists. Then shoves her forward, sending her landing on her face.

Big Beard points to Taabe and barks at his men.

BIG BEARD
Get him bleeding.

Behind her, the men cut a line across Taabe's chest.

70

EXT. BURNT GLADE - DAWN

70

Blackened trees protrude from the ground, evidence of a long passed fire that created the clearing.

The air is thick with FOG that drifts between the burnt black trunks.

Naru and Taabe stand in the middle of the glade. Their wrists are bound to each other's with the burnt trunk of a tree between them. They're 'reverse hugging' the trunk -- if one pulls forward, the other is pulled back into the tree.

Naru speaks softly to her brother.

NARU
Are you hurt badly?

Taabe spits out a tooth.

TAABE
They tried.

Naru scans the burnt field. The entire glade is in a shallow depression set below the trappers' camp. Naru scans for any sign of the Frenchmen but it looks as if she and Taabe have been set out alone.

She surveys the ground. All around them TRAPS have been set out. There is one a yard from Naru's feet.

Naru pulls forward a little. Taabe groans. She does it again. Again Taabe complains.

NARU
Lean back. I think I can pull some slack out of the rope.

Taabe doesn't move. She tries again. He grunts.

TAABE
Stop.

Naru turns her head and peers through one eye over her shoulder toward her brother. Taabe does not face her.

NARU

If I can work slack...

TAABE

No. If they see you moving, they'll tighten the ropes. They don't want their bait to get away.

Naru scans the surrounding forest again. The realization of how screwed they are sinks in. All the same, she keeps working the rope. Taabe grunts but knows he can't stop her.

TAABE (CONT'D)

Pâtsí, listen. Wasape, the others, they were all wrong about you. They said you can't hunt because you're a woman.

Naru turns toward him. Taabe keeps his face turned away.

TAABE (CONT'D)

That is a lie they told because they were frightened by your strength. We both know you're a better hunter than all of them.

Naru stops moving.

TAABE (CONT'D)

You're as good a hunter as me.

The faintest hint of a smile comes on his face.

TAABE (CONT'D)

Almost as good anyway.

(beat)

That's not what keeps you from greatness.

His smile vanishes.

TAABE (CONT'D)

You know how I killed the lion? Your trap, the tree. You weakened it. When I fought it, it still had your lance in its back.

(beat)

You could have killed it. But you got scared and ran.

A pained look comes across Naru's face.

TAABE (CONT'D)

A great hunter can be scared, but
always be more scared of running.

(beat)

When I'm facing down my prey, I
think of my feet as roots, binding
me to the earth, making me stand my
ground. A true hunter never runs
from prey. Promise me you'll
remember that, pâtsí.

Naru strains to look back at her brother. He turns to her as
well. She nods.

NARU

I promise. Warchief.

Taabe nods his appreciation.

71

EXT. OBSERVATION POST ABOVE GLADE - DAWN

71

A trapper, SPYGLASS, lies prone on the ground overlooking the
glade. Through a telescope he observes Naru and Taabe bound
to the tree. A second trapper, RAMBERT, kneels beside him.

Behind him a team of FOUR TRAPPERS sit on HORSES, waiting to
gallop down into the glade. The horses are tense, sensing the
impending danger. The horsemen cruelly attempt to still the
animals; their spurs dig in, reins pull too tight.

RAMBERT

*We should not have brought the
horses.*

Spyglass replies without taking his eye off the telescope.

SPYGLASS

*The horses would be fine if the men
knew how to control them.*

He continues to scan the glade below. The horses WHINNY
nervously.

SPYGLASS (CONT'D)

*Silence them or the creature won't
show.*

Spyglass scopes back over to Naru and Taabe. Sees nothing.

Behind him Horseman #1 drops to the ground, dead.

The four horses run down into the glade.

Spyglass and Rambert turn back. See the four horsemen dead.
A PREDATOR FOOTPRINT forms in their POOLED BLOOD.
The Predator, cloaked, takes a step toward Rambert.
Spyglass's eyes go wide.

SPYGLASS (CONT'D)

Shit.

72

EXT. BURNT GLADE, NARU'S TREE - DAWN

72

Taabe watches the horses appear out of the fog, racing through the glade.

