

Cowboy's Burden

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FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT FLATS - DAY

A Harvester International Scout SS II speeds across the ungodly terrain. Sand and dust billow in its trail.

EXT. SCOUT SS II

It's topless and doorless. A man wearing a cowboy hat, shades, Western style shirt with the sleeves partially rolled up, and blue jeans is in the driver's seat.

INT. SCOUT SS II

The cowboy shifts gears and his boot steps on the accelerator.

CLOSE ON THE COWBOY'S FACE

He has a steely face. The distant horizon reflects off his shades.

COWBOY (V.O.)

The score was one all, you bastard. You killed my crew. So I in turn killed yours. And as far as I was concerned, that could have been the end of it.

EXT. DESERT FLATS - DAY

The terrain is slowly changing. Mountains appear in the background as the speeding Scout proceeds. The blue sky is turning pink and the yellow flats are turning gray.

COWBOY (V.O.)

I even thought we'd reached a tacit truce after those awful events.

INT. SCOUT SS II

CLOSE ON THE COWBOY

COWBOY (V.O.)

I guess that was just naive thinking on my part.

DASHBOARD

A sophisticated global positioning unit is beeping rhythmically.

GPS SCREEN

A grid layout of the area is on the screen. A white dot is moving against the grid. It blinks with each rhythmic beep.

CLOSE ON THE COWBOY

The same steely face and shades. His mechanized left hand is on the steering wheel.

COWBOY (V.O.)

If ever there was a truce, you
broke it last year when you pearl-
habored me.

CLOSE ON THE MECHANICAL LEFT HAND

COWBOY (V.O.)

You burned off my left arm. But
this new mech arm is almost as
good as a god given one. It will
last forever.

CLOSE ON THE MECHANICAL LEFT HAND AND FOREARM

The name of the manufacturer is stamped on it: THE CYBERNETIC AND CLONING LAB CO.

COWBOY (V.O.)

Yeah, this bad boy contains a
complete sample of my DNA. If you
should kill me, the eggheads back
at CCL will just clone me.

GPS SCREEN

The white dot is blinking rapidly and the beeps are more steady.

COWBOY (V.O.)

And I'll be back. And I'll keep
coming back until you're dead.

INT. SCOUT SS II-BACK SEAT

On the backseat is a rectangular box. The cover reads: **THE THUNDERBOLT 3000 RIFLE: WHY JUST KILL'EM WHEN YOU CAN REDUCE HIM TO ASHES.**

COWBOY (V.O.)

I hope you like pain. Cause I'm
gonna dole it out by the boat
load when I catch up with you.

EXT. DESERT FLATS - DAY

The Scout is speeding. Sand and dirt billow in its trail.

INT. SCOUT SS II/COWBOY'S POV

Through the windshield, a winged creature is seen flying in the sky ahead of the jeep.

INT. GPS SCREEN

The white dot is no longer blinking; it's solid and the beep is now a steady ring.

INT. SCOUT SS II

While driving, he cowboy reaches into the back and grabs the rifle from its box.

EXT. DESERT FLATS - DAY

The jeep is speeding along the flats, pursuing a dragon flying in the sky.

The jeep is right under the dragon. It slams to a stop.

The cowboy jumps out with the rifle in hand.

He takes aim at the dragon.

COWBOY'S POV

High in the sky, the tail end of the dragon is in the gun's sight

CLOSE ON THE COWBOY'S FACE

He's looking through the gun's sight. The flying dragon reflects off the shades.

COWBOY
Vete al diablo!

DESERT FLATS

The rifle fires a thunderous lightning bolt.

EXT. SKY/DRAGON - DAY

With a blinding flash and deafen boom, the lightning bolt strikes the dragon in the rear.

The beast flinches in mid-flight and lets out a god awful shriek.

It recovers.

The dragon turns in the direction the bolt came from. It's headed for the cowboy.

EXT. SCOUT SS II

The cowboy sees the dragon flying his way.

He fires a lightning bolt at the dragon.

SKY/DRAGON

The approaching dragon evades the bolt. The dragon releases a deafen roar.

EXT. SCOUT SS II

Standing along aside the jeep, the cowboy fires another bolt.

COWBOY'S POV

The dragon evades that bolt, too.

The dragon hovers, wings flapping, keeping it aloft, and it unleashes a huge blast of fire from its mouth.

