

"AMERICA: A Renga"

FADE IN:

EXT. WILDERNESS - EVENING - WINTER

There is a lazy hill in the distance. On its base, there is some snow.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREAMSIDE - DAY - SPRING

Engulfed in spring foliage, an old stream flows. The scenery conjures the words to an ancient Japanese poem:

VOICE (V.O.)

Minase-gawa arite yuku mizu
nakuba koso tsui ni wagami o
taenu to omowame...

(The subtitles read: "If Minase River had no water that's there and flows, I might end up thinking that she has abandoned me...")

CUT TO:

EXT. STREAMSIDE - DAY - SUMMER

A gentle breeze blows from the same stream through a strand of green willows along its bank.

+DAWN

Downstream and O.S., there is the distinct sound of an OBJECT ENTERING THE WATER: it could be a foot, or a pole.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - NIGHT - AUTUMN

The moon struggles weakly to push through the thick mist of the night.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - EARLY MORNING - WINTER

The frost shines on the brittle grass of a desolate field.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - EARLY EVENING - AUTUMN

For the first time, the CHIRPING OF INSECTS can be heard. There are tall withering grasses along this stream.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY - AERIAL

The final shot is an AERIAL VIEW of the stream. And the same forest. And these same fields. There are no roads. There are no people.

FADE TO:

EXT. STREAMSIDE - DAY - SUMMER

The bank is eroding into the stagnant stream.

+CLOSE ON FISH

in schools, within the water. Once again, the sound of an OBJECT ENTERING THE STREAM is heard. Though the sound is muffled by distance, the fish dart away.

+CLOSE ON FISH AGAIN

They occupy the entire frame. The water is rushing. Suddenly, a primitive WOODEN TRIDENT is thrust into the water by an unseen hand. The weapon pulls a stunned fish from the water.

+THE PRIMITIVE MAN

The first sight of the FISHERMAN: he is a primitive Indo-Asian man. He hunts naked. He untangles the fish from the prongs of the trident, then threads a bone needle through

its gills. He prepares to attack again, resting back on his haunches.

EXT. WOODLET

The man has a string of fish on his back. He half-jogs, half-walks nimbly past reeds, through brush, and eventually to his resting place.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE - LATE AFTERNOON - THE WOOD

for a fire is stacked neatly in the center of the campsite. There is a tent-like shelter, made from what appears to be canvas, but must be some sort of animal skin. WAIT. There are some MANUFACTURED SHOES at the site. And now, the primitive man adorns himself with underwear and a pair of pants.

+TENT-LIKE SHELTER

The last sun of the evening glistens from what is now recognizable as the REFLECTIVE MATERIAL of the tent.

+CADILLAC

The primitive man now approaches his 1973 dull-black Cadillac sedan. He carefully opens the rusted-out trunk. There are DENTS IN THE GRILLE and IN THE FRONT FENDER.

+TRUNK OF CADILLAC - 2023 A.D.

The fire is blazing well-behavedly in a circle of stones. The man removes a sterile bag from the trunk. He takes a HIGH-TECH SHEET OF SHINY, THICK WHITE CARDBOARD from the bag and places a fish specimen flatly upon it. The man is TOYA, and he is not indigenous, he is a young JAPANESE man. The cardboard indicator he uses alerts one to the presence of toxic chemicals. As he lifts the fish from the cardboard sheet, we see the

+RESULTS OF THE TEST

The fish leaves a sticky black residue on the paper, indicating to Toya that the fish is toxic.

+THE FIRE

An unused skillet rests beside the fire.

+TRUNK

Toya returns the fish, with the others, to the trunk of the automobile where he seals them in an amber plastic bag. Then he reaches into a corner of the trunk to find a small box with Japanese characters. With the flat of his hand, Toya raps the box resolutely. He removes a fork from a mess kit in the trunk, and opens the box.

+CLOSE ON BOX

Steam rises from the FOOD inside the box. The food has been cooked instantly by means of a controlled, thermo-chemical reaction begun by Toya's rapping.

+TRUNK

As he has finished the food, he dismantles the container and seals it within another amber plastic bag (that contains other similar boxes), then places this bag neatly inside the trunk.

+CADILLAC

The sounds of Toya EXTINGUISHING THE FIRE are heard from O.S.

FADE TO:

EXT. ENTIRE CAMPSITE - MORNING - THE TENT

has been torn down and placed in the trunk. The fire has stopped smoldering and the stones that had surrounded it have been moved away. Toya secures the Cadillac's trunk and looks over the area. He enters the car and begins to drive away.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CADILLAC - MORNING - ABANDONED ROAD

The car reaches a narrow, one-way road. Here the cracks and crevices are deep and well-defined. The auto passes the

reverse of an old wooden sign -- the face of which is not in view.

+PARK ROAD

All the trees within this area are charred. They are leafless and straight telephone poles with roots. The auto finally reaches a larger asphalt road. The WEATHERED SIGN at the exit reads: "YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, WE HOPE THAT YOU ENJOYED YOUR STAY."

CUT TO:

EXT. YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK - EXIT - MORNING

The Cadillac passes the sign.

