Season 28, Episode 6, “To Keep What Is Dear”, Part 1

(scene opens at The D Ranch, dawn, early, sunrise coming up over the top of the forest on the hills bordering the east side of the ranch, coloring the clouds in the sky red. Behind her, to the West, the tall hills that signal the end of the mountain range, seem to pick up the redness of the sunrise...Nell is seen standing in the pasture next to the house, alone, arms crossed over her chest, resting on her belly, sizable now...Her button up denim blouse lays long, covering the top part of her long beige skirt, barely covering the tops of her worn, flat-heeled boots. On her head, a wide brimmed, floppy hat perches....She is pointed towards the East, looking at the colors of the ranch land change as the sun rises, little by little....She speaks to the child inside her...)

Nell: “Andreas...close your little eyes, sweetheart...Look at this through your mommy’s eyes”

(Nell gently runs a hand over her stomach, her own eyes close. Her face lights up...)

Nell: “I can feel you moving....Go ahead, I’ll wait”

(Her hand still on her stomach, her eyes still closed...she waits...then)

Nell: “There you go...you ready?”

(She still closes her eyes....then, speaking to her child in a low voice...)

Nell: “It shows us, sweet girl, every day’s a new day...no matter what you go through, there’s a new day coming....and with that new day comes hope for a better one”

(She opens her eyes, just as the sun rises enough to send red and pink streaks shooting upwards towards the clouds...She looks around, watches the new wheat that has come up after it was burned, reflect the colors of the sunrise....she continues speaking to her baby)

Nell: “Honey....this land...it’s your home. It’s going to be your home, your children's home, their children's home....and someday, when I’m gone, I hope you stand out here and see what I see....(she pauses) “..Hope, honey...this land is a gift to us from God...and a promise of that Hope...”

(She turns to start the long walk back to the house, and sees Dil standing on the edge of the pasture, a football field's length away, hands stuck in his worn out jeans, a plaid lumberjack shirt tight around the shoulders and chest, loose around the waist...He has been watching her...longish hair not yet brushed, falling on his forehead...She stops and takes the new sight in)

Nell: "And Andreas...there's the only sight more beautiful than our sunrise...Your daddy..."

(She smiles...waves....They both start walking towards each other, finally meeting a distance from the house...they stop, facing each other, close...)

Dil: "Ask me what my favorite time of the day is"

(She looks at him curiously...)

Nell: "Okay...what is your favorite time of the day?"

(He pauses...looks at his wife....then...)

Dil: "When you see me...and you smile like you do....That moment is my favorite time of the day"

(She blushes...shyly smiles...)

Nell: "Then you must have a lot of favorite times of the day....I smile every time I see you"

(He grins...)

Dil: 'Yea...I know..."

(She playfully punches his chest...)

Nell: "No fair making me want to cry this early in the morning...."

(He gives her a light kiss..Then he looks around at the land)

Dil: "You out here surveying all the lands you own?"

(She chuckles...)

Nell: "No, silly...I don't own it....you and Dez do...But I feel like it's mine...I feel like I belong...and that's good enough for me..."

(He places an arm over her shoulders, draws her close)

Dil: “The day we said ‘I do’ is the day you became one of the owners...Virginia Community Property Law, baby....”

(She leans her head against his chest, still looking at the land....)

Nell: “I know...But it’s been in your family forever...Anyway, it feels like home...our home. Our baby’s home”

Dil: ‘It is....always will be”

Nell: “I feel like I’m going to wake up and it’s all been a dream”

Dil: “Nope...you’re awake...it’s real...But you know...You can get this same view from the house...Why do you think we had the front done all in glass?”

(She looks down at the ground...she moves one of her boots against the tall green grass)

Nell: “I like feeling the ground under my feet...It makes me feel connected....somehow...”

(He laughs....)

Dil: “Sometimes, Nell, I think you love this place more than I do....”

Nell: “I love it with all my heart....at least the part allowed to love home...”

Dil: ‘And I’m sure the land loves you back....Now....are you two hungry?”

(She looks up at him smiling....)

Nell: “Oh yea...we two girls are big time hungry!”

(He looks at the smile....smiles back)

Dil: “Guess what my favorite time of the day is...”

(She stands on her tip toes, tilting her head up, purses her lips...he leans his head down to meet her, kisses her lightly)

Nell: “No crying before breakfast....it’s a law....Now come on and feed us, big boy”

Dil: “Okay...but that’s a lousy law....Maybe my pancakes will be so good you could cry...”

Nell: “With jalapenos!”

Dil: “Wow...you are pregnant....”

Nell: “Dang skippy I am!...Now, quit stalling and make me cry over those pancakes!”

Dil: “Will do, little momma...Torres and Bishop are already here, Tony and Ziva are fighting over whether to make biscuits or toast..Something to do with the bacon fitting better on the toast than it does a biscuit”

Nell: “Who’s winning?”

Dil: “Tali...as usual...”

Nell; “Tali...she is the sweetest girl....I love having her here...Did they bring my little niece?”

Dil: “No...sorry...she’s with Delilah and Tim....the twins are at her moms, and she...”

Nell: “And Delilah wanted the baby? Dil!...”

Dil: “Sorry honey....”

Nell: “I wanted to practice!”

Dil: “You can practice on me later....now come on....”

Nell: “Okay....big baby....”

(They begin their walk to the house, arm in arm.....)

(scene shifts to the D Ranch kitchen, Dez and the others inside, Dez looking out the rear windows...She sees Cal, standing, looking out...She walks outside, sees that Cal’s eyes are closed..then they open...he turns to her...)

Dez: “Watcha doin’ pretty man?”

Cal: “Listening”

Dez: “To what? It’s quiet out here”

(He shakes his head)

Cal: “No, ...the air is quite full...”

(silence)

Cal: “A prayer....A mother...talking to a child...”

(He shrugs...puts an arm around her waist)

Cal: “I am famished...and the aromas are overwhelming me..”

Dez: “So, lead you to what you’re hungry for....right?”

Cal: “No....”

(She looks at him curiously....)

Cal: “I am holding what I hunger for....”

(She scowls....pulls him towards the French doors)

Dez: “Stop it!...Or we’ll never make it through breakfast!..”

(scene shifts to the other side of the hills...4 men, 4 tents, one of them starts piling kindling on the ground....One of the other men shouts out...)

Man: “Hey!..We brought a camp stove!”

Man 2: “We’re camping...we need a campfire...it’s a rule, brother...”

Man 3: “The rules of this area say no fires....They said these hills haven’t been touched by rain for 2 months...”

Man 4: “I’m with him...we didn’t come out here to play camp...we came to really camp....Let’s get a fire going...we cook, we eat, we put the fire out, we’re twenty miles from the nearest Ranger station....who’s going to know?”

(Two of the men proceed to gather kindling, then larger pieces of wood....The other two men drag coolers over, pulling out the makings of breakfast...)

(Scene fades to black and white)

(Scene opens in the formal dining area at The D Ranch...a large map spread out on the table)

Dez: “Bubba...we do have this on a thumb drive...”

Dil: “Nope...I like this better”

Torres: “Yea...it’s like we’re land barons, carving up the territory...”

Tony: “Or McClintock...”

(Tony looks around....they look at him, curiously)

Tony: “Just making sure Gibbs wasn’t around...It’s a John Wayne movie....”

Dil: “We’re not land barons guys...we’re just looking at what you’re buying...”

Tony: “We could hire gunmen....”

Torres: “Yea!...And we could steal the land!”

Dez: “We have more guns than you, Torres....”

(Tony looks at her, face falls....)

Tony: “That’s just like Maureen O’hara, finally backing John Wayne’s play...”

Dez: “As I recall, she played a very independent and strong woman...”

Tony: “That got paddled with a fireplace shovel....”

Dez: “Then faked her love, led John Wayne around by the nose, then when nobody was looking, she banished him from her bed and she stole the land!”

(They stare at Dez....eyes wide....She blushes...)

Dez: “It was in the sequel...”

(Torres and Tony look at each other...then back at Dez...)

Torres; “Dez...man....that was harsh...”

Bishop: “It happens, Torres...pay attention...It could happen to you....”

Ziva: “And to you, Anthony...although...”

(They all turn to stare at Ziva....she holds her head up high...)

Ziva: “I am merely stating a low percentage possibility...that is all...”

Dil: “Like I was saying.....”

(He points to the far north side of the map....)

Dil: “This is the north boundary of the property....On the other side is property owned by the county....In the hills...(points to map) “..You can see here...it’s a canyon...it splits the hills here, and has a big stream at the bottom...right now, the

stream runs off the hills onto our land, and forms a natural property line between us here...and the tract we're about to talk about..."

Dez: "That's why there's a large grove of tall trees along the border....the stream feeds those trees"

Torres: "That's the area me and Bish looked at..Muy bueno beautiful...."

Bishop: "Get ready...my husband is going to gush...."

Torres: "What? Me? Gush?...."

Bishop: "You...gush...you took one look and fell in love with it"

Torres: "Okay...So we'll call it Bishop Land...You know...because...."

(Bishop punches Torres in the arm....)

Bishop: "Stop it!..."

Nell: "I think it's so sweet!...Bishop Land it is!..."

Torres; "No...no...I was just kidding...."

(Bishop looks at him, cocks her head...)