EXT. SCOUT SS II

The cowboy dives behind the rear end of the jeep.

The jeep's front end is enveloped in flames.

The cowboy is protected from the flames.

EXT. SKY/DRAGON

The beast start to fly toward the jeep.

EXT. SCOUT SS II

The cowboy rolls from behind the jeep, aims the rifle and fires off a bolt.

EXT. SKY/DRAGON

The dragon roars. A second later, the bolt strikes it directly in the mouth.

The beast's head explodes and it's body goes limp in mid flight. The lifeless body is headed toward the Scout and the cowboy.

EXT. SCOUT SS II/COWBOY'S POV

He sees what's coming but can do nothing about it.

COWBOY
This ain't good!

The careening, lifeless dragon flattens the Scout and cowboy.

A rut and huge crater are created by the impact.

FADE TO:

EXT. DESERT FLATS- NIGHT

The lifeless dragon lies in the crater. Parts of the wrecked, flattened Scout are visible.

CRATER

Buzzing and whizzing sounds emanate from under the dead dragon.

The mech arm has detached itself from the cowboy's body and has managed to escape from under the dragon.

The fingers of the mech act as legs, dragging the forearm along.

It drags itself out of the crater

EXT. DESERT FLATS - NIGHT

The mech arm is dragging itself across the flats

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERTED ROADWAY - NIGHT

The mech is dragging itself along the road.

A coyote notices it and goes after it.

The coyote picks the mech up in its mouth.

The mech grabs hold the coyote's ear.

The coyote yelps in pain and releases the mech.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The mech drags itself along the shoulder of the highway.

Cars speed by.

The bright skyline of a city is in the background.

CUT TO:

EXT. CYBERNETIC AND CLONING LABORATORY COMPANY - DAY

The mech is dragging itself through the parking-lot.

A swat white building is in the background.

WIPE TO:

INT. CYBERNETIC AND CLONING LABORATORY COMPANY/LABORATORY

Two techs examine the mech arm.

TECH #1
It's RX7-300ZX.

TECH #2
Ahh yes, the cowboy. He's to be
cloned if he should meet an
untimely death.

TECH #1
I guess he did.

CUT TO:

INT. CLONING LAB

CLOSE ON THE TWO LAB TECHS

The two techs are dressed in disposable protective clothing, face masks and goggles, standing shoulder to shoulder. They are bathed in green light.

TECH #1
Begin the cloning of RX7-300ZX.

TECHS' POV

A 100 gallon glass cylinder tank is full of green, translucent liquid and a human embryo. The label on the tank reads: RX7-300ZX

WIPE TO:

CAPTION: ONE YEAR LATER

POV OF 100 GALLON TANK

The two techs stare at the tank with shocked expressions.

TECH #1
This isn't right. Something has gone horribly wrong!

TECH #2
It's too late. Get a bed and take him to the prep room. He'll be awake soon.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

The techs are standing at the end of a hospital bed.

POV OF THE PATIENT/COWBOY

The two techs are standing at the end of the bed. Both seem concerned.

COWBOY
Where am I?

TECH #1
You're at CCL.

COWBOY
I was cloned?

TECH #2
Yes. You were. But there was a
problem.

The cowboy lifts his arms.

His forearm and hands are green and scaly. His fingers have
long, sharp nails.

COWBOY
What happened to me?

TECH #1
Your DNA sample was contaminated.

COWBOY
With what?

TECH #1
With dragon DNA. You've been
genetically spliced.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

The cowboy has been cloned into a dragon man, a man with
scales and claws. He's sitting up in his hospital bed. The
two techs are at the end of the bed.

COWBOY/DRAGONMAN
Can anything be done to reverse
it?

TECH #1
I'm afraid not.

CLOSE ON THE COWBOY/DRAGONMAN

He has the 1000 yard stare.

WIPE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

The cowboy/dragonman is alone in his room, lying in his
bed.

COWBOY/DRAGONMAN (V.O.)
It seems, dragon, you and I are
now one. The blood of my eternal
enemy flows through my veins. I
guess I'm my own worst enemy,
now.

CLOSE ON THE COWBOY/DRAGONMAN

COWBOY/DRAGONMAN

This changes nothing, dragon. I
will kill you. I promise.

THE END