

# THE MAZE

By

Paul Soderman and Cathie Soderman

Paul & Cathie Soderman  
Boulder, Colorado  
(720) 381-0747  
Cathiesoderman@gmail.com

WGAw# 799676

FADE IN:

EXT. BLACK HILLS FOREST, SOUTH DAKOTA- DAWN

Forest trail, Black Hills of South Dakota, two male figures emerge out of the mist jogging hard. WESLEY WALKING BEAR, (40), rugged Lakota male and COACH AUGUST ANDERSON, (49), white athletic male, train relentlessly before sunrise, racing through the rocky terrain, leaping over streams and fallen logs.

The athletes sprint to a hilltop, just as the sun appears over the plains of South Dakota. Side by side they raise their hands toward the rising sun, in a ceremonial gesture. Standing reverently they pray.

EXT. A SNOWY RIVERBANK, BLACK HILLS, SOUTH DAKOTA - DAWN

Descending the hilltop, the two men arrive next to an icy river.

August strips. In prayer, he places his palm in the ice cold water. He stands and emerges into the freezing water. Wesley, on the riverbank takes pinches of tobacco out of a medicine pouch, offering his prayers to the Creator.

Struggling to hold himself underwater in the freezing river, August's mind flashes to images of Wesley's son, WILLIE WALKING BEAR, (18) Lakota, High School Basketball star.

Flashback.

EXT. ROSEBUD RESERVATION, S.D. - SAME TIME

MONTAGE - WILLIE WALKING BEAR'S BASKETBALL CAREER.

Willie shooting baskets into a netless, bent hoop. Snow and ice fringe the unpaved South Dakota Reservation dirt court.

August's Flashback continues.

At the High School State Championship game, Willie soars over three defenders, dunking in the closing seconds, to win the game by one point. August, on the sidelines, raises his arms in victory.

Willie is surrounded by his proud family, while he holds his high school championship trophy.

IMAGES FLASH #1 OF SUN DANCE TREE BEING RAISED IN LAKOTA SUN DANCE ARBOR.

Flashback continues.

Willie attends his own press conference at Rosebud High school, at his side are his proud family and Coach Anderson.

The athletic director of the University of Kansas shakes his hand. Willie has accepted a full scholarship to Kansas. He proudly holds up his University of Kansas team jersey.

Beaming with pride, Coach Anderson displays a Sports Illustrated cover with Willie Walking Bear's photo on it.

The cover's caption reads: "THE GREAT RED HOPE".

EXT. A SNOWY RIVERBANK, BLACK HILLS, S.D. - DAWN

August's raised arms break the surface of the water. Waist deep in the freezing river, clenched fists shaking at the sky, he wails.

AUGUST

A-AHHHHH!

IMAGES FLASH #2 OF SUN DANCER PUTTING ON SAGE CROWN.

INT. SPORTS TALK RADIO JOCKEY, JIM ROME (45) is "On The Air".

MONTAGE - Professional athletes and their greatest feats, featuring highlight clips of football, basketball, baseball and hockey stars. Vivid images of runs, jumps, dunks and goals scored.

JIM ROME (V.O)

Greetings, I am Jim Rome, you are in the Tarpit. We're gonna be covering all the big stories, let me say right up top, the main issue this morning is gonna be the NBA Playoffs and the Warriors free agent "stealing" of Devon "Crybaby" Wilkerson. I know all you NoCals are ecstatic...dude has skills...dude has game...but, dude has legal problems, so before you raise your banner, set aside a bail bond fund for the Crybaby...

MONTAGE continues into triumphant images of elaborate high fives, spiking footballs, hanging on the rim, fist-pumping, and ridiculous end zone dances.

JIM ROME (V.O)

Make a note, the Crybaby has refused to come into the Tarpit, thus he has eliminated himself from receiving the ever valuable "Tarpit Karma".

Come on, you need it Devon. We want to know... What really happened in that Denver nightclub?

MONTAGE slowly transitions into the HEAT OF BATTLE - The images are of the athlete's violent collisions, expressions of anger, taunting, and arguing with referees. Next we see them in face to face confrontation with each other, followed by footage of bench-clearing brawls.

JIM ROME

If you're hearing this Devon, call in and come correct. Admit it dude, you're all about the signing bonus...but hey, you'll need it, to buy your freedom...So this week we'll add the "Crybaby" to the list of 1 in 5 pro athletes that have been convicted of a serious crime...

SLOW MOTION/SILENCE transition to the proud FACES of fans, kids, vendors, cheerleaders, television crew and announcers. Back to the crowd loudly chanting.

AUDIENCE

MVP! MVP! MVP!

IMAGES FLASH #2 PROUD FACES OF LAKOTA PEOPLE IN SUN DANCE ARBOR WATCHING THE SUN DANCE.

EXT. STREETS OF HOLLYWOOD - MORNING

A gleaming black Porsche squeals it's wheels at the green light. Booming music of Jim Rome's Sports Talk Radio Show, vibrates from the car.

INT. CEDRIC'S PORSCHE - SAME TIME

Inside the car a young, muscular, black man, CEDRIC BUTLER, (23) celebrates to the breaking news, as he drives.

JIM ROME (V.O)

Welcome back to the Tarpit. It's official. In just twenty minutes, "Crybaby" Wilkerson will be crowned the richest basketball player in history. Yeah for about... a day... One hundred and ten million. Not bad for a coach-beater...and now an accessory to murder...allegedly.

Cedric grabs his ringing cellular phone, checking caller I.D., he sees the incoming call is from DR. X.

Yeah! I'm here.

He hangs up and steps on the gas, weaving through traffic. His car skids into a Hollywood strip mall.

INT. HOLLYWOOD DOCTOR'S SEEDY OFFICE - DAY

From the back room emerges a nervous, disheveled DOCTOR, male, (60).

DOCTOR X  
(hushed)  
Untraceable.

Smiling, Cedric hurriedly unbuckles his belt, pulls the back of his pants down and pounds on his gluteus with his fist.

CEDRIC  
Give me the goods, you wizard mother-fucker!

DOCTOR  
You know the drill.

CEDRIC  
Damn...

Cedric digs into the pocket of his pulled down pants, presenting a fat roll of cash. He quickly peels off four crisp bills and stuffs them in the doctors coat pocket.

Cedric dances with his pants around his ankles, down the hall, following the doctor into a room.

The door shuts.

CEDRIC  
(Screams)  
Oh, that's G-O-O-O-O-D!

The door flies open. Cedric pulling up his pants pretends he has a football as he bounces off the hallway walls. He spins and rolls directly into the chest of a huge 340 pound, rival football player, Zeek. Startled, Cedric looks up.

CEDRIC  
Zeek "the freak". (Pinches his arm) Don't you think you've had enough of Dr. Miracle-Grow?

Zeek grabs Cedric by the throat.

ZEEK

You did not see me here, got it rookie!

CEDRIC

(choked whisper)

Got it.

Zeek throws him up against the wall and enters Dr. X'S office.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD DOCTOR'S OFFICE PARKING LOT - DAY

Cedric rubs his throat and takes his revenge, he jumps on the bumper of Zeek's Hummer, setting off the car alarm. Cedric hops into his Porsche and splits, as Zeek runs out to check his vehicle. Cedric's car speeds off, music blaring into the city.

INT. BASEMENT OF HECTOR'S HOUSE - DAYTIME

HECTOR SANCHEZ, (32), is an All-Star Shortstop. He is 7 games away from breaking the all-time "consecutive games played" record.

He is taking batting practice in his indoor, high-tech batting cage. His lavish home gym is complete with workout equipment and spa facilities.

In the background, we see Devon Wilkerson's Press Conference on a nearby television. Hector sees this out of the corner of his eye. He shoulders his bat, grabs the remote for the TV and turns up the volume.

His concentration is interrupted by his son, JUAN SANCHEZ (age 7) as he enters the gym. Hector immediately grabs his drug paraphernalia and stashes it under a towel.

HECTOR

Hey little man, you ready to take your swings?

The boy is transfixed on Devon Wilkerson's face on TV.

JUAN

Who's that daddy?

Hector laughs.

HECTOR

That's the richest athlete in the world.

JUAN

Richer than us?

HECTOR  
Not for long, my boy.

He stares at the LOGO of his current team on the batting helmet next to his bat.

HECTOR  
(whispers to himself)  
Free agent... Hector Sanchez...  
(To Juan) )  
Start with some bunts first, OK?

His son nods anxiously and grabs his little bat.

Hector's wife ANA SANCHEZ (25), calls on the household intercom.

ANA  
Hector honey, the Magazine people are here. They're setting up in the trophy room, is that OK..?

HECTOR  
That's fine. I'll shower and be right up.  
(To Juan)  
Sorry little buddy, we'll hit later.

Hector turns away from Juan and quickly pops two "Uppers". Shakes his head side to side and heads upstairs.

INT. HECTOR'S TROPHY ROOM - DAYTIME

Hector is being interviewed by a woman reporter from "True Heroes Magazine". They are surrounded by his many trophies and awards.

REPORTER  
Two thousand nine hundred and thirty-nine consecutive games, they said it couldn't be done, yet here you are...

INT. HOCKEY GAME, ICE ARENA, BUFFALO, NY - AFTERNOON

During the game, American hockey star, GUS BERNARD (27) has dropped his gloves and is administering a terrific beating upon his weaker opponent.

As Gus weathers a punch to his own jaw, he shows an eerie toothless smile and then finishes the fight unmercifully. The referees finally separate the combatants.

INT. ICE ARENA, BUFFALO, NY - LATER

Gus has stolen the HOCKEY PUCK and is racing in on a break away. He scores the winning goal in the overtime play. He celebrates with his teammates.

INT. UPSTATE NEW YORK - NIGHT

In his beautiful living room, Gus watches Devon's press conference on his \$100,000 home theatre system. The room is filled with Hockey trophies, among them, an Olympic Gold Medal.

He is drunk and smoking a cigarette. His false teeth sit on the end table.

GUS

One hundred and ten million dollars! For playing Basketball? Come on!

His meek and obviously pregnant wife, SUZETTE, (28) watches from the kitchen doorway as Gus rants and raves at the television. Suddenly he rises and approaches her, obviously intoxicated.

GUS

Baby, don't you think basketball players are pussy's...

She winces as he kisses her neck. She turns to reveal a swollen black eye.

GUS

Let me make it up to you baby.

He continues to grope her.

EXT. THE FAIRMONT HOTEL, SAN FRANCISCO - AFTERNOON

A Press conference is taking place at the Fairmont Hotel. At the entrance, camera crews gather. Limousines arrive in a row as onlookers gawk at businessmen and lawyers, who stop to answer the Press questions.

A super stretch Hummer Limo arrives and out of it steps DEVON WILKERSON, (32), 6'6", 220 pounds of NBA superstar.

CAMERAS FLASH.

The handsome black man is heavy laden with gold jewelry, and an Armani suit. He holds his cell phone and talks to his wife.



DEVON

...Tell that Real Estate agent to get off her ass, it's Pacific Heights or no deal...got to go, I love ya baby. (Click)

His Lawyer, HERB KAPLAN (50)rushes to greet him.

With Herb is a fat cherub of a businessman, Team Owner WILSON MCKAY II, Southern(65).

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY BEGINS.

HERB

Welcome to your show tiger. You're looking like a star. Meet your new boss, Wilson Mckay.

They pose as the Photographers shoot. Devon stares with contempt, over his Hip Hop sunglasses at Wilson Mckay.

MCKAY

(Smoking a cigar)  
I don't much care for the risk we're entering into here Mr. Wilkerson...with your potential legal problems and all...but as an owner of an NBA Franchise, ...I'm buying one thing, a championship for the Warriors, sir.

Photographers shoot away.

MCKAY

That's the bottom line.

DEVON

(Sarcastic)  
Meet me at the ring ceremony... How will you like me then?

Suddenly, he breaks into a gold-toothed grin.

They shake hands for the camera.

HERB

Gentleman, our adoring public awaits.  
(To the Media)  
...and no Denver questions!

Devon drapes his new team jersey over his shoulder, as the three men confidently enter the hotel.

INT. THE COLISEUM LOCKER ROOM, SAN FRANCISCO - TWO WEEKS  
LATER - NIGHT

A large group of MEDIA, TELEVISION REPORTERS AND RADIO  
ANNOUNCERS, have gathered to interview Devon Wilkerson.

He has kept reporters waiting for an hour, as he hides in the  
trainer's room. The "Golden State Warriors" have just been  
eliminated from the first round of the Playoffs. Devon  
finally emerges, very agitated.

DEVON

Alright, what do you mother-fucker's  
wanna ask me? Why we lost to the 8th  
seed...why don't you ask our loser coach?

The intimidated journalists remain silent.

DEVON

What, no stupid dumb ass questions? Then  
what the hell are you standing here for,  
to watch me get dressed? Fuck all y'all.

Devon drops his pants, exposing himself.

DEVON

Yeah, you can FILM THIS!

The shocked Press Corps turn off their camera gear and stand  
dumbfounded.

In full confidence that he still has the situation under  
control, Devon pulls up his pants and sits down on a stool  
next to his locker.

Devon reaches in his locker, pulling out a baseball cap that  
features "Wilkerson's Sports Gear".

DEVON

Alright, I'm done playing with you all,  
so let's go...and don't even think about  
asking me about that kid in Denver...and  
get the hat.

Cameras and Audio recorders roll and Devon performs for the  
nightly sports shows.

DEVON

Hey, we got outplayed. I ain't proud of  
it, but what can you do? The Warriors are  
young but they'll be back next year.

I don't know if I will, but that's up to the powers that be.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM, ROSEBUD RESERVATION, S.D. - NIGHT

August is in a dimly lit, cinder block workout room. A Heavy Bag hangs from the ceiling. On a metal chair is an AM transistor radio. Sports Jockey, Jim Rome reports.

JIM ROME (V.O)

...And what's the latest from San Francisco? Not only have they been bounced early but "The Crybaby" goes "Full Monty" in front of the press ... tremendous. Devon, nobody's paying you \$110 Mil. to see your twig and berries. Back away from the indecent exposure...