Torres: "I mean, yea...It was love at first sight...you know...for both...."

Bishop: 'I like Bishop Land...it's settled...."

(Torres frowns...)

Torres; "I gotta learn to keep quiet...."

(Dil grins....goes back to the map....)

Dil: "Okay...you picked out a parcel of 10 acres bordering the hillside....Now..."

(He runs his finger up the map, from the hillside to the country road...)

Dil: "We want you to consider this area too...."

Bishop: "Dil...that's too much land...it's..."

Dez: "100 acres..."

Bishop: "No...we can't...we're not rich...."

Nell: "Included in the 10 acre price!"

(Bishop and Torres stare at Nell....)

Torres: “No...i mean thanks,,,but no....”

Bishop: “We’re not going to take advantage of a friendship....No...we can’t...”

Dez: “It’s not about friendship, Ellie...it’s about the law....”

(Dez runs her finger up the map along the north border...)

Dez: “State law dictates that bordering property can be obtained by the state, should the state deem it’s needed....”

Torres: “You mean like a land baron?”

Dez: “Exactly like a land baron...only worse....Except....”

(She runs her hand along the border again...)

Dez: “The state or county can take it....Unless...the land is occupied, with a house on it, fully functional, and someone living in it full time...So...yea, we’re friends, and that has a lot to do with this....but...it’s also about protecting this land from the state taking what they want....”

Nell: “Yes...So...we want you to take it...please....”

(They stare at Nell, then...back at Dez...)

Dez: “She wants this place to stay the way it is....”

Nell: “I do....it’s...It’s special....”

Dil: “So guys...you benefit from extra land....We benefit having you and your family establishing that legal border...”

Bishop: “But Dil...100 acres..that’s too much for you to give up....”

Dez: “El....We have 4100 acres....Cal and I have 2000....”

(Bishop’s eyes get big....)

Tony: “Land barons...We’re sitting on the McClintock ranch....for real...”

Dez: “We’re not done...”

(She pulls the huge map across the table...she points to the south side border....)

Dez: “Same law applies on the far side of our place....”

(She taps the border line on the map, the far side of the Thomas House)

Dez: “Because the hills curve there, it’s only a 50 acre tract....but Tony, you and Ziva picked out a tract here....and that 10 acre plot you picked out...If you expand it north for half a mile, it comes to the north border, the county road.....Cal and I want to offer you two the same deal....and it benefits us just as much as it benefits Dil and Nell...”

Nell: “And you too...you still own D Ranch...”

Dez: “I know...but I’m in love with my new home....as much as I love this place...”

(Dez smiles at Cal...)

Dez: “It’s my home now....”

Dil: “Okay guys...what do you think?”

Torres: “Man...100 acres...that’s a lot of land to take care of....”

Dil: “My workers will continue to tend to it..in exchange, we’ll split the profits on the crop 50/50...”

Nell: “Dil! Tell them about the lines!”

(Dil nods...)

Dil: “Yea..I forgot...county and state property requirements dictated 20 years ago that properties potentially to be zoned commercial had to be bordered with access to utilities....”

Bishop: “Oh my gosh...I didn’t even think about that...it will cost so much to bring those in....”

Dil: “There’s already water, sewage, and electricity run in....The state paid for it 20 years ago...Both our ranch and the Thomas Ranch benefited from it...So...yea...you’ll have to hook up to them, and that’s on you, but the major part, from the land to the county utilities...it’s already there....and it’s underground, so freezes and storms don’t affect it”

Dez: “It still leaves you the 10 acres of wooded land to develop like you want....We take care of the rest....It’s a win/win, Torres....”

Nell: “Nick...Ellie..Tony...Ziva...Please...I love this place...I want it to stay in our family forever....If you do this, I know the state can’t take any of it....When I found out they could....”

Dil: “She completely freaked...”

Dez: “I feel the same way about ours....I’ve seen what a state or county can do when they want the tax income...”

Tony: “Tax income?”

Dez: “Yea...Right now, both properties are grandfathered in to a low tax rate...it was an agreement made between our family and the state, 30 years ago...and the Thomas Family...The agreement allowed one transfer of this tax shelter, and it dies after you and Torres buy it.....The state...if it takes the land...and the laws of Imminent Domain are ruthless, they can raise the taxes to 10 times what we pay now....They want to do it...badly”

(She pauses...then)

Dez; “Then calculate that 70% of both our properties have crops, and with those come agricultural exemptions...The state would take those away from us too...So...we can literally give you the extra land and we benefit financially. It’s almost a break even scenario...so...”

Torres: “It’s like we’re fighting the evil land barons....”

Dez: “The most ruthless land barons of all. If you don’t buy the properties...(pause) “I can fight them in court, and delay it for years...but eventually...they’ll take it..The idea of a shopping mall next door or an industrial plant doesn’t appeal to me”

(Torres stares at the map....he runs his hand over the area he and Bishop are being offered....without a word, he leaves the room....Bishop watches...stays by the table...)

Bishop: “Give him a minute...”

Nell: “Is he okay? He looks upset”

Bishop: “He is...but it’s not bad....”

(Bishop looks up at Dil....mouths, ‘thank you’)

Bishop: “He was raised being told that a man isn’t a man unless he owns land...and for 10 years, undercover, he never even owned a house...He didn’t even have a home, much less land...That’s why when he left undercover, he began buying rent houses...and more rent houses...It was his way of buying land....”

(She looks towards the kitchen where Torres left.....)

Bishop: “Give me a minute....I’ll be right back”

(She leaves...)

(scene shifts to the back patio...Torres is standing in the orchard, looking towards the north....Bishop walks up...)

Bishop: “You okay?”

(Torres nods....)

Bishop: “We’re doing this...aren’t we?”

(He nods again....)

Bishop: “It’s as much for Nickie as it is for us....”

(He nods...)

Bishop: “I love you, Nick”

Torres: “Love you too”

Bishop: “I’m proud of you...proud to be your wife”

(He doesn’t reply....then..)

Torres: “Maybe...maybe now...when we do this....”

(He still stands facing away, looking towards the area of the property...he turns to face her...)

Torres: “maybe, you know...(pause) “...I can be proud of me, too...”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at the men's campsite...a cell phone rings....one man, cursing the phone, answers it...He takes the call, then angrily ends it...)

Man: "We gotta go....."

Man 2: "Why? We just ate breakfast!"

Man: "Assembly line 14 just blew a gear...it's shut down the entire line...."

Man 3: "And we are the tech crew....."

Man 4: "And duty calls...."

Man 3: "Along with time and a half today...."

Man 4: "Which means the quicker we get outa here, the quicker we start earning that big check!"

Man: "We've got to put the fire out, guys...."

Man 4: "At time and a half, we can let it burn out on its own!"

(scene fades out to the men scurrying to take down the tents...)

(scene switches to the D Ranch dining room....Torres and Bishop walk back in.....)

Torres: "We're in....and muy grateful...to all of you..."

(Nell starts tearing up.....She runs to Torres, hugs him...)

Nell: "Thank you....thank you so much...."

Torres: "Oh yea...you're welcome..Glad to take 100 acres for the price of 10....I mean, it's a tough job, but someone's' got to do it"

Nell: "NO!...You're the ones to do it!...Tony and Ziva are the ones!...Our best friends ever, on this land....It's so wonderful!"

(Ziva looks at Tony....he looks down at her...nods...)

Ziva: "My husband has made a decision...we are happy to build here too...."

(Nell shrieks, runs to Ziva...hugs her....starts to hug Tony...stops...)

Nell: "I want to hug you too!..But your back!..."

Tony: “It’s healing, Nell...my nurses have done miracles...”

(Nell hugs him....his face winces....)

Dez: “Wait...Ziva...your husband made the decision?...Have you....”

Ziva: “I have decided to become a new woman....I am appreciating what and who he is....”

(Dez stares at Ziva...Ziva gives small grin...)

Ziva: “I gave him permission to make the decision....I told him this is what I wanted and I would not change my mind” (pause) “...but I left it up to him....as any good wife would do...”

(Dez grins....)

Tony: “I believe her exact words were “Do it or I will show you what kind of pain I can inflict with a paper clip”

(Ziva looks at Tony in shock)

Ziva: “That is so not true, Anthony...!.”

(She pauses)

Ziva: “It was a bobby pin...I distinctly remember....”

Nell: “I don’t care if you threatened him with paper cuts!....I’m so happy!”

(Ziva looks up at Tony...bewildered look..)

Ziva: “Death by paper cuts?”

(The group chuckles.....)

Tony: “Ziva..remember?...Beirut...2015?”

Ziva: ‘Oh yes....my mistake....Yes...death by paper cuts....I forgot...”

(The group stops chuckling....Ziva looks at them....)

Ziva: “It was very nice stationary....very heavy....”

(They are interrupted by Tali and Ahnjong walking into the room....Tali is using a cane....)

Tali; “What are you doing?”

Ziva: “Precious...we are looking at something....come see....”

(Tali walks to the table....)

Tali: ‘It is a map...a real map”

Ziva: “Yes...and here....”

(She runs her hand over the border of the property, the other side of the Thomas House property....)

Ziva: “This is where we are going to build our home....”

(Tali looks up at Ziva....wide eyed....)

Tali: “A home?”

Ziva: “Yes, dearest...a home...”

(Tali’s eyes light up...)