A SCREAM echoes through the clearing. Spyglass appears -- running full speed toward Naru and Taabe. Spyglass looks back over his shoulder, his face a mask of fear.

The Predator's red sighting laser shines through the fog.

Naru's view of the trapper is blocked by the tree. She strains to see around it.

THWACK -- the Predator's combistick lodges into a tree near Naru -- with Spyglass's hat pierced on the end.

73

EXT. BURNT GLADE - DAWN

73

The Predator enters the glade. A swirl of ASH adheres to his camouflage cloak. He attempts to brush it away, realizes it's futile. Gives up and de-cloaks.

Predator POV -- he scans the glade in Predator vision. Sees Naru and Taabe bound to the tree -- pans over and, using his targeting system, locates his combistick in the tree.

He walks through the glade to retrieve his weapon.

The ground is covered in hidden BEAR TRAPS.

Beyond the traps, lying concealed from view, SIX TRAPPERS watch the Predator walk across the burnt ground.

He takes another step -- **SNNAAP** -- a trap slams shut on his ankle.

Confused but unfazed, the Predator looks down at the trap.

TRAPPER #5

Pull!

The six trappers, - spring up from their hiding holes -- they yank on CHAINS connected to the trap on the Predator's foot.

Tripped, the alien falls. His hand lands in a second TRAP which snaps shut.

The trappers spring forward. Trapper #6 and Trapper #7 toss a rope NET to Trapper #8 and Trapper #9. They each hold a corner as they cover the Predator.

74 EXT. BURNT GLADE, NARU'S TREE - DAWN 74

Naru peeks around the tree. Sees the trappers holding the Predator down.

75 EXT. BURNT GLADE - DAWN 75

TRAPPER #5
We have him!

As soon as he gets the words out -- **SNNICK** -- the Predator's blades extend -- cut through the rope net -- and drive through the jaw of Trapper #5.

With Trapper #5 still impaled, the Predator swings his arm -- crashes the blade down through Trapper #6's chest.

Trapper #7 shouts in terror -- the Predator pulls the metal SPHERE off his belt -- sailing through the air it expands revealing itself -- the Predator's own metal NET!

The device covers the trapper -- then contracts -- its metal web slicing through a LOG then dropping to the ground and forming a metal knot again.

The Predator looks down at the trap on his foot. He reaches down to his belt, pulls the coiled, sectional device, a CUT-CLAMP. It unfurls.

The Predator throws the clamp down at the trap and we see how it works -- the clamp cinches around the trap's metal jaw like a snap bracelet, there's a high-pitched whine as it self-tightens, then -- **KRINNK** -- the trap snaps in half and drops open.

76 EXT. BURNT GLADE, NARU'S TREE - DAWN 76

Back at her tree, Naru looks down at the trap nearest her foot. She strains to hook her ankle over its chain, trying to bring the trap closer. But why?

Trapper #8 squares off against the Predator. He pulls a long KNIFE.

The Predator looks at the man. Then to his own hand which is still encased in a trap. He smashes the trap against a tree -- catches the heavy metal device as it opens -- throws it full force into Trapper #8's face, killing him.

Two bullets slam into the Predator's back, drawing green blood and knocking him forward.

He turns -- and unfolds his spiral metal SHIELD -- it unfurls on his arm like a Japanese fan forming a circle.

As he turns to face three more trappers, their bullets bouncing off the alien metal shield.

Naru manages to hook her ankle around the chain leading to the bear trap. Her movement pulls hard on Taabe's arms. He grunts in pain.

TAABE

What are you doing?

Naru's voice is strained by the effort she's putting in to drawing the trap closer.

NARU

Do you remember the flood when we were young?

Taabe shifts as she pulls the trap closer.

NARU (CONT'D)

The water came fast. The river swept everything downstream.

She reaches farther.

NARU (CONT'D)

I saw a beaver with it's leg pinned between two rocks.

Raphael hides behind a tree, reloading his flintlock PISTOL as the Predator advances on the other trappers.

The Predator unfolds his shield. Snaps out his wrist blades. Trapper #9 advances wielding his musket like a club. The Predator cuts right through him -- Trapper #10 charges -- the Predator back hands him -- sending Trapper #10 crashing hard into a tree.

