

THE LAST STAND

FADE-IN:

EXT. STAFFORD, CA - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAWN

HEAVY RAIN hammers down steadily on the tiny hamlet of small dwellings nestled at the foot of a steep hillside that is covered mostly with tree stumps.

TITLE OVER: Stafford, CA January 1, 1997 - 7:34 a.m.

Side-by-side double wide trailers. Sign in front of one with an arrow pointing next door: KELLY BROPHY. Next door, a similar sign points back at the first: KYLE BROPHY.

INT. KELLY BROPHY'S HOUSE - DAWN

KELLY BROPHY, 30, in the kitchen making coffee. Suddenly, a series of sharp, snapping CRACKS. He looks out the window.

HIS POV: The saturated hillside is collapsing, taking everything in its path; a giant wall of trees, rocks, and mud! And it's heading straight for his home!

He spins and bolts up the stairs, CAMERA TRACKING. He rushes to a bedroom to rouse his sleeping nine-year-old DAUGHTER.

KELLY
Janice! Get up!

The SOUNDS outside are getting more forceful.

OUTSIDE: He holds his daughter's hand as they race next door.

KELLY
THE MOUNTAIN'S COMING DOWN!

Kelly's twin, KYLE BROPHY, 30, and his wife BETTY come to the door. She's holding a small BOY in diapers.

KYLE
What the hell?

KELLY
You've got to get out! Look!

He points back at the landslide, just as the massive, lavalike flow hits his own house, lifting it off its foundation before steamrolling toward Highway 101.

KYLE
Sweet Jesus...

Kyle whirls back into the house just as flying debris SHATTERS one of the windows. The child SCREAMS.

Kelly and daughter dash next door. The mudflow smashes into Kyle's trailer, overturning it like a toy.

The rock and mud hit them broadside, separating them. He watches helplessly as his daughter is carried away from him.

KELLY
Janice!?! JANICE!!! Dear God!
JANICE!!!

HIGH ANGLE: Seven homes swept away, others badly damaged, piled together with sections of broken trees.

A huge tree, 300 feet long, slides across the road where an orange Jeep Cherokee swerves to avoid it.

The giant comes to a rest only when its ball of roots intertwine with those of another.

DIP TO BLACK

INT. JED HAWKINS' BEDROOM, SAN FRANCISCO - PRE-DAWN

TITLE: 10 YEARS EARLIER

An insistent RINGING PHONE intrudes on the sleep of JED HAWKINS, 30. A parrot - MR. FOX - is in a cage near the bed.

MR. FOX
Tel - PHONE.

Jed fumbles with the phone, answers groggily.

JED
Yeah? (pause) Why...?

INT. SHELAN'S KITCHEN, SAN FRANCISCO - PRE-DAWN

PETE SHELAN, 48, is at the breakfast table, watching the market report on TV. He's in shirtsleeves and suspenders.

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY.

SHELAN
You got the business report on?

JED
Asleep...

SHELAN
They're reporting a rumor that
Humboldt Lumber's "in play."

Jed's awaking up now.

JED
No shit? Who says?

SHELAN
What does "in play" mean?

He sits up, wide awake.

JED
Someone's stalking us...as in...
hostile takeover.

He hangs up, looks to the other side of the bed that clearly
has not been slept in.

He stumbles toward the bathroom, past a dresser with a
prominent wedding photo.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY 101, SONOMA COUNTY - EARLY MORNING

LUCY "EARTH ANGEL" DILLON, 24, hitchhikes alongside of the
road. She's in jeans, tie-dyed T-shirt and hiking boots.

A battered old pickup truck - painted like a Pinto pony -
stops for her. She throws her heavy backpack in the back.

INT. SPIRIT WIND'S PICKUP TRUCK - MOVING SHOT - DAY

SPIRIT WIND, 70, a Native American with a kindly, weather-
beaten face.

ANGEL
Thanks for picking me up

SPIRIT WIND
Sure. What's a nice young...

ANGEL
Car got stolen in Oakland. Bummer.

SPIRIT WIND
Where ya goin?

ANGEL
Up the coast. Oregon maybe.

SPIRIT WIND
I can getcha as far as Eureka.