Tali: “MOTHER!...WHEN DO START BUILDING?..I CAN HELP!”

(Tony laughs)

Tony: “Tali....I’m sure we will hire builders....”

(Tali shakes her head....)

Tali: “NO!...Daddy...we have to help build it!...It is how we know it is ours!”

(Torres watches Tali....then...)

Torres; “She gets it....She’s right....”

Ziva: “Yes...I believe it is in her blood...To us...land is precious....Ours was a gift..and people want to take it....they still want to take it”

Tony: “Honey...we’re not in Israel...”

(Ziva gets quiet....then...)

Ziva: “Everywhere is Israel....Someone is always there to take what you hold dear”

(scene shifts to the Park Ranger station, 25 miles from the ranches....inside, two rangers look at the weather on the TV....)

Ranger 1: “High winds coming in.....”

Ranger 2: “Yea...blowing East to West....away from the private property on the other side...”

(They look at the TV...the weather girl, showing her $10,000 set of capped teeth off with her smile....)

Girl: (on tv) “And then channel 3 friends, sometime in the afternoon, the winds will shift towards the East, and pick up to around 30 miles per hour....It will be a perfect day for sailing!”

(scene shifts to the campsite...The scene shows the men driving off....the image zooms in on the smoldering campfire...the breeze picks up, the coals glow bright red....some of the left over kindling bursts into flame...)

(scene shifts to the olive orchard off the back patio...Dil and Nell lead Ziva towards an area between the orchard and the large barn...they point to the area behind the barn, showing 3 large water tanks....)

Ziva; ‘You have water collection tanks....”

Dil: “Yea...We need them for irrigation...the county water lines don’t supply the pressure we need...”

Ziva; “Dilbert!...They are huge!”

(She looks at the 3 tanks...all three are identical...)

Dil: ‘27 feet in diameter, 14 feet high...each one holds up to 30,000 gallons of rainwater...and I fill them with well water when it’s dry...The lines you see running from them are hooked up to the natural underground water...The small hut next to them houses an electric pump, mostly solar powered...If we lose county water, I flip a lever, and it runs the water to the house...”

Ziva; “You are more self-sufficient than I thought!”

Dil; ‘Have to be....”

Ziva; “Fascinating, Dilbert...and it is a lesson for Anthony and myself...but...you did not bring me out here to show me water....did you?”

(Dil looks over at Nell....Nell is smiling...big...)

Dil: “My wife is about to pop....”

Nell: “I can’t wait any more!...Ziva!...come with me!”

(Nell takes off running...Ziva looks at Dil...he nods his head towards Nell...Ziva runs quickly, catching up to Nell....Nell reaches the barn, then stops at the rear...)

Nell: “Are you ready?”

Ziva: “Ready for what? More water?”

Nell: “No....Okay...you know how you like the olive trees in back?”

Ziva: ‘Like? No, Nell...I love them....they are home to me”

(Nell pulls Ziva by the hand to the back of the barn...she stops, smiles big....)

Nell; “TA DAH!”

(Ziva looks...then she stops breathing....she looks at Nell....)

Ziva: “These are..oh Nell...these are...”

(Nell explodes...)

Nell: “Jerusalem Olive trees!...They came from ours!....I dug them up last year and put them in planters....I wanted to give them to you as a gift!...And now that you’ll be here...It’s time!”

(Ziva looks at the young trees...all in planters, all about 12 feet tall, leaves coming out....)

Nell: “You can bring in bigger ones if you want...but you can add these to what you buy...”

(Ziva looks at the saplings, speechless...she walks to them...touches leaves....)

Ziva: “Oh...Nell...why....this must have been so much trouble....”

Nell: “No trouble, silly...I’ve been bursting to show you....I was afraid they didn’t take to the pots, but last week, they started growing leaves!...They made it!”

Ziva: “You are...you are making this our land....”

Nell: “Yes!”

Ziva: “You are making it our holy land...”

Nell: “That’s what it feels like to me...so...yea....holy land on!”

(Ziva runs to Nell...hugs her....)

Ziva: “It is the most wonderful gift ever....My Nell...how can I thank you....?”

Nell: “Uh...build a house?”

(Ziva wipes her eyes....nods....)

Ziva: “Yes...I shall give Anthony permission to approve my wishes....”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at the campsite...dried pine needles near the campfire are blazing....sparks carried by the wind spread further out....more dried leaves and pine needles blaze up...the view zooms out....The hillside is covered in flames....)

(scene shifts to the D Ranch kitchen, entire group except for Tali is gathered at the table, drinking coffee....)

Tony: “Our own olive trees? Like those?”

Ziva: “Yes..I am...I am touched....”

Nell: “I’m pee pant happy!”

(They look towards the French doors, Tali walks in....)

Tali: “I love the sunrises here!”

Dil: ‘Honey...the sunrises are on the other side of the house....”

Tali: “No...it’s right there....”

(She points out the window towards the hills behind the house...)

Tali: “I can see the red glow coming over the tops! The sky is beautiful!”

(Dil’s face immediately changes...he jumps up, Dez follows...)

Dil: “No ...god no.....”

(Dil and Dez run out the back doors...they stand on the patio, looking up at the hills....the glow from the forest fire on the other side of the hills paints the sky a deep red....)

Dil: 'FIRE!....DEZ, NELL!...GET THE HORSES TO THE EAST PASTURE!"

(Dil turns to the others....all are looking at him, in shock...)

Dil: "If you need to go, go...I'll understand....But...If you want to save this land...Do exactly what I tell you....."

(scene fades to black and white)

Part 2

(scene opens in rear of the D Ranch, Ziva, Tony, Cal, Bishop standing on the back patio, looking up at the red glow coming over the top of the hills behind the house. Cal, Torres, Tony stand at the base of the orchard, along the fence line, looking upwards, Dil stands to the side, cell phone to ear....)

Dil: "How much time do we have before the fire crests?

(Listens....)

Dil: "Okay...the units on the other side have a firewall built there?"

(He nods....then...)

Dil: "What?...No...about what time...?"

(listens more....nods....rubs his eyes, then looks up at the hills as he finishes...)

Dil: "Okay....yea...I'll have them down....just drive down the road then I'll have you a straight shot to the fence line...."

(listens more)

Dil: "Three...they're all full...you've got 60,000 gallons to work with after your tanks are dry...I'd like to save one tank for my barn...."

(Dil ends the call....he turns to the men, listening, waiting for him...)

Dil: “Cal, they have a firebreak that’s working about a mile towards your house...Chief Davis says the Park Fire Force feels good about it not reaching your place at all...”

(Cal is staring at the hillside....turns his head to the right, looking Northward...)

Dil: “Cal.....”

(Cal turns his head to Dil...nods...)

Cal: “Thank you, Dilbert...I am not concerned....”

(Dil, Torres, Tony, look at Cal, curiously...Cal notices...turns to them...)

Cal: “My family is safe....I do not hold the house tightly....I can build again....”

(He looks upwards again...)

Cal: “It is this land....Yours, Dilbert...This land is to be held in one’s hand tightly...So...”

(He nods at Dil)

Cal: “It allows myself and Destiny to assist....I feel confident Ahnjong and the children will be safe...”

Tony: “Glad you’re worry-free, Cal...but if you don’t mind, I’m going to worry....”

Dil: ‘Tony...remember...you’re not obligated to buy it...we haven’t signed documents yet...”

(Cal watches Tony...studying him....Tony looks northward at the hills rising up past the Thomas House....the area he and Ziva are buying....)

Tony: “Dez got them ready?”

Dil: “Well yea....they’re in the dining room...But brother....don’t you think....”

Tony: “How much time do we have before we know how bad it’s going to be?”

Dil: “Several hours...why...?”

(Tony starts to slowly walk towards the house, then hears a commotion coming from the pasture.....)

(scene shift to the pasture...Dez and Nell on horses .racing across the pasture, Dez on the dappled gelding Lorenzo, Nell on Prissy, both leaning forward over the horns, both whipping loose reins back and forth across the horses' necks, manes flying outward as the two women, at a full gallop, race towards the north side of the pasture, another set of stables, and a corral full of frightened horses whinny in fear at the smell of smoke....)

Dez: "HYA! HYA!..."

(Dez yells at her horse, urging her onward, faster....)

Nell: "FASTER PRISSY!...LET IT GO!...GO GIRL!..."

(Nell's floppy hat flies off her head, the horse obeying her commands, straining to race across the pasture...)

(scene shifts to the men....the others, alerted to the commotion, leave the porch and come out to witness the scene....)

Torre: "Nell?...Daaaaaang!..."

Bishop: "I figured Dez....but Nell...."

Dil: "She's done magic with Prissy...the bond between the two is special...."

Torres: "But ride like that?...I'm not believing this!"

Dil: "She rides every chance she gets...Dez has been teaching her....Hold on...they've almost reached the corral....watch...."

(scene shifts to the fenced in circle adjoining the stable house....Dez races up first, Lorenzo, knowing his task, comes to a skidding halt at the gate.....)

Dez: "NELL!...YOU READY?"

(Prissy slows...Nell guides her to the side of the corral....then stops, facing the pasture...)

Nell: "READY!...TURN "EM LOOSE!"