Raphael fires into the Predator's back.

He turns -- throws a cut clamp -- it hits Raphael in the thigh -- severing his leg.

Trapper #11 swings his musket at the Predator -- he closes his hand around Trapper #11's throat -- chokes him against a tree.

As Trapper #11 reaches for a knife in his boot, Trapper #12 attacks from the Predator's side -- swings a HATCHET down -- hits the Predator's gauntlet -- the Predator grabs the HATCHET -- spins it end over end -- catches it by the handle -- slams it into Trapper #12.

Still being choked, Trapper #11 grabs his knife -- but before he can use it the Predator unfurls his folding shield -- decapitating Trapper #11.

Trapper #13 approaches from behind, loading his MUSKET -- he raises the weapon and fires, point blank, into the Predator's face -- the bullet ricochets off the Predator's mask and slams back through Trapper #13's skull.

80 EXT. OTHER SIDE OF THE BURNT GLADE - DAWN 80

A line of TRAPPERS aim their muskets at the Predator. Big Beard stands among them.

BIG BEARD

Fire!

WAX MUSTACHE

We'll hit the others!?

BIG BEARD

FIRE!!!

81 EXT. BURNT GLADE, NARU'S TREE - DAWN 81

A hail of bullets sail past Naru -- piercing the trees around her and striking the trunk she and Taabe are bound to.

82 EXT. BURNT GLADE - DAWN 82

The Predator turns -- uses his shield to block the volley of shots coming from the other side of the glade.

83 EXT. BURNT GLADE, NARU'S TREE - DAWN 83

She looks down. Finally has the trap close enough that she can use it.

NARU

The water kept rising.

Naru bends down.

NARU (CONT'D)
The beaver knew it would drown.

She picks up a rock. Holds it over the trap.

NARU (CONT'D)
So it chewed off its own leg.

Taabe's eyes widen as Naru lowers their bound wrists toward the trap.

TAABE
No. Wait.

NARU
It was worth it for the beaver to
lose its leg to be free.

TAABE
Naru!

She drops the rock onto the trap's pressure plate.

SNAAAP!

Taabe looks down. The trap's metal jaws are clamped into the rope that binds their wrists. Naru pulls against the trap's jagged edge -- the rope splits, freeing them.

She moves around to the same side of the tree and looks at her brother, smiling.

NARU
I'm smarter than a beaver.

Taabe smiles back. Working together they quickly unbind their other wrists.

84 EXT. BURNT GLADE - DAWN

84

The Predator leaps from tree to tree, flying through the burnt glade.

He passes Naru and Taabe as they stand, finally able to free themselves from the tree.

85 EXT. BURNT GLADE, NARU'S TREE - DAWN

85

Taabe looks to the far side of the glade where the horses ran.

TAABE

I need a horse.

Naru nods. Looks up at the trappers' camp.

NARU

I'll get Sariii.

Taabe nods. They head off in opposite directions.

The trappers fire up into the trees as the Predator sails by overhead.

They stand in a cluster, aiming and missing.

An **ELECTRONIC BEEPING** draws their attention.

Trapper #14 turns to find the source of the strange sound.

The Predator's gauntlet lies in the dirt at their feet.

Its display counting down in an strange glyph.

It reaches zero.

The gauntlet opens.

Three sharp DISKS rise up out of the device.

They spin, hovering at neck height.

From above the glade we see LASERS cut through the fog -- the Predator's gauntlet weapon dispatching the trappers.

Naru steps into the camp.

She spots her satchel near a crate by the campfire. Moving closer, she stays hidden.

The remaining trappers peer nervously toward the scene of the fight.

TRAPPER #17

Do they need our help?

Trapper #15 shakes his head.

TRAPPER #18

They're beyond our help. I say we go.

Trapper #14 looks back toward the battle. Nods agreement.

TRAPPER #17

What about the dog?

TRAPPER #18

I like dog. It tastes better than beaver.

Trapper #17 smiles and pulls his KNIFE. Walks toward Sariii.

Naru jumps out. In one move, she scoops up a small PELT - reaches into the fire with it -- throws a handful of embers into the man's face.