ANGEL
Cool. (pause) My name's Lucy
Dillon.

SPIRIT WIND
Spirit Wind.

LATER: Spirit Wind's truck winds through the redwood forest.

INSIDE, Angel looks out in awe of the towering redwoods.

ANGEL
These trees are humongous!

SPIRIT WIND
You're not from here, I take it.

ANGEL
McCook, Nebraska. No trees at all
back home, let alone...

SPIRIT WIND
No trees like these anywhere else.
They're the oldest, tallest living
things on Earth.

They ride in respectful silence for a moment.

SPIRIT WIND (CONT'D)
What brings you to California?

ANGEL
I wasn't really sure -- until now.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUMBOLDT LUMBER CO. SAN FRANCISCO HEADQUARTERS - MORNING

INT. PETE SHELAN'S OFFICE

Several executives sit around the room. They're dressed in business attire, save for CAMERON BELL, 42, who looks like he just came out of the woods. They greet Jed as he arrives. He walks with a slight limp, as he will throughout.

SHELAN

Morning, Jed. Where's Bridget?

JED

I'm, ah...not sure. (beat) What do you know about this? You're CEO.

SHELAN

There's been unusual trading in the stock. Probably nothing.

JED

Nothing? Hostile corporate takeovers are all over the news.

VIC GARNETT, 45, owlish, white shirt and suspenders.

VIC

So what? We're not for sale. Not for any price. Not as long as I'm Chief Financial Officer.

HL's Operations manager speaks with an Australian accent.

BELL

Humboldt Lumber's been in the Flynn family for a century. (to Jed) Hell, your wife's the biggest shareholder.

JED

Everybody's a target these days. Wall Street's a war zone.

BELL

We're the biggest employer in the County. And the most stable.

JED

Two hundred thousand acres of old growth redwood, no debt, an over-funded pension fund. We're a prime takeover target.

SHELAN
 (skeptically)
 Who's afraid of the big bad wolf?

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. MAXXAM CORPORATE JET - DAY

CLOSE ON HARLEY PURVIS, 45, perfectly tailored in a dark suit; eyes cold, face expressionless.

Next to him is his lawyer and confidant, ED TREVOR, 55.

TREVOR
 You and he go way back . . .

PURVIS
 Long time. If anyone can pull this off, it's Mike Fishkin.

TREVOR
 The king of junk bonds.

PURVIS
 No one else can get us the kind of money we need on such short notice.

TREVOR
 Yes, but junk bonds are very risky.

PURVIS
 Only if you're an investor.

EXT. ARCADA AIRPORT - DAY

Climbing out of the jet, Purvis and Trevor are greeted by MIKE FISHKIN, 38, along with an assistant.

FISHKIN
 Harley. Great to see you again.

They walk to the helicopter. Purvis uses a handkerchief.

FISHKIN (CONT'D)
 Allergies?

Purvis nods.

FISHKIN (CONT'D)
 I gotta say, this is the juiciest
 deal we've done since you took over
 that Texas savings and loan.

PURVIS
 ...which I gave to the taxpayers.

CUT TO:

INT. SHELAN'S OFFICE - DAY

The meeting continues. Garnett picks up on Shelan's comment.

VIC
 But suppose it is the Big Bad Wolf?

BRIDGET FLYNN HAWKINS, 30, walks in. "Bridge" is attractive,
 well-dressed and educated, but with a little hard edge.

She sits across from Jed. Their eyes meet - his ask "why?"
 hers reply with resignation.

SHELAN
 Jed thinks we're a takeover target.
 Sitting ducks.

BALL
 We're not helpless. We're a forty
 million dollar corporation!

JED
 Corporate raiders can raise that
 before lunch. They'll start buying
 up our shares on the open market...

BRIDGE
 (indignantlly)
 I've got more shares than anybody,
 and...and...and I'm not selling.

The tension between her and Jed is palpable.

JED
We have a lot of shares. But tell
 me: if they come in here with big
 bucks, why don't we just put a huge
 price tag on the company and...

BRIDGE
 And sell HL! My father would barf
 in his grave.

(MORE)

BRIDGE (cont'd)
 (pause) Didn't we protect ourselves
 with one of those poison pill
 things?

