

THE HOUSE AT OTOWI BRIDGE

an original screenplay by

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(based on the book by Peggy Pond Church)

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WGAw

On July 16, 1945 at 5:20am the United States Army tested the first Atomic Bomb in the desert of Alamogordo, New Mexico...

THE HOUSE AT OTOWI BRIDGE

FADE IN:

EXT. SKY - NORTHERN NEW MEXICO -- NIGHT

The SKIES ARE ALIVE - pulsing, throbbing, bursting with STARS that shift-shape into colors and forms - by turns dazzling, terrifying, serene.

EXT. SANGRE DE CRISTO MOUNTAINS/NORTHERN NEW MEXICO -- DAWN

With the DAWN the Pajarito Plateau, carved out of volcanic rock, provides a view as breathtaking as it is ancient.

We hear

EDITH (V.O.)
There are certain places on the
earth...

Far below the Rio Grande snakes its way through the canyons.

EDITH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Where the great powers that move
between earth and sky...

EXT. PUEBLO -- DAY

The Pueblo of the San IldeFonso Indians - simple, quiet.

EDITH (V.O.)
Are closer and more available.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

TUMBLEWEED dances across a dirt road toward an old house. We hear TICKING.

EDITH (V.O.)
This is the story of a house...

ON THE PORCH - the back of a WOMAN in a rocking chair.

EDITH (CONT'D) (V.O.) (CONT'D)
That stood for many years...

EXT. OTOWI BRIDGE -- MAGIC HOUR

As the sun sets the TUMBLEWEED continues over a small footbridge, crossing the Rio Grande. The TICKING IS LOUDER.

EDITH (V.O.)
Beside a bridge...

EXT. HOUSE/PORCH -- CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON the WOMAN'S hand, holding A GOLD POCKET WATCH, caressing it as she would a lover.

EDITH (V.O.)
Between two worlds.

She opens the watch - the TICKING STOPS.

A BLINDING FLASH.

EXT. NEW MEXICO SKY - NIGHT

LIGHTNING twitches through a parched sky, heavy with clouds.

SUPERIMPOSE: JULY 16, 1945 - 12:10AM

EXT. THE HOUSE AT OTOWI BRIDGE - NIGHT

That same WOMAN in jeans and a cowboy hat BOLTS from the house, throws a saddle-bag on a horse, hops on, and rides quickly across the road up toward the hills.

The woman is EDITH WARNER, 30s. She is thin, blonde, desperate - and with good reason: tonight is the night her life - and everyone else's - changes forever. LITERALLY.

In the distance A COYOTE HOWLS.

EXT. SAN ILDEFONSO PUEBLO - MAIN PLAZA - CONTINUOUS

A large circle of Native American Men, in full regalia - are doing a RAIN DANCE CEREMONY. At the center of the circle is TILANO, 40s - who leads a ritual at once ancient, artful, and FEROCIOUS: this man dances as if his life depends on it.

And it does.

EXT. ALAMOGORDO/TEST SITE -- CONTINUOUS

Two hundred miles away at a make-shift military camp in the desert - a group of scientists, technicians, officers and soldiers make the final preparations for a test. The mood is tense, serious, excited. Standing outside the

MAIN BUNKER

We focus on 3 men: OPPIE, 30s, BAKER, 40s, and GENERAL GROVES, 50s as they preside over the preparations - staring in the distance at a TOWER in which THE ATOMIC BOMB is suspended.

ASSISTANT
3 minutes and counting, General.

The General nods his approval, Oppie finishes a cigarette, lights another - and both quickly head inside the bunker.

Baker takes a moment, looks at the tower, the sky, then reaches into his vest pocket for his GOLD POCKET WATCH - it's not there.

EXT. TSIREGE/ANCESTRAL SITE - CONTINUOUS

Edith has it, checking the time as she walks her horse up the hill. The ground is hard and dry, the foliage brown - suffering from the longest drought in New Mexico in years.

A flock of CAVE SWALLOWS SHRIEK into the night sky. A MOUNTAIN LION patrols the upper mesa.

AT THE TOP OF THE HILL ON TSIREGE

Edith stops, takes off her cowboy hat - she's wearing a RED BANDANA across her forehead.

She stands in front of A TOWERING ROCK WALL on which is a drawing of a PLUMED SERPENT, "Avanyu" - at which Edith stares long and hard.

She then looks out over the canyon. She is scared.

EXT. MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO - CONTINUOUS

Tilano and the other men are dancing and chanting - the Rain Ceremony is reaching a furious peak.

EXT. MAIN BUNKER/ALAMOGORDO/TEST SITE -- CONTINUOUS

Groves, Oppie, and Baker have donned goggles. We hear -

ASSISTANT
One minute...59, 58, 57...

EXT. TOP OF HILL/TSIREGE/ANCESTRAL SITE - CONTINUOUS

Edith hears THUNDER, A BOLT OF LIGHTNING SPLITS THE SKY.

Her horse freaks out. She tries to settle it down, but then MORE THUNDER, ANOTHER BOLT OF LIGHTNING.

Her horse takes off. Edith desperately tries to stop it - she snatches her saddle bag - but can only watch as the horse disappears down the canyon.

Suddenly the skies open - TORRENTS OF RAIN.

EXT. MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO - CONTINUOUS

It is pouring rain - Tilano and the other continue to dance but now it is one of joy, of celebration. THEIR PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED.

INT. MAIN BUNKER/ALAMOGORDO/TEST SITE -- CONTINUOUS

General Groves is beside himself as THUNDER and LIGHTNING EXPLODE across the desert sky - and it starts to rain like it's never rained before.

BAKER

Oppie...

Oppie nods, gets on a walkie-talkie:

OPPIE

Shut it down...SHUT IT DOWN!

Suddenly outside men are scurrying in every direction.

OPPIE (CONT'D)

Sorry, General. We'll have to wait.

The General is irate.

INT. CAVE - TSIREGE - CONTINUOUS

Edith, soaking wet, has found refuge in the back of an old kiva-like cave. She has made a small fire, which illuminates the ancient cave walls.

While RAIN beats like a drum against the roof of the cave Edith opens her saddle bag, removes a blanket, a canteen of water, a book. She gives the bag a shake and a little hand-made chamois bag falls out.

As she peels off her wet clothes, she notices a CRUCIFIX slipping out of the chamois bag, and remembers...

EXT. CITY STREET/PHILADELPHIA -- DECEMBER 7, 1941 - 3:30PM

CLOSE ON A BANNER HEADLINE

"JAPS BOMB PEARL HARBOR" screams the headline of the Philadelphia Enquirer - as a NEWSBOY hawks papers:

NEWSBOY

Extra! Extra! 1500 dead in Hawaii! -
READ ALL ABOUT IT!

EXT. CHURCH STEEPLE -- CONTINUOUS

The imposing steeple of the First Baptist Church - outside of which there is CHAOS in the streets.

Trash cans are on fire, families huddle around them. A FIGHT breaks out. COPS ON HORSEBACK rush in to break it up. In a doorway, a young MOTHER breast feeds her baby.

And watching it all through a corner of the Church glass window is EDITH - an anxious look on her face, that same CRUCIFIX around her neck.

We hear the voice of REVEREND JOHN WARNER:

REVEREND (O.S.)
Ladies and gentleman, please settle
down!

INT. CHURCH WINDOW -- CONTINUOUS

Edith turns from the window and, for the first time, we see her in the daylight: she has a great face, its refined features barely containing the Spirit that lives beneath. It's a face Edith hasn't fully grown into yet. But she will.

She sits with the Children's Choir alongside the pulpit while her father, REVEREND JOHN WARNER, 65, tries to calm the agitated congregation.

REVEREND
I know you're all worried and scared -
the attack on Pearl Harbor this
morning has us all pretty shaken.

IN THE CONGREGATION

Which is prim, proper, and all-white - women cry, men hold small flags, there's even a few soldiers in uniform.

REVEREND (CONT'D)
And you'll all want to be home by
your radios when President Roosevelt
speaks to the nation later.

ON THE PULPIT

REVEREND (CONT'D)
But for now, ladies and gentlemen -
we are here together, and we can all
find comfort in our Lord Jesus.

He glances Edith's way and smiles.

REVEREND (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Let us join our voices as my daughter
leads the Children's Choir in a
musical rendition of "The Family of
God". Edith?

All eyes turn to her as she leads the children to the podium.

Edith focuses the CHOIR, then cues a LITTLE GIRL in front
who steps forward and, with the voice of an angel, SINGS:

LITTLE GIRL

"I'm so glad to be part of/The Family
of God...

Edith's eyes fill with tears as she cues a LITTLE BOY who
steps forward and, also with the voice of angel, SINGS:

LITTLE BOY

"I'm so glad to be part of/The Family
of God...

Edith cues the back row of the choir - the TEENAGERS scream:

TEENAGER 1/TEENAGER 2

"Washed in the fountain!/Cleansed by
his blood!

TEENAGER 3/TEENAGER 4

"Join hands with Jesus/As we travel
this sod!

Edith cues them all - and leads the CHOIR in a hand-clappin',
arms-flailin', roof-blowin' gospel:

EDITH/CHOIR

"I'm so glad to be part of, to be
part of, to be part of...

IN THE CONGREGATION

Some are shocked, some offended, but some are actually
singing, clapping and moving to the beat as

ON THE PULPIT

No one is singing louder, filled with more Spirit, or more
out of control - than Edith:

EDITH/CHORUS

"I'm so glad to be part of/The family
of God!"

The Reverend is appalled.

EXT. CHURCH MANSE -- THAT NIGHT

A tea-kettle SHRIEKS as lights are on in an upstairs study.

REVEREND (O.S.)
 You insist on making a spectacle of
 yourself and I won't have it!

INT. REVEREND'S STUDY -- MOMENTS LATER

Edith serves her father tea n'cake on her mother's fine china.

REVEREND
 Today of all days - with everything
 going on in the world...It makes me
 look ridiculous!

Edith says nothing.

REVEREND (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 I think we should discuss your Aunt
 Clara's invitation. Painesville may
 be just what you need.

EDITH
 Painesville.

REVEREND
 The Ohio farmland is beautiful,
 serene, you're only 30 miles from
 Cleveland and -

EDITH
 Aunt Clara runs a home for
 "hysterical" women. Do you think I'm
 crazy, Father?

REVEREND
 I think you may be unwell, yes.

This cuts. Deeply.

REVEREND (CONT'D)
 I went through this with your mother.

EDITH
 Mother wasn't crazy!

REVEREND
 Honey, you need help.

EDITH
 I DON'T NEED HELP!

Silence. Her eyes fill with fear.

INT. CAR - A FEW DAYS LATER

CLOSE ON A CHRISTMAS FRUIT CAKE IN A TIN

That same silence. And same fear. Edith stares at the cake.

EDITH

Isn't this the fruit cake she brought
us last Christmas?

Her father is driving. Manages a smile.

REVEREND

Probably.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA TRAIN STATION - LATER

As Edith and her father make their way toward her train,
the platform is busy with sad, proud, patriotic good-byes -
SOLDIERS with parents, with wives, with girlfriends.

When they reach the train the Reverend hands Edith's suitcase
to the Porter. Edith's carrying a shoulder bag, still holding
that damn fruitcake.

Edith looks around at the various goodbye scenes - she's
trying to keep a brave face, but has never felt more
humiliated in her life.

There's a long moment between daughter and father - so much
to say. But no words.

They share an awkward hug and Edith climbs on the train, a
sadness filling the Reverend's eyes.

EXT. TRAIN -- DAY

The SHRIEK of a train whistle, as the locomotive steams toward
America's heartland.

INT. TRAIN -- CONTINUOUS

As Edith reads "The Selected Poems of Rainer Maria Rilke" -
in German - cornfields rush by outside the window.

In the seat across staring a hole right through her is a
large NATIVE AMERICAN MAN with long hair, cowboy duds, and
eyes that have seen too much of the world - this is TILANO,
whom we saw earlier dancing at the Pueblo.

When the east coast train crowd is not chattering about Pearl
Harbor and the war, they're stealing glances at Tilano, who
couldn't look more out of place.

EXT. TRAIN -- CONTINUOUS

As the sun sets in the west the train approaches a station, and we see a sign: "Welcome to Painesville, Ohio".

ON THE STATION PLATFORM

The same emotional scenes are being played out as YOUNG SOLDIERS say goodbye to their families.

A pleasant-looking woman, Edith's AUNT CLARA, 60, waits with a young man who looks like one of her hospital aids.

INT. TRAIN -- CONTINUOUS

The train stops. Edith's window is right in front of her Aunt. Edith DIVES UNDER THE WINDOW. Tilano is amused.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM -- CONTINUOUS

Aunt Clara scours the platform, searching for Edith.

INT. TRAIN -- MOMENTS LATER

Edith's nowhere in sight, but has left her Rilke book on the seat. Aunt Clara approaches, CONDUCTOR in tow. Tilano grabs the book, pretends to read, not realizing it's upside down.

Aunt Clara notices the Xmas fruitcake on the empty seat. She looks at Tilano, stares hard at the book.

AUNT CLARA

Read a lot of German poetry, do you?

TILANO

Can't get enough.

AUNT CLARA (CONT'D)

Upside down and in German?

CONDUCTOR

Where's the woman who was here?

TILANO

She got off.

Aunt Clara recognizes the fruitcake all too well.

TILANO (CONT'D)

I love a good fruitcake, don't you?

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM -- MOMENTS LATER

A confused Aunt Clara on the empty platform. The train leaves.

INT. TRAIN/BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Edith emerges, returns to her seat. The Conductor passes, gives her a look - which Edith avoids.

Tilano hands her book and fruitcake. She smiles sheepishly.

EDITH

Thank you.

He kicks back, tilts his hat over his eyes, dozes.

Hands shaking, heart pounding - Edith stares out the window:

What the hell has she just done?

EXT. TRAIN -- NIGHT

The train disappears into the darkness.

INT. TRAIN -- NEXT MORNING

Edith snaps awake. Looks across the seat - Tilano is gone.

EXT. TRAIN/ROCKY MOUNTAINS -- LATER

The train chugs across a trestle through the spectacular Rockies. On the mountain road below them truckloads of migrant families navigate the steep incline, heading west.

INT. TRAIN/DINING CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Edith enters. The dining car is busy with soldiers and well-dressed men and women having breakfast. In a corner in the back, separated from the rest, is Tilano. Eating alone. The empty seat at his table is the only one left.

She approaches.

EDITH

May I?

Tilano stands, tips his hat. Edith turns - everyone in the car is staring. She sits, opens a book, disappears into it.

Tilano finishes breakfast, takes out a tobacco pouch, rolls a cigarette, glances out the window at the migrant-families struggling to make their way through the difficult terrain.

TILANO

Everybody's lookin' for the 'Promised Land'.

Edith waves at the waiter, who comes up.

EDITH
Where is this train going?

WAITER
San Francisco.

EDITH
San Francisco?

WAITER
By way of LA.

Edith is getting more and more agitated, which the Waiter - with a glance at Tilano - misunderstands.

WAITER (CONT'D)
Ma'am, there's a table opening up in front if you'd like to -

EDITH
Just coffee, please.

The waiter leaves. Edith is nervous, fidgety - she doesn't know what to do with herself. Then she looks over and sees Tilano's staring. Quickly she opens her book and begins reading again. Tilano seals the cigarette with his lips.

TILANO
Ever come out from behind those books?

EDITH
I beg your pardon?

Tilano gives her a look - not worth it. He stands.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Not that you would care, but this is Rainer Maria Rilke - some of the most beautiful poetry ever written!

TILANO
I'm sure she's great.

Edith's about to correct him when he drops coins on the table.

TILANO (CONT'D)
But there's some pretty good poetry going on right outside this window - and you're missin' it.

He tips his hat, and leaves.

Edith opens her book, tries to get back into it, can't - then slides over by the window as the train passes

A MAGNIFICENT WATERFALL IN THE EARLY MORNING MIST

And for the first time in a very long time Edith takes a deep breath. And smiles.

EXT. TRAIN/DESERT -- LATER

The train steams its way through the New Mexico desert.

INT. SEAT/TRAIN -- LATER

Edith returns to her seat. Tilano is digging in his valise for something; papers scatter onto the floor. Edith retrieves them: they're flyers for a Wild West Show. In French.

EDITH

(reading)

"Danses sacrées de l'Ouest Américain
par Authentique Sauvages"

TILANO

Never did learn the damn language.