As he bellows in pain she grabs his arm, redirects his wrist - - shoves the knife into his thigh. He drops.

Trapper #18 draws his knife. Naru looks at her satchel on the crate right behind him.

She charges -- uses the pelt to grab the hot PAN out of the fire -- slams it into Trapper #18. He drops but begins to rise again.

A BULLET blasts into a tree near Naru.

Trapper #19 quickly reloads.

Naru pulls her tomahawk out of her satchel -- dispatches Trapper #18 just as he is about to stab her -- throws the tomahawk into Trapper #19 just in time -- he fires upward as he drops dead.

Trapper #17 pulls his knife from his thigh, moves toward Naru.

Naru yanks her tomahawk back -- but it comes back too fast, she fails to catch it.

Trapper #17 gives an evil grin, charges -- Naru grabs Trapper #18's knife -- throws it into Trapper #17's other thigh -- he leans forward -- Naru dives between his legs, grabbing the knife back.

Trapper #17 spins to face her -- Naru stabs through his hand - - he drops his knife -- she catches it and stabs him in the face.

Naru looks around. She's alone now. She walks to Sariii. Cuts him free. The dog licks her face. She points -- **TiCh-TiCh.**

NARU

Find Taabe.

Sariii runs off, following her order.

87A

EXT. BURNT GLADE - SAME

87A

Dead trappers lay strewn about the clearing floor.

The Predator is sitting propped up against a tree. He opens his rucksack. Removes a CYLINDRICAL container. Presses the container against a bullet hole in his chest. A liquid alloy spreads out like liquid mercury -- sealing the wound.

87B

EXT. FUR TRAPPERS' CAMP - DAY

87B

Naru looks at the trappers' gear. She empties a canteen of water onto her wounded leg. Drinks a second one down in a few gulps. She spots a coil of rope. Shoves it into her bag.

She creeps farther into the camp. Surveys the scene, she takes a breath.

CLICK -- a gun is cocked behind her.

Without looking, in one perfectly fluid move, Naru yanks her tomahawk back into her hand, spins and swings it to slice into her assailant -- Raphael.

But the weakened man instantly drops his flintlock PISTOL, and raises his hands in surrender.

Naru hesitates. She keeps the hatchet back, ready to strike, and surveys the man. He's kneeling. Pale from the blood loss caused by his lost leg.

He drops to the ground, unable to even kneel.

RAPHAEL

Help me.

Naru stares at the man. Unmoved.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)

Please. Water. Please.

Naru eyes the flintlock PISTOL. Raphael sees what she's looking at.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)

Help me and I'll show you how to use it.

Naru grabs a canteen and moves to Raphael. She hands it to him and as he drinks she examines his leg.

She ties a length of rope around his thigh just above where it was severed. He groans as she tightens the tourniquet.

Naru takes the canteen from Raphael. Pouring water over the wound she sees that the Predator's cut-clamp is still attached -- locked on the edge of his bone.

Naru reaches out and touches the device. Raphael winces. She flips a lever -- the clamp pops open.

Naru studies the clamp. She cleans it with more water and puts it in her satchel.

Raphael looks at her pleadingly and she gives him back the canteen. He takes a huge swallow. Then points to Naru's medicine pouch.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
You have medicine.

Naru stares back at him with cold eyes.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
Please.

Naru slowly removes her medicine pouch. She looks at Raphael's leg, then separates out a handful of the same orange flower petals she gave Puh.

She mixes them with the mushrooms from the pouch at her waist, then holds the medicine out to Raphael who reaches for it eagerly with his sweaty hand. Naru pulls her hand back. She pulls the flintlock out of Raphael's belt.

Raphael nods and gestures for her to hand it to him.

Naru holds the edge of her tomahawk to his throat and stands close.

As she watches, Raphael pulls a POWDER HORN from his belt.

He pours powder from the horn into the pistol, primes the flint with a few grains, drops a ball of shot down the barrel, uses the ramrod to tamp it down. Then he hands the pistol and the horn to Naru.

He touches the hammer.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
Pull that back and it will fire.

Naru cocks the hammer. As she examines the weapon we catch a glimpse of the engraving on its side: "Raphael Adolini 1715."