JED
 That'll just slow 'em down.

SHELAN
 OK, Jed, why don't you get up to
 Scotsland and sniff around - just
 in case there is something to this.

JED
 (sarcastically)
 You know I love going back there.

SHELAN
 It's your hometown...

BRIDGE
 Get over it, Jed.

JED
 Yeah, well, if I never see another
 tree - or another chainsaw . . .

BELL
 Strange words from a timber company
 executive. And a board member.

JED
 Hey, I'm the marketing guy. I sell
 redwood decks and patio furniture.
 They're not trees anymore.

SHELAN
 Just get up there!

EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF HL HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Leaving the building, workers use a JACKHAMMER. The sound
 becomes the SCREECH of a CHAINSAW. Jed cringes, wipes his
 hand across his face.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE REDWOOD FOREST - DAY

Spirit Wind's truck negotiates a narrow road that literally
 squeezes past mammoth trees, gliding to a stop at a pullout.

Angel's out of the truck now, looking up, giggling with glee.

HER POV: A cathedral-like canopy a hundred feet up. A shaft of sunlight penetrates an opening.

BACK TO SCENE: Spirit Wind produces a paper bag.

SPIRIT WIND

I've got an extra sandwich. This looks like a good place for lunch.

LATER, they sit on a huge fallen log, finishing lunch.

ANGEL

Spirit Wind. Seems appropriate...

SPIRIT WIND

I was named for the song of the Marbled Murrelet that nests up top.

ANGEL

Think we'll see one?

SPIRIT WIND

Doubt it. They spend most of their time out at sea. Only come back to nest.

She leans back on her arms, gazing up in awe.

ANGEL

It's like a living cathedral.

He leans back against a tree, pull his hat over his eyes.

SPIRIT WIND

Shouldn't sleep in church, but...

LATER: The Indian snoozes. In the distance, down a narrow path, Angel dances naked, drinking in the majesty of the place. She moves with cat-like grace.

The shaft of sunlight that spotlights her is interrupted by a moving shadow. She looks up.

HER POV: A HELICOPTER flying low overhead.

CUT TO:

EXT. HELICOPTER FLYING LOW OVER THE FOREST - DAY

INSIDE, Purvis sits next to the pilot; Fishkin, Trevor and an assistant behind. They SHOUT to be heard NOISE.

PILOT

There. The the last stand of
privately held old-growth redwood
in the world.

TREVOR

No one else owns anything like it.

FISHKIN

The Flynn family owned it until the
old man died and they went public.
Biggest shareholder is the only
kid, Bridget.

PURVIS

Know anything about the business?

FISHKIN

Not much. But her husband, Jed
Hawkins is VP/Marketing; probably
the smartest guy on the board.

PURVIS

(to Trevor)

Let's find a way to get to him.

FISHKIN

None of the rest have any business
sense. Instead of maximizing
production, they treat the forest
like it'll last forever!

All laugh except Purvis.

FISHKIN (CONT'D)

Company's worth at least three
times the current share price! Plus
a pension fund with a huge surplus!

TREVOR

You don't seem pleased, Harley.

PURVIS

No room for sentiment. This is
about money, not trees. Money's how
I keep score.

THE AIRPORT: The four of them shake hands next to the plane.

FISHKIN
Okay. Done deal. They'll never
know what hit 'em.

CUT TO:

EXT. U.S. 101, REDWOOD FOREST - DAY

Jed's car glides past towering redwoods along the road.

INSIDE: He's deep in thought, a study in pain and anger.
MR. FOX, is in a cage on the seat next to him.

Passing a clear-cut, HL workers plant a 5 foot sapling in an
area being reforested. Camera showcases the action.

EXT. MAIN ST. SCOTSLAND - DAY

Spirit Wind's truck rolls through the hobbit-like town.

INSIDE: Angel's fascinated with the huge mills, quaint
village, and rows of the well-kept cottages.

ANGEL
It's right out of kid's story book.

SPIRIT WIND
Scotsland's special all right.
Paradise With a Waiting List.

ANGEL
It's like time passed it by.

SPIRIT WIND
Last company town left in America.

ANGEL
You mean. . .