

# Part 15

Part 15 opens with a group of men, including Glanton, riding north from Sonora at the break of dawn on December 5th, embarking on a journey marked by hardship and violence. Among their number is Sloat, a young boy left behind by a gold train weeks ago. These men travel across the dry, barren Sonoran desert, searching for the elusive Chiricahua raiders. Their path is filled with rumors of their quarry, but they are met with little more than desolation. After a violent encounter near the Nacozari River, they massacre a pueblo, catching the attention of General Elias' Sonoran cavalry. The clash results in several casualties, including three deaths and seven injuries on Glanton's side, underscoring the brutal, unforgiving nature of their journey. This scene highlights the violence and suffering that follow them, no matter where they go.

As the day continues, the tension within the group grows. The wounded men, who are desperate for water, create further strain on an already tense atmosphere. The Delawares, quiet and uncommunicative, seem distant, their foreignness emphasized by their silence. Glanton, ever the leader, takes stock of their dwindling resources, carefully counting his arrows and preparing himself for the inevitable battle. The men exchange wary glances, the weight of their circumstances and the danger they face hanging heavily in the air. Despite the mounting fear and the burden of their situation, they move forward, unrelenting in their pursuit of their bloody mission, bound together by a shared history of violence and bloodshed.

The next significant event unfolds when Tate speaks up, breaking the uncomfortable silence by asking what should be done with a Mexican captive they've captured. The conversation turns chilling as the group discusses the prospect of torture and death. Their descent into brutality becomes evident as they voice their intentions, showing no moral restraint. The Kid, deeply disturbed but hesitant to speak, listens to his companions, acknowledging the growing moral decay within the group. The wounded

Shelby, in particular, seems to reflect on the shattered lives around him, contemplating the cost of their violent existence. As the men confront their own survival instincts and the depths of their cruelty, a confrontation between the Kid and Shelby reveals the fractured bonds within the group. Taunts and bitter exchanges illustrate the emotional toll their actions are taking, turning once-solid relationships into strained, hostile interactions.



The situation grows darker still as the group travels deeper into the wilderness. The harsh cold settles in as snow begins to swirl around them, compounding their exhaustion and hunger. Yet, despite the overwhelming obstacles, the men refuse to turn back, determined to continue their mission. The harsh landscape, covered in snow and filled with the promise of death, erases any trace of their movement, leaving no footprints behind in the vast, barren land. As night falls, the weight of despair grows, and the men find themselves surrounded by the unrelenting cold, the bleak wilderness threatening to swallow them whole. Their journey becomes one of survival against the elements, as they push forward with no respite in sight. They approach the desolate settlement of Santa Cruz, an area that seems as absurd and alien as the hostile wilderness they have traversed. This final leg of their journey marks the deepening of their shared brutality, as each passing day draws them further into a world dominated by violence and cruelty. Their struggles and hardships bring them closer together, not in camaraderie but in the shared experience of suffering and survival. The chapter concludes, leaving the men more entrenched in their brutal existence and foreshadowing the deeper violence yet to come.