Raphael looks down at his leg. He's woozy.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
Please.

Naru looks at him. Considers. She hands him the medicine. Raphael swallows it eagerly.

For a beat he's still.

Then it hits like wave crashing -- an intense spasm of frantic convulsions, Raphael slams off the dirt floor -- then he lies still.

After a moment his eyes pop open and he stares at Naru. He's shivering frantically. His teeth chattering.

Naru hears a NOISE in the trees. Something big moving. She gets up. Raphael looks at her with pleading eyes.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
Don't leave me here.

Naru backs away holding his pistol.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
Wait. Please. Don't leave me.

But Naru keeps moving.

88 SCENE 88 HAS BECOME SCENE 87A 88

89 EXT. EDGE OF TRAPPERS' CAMP - SAME 89

Naru hides behind the trunk of a huge tree. She examines the pistol and the powder horn. Takes a deep breath. Runs toward the next tree, heading back to the clearing.

Making it, she stops. Looks down at the wounds on her leg from the trap. They're bleeding again.

90 EXT. FUR TRAPPERS' CAMP - SAME 90

The Predator walks into the staging area. Looks at the trappers' gear and the empty canteens. He moves on, following a long BLOOD TRAIL.

91 EXT. TREES BY THE GLADE - SAME 91

Naru peers back into the camp. Watches the Predator exploring.

Behind him, Raphael, terrified, drags himself toward the tree line.

The Predator hears a noise. He turns. Raphael holds still.

92 EXT. FUR TRAPPERS' CAMP - SAME 92
The Predator walks toward where Raphael cowers, shivering and terrified.
The Predator gets closer. And closer.
Then walks right by him -- it's as if he can't see the man.

93 EXT. TREES BY THE GLADE - SAME 93
Naru watches the Predator. He stops near Raphael, she looks confused. Why isn't he killing the trapper?
Seeing Raphael shivering against the cold -- Naru figures it out -- the medicine she gave him has rendered Raphael invisible to the Predator.
She opens her pouch and looks at the orange flower petals, then back at the Predator, he's standing right next to the trapper yet unable to see him!

94 EXT. FUR TRAPPERS' CAMP - SAME 94
Delirious with terror, Raphael holds still.
The alien takes a step back. Examines a pool of blood on the ground right by Raphael.
He takes another step -- his foot comes down on Raphael's knee -- the man yells out in pain.
The Predator tilts his head -- confused.
He snaps out his wrist blades. Puts them through Raphael's skull.

95 EXT. TREES BY THE GLADE - SAME 95
Naru slowly backs away. She hears a rustling.
The Predator hears it too. He scans the woods. Sees a blur of movement. Aims his crossbow.
He walks back toward the burnt glade. Scanning.
Still can't get a lock on his target.
Then suddenly, Sariii charges out of the forest, barking.
The Predator turns. Aims his lasers at the dog. Fires.

As the arrows launch -- the thunderous sound of HOOVES - Taabe charges into the glade on horseback -- **SMAAKK** -- hits the side of the Predator's head with the combistick -- a direct blow -- Mark McGwire crushing a fastball.

The Predator's helmet is knocked off -- it falls to the dirt.

With the helmet on the ground, its lasers, the target guidance system -- now point away from Sarii.

Naru follows the line of the three red lasers -- they're now aimed at the base of a nearby tree.

She watches closely as the Predator's arrows sail around, adjusting their aim to the new target point, then slam harmlessly into the base of the tree.

As they hit, Sarii makes it through the clearing.

Naru studies the Predator's arrows lodged in the tree -- the lasers from his helmet still shine on the aim points.

Naru looks up. Taabe steers the horse into the camp -- grabs his bow and quiver -- turns the horse back -- rides straight at the Predator, firing.

His aim is true -- but the arrows bounce off of the Predator's shield -- as Taabe nears, he drops his bow -- lifts the combistick -- prepares to smash the alien again.

The hooves stomp -- Taabe is almost to him -- at the last second, he leaps off the horse, drives the combistick, through the Predator's shoulder.

The alien lets out an angry snarl, grabs the front half of the combistick, allows the second half to drop, catches it and moves in, enticed by the prospect of hand-to-hand combat.

