

FADE IN:

COLORADO TERRITORY, SUMMER, 1864

1 EXT. FREMONT'S ORCHARD - DAY

1

A rabbit nibbles grass. CHIEF LEAN BEAR, 40s, a muscular Cheyenne with a single eagle feather in his hair, aims an arrow. Behind him, other BRAVES water horses and a few head of cattle.

Hoof beats. The rabbit dives out of sight.

Lean Bear turns to see FIFTEEN UNION SOLDIERS riding up. He lowers his bow and holds up a large, brass medal that hangs from his neck on a leather thong.

The patrol stops, an OFFICER dismounts and walks to him.

The braves and soldiers watch one another tensely. Lean Bear extends a hand in the custom of the Whites.

RED EAGLE, 20s, strong, broad shouldered, observes with apprehension.

The officer shakes Lean Bear's hand then turns to his men:

OFFICER

Take their weapons.

The soldiers dismount and move to seize the Indians' bows and few rifles. Bewildered, the Indians refuse to give them up. The soldiers take aim.

Lean Bear raises his medal again, confident it will protect them. As he removes a paper from a pouch at his waist, he is shot dead by the officer.

Red Eagle is stunned and fires his rifle at the officer, who takes cover behind his horse. Everyone goes on the attack.

Four soldiers are shot and several Indians wounded.

The Indians ride off with Lean Bear's body. The soldiers give chase, trampling his paper -- with the seal of the President of the United States and iconic signature, *A. Lincoln*.

2 EXT. SMOKY HILL INDIAN CAMP - DAY

2

Lean Bear's body is wrapped in skins. BRAVES pound the ground, WOMEN wail, drums beat. Lean Bear's brother, BULL BEAR, 40s, fierce Chief of the Cheyenne Dog Soldiers, cuts the Presidential medal from its thong and throws it in the fire.