EDITH

(translating)

"Sacred Dances of the American West
by Authentic Savages"?

TILANO

That would be me.

(off her look)

We were outside Paris when Pearl
Harbor was bombed. They canceled
the tour and sent us home.

He finally finds what he's digging for: a beautifully engraved SILVER FLASK - which Edith admires the artistry of.

TILANO (CONT'D)

A gift from a lady. She'd never seen
(French accent)

"A real live In-jun" before.

He takes a long pull from the flask. Offers Edith, who declines. He takes another pull.

EDITH

You toured Europe in a Wild West
Show?

TILANO

Many times. Ever been?

EDITH

Only in books.

Tilano glances out the window - the train approaches a station. He closes the suitcase. Stands. WHISPERS SOMETHING IN TEWA. Edith doesn't understand.

EDITH (CONT'D)

What?

TILANO

It's our language, Tewa. Rough translation: whatever it is you're looking for, I hope it finds you.

EDITH

I'm not looking for anything.

TILANO

We're all either lookin'-for or hidin'-from.

(a final swig)

Some of us are doing both.

The train stops. Tilano hides the flask under his shirt, grabs his suitcase, tips his hat to the lady, leaves.

As people get on and off the train Edith takes a moment to contemplate her next move. Suddenly she hears

NEW CONDUCTOR (O.S.)

Tickets please?!

The NEW CONDUCTOR is standing above her. Edith hands him her ticket, which he stares at it.

NEW CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)

Madame...?

EDITH

How much is the fare to Los Angeles?

NEW CONDUCTOR

\$97.25 additional.

A beat. The conductor is checking her out pretty seriously. Likes what he sees. She holds up the Christmas tin.

EDITH

Can I interest you in a fruitcake?

He smiles. His voice gets very quiet:

NEW CONDUCTOR

That's not exactly what I had in mind.

EXT. STATION PLATFORM -- CONTINUOUS

As the train pulls away the platform is empty - except for Edith and her suitcase.

She looks around: nothing but cactus and sagebrush as far as the eye can see and a huge sun screaming down across it all.

WHERE THE HELL IS SHE?

She notices Tilano driving off in an old truck, a couple of women and a teenage boy with him.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Miss Culpepper!

A WHITE MAN in his late twenties hurries toward Edith.

WHITE MAN
You have no idea how good it is to see you!

He looks her over - likes what *he* sees. Takes her suitcase.

WHITE MAN (CONT'D)
I'm afraid the boys' reading and writing skills have fallen into an almost permanent state of disrepair.
(extends a hand)
Alistar Duncan, headmaster. I also teach political science at the school.

EDITH
I'm not Miss Culpepper.

DUNCAN
You're not Miss Culpepper?

EDITH
I'm not Miss Culpepper.

He drops her suitcase with a THUD and races to the other end of the platform, searching for his Miss Culpepper.

Edith looks back for Tilano - he's gone. Duncan returns.

DUNCAN
I thought for sure our new english teacher was coming today.

EDITH
Where am I?

He points to the sign above the platform: "LAMY".

EDITH (CONT'D)
Lamy...Where's Lamy?

EXT. CAR/ROAD -- LATER

Duncan's Ford, top-down, drives from Santa Fe to Los Alamos.

DUNCAN

The train back east is not for another
two weeks.

EDITH

Is there someplace I can stay?

DUNCAN

So you've never been to New Mexico...?

As if on cue the land becomes more green, snow-capped mountains appear out of nowhere - Edith, awed by the beauty, has entered a magical new world.

They pass a sign: 'San Ildefonso Indian Reservation'. Edith takes note.

EXT. CAR/OTOWI BRIDGE -- MOMENTS LATER

As they cross the tiny Otowi bridge over the Rio Grande, Edith sees a little house set back from the road with an OLD GAS PUMP in front. Duncan pulls off the road, notices a pile of boxes/mail in a snow-bank by the side of the house.

INT. FRONT ROOM/HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Edith follows Duncan in - the place is filthy, littered with empty cans and bottles. A total dump. Makes her flesh crawl just to be in there.

DUNCAN

Shorty?
(No answer)
Shorty?!

While he pokes his head into other rooms, Edith glances around the front room: walls cracking, floorboards coming apart, the broken-down remains of a fireplace. Duncan returns.

There's an OLD RADIO on the mantle. Duncan turns the knob, nothing. Gives it a RAP. Nada. Looks at the abandoned house.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

I was afraid this might happen.

EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE/CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Duncan loads the soggy mail into the back seat of his car.

DUNCAN

Fourth caretaker we've had this year.

EXT. PAJARITO PLATEAU -- MOMENTS LATER

The bluest sky, the whitest clouds - Edith rebuttons the collar of her overcoat against the drop in temperature as the old Ford climbs the steep hill toward Los Alamos.

EXT. LOS ALAMOS -- A LITTLE LATER

They enter the sleepy mountain town of Los Alamos. Country stores bearing Xmas lights dot Main Street. Boys in uniform play around the duck pond in the center of town.

DUNCAN

Our Christmas holiday just began,
most of the boys and many of the
faculty have gone home.

EXT. GUEST LODGE -- CONTINUOUS

They pull up in front of the guest lodge of the exclusive Los Alamos Boys' School, the town's primary industry.

INT. GUEST LODGE/LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Duncan, carrying her suitcase, leads Edith through the lobby of this classic A-frame mountain lodge - which is complete with holiday decorations and a roaring fire in the fireplace.

INT. ROOM/LODGE -- CONTINUOUS

Edith unpacks her suitcase in the small furnished room, doing her best not to encourage Duncan, who stands in the doorway.

DUNCAN

Will you be comfortable here?

EDITH

Yes. Thank you.

Edith sets some books and a SILVER-FRAMED PHOTO of her and her mother on the dresser. Duncan is still lurking. Finally:

DUNCAN

Join us for dinner?

INT. DINING HALL/LODGE -- EVENING

A dozen staff members hold hands, say grace. Edith sneaks a peek around the dinner table - Duncan is staring. She manages a smile and looks away.

EXT. MAIN STREET/TOWN -- DAY

They stroll through town. It's more than clear Duncan is smitten with her. It's just as clear she's not with him.

INT. LOBBY/LODGE -- EVENING

Edith is on the telephone in the corner of the lobby.

EDITH

I'll write Aunt Clara and explain.
No, I'm fine. It's beautiful here!

Duncan passes, sees her on the phone, stops. Suddenly Edith wells with emotion, gives Duncan a look - he moves on.

EDITH (CONT'D)

Father, don't talk to me like I'm a
child - I'm *fine*. Love you, too.

She hangs up. Dazed, sad, lost.

EXT. HEADMASTER'S HOUSE -- MAGIC HOUR

A beautiful mountain home covered in Xmas lights.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

At a HOLIDAY PARTY in Duncan's house Edith tries to make small talk with a gaggle of middle-aged TOWNSLADIES. She couldn't look more uncomfortable or out of place.

EXT. HEADMASTER'S BACK PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Duncan leads Edith out onto the huge back porch.

DUNCAN

It looked like you needed saving.

He watches as she admires the beautifully-crafted porch, with its gorgeous view of the woods and the sunset.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Nice, huh?

EDITH

Magnificent.

A beat. He has something on his mind.

DUNCAN

Listen, I'm not very good at these
sorts of things, but - I mean, I'm
not such a bad fellow, am I?

EDITH

No, Mr. Duncan.

DUNCAN
I realize we haven't known each other
very long.

EDITH
We don't know each other at all.

DUNCAN
But I was thinking...

Edith notices Tilano from the train ON HORSEBACK in the woods.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
How would you feel if you and I -

She hurries down the back porch steps.

THE WOODS BEHIND THE HOUSE

Edith approaches Tilano, excited to see a familiar face.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Hello again!

His horse SHIES UP, scaring her. She backs away.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Remember me? From the train!

TILANO
(wry smile)
The fruitcake lady.

Edith grins. A RABBIT scampers by and THWUMP! - is stopped
dead by an arrow. Edith's grin turns to horror.

Adam, 17 - from the train station - Tilano's son and a cherub-
faced, strapping young man, retrieves his bloody catch.

Down from the house comes a very angry Duncan.

DUNCAN
HEY!

Adam adds his catch to others on the back of his horse.

DUNCAN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
How many times have I told you
people?!

The boy jumps on the back of Tilano's horse and they're gone.

Edith tries to catch her breath. Her heart is racing.

EXT. LARGE ADOBE/SAN ILDEFONSO PUEBLE - NEXT MORNING

Duncan's Ford is parked in front of a sign that reads: 'Tribal Government'.

DUNCAN (O.S.)
Right in front of the lady from
Philadelphia!

INT. LARGE ADOBE -- CONTINUOUS

Duncan, holding forth in front of a tribunal which includes Tilano, points to Edith, who sits in back.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Scared the poor woman to death!

Edith is embarrassed. The oldest of the tribunal, IGNACIO, 70, looks out at her.

IGNACIO
We are sorry, Madame.

EDITH
It's fine.

DUNCAN
I'm afraid 'Sorry' is no longer good
enough!

TILANO
What would you suggest, Mr. Duncan?

DUNCAN
Keep your people off school property.
Or I will.

Duncan turns back to Edith. She's gone.

EXT. MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO -- CONTINUOUS

Edith strolls, captivated by the daily business of the Pueblo - it's as if she's wandered into another century.

FROM EDITH'S POV

Men skin animals, chop firewood; women pull fresh bread from bee-hive ovens, try to salvage what's left of their dried-out gardens; children scare crows, carry water, or just play gleefully in the hot sun.

A young boy and girl follow her, giggling and whispering in their native TEWA to each other about Edith, who stops

IN FRONT OF AN OLD ADOBE

Where a tiny, serious-looking woman, MARIA, 54, is finishing a clay pot. On one side of her a young helper is pulling a BLACK POT out of a fire; on the other side of Maria her husband JULIAN, 44, paints on a finished pot.

ON THE BLACK POT

He paints a SNAKE-LIKE line that looks like a lightning bolt.

EDITH

What is that?

JULIAN

Avanyu.

As Edith watches, completely mesmerized by this process, it's clear her presence is annoying the hell out of Maria.

EDITH

What is Avanyu?

Julian looks at Maria, who bristles. Julian goes back to work. Edith realizes she's asked one too many questions.

She turns - the young girl and boy are still following her. Edith reaches behind the girl's ear, produces a PIECE OF CANDY, hands it to her. She then does the same magic trick with the boy, who is equally surprised and delighted.

TILANO(O.S.)

Sent by the Sun Gods!

Edith turns again - it's Tilano and Adam on separate horses. Tilano points to her blonde hair.

TILANO (CONT'D)

They've never seen such hair before.

EDITH

And I thought it was the candy.

TILANO

Candy helps.

Again, the horses make her nervous. She backs off.

TILANO (CONT'D)

This is my son, Adam. I'm Tilano.

EDITH

I'm Edith.

Very formally - and awkwardly - she extends her hand. First Adam shakes it, then Tilano - who points at the potters.

TILANO

I see you met my famous cousins.
 (off her look)
 Maria and Julian Martinez - their
 pottery is known all over the world.

EDITH

I don't think she likes me.

TILANO

What a surprise.

EDITH

What's Avanyu?

Tilano sees Duncan's car approaching. To Edith:

TILANO

We're going to Tsirege.

Duncan pulls up alongside where Maria is working.

DUNCAN

Shorty's gone!

Maria never looks up, doesn't stop working.

MARIA

So?

DUNCAN

So it's your house. I can't have our
 mail sitting out in the snow!

MARIA

Read the lease. Your mail is not my
 problem.

Duncan's frustration is reaching its boiling point.

TILANO

(to Edith)
 Are you coming?

EDITH

(to Tilano)
 What's Tsirege?

TILANO

Where Avanyu lives.

DUNCAN

Edith, we have to get back to town!

Edith would love to go with Tilano, but is torn. Finally:

EDITH

Tomorrow?

Duncan bristles.

TILANO

Early.

EDITH

How early?

EXT. TSIREGE - DAWN

As the SUN RISES over the mountains in the east and Tilano's truck is parked on the dirt road far below, he and Edith hike up into the ancestral hills known as Tsirege.

Edith's struggling - she's still half-asleep, and is neither dressed right nor has the stamina for a hike at this elevation. But she's a trooper.

As they ascend, the ROCK ART along the path becomes more and more sophisticated and an odd sensation begins to over-take Edith - she is waking up, slowing down. Tsirege seems to relax her.

In contrast, Tilano seems tense, pre-occupied - he discreetly takes a pull from his flask, then tucks it away.

Edith squats and looks at one large stone - drawings, petroglyphs of bird men, rabbits, hands, and medicine wheels - are etched into it.

TILANO

Everything has a voice. Tells a story.

He walks on. She points to a rock which has an elaborate drawing of a circle surrounded by dots.

EDITH (CONT'D)

What is this saying?

TILANO

You tell me.

EDITH

How would I know?

She stands in front of that TOWERING ROCK WALL on which is a drawing of a PLUMED SERPENT like the one on Maria's pot.

Edith is intrigued.

A tense Adam rides up on horseback. To Edith:

ADAM
Good morning.

EDITH
Good morning.

There's clearly great tension between father and son.

ADAM
(to Tilano)
We're not finished.

TILANO
I said everything I needed to say.

Adam gets off his horse.

ADAM
Please?!

Reluctantly, Tilano follows his son down the trail to talk.

Edith steps closer to the rock wall, mesmerized - as though the wall was calling to her.

THE ROCK STARTS COME ALIVE

Like an OCEAN stirring with energy - and suddenly

OUT OF THAT OCEAN

springs the PLUMED SERPENT, AVANYU - enormous, terrifying - LEAPING OUT at Edith. Who is dumbstuck.

EDITH'S EYES

are filled with the image of this creature, as alive and real as the earth beneath her. BUT SHE IS NOT AFRAID. She has no idea how or why but she knows this creature and this creature knows her.

Edith doesn't move. Doesn't utter a sound.

And like that - the creature returns to its ocean, the ocean becomes the rock wall, and AVANYU is but an etching across the face of the rock.

And now the fear does start to creep into her eyes: what just happened? Is she really losing her mind?

Tilano and Adam return, in mid-argument.

TILANO

I said no and that's final!

ADAM

Then I'll just wait till I'm 18 and
it won't matter what you say!

Edith watches as Tilano raises his hand, is about to HIT his son, but stops. Adam doesn't flinch.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Go ahead - you stupid old drunk! I
wish you never came back here!

This cuts Tilano. Deeply. He tries a different tack.

TILANO

It's the white man's war - not ours.

ADAM

We're American, aren't we?

TILANO

You're not enlisting!

ADAM

What if I'm drafted?

TILANO

You won't be drafted!

ADAM

What if I am?!

A beat. Tilano is done with this conversation.

TILANO

There's work to do at home.

Adam doesn't move.

TILANO (CONT'D)

GO!

Adam climbs on his horse, rides off. Tilano pulls out his flask, takes a couple of long slugs. He walks back toward Edith, who's still standing in front of the rock wall - as if in a dream.

EDITH

(re: Adam)

Is he okay?

TILANO

You wanted to know about Avanyu -
The Plumed Serpent? That's him.

Edith can't believe it - that's exactly what she just saw!

EDITH

Is it supposed to be good or evil?

TILANO

To our people Avanyu is the guardian
of water, a preserver of life.

She is still in a daze.

TILANO (CONT'D)

You look like you've seen a ghost.

Edith doesn't know what to make of any of this. Tilano shakes
his head and takes another drink, still upset about his son.

TILANO (CONT'D)

We should get back.

EXT. LOS ALAMOS - MAIN STREET -- MORNING

As Tilano's beat-up old truck drives through town Edith
notices MEN IN DARK SUITS, as well as MEN IN MILITARY
UNIFORMS, pointing at various locations around town.

EXT. GUEST LODGE - CONTINUOUS

The truck pulls up to the Lodge, Duncan's Ford parked in
front. He's helping an attractive young woman with luggage.

INT. TILANO'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Tilano's still a little concerned about Edith.

TILANO

You okay?

EDITH

I'm fine.

EXT. FRONT OF LODGE - CONTINUOUS

Edith gets out and Tilano drives away. Duncan approaches.

DUNCAN

I was wondering when you'd get back.

Edith, still shaken by her vision at Tsirege, notices HER
SUITCASE is packed and sitting by the curb.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Edith Warner, meet our new English teacher, Miss Cecilia Culpepper.