As the two circle, the fight is glaringly one-sided -- but there's a fearsome look of determination on Taabe's face.

They close and begin to battle, parrying back and forth.

As Taabe attacks, the Predator cloaks.

Taabe holds his bow, arrow nocked, ready to fire. He scans for the Predator.

Naru approaches. She shoves the flintlock pistol back in her belt. Draws her tomahawk as she walks to Taabe.

NARU

Let's go.

Taabe continues to search for his foe.

TAABE

No, I've got this, Naru.

Naru takes a step closer. Shakes her head.

NARU

Not here. Here it has strength.

(beat)

We need to go where we're stronger.

Taabe looks at his sister. Realizes she's right.

He lowers his bow -- as the blades from the Predator's gauntlet pierce through his body.

Naru stares at her brother in horror.

She raises her tomahawk.

Steps in to fight.

The Predator turns to face her.

Taabe grabs the skull off the Predator's belt -- drives the fangs into the alien's back.

The Predator turns back to Taabe.

Taabe looks at his sister.

TAABE

Go!

The Predator kills Taabe.

Then turns back to Naru.

But she's gone.

Naru runs down the hill.

She moves as fast as she can on her wounded leg. The effort to keep going is painful. She's drenched in perspiration.

Naru runs as fast as she can on her wounded leg. The effort to keep moving is painful. She's drenched in perspiration.

She crosses the stream then traverses the opposing bank which is covered in tangled tree roots.

As she climbs up the ridge her injured leg gives out. Naru crashes to the ground. And lies there.

Sarii pops out of the woods behind her. He runs through the stream to Naru and licks her face. Naru pushes herself up and sits.

Naru pulls her leg up toward her body and checks her wounds.

Reaching down toward the stream she tears out a handful of wet moss.

She crawls toward a deep pocket where the tree's root structure bends over the bank of the stream -- a dark nook, concealed from view.

Naru nestles herself inside, folding her body to fit in the natural alcove. Sarii climbs in after her.

She pulls her pouch and removes some herbs.

Naru mixes the other herbs in with the moss and packs the wounds on her leg. It's painful work but she steadies her hands. Soldiers through.

When she's done she leans back in the tree. Rests.

Aruka stands outside alone. She's working a HIDE; scraping and stretching the animal skin.

The sound of HOOVES galloping.

Tabu and another SCOUT ride up to the camp. Aruka stares as they hop off their HORSES.

Tabu looks to the scout. Gestures with his head toward Kehetu's tipi and the man heads in that direction.

Aruka watches intently as Tabu approaches her, He's nervous.

ARUKA

Tell me.

TABU

There was a large battle in the glade. Many dead men. Most were white.

(holds a painful beat)

But Taabe was among them.

Aruka's face floods with grief. She holds it back. Steadies herself. Soldiers through.

ARUKA

Naru?

Tabu shakes his head.

TABU

We've found nothing yet.

98

EXT. DEEP FOREST STREAM - DUSK

98

Naru rests in the tree. She hears FOOTSTEPS approaching. Shifts in the nook. Pulls the flintlock pistol and peers out with one eye.

The footsteps get closer. Big Beard steps into view. He looks nervous, rattled. Keeps looking back over his shoulder.

He walks down to the bank of the stream. Stops. Bends to wash his face in the water. Begins to fill his leather CANTEEN.

Naru aims the pistol at his head. Holds for a beat. Thinking.

She looks at Sari. Leans down close to the dog.

NARU

Home, Sari, now.

She signals -- **TiCh-TiCh** -- But Sari doesn't move. Naru glares at him.

NARU (CONT'D)

I do this alone.

Sari stares at her another beat. Then follows Naru's order.

Naru puts the flintlock pistol in her belt. Pulls her medicine pouch. Opening it, she sorts out the bright orange flower petals that we saw her give Puhi and Raphael earlier.

She looks at the orange petals in her palm. It's a huge dose.

Naru mixes in the mushrooms. Then swallows it all.

Her muscles instantly convulse. Gritting her teeth, Naru reaches into her satchel and pulls something out.

As Naru returns her focus to Big Beard standing in the stream we see what she's holding -- the Predator's cut clamp unfurls in her hand.