FADE TO BLACK.

+TITLE: "AMERICA"

FADE IN:

INT. CADILLAC - LATE MORNING - RURAL ROAD

This road is no better than the previous one. The ride is rough.

+GAS CITY OUTSKIRTS

A few houses appear beside the road. They, like the roads, are in grave disrepair. One ancient house is covered in huge, faded yellow letters: "SEE ROCK CITY."

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS CITY OUTSKIRTS - LATE MORNING - SIGN

More houses. Toya's auto nears the cluster. A rusty green sign swings gently by the roadside: "GAS CITY."

INT. CADILLAC - CLOSE ON FUEL GAUGE

Low.

+VIEW THROUGH WINDSHIELD

No people on the streets. The car passes deserted homes.
There is a gas station.

EXT. GAS STATION - LATE MORNING - CLOSE ON BELLHOSE

The tires of the Cadillac cross the bellhose WITHOUT
SOUNDING THE BELL.

+PUMPS - DETAIL ON OFFICE

Empty.

+PUMPS - DETAIL ON TOYA

as he naïvely begins to take the nozzle from the gasoline
pump.

VOICE (O.S.)

What are you doin' there, boy?

Toya is startled. A heavy-set man of about forty years
appears from O.S. and makes his way toward the pump: the
station's ATTENDANT. The attendant shuts off the pump.

+OFFICE DOORWAY

The ASSISTANT stands inside the once vacant office. He is
thinner than the attendant. An electric fan rotates inside.

+PUMPS - DETAIL ON TOYA

as he studies this old-style pump.

ATTENDANT

How much?

Toya reaches to take the nozzle.

TOYA

Oh, I can do it.

The attendant raises his open hand.

ATTENDANT

We pump it here. How much?

TOYA
(resigning)
Make it full, please.

As the attendant fits the nozzle into the Cadillac's gas tank, it scrapes metal.

+INSERT

Toya's California license plate.

+BACK TO SCENE - PUMPS - CLOSE ON ATTENDANT'S JAW

The jaw muscle bulges.

ATTENDANT
This's a nice car. Old one.

Toya smiles nervously.

TOYA
Thank you.

ATTENDANT
(more directly)
Aren't you kinda far out?

+DOORWAY

The assistant adjusts his stance.

+PUMPS

TOYA
From where?

The attendant shakes his head in frustration.

ATTENDANT
What are you doin' out here,
son?

TOYA
I'm not sure.

ATTENDANT
Yep...

+CLOSE ON PUMP NOZZLE

The pump shuts off immediately and automatically. The attendant recklessly removes the nozzle from the tank.

+DETAIL ON ATTENDANT

The attendant replaces the nozzle in the pump. Then, he turns abruptly toward Toya.

ATTENDANT
That's twenty-five. We don't
take no cred--

+PUMPS

The cash is ready. Toya hands it to the attendant. The attendant takes the money and ambles slowly toward the office. The assistant, still staring at Toya, straightens to let the attendant pass.

SLOWLY FADE TO BLACK.

ATTENDANT (V.O.)
(to assistant)
CAL-I-FOOOOORR-NI-CATION!

FADE IN:

+TITLE: TWO YEARS EARLIER

INT. TOKYO (2021) - LATE AFTERNOON - SKYLINE

The OPENING THEME MUSIC from a Japanese television special is heard. There is the bright light of the sun burning from a hazy sky. Beneath the sky (but not too far) is the Tokyo skyline, viewed from within the city. The bright neon lights scream "SONY!" "TOSHIBA!" "SANYO!" etc., all in Japanese, all violent to the eye. No English language signs.

From O.S., "THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER" is heard in its full brassy glory. CAMERA PULLS BACK to the interior frame of the apartment window, from which this view was possible. The furnishings of this modest apartment are rather modern. There is a large television monitor in this room; the aspect ratio of the set is on the scale of a CinemaScope screen. It is wide and extremely clear. A huge American flag, flapping in a gentle breeze, occupies the television screen.

(NOTE: This program is a Japanese-made documentary about the fall of the American Empire. The narration is in Japanese -- there are no subtitles. The images will speak for themselves to any American.)

By now, the monitor's image occupies the entire frame. Once the National Anthem has ceased, WE SEE

+WHEAT FIELDS,

beautiful and golden, pushed by the same gentle breeze that had once pushed the flag. The sound of the FLAPPING FLAG continues. From the soundtrack of the documentary rises a SOLITARY CELLO that echoes the once rousing anthem.

+MOUNTAINS

of deep purple loom over the horizon.

+FORESTS, ETC.

of brilliant green, and hills.

+A STRONG RIVER

of blue-green raging rapids. Finally, as the cello's anthem ENDS STRONGLY, there is a wonderfully clean

+OCEAN

as it laps longingly against the shores of the United States of America, the way they used to be.

(NOTE: The following titles are to be printed on the screen in Japanese. Still, there is to be no English at all.)

+TITLE: A COSTLY MONUMENT

+OLD FOOTAGE - DIFFERENT U.S. CITIES AT THEIR INCEPTIONS

Cities seem to rise before our eyes.