MISS CULPEPPER, 27, is pretty, polished, doesn't have the wild spirit Edith does - and wouldn't want it.

MISS CULPEPPER

Very nice to meet you.

Edith shakes her hand. Duncan points to the lodge.

DUNCAN

Miss Culpepper - someone will show you to your room.

She leaves. Edith, who's getting very agitated - first Avanyu, now getting kicked out of her room - turns to Duncan.

EDITH

Is there someplace else?

EXT. HOUSE BY THE BRIDGE - LATER

Duncan's Ford is parked in front.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The same disaster of a place.

DUNCAN

I'll get somebody permanent after the first of the year, but if you'd like to stay till then - I'll pay you 25 dollars plus whatever you can make from the gas.

EDITH

When's the last time this place got cleaned?

DUNCAN

The well's out back, along with the 'facilities'...The Chili Line comes twice a week, just keep our mail in a safe place until someone comes down from the hill to get it.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Edith stands outside the front door watching as Duncan's Ford ascends the hill toward Los Alamos.

Edith looks around: the mid-day sun is warm, the air is cool, there's nothing but blue skies for as far as she can see - but she's a speck against the vast landscape.

And she's afraid. Very afraid.

INT. KITCHEN -- A LITTLE LATER

Edith checks the cupboards, which are bare but for various canned goods, a jar of coffee, a bag of flour, a sack of grain. Next to the wood-burning stove is a single pot and pan. Filthy.

She opens a drawer - there's a rusted old gun and a box of bullets inside. She picks up the gun - she's never actually handled a real one, even an old relic like this.

She opens another drawer - a CONGREGATION OF LIZARDS comes flying out - she SCREAMS! The lizards disappear through a hole in the kitchen door. Edith bolts from the kitchen -

INT. FRONT ROOM/HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Into the front room where the door won't close. Edith tries several times, the damn thing still won't close properly. All the fear and frustration reach their boiling point and, with all her might - she SLAMS the door closed. The walls rattle, the floor quakes.

ON THE MANTLE

The old radio LIGHTS UP, POPS ON - and issuing from it loud and clear is The Andrew Sisters', "Boogie-Woogie Bugle Boy"

IN THE FRONT ROOM

Edith doesn't know whether to laugh or cry. But suddenly the little house is full of MUSIC...

ANDREW SISTERS

"He was a famous trumpet man from
out Chicago way/He had a boogie style
that no one else could play..."

EXT. WELL/BACK OF HOUSE -- MONTAGE

Edith cranks up a bucket of water from the well.

ANDREW SISTERS

"He was the top man at his craft..."

IN THE FRONT ROOM

She scrubs the walls and floor.

ANDREW SISTERS (CONT'D)

"But then his number came up and he was gone with the draft..."

IN THE KITCHEN

Cleans and scrubs everything.

ANDREW SISTERS (CONT'D)

"He's in the army now, a-blowin' reveille..."

OUTHOUSE/BACK OF HOUSE

Likewise. Only now Edith is singing along.

EDITH/ANDREW SISTERS

"He's the boogie woogie bugle boy of Company B..."

EXT. GAS PUMP/FRONT OF HOUSE -- NEXT DAY

She cleans and oils the creaky old gas pump.

EDITH/ANDREW SISTERS

"A-toot, a-toot, a-toot-diddelyada-toot..."

She tries it - amazingly, it works.

EDITH/ANDREW SISTERS (CONT'D)

"He blows it eight-to-the-bar, in boogie rhythm..."

EXT. SAME -- A LITTLE LATER

She hammers a sign to the top of the pump: "GAS". Only problem is, there's nothing and no one in sight.

EDITH/ANDREW SISTERS

"He can't blow a note unless the bass and guitar is playin' with him..."

TOOL SHED/BACK OF HOUSE

She finds an old wooden table and chair.

EDITH/ANDREW SISTERS (CONT'D)

"He makes the company jump..."

SIDE OF HOUSE

She fills her arms from a dwindling wood-pile.

EDITH/ANDREW SISTERS (CONT'D)
 "When he plays reveille...

KITCHEN

She lights the wood-burning stove. Boils water for rice.
 Takes a can of beans from the cupboard.

EDITH/ANDREW SISTERS (CONT'D)
 "He's the boogie woogie bugle boy of
 Company B...

FRONT ROOM

She lights a small fire in what's left of the fireplace.

FRONT ROOM

Dinner for one at the table by the FIRE - as she quietly
 HUMS the song to herself.

FRONT ROOM

Which is now cold, the house dark, the wind HOWLING. The old
 radio plays only STATIC.

IN THE BEDROOM

The photo of her mother is on the dresser as the exhausted
 Edith, under a pile of blankets - curls up against the cold.

INT. HOUSE/BEDROOM -- PRE-DAWN

A window pane BREAKS - Edith snaps awake. Someone is trying
 to get into the house.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Edith scrambles into the dark kitchen, opens a drawer, grabs
 the gun, but is so nervous she drops it and BANG! - it goes
 off. A moment later the footsteps are running away.

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Edith reaches the window in time to see A MAN IN A PORKPIE
 HAT ON HORSEBACK disappear into the canyon.

She looks around the house, takes a deep breath, summons up
 what's left of her German-Irish will - flips on the RADIO:

RADIO ANNOUNCER
 "And here she is, chosen radio's
 outstanding new star of 1941, ladies
 and gentlemen - Miss Dinah Shore!

IN THE KITCHEN

Coffee on, Edith pulls raisin scones from the oven - as she SINGS along with the radio and Dinah Shore:

EDITH/DINAH SHORE

"A merry American Christmas...

IN THE TOOLSHED

She finds a beat-up old ROCKING CHAIR in the toolshed -

EDITH/DINAH SHORE (CONT'D)

"That's what we're wishing you...

BY THE GAS PUMP

Which she sits in, reading, next to the pump and beneath the sign that now reads "CHEAP Gas".

EDITH/DINAH SHORE (CONT'D)

"It's just great we can celebrate...

Edith stops, closes the book. Blue skies, warm sun - the mountains in the distance are snow-capped and beautiful.

EDITH/DINAH SHORE (CONT'D)

"Under a sky of blue...

Edith is getting a short break from her anxiety when she hears TOOT! TOOT!

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS -- CONTINUOUS

A small train of the Denver-Rio Grande Railroad - the 'Chili-Line' - stops at the tracks across the road from the house. Edith crosses toward the tracks and waves at the trainman.

EDITH

Good morning!

The TRAINMAN is taken aback when he sees Edith.

TRAINMAN

Where's Shorty?

EDITH

There's coffee and fresh raisin scones
if you'd like to -

The trainman tosses Edith a huge sack of mail that knocks her on her butt.

DINAH SHORE
 (on the radio)
 "A merry American Christmas..."

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE -- LATER

Edith drags the last of the freight to the house.

DINAH SHORE (CONT'D)
 "The holiday's begun..."

Exhausted, she leans against one of the crates as Duncan -
 with a couple of hunky MIGRANT WORKMEN - pulls up.

DINAH SHORE (CONT'D)
 "This is the time for peace on
 earth..."

The workmen load the last of the boxes and crates into the
 back of the school truck.

DINAH SHORE (CONT'D)
 "Goodwill to everyone!"

Duncan approaches and Edith perks up.

DUNCAN
 How you making out?

EDITH
 Great! How about some coffee? I've
 baked some raisin scones that -

DUNCAN
 Scones?!

EDITH
 (to the workmen)
 Guys - how 'bout some scones?

Duncan can't help but smile at her naivete. These guys have
 no clue what a scone is. He steps closer. Softer:

DUNCAN
 Listen, we're having Midnight Mass
 at the church in town tonight. I'd
 be happy to drive down later and -

EDITH
 What about Miss Culpepper?

DUNCAN
 What about her? As I said, I'd be
 happy to come, pick you up, and bring
 you home later if you'd like to -

EDITH
Thanks. I'll be fine.

DUNCAN
I just thought if you didn't want to
be alone on -

Edith looks at him and he finally gets it: she's not
interested. There's a moment between them, then

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Merry Christmas.

EDITH
And to you.

Duncan and the workmen jump in the truck and zoom off.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Edith sleeps, the gun beside her. Over

A MONTAGE OF THE FOLLOWING WEEK

We hear on the RADIO...

FDR
"The year 1941 has brought upon our
Nation a war of aggression..."

BY THE RIVER

Edith walks along the Rio Grande, picking wildflowers.

FDR (CONT'D)
"The new year of 1942..."

KITCHEN

As Edith prepares a meal we notice the kitchen has been so
cleaned up it is barely recognizable from a week ago.

FDR (CONT'D)
"Calls for the courage and the
resolution..."

FRONT ROOM

Those WILDFLOWERS sit in a glass of water on her table as
she eats dinner alone, the old radio her only company.

FDR (CONT'D)
"Of old and young to help..."

GAS PUMP

She rocks and reads - still nothing and no one in sight.

FDR (CONT'D)

"Win a world struggle in order that
we may preserve all we hold dear."

SIDE OF HOUSE

She fills her arms with firewood and hears - at the Pueblo
in the distance - the SOUNDS of DANCING and CHANTING.

It only makes her feel more alone.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

"5,4,3,2,1...HAPPY NEW YEAR!

As we hear strains of Auld Lang Syne -

IN THE BEDROOM

Edith lays in bed, staring at the gun. The isolation and
loneliness is crushing her.

EXT. GAS PUMP -- NEXT MORNING

Edith is back in her rocking chair, reading. Out of nowhere
a thin white MAN IN A PORKPIE HAT ON HORSEBACK - whom we now
recognize as Oppie from the opening - comes riding up.

OPPIE

Good morning. Happy New Year!
(re the house)
Do you own that house?

A very edgy Edith fumbles for something under her blanket.

EDITH

Why?

OPPIE

Forgive me, I thought it was
abandoned. I was out for a ride the
other morning and accidentally -

Edith pulls the gun from under the blankets - he's stunned.

OPPIE (CONT'D)

Hold on.

BEEP! BEEP! A young couple in a convertible turns off the
highway and heads toward her and the pump. Edith is at once
relieved and ecstatic - her first customers!

EDITH
 (to Oppie)
 You better move along.

OPPIE
 I wanted to pay for the window I
 broke.

EDITH
 NOW!

He gallops off. Edith tucks the gun back in her sweater as
 the car pulls up and the YOUNG MAN hops out.

YOUNG MAN
 Are you open?

EDITH
 Are you kidding? Happy New Year!

YOUNG MAN
 Happy New Year. Can we get some gas?

EDITH
 You can have all the gas in the world!

YOUNG MAN
 A tank will do. You out here alone?

With a relieved glance toward Oppie, who has disappeared
 into the canyon.

EDITH
 Just me and the lizards.

The gas tank is in back. The man unscrews the cap, Edith
 removes the hose from the pump - it's heavy, ungainly.

YOUNG MAN
 Allow me?

EDITH
 Thank you so much.

He takes the hose from her, inserts it into the tank, goes
 to the pump and begins cranking. Edith smiles at the woman.

EDITH (CONT'D)
 Where you folks from?

YOUNG MAN (O.S.)
 Don't move.

There's A GUN in her back. He reaches into her sweater pocket,
 takes her gun.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)
Where's the till?

EDITH
You're my first customers.

YOUNG MAN
(to the woman)
Check the house.

The woman leaps from the car, runs into the house. Edith tries to get her breath.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)
I said, DON'T MOVE!

Edith freezes. The woman comes back out of the house with the OLD RADIO in her arms.

YOUNG WOMAN
What a dump! You gotta be nuts, lady,
to live out here by yourself.
(to the man)
I found this.

Edith reacts as the woman puts the radio in the back seat.

YOUNG MAN
Should be worth something.

YOUNG WOMAN
And this.

She shows her partner the silver frame with the photo in it. The man finishes cranking the gas, replaces the cap and, with the gun still on Edith, gets back in the car.

As the car pulls away the woman takes the photo out of the frame and flings it back at Edith.

Edith walks over, picks up the photo of her mother, wipes away the dirt. Fights back the tears.

INT. FRONT ROOM/HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

There's a note addressed to "Mr. Duncan" on the mantle - Edith has emptied the fireplace, packed up the house etc.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Edith has emptied the closet, is busy squeezing clothes and books and things into her suitcase. She checks her watch.

EXT. GAS PUMP/FRONT OF HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

HORSE HOOVES...Tilano is walking his horse across the road. He ties his horse to the post by the gas pump, heads toward the house. Knocks on the front door.

TILANO

Hello...

INT. FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The front door is open. He comes in.

TILANO

Anybody home?!

EDITH (O.S.)

In here!

TILANO

I heard there was this crazy white woman living by herself at Otowi Bridge.

Tilano crosses into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

He sees the kitchen's been transformed. There's coffee and a plate of scones on the counter. He calls out to her:

TILANO

Can I help myself?

No response.

TILANO (CONT'D)

Don't mind if I do.

He does.

INT. BEDROOM/HOUSE -- A LITTLE LATER

While Edith continues to cram things in her suitcase, Tilano sips coffee on the edge of the bed, the scones beside him.

EDITH

You sure don't mind taking me?

TILANO

What's your hurry?

EDITH

The train comes every two weeks and today's the day!

Edith flies out of the room. Tilano takes a scone, bangs it on the metal edge of the bed - hard as a rock. He sips his coffee as Edith returns, her arms full of things to pack.

TILANO
Good coffee. Strong.

EDITH
Been on the stove since Christmas.

TILANO
The Indian way.

Edith jams everything in, squeezes the suitcase shut.

EDITH
Let's go!

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

As Edith hurries across the room the suitcase explodes open, her stuff spilling everywhere.

She gets on her hands and knees, frantically picking stuff up. Tilano sits on the remnants of the fireplace, grinning.

EDITH
I'm glad you find this amusing.

She picks up clothes, jams them in the suitcase.

TILANO
What's your hurry?

EDITH
IT'S THE ONLY TRAIN!

Like a woman possessed Edith crams her stuff in and closes the damn suitcase. It POPS open. She closes it again. It POPS open again. Something or someone will not let Edith go.

Tilano stifles another grin. Edith tries one last time and, with all her might, she squeezes the suitcase shut. FINALLY.

It POPS open. And with it the tears she's been holding back. Tilano removes the RED BANDANA he wears around his neck, and gives it to her to wipe her eyes.

TILANO
Took us 700 years to make this place
a home. You've had three weeks!

EDITH

No, it's me - I can't seem to...I mean, I've tried to do good, tried to be strong - but it's just so...

She can't say it.

TILANO

Lonely.

She looks away. Her silence says it all.

TILANO (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Then stop doing it alone!

This hits a nerve. Edith looks up at him.

TILANO (CONT'D)

You white folks have no shame in grabbing up any land you want and saying it's yours. But to ask a friend for help...

He crosses to the front door and opens it.

TILANO (CONT'D)

So - what do you say?

She doesn't know what to say. He waves outside - and in walks Adam, carrying tools. Followed by Tilano's mother Sayah, his sisters Queba, Oqua, their husbands Joe and Chai - with rugs, curtains, eating n'cooking utensils, fresh vegetables...

Edith is astonished. In the distance a train whistle.

Her train.

EXT. TEST-SITE/ALAMOGORDO -- NIGHT

SUPER-IMPOSE: JULY 16, 1945 - 1:35AM

Baker, Oppie, and General Groves stand in the POURING RAIN, staring at the TOWER in which THE ATOMIC BOMB is suspended.

OPPIE

The worst drought in New Mexico in years and it has to end tonight.

An ASSISTANT rushes up.

ASSISTANT

General, the Secretary of War's on the line. He wants to know if it's a cancel.

GROVES

(to himself, mostly)

Truman's in Potsdam with Churchill
and Stalin. We've got no leverage
with the Russians until he hears
from us.

LIGHTNING crackles in the sky. Baker takes Oppie aside.

BAKER

You cannot send men up on that tower
in a lightning storm.

Oppie nods. He and Baker approach Groves.

OPPIE

What about the weather, General?

GROVES

What about it?

BAKER

We cannot send men up there in this -
the risk is too great!

GROVES

That won't be a problem, Professor,
because...

(railing at the sky)

I FORBID THIS WEATHER TO CONTINUE!

EXT. MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO -- CONTINUOUS

As the rain comes down, Tilano and his friends continue to
dance in the main plaza and, in a circle around them, the
other members of the Pueblo CELEBRATE the end of the drought.