August picks up a 45lb. weight and smashes the radio to bits.

He goes to the wall and furiously rips down a Devon WILKERSON POSTER.

He turns and begins violently to pound the heavy bag with his fists.

Flashback.

INT. PEPSI CENTER, "NUGGETS VS. ROCKETS" GAME, DENVER, CO.- NIGHT

Willie and August have traveled to see Willie's hero, Devon Wilkerson play basketball against the DENVER NUGGETS. Devon is playing for his former team the HOUSTON ROCKETS.

Willie, in the audience, proudly wears his University of Kansas colors.

INT. PEPSI CENTER LOCKER ROOM, DENVER, CO.- NIGHT

As Devon and Willie shake hands, August looks on.

DEVON

Well, well...my Kansas Jayhawk brother, the Great Red Hope.

WILLIE

Wow, Devon Wilkerson, I can't believe I get to meet you.

They shake hands.

WILLIE

I used to listen to the Kansas games on my radio. Remember you won the NCAA Finals? That was the greatest night of my life.

DEVON

Yeah? Mine too.

WILLIE

That night, I prayed to Tunkasila, that someday I'd play for Kansas.

DEVON

Uh, huh...And now here you are...how about that. I gotta get something to eat, how about I take you and you're friend to dinner. Ever been in a Limo?

Willie pauses as August nods in consent.

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT, DOWNTOWN DENVER - LATER

Seated at a table near the window are Devon, Willie and August.

TWO BEAUTIFUL FEMALE GROUPIES, (20's) are flirting with Devon as they get his autograph. August sits and looks on skeptically.

Willie grabs his pocket camera.

WILLIE

Would you girls mind taking a picture of us?

Devon and August lean into the photo. Willie gives a big smile as the flash goes off.

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT, DOWNTOWN DENVER - LATER

At the bar, near Devon's table sits a DRUNK GUY, white male (20's), very big, muscular and drinking heavily. He looks at Devon with contempt. The guy slowly chews a cocktail cherry.

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT, DOWNTOWN DENVER - SAME TIME

Devon leans back speaking loudly to Willie and August.

DEVON

Jealousy. That's what your going to be dealing' with.

Your friends, your family...they're gonna  
envy your car, your house, your money,  
your fame and your women...

Eyeing the Drunk Guy.

DEVON

A lot of women.

Turns back to Willie.

DEVON

Every person in here is watching us right  
now. This is what it's all about.

Devon gives his famous gold tooth grin.

Willie looks around, a bit uncomfortable.

WILLIE

I want to enter the draft this year. I  
could always go back to school. My  
family...we're real poor. But Coach  
Anderson thinks I should probably get my  
degree first, play out my senior year.  
What do you think?

DEVON

(To August)

And what happens when he gets hurt next  
year and his value disappears. He's a  
marketers dream. Basketball pays the  
bills, but commercials make you rich! You  
have no idea how far or fast this horse  
could run do you?

AUGUST

Mr. Wilkerson, I understand all too well  
the value of this young man. First of  
all, where he comes from is a place that  
they can't pay you to go. There's no  
money, no jobs and no future. Do you know  
what the average life-span of a Lakota  
male is today?

Devon sips his wine.

AUGUST

...under 40 years old. Do you know why?  
Because of poverty, drugs, alcoholism and  
a government who continues to practice  
it's policy of ethnic cleansing.

Willie is a great basketball player, but more important than basketball, he will become a leader of his people. No amount of money or fame can buy the life that the Creator has given him.

Devon pours another glass of wine for himself.

AUGUST

Never has a drop of alcohol or a drug entered his body. He is a solid representative of the Sun Dance Nation and he has been raised traditionally by his Lakota people.

DEVON

All I'm talking about is the American Dream, son.

Suddenly, Devon is struck on the forehead by a small object. It lands on his plate.

Shocked, he looks toward the bar to see the DRUNK GUY, twirling the cherry stem and snickering.

DRUNK GUY

(Laughing)

You gonna cry now...crybaby?

DEVON

(To Willie)

You'll excuse me, while I deal with this fool.

Devon gets up and punches the Drunk Guy in the mouth.

The Drunk Guy leaps off the bar stool and pushes Devon through the plate glass window. Glass flies as Devon lands on his back, on the street outside.

Devon pulls A GUN and FIRES THREE SHOTS.

The Patrons scream and duck for cover.

Devon, in a daze stumbles back into the restaurant.

Willie has remained seated in his chair. August rises from the floor and kneels by Willie's side.

AUGUST

Are you alright?

Willie slowly removes his hand from his stomach. It is covered with his own blood. He looks at August in disbelief as blood spills from the corner of his mouth.

As August holds his dying young friend, he pleads with Willie to be strong. As Willie's life force begins to fade, August prays fervently.

AUGUST  
Not like this God. Please no!

Willie takes his last breath and collapses in August's embrace.

Flashback ends.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM, ROSEBUD RESERVATION, S.D. - NIGHT

Still hitting the heavy bag, fury consumes August as his merciless flailing leads him to exhaustion. Fists bleeding, he wraps himself around the bag and breaks down crying. In the background is Wesley, crying and wiping his tears. He approaches August carrying a manila envelope.

AUGUST  
I failed that boy. I could have protected him from that world.

WESLEY  
Willie is in the Spirit World... Our Ancestors will take care of him now.

August regains his composure.

WESLEY  
I found out that Wilkerson is in L.A. We have to go now to have a chance at doing this.

With Marine-like precision, August snatches his backpack, slings it over his shoulder and focuses on their mission.

AUGUST  
Hoka!

EXT. TELEVISION STUDIO, L.A., CA. - WEDNESDAY, MORNING

Driving up to the studio door, in a luxury Suburban Limousine, are Cedric Butler, Hector Sanchez, Gus Bernard and Devon Wilkerson. They are about to film a TELEVISION COMMERCIAL for "Wilkerson Sports Gear".

Exiting the vehicle we see, Devon wearing a silver and white "Wilkerson Sports Gear" warm-up suit along with his own name brand sneakers.

Hector and Devon are met by their agents KEVIN (late 20's) and BARRY (40's), both babbling on their CELL PHONES. Barry holds an Art Department FAX in his hand.

BARRY  
 This is not what we agreed on! What is this? A logo for Barney, the fucking Dinosaur. I need it to be more... galactic...you know, a Super Nova, the brightest star in the galaxy, he's the Zeus of the New Millennium, not "Og" the freaking caveman!

KEVIN  
 I don't give a crap about your salary cap, we're talking about the Iron Man! 2864 straight games, count them...look at his numbers this year. Just get him done or I'm taking him to market. Four days and Donny don't underestimate.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO, LA, CA. - LATER

The "Wilkerson Sports Gear" Commercial is in progress.

The athletes waiting off camera. They are wearing Wilkerson Sports Gear. ADVERTISING EXECUTIVES and COPYWRITERS mill about the set.

Cedric plays a computer game, "The Bomb", featuring himself, on his laptop computer.

Hector pages through the Wall Street Journal checking his stocks.

Gus, wearing Wilkerson Sports Gear, grimaces as he sees his image in the mirror.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - LATER

Loud Hip-Hop Music blares in the studio as a FEMALE CHOREOGRAPHER works with the "out of step" All-Stars. Devon stands with the Producers looking on in approval. He is now wearing a gold version of his Sportswear.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON

As the interior commercial shots are finished, we see a man with a tape recorder and a camera sneaking onto the set.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
 People, that's a wrap. Beautifully done.  
 The helicopter will be boarding in 20 minutes for our next location.



INT. TELEVISION STUDIO, BACKSTAGE - SAME TIME

Devon and Barry discuss business.

BARRY

We're not a charity organization, if these guys want your clothes, they can buy them, we paid them plenty. Alright...15% discount...but not on the shoes. Gold Devon, gold is THE color for you man.

A PAPARAZZI CAMERA FLASHES in their faces. The man has tape recorded their conversation.

PAPARAZZI MAN

Gentlemen, I'm from the National Informer. How does it feel Devon, to be indicted for the murder of Willie Walking Bear? You remember, Denver...

Devon, about to react violently is interrupted.

BARRY

Walk away Devon, walk away!

Barry escorts him off and picks up the studio house phone.

BARRY

Get me security to stage 4! Unauthorized tabloid scumbag harassing the talent.

He grabs the tape recorder. Presses record.

BARRY

Devon Wilkerson has no comment at this time. As his agent, I'll say, if he's being indicted... Fine, his innocence will prevail.

Outside, the HELICOPTER arrives. Barry turns off the recorder and stuffs it down the front of the reporter's pants.

BARRY

Next time, you'll have to pull that recorder out of your ass, pal.

EXT. CHOPPER, OUTSIDE STUDIO - WEDNESDAY, AFTERNOON

The Director, AD, DP, Athletes and Agents board the chopper. Devon and Barry are late and last to board.

On board, incognito, sits Pilot August Anderson. His copilot, Wesley Walking Bear sits beside him. Both men, wear black baseball caps, headsets and sunglasses.

The Chopper takes off. It heads over the freeway, towards the film location site in the California desert.

INT. CHOPPER - LATER

Cedric, Hector and Gus still dressed in Wilkerson Sports Gear recline on board. Barry and Devon share a Newspaper, obviously concerned.

Headline: "WILKERSON INDICTED"

HECTOR

(loudly)

Man, this is taking all day! I got to get to the ballpark by 5:00!

CEDRIC

(To Hector)

Damn, these brothers are cheap. The least they could do is let us keep the warm-ups.

HECTOR

Yeah, I wonder if they make any in "county jail" style.

Cedric cracks up.

CEDRIC

(To Barry)

How much am I getting paid for this bullshit?

(To Gus)

Hey hockey boy, how much you getting paid?

BARRY

(To Cedric)

Alright, alright take the clothes! You hear me, everybody take the freakin' clothes home!

DEVON

(Angry)

Where the hell is my lawyer? I got to find out about this shit in the paper?!

BARRY

I'm calling Herb, but we'll need a bigger gun than him.

CEDRIC

Wouldn't mind a pair of those hip sneakers.

Gus guzzles two small airplane bottles of whiskey.

INT. CHOPPER - WESLEY AND AUGUST IN COCKPIT - SAME TIME

August and Wesley, overhearing the athletes complaints look at each other knowingly. Quietly, Wesley speaks to August through the headset.

WESLEY

(Lakota, with subtitles)

Looks like we have more than we planned for.

August looks back at the men. He signals the number 4 with his fingers.

AUGUST

(Lakota)

The "warriors" stay. The others go.

EXT. CHOPPER, ABOVE DESERT LOCATION - AFTERNOON

Pilot Anderson circles the filming location, landing near the site.

INT. CHOPPER AFTER LANDING - SAME TIME

Upon landing, August and Wesley roll their ski masks down over their faces. August, reaches into his jacket and pulls out A HAND GUN.

Pivoting in his chair he immediately places the GUN against Devon's head.

Everyone FREEZES. Wesley points to Hector, Cedric and Gus.

WESLEY

You, you and you, stay... the rest of you get out!

The Director, AD and DP scurry to open the door. They exit, as Kevin quickly follows.

Barry heads for the door and stops.

BARRY

I don't know what you guys want, but,  
please, take me instead?

Wesley cocks the gun.

DEVON

Mother-fucker's serious, man!

WESLEY

(In Lakota to Barry)

HOKA!

Barry jumps and exits, rolling onto the desert floor as the chopper lifts off.

EXT. CHOPPER - AFTERNOON

The chopper circles the film set in a clockwise direction. The HANDGUN is tossed out of the Pilot's window. The crew members run for cover.

The CHOPPER heads due North.

Barry frantically dials his cell phone. Out in the desert he can't get a connection. Frustrated at failing to protect Devon, he smashes his cell phone on a desert rock.

BARRY

(To the Director)

Where's the nearest town? Somebody get  
some help out here right now! Oh, my God,  
what's happening?

INT. INTERIOR CHOPPER - AFTERNOON

The focused ABDUCTORS stare straight ahead, as their CAPTIVES look nervously at each other.

DEVON

(To Cedric, Hector, Gus)

Are they kidnapping us...?

Confused, they stare at Devon.

DEVON

(To Wesley, & August)

You can't be kidnapping us! You're making  
a big mistake. Do you know who we are?

CEDRIC

Obviously they do.

August and Wesley do not respond.

DEVON

Come on now. Talk to me!

August turns around and looks knowingly at Devon, then abruptly turns the Helicopter from NORTH to SOUTHEAST

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OAK SPRINGS, CA. - LATE AFTERNOON

The commercial film crew has arrived in the nearby town of Oak Springs, California. It is chaos in the Sheriff's office. SHERIFF JOHNSON (50's), motions for everyone to calm down.

SHERIFF

OK, listen up. Anybody who got a good look at the kidnapers, go with the Deputy. We need full descriptions. The Feds are on their way.

The DEPUTY takes statements from the DP and AD and Director.

SHERIFF (CONTINUED)

And please, we don't know who these guys are, or what they want. NO MEDIA! Got it?

EXT. OUTSIDE SHERIFF'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

At a PAY PHONE is Kevin.

KEVIN

Cheryl, get me George Brooks, ESPN! Big news about Hector Sanchez, he's been kidnapped! I'll hold...

INT. INTERIOR CHOPPER - LATE AFTERNOON

The flight continues across the desert wasteland. Cedric sits directly behind the pilot, Hector is next to Cedric and Gus sits near the rear of the aircraft drinking beers. Devon remains seated behind Wesley.

CEDRIC

(To himself)

...Headline news, crazy kidnapers take superstars for a ride. Nobody knows why, but they're doing it. More at eleven.

Cedric looks out the window at the desert ground.

DEVON  
(To Pilots)  
Listen, I got money, you want my money?  
Maybe we could come to an arrangement.

August and Wesley do not respond.

Hector catches Devon and Cedric's attention and motions for Cedric to remove his heavy gold necklace.

Devon  
(To Pilots)  
Hey, maybe you got a political cause.  
Government did you wrong? Who don't hate  
the Government anyway? You know I know a  
lot of public officials...