99

EXT. CLEARING IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

99

Snow drifts down from above.

Big Beard is lying on the ground on his back. Sweat on his forehead glistens in the light of a large BONFIRE burning nearby.

A RAT scurries by. Then another.

The big man's eyes pops open. He looks down at his leg -- the lower half of the limb is gone -- three RATS gnaw at the savage wound. With a SCREAM he slaps them away.

He draws his leg up. Examines the damage. Charred flesh marks where the end of his stump has been cauterized.

He rolls over. HOWLS in pain. Sees his canteen and the rest of his gear lying on the ground several yards away. Beyond the small pile of his possessions is his musket.

Grunting in fury, he crawls quickly toward the weapon.

Naru steps out of the woods. She's holding Big Beard's boot.

The trapper crawls faster. He's furious. Spit flies from his lips as he shouts.

BIG BEARD

Idiot savage.

Naru walks calmly.

Racing, he drags himself toward his gun.

BIG BEARD (CONT'D)

You are going to die.

Naru shakes her head. Tosses his boot into the fire.

NARU

You think I'm stupid.

Shivering, her teeth chatter. But she walks with purpose moving toward the fire.

NARU (CONT'D)
But your trap didn't work.

The trapper is almost to his musket.

Naru stands near the flames. But because of the medicine the skin on her arms is still covered in goosebumps.

NARU (CONT'D)
It only hunts the hunter.

100 EXT. WOODS, PREDATOR POV - SAME 100

In Predator vision the alien surveys the scene. The bonfire glows bright in his display.

He sees Big Beard aiming his musket in his direction.

But he does not see Naru!

Just as with Raphael, the medicine has rendered her invisible.

101 EXT. CLEARING IN THE WOODS - NIGHT 101

Big Beard pulls the trigger. An empty click.

He quickly examines the weapon.

He hears the thud of heavy FOOTFALLS.

He turns, facing the noise, holding his useless weapon.

Naru stands close by. Holding still. Shivering as the snow falls around her.

Lying in wait.

The Predator uncloaks. Big Beard's eyes go wide in terror.

The Predator extends his combistick -- spins it in his hands, preparing to deal the death blow with a flourish -- Naru is so close to him the weapon clips her hair as he spins it -- yet the Predator does not see her.

Naru's cut hair drifts to the ground -- as Big Beard's head and body separate -- severed by the Predator.

The alien leans down to examine Big Beard's skull.

As he bends down we see Naru -- standing behind him -- aiming the flintlock pistol right at the back of Predator's head.

As the Predator stands -- **KRAACK** -- Naru fires.

Shoved forward by the shot -- the Predator's helmet flies off.

Naru rushes out -- grabs the helmet -- puts it in her bag as she dashes into the woods.

The Predator stands. Feels the back of his head where the bullet grazed his thick skull. Sees his green blood glowing in his palms. ROARS!

102

OMITTED

102

103 EXT. FOREST FLOOR - NIGHT 103

The Predator scans the forest floor in the direction Naru continued on. Spots a blood trail.

The Predator moves on, following the trail. It leads around a bend in the path.

A thick growth of plants. The Predator pushes through.

104 EXT. CLEARING INSIDE THE NATURAL HEDGE - NIGHT 104

Pausing, he surveys the area ahead. Sees something odd on the ground. He moves toward it.

And now we see where Naru has led him -- the moss above the sinkhole.

In the center of the moss is Big Beard's leg.

The Predator studies the severed limb from afar.

But the Predator is cagey. He stops at the edge, peers down, recognizing what may be a trap.

105 EXT. TREE - NIGHT 105

Up on a branch, Naru looks down at the Predator's back. Waits for him to step forward. He doesn't. So she leaps down --

106 EXT. CLEARING INSIDE THE NATURAL HEDGE - CONTINUOUS 106

Naru's crashes down on to the Predator's back -- the alien staggers forward -- but just manages to avoid stepping into the mud pit!

Naru slams to the ground behind him.

As the Predator turns she draws her tomahawk --

They battle hand-to-hand.

The Predator using his strength and experience.

Naru using her wit and sheer force of will.

Along with everything she's learned watching the Predator.

His weapons and techniques.