Suddenly Tilano stops, listens, sniffs - there's been a shift.
He stares up at the sky, and a worried look creeps across
his face: for all the joy and relief from the rain - something
else is going on, something ominous is in the air.

EXT. CAVE/TSIREGE/ANCESTRAL SITE - CONTINUOUS

The rain is still coming down in buckets.

INT. CAVE - TSIREGE - CONTINUOUS

Tilano's RED BANDANA - along with the rest of Edith's clothing -
is drying over the small fire in the cave.

Wrapped only in a blanket, Edith has emptied the contents of
her chamois bag and laid it out in front of her almost as an
ALTAR: in addition to the CRUCIFIX, there's an EAGLE FEATHER,

a small writing book with pencil, and a NECKLACE WITH A CLEAR MARBLE on the end of it.

A LIZARD

About a foot-long - appears on the cave-wall behind Edith. It stops, checks her out - she doesn't see it - then squirts its way up the wall and out through a hole in the cave.

THE NECKLACE WITH THE CLEAR MARBLE

Edith is staring long and hard at it...

EXT. GAS PUMP/HOUSE - LATE JANUARY, 1942

"COLD DRINKS AND CANDY" reads the new sign above the gas pump. As Edith cranks gas a DARK-EYED LITTLE BOY stares from the back of an old bean-picking truck. She takes candy from her pocket, offers it to the boy, who gobbles it up.

But when Edith goes to collect for the gas, the parents don't have enough. The father is embarrassed, the mother offers Edith a small painted Jesus as compensation - Edith declines, but from the back of the truck the little boy gives her the NECKLACE WITH THE CLEAR MARBLE on the end of it.

Edith is touched, but before she can give it back to him the truck drives off. She opens the cigar box by the pump - which has some coins and bills in it, but is mostly filled with talismen, hand-painted stones, crucifixes etc.

She drops the necklace in.

EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Duncan's Ford - as well as other cars - are parked on the side of the house where Adam splits wood. Edith approaches.

EDITH

How 'bout some lunch?

Ax in hand, Adam seems far away. Edith can see something's wrong. She steps closer.

EDITH (CONT'D)

What is it?

(no response)

News from your father?

ADAM

(sore subject)

Last we heard they were performing again in San Francisco.

The ax comes down hard on a log, wood chips flying. Finally:

ADAM (CONT'D)

I was drafted.

Edith takes in the news like a mother would. Quieter:

EDITH

You said you wanted to go.

The ax comes down hard again on a log, wood chips flying.

ADAM

I did say that, didn't I?

HONK! HONK! A new customer pulls up to the gas pump. Adam slams the ax into another log.

ADAM (CONT'D)

I'll get it.

EXT. HOUSE/FRONT DOOR SIGN - MOMENTS LATER

Edith approaches the house and we see there's a small, hand-painted sign above the door: "TEA ROOM".

INT. HOUSE/FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Edith enters and, as she immediately starts cleaning up, we see the whole front room has been transformed: there are curtains, rugs, a fire in the rebuilt fireplace, Native American art on the walls, bookshelves lined with her books.

Linen tablecloths cover tables, each table has a candle and tea set on it - and the tables are filled with customers.

AT ONE OF THE TABLES

"THE FINAL SOLUTION" blares the headline of the New York 'Times' Duncan reads as he and Miss Culpepper have tea n'cake.

DUNCAN

Amazing - at the Wannsee conference in Berlin the Nazis concluded the solution to the "Jewish Problem" is relocation and extermination.

MISS CULPEPPER

Don't dangle your participle.

Miss Culpepper is also reading a newspaper.

MISS CULPEPPER (CONT'D)

The Japanese just invaded Singapore.

He puts down his paper.

DUNCAN

Did I dangle?

She puts down the paper, sips her tea.

MISS CULPEPPER

You did, indeed.

OPPIE (O.S.)

Hello?

Oppie is at the front door.

OPPIE (CONT'D)

Remember me?

Edith is surprised to see him. With caution:

EDITH

I do.

OPPIE

I was at a party in Santa Fe and somebody told me there was this very attractive woman who opened a tea room at Otowi Bridge.

He grins sheepishly, takes out some cash, gives it to her.

OPPIE (CONT'D)

For that window I broke. With my sincerest apologies, Miss -

EDITH

Warner. Edith.

OPPIE

I just picked up my friend at the train, we were heading up to Los Alamos and - is it safe to come in?

She smiles, points to an empty table.

EDITH

Please. Mr. -

OPPIE

I'm sorry - Robert Oppenheimer. Friends call me Oppie.

As Oppie takes a seat, standing in her doorway is his friend.

OPPIE (CONT'D)

And this is Nick Baker.

BAKER, 50s, is a blonde, regal-looking Dane - and Edith does a double-take when she sees him: Baker isn't roguish or dapper like Oppie; his is such a kind and gentle face - Edith doesn't know from where or how, but she seems to know this man.

Baker nods shyly. Steps in, joining Oppie at the table.

EDITH

Tea?

OPPIE

That would be lovely.

On her way into the kitchen Edith passes several customers who hand her some money.

CUSTOMER 1

Delicious, Edith.

CUSTOMER 2

Like always.

EDITH

Thank you.

As Baker glances around the tea-room, Oppie catches the pretty Miss Culpepper's eye and smiles. She quickly returns to reading her paper.

Edith comes back in with tea and chocolate cake for both Oppie and Baker.

EDITH (CONT'D)

(re the cake)

I thought you might like something sweet to go with it.

BAKER

No, thank you.

EDITH

(to Oppie)

A peace offering.

OPPIE

You're very kind.

He digs into the cake as Edith pours their tea.

EDITH

Where are you visiting from, Mr. Baker?

Baker hesitates - Oppie jumps in.

OPPIE

My wife and I have a vacation house
in White Rock. I teach at the
University of California.

(re: the cake)

This is real chocolate cake!

EDITH

What were you expecting?

OPPIE

Oh, I don't some tasteless, cowboy
version. I can't get chocolate cake
this good in Berkeley!

He finishes. Baker slides his cake over. Oppie eats his.

EDITH

(to Oppie)

You teach literature?

OPPIE

Physics.

Edith turns to Oppie, nods at Duncan and Miss Culpepper,
still reading their papers.

EDITH

They teach at the Boys' School up on
the Hill.

DUNCAN

Who knows for how much longer.

Duncan lowers his paper, eyes Oppie and Baker suspiciously.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

One hears rumors.

BAKER

(to Miss Culpepper)

Do you love it?

MISS CULPEPPER

Love what?

BAKER

Teaching.

MISS CULPEPPER

You mean trying to convey the
importance of good grammar to a bunch
of snot-nosed seventh-graders?

OPPIE

Best teacher I ever had was my seventh-grade english teacher, Miss Amadea Deutsch. Had a crush on her for years.

MISS CULPEPPER

I guess my kids aren't so lucky.

OPPIE

I guess not.

She bristles. Duncan stands, leaves money on the table.

DUNCAN

We should get back.
(to Edith)
Thank you.

EDITH

My pleasure.

Miss Culpepper gives Oppie a look as she and Duncan leave. Oppie and Baker are the only customers left.

OPPIE

Didn't mean to clear out the place.

Meanwhile, Baker takes in the warm and inviting room - particularly her elaborate book collection on the shelf.

BAKER

Look at this - you've got Goethe, Blake, Shakespeare's Sonnets...

EDITH

I had them shipped from back East. I'd be lost without my books.

BAKER

I understand.

OPPIE

(to Baker)
A little oasis in the middle of the desert, don't you think?

BAKER

Very impressive!

Edith smiles at the recognition. It's been a long time since she could talk books with anyone.

EXT. PUEBLO/KIVA/MAIN PLAZA -- DAWN

Out of the Kiva come men painted with black n'white circles, with red yarn fluttering and foxskins dangling, with collars of fir and feathers dancing on black hair.

There are familiar faces - Ignacio, Julian Martinez, Joe, Chai, and Adam among them - all dancing and singing in a circle, intent on prayer.

IN THE MAIN PLAZA

Edith sits with Tilano's mother Sayah, her daughters, and Maria Martinez. This is their winter ceremony, the holiest day of the year in the Pueblo.

Edith has no idea what's going on and, while she'd love to know, she doesn't want to offend by asking. Sayah seems to understand her predicament.

SAYAH

(a whisper)

It's a prayer for abundance.

Edith doesn't understand.

SAYAH (CONT'D)

When we dance - if our hearts are right - it will come.

A beat, as Edith tries to take this in. Quiet:

EDITH

You must miss Tilano being here.

This is a sore subject for all the women, especially Maria.

MARIA

He's too busy being a "Show Indian".

EDITH

He's got to make a living, right? He supports a lot of people.

An awkward silence. Maria looks at Edith - the woman has a spine, after all. Their voices are all very quiet:

MARIA

The Great Spirit gave Tilano a purpose - he is a dancer, and to our people a dancer is a holy man, a bridge between The Great Spirit and us. When Tilano's wife was taken he got lost in the white man's world. And turned his back on his purpose.

EDITH
At least he has a purpose.

MARIA
Everyone has a purpose.

EDITH
And if you don't know what yours is?

MARIA
You're not listening.

Maria's bluntness cuts Edith to the core. She wants to respond, but can only watch as Maria and the other women close their eyes in prayer while

OUTSIDE THE KIVA

The dancers facing east, Ignacio CALLS to the Great Spirits.

BACK TO EDITH

Who closes her eyes. Suddenly

OUTSIDE THE KIVA

AVANYU, the Plumed Serpent is there, hovering over the circle of dancers like a GIGANTIC STORM CLOUD...

BACK TO EDITH

Her eyes snap open, terrified. Is she hallucinating again?

OUTSIDE THE KIVA

The ceremony continues, there is NO AVANYU, but the SUN IS RISING. Suddenly the -

SOUND OF MILITARY PLANES

Shatters the stillness.

IN THE MAIN PLAZA

The women point, whisper in Tewa. Then Edith sees them - a flock of ARMY TRANSPORTS in the sky.

And in the distance a caravan of MILITARY TRUCKS - slowly climbing the hill toward Los Alamos.

EXT. HOUSE/GAS PUMP/CHIMNEY -- NIGHT

The falling snow covers the "Gas" sign, the locked pump, and gathers on the roof as smoke billows from the chimney.

INT. FIRE/FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

A party is in progress. Around the tables sit Ignacio, Maria and Julian Martinez, Sayah and her daughters, Joe and Ignacio.

At the head of the biggest table sits Adam - in uniform - who leaves in the morning for Europe and the war.

From the kitchen comes Edith with a huge chocolate cake with several candles in the middle. She sets it before Adam, whose mind is elsewhere. A very anxious elsewhere. He's about to blow out the candles:

EDITH

Wait! You have to make a wish.

Adam looks at her, closes his eyes, wishes. As a jug of homemade alcohol is passed among the men, Edith looks at Maria - who nods and smiles her approval to her.

Adam, eyes still closed, is still making a wish. Finally:

JOE

Sometime this week, kid.

CHAI

The cake is turning to wax!

TILANO (O.S.)

He's wishing the war will end before he has to open his eyes.

Everyone turns - Tilano has come in the front door.

Adam open his eyes and - ignoring the candles - gets up to greet Tilano. A moment. Father and son embrace.

A tear slides down Edith's cheek.

EXT. AROUND THE HOUSE -- A FEW MONTHS LATER

As the first signs of Spring come to Otowi Crossing...

AT THE GAS PUMP

Chai pumps gas for a truck full of migrant workers.

ON ONE SIDE OF THE HOUSE

Joe chops wood.

ON ANOTHER SIDE OF THE HOUSE

Sayah, Quebi and Oqua plant a garden.

BY THE FRONT DOOR

Edith instructs Tilano - who's taken over handyman duties.

EDITH

I'm talking about a porch with a railing all the way around so there's enough room to sit and watch a sunset.

Tilano looks pale, out-of-sorts.

TILANO

There are better places to watch a sunset.

EDITH

But a porch is like the arms that invite people into the house.

He mutters, grumbles, shakes his head.

TILANO

A porch is like arms.

Tilano takes his measuring stick and, as he holds it up to the side of the house, Edith sees his hands shaking.

She steps closer and, as she steadies the stick against the house, their HANDS GRAZE EACH OTHER.

For moment he looks at her - with longing, with desire.

All she sees is his vulnerability - and it touches her.

EDITH

(quiet)

Can I get you something? You hungry?

He takes the stick and starts drawing in the dirt where the porch would go.

TILANO

Thirsty is more like it.

EDITH

Where's that silver flask of yours?

TILANO

Funny thing about that silver flask and me. About a month ago we were on the Golden Gate Bridge together and one of us was going over.

A beat. Edith takes it in. Understands.

TILANO (CONT'D)
The damn thing must be halfway to
China by now.

A sad smile washes her face.

EDITH
Can't have too many places to watch
a sunset - right?

They share a look, then she calls to all the folks working
around the house.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Lunch - whenever you're ready!

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Edith comes back in. There's a few people at tables, drinking
coffee, eating cake.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Edith takes a huge pot of soup off the fire, removes a tray
of biscuits from the oven, sets out bowls for her friends to
serve themselves, then crosses back into the front room.

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

As she clears a table in walks Miss Culpepper.

EDITH
Howdy stranger! How are you, Miss
Culpepper?

She flashes a ring.

MISS CULPEPPER
Mrs. Culpepper-Duncan.

EDITH
Really?

Duncan comes in.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Congratulations! We'll have to have
a little celebration!

MRS. CULPEPPER-DUNCAN
We just came to say goodbye.

EDITH
Goodbye?

DUNCAN

The government bought the school.
Then closed it.

Edith is stunned. Joe and Chai come in, heading for the kitchen and lunch.

MRS. CULPEPPER-DUNCAN

I've taken a teaching job in Denver.

DUNCAN

And guess who's been drafted?

EDITH

Oh, no.

DUNCAN

We must really be losing badly.

MISS CULPEPPER

Don't split the infinitive, dear.

DUNCAN

Hey, I'll dangle a particle or split
any damn infinitive I want to!

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

As Tilano continues to measure out a porch and Edith walks Duncan and his wife out, a caravan of construction vehicles lumbers past the house and up the hill toward Los Alamos.

DUNCAN

Things aren't ever going to be the
same around here.

Mrs. Duncan reacts - his grammar is driving her nuts.

MRS. CULPEPPER-DUNCAN

We'll miss the train. Goodbye, Edith.

She goes off to the car. Duncan nods to Tilano.

DUNCAN

Goodbye.

TILANO

My son's over there.

DUNCAN

If I see him, I'll say hello.

Tilano nods, looks at Edith - he can see how upset she is that Duncan is going away.

TILANO

Lunch-time.

He goes inside. Edith and Duncan shake hands.

DUNCAN

Who woulda thunk that that frantic little woman who got off the train that day at Lamy...

EDITH

If it hadn't been for you...

He kisses her sweetly on the cheek.

DUNCAN

Save me some chocolate cake.

EDITH

I will.

She wipes away a tear as he gets in his car. As they drive off, TWO MILITARY CARS pull in. Out of the first car steps OPPIE with GENERAL GROVES whom we saw in the opening.

OPPIE

There she is! Miss Edith Warner...General Leslie Groves.

Edith and the General shake hands.

GROVES

Robert's told me a lot about you.

IN THE OTHER CAR

Several SECURITY OFFICERS and MILITARY POLICE step out.

OPPIE

Edith, do you mind if these guys have a look around the property?

EDITH

Go ahead.

Oppie motions - and the security officers and military police fan out, checking out the area around the house.

INT. HOUSE/FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Groves enters the front room, Edith and Oppie following.

GROVES

Very nice.

Edith points to a table.

EDITH
What can I get you, General?

Re: Tilano and the others eating lunch at another table.

GROVES (CONT'D)
Could we talk privately?

EDITH
I have no secrets from my friends.

GROVES
I do.

Tilano reacts. Groves walks into the kitchen - Edith and Oppie follow.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Groves sees the shelves filled with pots, pans, pottery from the Pueblo. He admires Edith's family china from back east.

GROVES
Haven't seen fine china like this
since my grandmother's house in
Albany.
(grins)
They wouldn't let me near the stuff.

EDITH
It was my mother's.

GROVES
Robert says you're quite the cook.

The kitchen door opens and the SECURITY OFFICERS come in.

SECURITY OFFICER 1
The site is completely secure, Sir.
A well, a toolshed - outdoor
facilities, of course.

The General is grinning. To Oppie:

GROVES
Will your colleagues be willing to -

OPPIE
They'll manage just fine, General.