Still no response.

DEVON  
Maybe you just want to be on TV, and get  
your fifteen minutes of fame...

Cedric quickly wraps his GOLD CHAIN around August's neck,  
snapping his head back.

DEVON  
(Shouting)  
Alright mother-fucker! Now whose show is  
this?! You're landing this thing! Now!

August struggles for air, but stays on course. Wesley sits  
without reacting.

HECTOR  
TAKE US DOWN!

August motions to Wesley to act.

WESLEY  
(Lakota)  
Hoka Hey!(It's a Good Day To Die!)

Wesley grabs the control stick and jams it strait forward,  
sending the aircraft into a steep nosedive. Wesley sounds  
four quick yelps of a Death Song.

WESLEY  
Heya,Heya,Heya,Heya!

Devon tries to pull him away from the controls, with no  
success.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF CHOPPER - SAME TIME

The chopper speeds toward the ground.

INT. INSIDE OF CHOPPER - SUNSET

As the Chopper dives, objects fly. Still, Cedric fights against gravity to choke August. Wesley, fearlessly holds the stick forward and continues to pray loudly. Gus breaks into a psychotic laughter.

DEVON

(To CEDRIC)

We're going to crash! Let him go!

As the chopper nears the desert floor, Cedric releases August.

At the last possible moment, August takes hold of the control stick and pulls the aircraft out of its dive.

Gus hangs onto his chair and heaves vomit.

The three athletes sit back, traumatized and powerless.

Gus opens and slams another beer.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF CHOPPER - SUNSET

The chopper flies on, as the desert sun begins to set.

Suddenly the chopper drops over a canyon rim and into the abyss of the GRAND CANYON.

Following the Colorado River northeastward, it sails along towards CANYONLANDS, Utah.

Finally, the chopper hovers over, then descends into a barren, remote and lifeless place known as "THE MAZE".

INT. THE MAZE, CANYONLANDS, UTAH - WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Upon landing, August quickly and methodically powers down the aircraft.

August smashes the radio with the heel of his boot. He then pulls wires from the console, disabling the chopper. Wesley retrieves a backpack from under his seat.

Tied to his pack is a small ceremonial drum.

Without a word, they glance at all four men and exit the aircraft.

Confused, the group looks nervously through the windows. Their captors have vanished into the black night of "The Maze".

INT. ESPN STUDIO, HARTFORD, CONN.- NIGHT

ESPN Announcer interrupts programming for a special announcement.

ANNOUNCER

...And right now we have Kevin Harris,  
Hector Lopez's agent with us by  
telephone...

INT. DEVON'S LIVING ROOM, HOUSTON, TX. - WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Devon's wife SHARICE (30), is busy packing boxes for their move to San Francisco. She stops and stares at the TV, seeing the picture of her husband she runs for the phone.

Close up on television, where Kevin Harris is being interviewed.

KEVIN

(On Television)

He had a gun to Mr. Wilkerson's head and  
when Barry Engler attempted to negotiate,  
he threatened to kill him!

Sharice frantically dials Devon's cell phone. Getting his voice mail, she hangs up and re-dials. She hangs up the phone and cries... looking at her beautiful wedding photo.

INT. FBI WAR ROOM, LOS ANGELES, CA - SAME TIME

The chaotic War Room is filled with hustling FBI agents. FBI CAPTAIN, TRAVIS BAXTER, (49) arrives. His dark eyes hide his dark past. His cunning smile gets him out of trouble sometimes and into trouble others. Watching television news report with disgust he throws his hands up.

TRAVIS

I love ESPN. Sports news as it happens!  
I want Williams as our spokesman on this.

CLOSE UP ON TELEVISION.

Baxter sees Russell, A PILOT (25), wearing a flight suit.

TRAVIS

Quiet! Talk to me Russell...



RUSSELL

(On Television)

They were inside the aircraft, without my knowledge. After I powered up to fly my mission, a guy put a gun to my head and forced me into the hangar locker room, the ladies room, where he handcuffed me to the sink.

TRAVIS

Get me fingerprints!

AGENT 1

And get me all the air traffic controller reports for that area.

TRAVIS

Everybody ready in ten minutes, we're pulling out for Oak Springs. The world is watching us tonight!

INT. JUAN'S BEDROOM, BOSTON MA. - LATE NIGHT

Little Juan is in bed. Hectors' wife Ana is reading her son a bedtime story as the telephone rings. She goes to the hallway to answer it.

ANA

Hello? Kevin... What's the matter...what...kidnapped? Oh dear God...!

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OAK SPRINGS, CA. - NIGHT

Kevin is on the payphone with Ana Sanchez as the FBI Helicopters swoop in over Oak Springs.

EXT. HELICOPTER, THE MAZE, DESERT - LATE NIGHT

The four men huddle in the helicopter cabin, surrounded by the formidable Maze rock-walls and a star-filled black sky.

Devon sits in the Copilot's seat dumbfounded, while Hector tries to repair the radio. Gus is passed out in the back of the chopper. The men try to devise a plan.

CEDRIC

We have got to go, I'm not going to be here when they come back to torture and kill us.

DEVON

I already thought of that. Did you see any roads or towns when we flew in here? No. Where you going to run to?

CEDRIC

Anywhere but here.

HECTOR

Look man, I can fix this radio, it may take a minute but I'll get it fixed.

CEDRIC

And when you get it fixed what are you going to tell them, to come pick us up on the backside of the moon? You do what you got to do. I'll send help as soon as I can. You guys be cool.

Cedric leaves.

EXT. THE MAZE, DESERT - LATE NIGHT

Cedric jogs through moonlit terrain. He stops to get his bearings. Looking to his left he sees eerie rock formations casting shadows. To his right, a deep, dark canyon. Directly in front of him is a 1000' sheer cliff.

INT. CHOPPER - SAME TIME

Hector continues to work on the radio.

DEVON

Maybe you should forget the radio, maybe we should try fixing the helicopter. Fly us out of here.

HECTOR

Why, you think you could fly this?

DEVON

Hell no, but it's worth a try.

Gus wakes up and rifles through the cabinets searching for more booze. The door flies open. Cedric enters catching his breath.

CEDRIC

It's too dark out there.

Gus finds a gun and points it at Cedric.

GUS  
 (To Cedric, laughing)  
 Afraid of the dark are we? Pow!

CEDRIC  
 Don't point that at me, you drunk-ass  
 hockey playing, igloo-making mother-  
 fucker - where'd you get that thing?!

GUS  
 It's a flare gun. It shoots stars.

HECTOR  
 We can use that.

EXT. TOP OF CANYON RIM, THE MAZE - SAME TIME

A SMALL FIRE is burning.

Wesley paints a red medicine symbol (lightning bolt) down the middle of his face.

Bare chested, August is wearing a leather necklace with a wooden peg tied to it. He affixes a single eagle feather to the back of Wesley's head.

In the canyon below a gunshot is heard. The light of a bright green flare below, barely reaches the canyon rim.

August places two wooden bowls of ceremonial meat and water by the fire.

Wesley takes a medicine pouch from around his neck. From the pouch, he removes a perfectly round, small, black stone and places it in front of himself, on a bed of sage. He begins drumming and singing a "Spirit Calling Song."

WESLEY  
 Kola le mieyca, wauelo, wauelo...

August strings together seven red cloth prayer ties, filling each with tobacco as he prays.

As Wesley finishes the song the BLACK STONE begins to glow red. A small, red, SPIRIT LIGHT emerges from the stone and hovers over the fire. Wesley bows his head.

WESLEY  
 (To the Spirit in Lakota)  
 Tunkashila, we thank you for coming. We  
 need your help.

The Spirit Light moves in acknowledgement.

WESLEY

We pray for these four men we've brought here and ask that you have pity on us all. We thank you for your blessing.

The Spirit Light hovers over the 2 wooden bowls, taking the essence of the offerings.

WESLEY

(Singing)

Wanka Tanka, tunkashila, pelmiaya yelo...

The Red Spirit Light circles the two men and flies down into the canyon. August and Wesley notice the 7 prayer ties have been taken.

Wesley continues the prayer-song.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OAK SPRINGS, CA.- LATE NIGHT

In a bustling atmosphere the FBI is setting up an outpost, as telephones ring.

Travis rushes in as Sheriff Johnson hands him a plastic evidence bag. Travis puts on rubber gloves and removes the handgun.

Travis takes the Handgun out of the bag. Opening its chamber he is surprised to find a small, bullet-shaped, WOODEN PEG.

TRAVIS

What have we here...?

Using a pair of tweezers he cautiously removes the wooden peg out of the chamber. He holds it up for the group's inspection.

TRAVIS

We've got blood. Run DNA and prints... A wooden bullet? These guys are off the charts.

Travis studies the blood-stained wooden peg.

INT. FORD RENTAL CAR, DESERT - THURSDAY, EARLY MORNING

The car radio blares rock music as MEREDITH MAHONEY(32) African American, is stopped at a remote intersection, studying a map. On her right hand, she wears a black Velcro hand brace.

She takes a long sip of strong coffee and peels off toward Oak Springs.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OAK SPRINGS, CA.- THURS. MORNING

Travis and Agent #1 are studying a large wall map of the Southwestern U.S.A.

TRAVIS

The fuel in that helicopter allowed for a range of 500 miles. We need more pilots. We'll split up the coordinates and sweep the grid.

AGENT 1

Already got it Captain. Enforcements are coming in. Regional "Search and Rescue" teams are on the way.

Agent 2 hands Baxter a cup of coffee.

AGENT 2

So Captain, word has it your up for the ultimate promotion.

TRAVIS

I wouldn't turn it down.

Through the window, Travis spies an attractive woman. She is seen talking to the Sheriff and taking notes.

TRAVIS

Look who's here. I thought she'd be out of the game by now.

AGENT 2

Do we know her?

TRAVIS

Meredith Mahoney. Kamikaze Negotiator. The hijacking of Flight 220, Atlanta Air, remember?

AGENT 1

Was she the one that offered herself in exchange...

TRAVIS

That's her, brave but reckless... killed the terrorist, but lost two civilians.

AGENT 1

...And took a bullet through the hand.

TRAVIS  
I'll handle her, you boys get on those  
calls.

Meredith enters.

TRAVIS  
Ah, this room is off limits to... pretty  
women.

MEREDITH  
Uh huh. We're going to try this again.

She turns and leaves.

A moment later she re-enters.

MEREDITH  
I'd like to introduce myself.

She extends her left hand.

TRAVIS  
I know who you are. I watched you very  
carefully in Atlanta.

MEREDITH  
Really, and you are...?

TRAVIS  
Captain Travis Baxter, FBI.

MEREDITH  
Negotiator Meredith Mahoney, NBA.

Travis, mouths "NBA".

TRAVIS  
Wait a minute, who's bringing you in on  
this?

MEREDITH  
I've been hired by the Commissioner of  
the National Basketball Association.

TRAVIS  
Nobody cleared this with me.

MEREDITH  
Devon Wilkerson's safe return is my only  
concern.

TRAVIS

Well, we'll let you know when it's time to negotiate his safety. As of now, there's been no contact.

MEREDITH

No ransom request, or clues? No message at all?

He hesitates.

TRAVIS

No, nothing. So, like I said, your services are not currently needed.

MEREDITH

Captain, whether you realize it or not, the negotiations and the need of my services, have certainly begun.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OAK SPRINGS, CA.- LATER

Travis studies the wall map. Meredith looks on.

AGENT 1

Time to move out!

Travis, Agent #1 and Agent #2 head for Chopper. Meredith follows.

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OAK SPRINGS, CA. - SAME TIME

Travis blocks Meredith's entrance onto chopper.

TRAVIS

Oh no, stay here Mahoney and wait for the call.

MEREDITH

You may need me sooner than you think.

TRAVIS

Why? So I can watch my back when you decide it's time to play hero again? Your job will be on the phone, not in the field.

He jumps in, slamming the door. The Chopper lifts off.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OAK SPRINGS, CA. - SAME TIME

Meredith begins to look through scattered documents, and recently delivered photographs.

First, she looks at separate photos of each kidnapped athlete. She studies a report of Russell, the helicopter pilot.

She comes across a newspaper clipping of Devon's involvement with "The Great Red Hope Shooting". She studies the UPI photo of Devon, Willie and August.

Caption: Devon Wilkerson with NBA hopeful Willie Walking Bear and his High School coach, August Anderson.

EXT. FBI HELICOPTER, THE CALIFORNIA DESERT - MORNING

The helicopter joins a fleet of searchers. They travel 50 miles, splitting up to search their designated areas.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OAK SPRINGS, CA. - SAME TIME

Meredith sits studying the items from the folder.

Meredith uses a magnifying glass to inspect the UPI photo of Willie, Devon and August.

Meredith's focus zeros in on a jacket insignia worn by August.

Insignia - "Rosebud H.S. Athletics"

EXT. HELICOPTER, THE MAZE - THURSDAY MORNING

Inside the helicopter, the four athletes have spent a restless night. Hector continues to reconnect wires.

Chopper Lights begin to blink on & off. Devon spins the dials on the smashed radio.

DEVON

I'm still getting nothing.

HECTOR

Try that TV back there.

Cedric turns on the TV. It works. He presses the button on the DVD player.

CEDRIC

I got it.

DVD plays.

CEDRIC

Hey man, you all need to be seeing this spooky shit!!



DVD - Opening music is a throbbing Hip-hop beat.

The first images are of Devon dunking a basketball, followed by Willie Walking Bear blocking an opponent's shot. Suddenly, the word BRAVERY appears on the screen.

The men gather around the TV.

More footage of both athletes amazing feats and the word HONESTY appears.

The next image is of Devon arguing with his coach, and punching an innocent photographer. Following is Willie, dressed in elaborate TRADITIONAL POW WOW REGALIA, he is teaching two young boys how to POW WOW "Fancy Dance". The word GENEROSITY flashes.

Then we see Devon ignoring fans requests for autographs as he gets into his \$100K sports car.