+ANIMATED MAP

which illustrates the growth of the US infrastructure

from the late 1800s to the late 1900s. It begins to pulse,
flow.

+HUGE CITIES

and expansive but empty parking lots.

FADE TO:

+TITLE: FUNERAL

+MOUNT RUSHMORE

where Japanese baseball players clown about on the broken
facial features of George Washington.

+TITLE: BEGINNINGS

+PAINTING OF COLUMBUS

as he is being greeted by the doomed Arawak Indians.

+PAINTING OF AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

depicting white men as they toil over the soil.

+ANIMATED MAP

that details the westward movement of Manifest Destiny.

+THE RIVER,

the famous documentary from the 1930s in which trees, etc.,
fall and rush down the Mississippi River.

+SUBTITLE: WEALTH

+THOMAS EDISON (B/W)

A hand reaches from the dark to switch on an ancient light
bulb. It illuminates a photo of Thomas Edison.

+NEWSREEL SHOTS OF MODEL "A" FORDS

as they stream out of a plant.

+A WRIGHT BROTHER

flies an airplane briefly.

+A NEWER PLANE (COLOR)

swoops near the ground. Then, a WARPLANE flies overhead.

+FACTORIES

in which thousands of widgets wind around on conveyor belts and through chutes, etc.

+CONVEYOR BELTS

form a cross shape: mass production.

+NEW YORK CITY (1940S) - BANK

conducts a land office business.

+A MODERN BANK (COLOR)

continues to thrive.

+HIROSHIMA (B/W)

A terrific nuclear blast.

+MISSILE SILO (COLOR)

in which a nuclear missile glistens.

DISSOLVE TO:

+J. F. KENNEDY (B/W)

as he gesticulates confidently. With his top hat, he impresses the French crowd, but -- there is a

+WOMAN

A QUICK PAN to a woman (without Kennedy in the frame). The CAMERA TILTS UP to her eyes staring directly into the camera: MARILYN.

DISSOLVE TO:

+THE STATUE OF LIBERTY'S EYES

as they take the place of Marilyn's. Then, PULL BACK to include more of the statue.

+TITLE: CHRONOLOGICAL DETAILS

+SUBTITLE: 1776-2021

+1776

A painting depicting the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

+1861-65

Photo of a Civil War battle.

+PHOTO OF LINCOLN

made from a cracked glass plate.

+PAINTING OF SCENE FROM UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

+1895

Newspaper headline: "Remember the Maine!"

+1913

Opening of the Panama Canal.

+1915

Infantile automobile plant: car construction.

+1914-1917

Artillery launched from railroad trains in WWI.

+SHOTS FROM THE BIG PARADE

depicting the horror faced by World War I infantrymen.

+FRED ASTAIRE,

in uniform, dances with Rita Hayworth in You'll Never Get Rich.

+1929

Souplines move listlessly.

+1941-45

World War Two. The bomb.

+1961

Bay of Pigs fiasco. Fidel Castro orates.

+1963

Computers, man on the moon.

DISSOLVE TO:

+ANIMATED MAP OF THE WORLD

A) 1950: a blast appears over Korea.

B) 1962: Vietnam, blast.

C) 1982: Nicaragua, blast.

D) 1983: Grenada, blast.

E) 1986: Libya, blast.

F) 1989: Panama, blast.

G) 1991: Iraq, blast.

H) 1993: Somalia, blast.

- I) 1993: the Balkans, blast.
- J) 1997: northern Africa
- K) 2009: midwestern South America, BIG BLAST. Map clears.

+SUBTITLE: THE TWO CAUSES

+MONTAGE - FREEDOM

- A) THOMAS JEFFERSON turns from his desk while writing.
- B) BLOCK LETTERS which spell out "FREEDOM" GROW to mammoth proportions on the screen, then SHRINK. As they are reduced,
- C) They become TEXT from Thomas Paine's pamphlet "COMMON SENSE."

+MONTAGE - WEALTH

- A) ALEXANDER HAMILTON'S face upon a \$10 bill that becomes one of thousands of bills floating into a bank.
- B) BEN FRANKLIN, an older man in spectacles, opens a BOOK that contains
- C) a PICTURE of TRUMAN, the next page shows an A-BOMB, the next, new B-1 BOMBERS, the last, ERASED CITIES.

+SUBTITLE: POLITICAL IMPOTENCE

+MONTAGE - GRAVES

- A) MASS ALLIED AND ENEMY GRAVES.
- B) WAR BANNERS, FLAGS WAVE.
- C) A MODERN TICKERTAPE PARADE.
- D) STREET CLEANER SWEEPS UP CONFETTI.
- E) (CNN) CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS:

BUSINESS HEAVY #1
Yes, I sold armament in the
form of tanks..

+MODERN HANGINGS

of U.S. TRAITORS. They wear black hoods.

+THE U.N. BUILDING

where FOREIGN DIPLOMATS are leaving and entering taxis and limousines with armloads of documents-- and an air of permanence.

+THE U.S. FLAG

is one of the only flags left flying over the U.N.

+ON TELEVISION

diplomats leave U.N. grounds. They board planes, etc., waving off pesky reporters.