SECURITY OFFICER 2
The Indian Pueblo owns the land, but
the house itself -

EDITH
Is owned by Maria Martinez, who lives -

SECURITY OFFICER 2
We've gone over the lease.

SECURITY OFFICER 1
I don't see a problem, General.

SECURITY OFFICER 2
Ma'am, what's back there?

EDITH
Just my bedroom.

Security Officer 2 starts toward it when -

OPPIE
Soldier!

Security Officer 2 stops in his tracks.

OPPIE (CONT'D)
Where are your manners?

SECURITY OFFICER 2
I'm sorry, sir.
(to Edith)
Forgive me, Ma'am.

Edith sees Tilano standing in the kitchen doorway, watching.

EDITH
Oppie, what's going on?

OPPIE
I know times are tough, Edith. I had
an idea that might help both of us.

GROVES
Miss Warner, how would you like to
go to work for the United States of
America?

Edith is baffled. She looks at Tilano, who is skeptical.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE -- DUSK - A FEW WEEKS LATER

The sign by the front door now reads: "Tea Room Closed".

Edith stands on her NEW FRONT PORCH as a procession of cars
start pulling up. Stepping out of the first car is Oppie, in
a tie and coat, and his attractive wife, KITTY, 32.

OPPIE

Edith, this is my wife, Kitty.

The two women shake hands.

KITTY

At long last!

(to Edith)

My husband has a terrible crush on you and now I know why.

(to Oppie)

She's gorgeous! Much better-looking than your mistress in Berkeley.

OPPIE

Kitty, you're embarrassing Miss Warner.

KITTY

Oh, I'm sorry. I just meant to embarrass you.

EDITH

(to them)

Please go in.

More car doors open, well-dressed couples step out. Edith greets them as they approach the house.

EDITH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Come in...Come in.

A final car pulls up and two particularly nebbishy men get out: ENRICO FERMI, 41, a short Italian with glasses, and HANS BETHE, 36, a German, also with glasses.

EDITH (CONT'D)

Welcome...

From the back seat of this last car steps Nick Baker, who cleans up very well.

TILANO (O.S.)

Edith, you're needed in the kitchen.

As Baker approaches Edith is again struck by how familiar he looks. She can barely get the words out.

EDITH

Welcome, Mr. Baker.

Baker stops, looks at Edith. Extends his hand.

BAKER

A pleasure to see you again, Miss Warner.

They shake hands awkwardly. Tilano is still in the doorway.

TILANO

Edith!

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

POP! POP! POP! go several champagne bottles. Candlelight, crystal goblets, the tables put together and set elegantly for fifteen - the front room's been transformed yet again - this time into Edith's version of a four-star restaurant.

As champagne is poured, Fermi offers a toast:

FERMI

To Oppie, who promised fun in the sun.

BETHE

The vacation of a lifetime!

As Tilano comes in and begins serving soup, a short Hungarian man, TELLER, 34, stands and offers a more solemn toast:

TELLER

To a most extraordinary gathering.

OPPIE

With a most impossible task.

The young American, WILSON, 20s, is star-struck. He looks around the table in awe. To the young American, Burns, 20s - who's also star-struck - sitting across from him:

WILSON

Can you believe this lineup?

BURNS

I cannot.

WILSON

Murderers' Row *and* The Bronx Bombers.

KITTY

No pun intended.

Nervous giggles around the table. Oppie realizes Tilano is hearing everything. He looks hard at Wilson and Burns, who suddenly get the message.

WILSON

I don't know what the Yankees are going to do now that Dimaggio has been drafted?

BURNS

Ted Williams *enlisted*.

A brainy young Brit, CHADWICK, 20s, pours more champagne for his pal, COMPTON, 20s, another brainy young Brit.

CHADWICK

Here we go again.

Wilson's from the New York, Burns from Boston - this is a debate that never ends.

WILSON

56 games in a row - Splendid Splinter my ass!

BURNS

And the last time Dimaggio hit 400 was exactly...

CHADWICK/COMPTON

Never!

KITTY

Boys and their baseball.

Laughter around the table as Edith comes in, carrying a tray with more bowls of soup. The laughter is interrupted by Baker, at the far end, who mutters somberly in Danish.

OPPIE (CONT'D)

Translation, Mr. Baker?

BAKER

May God be with us.

The room quiets somberly, they all drink.

Edith glances around the room - at the table, at her guests - how happy she is to be hosting such an impressive group of people! Then she and Baker lock eyes - and she spills hot soup onto Oppie.

TILANO

Edith!

EDITH

Oh, no.

Baker looks at Tilano, trying to figure out just what the deal is between he and Edith.

EDITH (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry!

KITTY

Let me.

Kitty, who's tipsy, takes the pitcher of ice water and starts to pour some onto a napkin.

OPPIE

I guess this means we've been
officially christened!

But Kitty misses and spills ice water onto him, too. Oppie screams - jumps up. Everyone at the table is laughing.

BAKER

Or baptized.

Edith is mortified. She glances at Tilano, then goes quickly back into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

Tilano's mother SAYAH is at the sink, washing dishes as Edith fills a huge bucket with garbage for the compost heap - corn husks, banana peels, melon rinds etc. Baker enters.

BAKER

It was just a little soup. No need
to go into hiding.

Edith says nothing. She's still embarrassed, but notices Sayah looking suspiciously at Baker.

EDITH

Sayah, this is Mr. Baker.
(to Baker)
Sayah is Tilano's mother.

Baker smiles warmly at Sayah.

BAKER

Dinner was delicious.

Sayah points to Edith.

SAYAH

She made it.

Sayah goes back to the dishes, and he turns to Edith.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Were you raised in this house?

EDITH

Philadelphia.

BAKER

That's right - you said you had your books shipped from back east. Your family is here or there?

EDITH

There.

BAKER

Tilano is your husband?

Edith stops, glances at Sayah.

EDITH

Just a friend. You ask a lot of questions.

BAKER

I'm a scientist.

Edith reaches for the bucket, Baker grabs for it, it spills.

BAKER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry!

EDITH

That's okay.

Edith gets on the floor and cleans it up.

BAKER

What was the Laurel and Hardy film where the little one is helping the big one clean up his house?

EDITH

The more he helps the worse it gets?

BAKER

In physics we call it a chain reaction. So the big one wags his finger at the little one and says: "I can tell what's wrong with you in two words..."

EDITH

"Im. Possible."

Baker grabs the bucket, follows Edith out the kitchen door.

EXT. BEHIND HOUSE/COMPOST HEAP -- MOMENTS LATER

He dumps the stuff on the compost heap next to the garden.
Edith hands Baker a towel to clean his hands.

EDITH

Thank you.

BAKER

Thank you for a wonderful dinner.

As they head back toward the kitchen door he takes out a pipe, lights it - then looks up at the sky.

BAKER (CONT'D)

"A billion stars go spinning through
the night,/blazing high above your
head./But in you is the presence
that will be,/when all the stars are
dead."

Edith is surprised, moved.

BAKER (CONT'D)

I noticed Rilke on your bookshelf.

TILANO (O.S.)

Those Nazis are her favorite writers!

Tilano is standing in the kitchen door.

BAKER

Rainer Maria Rilke is hardly a Nazi.

TILANO

She's German, isn't she?

Edith and Baker share a look.

EDITH

Rilke's not a 'she', Tilano. And
never has been.

Tilano reacts to the perceived slight. Baker takes a gold pocket watch from his vest, and checks the time.

BAKER

But you're quite right, sir. That
the same culture could give the world
Rilke, Beethoven, and Adolf Hitler
is indeed one of life's mysteries.

(to Edith)

Facilities?

Edith points to the outhouse. He nods, goes off.

EDITH
 (to Tilano)
 It's going well - don't you think?

Tilano glowers, goes back in the house.

INT. FRONT ROOM -- A LITTLE LATER

Edith and Tilano clean up as the guests leave. Kitty Oppenheimer, quite drunk, keeps trying to put on her coat.

KITTY
 I haven't laughed like this since we
 came to this godforsaken place.

Tilano - ever the ladies' man - helps her with her coat.

KITTY (CONT'D)
 You'll never know what a night like
 this means - especially for the wives.

EDITH
 Thank you, Mrs. Oppenheimer.

KITTY
 Robert's mother was Mrs. Oppenheimer.
 Kitty. Please.

In comes Oppie from the back, putting on his coat.

OPPIE
 I'd say opening night was a smash.
 What does the U.S. Army owe you?

Edith looks at Tilano, who clears plates from the table.

EDITH
 Oh, I don't know. Fifty?

OPPIE
 For all of us?!

KITTY
 Robert, no - that's not enough!

OPPIE
 Tilano, are you sure?

Tilano continues to clear the table - he's not happy with the situation, no amount of money is going to change that.

TILANO
 It's up to her.

OPPIE
How about I double it?

Oppie puts a wad of cash in her hand.

OPPIE (CONT'D)
Courtesy of the U.S. Army.

EDITH
That's very generous.

As Tilano brings a tray of dishes into the kitchen he passes Baker, who's on his way out.

BAKER
Thank you.

Tilano just keeps walking.

EXT. FRONT PORCH -- CONTINUOUS

Edith is saying goodbye to her guests as Baker comes out. Very formally he extends his hand, Edith takes it, they seem to have everything to say to each other - but for now:

BAKER (CONT'D)
Goodnight, Miss Warner.

EDITH
Goodnight, Mister Baker.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

As Sayah smokes a cigarette on the steps outside the kitchen door, Tilano washes dishes and Edith comes in with the rest of the plates.

TILANO
Did you hear what they were talking about tonight?

EDITH
What do you mean?

TILANO
Do you know what's going on here?

EDITH
All I know is they're helping us make ends meet.

She puts some cash on the counter beside him.

TILANO
That's too much.

She glances out at Sayah.

EDITH

No, it's not.

As she starts to dry the dishes she walks over to the kitchen door and looks out.

FROM EDITH'S POV

The sky is glittering, pulsating, EXPLODING with stars.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN

Tilano pockets the money and looks at her.

She's thinking about Mr. Baker and he knows it.

EXT. TSIREGE/ANCESTRAL SITE - DAY

Two women, one horse - Maria is in front, Edith has her arms wrapped around Maria's back - she is breathing in the scenery as they climb the hills of Tsirege.

EDITH

Thanks for this.

MARIA

I thought you might need to get out of the kitchen.

An EAGLE patrols the sky, a MOUNTAIN LION the upper ridge; a RABBIT scampers through the bush, a RATTLESNAKE slithers under a rock - Tsirege is hot and dry this summer morning.

MARIA (CONT'D)

There are such marvelous forms up here. I learn something new every time I -

Maria sees something and immediately hops off the horse, leaving Edith up there alone.

EDITH

What are you doing?!

Maria hands the reins to her and kneels to check out some DRIED OUT CORN STALKS.

MARIA

We're going to lose the corn if it doesn't rain soon.

Edith nervously slides forward on the saddle. The horse TAKES OFF, moving forward past Maria.

EDITH

Whoa!

MARIA

Just hold the reins and relax. She takes her cues from you.

Edith centers herself and, as she does, the horse calms down, Edith gets more and more comfortable in the saddle - and then the horse BUCKS again, Edith holds on for dear life.

Maria smiles.

EXT. TOP OF THE HILL/TSIREGE - LATER

Both women are walking now, the horse alongside. Edith, carrying an armful of wildflowers, finds herself in front of that TOWERING ROCK WALL. Again, she is mesmerized.

THE ROCK COMES ALIVE

Like an OCEAN stirring with energy - and

OUT OF THAT OCEAN

the PLUMED SERPENT, AVANYU - leaping out, calling to Edith.

EDITH'S EYES

have no fear, but instead are filled with the majesty of this creature. She looks at it imploringly, as if to ask, "What is my purpose?"

And like that - the creature returns to its ocean, the ocean becomes the rock wall, and AVANYU is back to being just an etching across the face of the rock.

BACK TO THE SCENE

Maria is there, staring at Edith.

MARIA

I see you've met Avanyu.

Edith is at once startled and relieved Maria gets this.

EDITH

Does this happen to everyone?

MARIA

Hardly.

EDITH

What does it mean?

MARIA

It means you're listening.

An EXPLOSION ROCKS THE HILLS

The horse SHIES UP - Maria grabs the reins, settles her down.

ANOTHER EXPLOSION

A FLOCK OF GEESE zooms off, SMALL ANIMALS on the ground scatter for cover.

Edith and Maria look out over the canyon toward Los Alamos. As the smoke clears they see a GROUP OF MEN getting into MILITARY VEHICLES and driving away.

EXT. CANYON -- LATER

Edith and Maria are riding in the canyon where they saw the military vehicles. Maria gets off the horse and inspects the ground where the explosion happened - the soil is black, the earth scorched.

ANOTHER EXPLOSION

The ground shakes, the horse shies up again - this time Edith grabs the reins, settles the horse down herself.

Edith and Maria look around: they can't tell where this last explosion came from - but Maria quickly climbs back up on the horse with Edith and they get out of there.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE -- ANOTHER EVENING

Cars are parked in front.

INT. FRONT ROOM/HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Dinner's in full swing as Tilano serves. Oppie and Kitty, Baker, Teller, Fermi, Bethe.

The two young Brits, Chadwick and Compton, their wives, the two young Americans, Wilson and Burns, their wives - all of whom are pretty drunk.

Baker's voice is low, hushed - trying to be discreet.

BAKER

It's already three years since Hahn,
Strassman, Frisch and Meitner produced
their explosion in Berlin.

Tilano overhears, reacts. The others continue quietly.

BETHE
No flash, no crash - nothing.

TELLER
Didn't knock a fly off the wall.

FERMI
There's no way they have it!

BAKER
How can we be sure?

OPPIE
There's no way of being sure. We
need to assume the worst.

TELLER
We do know the only plutonium that -

BAKER
(hushing him)
Edward.

Baker glances at Tilano, who's clearing. Teller zips it.

BETHE
(oblivious)
What they don't have - thank you,
Enrico - is the self-sustaining chain-
reaction that -

BAKER
Tilano, this was delicious! What do
you call it?

TILANO
Posole.

BAKER
Posole?

TILANO
Made of parched corn.

The others haven't picked up Baker's cue yet.

OPPIE
But they do have a head start.

FERMI
Three years is an eternity!

Edith comes in to help clear.

OPPIE

I'll tell you what else they don't
have -

BAKER

Oppie, isn't the posole delicious?!

OPPIE

(realizing)

Yes...And these vegetables from your
garden - Edith, you've outdone
yourself!

Edith's trying not to look at Baker. To Oppie:

EDITH

I'm glad you liked it.

But their attempt to change the subject doesn't last long.
Burns, Wilson, Chadwick, Compton and their wives are loaded.

BURNS

You wanna know what Hitler's got?

COMPTON

No, Mister Bones, what's Hitler got?

WILSON

(holds up a pinky)

About 3 inches would be my guess.

Laughter among the young scientists and their wives. Edith
reacts to the crudeness.

CHADWICK

I'll tell ya what that little
bratwurst's got!

MRS. BURNS

Eva Braun.

BURNS

And zee beegest tube of lubricating -

WILSON

Ja...Mein Fuhrer...Ja! Ja! Ja!

The young scientists and their wives can't stop giggling.
Baker stands. He's heard enough.

BAKER

Do you have any idea what it means
to be driven from your home at
gunpoint?

(MORE)

BAKER (CONT'D)

My wife and children have fled to Sweden. We are homeless, thanks to Mr. Hitler. As is much of Europe.

The laughter stops. Baker points around the table.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Ask Edward. Or Enrico. Or Hans.

(re: Tilano)

Ask this gentleman. I'm sure he could tell you what it means to have your home taken away from you.

A piece of wood in the fireplace EXPLODES - sparks flying, startling everyone. Baker's voice is quiet.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Of one thing I am entirely sure: if they do get there first, none of this will matter. We'll all be dead. Or wish that we were.

He leaves, a hush falling over the table. Tilano throws a look at Edith, who is stunned by what she just heard.

EXT. KITCHEN DOOR -- LATER

Baker is smoking his pipe outside the kitchen door as Edith brings out a basket of corn to husk and joins him.

BAKER (CONT'D)

I apologize for my young colleagues.

EDITH

It's okay.

BAKER

I'm afraid the pressure's starting to get to all of us.

EDITH

Pressure?

Baker realizes he's said something he shouldn't have.