Lastly, footage of the sad funeral procession of Indian people carrying Willie Walking Bear's coffin to a Rosebud Reservation grave yard.

The final word HUMILITY, spreads across the screen and cross fades to, the words, THIS JOURNEY IS DEDICATED TO WILLIE WALKING BEAR.

EXT. HELICOPTER, THE MAZE - SAME TIME

The helicopter door flies open and Devon, obviously shaken stumbles to a distant boulder and sits down.

The three other athletes come out of the helicopter, Hector leading them toward Devon.

HECTOR

What the hell? This is your gig man!  
They wanted to bring you out here. You  
didn't see me on that video.

Devon, stunned, doesn't respond.

HECTOR

You better have a plan to deal with these  
guys, cause this is on you!

GUS

Maybe they'll just kill us all out here.

DEVON

I'm telling you, that shit was not my  
fault.

CEDRIC

(To Devon)

You fucked up man, you fucked up!

Devon stands, screaming up at the canyon walls.

DEVON

YOU WANT ME?! THEN COME AND GET ME! HERE  
I AM!

His voice echoes in the silence.

HELICOPTER EXPLODES.

INT. SOUTH CENTRAL, LA - THURSDAY MORNING

Cedric's family gathers around his mother, BEULAH BUTLER (54). They watch the latest news break, on her new oversized flat screen television.

FOX SPORTS NEWSWOMAN

On our special report a deeper look into the lives and careers of the "Kidnapped Superstars".

She narrates over images of Hector Sanchez's CAREER MONTAGE.

FOX SPORTS NEWSWOMAN (V.O.)

Hector Sanchez was raised in Havana, Cuba and defected from the Cuban National Team in the 1984 Olympics...He signed with the Boston Red Sox and won rookie of the year in 1985, without playing a day in minor league baseball. He's spent his entire career in Boston. He currently is challenging the record for most consecutive games played. Lately his free agency status has made headline news. Most public opinion is that no one is worth 10 million dollars a year.

Next, we see images of Devon Wilkerson's "bio".

FOX SPORTS NEWSWOMAN

A gifted multi-sport athlete from Detroit, Devon chose basketball over baseball. He recently signed an unprecedented deal with the Warriors for the playoffs. The Warriors were eliminated in the first round.

Next, is a profile of Gus Bernard. The images chronicle his OLYMPIC HOCKEY STARDOM.

FOX SPORTS NEWSWOMAN (V.O.)

Gus Bernard possesses many gifts, among them, toughness. He is his team's intimidator. Over the years he has played an major role in two Stanley Cup Championships.

Last, is Cedric Butler. We see unbelievable feats of eluding would-be tacklers.

FOX SPORTS NEWSWOMAN (V.O.)

Cedric Butler was a Heisman trophy finalist at USC. An obviously illustrious career lies ahead of him. He is a shining light to the young people in South Central LA.

Pause.

FOX SPORTS NEWSWOMAN (V.O.)

In a bizarre angle to this story, Fox Sports has dug a little deeper and takes a closer look at some of the latest exploits of these athletes.

ESPN clip showing Cedric Butler being arrested on suspicion of sexual assault. Followed by a news report of him pummeling a teammate in practice.

Footage of a broadcast showing, Gus Bernard, handcuffed after a drunk driving arrest. His sports car is firmly implanted in a storefront. Image of him exiting a cop car in handcuffs after being arrested for domestic violence.

CEDRIC'S BROTHER (O.S.)

Man, that dude's a mess!

Hector's section portrays coverage of his well publicized arrest for cocaine possession. Final image, slow motion, Hector spits in the face of a veteran umpire.

On Devon's reel, he is restrained after he has punched an innocent photographer under the basket. A photo of his coach with bloody swollen lip. Followed by a picture of Devon with Willie Walking Bear and his Coach August Anderson, the night of the Denver shooting.

Montage ends with a replay of Hector, spitting in the face of a veteran umpire. FREEZE on image.

FOX SPORTS NEWSWOMAN (V.O.)  
(Somber)  
When we return, more on the "Superstar  
Kidnapping".

Cedric's mother sobs as the family continues to comfort her.

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE, OAK SPRINGS, CA. - THURS. AFTERNOON

The FBI helicopter lands. Baxter and crew have returned after a long, fruitless search.

TRAVIS  
What about the blood?

LAB TECH  
Not a match on any of the hostages. We  
lifted a print from the gun.

TRAVIS  
Good. Get me that ID.

EXT. THE MAZE, CANYONLANDS DESERT - EARLY MORNING

From a distance we see four figures DWARFED by the canyon walls, walking slowly. They appear disoriented as they hike through the Maze.

THE MAZE is comprised of puzzling rock formations that tower 1000' above the sandy, desert floor. They are eerie in shape, but beautiful in their layered colors of white, orange and brown. This terrain is lifeless, inhospitable and mind-boggling. The silence is deafening.

A closer look at the four men, reveals cuts, bruises, and torn clothes, from their survival of the explosion.

Hector leads the trail. Cedric and Gus follow. Devon lags far behind.

Gus has dropped to one knee and is visibly sweating and shaking.

CEDRIC  
(Sarcastically)  
You must need another Budweiser.

GUS  
Leave me alone. I'll catch up.

CEDRIC  
How can you do that to yourself? My body  
is a temple of God!

Cedric drops to the ground and bangs out 15 quick push-ups. He then carefully inspects and admires his well-sculpted biceps.

CEDRIC  
Somebody get the Veterinarian, cause  
these Pythons are sick!

Gus begins to gag and vomits.

CEDRIC  
That's right, detox time for you dude.

Cedric runs ahead to catch up to Hector.

EXT. THE MAZE, CANYONLANDS DESERT - THURSDAY NIGHT

Night has fallen and the group has taken shelter under an outcropping of a rock ledge. Devon paces outside alone within hearing distance. They have no food, no water and no fire. Their thirst dangerously increases and the temperature has dipped into the low 40's.

HECTOR tries to keep warm as his teeth chatter.

CEDRIC  
I'm not saying he's guilty or innocent I  
just want to know who did he kill that  
boy?

GUS  
I knew about that kid, he would have been  
the first full-blooded Indian to play in  
the NBA.

HECTOR  
Oh yeah, the Great Red Hope, saw him on  
the cover of SI. Lot of us been in some  
trouble but Devon raised it to a new  
level!

CEDRIC  
(To Devon)  
Damn! You shot The Great Red Hope?

Devon walks towards the group.

DEVON  
Let me ask you a question Rookie. How  
long do you think you're going to last  
playing in the NFL?

CEDRIC

What?

DEVON

The career span of a pro athlete is about four years, you know why?

CEDRIC

Yeah, knees only bend one way, that's why.

DEVON

Injuries can be fixed, fool. It's all the other shit. Do you have any idea what kind of heat is coming with the money you make this year?

Cedric finally listens.

DEVON

First, it's the Team Owners you have to impress. Then comes the Agent to deal with the Owner...and right behind him is Mr. IRS...all getting rich off your talent. Next, it's the Endorsement people, saying whether your image is "hip" enough to sell a candy bar or a video game.

Gus and Hector let Devon continue.

DEVON

How are you going to handle the Media... twenty microphones jammed in your face, after you dropped the ball and lost the game? TV and radio guys that hate your guts, only because you're richer than them...and fat, out-of-shape Sportswriters always digging for a scandal. Add to that the groupies, stalkers and a broke-ass family, always wanting a "loan". It'll take you apart, one piece at a time.

Hector rolls his eyes.

DEVON

Then perform? Do your job! Endless workouts, steroids, drug tests, and cheap shot artists putting you on disabled lists.

CEDRIC

What's all that got to do with us being out here, Devon.

DEVON

All for what? For the fans? They can't wait to tear you to pieces. How you going to deal with them, rookie? When they never stop talking about your Mother or say how they're going to kill you, cause you didn't sign an autograph for the stupid kid or maybe they'll just throw something at you... There comes a time when the wrong thing feels real good.

GUS

I heard that. That's true.

DEVON

They'll say you're getting paid millions to play a little kid's game. It ain't no game, it's war mother-fucker.

Hector suddenly stands to challenge Devon.

HECTOR

You're full of shit, Devon! What do you know about war? You got nothing to cry about, but that's all you do... Sixteen years in the Majors and I haven't missed a game my whole career...until tonight. So, save your "I'm a victim" rap, for your book deal. We're not all like you, Devon.

Hector walks away from the conversation. Devon looks at Cedric.

GUS

He's gonna lose the record. That sucks.

Solemn and cold, the men try to rest.

EXT. THE MAZE, CANYONLANDS DESERT - SAME TIME

High above the desert floor, on the edge of a butte, August and Wesley look down on the four athletes.

EXT. ROSEBUD HIGH SCHOOL, S.D. - THURSDAY, 5:00 AM

Meredith has left the FBI outpost in Oak Springs and flown to South Dakota.

She approaches the school building and sees a JANITOR(60) dumping a bucket of water out a side door. She slips into the open door.

In the dark, she navigates through the empty halls avoiding the janitor. She finds the gymnasium area.

Using a small flashlight, she studies the trophy case and is interested to see the many pictures of Willie Walking Bear and championship trophies. A closer look reveals that August Anderson, is in all the team photographs.

Continuing down the dark hall she finds Coach Anderson's Office.

INT. COACH ANDERSON'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

As Meredith enters the office, large portrait photos catch her eye.

One is of Coach Anderson as a Minor League baseball player. The other is of him in Iraq, standing next to his helicopter during Operation Desert Storm.

Meredith thumbs through a stack of mail. She finds his home address. She puts the letter in her briefcase.

INT. HALLWAY, H.S. - SAME TIME

Scurrying to get out of the building, she catches a glimpse of an eagle feather dangling on a door marked media dept. She stops to see a written note taped to the door.

Note: In Memory of Willie Walking Bear.

INT. ROSEBUD H.S. MEDIA ROOM - SAME TIME

First, she notices a large array of audio visual equipment. She sees the wall is covered with Indian art, warrior drawings and quotations. The collage theme consists of Traditional Lakota messages.

Turning to leave, her eye catches sight of a DVD that is among a stack of discs, it is labeled: ROUGH CUT. Impulsively she plays the DVD.

She is astounded to see, video clips and sound bytes of the NBA Superstar, Devon Wilkerson.

She snatches the DVD and locks it in her briefcase.



EXT. REV. ANDERSON'S HOUSE, ROSEBUD RESERVATION, - SUNRISE

Holding the envelope and checking the address, Meredith knocks on the door of the Anderson residence.

INT. REVEREND ANDERSON'S HOUSE, ROSEBUD RESERVATION, SOUTH DAKOTA - LATER

Meredith sits with an old man.

REVEREND ANDERSON is 68 years old. He wears blue jeans, cowboy boots and a denim jacket. His house is filled with books. He has no TV and doesn't know what has happened.

The photo of his son, August Anderson, Willie and Devon is between them on the table.

REV. ANDERSON

I haven't seen him for a few days. He's been very sad. Sometimes he stays over at his friend Wesley's.

MEREDITH

Who's Wesley?

REV. ANDERSON

Wesley Walking Bear.

MEREDITH

And what is their relationship?

REV. ANDERSON

They both work over at the school. Now you said you were a hostage - investigator?

MEREDITH

Uh, yes sir. I've been hired by the NBA to find this man...

Points to Devon in the photo.

MEREDITH

...He's been kidnapped and your son may be involved. If I could speak with him we could clear this up.

REV. ANDERSON

I can take you over to Walking Bears', but they're very traditional and may not want to talk to you...Willie's grandfather is a Wicasa Wakan.

MEREDITH

Excuse me?

REV. ANDERSON

Orville Walking Bear is a holy man, one  
of the last of his kind.

EXT. THE MAZE, CANYONLANDS DESERT - FRIDAY MORNING

As the sun rises, the athletes have already hiked a mile  
through the sandstone puzzle.

They're on a narrow trail between two canyon walls. They are  
ragged and tired. Hunger is overwhelmed by thirst.

GUS

Let's head through here.

CEDRIC

This place makes no sense. We're lost as  
hell.

They follow Gus into the narrow canyon. As they come around  
a wall, they hear the menacing rattle of a coiled  
rattlesnake. All four freeze.

GUS

Nobody move.

Cedric, the last in line, bolts back down the trail.

Slowly, the other three men back up.

GUS

(Whispers)

We need a stick or a rock to kill him.

DEVON

Kill him? Let's just get out of here!

Hector picks up a rock.

HECTOR

He's right, we could eat him.

GUS

I'll do it. Give it to me.

Gus slowly approaches the snake with the rock held over his  
head. As he throws and misses, the snake strikes, latching  
onto his forearm.

He grabs the rattlesnake by its head, ripping its fangs out of his arm. Uncontrollably he smashes the snakes head on the nearby wall.

Hector whips off his belt and tourniquets Gus's bicep. On his forearm, two fang marks begin to swell and turn red.

EXT. THE MAZE RIM - SAME TIME

Undetected, Wesley and August observe from above, as the men struggle with the snakebite.

EXT. THE MAZE, CANYONLANDS DESERT - SAME TIME

Gus starts sucking on his arm frantically.

GUS

My arm is going dead! Cut it open!

Hector grabs the belt buckle and uses it to brutally open the wound.

EXT. CANYON, THE MAZE - SAME TIME

Cedric has run off and taken a left turn into a strange canyon approximately 100 yards from the others. He is down on his knees, staring in disbelief.

In front of him is the helicopter wreckage from the explosion. They have walked full circle.

EXT. ORVILLE WALKING BEAR'S HOUSE, ROSEBUD RESERVATION, SOUTH DAKOTA - FRIDAY, LATE MORNING

CHIEF ORVILLE WALKING BEAR, (70) wears jeans. He has a long simple white braid.

Meredith Mahoney, and Reverend Anderson sit around the kitchen table. ORVILLE'S GRANDDAUGHTER, INA WALKING BEAR (20) serves coffee and fry bread to the men. She then leaves them to continue their talk.

The UPI photograph of Devon, Willie and August is on the table.

REV. ANDERSON

(Points to Devon)

She is looking for this man.