+SUBTITLE: DEEP DEPRESSION

+PRESENT U.S. PRESIDENT

disclaims any danger. At this point, the JAPANESE NARRATION HALTS.

FADE TO:

+THE NATION'S CAPITOL,

and then, the JAPANESE NARRATION RETURNS.

+THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

where the World Banking Authority is holding bankruptcy hearings with the leaders of the U.S. government.

+ANIMATED U.S. MAP RETURNS

with SCHEMATIC DRAWINGS AND ASCENDING DATES. The map shows the flight of little smiling heads, representing the movement of population and remaining U.S. wealth, to the remaining MEGALOPOLIS: "NYC" (including New York City, Philadelphia and New Jersey) and "CA" (which engulfs present-day Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego).

FADE TO:

+THE ENOLA GAY,

big and black, as it flies from east to west.

CUT TO:

INT. TOYA'S APARTMENT - DETAIL ON TOYA

as he watches the television, O.S., from which there is the sound of a huge explosion. His face is substantially more illuminated as the documentary's image of an atomic explosion dominates the television's screen.

CUT BACK TO:

+FOOTAGE OF HIROSHIMA EXPLOSION

The winds whip outward.

+FOOTAGE OF NAGASAKI EXPLOSION

Dawn of the artificial sun.

+FAMOUS FOOTAGE

showing VIETNAMESE GIRL who tries to run from the napalm burning her skin.

FADE TO:

+A YOUNG AMERICAN FIREMAN

who ignites and sends up a firework. It leaves a faint trail of sparks as it rockets skyward. As it reaches its peak,

+THERE IS A HUGE DISPLAY OF SPARKS

an AUTOMOBILE WORKER creates as he welds a frame.

+TECHNICOLOR FOOTAGE OF 1950S AUTOS

CAMERA TILTS DOWN from an auto factory's sign to autos as they stream out. The autos are of varying colors; their bodies are identical.

+IN A 1970S AUTO SHOW,

a FEMALE FASHION MODEL in a dress of white sequins passes her sleek hands over the hood of a concept car.

+AUTO WORKERS PICKET

in front of an auto plant.

CUT TO:

INT. TOYA'S APARTMENT - DETAIL ON TOYA

who watches sternly.

CUT BACK TO:

+A BARREN AMERICAN STREET

that recalls the Vietnamese road upon which the frightened and burning girl was running. This time, there is a little AMERICAN GIRL: poor, naked, and crying: running through industrial Michigan.

CUT TO:

INT. TOYA'S APARTMENT

Toya's hand presses a button on his desktop telephone. The illumination of the television and its CLOSING THEME MUSIC cease simultaneously.

+DARKNESS

Toya's face is silhouetted against the phosphorescence of the recently extinguished screen. There is the tone of a Japanese telephone receiver. A number has been automatically dialed.

+CLOSE ON TOYA'S FACE

as he moves from in front of the monitor to the window, open to the Tokyo night.

(NOTE: dialogue in parentheses is spoken in Japanese and subtitled in English.)

TOYA
(in English)
Hello, hello?

FATHER (O.S.)
(Hello.)

TOYA
(It was very pretty.)

FATHER (O.S.)
(You mustn't insult me.)

TOYA
(Well 250 years is a lot to condense.)

FATHER (O.S.)
(I wasn't attempting to sum up the 250 years, perhaps you missed my point.)

TOYA
(I guess your point was clear enough. Your bitterness is outspoken.)

FATHER (O.S.)
(She will never see this.)

TOYA
(Are there no other ways to express your grief?)

FATHER (O.S.)
(This is not an expression of grief over my wife, it is an obituary.)

TOYA
(he blurts out in English)
You tell us! (that the United States are dead?)

FATHER (O.S.)
(You deny it?)

TOYA

(I do not know what it is to
live as a nation, needless to
say, to die as one...)

FATHER (O.S.)

(No, I'd say you don't, my
little Basho. And I'll admit
that to know the U.S. through
film is to not know it. Yet, it
is as far as most care to go.)

TOYA

(Do you think that she is still
alive?)

FATHER (O.S.)

(I don't think about her.)

TOYA

(Don't you?)

FATHER (O.S.)

(Next week, we agree upon the
North American Satellite
Rights.)

TOYA

(in English)

You can't forget her.

FATHER (O.S.)

(mocking him)

You can't forget her. (I
already have.)

TOYA

(Please wait until I find her...)

FATHER (O.S.)

(You will never find her.)

TOYA

(Wait until I find her.)

FATHER (O.S.)

(You plan to travel to the
United States?)

TOYA

(To bring her back. It may be
easier than you think.)

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GAS STATION (GAS CITY, 2023) - AFTERNOON - TOYA

as he walks from his Cadillac, parked at the gas pump, to a phone booth on the side of the lot.

+HIGH ANGLE - DETAIL ON SIGN AND PHONE BOOTH

A sheer white Pegasus flies on the red field of a slowly rotating MOBILGAS sign. Toya crosses underneath.

TOYA
(quoting)
A great American intersection...