BAKER

What I mean is, if you haven't experienced the Nazis first-hand - as my family has - it's hard to understand.

EDITH

You must miss them terribly.

BAKER
They're in Stockholm. Safe. For now.

EDITH
Is that home?

A wave of sadness washes over him.

BAKER
Copenhagen is home.

EDITH
How many children?

BAKER
Five. Well, in fact...

His eyes darken. He stares up at the sky.

BAKER (CONT'D)
When our oldest, Christian, graduated high school several years ago his wish was to go sailing with his Papa - his big-shot Papa, who is usually too busy to do anything with his boys. Christian loved the water. The Channel was rough that afternoon. Christian was at the tiller when a huge wave hit us. He got swept overboard.

A beat. Edith's eyes well with tears.

BAKER (CONT'D)
I tried everything, but -

EDITH
I'm sure you did.

BAKER (CONT'D)
My wife and I...We got through it. Or, I should say, I did. Working. Day and night. I don't know if Margarethe ever did. Or ever will.

Their eyes catch each other, and hold. Edith's heart is racing - suddenly there's all this electricity between them.

Tilano sticks his head outside the kitchen door, looks for a moment - he can see that electricity between them. Quiet:

TILANO
Your guests are ready for dessert.

Edith glances over, nods. The spell between her and Baker is broken. An awkward moment.

INT. FRONT ROOM -- A LITTLE LATER

Edith is refilling coffee cups as her guests finish dessert - and Tilano has their full attention.

TILANO

It was the last game of the season, 1939. We'd had a show at the Garden, the Yanks and Sox were playing a doubleheader, we got there just in time for the second game...Williams hit a home run, Dimaggio went 0-3, but I couldn't take my eyes off him in center field - the way he moved, making the slightest adjustments with every new hitter, each new pitch, the way he commanded that big green stage...

Edith is both charmed and amused - she's never seen this side of Tilano. She and Baker share a smile.

BURNS

Now the great Joltin' Joe is drinking beer and signing autographs in Hawaii.

WILSON

And Williams?

BURNS

Flying combat missions over Germany.

Chadwick grins.

CHADWICK

The Red Sox finally win one!

KITTY

(to Tilano)

I didn't know your people liked baseball.

TILANO

Jim Thorpe. He was my idol.

OPPIE

They say he could hit a ball further than Babe Ruth.

WILSON

Please.

BURNS

Much as I loathe and despise the
Babe - he couldn't carry his jock!

BAKER

I saw Thorpe at the 1912 Olympics in
Sweden and he won everything. An
astonishing athlete!

WILSON

Who couldn't hit a curveball.

BURNS

And stunk at America's pastime!

TILANO

He never got the chance.

BURNS

Come on - do you people know even
the first thing about baseball?

EXT. BEHIND THE HOUSE -- DAY

A homemade baseball game is in full swing in the large open field behind the house. It's The US Army scientists/soldiers vs. The Pueblo Indians - and the Indians are losing.

The wives and family members of each team are on opposite sides of the field - on blankets, in lawn chairs.

Edith's having a great time shuttling between the two sides, serving cookies, cake and lemonade - chatting with Mrs. Burns and Mrs Wilson on the Army side, and with Maria and Julian Martinez on the Pueblo side.

Baker's in right field, wearing an ill-fitting uniform, glove on one hand, his pipe in the other. Oblivious to the game. Working out equations in the air with the stem of his pipe.

BACK IN THE GAME

The Indians are up to bat - Tilano's in charge, and his ragtag team consists of Joe, Chai, and a bunch of folks from Pueblo.

Up to bat is his sister, Oqua. Tilano gives her instructions on how to hit, she pushes him away, steps in.

Security Officer 1 is on the mound for the US Army. He throws her a nice fat pitch and Oqua smacks it toward Baker in right field who's still lost in his equations. Burns is in center:

BURNS

Nick! Nick!

Baker's oblivious as the ball bounces past. Burns races over, cuts it off, fires to second base - where Oqua just beats the throw. The Indians cheer. Baker snaps out of it.

BAKER

What's the score now?

BURNS

It's still 10-9. Two more outs and we win!

BAKER

A good outcome, no doubt.

BURNS

Time!

He points to an MP who's not playing.

BURNS (CONT'D)

Right field!

(to Baker)

Uncle Nick - do you mind?

BAKER

Not in the least.

He jogs off, hands his glove to his replacement, and

IN FOUL TERRITORY OFF FIRST BASE

Joins Teller, Bethe, Fermi and Wilson who are engaged in a hushed, heated debate.

TELLER

Let's see if it works first!

WILSON

A regulating body must be formed.

TELLER

We've got plenty of time to worry about the politics!

WILSON

The information must be shared.

TELLER

You're gonna share this with Hitler?

WILSON

I'm talking about the civilized world.

BETHE

Stalin is civilized?

FERMI

He's an ally, isn't he?

Baker looks over, sees

BY THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE

A military jeep pulls up and Oppie gets out. He hands Edith a letter. From her POV we read the return address: "Culpepper-Duncan/Denver, Colorado". She smiles, opens it.

BACK IN THE GAME

Up to bat for the Indians is Joe, who hits a fly ball to center field that Burns races over and grabs. Cheers from the Army side.

FOUL TERRITORY OFF FIRST BASE

As Baker watches Edith, the debate continues.

WILSON

An international community of
physicists, perhaps.

FERMI

Science has always been shared.

TELLER

There's never been science like this.

WILSON

If we make it, someone will use it.

TELLER

Of course someone will use it! That's
why we have to get there first!

WILSON

It's too dangerous in the hands of
one government, one set of
politicians.

BETHE

Good luck convincing Churchill.

FERMI

Or Roosevelt.

BACK IN THE GAME

In center field, Burns rallies his team.

BURNS

Okay, guys - one out away! And look
who's stepping up to the plate!

It's Tilano. Hitting after Tilano is his sister Quebi.

BURNS (CONT'D)

Hey, pitcher!

The pitcher turns around, Burns flashes him four fingers -
the pitcher nods.

He winds up, throws the first pitch WAY OUTSIDE. They're
going to walk Tilano intentionally. The crowd boos.

IN FOUL TERRITORY OFF FIRST BASE

Baker is still watching Edith.

WILSON

What do you think, Uncle Nick?

BAKER

I think they'd hang us all just for
having the conversation.

He walks off to Edith - as the crowd boos Ball 2.

BY THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE

Edith just stares at the letter as Baker comes over.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Bad news?

EDITH

From the wife of a friend of mine,
Mr. Duncan. My first friend here.

We hear the crowd boo Ball 3.

BAKER

What?

EDITH

He was killed in Germany.

BACK IN THE GAME

The pitcher throws ball 4 but Tilano reaches out and THWACK! -
mashes the ball way over Burns' head in right center field.

The Indians are going crazy. Tilano runs around the bases,
Burns gives the ball chase, but by the time he reaches it
Tilano is crossing home plate with the winning run!

Just in time to see Edith by the side of the house, crying in Baker's arms.

Maria sees it, too.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

No cars. The house is dark. A full moon brightens the sky.

INT. BEDROOM/HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

And gives Edith all the light she needs as she sits up in bed, thinking about Duncan, thinking about Baker, scribbling in her journal. The old photo of her mother - still frameless - is the bookmark in her journal.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE -- MORNING

Carrying garden tools, Tilano walks toward the house.

INT. FRONT ROOM -- A LITTLE LATER

Tilano knocks on the front door, enters.

TILANO

Good morning!

From the bedroom:

EDITH (O.S.)

What are you doing here? I told you - we're off today!

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Tilano enters, pours himself a cup of coffee.

TILANO

I thought I'd do some work in the garden. If we don't get some rain soon, we're going to lose all our...

The letter from Duncan's widow is sitting open on the counter. Tilano picks it up, starts to read.

Edith comes in. Tilano puts the letter down.

TILANO (CONT'D)

It was open. I didn't mean to -

EDITH

It's okay.

TILANO
 (re: Duncan)
 I'm sorry.

They exchange a long look. Tilano sees she's all gussied up.

TILANO (CONT'D)
 Where are you going?

EDITH
 Into Santa Fe. Got a list a mile
 long. Need anything?

They hear a CAR HORN outside.

EDITH (CONT'D)
 Got to go.

TILANO
 We're doing a rain ceremony in the
 plaza later, if you'd like to come.
 And my mother invited you for supper!

EDITH (O.S.)
 Bye!

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Edith comes bounding out of the house.

EDITH
 Good morning!

The car is a Packard convertible and Baker is driving.

BAKER
 Good morning.

Edith gets in the passenger side. Baker doesn't look all that comfortable as he searches for the right gear.

BAKER (CONT'D)
 Bear with me - this is Fermi's car.

EDITH
 Do you drive much in Denmark?

BAKER
 (still searching)
 "He swims like a fish and skis like
 the wind," my brother used to tell
 people. "And drives like a physicist."
 (finds the gear)
 What does he know? He's a
 mathematician.

He hits the gas. The car lurches, sputters, peels away - Edith's giggling like a schoolgirl.

And watching from the front door of the house - Tilano.

EXT. CAR/ROAD -- LATER

Like teenagers Edith and Baker fly along on this perfect New Mexico day - talking, laughing, Edith pointing out the sights, excited to show Baker her adopted home.

She has never looked so happy.

EXT. MARKET/DOWNTOWN SANTA FE -- LATER

The Packard pulls up in front of a produce market.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Edith gets out.

BAKER

I'll pick you up here in two hours.

EDITH

Very good.

Baker puts it in gear and drives off. Like a physicist. Which makes Edith grin.

EXT. MARKET/SANTA FE -- LATER

Carrying a shopping bag filled with things, Edith emerges from the market. Checks her watch.

EXT. STREETS/SANTA FE -- MOMENTS LATER

She wanders the cobblestone streets on this busy Saturday in Santa Fe: VENDERS sell their wares; a BRIDE-TO-BE models her wedding gown in a shop window; at the local MOVIE HOUSE a line forms for the matinee.

Edith turns the corner and sees the Packard, parked between several GOVERNMENT CARS in front of a cafe, outside of which a couple of SOLDIERS stand guard. She moves closer.

Baker's in the cafe, sitting between Wilson and Teller, who argue vehemently, each making their case to General Groves. Oppie's also there, and appears to be acting the peacemaker - as the nastiness escalates between Wilson and Teller.

Edith has no idea what the argument is about, but it's clear Baker is right smack in the middle, and his ambivalence is tearing him apart.

EXT. MARKET -- LATER

Edith waits outside the market as Baker pulls up. She gets in. Cheerfully:

EDITH
How'd your meeting go?

Baker is tense, faraway. He tries to put the car in gear, can't - what was funny before is no longer. He slams his fist against the wheel.

BAKER
Damn this thing!

He's not being good company and he knows it.

BAKER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

EDITH
Let's park the car - do you mind?

BAKER
Why?

INT. MOVIE HOUSE -- A LITTLE LATER

Edith and Baker sit in the dark movie theater eating popcorn, watching a classic old LAUREL N' HARDY flick. They're surrounded by laughing parents and children.

And no one is laughing harder than Baker, whose dark mood has surrendered to the silliness up on the screen.

Edith watches him. She's beaming.

EXT. CAR/ROAD -- LATER

On the road back to Los Alamos.

INT. CAR -- CONTINUOUS

They pass the sign for the San Ildefonso Pueblo.

BAKER (CONT'D)
I still haven't seen the Pueblo.

EDITH
I'll take you some time.

BAKER
Some time?

EXT. CAR/ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

The Packard makes an abrupt U-turn - as only Baker could - and heads back toward the Pueblo.

EXT. MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO -- LATER

Edith is anxious - she's not sure how bringing Baker to the Pueblo will be received. Nevertheless, she leads him into the main plaza where about fifty people are watching an intense native ceremony.

BAKER
(re: the ceremony)
What are they doing?

EDITH
A Rain Dance.

As they make their way toward the center, the Indians are looking oddly at Edith and Mr. Baker. She greets several Indian friends, but gets a cold shoulder. Then she sees Sayah.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Sayah!

Baker nods hello to her. Sayah manages a smile. Then she sees Maria, and walks over to her, Baker in tow.

EDITH (CONT'D)
(to Baker)
This is Maria - who made the pottery that's in the house.

BAKER
Mrs. Martinez - an honor! Your work is well-known where I come from.

EDITH
(to Maria)
This is Mr. Baker. He's from Denmark.

She looks Baker dead in the eye.

MARIA
And what brings you to this part of the world, Mr. Baker?

Baker points to the center of the plaza.

BAKER
There's Tilano!

Maria gives Edith a look - as their attention shifts to the

CENTER OF THE PLAZA

Where Tilano leads the ceremonial rain dance - moving elegantly, artfully, chanting to Avanyu and the other Great Spirits for relief from the drought.

Edith has never seen him dance before and she is mesmerized.

Yet when Tilano sees Edith with Baker, his dancing takes on a different kind of intensity - darker, angrier - as if he were praying not just for rain, but for the soul of the woman he loves.

Edith doesn't quite know what to make of it.

Baker is spellbound.

EXT. TSIREGE/ANCESTRAL SITE -- LATER

The Packard is parked on the dirt road far below. Edith and Baker have hiked up to her spot near Rock Wall and Avanyu.

Baker looks over the canyon, captivated by the ancient beauty, then at the Rock Wall and the image of Avanyu.

BAKER

What is that?

EDITH

Avanyu. Guardian of water. Preserver of life.

Baker is preoccupied, but is moved just the same. He picks up a dried-out corn stalk.

BAKER

So what exactly is the point behind a Rain Dance?

EDITH

To make it rain.

He smirks, looks up at the sun - at how dry everything is. Shakes his head, manages a smile. To himself, mostly:

BAKER

I guess we're not the only ones here trying to control Nature.

EDITH

What do you mean?

Again, he realizes he's said something he shouldn't have.

EDITH (CONT'D)

How are you trying to control Nature?

BAKER

What I meant was - how can a dance
make it rain?

EDITH

For them it's not control. It's
surrender.

BAKER

Surrender?

EDITH

To feel part of, to be worthy of
Nature.

She looks at the dried corn stalk.

EDITH (CONT'D)

They believe that when they dance -
if their hearts are right - the rain
will come.

He smiles.

BAKER

They *believe*.

He examines a series of petroglyphs on a rock.

BAKER (CONT'D)

For a long time in physics, light
was thought to be composed of either
waves or particles. Two completely
different ways of viewing the
universe. You were in one camp or
the other.

Edith listens, captivated.

BAKER (CONT'D)

Then we developed the Theory of
Complementarity, which says that
wave and particle are really just
different aspects of the same thing,
that everything depends on the
standpoint of the observer, each
point-of-view giving a partial image
which excludes, but...

EDITH

Also complements the other.

BAKER

(nodding)

In fact, harmony in nature consists of the interplay of apparently opposing forces - earth and sky, summer and winter...

EDITH

Male and female.

BAKER

Exactly. Most physicists agree 'complementarity' is a big step for us.

Baker shows Edith the petroglyph: earth and sky, men and women - in ancient symbols and images it's a pictorial depiction of exactly what he's saying.

BAKER (CONT'D)

And yet it seems your friends at the Pueblo have been *living* it for centuries. They're a lot older than we are.

(to himself)

Oppie was wise to bring us here.

She can't stop staring at him.

BAKER (CONT'D)

What?

EDITH

You and Tilano share a similar faith. Some people practice with their mind, others with their body.

Baker finds a solitary RED ROSE growing - so improbably - out of the rock. He picks it up, presents it to Edith.

BAKER

And some people have a heart big enough to contain the two.

She blushes, takes the rose. Suddenly they're very close. Baker wants to kiss her, Edith wants him to, but no one makes a move and nothing is said. Until...

EDITH

We should get back.

Baker smiles, nods.

BAKER
The inevitable "Should".

EXT. CAR/FRONT OF HOUSE -- EVENING

The car door slams, Edith waves - the Packard pulls away.

Edith is still beaming - that ROSE is in her hair now - as she watches him ascend the hill toward Los Alamos.

INT. HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

She enters the dark house, lights the light - and is startled to see Tilano sitting in a chair in the front room.

EDITH
You scared me!

Tilano's drinking from a bottle.

EDITH (CONT'D)
What are you doing sitting here in the dark?

He's holding a letter. He hands it to her. We see the return address: "US Army". The color drains from Edith's face.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Oh, no...Adam?

She opens it. From her POV we see most of the letter has been blacked out for 'security' reasons.