(Dez leans over in her saddle, lifts the metal bar from the hitch, then takes a hand, places it on the gate post, and trots Lorenzo outward, pulling the gate open....The horses in the corral whinny and knicker...Nell expertly backs Prissy up, then takes the coiled rope off her pommel, starts banging it on the fence rail...)

Nell: “HYA!..HYA!...GO!....GET OUT!...HYA!...”

(The horses panic at the sudden sounds, then all 12 of them begin racing out of the gate.....Dez waits....then yells..)

Dez: “YOU GO RIGHT!...I”LL TAKE LEFT!”

(Nell immediately kicks Prissy’s flanks, and the horse surges forward, racing around the back of the scattering herd, circling around to the far side, moving two of the horses that have taken off from the herd, back to it....Dez races forward to the near side of the herd, doing the same to one horse that has strayed from the herd...)

(scene shifts to the group...Dil watches the hillside....the rest are awed at the sight of the two women on their horses....Dil turns....he talks to himself....)

Dil: “Okay...push them now....”

(scene shifts to the pasture....Dez yells at Nell....)

Dez: “GO!...OPEN THE GATE!...”

(Nell is already on her way, veering to the right, running Prissy towards another corral....Prissy slides to a stop at the gate, Nell opens it, swings the gate wide open.....then races back towards the herd, taking up her spot behind them....)

Dez: “PUSH “EM IN!”

(Nell and Dez slow....they both veer in and out behind the herd, moving their horses closer....Nell sees one start to move from the herd,..she gallops to the horse, Prissy doing the rest, moving the frightened animal back into the herd....The herd starts to enter the corral.....)

(scene shifts to the group...)

Dil: “TALI!...”

(Tali turns to Dil...)

Tali: “NOW?”

Dil: ‘NOW!..Go get them!.”

Ziva: “Honey...be careful....”

Tali: “Always momma....”

(Tali walks as fast as the cane will allow to the Jeep in front....Torres and Bishop watch...surprised..)

Torres: “Dude!...She’s twelve!...”

Tony: ‘She’s okay...I’ve been teaching her to drive here on the ranch...it’s just across the pasture....she can handle it....”

(Tony looks at his daughter, nervously.....)

Torres “Uh, Dinozzo...it was you that taught her to drive...right?...Not your....”

(Ziva punches Torres in the arm....Torres winces....)

Ziva: “TALI YOU BE CAREFUL!”

(the young girl climbs carefully into the Jeep, starts the motor, then pulls the shifter into drive...the Jeep starts to roll forward....then picks up speed....They watch as she heads straight across the pasture towards Nell and Dez....)

(scene switches....Nell and Dez have taken the saddles and bridles off the two horses.....Nell goes to Prissy...nuzzles her nose....)

Nell: “Thank you sweet girl....you’ll be safe here....Momma’s going to go back now...but I'll be back to get you as soon as I can....”

(Dez frowns...looks at Lorenzo....)

Dez; “Hey!...Be a horse!”

(Lorenzo whinnies....)

Dez: “Yea..like that...”

Nell: “You should be nicer to Lorenzo...he’s starved for attention....”

Dez; ‘He is not!...Nell..he’s a horse!”

Nell: “He’s looking at you...he’s sad you’re leaving...”

Dez; “Nell? Fire? House? Priority?”

(Dez jumps as she’s almost pushed off her feet by Lorenzo’s nose....)

Nell: ‘Here she comes!”

(Dez looks in the direction of the house....Bessie is finally arriving, loping as fast as she can.....)

Dez: “Okay...last one’s here...we can let Bessie graze...”

Nell: “Here comes our ride...”

(Tali is seen driving up in the Jeep....the jeep slides to a stop on the grass...)

Tali: “Sorry...I am still working on the stop part....”

(Dez climbs in the back seat, Nell in front...)

Dez; “You’re doing fine...Let’s get back, honey...There’s work to do”

Nell: “Lots of work....We’re going to stop that fire...”

Dez; “Nothing stops a fire, Sis....”

(Nell looks at the smoke rising up over the hill top...)

Nell: “We will...We have to....”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at the house...Dez, Nell, Tali arrive....Dil has them grouped inside, in the living room)

Dil: ‘Torres.... The firetrucks will be here in about two hours. They’re filling their tanks now...We need to pull the fence line down between the front drive and the pasture so they can get through...”

Torre: “Okay...how...?”

Dil: “We have two tractors in the barn....there are chains and hooks on the wall...just wrap the top of the post and pull the son of a gun down...”

(Dil turns to Cal...)

Dil: “Cal...you sure you and Dez don’t want to …..”

Cal: “I am sure...please...continue...”

Nell: “Cal...It’s your land....your house....”

Cal: “My property is of no consequence, dear friend....It is this land we must preserve....”

Dez: “He’s right....we’re not supposed to be touched....but even if it was...we can rebuild...”

Tony: “Hey Dilbert....that reminds me....”

Torres; ‘Yea...Tony and me talked...Bishop’s good with it....let’s do it before the party starts”

Dil; “Guys!...It’s not a priority!...”

Torres: “Is to us.....”

Ziva: “What my husband is saying, Dilbert...we will fight for what is yours...but we will fight even harder for what belongs to all of us”

Bishop: “Pull the papers out, Dil...we’re wasting time....”

(Dil stops....looks at his friends.....nods to Dez...)

Dil: ‘Thank you... I know what you’re doing....(pause) “...thank you....”

(Dez walks to the dining room, opens a drawer, pulls out two manila envelopes...places them on the table...)

Dez: “Ladies..gentlemen...prepare to become land barons.....”

(scene shifts to the back of the house....the group is on the patio....Dil still speaking to them...)

Dil: ‘Okay...the last thing we worry about is the house....”

Tony: “The last?”

Dez: “Quick history lesson, bubba...tell them why”

(Dil nods to his sister...)

Dil: “Our grandparents bought this land 85 years ago...there was a farmhouse on it..Sis and I grew up in it....Our grandparents passed, and we moved in....then our parents were killed....When we both turned 18, the settlement our family received from the company that settled, went into our control....We hadn’t been

here for over 5 years....We came out here....The house we grew up in was burned to the ground....the stables, the barns, everything....”

Dez: “We turned around and left...it hurt too much to see it....but 5 years later....”

Dil: “5 years later we decided to rebuild...but we decided to rebuild in a way that the house was as fireproofed as possible....”

Dez: “The roof is fire repellant...”

Dil: “There’s no wood in the structure....it’s metal and stone....The interior walls are constructed using Fireboard....”

Dez: “We swore we’d never come back to that scene again....This is our home...it’s our legacy....”

(Nell watches Dil....nodding....Dil nods back to her)

Dil: “It’s our children's legacy....”

Nell: “And their children....”

Dez: “Plus...we have enough water to keep the place wetted down....”

Dil: “The barns and stables....that’s another story....they’re wood....”

Torres: “Okay...what do we do?....I’m on fence duty...what about the rest?”

Dil: ‘There are hoses in the barn...we need to pull them out....”

Dez: “I’ll show you how to hook one up the tank 3....the other two will be used by the firefighters...”

(Dil’s phone rings.....he looks at it...answers...)

Dil: “Yea chief....”

(listens...shakes his head...he ends the call)

Dil ‘The winds are shifting early....the fire will crest the hill in about an hour....”

Torres: “How fast will it come down the hill?”

Dil: “We get a break on that....Fire defies gravity...what I mean is, fire races uphill, it crawls downhill...Heat rises, flames rise....a brush fire can travel as fast as 30 miles an hour uphill....downhill...it creeps...”

Torres; “Dude..you have tractors....

Dil: “Yes we do...and we’re going to use them....The best one for the job....”

(He turns to Nell...Nell shyly raises her hand....)

Dil: “She knows what to do....Bishop...Nell can give you instructions....”

Bishop: “ME?”

Nell: “Yea El...you and me...we’re going bulldozing....”

Bishop: “WHAT?”

Torres; “WHAT?”

Nell: “We’re going to clear the property line of grass, small trees, brush, everything....we need a twelve foot strip of nothing to burn....”

Dil: “The front blade attachment is on both...it’s just to the rear....hydraulics will pull it over the tractor to the front...just skim the surface..we’re not digging, just clearing....”

Bishop: “Trees?”

Dil: ‘There are no big trees near the tree line....only saplings.....just mow them down and keep them moving off the strip....pile them at the end...Nell will push them over the fence line....”

(Dez walks to a cabinet in one of the bedrooms...she returns....)

Dez: “After you finish clearing....Nell...you’re in the house....”

(Nell’s face turns red...)

Nell: “NO I’M NOT!”

Dil: “You are...”

Nell: “NO!”

(Dil walks to his wife...he reaches out towards Dez...she hands him a breathing mask....)

Dil: “I have never told you what to do, Nell....never...but I am now....You’re in the house..in the Control Room...and if you leave the house, you wear this....”

(he hands her the mask....)

Dil: “Cal...please....”

Cal: “He is correct, dear mother....If you inhale smoke...the damage to the child in you can be traumatic....Please...for that child you carry...for the legacy you so want for it...?”

Dil: “Plus...our cameras are heat resistant...they’ll work....If you’ll get everyone headsets, you can monitor the fire...you can tell us where it’s getting close, if embers have floated onto the barn roof”

Nell: “Like leading a mission...okay...I get it....But....”

Dil: “Nell....please...don’t fight me on this....”