Sarii returns from the woods to help.

The dog's ferocious loyalty allows Naru an important moment in the battle.

But then he is endangered.

And she must help.

During the fight, Naru leads the Predator into position in the pit.

He sinks. Deeper and deeper.

Then stops, waist deep.

Unfazed, the Predator draws his crossbolt.

Aims it dead at Naru. The weapon activates -- its sharp, lethal blades shine in the light.

Naru stares right into the weapon. One pull of the trigger and she's dead.

But Naru does not move. She holds her ground. Naru speaks quietly to herself.

NARU

My feet are roots.

Naru glares defiantly down the barrel of the alien weapon.

The Predator fires. The bolts sail out toward Naru.

But Naru doesn't flinch.

She stares the Predator dead in the eye. Then looks to his side.

There, propped between two rocks -- his helmet -- the Predator is right in position where she wanted him.

The red laser sights are pointing directly at him -- Naru set him up -- used his own targeting system against him.

The arrows sail up in a loop -- they pass Naru -- and whip back down -- where they slam home -- into the Predator.

The Predator gasps. Chokes. Coughs green blood out of his pierced lungs.

Falls backward.

Dead.

Naru stands. Retrieves her tomahawk.

Walks to the Predator.

Grabs a handful of dreadlocks -- pulls his head back exposing his neck -- lifts the hatchet.

As she brings the weapon down to strike we --

CUT TO:

107

INT. WARCHIEF KEHETU'S TIPI - MORNING

107

Kehetu sits by the fire. Sumu is beside him holding his hand.

The old warchief coughs. He struggles to get up and walk to the stew pot. It's difficult. His old knees are tired.

Sumu helps him sit back down. Brings him the stew.

She looks at her husband. It pains her to say this. But she has to.

SUMU

We will need a new warchief.

Kehetu looks into his wife's face. Considers the truth of her words.

After a beat the flap of the tipi opens. The young Comanche girl enters.

She stares at the adults for a beat.

Then looks at Kehetu.

GIRL

Come and see.

She rushes back out of the tipi. The others follow.

Sumu and the Elders stare out into the tall grass. The rest of the tribe quickly gathers behind them.

Sumu gestures and a young Comanche MAN goes into her tipi. He returns a moment later helping Kehetu along. Aruka makes her way up to join them. She has a fresh CUT LINE on her shoulder.

As Kehetu is led to the front of the crowd he squints into the distance.

A lone figure moves through the tall grass toward them.

(page 84A)

It's Naru. Her body is soaked in green blood.

Her face is painted in her own style using the Predator's fluorescent green blood.

The Comanche in the camp look on in awe as Naru, with Sariii at her side, walks toward them.

Aruka stares in stunned silence. As Naru gets close, she rushes to her.

They embrace. Each has a fresh CUT LINE on their shoulder.

The others gape at what Naru's holding. Marveling at her accomplishment as a hunter.

They stare in fascination at the head of the Predator.

Naru's prey.

Naru walks to Kehetu. She lays the alien's head at his feet. The old warchief looks at the Predator's face.

Naru pulls the flintlock pistol from her belt. Hands it to Kehetu. He regards the foreign weapon, then sets it down.

Then he turns back to Naru, studying her.

NARU

There's danger nearby. We should
move to more easily protected
ground.

The old warchief stares at her. Sees something he missed before.

Mirroring his actions when Taabe returned with the mountain lion, Kehetu puts his hands on Naru's shoulders. Stares deeply into her eyes.

Kehetu hobbles back to his tipi. The crowd watches, silent now.

The warchief returns. He's carrying the carved staff he gave to Taabe. He leans forward. Takes Naru by the hands. He presses the staff into her palms. Walks back to his tipi.

Naru looks into the crowd. But unlike Taabe, she's not basking in the glory of adulation. Naru's expression is pensive as she contemplates the enormity of the battles to come.

Naru looks down at the staff. Then she looks to her mother. Aruka looks back, her face a mix of sadness, fear, pride, and then reverence.

Naru looks into the crowd. She spots the face of the little Comanche girl. She's standing in the grass, holding a bag for collecting wood.

The girl sets her bag down.

Looks up with pride.

Smiles at the new warchief.

THE END