TILANO (O.S.)
It seems he's fine.

As her face washes with relief, she smiles: the "PS" at the bottom of the letter reads: "Tell Edith I said hello."

She puts the letter back in the envelope and hands it back to Tilano. He takes a swig.

TILANO (CONT'D)
When it first arrived, of course, I feared the worst. The funny thing is - I hid it away, didn't tell anyone, didn't want to open it - until I was with you.
(another drink)
Isn't that funny?

A beat. Edith says nothing.

TILANO (CONT'D)

I don't care that you went to Santa Fe with him. I don't even care you brought him to the ceremony. Just don't start lying the way they do.

EDITH

What are you talking about?

TILANO

They lie about everything!

EDITH

When did you start drinking again?!

TILANO

When I felt like it!

EDITH

I'm going to make some coffee.

She crosses into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

She lights the fire, puts the kettle on. He comes in.

TILANO

Do you know what they're doing up there - your 'Mr. Baker' and his friends?

EDITH

No. And neither do you.

TILANO

I know it's bad.

EDITH

He's an extraordinary man!

TILANO

For months I've served them - they still talk like I'm invisible. How stupid does he think I am?

EDITH

He admires you, Tilano.

She starts preparing a pot of coffee.

TILANO

I see the way you look at him. There was a time I thought maybe you could look at me that way.

EDITH

What are you talking about - you're my friend!

TILANO

Your friend...They're doing something terrible up there, your Mr. Baker and his friends. We're helping them. I can't anymore.

He walks out.

EDITH

Tilano!

EXT. FRONT PORCH/HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Edith stands on the front porch, watching Tilano - bottle in hand - stumble away from the house. Suddenly Tilano stops, FLINGS the bottle up the road toward Los Alamos, then turns and heads back toward the Pueblo.

She takes the rose from her hair, stares at it for a very long time.

EXT. ARMY HUT/TEST-SITE/ALAMOGORDO

SUPER-IMPOSE: JULY 16, 1945 - 2:40AM

INT. ARMY HUT/TEST-SITE/ALAMOGORDO - CONTINUOUS

Baker grabs the wrist of young Wilson sitting next to him - checks his watch.

The rain pounds down and our group of scientists chain-smoke, pass flasks and canteens of booze, make bets on the blast - in every way climb the walls - in this tiny army hut, waiting.

Baker turns to Oppie, who's also chain-smoking as he monitors the weather on an army radio.

OPPIE

They say it could lift in a couple of hours.

BAKER

How long do we wait?

With a glance outside at General Groves, who sits defiantly in his car in the rain.

OPPIE

As long as it takes.

Baker looks up at the rain.

BAKER

I've got my money on God.

Oppie looks out at Groves. He knows the General all too well.

OPPIE

For how much?

EXT. KIVA/MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO - CONTINUOUS

As the celebration of the rain continues, Tilano climbs the steps of the Kiva.

INT. KIVA/MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO - CONTINUOUS

And climbs down the ladder into the belly of it.

Down here - among the Ancestral Spirits - Tilano gets on his knees, and begins to pray.

INT. TSIREGE/CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Edith's staring at that ROSE Baker gave her, only it's dried now. She puts it back in her journal as a bookmark.

The fire is smaller, the rain still pounding the cave walls.

Edith's tired. Still wrapped in a blanket, she curls up next to the fire - her eyes wide...

A MONTAGE

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT - DECEMBER, 1944

No cars. The house is dark, blanketed in snow. The only sign of life the SMOKE coming out of the chimney.

EXT. RIO GRANDE/OTOWI BRIDGE -- DAY

Rain pours down, swelling the river at the bridge.

EXT. SANGRE DE CRISTO MOUNTAINS -- CONTINUOUS

The mountains are shrouded in fog and mist.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Still no cars. As rain pelts the house Edith, in a poncho, is digging in her garden to keep it from flooding.

EXT. PAJARITO PLATEAU -- DAY

The valley is now green and luscious under a clear blue sky.

EXT. HOUSE -- EVENING - APRIL, 1945

The cars are back - the house is alive again.

TELLER (O.S.)
This is totally unacceptable!

INT. HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Just the scientists - no wives - are around the table. Time and pressure has aged them all considerably. Edith serves - no Tilano, no Sayah.

Teller's furious, everyone's on edge - less and less discreet.

TELLER
My group gets the least funding, the
least man-power, the least amount of -

OPPIE
We've been through this, Edward.

Baker notices that Edith is looking differently at the men, trying to listen more intently to what is being said.

TELLER
We will continue to go through it -

OPPIE
The Super cannot be a priority now!

Silence. Edith reacts. Baker catches her eye.

BAKER
You okay?

EDITH
Fine.

BAKER
Where's Tilano? I haven't seen him
around for the longest time.

EDITH
I don't know.

Baker can see it's a sore subject and lets it be. Edith continues serving. The discussion resumes.

FERMI
The Germans are finished - everyone
knows that.

BURNS
Not the Japs.

TELLER

I'm talking about the future!

(a whisper)

If we don't develop the hydrogen
someone else will.

(to Bethe and Fermi)

And it will make what you're working
on look like a firecracker!

Baker starts to say something, stops.

WILSON

Uncle Nick?

Baker looks at the young American, then away. Wilson looks
at Bethe and Fermi - no one will stand up to Teller. Finally:

WILSON (CONT'D)

How many times must you kill
something, Edward, before you decide
it is dead?

TELLER

Until the threat is dead, young man.
Until the fear is dead.

WILSON

The more you try to kill the fear
the more you perpetuate it. Perhaps
the only way is to allow it - and
trust the fear will eliminate itself.

Teller cackles at the concept.

TELLER

Trust?

WILSON

You make it sound like an obscenity.

TELLER

No, it's a nice democratic word. But
it presupposes human beings are
capable of behaving nice and
democratically.

Wilson looks at Baker, whose silence is deafening.

WILSON

Got to have a little faith.

BETHE

Got to have a lot of faith.

TELLER

Faith is a fool's game.

WILSON

Perhaps you're on the wrong side in this war, Edward!

TELLER

Perhaps you're living in a fantasy world, young man!

OPPIE

Gentlemen, please.

A tense moment at the table, as Baker looks up to see Edith working hard - but she's heard every word.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

A weary Edith hauls in two buckets of water and puts them to boil on the stove - for washing the dishes - as Baker, Oppie, and Fermi poke their heads in.

OPPIE

Good night, Edith.

FERMI

Dinner was wonderful, as usual.

EDITH

Good night, gentlemen.

They start to go. Baker sees how exhausted she is.

OPPIE

Coming, Nick?

BAKER

I think I'll stay and help Miss Warner clean up a bit.

EDITH

Oh, no - it's fine.

BAKER

I insist.

Oppie and Fermi exchange glances. To Fermi:

BAKER (CONT'D)

Do you mind leaving the car?

FERMI

Not at all. I'll get a lift with Oppie, right?

OPPIE
Oh, yes. Of course.

Oppie takes a long look at Baker and Edith.

OPPIE (CONT'D)
Well...Good night.

INT. KITCHEN -- LATER

His jacket off and sleeves rolled up, Baker washes dishes as Edith brings in more dirty ones, and lays them on the counter.

EDITH
You really don't have to.

BAKER
I'm an old hand at this!

But just as he says it he spills water all over his vest.

EDITH
I have a poncho if you need it.

He smiles, she leaves. He takes his pocket watch from his vest and puts it on the counter as Edith returns with more dishes.

They stand side by side. He washes, she dries. Each of them is tense, preoccupied - as much with what's going on in their separate worlds as with the depth of feeling between them.

BAKER
What really happened with Tilano?

EDITH
Nothing.

BAKER
I'm sorry if I did something to -

EDITH
What are you doing up on the Hill?

The question takes him by surprise.

BAKER
What do you mean?

EDITH
For years there have been explosions all around the canyon. Tilano used to think you were inventing some kind of nerve gas or a super bomb.

He laughs.

BAKER

Where there's science there must be
science fiction!

EDITH

So what are you doing up there?

BAKER

We're doing research is all.

EDITH

What kind of research?

Baker's eyes darken, his mind is faraway - he seems to be carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. Her voice softens.

EDITH (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm sure you're not
allowed to talk about it. It's just -
I hear some of the things you talk
about at the table and...

He looks at her - lonely, confused. He needs a woman's arms.

BAKER

May I stay with you tonight?

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Clothes on, they lie quietly together - holding each other,
comforting each other. A sweet moment. For both of them.

INT. BEDROOM -- NEXT MORNING

Still dressed, Edith awakens. Baker's gone.

INT. KITCHEN -- A LITTLE LATER

As Edith makes coffee she notices Baker's gold pocket watch
on the counter. She turns it over, the inscription reads:
"To Niels Bohr from his colleagues at the Institute."

Edith is baffled.

EXT. LIBRARY/SANTA FE -- A WEEK LATER

Kitty Oppenheimer drops Edith in front of the library.

KITTY

I'll pick you up in an hour.

EDITH

Thanks.

INT. LIBRARY TABLE -- CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON a headline: "NIELS BOHR SPLITS ATOM"; then another: "BOHR'S 'THEORY OF COMPLEMENTARITY' BREAKS NEW GROUND"; and another: "DANISH PHYSICIST WINS NOBEL PRIZE" - and below it a photo of young 'Baker' accepting the award from the King of Sweden - as Edith rifles through a stack of old newspapers and magazines at a table in the library.

Edith comes upon a small blurb in a newspaper, "NOBEL LAUREATE'S SON DIES IN BOATING ACCIDENT." And then under a caption reading "A Meeting of the Minds" - there's a photo of Albert Einstein shaking hands with 'Baker' and, next to Baker, his wife Margarethe. WHO LOOKS JUST LIKE EDITH.

The YOUNG MAN sitting across from her at the table notices what she's reading.

YOUNG MAN

Interested in Niels Bohr?

EDITH

You've heard of him?

YOUNG MAN

Heard of him? He and Einstein are the Gods of modern physics!

(a secret)

They say he's up in Los Alamos building a bomb.

He comes out from behind the desk - he's in a wheelchair. He has no legs. She can't help but stare.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

The Battle of Midway.

EDITH

I'm so sorry.

YOUNG MAN

I just hope Bohr and his buddies build a bomb so big no one will ever fuck with us again!

He wheels off. Edith is stunned.

Suddenly there's a COMMOTION in the library - several STUDENTS go whooping and hollering past Edith's desk.

STUDENT 1

They've surrendered!

STUDENT 2
The Germans surrendered!

STUDENT 3
THE WAR IS OVER!

EXT. LIBRARY/SANTA FE STREETS -- A LITTLE LATER

Edith steps outside where a celebration has begun: sirens WAILING, car horns BLARING - people are SCREAMING with joy, hugging and kissing one another. A YOUNG MAN comes out of nowhere and plants a huge kiss on the astonished Edith.

INT. FRONT ROOM/HOUSE -- THAT EVENING

POP! POP! POP! go the champagne bottles. One the scientists has brought a battery-operated RADIO, it's blasting SWING MUSIC, the tables have been pushed aside - and the scientists and their wives are dancing up a storm, celebrating the German surrender.

As a dazed and confused Edith serves hors d'oeuvres she notices several of the scientists - Baker included - off in a corner, arguing loudly. Part of it is the champagne, part of it the celebration - but all discretion is gone.

TELLER
You're not serious?!

WILSON
Japan is hardly a nuclear threat.

TELLER
We're still at war!

BURNS
Thousands of Americans are still dying!

WILSON
We don't need the 'gadget' to defeat Japan.

CHADWICK
I've got sixty-five people working their asses off to make this test-date.

COMPTON
We all do.

CHADWICK
I'm supposed to tell them to stop?

WILSON

YES!

Edith is hearing everything. Baker tries to quiet them.

BAKER

Wilson, please.

WILSON

Uncle Nick, we've talked about this!
Whose side are you on?

FERMI

(sotto, to Bethe)
Oppie's gonna have a coronary.

But the conversation continues, louder than before.

WILSON

We started this because we didn't
want Hitler getting there first.
Germany's *finished*. If we test it,
they're going to use it.

BURNS

What if it's a dud?

WILSON

What if it's not and we can't stop
the chain-reaction?

FERMI

Could set fire to the atmosphere.

BETHE

Say goodbye to New Mexico.

Edith is listening, horrified.

BAKER

Not just New Mexico.

A moment, as all eyes turn to Baker.

BURNS

What about all our work?

TELLER

What about the science?

BAKER

Who gives a damn about the science?!

The party stops. No one can believe what Baker just said.

COMPTON

I do.

CHADWICK

Nick, we're making history here!

TELLER

(re: Baker and Wilson)

They want to put the genie back in the bottle. It cannot be done.

BAKER

I want us to know just how dangerous this genie could be. Especially in the hands of the military.

TELLER

I'm getting a little tired of you playing Hamlet, Nick...

BAKER

Edward, I'm don't give a damn what you're tired of.

TELLER

(to the others, re:
Baker)

Truman thinks he's a fool, Churchill thinks he's a spy. And as far as Oppie's concerned -

OPPIE

EDWARD!

Oppie comes in. Hushes everyone.

OPPIE (CONT'D)

This is neither the time nor the place.

WILSON

When is the time and place, Oppie?

OPPIE

I share your concern. No one here ever wants it used on people. But the world should know about the possibility - especially now, while the United Nations is being formed. Besides, we've spent two billion dollars and come this far...

(quiet, to Baker)

Don't you wanna see if the damn thing works?

Baker looks up - Edith is staring daggers at him.

EXT. KITCHEN DOOR/BACK OF HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Edith is pacing nervously out back when Baker joins her.

EDITH

You left this the other night.

She shows him the pocket watch with the inscription. A beat.

EDITH (CONT'D)

I had no idea you were so important.

BAKER

What are you talking about?

EDITH

I've been to the library. You're a very famous man, Professor.

BAKER

For security reasons they insisted my real name not be used.

EDITH

So this is why Oppie brought you all here - your bomb could set fire to the atmosphere?!

BAKER

We don't know what the thing can do.

EDITH

The "thing", the "gadget" - you can't even say the word! WHAT ARE YOU MEN DOING?!

BAKER

Trying to protect the free world!

EDITH

Protect?!

Baker says nothing.

EDITH (CONT'D)

You have to stop it.

BAKER

Don't be ridiculous.

EDITH

Why is that ridiculous?!

BAKER

My dear woman, this is not about you
and me. A chain-reaction has been
set into motion and cannot be stopped!

EDITH

(quiet)
I believed in you.

She starts back into the house, stops, lays the gold pocket
watch on the step and goes back into the kitchen.

Baker follows, leaving the pocket watch on the step.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Oppie - champagne bottle in one hand, cigar in the other -
scavenges for food as Edith comes in.

OPPIE

Edith, I'm famished. Do you have any
more of those -

EDITH

I want you out!

OPPIE

What?

EDITH

What are you doing up on the hill?

OPPIE

NONE OF YOUR GODDAMN BUSINESS!

Edith storms into the front room.

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Edith turns off the music. The party stops. Announces:

EDITH

Ladies and gentlemen - the party's
over. We are closed!

Baker and Oppie come in from the kitchen. The scientists and
their wives don't understand. Kitty, who's partying hard,
looks at Edith.

KITTY

Says who?

EDITH

Says me!

Kitty looks at Oppie.

KITTY

Robert?!

EDITH

This house belongs to Maria Martinez
at the San Ildefonso Pueblo and -

OPPIE

In fact, Edith, when the Army
purchased the Boys' School we took
over the lease of this house, so -

EDITH

I don't give a damn about your lease!

OPPIE

We have a legal right to -

EDITH

This is my home. I want all of you
to leave!

A beat. No one knows what to do. Edith picks up a champagne
bottle and FLINGS it against the fireplace - shattering it.

EDITH (CONT'D)

NOW!!!!!!

Everyone is stunned. Finally:

BAKER

You heard the lady.

The shocked party goes file out. Last to leave are Oppie,
who's confused and upset at her dramatic change in attitude
and Baker, whose eyes Edith refuses to meet.

Shaking with rage, Edith stands at the front door, watching
the cars pull away and head back up the hill.

She hears HORSE-HOOVES, turns and sees a MAN IN UNIFORM,
walking two horses toward the house.

It's Adam. Her eyes well with emotion.

EDITH

My God...

She runs out and they share a long, warm embrace.

IN ONE OF THE CARS

Baker watches them, as they drive away.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Edith looks at Adam, beaming like a mother.