(She stares at him....eyes moist....)

Nell: “I love this land, Dil....I want to fight for it....”

Dil: “I understand....”

(Ziva steps towards them....)

Ziva: “Dilbert...I do not think you understand...I believe your wife will do what is right for your child...but you need to know what you are asking....”

Cal: “Dilbert...you fight to keep your home....To her...it is more...”

Ziva: “This is your home, Dilbert....to her...it is life....”

(Nell looks away, tears form....)

Ziva: “This is where she fell in love with you...and you with her...it is where her child was conceived...it is where she learned to love without fear..She has fought on this land, killed on this land...she has protected it, loved it, and feels most at peace when her feet touch the earth....This land is life to her....”

(Nell turns to Ziva...surprise on her face..Ziva turns to her...)

Ziva; “Israel is life...the land is our life....since the beginning, people have tried to take it away...Israel is not buildings...it is the land...This ranch, Dilbert....it is your home, and it is dear to you...To your wife...It is more....It is holy....”

(pause)

Ziva: “It is her Israel”

(Nell looks at Dil...)

Nell: “I won’t fight you...I love you too much for that....and I know you’re right....”

(Dil looks down...then over at Cal...)

Dil: “Doc...what are the limitations...?”

Cal: “If she wears the mask...the child will be safe”

(Dil stares at Cal...)

Cal: “I would never place that child in jeopardy....there is much for your daughter to do in this world....”

(Dil looks away.....then...)

Dil: “Does the mask stop her from doing anything stupid?”

Cal: “No...unfortunately, it does not....”

(Dil looks sternly at Nell...)

Nell: “Nothing stupid...”

Dil: “No jumping into flames, no picking up burning limbs...no running...”

Nell: “Dil...nothing stupid....”

(He walks to her quickly....takes her by the arm, pulls her to the side....he looks straight into her eyes....his voice harsh....)

Dil; ‘Listen to me and listen good....I’m afraid...I’m afraid of fire taking this place again...I'm afraid our friends might get hurt because of their loyalty....”

Nell: “I know, baby...”

Dil: “NO YOU....”

(He stops...lowers his voice....)

Dil; “No you don’t...Yes, I’m afraid of those things...but the thought of you being hurt...or worse...of our baby being hurt....Nell..It terrifies me...I’m sick inside thinking of it....I can’t bear the thought....”

(She reaches up, places a hand on his cheek...)

Nell: “I know...Dil...it’s the same feeling I get every time you go do what you do....I know...”

Dil: “Nell...jesus...please....”

Nell: “Nothing stupid...and if it gets bad out there, I’ll come inside...”

(He pulls her close...)

Dil: “You’ll never understand how much I love you....never...please...please don’t do something that would take you away from me....”

Nell: “I promise....I really do...”

(He hugs her again....)

Dil: “I have something ask of you....actually, it’s for Ziva....and Tony..”

(She nods)

Nell: “I know...the other mask...Dez’s..it’s for Tali....and you want me to keep her with me....”

(Dil nods...)

Dil: “You know how much she loves you....and listens to you”

Nell: “I love her too...a lot....”

Dil: “Thank you...”

Nell: “One thing....”

Dil: “What?”

Nell: “Can you make the same promise to me that you made me make you?”

Dil: “Yes...I can...Bullets?...I’ve been wounded...they don’t scare me...but fire....”

(He shakes his head)

Dil: “Fire scares the living crap out of me....”

(She gives him a weak smile)

Nell: “Good...now go be extra scared.....for us....”

(scene shifts to the patio, Cal looking up at the hills....)

Torres: “Hey doc....they’re still there...I mean, the hills. They’re not going anywhere”

Cal: “No...they are not...but other things are....”

Torres: “Other things?”

(Cal nods...small smile....)

Cal: “Nickolaus...would you come with me for a moment?”

(scene shifts to Cal and Torres, standing behind the big barn, next to the planted olive trees in containers. He points to the south, towards the property Torres and Bishop purchased earlier)

Cal: “Your friend up there...”

Torres; “Yea...Kitty?...She’s bueno....she’s smart enough to run from fire, amigo”

Cal: “Of course she is.....however...look....”

(Cal points to the lower level of the hills...myriads of animals...foxes, coyotes, squirrels, rabbits, and more, are filing down the hill and joining a migration of others, all scampering towards the canyon break, then to the property they now own)

Torres; ‘Oh wow!..It’s like they’re on some kinda march!”

Cal: “Indeed....”

Torres: “Oh yea...indeed back at you!”

Cal: “Look further, my dear friend....look to the front of this wonderful parade...”

(Torres looks at Cal curiously, then towards the area Cal is pointing.....Torres stares...his eyes get wide....)

Torres; ‘NO WAY!”

(scene shifts to the hillside...scores of animals, orderly fashion, and in front, a large mountain lion walks patiently....The cat stops, looks back, then roars...)

Cal: “It would seem your friend has become a queen.....”

Torres: “DUDE!”

Cal: “And the queen is leading her subjects to safety...”

(Torres is still staring in amazement....)

Torres; “DUDE!...Does that happen? You know...in real life?”

Cal: “No...it does not....We are witnessing...I suppose...a sort of miracle...”

Torres: “Wow!...”

(Cal gives a small smile...)

Cal: “Wow indeed...(pause) “Dude”

(Torres looks at him in surprise....shakes his head)

Torres: “Uh...no offense, doc..but it doesn’t quite go with ..you know....”

(Cal smiles)

Cal: “I think it fits nicely.....I think I shall use it again...It has a pleasant connotation...”

(Torres crosses his arms, looks, along with Cal, at the animal parade...)

Torres: “Indeed”

Cal: “Yes....Indeed”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens on The D Ranch....Nell is scraping the ground with her tractor, the front blade digging less than one inch into the ground...the tractor roars, smoke billows out of the exhaust...Bishop is beside her, on the other tractor, digging deeper grooves into the ground, the tractor bucking and lurching as Bishop tries to get used to the clutch....Bishop yells over the noise)

Bishop: “HOW AM I DOING?”

(Nell looks back at her tracks, smooth....then at the track of dirt behind Bishop...deep chunks, a few swerves...but the ground is bare behind her...)

Nell: “YOU”RE DOING GREAT!”

Bishop: “WE GOTTA GET ONE OF THESE!...THIS IS SO COOL!”

Nell: “YES!...THESE ARE WHY I HAVE SO MANY GARDENS!”

(Nell sees several 7 foot trees in the path of Bishop...)

Nell: “TREES!”

(Bishop looks forward, her eyes widen....Then the tractor mows them down, the remains being pushed in front of the blade....)

Bishop: “DID I GET THEM?”

Nell: “OPEN YOUR EYES AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!”

(scene switches to the barn...Cal and Dez putting a role each of flattened fire hose onto wheelbarrows....)

Dez: “Okay...we’ll hook these up to tanks 1 and 2...it will give the fire engines 100 feet of extension”

Cal; “And the hose for #3?”

(Dez points to a shelf....another roll is waiting)

Dez; “We hook up that one....it’s 100 feet of 5 inch, then a downsize to 3 inch...it will give us more force towards the end....it already has a nozzle on the end....”

Cal: “I see this and feel our house is ill-equipped....I must correct that”

Dez “We’ll need a tank first...”

Cal: “Yes...it is on my list....You have prepared well, my dear...”

Dez: “Well..all you have to do is drive up once and see your childhood burned to the ground....it motivates you, baby”

Cal: “Why have you not told me of this?..I would have gladly prepared us as well...”

(Dez continues to load her role into the wheelbarrow)

Dez: “I haven’t wanted to put my fears on you, Cal...I have enough baggage without adding more...”

(Cal stops...)

Cal: “Destiny...that is not what I want....I want....”

(She stops...looks at her husband...)

Dez: “I know...honey...I know you’d take every bad thing I have inside and try to take it from me....I know...”

Cal: “Yes...but...Is there something I have done to keep you from trusting me with those things?”

Dez; “God no...Cal....(she shakes her head...) “...angel boy....”

(Cal looks at her...)

Cal: “Yes?”

Dez: “Just give me some time to get used to how you love me....It’s not something any woman expects....You’re...christ, Cal....”

(pause)

Dez: “You’re too good to me.....I don’t think I’ll ever get used to it”

(She quickly speaks)

Dez: “Ahnjong....she’s....”

Cal: “Full filtration mask...and she has goggles...She is as protected...(pause) “..as necessary”

Dez: “The full masks we have here...we don’t have them for children...mine barely fit Tali”

Cal: “It is something we will correct...We learn each time...”

(scene shifts to the pumps...Cal and Dez finishing hooking up the last hose....)

Dez: “Okay...I’ll start the pump, start building pressure....”

(Dez walks to the shed adjoining the pumps...Cal looks upwards....)

Cal: “Destiny...hurry....”

Dez: “Just a moment....(clicks heard, sound of pump gaining momentum heard....) “...Why...you need....”

(She looks up to the top of the hills where Cal is looking.....her face freezes....)

Dez: “Oh sweet Jesus help us....”

(scene shifts to the top of the tall hills....A wall of flame, 100 feet high, has reached the pinnacle, the flames dancing in the air.....)

Cal: “The wind...it has died....”

Dez: “That means it’s shifting....”