ORVILLE

(Broken English/Lakota)

I'm seeing things now, I've never seen before.

My people are poor and there are no jobs. Our young are turning to drugs, alcohol, guns and even suicide...my Grandson was a warrior on the Red Road.

MEREDITH

Excuse me...the Red Road?

ORVILLE

The time is here for us to return to our old ways. The old ceremonies are making us strong again. Some of our youth are again walking through the seven sacred rites.

MEREDITH

Seven rites...? I mean no disrespect, but lives are at stake here, and there is little time. I believe your grandson and your son are involved in this man's disappearance.

She points to Devon, in the photo.

ORVILLE

My grandsons are only involved in ceremony. The first of the seven sacred rites is inipi, purification ceremony. We leave this world and return to our mother's womb.

She looks at Rev. Anderson for help.

ORVILLE

Another sacred rite, the Hanblecheya. Crying for a vision. We pray, four days, on a hill, no food, no water.

Frustrated, Meredith pulls out the DVD.

MEREDITH

I have evidence that Wesley is involved with the kidnapping. Do you know where they are?

ORVILLE

I only know what the Spirits have told me.

MEREDITH

And what have they told you...these spirits...

ORVILLE

They have journeyed to a sacred place...Where the grandfathers spin a man's mind and two bloods of the same mother meet.

Meredith, throws up her hands in disbelief and begins pacing.

REV. ANDERSON

Our sons are not what you think they are. They're not kidnapers.

MEREDITH

The hell they're not!

ORVILLE

They are Sun Dancers.

She tosses the VIDEOTAPE onto the table.

ORVILLE

The Wiwang Wacipi is our most important ceremony. Four days we dance and pray. We fast and take no water. We pierce our bodies and spill our blood onto our mother earth. We have nothing material to offer the Creator except a piece of our own flesh.

EXT. THE MAZE, THE HELICOPTER SITE - FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Orville continues.

ORVILLE (VO)

We suffer and sacrifice, so that the People may live.

Out of the mouth of the narrow canyon, the group emerges walking silently into the clearing led by Cedric.

Hector carries the dead rattlesnake. Gus is getting sicker.

They are shocked when they see, standing on a nearby canyon ledge, 100' above the wreckage of the helicopter, their captors, August and Wesley. They are both holding bundles of freshly picked plants.

ORVILLE (VO)

It is true, these two men are not what you think they are. They have been initiated into the Sun Dance Way of Life. They are Sun Dancers.

Gus points a feeble finger up at the two men.

GUS

It's them.

The others like wounded animals, slowly approach the base of the ledge.

Wesley and August stand stoically. Everyone is quiet.

AUGUST

(To Devon)

People call you a star...a hero, in your world. Because of your foolish actions a nation has lost it's hero, it's shining star...and it's hope.

DEVON

You were there, you know it was an accident!

WESLEY

(To Everyone)

You have all taken your last water and food, and now you have no shelter.

Wesley points down towards the blown up helicopter.

WESLEY

Without these things you will suffer. You will try to rely on your own strength but it will fail you. In this place, you must enter the World of the Spirit to survive.

August looks across the canyon, deeper into The Maze.

AUGUST

You are standing in the center of 40 square miles of waterless, desert wasteland, that all looks the same. We know this land, you don't.

He points to the east.

AUGUST

Many miles to the east there is a river. Maybe you will live to find it...

CEDRIC

A river? What am I doing out here? I didn't kill nobody!

HECTOR  
(To August & Wesley)  
Wilkerson is your problem!

He points to Devon.

HECTOR  
Why don't you just let us go and deal  
with him?

Gus moans and collapses in agony. Wesley tosses the bundle of plants down to the desert floor.

WESLEY  
Medicine for him, to eat.

Wesley and August slip back into the Canyons and vanish.

INT. ORVILLE WALKING BEAR'S HOUSE, ROSEBUD - LATER

Meredith now sits quietly, intently listening to Orville.

ORVILLE  
Sun Dance Warriors are committed to a disciplined life. They must use sacred elements, not weapons. They hold the four principles in their hearts. These are bravery, honesty, humility and generosity. With these, they prepare life for the coming generations and prepare themselves for their own death.

Suddenly the front door of Orville's home is smashed open.

TRAVIS and his FBI crew rush in with guns drawn. They have arrived from Oak Springs.

AGENT 1  
Everybody freeze. FBI!

TRAVIS  
Secure the location. Check ID's.

Agent #2 moves to the back of the house. Unnoticed, Meredith hides the DVD in her pocketbook.

TRAVIS  
Well, well Chief. I thought your days of misbehaving were over...(To Meredith) Running your own show again, Mahoney?

Agent 2 comes from the back room with Ina. The Agents are tearing the house apart. Agent 1 hands Travis Rev. Anderson's drivers licence.

ORVILLE

(Lakota)

Tell them not to touch my sacred things.

TRAVIS

What is he saying?

REV. ANDERSON

Mr. Walking Bear does not speak your language. I don't believe he wants you in his home.

TRAVIS

(To Orville)

I'll burn his home to the ground if I don't get some fast answers... I want to know what your grandson's blood is doing on this?

Travis holds up the evidence bag, revealing the WOODEN PEG. Orville recognizes the Sun Dancer's piercing stick.

Orville does not respond.

TRAVIS

(To Rev. Anderson)

And explain how your son's fingerprint is on the gun we recovered from the scene of the abduction. You're both under arrest for accessory to kidnapping. Now, tell us where they are.

REV. ANDERSON

(To Orville, in Lakota)

Tell them something, I know nothing.

INTERCUT SHOTS OF STRANGE ROCK FORMATIONS AND THE CONFLUENCE OF THE GREEN RIVER AND COLORADO RIVER, CANYONLANDS.

ORVILLE (V.O.)

(Lakota)

Tell them, they have gone where the grandfathers spin a man's mind and two bloods from the same mother meet.



INT. ORVILLE WALKING BEAR'S HOUSE, ROSEBUD - SAME TIME

REV. ANDERSON

(To Travis)

He says they're... where the grandfathers spin a man's mind and two bloods from the same mother meet.

TRAVIS

That's it! You're both going to jail...take them to Rapid City.

The agents escort the elders outside.

EXT. ORVILLE WALKING BEAR'S PORCH - SAME TIME

TRAVIS follows Meredith outside. Orville and Rev. Anderson sit in the back seat of an FBI car.

TRAVIS

We needed you for the call and you disappear? I knew not to trust you.

MEREDITH

There won't be any call. These guys don't want to be found.

TRAVIS

You don't know what you're dealing with up here.

From his coat pocket, he pulls out the evidence bag containing the wooden peg.

TRAVIS

You have any idea what this is Mahoney?

(She studies the object.)

It's a torture stick. These people are into self-mutilation, what do you think they're doing to those athletes! This is a simple case of revenge.

MEREDITH

Revenge? These people are traditional Lakota. I know, that to you, we're in a foreign country up here Baxter. But these are spiritual people. Something besides a kidnapping is going on here.

TRAVIS

Oh, yes, two FBI agents were gunned down up here back in the 70's...And one was my first Captain. Orville Walking Bear was involved, but never paid a price...Today he will.

MEREDITH

Your judgement seems a bit tainted, Captain. Maybe we can't work together on this.

Meredith turns away from Baxter.

TRAVIS

Sympathizing with the enemy again, Ms. Mahoney?

She continues to walk away.

EXT. SKYLINE, LOS ANGELES - FRIDAY

We see the city of Downtown LA. We hear a voice over of Radio Sports Jockey, Jim Rome.

INT. RADIO STUDIO - SAME TIME

We come to a radio station studio where we see Jim Rome, live ON-THE-AIR.

JIM ROME

I'm not a detective I only play one on the radio...The Crybaby, The Spitter, The Guzzler and The Gangster were all swooped up from a "Wilkerson Gear" commercial. But tell me, is it just me or is it a coincidence that Devon Wilkerson vanished on the same day he was indicted for murder? Hey FBI, feel free to do your job. Find these guys.

Station goes to commercial.

INT. TORONTO BASEBALL STADIUM, CANADA - FRIDAY AFTERNOON

The full house stands at attention, in silence. The players stand with caps over their hearts, wearing yellow armbands. The stadium is adorned with yellow ribbons. The giant jumbotron displays pictures of all four missing athletes.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, may we have a moment of silence for the safe return of the four athletes. (30 seconds pass)

We see the mournful players, fans, and kids emotional reactions.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCER

Thank You.

EXT. THE MAZE, CANYONLANDS - FRIDAY AFTERNOON

The Athletes, tired from walking in deep sand, journey further into The Maze.

Eventually the group approaches a fork in the trail.

CEDRIC

No footprints, no tracks...Which way?

DEVON

I need to rest my legs are burning.

Devon sits down.

HECTOR

Get up Wilkerson, night comes fast out here. We need to find shelter.

DEVON

Yeah?...Where we going, Sanchez? You think either of these trails has a Hyatt on the end of it?

HECTOR

You know Devon, I never would have guessed you were such a weak punk.

DEVON

Oh no, you didn't say that to me.

Devon rises to his feet and confronts Hector.

HECTOR

Let's go...I been looking forward to this.

Gus watches with amusement. Cedric looks down, shaking his head.

The two men lunge at each other and begin a violent wrestling match. They tumble and roll down the south fork of the trail.

Hector gains the advantage, throwing Devon up against a rock wall. He cocks his fist and delivers a blow. Devon recovers to return the punch. The fight escalates until both men are bloody and swollen. Hector backs Devon against a rock clutching him by the throat. As he cocks his fist to deliver a final blow, Devon signals that he's had enough. Exhausted both men collapse.

DEVON

I can't fight anymore.

CEDRIC

Like we don't have enough problems out here that you have to be fighting?

Devon wipes blood from his mouth

Devon

I am sorry you all got brought out here.

GUS

I guess the only thing to eat out here is humble pie, huh Devon?

CEDRIC

Whatever man, we just have to keep going.

All four men quietly surrender to their ordeal.

Suddenly, from the south, the four men hear the faint sound of a drum beat and strange singing.

CEDRIC

Can you hear that? It's them!

HECTOR

It's coming from over there.

Hector points to the south.

DEVON

Let's go find these mother-fuckers.

EXT. THE MAZE, CANYONLANDS - FRIDAY EVENING

The sun is sinking and the temperature begins to drop. The men have cautiously followed the strange singing and drumbeat. The sound has faded away now, but they have been led to an opening of a cave. Collapsing from exhaustion, they recognize it as a shelter for the night.

INT. RAPID CITY, S.D.- FRIDAY NIGHT

Reverend Anderson and Orville Walking Bear share a jail cell. They sit on opposite bunks. They are silent.

Two guards open the cell door and lead them to two separate interrogation rooms.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #1 - LATER, FRIDAY NIGHT

Chief Orville has been placed in the ROOM #1 where Travis and Agent #1 are interrogating him.

TRAVIS

Right now you're looking at jail time... you're a little too old to do that. We know your son Wesley is involved. We identified him at the airport where he stole a helicopter.

Orville hangs his head and stares at the floor.

TRAVIS

Now is your chance old man, tell us where they are and we'll take you home tonight.

Orville says nothing.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - LATER

Travis and Agent #2 are badgering Reverend Anderson.

TRAVIS

I don't care if your son saved the whole country of Kuwait, if he loses these four guys, he's a dead man. Are you following me Reverend?

Reverend Anderson clasps his hands and says nothing.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #1 - LATE NIGHT

Travis is pacing back and forth, his voice rises. With him is an INDIAN TRANSLATOR, JOSEPH SEES-AROUND,(42).

TRAVIS

Tell him...the clock is ticking!

He smacks his hand on the table in front of Orville.

TRAVIS

Quit screwing around with us!

Before Joseph has a chance to translate, Orville begins to loudly sing a prayer song.

ORVILLE

Ate wiopeyata, nawajin uelo wamayanka yo!  
Ite' Otateya nawajin yelo...

Travis storms out of the room. Joseph remains as Orville continues to sing.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - - LATE NIGHT

Travis continues to intimidate Reverend Anderson.

TRAVIS

What the hell are you doing up here with these Indians anyway? Where did you come from, don't you have a home somewhere?

Rev. Anderson hears Orville singing next door.

REV. ANDERSON

(Praying)

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace,  
That where there is hatred I may bring  
love...

Travis throws up his hands in exasperation.

EXT. A BEAUTIFUL MESA TOP, THE MAZE - PRE DAWN

Wesley is holding tobacco in his hand and praying to the sacred directions.

WESLEY

(Lakota)

Wihopeyata, Waziyata, Wiohiyapata,  
Itogogata, Unsimala, Makatakia,  
Wankatanka, wopelo Tunkasila'...

He raises the tobacco as an spiritual offering, then carefully places it into the unlit, Tipi shaped campfire.

August unwraps a bundle containing a wood block with notches cut into the sides, a pointed cylindrical stick 10" long and 1" in diameter, a small unstrung bow, a string of sinew, a handful of moss and dry grass.

August assembles the fire-drill and expertly begins the process. The wood begins to smoke. The pinhead of a coal falls onto the dried moss. He gently blows on it as more smoke appears. Then a tiny flame erupts.

Quickly he places it on the ground and begins to feed it twigs. Shortly a fire is ablaze. Wesley continues to pray. Suddenly the Red Spirit Light appears.

WESLEY

Wolpilo cicielo. Thank you for coming.

As the Red Spirit Light hovers next to his ear, Wesley closes his eyes and listens.

SPIRIT

(Lakota)

It is good. They're becoming teachable.

WESLEY

Waste. We'd like to ask that you check on our relatives back home.

SPIRIT

(Lakota)

Sing a Vision Quest Song and I will go.

Wesley picks up the drum and begins to sing.

WESLEY

Ate wiohpeyata nawajin yelo...wamayank  
yo! Ite Otateya nawajin yelo...

Wesley finished the song.

WESLEY

He says that it is good, and now he has gone to check on our relatives.

August humbly acknowledges him.