EDITH
When did you get back?

ADAM
A few hours ago.

EDITH
Look at you - you've grown into a man. Come in, let me make you some -

ADAM
That's okay.

EDITH
What are the horses for?

ADAM
I was going to take a ride, thought you might like to join me. I heard a rumor you learned how.

EXT. TSIREGE - LATER

Edith and Adam - each on their own horse - traverse the ancestral hills. Edith, still upset about what happened in the house, is starting to come back to herself.

EXT. TSIREGE - LATER

The horses are now parked near that same spot - near the cave, the Rock Wall and the view of the canyon. Edith and Adam are sitting, looking out. Quiet. Beautiful.

ADAM
I miss this.

EDITH
It misses you.

Each of them, alone with their thoughts - they sit. Finally:

ADAM
I should probably get back - they're making this big thing for me at home. I had to get out of there for awhile.

He stands.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Will you join us?

A wave of sadness washes over Edith.

EDITH
Thanks. I think I'll stay up here a
little longer. I'll get the horse
back to you as soon as -

ADAM
Still making the chocolate cake?

EDITH
Anytime you want.

He gives her another hug.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Welcome home.

Adam climbs on his horse, heads back down the canyon.
Edith watches him go, then looks around - she's all alone.
She sits and soaks it all in.

EXT. SANGRE DE CRISTO MOUNTAINS -- ANOTHER DAY

The sun rises big and red over the mountains.

EXT. GARDEN/SIDE OF HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

As Edith pulls dead, dried-out vegetables and dumps them in
a bucket, Adam's horse is tied up nearby - eating oats,
drinking from a small water trough.

The horse SHIES, Edith looks up - a CARAVAN OF VEHICLES
heading down the hill from Los Alamos stops across the road
from her house.

Edith stands and calms the horse as TEAMS OF MEN fan out and
begin surveying the land on either side of the road.

One of them, the HEAD SURVEYOR, is busy with a set of blue-
prints as Edith approaches him.

EDITH
May I help you?

HEAD SURVEYOR
I don't think so.

EDITH
What's going on?

HEAD SURVEYOR
We're building you a big new road.

EDITH

Who's we?

HEAD SURVEYOR

Are you tax-payer?

EDITH

Yes.

HEAD SURVEYOR

Then 'we' is you.

He goes back to his work. Edith is baffled. Returns to her garden. Looks at what's left of her rose plants. Yanks them.

EXT. HOUSE -- EVENING

No cars in front.

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Edith eats alone at one of the tables.

INT. BEDROOM -- LATER

Edith sits up in bed, reading by candlelight.

INT. BEDROOM - DAWN

The SOUND OF JACKHAMMERS wakes her up. She looks out her window - construction on the new highway has begun virtually outside her door.

INT. FRONT ROOM - LATER

As Edith cleans the front room, the SOUND OF BULL-DOZERS shakes the house - books fly off the bookshelf, one of Maria's pots falls and shatters.

EXT. ROAD/FRONT OF HOUSE -- MAGIC HOUR

Construction winds down at the end of the day, workers are heading home, SOOT and GRIME cover everything.

FROM THE PORCH

Edith stares at what's become of the area in front of her house: it looks like a bomb hit it.

EXT. HOUSE/GARDEN - ANOTHER DAY

The construction continues and Edith is trying to work in her garden. A car pulls up. Kitty Oppenheimer gets out.

KITTY
When did this start?

EDITH
A few weeks ago. They're building a
new highway.

KITTY
The Army has big plans.

Kitty is smoking nervously. She looks tense, haggard.

EDITH
How's Oppie?

KITTY
I don't know. They've all been out
of town for awhile. Mr. Baker, too.

Edith reacts. Kitty's getting more and more distraught - she
puts out her cigarette. Looks at the house.

KITTY (CONT'D)
We sure miss coming down here.

Edith watches as Kitty lights another cigarette.

KITTY (CONT'D)
It is so hot up there. When is this
goddamn drought going to end?!

Kitty puts out the cigarette. She looks like she's about to
implode. She's about to light another one. Edith stops her.

EDITH (CONT'D)
Kitty...Are you all right?

Kitty looks at her - she's not all right. There is a terror
in her eyes.

EXT. ARMY HUT/TEST-SITE/ALAMOGORDO

SUPER-IMPOSE - JULY 16, 1945 - 4:40AM

The rain is letting up. Oppie confers with General Groves,
then starts barking instructions into his walkie-talkie:

OPPIE
Okay, we're back on - LET'S GO!

Soldiers, scientists, engineers race in all directions, re-
assuming their positions, doing final preparations.

Baker steps out the hut, looks up and, for the first time
all night, can see a FULL MOON in the sky.

EXT. KIVA/MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO - CONTINUOUS

Tilano has come out of the Kiva. Stares at that same moon.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE on Edith's face, dreaming...

INT. KITCHEN/HOUSE -- EDITH'S NIGHTMARE

It's bright. And hot. Way too hot. Edith pulls a tray of scones from the oven - as we hear

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.)

"I'm so glad to be part of..."

Her heart races. Edith wipes her brow, grabs the coffee pot -

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

"The family of God..."

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

And comes out to serve a room full of customers. But not just any customers: at one table is Duncan and Miss Culpepper.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.)

"Washed in the fountain..."

At another the Trainman, the Young Man and Woman who robbed her, Slim and Jim.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

"Cleansed by his blood..."

At a third the Church-goers from Philadelphia; the Townsladies from Los Alamos; Maria, Sayah, Quebi and Oqua from the Pueblo.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

"Join hands with ~~(CONT'D)~~ us..."

At a fourth Edith's FATHER and MOTHER, with a little girl who looks like the young Edith.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

"As we travel ~~(CONT'D)~~ God..."

As Edith moves among them, serving all these people from her past - NO ONE PAYS THE SLIGHTEST ATTENTION TO HER.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.)

"I'm so glad..."

The SOUND OF WIND.

EXT. PORCH/HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Edith steps out onto the porch and there's TILANO, ADAM, and others from the Pueblo CHANTING loudly, DANCING frantically - leading a ceremony around the house.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

"To be part of...

And then she sees it:

A TORNADO OF FIRE

Twisting down the hill from Los Alamos - and it turns into

A VISION OF AVANYU

That is dark, evil - INCINERATING everything in its path.

INT. HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Edith races back into the house. To Duncan and Miss Culpepper:

EDITH

We have to get out!

They ignore her. Outside the CHANTING IS LOUDER, the SOUND OF THE WIND more ferocious.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.)

"To be part of...

She runs from Townies to Church Ladies to Maria et al:

EDITH

Come on!

They all ignore her.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.)

"To be part of...

Windows SMASH, people SCREAM. To her mother and father.

EDITH

LET'S GO!

They don't move. AVANYU BLASTS into the house.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.)

"I'm so glad...

Edith grabs the little girl, heads for the front door.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 "To be part of..."

She flings it open - and there's BAKER. Edith SCREAMS.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 "The family of..."

The house EXPLODES.

BACK TO THE CAVE

Edith snaps awake. Sweating, trembling. Hears a RATTLING SOUND. Her eyes focus - she is FACE-TO-FACE with

A DIAMOND-BACK RATTLESNAKE

Six feet of coiled, grey-brown terror. The snake HISSES.

EDITH

Doesn't move. Doesn't make a sound.

THE SNAKE

Bores its eyes into Edith.

EDITH

Returns the gaze. Doesn't take a breath.

Then whispers:

EDITH
 Avanyu.

THE SNAKE

Hisses. Rattles. Slithers off into a hole in the cave floor.

EDITH

Blinks. Takes a slow, deep breath.

Did that just happen or was it a dream?

EXT. TSIREGE/ANCESTRAL SITE -- MOMENTS LATER

Edith comes out of the cave. The rain has stopped.

Everything in the canyon is quiet. Glistening.

A rabbit scampers through the brush. A bird lights on a tree. Down in the canyon a family of deer nibbles at a bush.

It's Heaven on Earth and Edith inhales every molecule of it.
She looks at the gold pocket watch. It reads: 5:20.

EXT. ALAMOGORDO/TOWER - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE on the ATOM BOMB, hanging in the center of the tower.
A FLASH - lighting the desert night like a thousand suns.

INT. ARMY BUNKER -- CONTINUOUS

The light fills Baker's goggles.

EXT. MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO -- CONTINUOUS

And Tilano's eyes.

EXT. TSIREGE -- CONTINUOUS

And Edith's - the horizon is ILLUMINATED. The ground RUMBLES.

INT. FRONT ROOM/HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

In the empty house WINDOWS SHATTER. Books fly from the
shelves, pottery from the mantle - SMASHING on the floor.

EXT. TEST-SITE -- CONTINUOUS

A huge VIOLENTLY-COLORED CLOUD mushrooms toward the heavens,
THUNDER from the blast BOOMS AND ECHOS across the desert...

These are the sights and sounds of the WORLD CHANGING FOREVER.

INT. BUNKER -- CONTINUOUS

Baker, Oppie, the other scientists watch. IN AWE.

EXT. MAIN PLAZA/PUEBLO -- CONTINUOUS

Tilano watches. IN DISBELIEF.

EXT. TSIREGE -- CONTINUOUS

Edith watches. IN HORROR. We hear

EDITH (V.O.)

At 5:20am on July 16, 1945 the first
atomic bomb was tested at Alamogordo,
New Mexico. Our world would never be
the same.

EXT. GARDEN/SIDE OF HOUSE -- ANOTHER DAY

Edith is working in her garden when she hear HORSE-HOOVES.
She turns - Tilano is walking a horse up to her house.

TILANO

So I heard there was this crazy white
woman fending for herself over by
Otowi Bridge.

She smiles.

EDITH

Very crazy.

He looks around at all the construction.

TILANO

And she was so happy when they started
building a highway outside her door.

EDITH

Tilano...

Her eyes fill with tears. She wants to take back any harsh
word, apologize for every wrong choice, tell him how much
she loves and misses him - but before she can, he just looks
deep into her eyes.

TILANO

I know. Me, too.

We hold on them for a moment, then

USING ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

WE SEE A FLASH

THEN AN EXPLOSION

EDITH (V.O.)

Less than 3 weeks after it was tested,
the first atomic bomb was dropped on
Hiroshima, Japan.

WE SEE THE DEVASTATION OF HIROSHIMA.

EDITH (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It was over in 9 seconds. Over 200,000
people were killed.

ANOTHER FLASH

ANOTHER EXPLOSION

EDITH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
3 days later a second bomb was dropped
on Nagasaki, Japan.

MORE ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

WE SEE THE DESTRUCTION OF NAGASAKI.

EDITH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Over 100,000 people were killed.
6 days later Japan surrendered and
the war was over.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE -- A FEW DAYS LATER

Construction is in full swing outside her house as Edith digs in her garden. A military jeep pulls up and Baker gets out. When Edith sees him her blood runs cold, and she digs a little deeper. He approaches.

BAKER
Hi.

EDITH
Hi.

BAKER
I wanted to say goodbye.

No response. She keeps digging.

BAKER (CONT'D)
Edith...?

She stops digging.

BAKER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I wish I could have stopped it.

She looks at him. He is pale, broken - a changed man.

BAKER (CONT'D)
It's not that our hearts weren't
right. They just...got lost in the
equation.

Her heart can only open to this man. Her eyes fill with tears.

Tilano comes out of the house. Baker approaches him.

BAKER (CONT'D)

I just came to say goodbye.

They lock eyes. The silence is awkward, excruciating. So much - and nothing - to be said.

Tilano looks over to see Edith - who's still in the garden - staring at the two of them. To her:

TILANO

Lunch. Whenever you're ready.

Tilano looks at Baker, WHISPERS SOMETHING IN TEWA, goes back in the house.

Edith stands, approaches Baker, who doesn't understand.

BAKER

What was that?

EDITH

An old Tewa expression. Rough translation: whatever it is you're looking for, I hope it finds you.

Baker looks at her, his eyes fill with tears.

BAKER

I don't know how any of us would've gotten through this - without you.

This both touches and disturbs her. But she takes him in her arms and they hold each other - for a very long time.

INT. FRONT ROOM/HOUSE - A WEEK LATER

Edith is boxing up her belongings in the front room.

TILANO

You sure you want to do this?

EDITH

My father's not well - I need to see him. Besides, the construction's only going to get worse. I can't live like this.

TILANO

I told you, you could move into the Pueblo with us. Of course, you'd have to marry me.

EDITH

You don't want to marry me.

He smiles.

TILANO
Yeah, you're probably right.

EXT. HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

Tilano loads her boxes and suitcase into his truck.

INT. FRONT ROOM/HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

It's clean, bare, empty. Edith, dressed in city clothes, takes a long, last look - she and this little house traveled a great distance together. The emotion is starting to well up, but she fights it back. No. She will NOT break down.

EXT. FRONT OF THE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Edith's in the front seat, Tilano drives. He takes the road to Tsirege - away from the Pueblo and the train station.

EDITH
What are you doing? I want to see
Adam and your family before we go to
the train!

TILANO
I thought you might want to say
goodbye to Avanyu first.

EXT. TSIREGE/ANCESTRAL SITE - DAY

With the truck parked below, Edith and Tilano hike up to Avanyu's spot on Tsirege.

EXT. CANYON OVERLOOK - CONTINUOUS

When she reaches the top Edith is shocked by what she sees: construction is going on, a small house is being built.

Busy at work are scientists and their wives from Los Alamos - the Wilsons, Burns', among others. Working alongside them are Indians from the Pueblo - Adam, Maria, Sayah, Quebi, Oqua, Joe and Ignacio.

Tilano quickly crosses to where the front of the house will be - and where Wilson and Burns are working.

TILANO
No, no - the front door goes here!

BURNS
But it would be so much faster if -

TILANO

Faster is not always better.
(showing him)
I want the porch to come out here.

BURNS

A porch is completely impractical!
Edith will have a lot more space if -

TILANO

Don't you understand - the porch is
everything! It's like the arms that
welcome you into the house!

Burns and Wilson exchange an eye-roll.

BURNS

A porch is like arms.

WILSON

A porch is like arms.

Edith is completely bewildered.

EDITH

What's going on?

TILANO

We're building your house.

EDITH

My house?

TILANO

We got the tribunal to set aside a
small piece of land - by the time
you get back from visiting your
father, it will be done.

Edith looks at him in disbelief. Then all the tears she's
been holding back come pouring out - and she begins to cry.
Tilano takes her in his arms.

TILANO (CONT'D)

You have to have a house to come
home to, don't you?

A moment. Tilano spots Burns and Wilson doing something wrong.

TILANO (CONT'D)

That is, if I can get these geniuses
to do what they're told!

As he goes to show them how it's done, Edith looks over at
that Rock Wall, the image of her old friend, Avanyu.

And as we PULL BACK from them all, we hear

EDITH (V.O.)
There are certain places on the
earth...

EXT. SANGRE DE CRISTO MOUNTAINS - DAY

The Pajarito Plateau, in all its splendor.

EDITH (V.O.)
Where the great powers that move...

Far below the Rio Grande snakes its way through the canyons.

EDITH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Between earth and sky...

EXT. PUEBLO - CONTINUOUS

Simple, ancient - a testament to the human spirit.

EDITH (V.O.)
Are much closer...

EXT. LOS ALAMOS LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Brilliant, new - a testament to the human mind.

EDITH (V.O.)
And more available than others.

EXT. TSIREGE - CONTINUOUS

A RATTLESNAKE in the bush, a MOUNTAIN LION on the ridge, an
EAGLE patrolling the sky.

EDITH (V.O.)
This was the story of a house...

EXT. TSIREGE/NEW HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Smoke rises from the chimney of a modest little house.

EDITH (V.O.)
That stood for many years...

Edith sits on her porch, looking out over the canyon. Tilano
comes out onto the porch to join her as Baker's GOLD POCKET
WATCH is open in her hand.

EDITH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Like a bridge...

CLOSE ON THE WATCH

It still reads: 5:20 a.m.

EDITH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Between two worlds.

CLOSE ON EDITH

She is happy.

At peace.

FADE OUT:

AND THEN A SCRAWL:

In 1950 NIELS BOHR wrote an open letter to the United Nations, pleading with the governments of the world to work together to end the insanity of nuclear weapons. He was to be a passionate advocate for arms control throughout the rest of his life.

TILANO lived happily the rest of his days - first with Edith, then in the Pueblo at San Ildefonso.

EDITH WARNER died of cancer in 1951.

She was buried in an Indian grave.