

LAND OF THE SUN

Written by

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(Note: Arches National Park is a modern name. The name Arches National Park, and formation names, are used for clarity.)

BLACK.

CUT TO:

The still of a cloudless blue sky is shattered by the entrance and ROARS of the USAF Thunderbirds.

Flying in Delta Formation, the planes leave white smoke. The smoke swirls and then slowly dissipates. Their sound fades.

CAMERA TILTS DOWN.

WE ARE IN:

EXT. SOUTHERN UTAH DESERT - C. 1500 CE - DAY

Baked red desert rocks burn against the ocean sky. Sandstone arches and desert towers soar in grandeur.

TITLE: C. 1500 CE

We hear a gentle BREEZE. No roads disturb the vast landscape.

Birds CHIRP and insects BUZZ. The circles of life in motion.

WOOSH. OURAY, a teenage Ute Male, enters the frame. Dark hair, slender frame, proper traditional attire. He sprints, bow and arrow in hand, after a jackrabbit.

EXT. ARCHES NATIONAL PARK - LATER

Ouray slows his pace. The jackrabbit just within sight.

Ouray draws his bow. CREEK.

The jackrabbit dashes away, RUSTLING. Gone.

Sweaty and tired, Ouray concedes.

EXT. ARCHES NATIONAL PARK - EVENING

Ouray, in the shadow of a cliff, scrambles up a smoothly carved sandstone slope. He stops abruptly.

A shaft of light cuts through the cliff face. A sandstone window, an infant arch, is the source of light.

EXT. ARCHES NATIONAL PARK - CLIFF WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Ouray arrives at the window.

Through the window we see Delicate Arch.

EXT. DELICATE ARCH - CONTINUOUS

Ouray, reverently approaches the looming arch. It glows in the golden evening sun.

His long shadow dances across the rippled sandstone.

Quiet. Calm.

He stares at the arch. Amazed.

EXT. DELICATE ARCH - NIGHT

Deep indigo sky. The Milky Way Galaxy clear and sharp.

Ouray sleeps. The dark figure of the Arch watches over him.

EXT. DELICATE ARCH - MORNING

With the BOOM of thunder...

Ouray wakes.

EXT. BACK SIDE OF DELICATE ARCH - LATER

Behind Delicate Arch, there are shallow cliffs. Ouray, climbs down these cliffs into the sandy valley below.

A storm, laden with pregnant black clouds, distantly looms.

Ouray pulls a rock loose.

Ouray TUMBLES down the cliff.

Lightning and THUNDER in the distance.

EXT. BOTTOM OF CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

WIDE: DELICATE ARCH, THE CLIFF BELOW THE ARCH, AND THE SMALL FIGURE OF A LIMP BODY AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CLIFF.

CAMERA HOLDS WIDE...

FADE TO:

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE CLIFF - DAY

In the place of Ouray, a full grown desert tree.

Its red wood a product of its red sandy growth. Its deep green leaves a living contrast to the lifeless sand.

A thunderstorm rolls across the desert. Flash. BOOM.

Lightning STRIKES the tree. The tree SPLITS.

BACK TO WIDE.

The THUNDER reverberates off the cliffs of the desert.

CAMERA HOLDS WIDE...

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE CLIFF - DAY

Two white male explorers, EXPLORER ONE, white beard mid 50's, and EXPLORER TWO, 30's, arrive at the sight of the tree.

The tree now dead and dry.

They set down their CLANGING gear. Stare up at the arch.

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE CLIFF - EVENING

The explorers at camp. They procure an ax and CHOP the tree.

BACK TO WIDE.

The CHOPS of the ax reverberate off the cliffs of the desert.

EXT. BOTTOM OF THE CLIFF - NIGHT

The explorers sit next to a CRACKLING fire. A pile of red desert wood sits next to them. They put the wood in the fire.

The fire's smoke and embers rise. Smoke gently circles and wafts in and out of the desert arches. White on red.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. ARCHES NATIONAL PARK - DAY

The sun blazes down on the crowds of Delicate Arch.

People YELL. People snap photos, take selfies under the arch, touch the arch. Rope burns on the arch indicate abuse.

ELIZA CHIPETA ADAMSON, 40's, wearing a USAF Thunderbirds polo, eyes hidden by aviators, amongst the crowd.

Her silence is starkly different from the yelling people.

She stares at the arch. Amazed.

People weave in and out of her as she stares.

Fade in the muted sounds of a JET ENGINE, as if in a cockpit. Simultaneously fade out the SCREAMS and YELLS of the crowd.

CUT TO:

I/E. F-16 THUNDERBIRD COCKPIT - DAY

COCKPIT CAMERA: Eliza pilots a USAF Thunderbird. The sounds of FLIGHT COMMANDS and MUTED JET ENGINES.

Black hair hidden by her helmet, eyes by aviators.

She flies in formation. The other planes just inches away.

FLIGHT COMMANDER (O.S.)
(female voice, muted)
Blue hold. Clear. 12.5 20.

The formation pulls up. The earth below shifts into view.

Earth slowly shrinks away.

CUT TO BLACK.

The FLIGHT COMMANDS and MUTED JET ENGINES continue.

TITLE: LAND OF THE SUN

Sound fades out.

THE END.