+PHONE BOOTH

Toya pushes against the glass door to the phone booth labelled "ALEXANDER BELL."

ATTENDANT
(yelling from office)
Hey, that don't work!

Toya, not hearing or listening to him, tries to open the booth again.

ATTENDANT
IT DON'T WORK!

TOYA
(acknowledging)
Okay. Thank you.

INT. GAS STATION OFFICE

Toya walks into the office. The attendant has disappeared. Toya is startled by the assistant.

TOYA
Oh, hello, I need to use a telephone.

ASSISTANT
For what?

TOYA
I must contact a relative of mine.

ASSISTANT
A long distance call, huh?

TOYA
No, it's...

ASSISTANT
(wheezing a little)
This phone here is only for
business calls, no personal
calls of any kind.

The assistant points to the misspelled sign behind the desk.

TOYA
I assure you, it's local--

ASSISTANT
You don't hear good!
(he screams)
NO PERRRRrr--

And on this, he chokes, he coughs. He hacks as if he had the worst coal miner's lungs. The coughing is loud. The attendant returns from another part of the garage.

ATTENDANT
(in a slight panic)
Jimmie, Jimmie, easy!
(to Toya)
What did ya do?

Jimmie is attempting to motion to the sign that says:
"ABSALUTELY, NO PERSONNEL CALLS."

ATTENDANT
Just cough it up, Jimmie. Just
spit it up.

Jimmie seems to be half-blowing, half-coughing.

+OFFICE FLOOR - CLOSE ON TILES

of the greasy, grey-white floor. A deep red chunk of flesh hits the floor.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GAS CITY STREET - AFTERNOON - CLOSE ON TRAFFIC LIGHT

A RED, FLASHING TRAFFIC LIGHT glows through the mess.

+CLOSE ON OLDER MAN

In the street, an OLDER MAN wipes a drip of something from his nostril.

OLDER MAN
(senselessly)
On the other hand, green light
gives it a sense of distance,
snow and sand..

+CLOSE ON TOYA

as he walks toward the man's side of the street.

+SIDEWALK - BENEATH THE AWNINGS

The older man stands alone near a bench in front of an abandoned store. He leans against the back of an enclosed wooden box cart.

OLDER MAN
(orgasmically)
Oh-oh-oh! I'm having a vision
of Cody.

Toya crosses the deserted street and approaches the older man.

OLDER MAN
(to Toya)
Hey, whatever ya came for, you
missed it, it ain't here. If
you seen it here it's gone; if
you ain't seen it we never did
have it.
(changing tone)
Hello, friend. Welcome to our
fair city. I call it home, what
can I say?

TOYA
(tentatively)
Good morning, sir. Could you
help me?

There is no answer from the older man.

TOYA
(continuing)
I need to go to this place. Do
you know it?

Toya holds up an old postcard that shows a brightly colored
motel.

TOYA
(continuing)
I'm afraid that she didn't tell
me the address.

OLDER MAN
Oh, yes. I know the feeling. I-
I can remember that...

TOYA
Could you tell me where? It is
very important.

OLDER MAN
(lecherously)
I can see by your face, young
man, that you have a date--
you're all smiles and your eyes
are squinting.

TOYA
I must -- no, no, the postcard
is from my mother.

The man stares at Toya silently.

OLDER MAN
I see. I can see what you're
telling me, now. Let me ask you
a question, son. How old are
you?

TOYA
Uh, twenty-

OLDER MAN
--Old enough, more than what I
would call old enough to know
better... I don't know if you can
see what I see my boy...

TOYA
Sir, I just need--

OLDER MAN

Sign o' the times, I guess,
sign o' the times. Well livin'
mean like this, livin' mean
can, uh...

Blood begins to drip from the man's nose. He pulls out a handkerchief full of dried brown bloodstains and dabs his nose.

TOYA

Sir, if you would please tell
me where--

OLDER MAN

Impatience is just a symptom, I
assure you. Actually, son, your
attitude makes me ill. And you
can see just how we have gotten
to where we are, can't you?

TOYA

Good-day, sir.

Toya turns and begins to walk away.

OLDER MAN

Wait a minute. I can tell you
where it is, hold your horses.

Toya stops.

OLDER MAN

(continuing)

Where are you from, boy?
California, I guess. There
ain't never a C.A. plate here
no more. You're odd, strange.

The older man begins to amble toward the end of the sidewalk.

OLDER MAN

(continuing)

It makes me glad that I raised
my kids here but there ain't
nothin' here, and I can tell
you this until we are both
blue. What you want to know is
'just where is this motel?'

Toya nods.

OLDER MAN
 (continuing)
All I can tell you is you go
straight down here.

He points down the road leading out of town.

 OLDER MAN
 (continuing)
and you make a left onto...
Miller Road. Then you go 'til
you see it. You can't miss it.

 TOYA
Miller?

Toya turns to walk back to the gas station. He turns back
toward the man as if to speak.

 TOYA
 (referring to the
 cart)
What do you have for sale
today?

The older man laughs to himself and gently strokes the door
to the top of the cart.

 OLDER MAN
Oh no, I'm not selling
anything, my boy. Nothing
here's for sale.