Cal: ”Towards us”

(scene switches to the hilltop....The harsh wind changes direction, blowing eastward, directly towards the D Ranch....The 100 foot wall of fire bends over towards them, the flames reaching the downward side of the hill....sounds like rifle shots can be heard as the dry trees explode in the heat, and burst into flames.....The wall of fire starts creeping down the hillside.....)

(scene shifts to the house..out back, each person looks upward, all holding up their hands in front of their face, the heat from half a mile up the hill, washes over them. Sirens from the fire trucks can be heard coming down the road to the house)

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at the fence line...Smoke, being carried by the winds, starts to creep into the ranch yard....Two fire engines sit 15 feet from the fence line, the men out, unrolling the hoses, readying themselves...two more SUV’s come to a stop in the pasture near the fence, 6 men from each SUV, already in firefighter gear, exit quickly, opening the rear hatch, all pulling out axes, shovels, and backpacks....The Chief meets Dil in the yard...)

Chief: “You have my auxiliary lines?”

Dil: “Already hooked up...pump is on, pressure is good, Chief”

ChIef: “Thank you, Dil...it’s a big help”

Dil: ‘Least we can do, Chief...(nods to the men exiting the SUV) “...foot soldiers?”

Chief: “Wildland Firefighters....best in the business...”

(The men can be seen running towards the fence line...one of them places a hoe on the wire, pulls the fence down....The 12 men start trotting up the hill, directly towards the fire....)

Dil: ‘I’ve never seen them work in person....”

Chief: “Bravest sons a bitches I’ve ever worked with...and I’ve worked with some brave men”

Dil: ‘It’s hard to imagine they can do some good....”

Chief: “Son...I've seen them stop the spread of fires twice this size....they’re good....”

(A gust of wind....the fire roars...one third of the way down, the tree tops explode into flame....)

Chief: “Never seen one this hot before though....Christ...it’s like it’s pissed off or something...”

Dil: ‘Chief...what can we do? We’re capable...and willing....”

Chief: “Go protect your people, Dil....let us do our job...”

Dil: ‘Roger that sir....and by the way...there’s a feeding trough on the back deck...it’s filled with ice and bottles of water....They’re for you...”

Chief: “Appreciate it son....now go....and remember...My advice to you was to get out....”

Dil: “I remember....”

Chief: “I know you lost your first house a long time ago...I was here, son...but everyone lived....”

(Dil looks at the team scurrying, grabbing hoes and shovels, all still clearing brush and branches away from the tree line in between the fence and the house....He sees Nell, hacking away with her hoe, full mask securely in place)

(scene switches to the fence line...Nell is furiously chopping tangles of vines on the fence down, refusing to stop...)

Tony: “Nell....it’s getting too hot!...Let’s get back!”

Nell: “NO!...I HAVE TO GET THIS DOWN!”

(The heat is evident....Ziva sees Tony arguing with Nell...He places a hand on her arm...Nell jerks it out of his grasp, goes directly back to chopping at the vines...Ziva goes quickly to them.....Ziva places her hand on Nell’s shoulder...)

Nell: “NO TONY!....NO!”

Ziva: “Nell...it is me....Ziva....”

(Nell turns...her full mask doesn’t allow Ziva to see her face....)

Ziva: “My sister...please...it is too hot....the child in you....it is not safe....”

(a quarter mile up the hill, dozens of trees explode at once, a sound, not unlike a dozen guns being fired fills the air....)

Ziva: “Nell....come with me....”

(Sobbing is heard from in the mask...)

Nell: “No....Ziva....we can stop this.....we can.....”

(Dez comes quickly up....she sees the situation)

Dez: “Yes, sis,...we can...but not by fighting it with our hands....come....come help me with the hose.....a”

Ziva: ‘Penolope...Tali is right behind you....”

(Nell turns quickly....she sees Tali, also hoe in hand, trying her best to hack at the remaining shrubs in the yard...)

Nell: “Oh god...Tali.....”

Dez: “It’s about her, Nell...and your baby....come on...let’s get the hose....”

(Nell turns to shout at Tali)

Nell: “TALI!..GET AWAY FROM THERE!...”

Tali: ‘No!...I only do what you are doing!...You fight, I fight!”

Nell: “Oh god....what have I done....?”

(Nell walks quickly to Tali....)

Nell: “Oh Tali...I”m so sorry....I’m so stupid....”

Tali: “No...you are brave, and wonderful....”

Nell: “No, I’m selfish and stupid...we can fight this better with the hose....In fact, honey...why don’t you go inside....”

Tali: “NO!...”

Nell: “Baby...Yes...I’m going in...remember? We have to help the others with where to go...the cameras...”

(Nell turns to Dez and Ziva)

Nell: “Will you tell them to put the headsets on? Tali and I are going in....I'll be online in 5 minutes...”

(She turns to Tali....Tali is looking around...)

Nell: “Tali...?”

(Tali is hypnotized by the flames she can see up the hillside....)

Ziva: “Tali...honey....”

(Tali turns to Ziva....her face can’t be seen under the mask.....but her voice betrays her emotions)

Tali; “The fire....It tried to kill me once...Now...it tries again...”

(She stops....she looks around, sees Tony pulling the hose towards them....She cries out to him, runs to him...)

(Scene shifts to Tony...he hears his daughter cry out...then sees her begin to try and run to him, limping, her cane laying on the ground behind her...He also sees a large flaming branch in the air, swept up by the fire created updraft and wind, swirling in the air over her....He screams as he runs towards his daughter...)

Tony: “TALI...STOP!”

(She doesn’t hear him....she sees her father running towards her, then she stops...then finds herself flung to the ground, her father laying on top of her, screaming as the flaming branch lands on his legs....Tali begins to scream again...then they find themselves doused with water, immediately extinguishing the flames...they both look back, and see Nell...holding the fire hose, spraying them down....Nell drops the hose, runs to them...)

Nell: “Please tell me you’re alright...please....”

Tony: “Yea..we’re okay...thanks to you....”

Nell: “No...it’s because of me you almost got killed....Tali...get up!..Come with me now!....”

Tali: “NO!..MY DADDY!”

Nell: “He’s fine!..NOW..COME WITH ME!”

(Nell picks the girl up, kicking and screaming.....carries her into the house...Ziva kneels by Tony, laying on his side, breathing hard....)

Ziva: ‘Anthony!...”

Tony: “I’m alright....I’m okay....”

Ziva: ’Your legs!”

Tony: “It didn’t burn through.....”

(He pauses...looks at her...)

Tony: “Sorry about the scream....I saw the fire hit my legs....I....I guess I lost it for a moment...I remembered....”

(She hugs him....)

Ziva; ‘You wonderful, wonderful man....”

Tony: “Hey...Ziva...this house thing....”

Ziva: “I know...you don’t want to...I will understand....”

Tony: ‘No...No, Ziva...just thought we need to start a list of stuff we need....I’m thinking fire suits...you know...like John Wayne in Hellfighters....maybe we can...”

(Ziva hugs her husband again...scene fades out to Tony laying on the ground, listing items for the house)

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens to the hillside, the Wildfire fighters at the edge of the flames....hoeing a trench, pulling limbs aside....two men carrying aluminum cans resembling watering buckets, begin laying down a fire line in the trench....)

Fighter 1: “Boss...it’s getting hotter....”

Boss: “Yea..that wind is making it burn hotter than hell....”

Fighter 1: “Look...I’ve only seen it once before.....”

(The firefighter points to an area directly at the fireline...rocks, superheated, begin to crack....a thin fault line appears in the hillside....)

Boss: “Christ...we can’t fight that.....Radio the men to fall back...i want them outa here...We’ve got a monster on our hands....”

(scene shifts to the firetrucks...the firefighters holding the hoses, watching as the fire advances down the slope....Dil, Dez, and Nell watch from the back patio...)

Dil: “It’s coming...”

Dez: “The house will survive....”

Dil: “The barns won’t...the stables won’t..”

(They both look at Nell...she is staring up at the fire...she holds the mask to her face, takes a breath, then lowers it....She looks directly at the flaming creation coming towards the...)

Nell: “You won’t win....I swear to you...you won’t win....”

Dez: “Sis...sometimes...sometimes we lose....”

Nell: “No...not this place...not these barns or this house, or the land...(pause) “It won’t win...”

Dil: “honey...we can rebuild....”

Nell: “No...We won’t lose”

(she puts the mask up to her face, breathes in...then turns and walks back into the house...)

Dez: “She’s in denial, Dil....”

(Dil watches his wife walk away)

Dil: “No she’s not...She just believes...”

Dez: “Believes in what?”

Dil: “I wish I knew...If I did....I’d believe in it too”

(scene fades out to the flames approaching the fence line...the first row of olive trees start to smolder...the fire chief gives the order...Water starts streaming out of the hoses...Flames, as if having a mind of their own, soar skyward, and then bend, reaching for the house)

(scene fades to black and white)

THE CONCLUSION

(scene opens at the base of the fence line....Dil rushing to the pump shack on the three tanks, opening the intake valve to wide open, pulling into the tanks as much water as the water system will produce...He adjusts the pressure valves to full on, increasing the air pressure of the pump itself, maximizing the flow to the hoses...The hoses fill with water instantly, dramatically unrolling, racing towards the firetrucks....)

Chief: “AUXILIARY WATER READY!...EMPTY THE TANKS ON THE BORDER!”