EXT. THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE, THE MAZE - SATURDAY, SUNRISE

A beautiful sun rises across the red rocks. Devon, the first to awaken, touches his bruised face. The sunrise has cast light upon the walls. He notices something unusual.

DEVON

(Amazed)

Hey wake up, looks like somebody's been here before us.

The others wake up and begin to view the walls. They are surprised to see ancient petroglyphs.

DEVON

Cave paintings.

Devon stands up and begins to study the wall.

CEDRIC

This is a map! Look here. These curvy lines are water!

HECTOR

It's the river maybe but where are we?

GUS

Why don't we ask him?

Gus is staring towards the back of the cave. They all turn and see the skeletal remains of a dead body.

The DECEASED MALE HIKER, circa 1960's, still wears wire rimmed glasses, the leftovers of a weathered straw hat, tattered khaki pants and leather vest. The hiker died, sitting up against the cave wall.

Hector, Devon and Cedric freak at the horror and run out of the cave.

EXT. THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE, THE MAZE - LATER

Outside they wait for Gus.

CEDRIC

Way too "Temple of Doom" for me.

HECTOR

He's been in there for a real long time.

DEVON

Nobody's going to find us out here...

Gus calmly walks out of the cave. He is wearing the dead man's eyeglasses.

EXT. THE MAZE - SATURDAY MORNING

By mid-morning they have unknowingly hiked into a box canyon. They stand at the base of an ominous, 600' vertical wall. A trail...seems nonexistent.

DEVON

Uh oh, that's it, game over.

HECTOR

What the hell? We can't go back the way we came. There's got to be a way up.



GUS  
It's not that high.

DEVON  
It's high enough to fall and break your  
ass.

HECTOR  
Do we have a choice? Let's do it!

Hector takes the lead followed by Cedric, Gus and Devon.

INT. MOTEL, ROSEBUD - SATURDAY, EARLY MORNING

Meredith is in a deep sleep. The telephone rings loudly for her wake-up call.

INT. RAPID CITY POLICE STATION - SAME TIME

Travis is in a deep sleep on a couch in the hallway. Agent #1 shakes him out of his sleep and hands him his cell phone.

AGENT 1  
Washington.

TRAVIS  
Yes sir...we're dealing with some  
uncooperatives, sir...but I'm confident  
that the perpetrators will head for the  
Indian reservation...yes sir...I just  
need more time...yes sir, of course,  
sir...24 hours, thank you sir.

Travis calmly puts the telephone down on the couch. He pauses, then picks it up and throws it across the room.

TRAVIS  
We've got twenty-four hours to bring  
these fucking hostiles in or we're off  
it! Get me search headquarters on the  
phone...and COFFEE!

EXT. MINI-MART, ROSEBUD - SATURDAY MORNING

Meredith pulls up in her rental car and sees restless Indian youths loitering. They are dressed in hip-hop athletic garments. They compare homemade tattoos while a boom-box blasts Rap music. One youth stares her down, while dribbling a basketball.

Meredith enters the store.

INT. MINI-MART, ROSEBUD - SAME TIME

After gathering her breakfast, Meredith stands at the cashier counter. She places the food and her purse on the counter, turning to grab a newspaper.

She reads:

Headline: "SUPERSTARS STILL MISSING"  
*"FBI Baffled"*

The youth with the basketball has entered and stands behind her. Without warning, he drops the ball and grabs her purse, darting out of the store.

Meredith pulls her gun and chases after the youth.

EXT. BEHIND THE MINI-MART, ROSEBUD - SAME TIME

The youth dodges through a field and disappears into the neighborhood. Meredith gives up the chase and stands helplessly with her gun drawn.

EXT. MINI-MART, ROSEBUD - LATER

Meanwhile, the other youths have hot-wired her rental car. The gang peels out of the parking lot, just as Meredith returns. All of them wave at her, as they set out on their joyride.

EXT. MINI-MART, ROSEBUD - LATER

Meredith describes the youths to CLYDE, a Lakota male, (45) POLICE OFFICER. He holds the basketball under his arm as he takes down her story.

MEREDITH

...And he was wearing a Dallas Cowboys jersey. I really need to be in Rapid City. Where can I get a rental car?

CLYDE

Not out here. But my cousin Luther might be able to help you with that.

MEREDITH

Well, can we call Luther?

CLYDE

Oh, he don't have a phone. He lives out that way.

He points out over an empty horizon.

CLYDE  
Are you the NBA lady?

MEREDITH  
...Yes, so to speak.

CLYDE  
Oh, everybody has been talking about you.

MEREDITH  
Can you take me to Luther's to see about  
a car?

CLYDE  
Hey, don't you want me to find your  
stolen car first? Before they torch it?

MEREDITH  
Torch it?

CLYDE  
Yeah, when it runs out of gas, they'll  
probably light it up. You know, destroy  
the evidence.

Perplexed, Meredith stares at him. She is speechless.

CLYDE  
OK, I'll take you over to Luther's, but  
first, there's somebody been asking to  
see you.

EXT. CLIFF SIDE, THE MAZE - SATURDAY, MORNING

Hector, Cedric, Gus and Devon are climbing single file along  
a treacherous, rocky, switchback path.

They are 200' above the canyon floor. Gus is carrying a  
stick.

Each perspires from the hard labor of climbing the rock wall.

HECTOR  
Watch out! Loose rock up here.

Hector comes to the thinnest part of the trail. In order to  
make it around the next curve in the switchback, they will  
have to maneuver themselves around a protruding boulder.

The first three men struggle to move around the dangerous 20'  
rock and reach safe ground.

Devon approaches the obstacle tentatively.

DEVON  
This ain't cool. I ain't no Outward Bound  
mother-fucker.

HECTOR  
(Calling down to Devon)  
Don't look down. Just hug that rock.

DEVON  
Hug the rock?

He makes his attempt and stretches himself across the  
boulder. Suddenly, he freezes.

HECTOR  
Where you at?

Devon gives no answer.

CEDRIC  
(To Hector)  
I'm going down there.

DEVON  
(Frantic)  
I ain't moving, I can't do this!

Cedric who has slid back down to the edge of the boulder,  
sees Devon's outstretched fingertips wrapped around the rock.

CEDRIC  
(Calmly)  
I'm right here.

DEVON  
I'm fucking losing it!

Devon's right leg begins to shake uncontrollably, a bad case  
of sewing machine leg.

CEDRIC  
Just hold on, man I'm going to grab your  
arm.

DEVON  
Don't touch me! My leg won't stop  
bouncing!

Cedric steadies himself and reaches for Devon's wrist. The  
moment Cedric grabs him, Devon loses his footing and falls,  
taking Cedric with him.

CEDRIC/DEVON

Whoa!!!!

Hector and Gus shimmy back down to the rock and listen to them fall. And then silence.

HECTOR

(yells)

Yo! Cedric...Devon!

(Silence)

The men have skidded and bounced 40' down the cliff-side.

Cedric breaks his fall landing on a lower switchback. As Devon tumbles past him, Cedric quickly reaches out and grabs Devon's arm. He pulls Devon up onto the path to safety.

HECTOR

Are you alright?

CEDRIC

(To Devon)

Hell of a ride, man.

DEVON

I couldn't stay cool. I choked.

CEDRIC

We're here, we're coming back up!

(To Devon)

Ain't no thing, I'll be behind you.

DEVON

(Looking down the cliff)

I should be down there, dead.

CEDRIC

Whatever player, let's go. We can do this.

Cedric leads Devon back up the path to the boulder. Gus and Hector wait on the other side.

Devon wraps himself around the rock, Cedric steadies him with a hand on his lower back.

Gus has extended his hand around the boulder, for Devon to grab hold. Hector holds onto the back of Gus's pants and anchors them by holding onto a nearby juniper trunk.

GUS

Just take my hand!

Devon takes the leap of faith and grabs Gus's hand. Cedric pushes while the two others pull Devon to safety.

They do the same with Cedric.

The ascent continues and the men help each other up the cliff. Hector gains distance and is the first to reach the top.

HECTOR

We made it! Come on up!

The three others join him at the top, on a flat mesa.

INT. WALKING BEAR'S HOUSE, ROSEBUD - SATURDAY LATER

Clyde has given Meredith a ride in the Tribal police car. They pull up to a dilapidated Reservation house. Junk cars and rusty farm equipment litter the property.

Three young children play in the yard. Willie's father WILSON WALKING BEAR(45), is under the hood of an old Dodge pick-up truck.

CLYDE

Wilson, I brought over the NBA lady you wanted to see.

Wilson wipes the grease from his hands and shakes Meredith's hand.

CLYDE

I'm going to Luther's to get her a car.  
I'll be back.

He goes to his car and drives off.

MEREDITH

Mr. Walking Bear, my sympathies to you  
and your family, for your loss.

The children have gathered to see the white lady.

WILSON

Thank you for coming. Let's go in so you  
can meet my wife.

They go into the house.

INT. WALKING BEAR'S HOUSE, ROSEBUD - SATURDAY AFTERNOON

On the wall, in a frame, is the Sports Illustrated cover of "The Great Red Hope", Willie Walking Bear.

DOTTIE WALKING BEAR (42) is a heavy set Lakota woman. Willie's Grandmother, RITA WALKING BEAR(65), sits in the kitchen smoking cigarettes. They all shake hands.

Meredith takes a seat with them at the kitchen table.

WILSON

We know that you are searching for those lost ones...And that you've been with our grandpa.

MEREDITH

Word sure travels fast around here. Mr. Walking Bear explained many things to me.

WILSON

Did he speak of the "Keeping of the Soul Ceremony"?

Meredith doesn't know about this.

WILSON

Willie's Soul has not crossed over, ...the purpose of his death is not yet fulfilled.

MEREDITH

What do you mean? You know about this? Then you know where they are.

WILSON

In the past, the authorities have been known to interrupt our ceremonies. So nobody was to know where this was to take place, not even us.

MEREDITH

Maybe, if we can find them, I can help them. Orville said that the spirits told him...they are where "The Grandfathers spin a man's mind and two bloods of the same Mother meet".

Rita puts out a smoke and speaks up.

RITA

You must find them, before the FBI's get to them. When we say Grandfather, it means many things...sometimes, old rocks. They hold the bones of our Ancestors...our Grandfathers.

MEREDITH

So...it could be a rock place?

RITA

The blood, of our Mother...the sacred  
earth, is water.

Outside, Clyde has arrived with a pitiful car. It backfires  
as he pulls up.

RITA

If your basketball player survives this  
ordeal, through him our warrior's message  
will reach the people...Willie's death  
will not be in vain...he will be free.

EXT. MESA TOP, THE MAZE - SATURDAY, AFTERNOON

The view of the outlying Canyonlands is breathtaking.

Devon is still shaking, Cedric turns around viewing the  
panorama, Hector sits down to rest. Gus wanders off, studying  
the landscape for any sign of life, water or rescue.

GUS

Hey, check this out!

Gus has come upon the remains of the campfire.

Cedric, Devon and Hector hustle over.

Gus kneels down and blows on the coals.

GUS

Get some sticks...we're gonna have  
ourselves a fire.

They pile sage brush and make a roaring fire.

GUS

Maybe somebody will see this smoke.

EXT. MESA TOP, THE MAZE - LATER

Gus has taken over the duty of tending the fire. The others  
gather wood.

Hector returns with a pile of deer droppings, found at the  
edge of the mesa top. He shows the others.

HECTOR

Could be a deer.



CEDRIC

A deer? What the hell would a deer be doing way out here?

HECTOR

It's a good sign man, we got to be getting close to the river, right?

GUS

Go look for it. I'll stay with the fire.

EXT. THE MAZE - LATER

MONTAGE - TRACKING OF THE DEER

The men kneel to study deer tracks. Hector points in forward direction.

We see them study nibbled vegetation.

Hector points to a group of trees and motions the group to be silent. They are getting close.

In the north they notice powerful, grey storm clouds gathering.

Soon they come upon hoofprint tracks in the sand. Cedric and Devon kneel down to inspect the tracks.

Montage ends.

HECTOR

These tracks are fresh. I'm gonna climb one of these rocks and look around.

Hector climbs up the spine of a nearby rock formation.

On the other side of the rock, 200 yards from their position is a group of juniper trees.

HECTOR

(Whispers)

It's right in here.

Cedric and Devon climb up the rock and lay low next to Hector. The men see the grazing deer.

CEDRIC

How are we going to kill it?

HECTOR

We have to trap it first. (Pointing) See that canyon behind it? We'll chase it in there.

He draws a diagram with his finger in the sand.

HECTOR

Devon will swing out to the right and block it in from that side. You go out to the left and keep it from getting by you and into that other canyon.

The men come down from the rock, spread out and start to stalk the animal. About 100 yards in, the deer senses them. She raises her head. They all freeze.

They proceed with their stalking and Hector begins to move in. Cedric and Devon are guarding a western opening.

Hector breaks into a trot toward the deer. She sees him and makes a break toward Cedric and Devon. Cedric waving his shirt in the air chases her back.

Hector closes in. She has no choice but to retreat into a small box canyon.

HECTOR

Damn, it worked.

Together they creep forward into the mouth of the box canyon.

CEDRIC

(To Devon)

I'll go in and chase it out. You hit it with this rock.

He hands a large rock to Devon.

HECTOR

I'll play safety.

Devon stands confused, with the rock. Cedric runs into the box canyon.

Hector hops up onto a high boulder. Devon stands awkwardly awaiting the charge.

CEDRIC (O.S.)

Whoa, look out! Here it comes!

The frightened deer is racing toward Devon. It has no choice but to run right at him.

DEVON

Holy shit!

Cedric is close on her heels. Devon swings wildly with the rock and misses. He falls, as she knocks him out of the way. Cedric tumbles over Devon. The deer is gone.

Suddenly they hear Hector as he leaps from the boulder onto the deer.

He wraps his arms around her neck and wrestles her to the ground.

HECTOR

(Yells)

Hey man, help me out!

The deer kicks wildly. Cedric and Devon arrive, but keep their distance from it's thrashing hooves.