Toya turns around slowly, as if this were the end of the
film, and walks into the distance. The older man continues
to pat the lid gently. He hears a NOISE from inside the
cart. He stops leaning against the cart with the front of
his pelvis and bends over the cart's lid. The chain to the
lid allows the lid to open only several inches.

+CLOSE ON CART

A hole about crotch high is visible.

+CLOSER ON CART

Within the slightly open lid, an OLDER WOMAN's wretched
facial features can be made out. The light from the hole
and from the cracked lid illuminate her face. She is
retarded and must be quite deformed to fit into the small
cart.

WOMAN

(in heavy dialect and
gurgling tones)

Miller Road? I remember
thaaaaat road. It's a busy
road. Oh, yes, there are many
busy people on that road, mercy
yes... Yessss, you hurt me there...

OLDER MAN

(Trailing off,
correcting)

I *found* you there.

He begins to push the cart.

EXT. MILLER'S ROAD - AFTERNOON - MILLER'S ROAD SIGN

Toya stands on the main road, looking in the direction indicated by the sign. There is no road, only a sandy pit about two feet below the road's surface. Impossible to drive to his destination, Toya begins to climb over the barricade and into the sand. He checks his watch. He begins to walk. As Toya's shoe steps down upon a RUSTY CAN in the sand,

CUT TO:

EXT. HAWAIIAN BEACH (1997) - AFTERNOON - CLOSE ON BOY

A young seven-year-old JAPANESE BOY's face reveals that he is IN PAIN, a shooting pain. The boy is in his swimming trunks at a sandy and remote beach. He runs, hops, screaming for his mother.

+MOTHER'S TOWEL

Reverently, the boy quiets himself as he reaches his mother's towel. There are three towels here: a small one and two large ones. His MOTHER is asleep on her towel, the other towel is vacant. The boy kneels beside the gently sweating woman.

+CLOSE ON MOTHER

She wears cateye sunglasses and a simple, one-piece maillot of which one of the straps has fallen. The boy kindly and slowly awakens the woman.

BOY

Mama.

She answers groggily but concerned, in ENGLISH.

MOTHER

What is it?

The boy, now seated "indian-style", brings up the cut foot. The sand sticks to the blood.

MOTHER

Oh, my baby.

BOY

There was a... (he says the Japanese word for "can").

MOTHER

A can. On the beach? I thought we had found a little paradise.

There is a slender and sinewy Japanese man who walks out of the ocean in the b.g. The mother brushes off the boy's foot. She takes some water from her cooler and rinses it. The man makes his way toward the two.

MOTHER

There never used to be any cans on the beaches in Hawaii. I guess you can never get far enough away.

Nervously, the boy looks at the man (who is just out of earshot).

BOY

(to mother)

When does Papa get here? We haven't seen him.

The man arrives at his beach towel beside the boy's mother.

MOTHER

(matter-of-factly)

Not very soon. First we must go to the mainland, and then we will go back home.

The man smiles faintly, but understandingly at her. The boy whispers in her ear.

BOY

It hurts...

+THEIR BODIES' IMPRINTS IN SAND

There is an empty beach and an empty tin can. There is a wave.

MOTHER (V.O.)
You will be alright.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AMERICAN AIRPORT (1997) - YOUNG TOYA

Next to a ticket counter in the terminal, the boy looks upward, as if toward his mother. He is dressed neatly and drags a rather heavy rolling suitcase. He turns around and struggles with the weight of his luggage toward the ticket counter. He turns back to look at her from the counter.

+REVERSE SHOT

There is no sign of his mother here.

MOTHER (V.O.)
I write to you to say that I did not mean to hurt you. In time you will understand what I have done and why I have done it.

(pause)
My mother's heritage has kept me here, not a man.

The airport's public address system announces the upcoming departures and arrivals.

MOTHER (V.O.)
(later)
I am writing you this note to offer a reunion. The location is a bit...

MOTHER (V.O.)
(later)
I'm sorry that you didn't wish to respond to my note. I miss you and...

MOTHER (V.O.)

(later)

Even though I don't hear from
you, you are on my mind. Please
meet me this time. I need your
love and support.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. MILLER'S ROAD (2023) - TOYA'S POSTCARD

The text of the postcard includes the WORDS FROM THE FINAL
V.O. At the bottom of the card is a STICK-FIGURE DRAWING of
their incident at the beach with the tin can.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL BEDROOM IN AMERICA (1999) - MOTHER'S BED

Mother lies listlessly in the dark of her bedroom. She is
extremely sensual in her gentle and sure movements, and
barely visible. She is openly and comfortably naked in
front of her son.

+YOUNG TOYA IN DOORWAY

The boy quietly waits for his mother to acknowledge him.

+YOUNG TOYA'S POV - MOTHER

as she rolls over, awake.

MOTHER

Toya? Are you afraid of your
mother?

YOUNG TOYA (O.S.)

No, mama...

MOTHER

You stare at me as if you want
to hurt me...

YOUNG TOYA (O.S.)

Oh, mama...

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. MILLER'S ROAD (2023) - BROKEN PAVEMENT - TOYA

In the sand, he is motionless.