(The firefighters holding the hoses ready themselves...they have donned the silver foiled Proximity suits, fully clothed from head to toe to reflect the heat...the heat is intense, the air itself bobbing and weaving as the heat distorts the light....The hoses burst forth with high pressure streams, all focused on the 20 feet from the fence line upward...Dil leaves the shack, runs towards Ziva and Torres, both desperately digging a trench between the fence and the start of the olive orchard...)

Dil: “IT”S TOO HOT!...YOU”VE GOT TO COME INSIDE!...”

(Ziva and Torres both drop their hoes.....Dil looks at their faces...redness is evident...)

Dil: “Oh god...Ziva...Nick...please...come inside...”

Torres: “Yea...I can’t...we can’t...”

Ziva: “I am so sorry, Dilbert.....”

Dil: ‘Nothing’s more important than you people...come on..get some water from the tank on the patio....drink it...lots of it...your skin is reacting to the heat...”

(A gust of wind blows downward off the hill...Dil shades his eyes and looks upwards...)

Dil: “Oh God.....”

(scene shifts to the firetrucks....the men are still hosing the hillside....then they stop for moment...and stare....)

Firefighter: “Sweet god....”

Firefighter 2: “It can’t be that hot...it’s not that big of a fire....”

Firefighter: “It’s that hot....there’s your evidence..”

(They look up towards the top of the hillside...a tall funnel cloud of flames twirls upwards, the fiery pillar dancing in the air....)

Firefighter: “Fire tornado....it’s not possible....”

(loud cracks are heard....then the sound of pings on the firetrucks can be heard...)

Chief: “MOVE BEHIND THE TRUCKS!...THE ROCKS ARE SPLITTING FROM THE HEAT!”

(scene shifts to the hillside...a line of granite, millions of years old, separates with a violent crack...small shards of rock under immense heat and pressure shoot off the hillside towards the pasture....)

(scene shifts to Dil....He has lifted the third hose, and begins to pull the spout towards the house. It stops...he pulls harder...it won’t budge.....He sees Cal running out of the house towards the hose...Cal picks up a portion of the hose 50 feet behind the nozzle, lift it from between the fork in a tree, loosening it...Cal begins pulling the slack from the tank side, allowing Dil to pull the hose closer to the house....Dil opens the valve on the nozzle....Cal joins Dil, helping him steady the hose....)

Dil: “Thanks, brother...there’s a lot of pressure on this hose....”

Cal: “Yes...”

(The hose jerks as the water streams out, knocking both men off their feet...They both refuse to loosen their grips on the hose...they get up, continue to spray the roof of the house....”

Dil: “God...it’s hot up there....”

(Cal looks at the rooftop....steam is rising where the water is hitting it....)

Dil: “Everyone....are they inside?”

Cal: “Yes...All except for Torres....”

Dil: “WHAT?”

Cal: “Forgive him, brother...he is doing what he feels is best...”

(scene shifts to Torres...he has entered the large barn....He runs to the far side of the barn...image shows a row of 5 gallon water bottles, used in the water coolers inside the house....He lifts a 50 pound water jug in each hand, flips them up, landing them on his broad shoulders....He turns and runs towards the house....)

Cal: “He is caring for those inside....”

(Dil looks...sees Torres running full speed in the heat, carrying 100 pounds...)

Dil: “He’s a good man....”

Cal: “Yes...he is....”

(scene shifts to inside the house...Bishop stands by Nell...both are looking out the glass windows in the back...the shimmer of the fire reflects off the glass....Nell presses a hand against the window...)

Nell: “They’re heating up”

Bishop: “I can feel it in here....thank god there’s no smoke coming in the house”

Nell: “Filtration...Dil and Dez designed it to clear the air in case gas was used to attack the house....I doubt they thought it would save our lives like this”

Bishop: “You know...if they can’t stop that fire...Nell..we’re going to have to leave...”

(Nell stares at the fire...then she turns her head towards the pasture, seeing the still green grass blowing the in the winds caused by the fire)

Nell: “We won’t have to leave...It’s going to be okay”

Bishop: “Nell...honey....It’s not looking like okay....”

(Nell nods...crosses her arms over her chest...)

Nell: “I know...But.....”

(loud pops are heard as small rocks shooting off the hillside hit the window in front of her....Bishop flinches...Nell continues to stare at the fire..she looks upward, sees the fire tornado rising in the air, dancing...she speaks to herself out loud...)

Nell: “You’re not scaring me....You’re not going to win....”

(Bishop looks at Nell...)

Bishop: “Baby...everything here can be rebuilt....”

Nell: “I know...But it won’t have to be....”

(They are interrupted by Torres yelling from the kitchen...)

Torres: “Hey...Little help please!”

(scene switches to the kitchen....Torres seen dropping the jugs on the floor...Tony comes in....)

Tony: “Where do you want them?”

Torres: “Against the wall!...Make sure each cooler is full! The ledge up top on the hill is cracking and it’s ...amigo....It’s shooting at us!”

Tony: “Got it!..If the window shatters....We need to douse the room....”

Torre: “Si!...I”m going back for more!”

(Tony starts to yell after him to stop....Torres is already gone....)

(Ziva runs in....she sees Tony bend over to lift one of the jugs....her face recoils in horror...)

Ziva: “ANTHONY!”

(She sees the back of his pants legs....he lied...the fire burned through...angry red skin can be seen through the burned holes...)

Ziva; “ANTHONY!...NO.....”

(Tony turns to her....)

Tony: ‘Okay...I lied...get pissed at me after this is over....”

(Ziva runs to the bottles Torres has laid down...she strains, lifts one up, cradling it in her arms...)

Ziva; “No, my love. I know why you lied...for our daughter..Here... I will help you”

(He nods to her...he grunts, pulls a water bottle up onto his shoulder...They both leave the kitchen as Torres races back to the barn for more water)

(Scene shifts to the barn...Torres seen entering...the two back windows implode, sending shards of glass into the barn....the heat rushes in the windows....)

Torres: “Oh boy....what were you thinking, Torres...”

(He sees Dez come running into the barn....he turns in surprise...)

Torres; “DEZ!...WHAT THE...”

(Dez yells at him...)

Dez: “HELP ME PULL IT OUT!...”

(Torres stops...then Dez lifts the tongue to a cart, her hand around the ball hitch....his eyes follow the handle to the cart, then to what it’s carrying....his eyes get wide....)

Torres: “MADRE!”

(He sprints to where Dez is...he takes the tow bar from her....)

Torres: “GET OUT!...NOW!...I GOT THIS!”

Dez: “You can't do it by yourself!...It hitches to a tractor!”

Torres: “GET OUT NOW!”

Dez: “NO!..I HAVE TO HELP....”

(Torres shocks Dez by picking her up off the floor of the barn...He carries her out the door, then bodily throws her at least 3 feet...she lands on her back, grunting...She looks up...and sees Torres straining...he’s pulling the cart out of the

barn...slowly....He screams, pulls harder, and the cart responds, picking up speed....)

Dez: “God...how....?”

(scene shows Torres turned around now, holding the handle behind his back, his legs straining the pull the cart...On the cart, a large white tank sits. On the side, the bold “No Smoking” sign is painted...above the warning, it reads...)

GASOLINE

500 Gallons

(Dez watches as Torres picks up speed, moving the potential bomb away from the barn, further away from the flames....he finally stops....Dez runs to him....)

Dez: “TORRES!..YOU’RE INSANE!”

(He kneels to the ground....looks up at her, smiles...)

Torres; “Yea...muy insane...But it’s not a bad thing, Dez....”

Dez: “Fine..but don’t tell Dil you dragged that thing out by yourself....”

Torres: “What? Dil couldn’t?...”

(Torres ash smeared face lights up....)

Torres: “I’m tellin...oh yea...”

(He tries to stand...then kneels back down...)

Torres: “As soon as I can stand up, that is...legs...muy malo....”

Dez: “You think, Torres!...Christ!..”

(He finally stands....)

Torres; “Water jugs...I’ve got to get them....”

Dez: “Come on tractor man....I’ll help...”

Torres: “They’re heavy Dez....”

Dez: “We have a pull cart in there, butt head....We can take 5 or 6 at a time....”

(Torres looks at her....eyebrows go up....)

Torres; ‘WHAT?”

Dez; “Yea...a pull cart..you know...like a little red wagon only bigger?”

(She pauses...then looks at him, small smile..)

Dez: “If your legs hurt too much, I can wheel you in on the wagon...Dil can help...”

(They both jump as a large flaming branch comes crashing through the rear wall of the barn.....It lands on the floor of the barn...directly where the gasoline tank was just sitting....They look at each other....eyes wide...)

Torres; “Wow...”

Dez: “Yea...wow....”

Torres: “Uh...we can use the chains to drag that thing out?”

Dez: “Yea..long chains....”

(They both walk fast to the barn, picking up a length of chain, tossing it over the flaming branch...the hook on the end snags wood, and they both drag the branch out of the barn.....)

Torres: “Close one....”

Dez: “Uh huh....you could say that...”

Torres; “My legs hurt”

Dez: “Cry baby”

Torres: “You are a mean sister....”

(She puts an arm around his waist as they both look at the gasoline tank...)

Dez: “Yea brother...but at least I’m not a blown up sister...”