Hector holds it in a tight headlock and rides the Deer's spasmodic struggle. He is practically eye to eye with it.

The deer suddenly ceases its struggle.

Cedric turns away as Devon holds the heavy rock above his head.

Close-up on the rock as it comes down.

EXT. A HILL TOP, THE MAZE - SATURDAY, LATE AFTERNOON

Perched on a nearby hilltop, is August. He has witnessed the men killing the deer. He rises from a crouched position.

Wesley is standing and staring at the distant mesa-top campfire.

AUGUST

It is good. Bravery. Generosity.

Wesley nods. The two men run down the backside of the hill, undetected.

The men stand over the deer.

HECTOR

Cedric, we need to build a fire down here. Go tell Gus. We got food.

Cedric takes off for the Mesa-top.

EXT. RENTAL CAR, HIGHWAY 44, S.D. - SATURDAY NIGHT, SUNSET

Meredith travels west, toward Rapid City. Luther's 1982 Chevy leaves a trail of blue smoke behind her.

INT. RENTAL CAR, HIGHWAY 44, S.D. - SAME TIME

She is determined to get to Orville.

Lightning flickers on the distant western horizon. On the radio she listens to the "Jim Rome Broadcast".

JIM ROME (V.O.)

Pete in H-town, welcome to the show.

PETE (V.O.)

Sherlock Homes in the box, how ya doing?

JIM ROME (V.O.)

I am great.

PETE (V.O.)

Sorry Jones...I'd like to be concerned, but who cares about gangsters, drunks and drug addicts playing sports today...and Wilkerson MVP? Yeah, Most Valuable Prisoner!

Rim cuts him off with the "BUZZER".

JIM ROME

(Interrupts)

H-town! Where you going with this? Yeah, a couple of these guys are bad-asses but this situation is beyond the field of play. So clones, ease up and let's remember what's really important here is these guys lives. Hey, authorities, feel free to do the job you get paid to do...find them...before these nappers end careers...

Meredith laughs at Jim Rome's commentary...

Just then she drives past her stolen rental car, sitting on the side of the road. It has been stripped of it's wheels, doors and chrome.

INT. RADIO STATION, LA - SATURDAY EVENING, SAME TIME

Jim Rome sits with his headset on, speaking into a hanging microphone.

JIM ROME

Let's go to Vincent in Queens. Welcome Queens, first time caller.

VINCENT

(Heavy Queens, NY accent)

Mr. Jones, I grew up here watching the Yankees and the Brooklyn Dodgers. Nobody would have thought of kidnapping Joe Dimaggio. You know why? Because he made a lousy stinking \$30,000. He made more selling coffee makers! What the hell is going on in this world. I'll tell you, it's greed Mr. Jones, pure and simple and it's ruining sports. I can't watch it anymore.

JIM ROME

Vinnie in Queens is a man! Dimaggio. That's Mr. Coffee to you. Tremendous.

(Laughs)

You're on it Vinnie, could be the huge call of the day.

EXT. THE WASH, THE MAZE - SUNSET

The men are sitting around a blazing fire. Strips of deer meat sizzle on the end of sticks.

The men are silently anticipating their first meal in three days.

A lightning storm flashes in the Northern sky. To the west, a spectacular sunset.

CEDRIC

I never ate deer and I can't wait.

Cedric collects the sticks of meat out of the fire and hands them out.

HECTOR

Fellas, hold up, would you mind if I...I mean would it be OK if I said a prayer?

The group stops and uncomfortably agrees.

DEVON

He's right. Go ahead bro'.

HECTOR

Dear God, I just want to say thanks, you know, for this deer giving us food and for bringing us this far. Please, help us get home. Amen.

MEN

Amen.

CEDRIC

Right on.

EXT. SOUTH EAST OF THE WASH - SATURDAY NIGHT, SUNSET

Five miles to the north, the thunderstorm gathers power.

August and Wesley are busy picking sage. They come together and admire the beauty of the sky.

AUGUST

(Lakota)

Eh, Wakiyan. Waste'. (Hey, Thunderbeings, it is good).

WESLEY

M'ni. (Water of life).

INT. JAIL CELL, RAPID CITY, S.D. - NIGHT

Reverend Anderson and Orville have been put back into the cell together. Anderson sits on the cot.

Orville has refused to speak. He is singing prayer songs and ceremoniously dancing in place. He has been at this all night and all day. The Red Spirit Light Dances in front of him. He communicates with the Spirit as he prays.

ORVILLE

(Singing)

Wankatanka, Tunkasila...

Agent #1 enters with their dinner and sets the plates next to the other uneaten meals.

AGENT #1

Here's his fucking dinner!

(To Rev. Anderson)

Get him to eat, so he'll stop that damn singing!

Orville continues his ceremony.

EXT. THE WASH, THE MAZE - SATURDAY NIGHT

Back at the camp the men have built up the fire and are staying warm. They are well fed and exhausted. Thunder rumbles in the distance.

Hector and Gus work together preparing more meat.

CEDRIC

I will never, ever, take food or water for granted, ever again.

DEVON

...Or my wife.

GUS

...or my home theatre system.

HECTOR

Or my son...You know, my boy is 7 years old. When I was seven years old, me and five of my brothers and sisters shared one bed. We had no indoor plumbing and a lot of times nothing to eat. The only time I felt good about life was when we played baseball from sun up to sun down. When I was ten, I was picked to play the Jr. National Team and the next day there were boxes of food left at our back door. That's when I knew I could help my family. That's when my mother told me I had a gift from God. That's when I knew that baseball wasn't just a game that we played. And today, you know what hurts the most..? I never get to be with the people I do this for.

The men are quiet.

CEDRIC

Man, what I remember is every race I ever ran, I won. And every class I ever took, I failed. When I was a sophomore we beat Crenshaw and we were on our way to the State Finals. But as we were walking to our buses to go home, shots rang out. A drive by. Three kids got taken out. One of them our best player. So, the first game I ever started was the State Finals. I ran for 350 yards and 4 touch downs.

My picture was in the paper and the cheerleader I had my eye on, had her eye on me. I never went to class but I had a 3.5 GPA anyway.

The Men laugh.

CEDRIC

But what really felt good, was the respect.

DEVON

(Hangs his head)

I killed that kid. That's the truth. No matter how my lawyers spin it I have to tell somebody the truth. I didn't need to shoot, but nobody throws Devon Wilkerson through a window. When I fired that gun I didn't care who got hit. And the worst part of it is, I could see, that Willie Walking Bear was a special kind of kid.

Devon's eyes well up with tears.

The night falls quiet again as each man looks at Devon.

The rainstorm continues in the distance as the men drift off to sleep.

INT. JAIL CELL, RAPID CITY - SATURDAY NIGHT

Travis and Agent #1 are making a last ditch effort to get information.

TRAVIS

(Yelling)

I'll make sure you rot in prison, Orville, for what you did back then and for what you're doing now.

Orville ignores him and continues to dance.

TRAVIS

When you're gone, I'll watch your boys do the same.

Anderson sits silently, still praying.

Travis flips out, grabs a metal chair and runs it along the iron cell bars. He storms back and forth making a loud ruckus.

The men do not respond.



Out of control, he continues his tirade.

Meredith appears and watches the absurd scene.

MEREDITH

Interesting tactics, Captain Baxter.

Rev. Anderson looks up at her. Orville, hearing Meredith's voice, stops dancing and singing.

MEREDITH

May I have a few moments alone with these men?

TRAVIS

You want to negotiate with "Dances with himself"? Give it your best shot, honey.

He storms out.

REV. ANDERSON

(Softly)

They're not finished.

ORVILLE

Four days, they need four days. Tomorrow, it is finished.

MEREDITH

Mr. Walking Bear remember what the Spirits told you...Could it be a "confusing rock place, where two rivers meet"?

ORVILLE

I don't know this place, but the Spirits told me...It's where the first ones, the ancient ones came from.

MEREDITH

Ancient ones?

ORVILLE

In your language you call it, Anasazi?

MEREDITH

Four corners area!

INT. JAIL CELL, RAPID CITY - LATER

Meredith has snuck a MAP OF THE SOUTHWEST into the jail area.

Orville, Rev. Anderson and Meredith search the Four Corners area.

In Canyonlands area of Utah, Meredith's finger follows the Colorado River to where it meets the Green River at, The Confluence. Next to it, they see in print, the area known as, The Maze.

MEREDITH

The Maze...Spins a man's mind.

She looks at Orville, and begins to fold the map.

ORVILLE

When tomorrow's sun sits in the southwest, they will be ready.

MEREDITH

It will be finished?

ORVILLE

...No sooner.

MEREDITH

I will do my best.

INT. RAPID CITY FEDERAL BUILDING, OFFICE - LATER

The office is filled with buzzing FBI agents. Travis on the telephone with his field coordinator in Oak Springs.

TRAVIS

I don't care that you're coming up with nothing, I've got a public relations nightmare on my hands and heads are gonna roll. Do another sweep and then another. Whatever it fucking takes!

Travis slams down the telephone.

Meredith enters.

TRAVIS

Great Mahoney. Fraternizing again?

MEREDITH

I get a lot of work done that way. So, what's the latest?

TRAVIS

You tell me. What have your new friends been talking to you about?

MEREDITH

Hey, I'm working as hard as you on this. Besides you don't have to like my style.

TRAVIS

I don't. Your under arrest, obstruction of justice.

Agent #1 approaches Meredith from behind and handcuffs her.

MEREDITH

I'm under arrest? Well, now I'd say you've got a pretty interesting style.

TRAVIS

You may be some hotshot negotiator, but you've never dealt with me...And I will get what I'm after. Take her.

He looks at his watch.

INT. RAPID CITY, INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - LATER

Meredith, handcuffed, sits at a table.

MEREDITH

I'm getting paid to do a job. Don't you think I'd be there right now if I knew where they were?

TRAVIS

So, how much was your payday for flight 220? Nice work. Two dead civilians killed on your watch.

MEREDITH

Quite different circumstances. Don't you think?

TRAVIS

No different. Have they revealed the location to you or not?

MEREDITH

You're nowhere on this. Getting desperate aren't you Baxter?

She holds up her cuffed wrists.

EXT. THE WASH, THE MAZE - PREDAWN

In the stillness and darkest part of the night a strange noise begins to rise from out of nowhere. The men are sleeping deeply.

Hector is the first to be awakened by the strange sounds of four coyotes, ravaging the carcass of the deer.

He lies motionless watching them. Suddenly, the coyotes raise their heads alertly, then race up the wash embankment and disappear into the desert.

The rumbling noise increases and the very ground he lies on starts to vibrate. The sound gets louder as the ground continues to shake.

HECTOR

Yo, yo, get up! Wake up!

The three others sit up and strain to see in the darkness. Coming at them is a four-foot wall of rushing water. They have unknowingly camped in the flood zone.

The Flashflood, carrying tree limbs and rocks, rushes in on the group. Immediately the wall of water overtakes them and Devon is hit in the head by a large log.

Cedric grabs an outcropping rock and holds on for his life. He quickly loses his grip and is yanked back into the flood. They all tumble and struggle to survive as they are pulled downstream.

Hector, across the wash from Cedric, muscles his way up an embankment. He is coughing out the sandy water. Gus reaches for Devon, realizing he is badly injured.

Hector has regained his breath and begins to stumble blindly along the top of the wash, searching for the others.

Cedric has reached dry ground and runs along the flood bank.

EXT. THE WASH 200 YARDS DOWNSTREAM - PREDAWN

The Wash narrows and the pressure builds. The floodwater deepens by two feet.

Gus holds Devon's head above water as they are propelled through a narrow passage and are sent crashing ten feet down, to a lower level of the wash. As the wash widens considerably, The power of the flashflood suddenly diminishes.

EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE WASH - SAME TIME

Hector and Cedric come upon a frightening scene. Gus is frantically pounding on Devon's chest and trying to revive him. They rush to assist. They take turns performing, CPR.

HECTOR

No, don't die on me...Don't die...

While Gus sits back exhausted and delusional, Hector continues CPR. Cedric stands watching helplessly.

CEDRIC

(To Devon)

Come on man.

As the men work frantically, Devon near death, experiences a vision.

Devon'S VISION: Devon, out of body, is hovering above the grisly scene. He turns to face a bright light. From the light emerges the Spirit of his Grandmother.

GRANDMOTHER

Look Devon, look this way.

The old spirit reveals to him an image of the "youth of the future". They hold Basketballs, Footballs and Baseballs in one hand...Guns, Drugs and Weapons in the other.

From out of the group steps the SPIRIT of WILLIE WALKING BEAR. He holds a Basketball under one arm and an Eagle Feather in his hand.

WILLIE

The next generations are in serious danger. They are looking up to you. Go back.

GRANDMOTHER

Go back Devon...they need you...help them.

EXT. THE WASH - SAME TIME

Without warning sandy, brown water erupts from Devon's mouth. He then gasps for air, opening his eyes.

Relieved, the men all collapse from exhaustion.

Devon focuses on the Red Spirit Light hovering above.

EXT. THE LAST MILE OF THE TRAIL, THE MAZE - SUNDAY, DAWN

As the Sun crests over the horizon, the four men, badly defeated, lay in the damp wash. The wind kicks up and rouses them.

Further up the wash, is the muddy carcass of the deer.

INT. RAPID CITY, INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - SUNDAY SAME TIME

Travis and Meredith remain locked in their struggle. He has rolled up his sleeves, and relentlessly questions a visibly frazzled Meredith.

TRAVIS

Seems to me you have some kind of misguided loyalty toward the very people you should be incriminating. The bad guys, criminals! These 'skins have you conned. Both sides can't win Mahoney! It's us or them!

Travis is face to face with Meredith.

MEREDITH

They know something that you'll never know...because...(whispering) They're Sun Dancers.

Meredith turns toward the window. The rising sun illuminates her face.

EXT. THE WASH - SUNDAY MORNING

Gus painfully drops to his knees next to a brown puddle. On all fours, he lowers himself to drink. He sees his face's reflection in the water and gasps, horrified by the look in his own eyes.