+TOYA'S POV - MOTEL FROM POSTCARD

There is a motel. The building is decrepit and dingy. There are no cars in the parking lot. The doors to several of the rooms have been left to swing open. All is QUIET and abandoned. Toya holds up the brightly colored PICTURE POSTCARD of the motel as it had been in its former grandeur. There is no comparison.

+MOTEL - DETAIL ON TOYA

as he walks toward the structure. He checks the postcard and continues toward a specific door. The door is open and banging against one of the room's inner walls. Toya slowly looks into the room.

INT. ROOM

The T.V. stand has been ripped from the floor.

TOYA
(softly)
Mama...?

There are plastic bags of clothes and collected items on and around the bed. Obviously, the room has been occupied recently. Toya ventures to the bathroom. There are rats and insects covering the facilities. There is a groan from the bed. Toya moves back toward it.

TOYA
Mama...?

He slowly uncovers the bed. The *thing* beneath the comforter begins to scream in a hoarsely quiet, almost insane manner. It is a SICK WOMAN, clothed in a hospital gown. She is not very old, yet she is quite weak and thin. SHE IS NOT HIS MOTHER.

VOICE (O.S.)
What the fuck are you doing?

+ANGLE ON TOYA - SIDE OF BED

As Toya turns around, he is caught at full speed by a charging man. Toya is crushed against the wall beside the bed. The man takes Toya's head and repeatedly smashes it

against the panelling of the wall. Finally, a nightstick cracks Toya's skull. The man is a POLICEMAN. As the man kicks Toya on the floor,

FADE OUT.

POLICEMAN (V.O.)
I don't know what you think
you're doing here...

LONG FADE IN:

INT. POLICECAR - EARLY EVENING - POLICEMAN'S EYES

as they appear in the REARVIEW MIRROR. Without regard for the road, the eyes are affixed to Toya awakening in the back seat.

POLICEMAN
Ah, you gonna wake up now?

The car begins to pull over to the side of the road.

POLICEMAN
You fuckin' Jap pervert.

+BACKSEAT

The front door opens and the policeman forthrightly opens the back door and punches Toya three times in the head. This, no doubt, sends Toya back into unconsciousness. The policeman gets back into the front seat. The car pulls back onto the road.

POLICEMAN
Even if you're not asleep, keep
your eyes shut 'til we get
where I'm going. Or I'll kill
you.

+THROUGH WINDSHIELD

The car smoothly continues.

FADE TO:

INT. COURTHOUSE GREAT HALL - NEXT DAY - OVERHEAD

Inside an ill-lit county courthouse, DROPS OF WATER FALL AND ECHO. It is difficult to see the monolithic walls and stairs. As seen from above, Toya silently approaches the

security desk, pauses, and is directed upward by the guard.
Toya is alone.

+TOYA'S POV - DOME

Sunlight struggles through the stained-glass window dome.

+COURTHOUSE STAIRS

Toya's foot slips into a groove well-worn into a marble
step as he ascends the staircase.

+CLERK'S OFFICE DOOR

Toya arrives at a frosted glass door labeled "COUNTY
CLERK." His HANDCUFFED WRISTS reach toward the doorknob and
open the door.

+CLERK'S OFFICE

is a dark room that holds a state flag, an old desk with an
aged computer terminal, and precariously stacked files.
Behind the desk, on the wall, is a large painting of Native
Americans hunting buffalo. Seated at the desk is the CLERK,
a middle-aged man with thick reading glasses. He adjusts
his high-backed wooden chair and looks over his glasses at
Toya.

+CLOSE ON GLASSES

Reflected in the clerk's glasses, Toya shuts the door
behind him, then approaches the desk.

+DESK

CLERK

What can I do for you?

TOYA

I was told to come to this room
by a man downstairs.

Toya is swollen. He cares very little for his pronunciation.
It hurts him to be conscious.

CLERK

Do you have the form for me?

Toya produces the sheet of paper. The clerk studies it.

CLERK

Do you know the seriousness of
what you have done? Sit down.

+DETAIL ON TOYA

as he sits gingerly in a chair in front of the desk.

CLERK

(continuing)

"Breaking and entering,
attempted robbery, attempted
assault, resisting arrest,
assault of a police officer,
battery of a police officer,
failure to comply with a
directive from an officer..."

+DETAIL ON CLERK

CLERK

How do you plead to these
accusations? Are you guilty or
not guilty? Sign here.

The clerk pushes another sheet in front of Toya.

TOYA

(responding slowly)

This is a trial?

CLERK

Will you respond in your own
defense?

(pause)

Oh, I've skipped something: I
need to see your
identification.

+TOYA

as he wearily reaches into his pockets to retrieve his
identification. It is not there. Without responding, he
discontinues his search for what has obviously been taken
by the policeman. CAMERA PULLS BACK to include clerk.

CLERK

Where are you from son?

TOYA

I was born in Osaga.

CLERK

I don't give a shit where you were born, where is your present residence?

TOYA

My father lives in Tokyo.

CLERK

Can you prove that you are a U.S. citizen?

TOYA

I am not a U.S. citizen.