Torres: “I don’t know...it might make you nicer....”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens in the house....Dil walks in, soaked...He walks to Nell, still standing at the window)

Dil: “Nothing we can do now but wait...we’ve done all we can...The Chief ordered us to leave...”

Nell: “I’m not leaving”

Dil: “I told him you’d say that....”

(She turns to him, small smile...)

Nell: “You told him ‘I’ would say that?”

Dil: “Yea...and that I would, they would...I also told him we’re not stupid...if it got too bad, we’d leave...”

Nell: “It won’t”

(She turns back to the window....small pock marks are seen in the bullet proof glass...)

Dil: “You still believe it’s going to be okay...”

Nell: “Yes...I do....”

Dil: “Why?”

(She stares at the flaming hillside, the heat radiating through the window....)

Nell: “Remember telling me that you owed the land? That was why you planted trees, trimmed others, took care of it like you do....”

Dil: “I remember...I still believe it”

Nell: “So do I”

(silence)

Nell: “The land will remember”

(Dil pulls her close to him...she leans her head on his arm..)

Dil: “I believe in you”

Nell: “I know...thank you”

Dil: “I guess if you believe it’s going to be okay, I will too....”

(She puts her arm through his, leans more into him)

Nell: “Thank you”

(A sudden crack is heard from the hills...at the same time, more bullet speed chunks of rock hit the window, creating loud snapping sounds...Nell does not flinch)

Dil: “I think the hill is pissed off...”

(Nell nods....)

Nell: “Yep..it’s pissed all right....but it doesn’t matter..”

(They are interrupted by the Fire Chief...he comes walking fast into the room...Cal follows him in...)

Chief: “Folks...we can’t stop it....you have to leave....”

(They both turn to the Chief, shake their heads....)

Chief: “DIL!..LISTEN TO ME!...That fire is so hot it’s cracking the top ledge!...No house can stand that heat!....Do you hear me?...The rock is splitting up there!”

(scene switches to their view of the hillside...The flames have reached the fence line, some shooting 50 feet in the air....the heat is intense, creating winds, the winds fueling the fire.....)

Chief: “IT’S GOING TO REACH THE HOUSE!...GET OUT!..”

(Without warning, the house trembles....a rolling earthquake makes its presence known, all of them reaching for something in the room to steady themselves)

(The scene switches to the firefighters, all holding onto their trucks to keep from falling over, the ground trembling, the hillside begins roaring.)

(Scene switches to the house..Nell holding onto Dil for balance....then....An enormous, earsplitting crack is heard, resounding through the hillside, entering the house....more cracks are heard, loud, harsh sounds....all three of them look in awe at the hillside....)

Chief: “God...the hill....the heat....never...I’ve never.....”

(More cracks scream through the air, more rocks come shooting towards the house, slamming into the sides and windows....)

Chief: “NOW!...COME ON!....”

(Nell screams....and she points to the upper part of the hillside...)

Nell: “LOOK!”

(The hillside roars as the fault line opens wide... then another muffled rumble can be heard from deep in the mountain...The rumble increases in volume...Then...from the canyon edge to the end of the fire line, the fault line violently cracks open, flaming trees falling, rocks tumbling down the hills.....)

Nell: “LOOK!”

(They look..The rumble they hear moves from inside the mountain to the outside, ...Water starts to rush out of the opening....steady at first...then a gusher spews out 20 feet into the sky, falling back down...the entire fault line starts to pour water out, 1 full mile of jagged opening, a line one mile long of water rushing down the hillside)

Cal: “The river....inside the mountain....”

(Dil stares in disbelief)

Dil: “The one that feeds the canyon stream...and Cal...your waterfall....the one that came out when the rocks split at your house....That’s where this is coming from!”

(Steam rises up in the air as the water pours down the hillside.....)

Chief: “It’s impossible.....It’s...It’s....”

(the scene shifts to the hillside..another gust of wind fuels the fire...The flames roar back up.....)

Chief: “My god...the fire..it’s almost like...it’s almost like it’s fighting back...”

(Cal stares in awe.....)

Cal: “It is... angry....”

(Nell watches....calmly speaks)

Nell: “It won’t win”

(The enormously intense fires hiss loudly as the water engulfs them...more flames shoot up, more hissing...sounds of trees shattering as the water hits them, the sounds of the hissing and cracking fill the land.....)

Cal: “The fire is refusing to be denied....My God, my merciful God, what are you doing..?”

(The roar of the mountain starts to subside....the water continues to pour out, the fire begins to disappear....steam rises up in the air as the temperature begins to drop....)

(Nell smiles....she reaches out, touches the glass...She smiles at Dil...)

Nell: “It’s paying you back....”

(pause)

Nell: “The land remembered....”

(scene switches to the water pouring down the hill, the flames extinguished....then....another tremble...the water slows....suddenly, with less violent cracking sounds, the water pressure ebbs, and the fault line, no longer held open by the pressure of the water, slowly falls back, sealing the crack.....and the water slows to a trickle, leaving several new, smaller waterfalls...fresh water flows down the rocks, feeding the land below....)

(scene shifts to the canyon bordering the parcel Torres and Bishop bought....the gaping hole in the canyon wall hisses...dust comes shooting out....then water begins to once again pour out, feeding the canyon stream again....)

(scene shifts to the hillside of the Thomas House....the waterfall created for Destiny and Ahnjong, dried up for lack of a source, begins to flow again, the waterfall making its music once again on the rocks below)

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens in the pasture....the firefighters are gone, everyone but Nell, faces and clothes covered with ash and dirt, stands, looking up at the hillside, blackened, charred, smoldering wood still emitting smoke....Ziva looks around for Nell....she sees Nell, walking through the olive orchard, inspecting the trees....)

(scene shifts to the orchard...Ziva walks to Nell....Nell turns to her...)

Nell: “Ziva...I’m sorry...these trees...they mean so much to you....”

(scene shows the leaves browned, withered...the row nearest the fence line charred, stripped of leaves....)

Ziva: “My sister...may I show you something?”

(Nell nods her head...Ziva leads Nell to a charred olive tree....)

Ziva: “My country...It has been burned, bombed...attacked, invaded...but still...we go on...like these trees....”

(Ziva takes out a knife...)

Ziva: “To us, Israel is a living thing..our mother....and the mother never dies....To you, dear sister...this land is to you, as Israel is to us....and therefore...”

(Ziva reaches up, pulls down a blackened branch...)

Ziva: “These are Jerusalem Olive trees...”

Nell: “Yes...because they came from there...Dil had the saplings brought in....”

(Ziva shakes her head....)

Ziva; “No, dearest...they are not just from Israel....”

(Ziva takes the knife, slices some blackened bark off the branch...)

Ziva: “They are Israel.”

(The image shows the area Ziva cut away...under the blackened bark, bright green, healthy tree fiber is shown)

Ziva: “They will live...and they will flourish...Just as this land you love so dearly will”

(Nell looks at the small cut...tears form.....she looks up at Ziva, a hesitant smile on her face)

Ziva: “My dear Nell...To keep what is dear...”

(Ziva gives her a small smile)

Ziva: “You have to believe....”

(Nell nods...holding back tears...)

Ziva: “We will build. Nick and Eleanor will build. We will raise our families on this holy land...and like Dilbert and Destiny, we will give back to the land...”

(Nell nods...unable to speak...)

Ziva: “Because like you, sweet Nell...If we didn’t believe already...Because of you...We do now”

(scene fades to black and white)

EPILOGUE

(scene opens at night, to Nell walking alone into the pasture, looking up at the hills, seeing the clear night sky, stars shining....Nell bends down, scoops up a handful of dirt, brings it to her nose, inhales...)

(She drops the dirt, brushes her hand on her long skirt, crosses her arms, looks again at the hillside...She can see a definitive line of blackened forest, then to the right, lush forest begins, untouched by the fire....)

Nell: “It will grow back....It always grows back”

(She pauses....she looks to the left, then to the right, taking in the enormous land that she lives on....Nell closes her eyes, and whispers)

“Thank you”

(She opens her eyes.. starts to make the walk back to the house, when she suddenly stops....her eyes widen as she witnesses what she has never seen before....She smiles, covers her mouth with her hand, bounces up and down....)

Nell: “OH MY GOD!”

(scene switches to the base of the hillside...along the fence line, hundreds of animals scurry across the ground...rabbits, gophers, deer, foxes, coyotes, and more....The parade of animals seems to go on forever.....then, her eyes widen even more....she is shocked into silence....The mountain lion...the huge cat is sitting on a rock, overseeing the stream of animals heading into the healthy

growth of forest...the cat senses her presence...its enormous head turns to her....the cat stares at Nell....then closes its eyes, and gently, slowly, bows its beautiful head....Then it raises the head and roars, the sound echoing across the pasture...Then it leaps and disappears...Nell speaks to her baby in a squeaky, excited whisper)

“Andreas!...That was....Kitty!”

(She places her hand on her large stomach, and smiles...)

Nell: “...Someday real soon, you’ll see this with your own eyes”

(scene shifts to aerial view of Nell walking towards the house...a breeze ruffles her hair and skirt, the grass bends over....In the breeze, a faint sound is heard, a whisper in the air, in the grass, in the trees, all speaking to a woman carrying a child inside her....the sound forms a word that travels on the breeze to the woman....)

“Believe”

THE END