He rises, without drinking and blankly walks past the others and into the brush. Hector, lying on his side, sees Gus disappear.

HECTOR

(Weakly)  
Gus...wait...

EXT. THE WASH - LATER

Hector, is kneeling at the puddle. He has taken off his shirt and made a makeshift water filter. He is sucking up small mouthfuls of sandy water.

EXT. THE WASH, THE MAZE, - MID-MORNING

Cedric opens his eyes and looks around. Gus is nowhere to be seen. He lies on his back and sees several black specks circling high above him. He rubs his eyes. He looks over at Hector, who is also staring at the circling Vultures. Devon is curled up in the fetal position.

CEDRIC  
Vultures? That is not a good sign.

Devon stirs and raises to one elbow.

CEDRIC  
Get up man, we got to move.

Cedric struggles to his feet and scans the landscape.

CEDRIC  
Where's Gus man. He was here...Now he's gone? (Weakly shouts) Gus? Hey...

He hears no reply.

HECTOR  
(pointing)  
He went that way. Awhile ago.

Hector stands and walks to Devon, offering his hand to help him up.

Hector motions with his eyes, toward the sky. Devon sees the circling buzzards and shudders. The two follow after Cedric into the desert.

EXT. THE MAZE - SUNDAY LATER

The THREE MEN have walked aimlessly for two hours. They have been calling for Gus with no response. Hector is suffering quietly. Cedric licks his cracked and swollen lips.

HECTOR  
(Yells)  
Gus we're here!

CEDRIC  
(Sharply)  
Maybe they did bring us here to let us die! Slowly! Make us suffer!

HECTOR  
GUS!!!

Suddenly, a violent DUST DEVIL rises from out of the desert floor. Whirling sand and debris fill the air. The noise of the 80mph wind is deafening.

Cedric dives to hold onto a nearby tree trunk. Devon and Hector hold onto each other as the small tornado rages against them. Sand and dirt sting their skin, filling their eyes and mouths.

The dust devil moves on, taking with it every last ounce of strength the men had left.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE MAZE - LATER

The men stumble on, deliriously beaten down.

From a distance they hear a man crying. Hector struggles to lift himself up on an elevated rock to scour the horizon. He makes his way back down and tells the others what he has seen.

HECTOR

It's Gus. He's standing out on a ledge,  
over there.

Hector, Devon and Cedric arrive to see Gus on top of a high ledge. A fall or jump from the rock, would be fatal.

HECTOR

Gus, we're here! Come on down.

Gus is obviously disoriented.

GUS

I'm done man, it's over. My life ain't  
shit. I can't take any more of this  
place.

HECTOR

(To others) )  
He's losing it, bad.

CEDRIC

C'mon down man!

Gus looks down at Devon, Hector and Cedric.

GUS

(Crying)  
I want out! I'm seeing things, bad  
things!



Cedric begins to climb up to the LEDGE and reaches Gus. He holds Gus by the arm and guides him to sit down.

CEDRIC

Easy now...You got to pull yourself together.

GUS

(Whispers)  
I'm sick man, really sick.

Gus completely breaks down sobbing.

Hector and Devon climb up. Hector sits down next to Gus. Devon stands and stares intently at the horizon.

DEVON

We've all seen things out here.

GUS

(Stands up)  
Fuck you, Devon. Fuck you all!

Gus rears back to throw a punch. Hector grabs Gus by the shirt.

Devon grabs Gus's arm, locks eyes with him and with his other hand shoots a pointing finger to the East.

Gus sees, that a half mile from them, are high canyon walls, in the center of the formation are two "WHITE STONE SPIRES". They mark an opening in the rock.

Between the spires, a large RED CLOTH FLAG waves in the wind.

DEVON

We're finishing this.

INT. RAPID CITY, INTERROGATION ROOM #2 - SUNDAY MID-MORNING

Meredith, exhausted, rests her head on the table. Travis startles her by slamming his fist down. He pins her good hand to the table with his gun.

TRAVIS

You want to fuck with us?

Meredith hears Orville's singing suddenly stop from down the hall.

Through the window, she gazes at the sun.

## MEREDITH

You missed it Baxter, they told it to you but you're too blind and deaf. The old man already told you. I'll tell you now... where the Grandfathers spin a man's mind? A puzzling, confusing rocky place...two bloods of the same mother?...The Mother? Earth, you idiot! The blood of mother Earth is water. Two bloods meet? The confluence of two rivers. The Colorado and the Green Rivers, in "The Maze"...Canyonlands, Utah.

Stunned, he withdraws his gun.

EXT. DESERT HILL, THE MAZE - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

The Four men begin the last climb. Devon stumbles deliriously, Cedric is helping Gus, who is struggling with each step. Hector wincING with pain, trudges on.

The men's shoulders and backs are sunburnt and peeling severely. They are bruised, cut, and limping. Their faces are wind-burnt, and chapped. Their lips are cracked and bleeding, tongues are swollen, cheeks are drawn in and gaunt.

They pass between the two "White Stone Towers" and come upon a flat circular rock terrace. The area they are entering resembles an outdoor cathedral. They step onto the floor, covered with freshly picked Sage.

Across from the entrance, a small fire is burning.

Wesley and August stand awaiting the four men. Wesley holds an abalone shell of burning sage and a sacred Eagle wing fan.

August holds a gallon of water and a wooden bowl of spirit food. Dried meat and berries.

The four bedraggled men approach their captors. Wesley immediately begins to smudge each man with the sweet smoke and fan them with the Eagle Wing.

He begins with Hector.

## WESLEY

This smoke will clean your spirits. While you were out here, you experienced thirst, hunger and loneliness. You have experienced the One who makes it all...

He moves onto Gus and smudges him down.

WESLEY

...who threw a little water down on you and knocked you on your face...His wind blew and pushed you to the ground. Maybe now, you will learn to appreciate - all that's been given to you...These things that are gifts from the Creator.

He then smudges Cedric.

WESLEY

If you don't treat these gifts with respect, they will be taken from you. You wouldn't have your talents or powerful bodies...Remember who it was that gave you the ability to be athletes.

He moves lastly to Devon. He stops fanning the Eagle Feather and looks him in the eye.

WESLEY

...The Spirit of my brother came here. Do you understand what he showed you?

Devon fights back tears.

WESLEY

Your own life and the lives of many that look to you, depend on you fulfilling the instructions of this vision.

August steps forward with the Water and Spirit food.

WESLEY

When you partake of these things, your journey will be complete. As you drink the water of life and take this Spirit food, remember to always be grateful and give a thought to those in the world who will not eat today.

The men drink and eat, slowly.

WESLEY

Being a Warrior today is not winning in sports or beating other men down. Being a Warrior today is not about gathering riches and money.

Being a Warrior today is not showing how cool or tough you are...Being a warrior today, means learning how to cry... Cry with compassion for the world. Cry with humility. Cry with real love for others. Honesty, Bravery, Generosity, Humility. These are the values in a real warrior's heart. Always remember this place and what you have learned here.

EXT. THE CONFLUENCE OVERLOOK, UTAH - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

August and Wesley lead the men through a rock passage to an Overlook. They stand 200' above the Confluence of the Colorado and Green River. The riverbanks are laced with vegetation.

On the shore they see the rising smoke from a campfire. On the river bank, people move about their river rafts.

The men are filled with joyous elation as they look upon their salvation.

August, steps forward and shakes the hand of Gus, Hector, Cedric and Devon. Wesley follows. He shakes Gus's hand.

WESLEY

Thank you, my brother.

Shakes Hector's hand.

WESLEY

Thank you, my brother.

Shakes Cedric's hand.

WESLEY

Thank you, my brother.

Stopping, he look Devon in the eye. Devon, tears streaming down his face, extends his hand out to Wesley.

DEVON

Thank you...my brother.

WESLEY

(Lakota)

Mitakuye Oyasin. (All My Relations)

The athletes are silent as they watch the men walk away. A Golden Eagle circles high above The Confluence.

EXT. THE MAZE, TWIN TOWERS HILL - AFTERNOON

Wesley and August pass back through the Twin Towers and walk onto the desert floor.

EXT. THE MAZE, TWIN TOWERS HILL - SAME TIME

Meanwhile, the four men have begun their descent to the river.

Gus is looking up at the sky for the eagle.

He is taken aback, when suddenly two black FBI Helicopters rage into the canyon, over the river.

EXT. FBI HELICOPTERS, THE CONFLUENCE - SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Travis and two other Agents circle over the athletes in Helicopter #1.

Helicopter #2 hovers nearby. They communicate by headset.

Following are two more choppers, with extra personnel, armed with maximum ammunition.

TRAVIS

(On Headset)

There...The side of the hill...There's our boys!

PILOT CHOPPER #2

I'm taking it down, we'll pick them up.

TRAVIS

(On headset)

Chopper 2, any sight of the fugitives?

PILOT CHOPPER #2

Negative, we'll touch down and secure the hostages.

TRAVIS

Fly them out of here, we'll search the area.

Chopper #1 flies off over the twin rock towers.

TRAVIS

Be advised! Suspects are armed and dangerous.

EXT. CONFLUENCE LANDING SITE - SAME TIME

The Athletes are waving their arms, signaling the chopper.

Chopper #2 lands close to the athletes and powers down. Meredith and the Pilot get out to meet them, carrying a First Aid Kit and blankets.

EXT. THE TWIN TOWERS HILL - SAME TIME

CHOPPER #2 is slowly circling over Wesley and August.

TRAVIS  
(Over loudspeaker)  
THIS IS THE FBI, STOP AND LAY DOWN ON THE  
GROUND.

The men begin to run for The Maze.

TRAVIS  
YOU ARE SURROUNDED! STOP AND LAY DOWN!

EXT. CONFLUENCE LANDING SITE, SAME TIME

As the pilot leads the athletes to the waiting chopper, Devon stops to listen to Travis on the loudspeaker.

TRAVIS  
(On Loudspeaker)  
LAST WARNING! WE WILL SHOOT!

At the door of the chopper, Devon sheds the blanket, turns, then bolts toward the twin rock towers.

PILOT CHOPPER #2  
What the...

INT. FBI HELICOPTER #1 - SAME TIME

TRAVIS  
(To the pilot)  
Take us down, land in front of them!  
Before they make it to those canyons!

EXT. THE TWIN TOWERS HILL - SAME TIME

Devon sprints across the desert floor toward Wesley and August.

INT. FBI HELICOPTER, THE TWIN TOWERS - SAME TIME

Chopper #2 lifts off with Meredith, Gus, Cedric and Hector. The men are wrapped in blankets and are drinking bottles of water.

PILOT CHOPPER #2  
(Over his headset)  
Wilkerson has jumped ship...he's headed  
your way. I'll land and get him.

EXT. THE MAZE, TWIN TOWERS HILL - SAME TIME

Travis faces August and Wesley, gun drawn. His agents  
standby, with their weapons aimed at the suspects.

Choppers #3 and #4 have arrived and circle above.

TRAVIS  
We have orders to shoot. You must  
surrender. Get on the ground!

Devon arrives at the scene. Chopper #2 is landing a short  
distance away.

TRAVIS  
(To August & Wesley)  
On the ground! Do it now!

Devon bravely steps between Travis's gun and the two men.

DEVON  
(Yells at Travis)  
If you want them, you'll have to go  
through me!

TRAVIS  
Get the hell out of my way! These men are  
mine!

DEVON  
These men are free, let them go...

Wesley and August slowly turn to look at Devon. A moment of  
understanding passes between them.

Meredith, Cedric, Hector and Gus approach the scene.

Travis stares with intimidation at Devon.

Meredith, Cedric, Hector and Gus join Devon and stare down  
Travis.

DEVON  
Problem with what we're telling you?

Suddenly, from the east, the loud sound of galloping horses  
approaches.

Invisible horses gallop faster and faster around the men. Sand flies as hoofprints begin circling the group. The men all watch the phenomenon in disbelief. Suddenly the horses stop.

The heavy breathing of the 'Spirit Horses' is heard by all. Baxter and the FBI's are visibly confused and frightened.

MEREDITH

It's been a ceremony, Baxter, not a kidnapping!

August and Wesley knowingly begin to walk toward the breathing sound of the invisible horses. The horses turn west and begin to walk. The two men follow the hoofprints which start to lead them westward back into The Maze.

Baxter nervously cocks his gun, followed by all his agents.

TRAVIS

This is your last warning!

August and Wesley begin to run.

TRAVIS

Fire!

Multiple gunshots ring out.

Wesley and August fall to their knees, palms out-stretched to the sky in final prayer.

Guns blaze.

DEVON

Stop! Oh God, No!

As the two warriors fall to the earth, Devon falls to his knees in agony. Cedric, Gus and Hector stand horrified.

The FBI's empty their weapons into Wesley and August. Meredith cries out and lunges at Baxter.

As the smoke clears, slowly, the 3 Spirits Of Willie, Wesley and August begin to appear, mounted upon the three SPIRIT HORSES. The horses are painted for war and the three spirits are in traditional clothing. They gaze deeply at the grief stricken men.

The SPIRIT OF AUGUST takes off the wooden peg necklace and hands it to the SPIRIT OF WESLEY.



Wesley prays with it and hands it to WILLIE. Willie offers it to the Creator in prayer and then tosses it in the air.

Magically, the necklace appears as it flies, landing at the feet of Devon. Devon, tears on his face, picks up the necklace. He stares at THREE SMALL SPIRIT LIGHTS hovering above the desert floor.

As the FBI's approach the dead bodies of Wesley and August, the THREE SPIRIT HORSEMEN turn and slowly walk toward The Maze. Fading as they enter the Spirit World, they gallop, then vanish.

EXT. THE MAZE, TWIN TOWERS HILL - SAME TIME

The dead bodies are covered and loaded onto the chopper. Meredith and the stunned Athletes board the aircraft. Choppers lift off to fly home.

INT. CHOPPER - MOMENTS LATER

Seated inside the chopper, Devon clutches the wooden piercing stick Sun Dance necklace to his heart. The choppers soar through the canyons above the picturesque beauty of the Canyonlands.

THE END.