CLERK

Mr., Mr.,

TOYA

Toya.

CLERK

Yeah. I am going to initiate deportation procedures. When did you enter the country?

TOYA

Six months ago.

CLERK

Dates, Mr. Toya.

TOYA

In March, 23rd March. May I have my possessions returned to me?

CLERK

I have them here. There is a pair of keys and a belt. And your shoe laces.

The clerk pushes the items across the desk toward Toya. First, Toya reaches for his BELT.

CLERK

When did you arrive in Gas City? And what is your business here?

+BELT

Toya does not respond but slowly reaches into an inner flap of the belt. He removes three crisply folded \$100 bills. Still in pain, he drops them on the desk. The clerk stops, pensively.

+DETAIL ON CLERK

CLERK

I repeat, when did you arrive
in Gas City, Mr. Toya?

Toya removes the last \$100 bill from the belt and turns the flap inside-out to prove its emptiness.

CLERK

What is your intention, Mr.
Toya?

Toya slowly nudges the bills in the direction of the clerk. The clerk corrals the four bills. He picks one up and studies its alien crispness.

CLERK

I still need answers to the
questions, Mr. Toya.

+TOYA'S POV - CLERK

The clerk has become more supportive, a little more congenial.

TOYA

My mother.

The clerk pockets the bills.

CLERK

You were looking for her in Gas
City?

TOYA

Yes.

CLERK

And where do you think your
mother *is* in Gas City?

TOYA

She... sent me a postcard from--

CLERK

From here, huh? That doesn't mean a thing. You see, what is *stamped* "Gas City" is not necessarily *from* Gas City. Most post offices that were in this area closed. Gas City is a sort of central office for this part of the country.

TOYA

She told me...

CLERK

You probably need to inquire within the Census Bureau.

+OFFICE

TOYA

Where is it?

CLERK

We don't have one. My father used to... Nevermind. What was she doin' here?

TOYA

She did not tell us. Now I must be leaving.

Toya motions with his head to the locked handcuffs on his wrist.

CLERK

Wait a minute, there. What did she look like?

TOYA

She... I really must go now.

CLERK

Is she about my age? And Japanese, I assume? This may be a coinc-- May I tell you the truth?

TOYA

I would appreciate it.

CLERK

Have you had anything to eat? Oh, here.

The clerk unlocks the handcuffs on Toya's wrists.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GAS CITY DINER - LATE AFTERNOON

The two men sit in the booth of a small diner. They are the only two people to have avoided the counter. A WAITRESS, short and missing a tooth, but still managing to have a nice smile, delivers their orders.

TOYA

Why do you ask me if you can
tell me the truth?

CLERK

(evangelically)
It may set you free.

+TABLE (STOREFRONTS IN B.G.) - TOYA AND CLERK

Through the broad glass window, the sky is darkened by an IMPENDING STORM. Soon, straight shafts of lightning appear to stretch from the sky to the ground. Now, there is only a FAINT RUMBLING. An ancient bus comes to a jerking halt across the street. One or two lonely, TIRED PEOPLE leave the bus. Toya takes a tentative bite of his food.

CLERK

How well does your country
remember World War Two?

TOYA

It's been almost 100 years.

CLERK

I wonder, do they ever discuss
it?

TOYA

There have been others to
discuss.

CLERK

Yes, I know that. But that's
what I thought. Do you realize
just how close your country was
to total destruction? I don't
think that your country
respects that anymore.

TOYA
I've seen the monuments.

CLERK
The reason I ask... I met a woman
this year, much earlier. A, a
Japanese woman...

Rain has begun to strike the bus in the b.g.

CLERK (O.S.)
(continuing)
This woman rode in on a bus.

TOYA (O.S.)
(excitedly)
The woman you mentioned
earlier?

CLERK (O.S.)
I saw her through this window.
She came in and sat at the
counter. She was sort of dirty
and her dress was wrinkled, but
they fed her because she was
Japanese.

TOYA (O.S.)
Who was she?

It begins to rain in the street, and into the lowered
windows of the bus.

CLERK (O.S.)
It turned out that the woman
had no money and couldn't pay
her check.

CAMERA PULLS BACK from window to incorporate Toya and the
clerk at their table.

CLERK
Things were a bit tense even
before she couldn't pay, and
the proprietors were going to
call the police (nobody wanted
to do that, though). So I stood
up for her and paid the check.
She kept claiming, in her high
voice...

+CLOSE ON TOYA

CLERK (O.S.)
(continuing)
...that her wallet had been
stolen.

+TABLE

Both men sit calmly at the table.

TOYA
Was the woman your age?

CLERK
She was.

It is still raining steadily.

CLERK
I don't know who it was.
(pause)
She took me back to my
apartment. I never knew how
free the Japanese were with
their bodies.

TOYA
What was her name?

CLERK
I didn't ask. I said, "I never
made love to a yellow person
before." She told me that she
was part white.

TOYA
When did she leave?

CLERK (O.S.)
It may not have been her. Mind
you, she didn't seem to have
been anyone's mother. She
wasn't the type.

The rumbling has finally died away. The rain only dribbles
down now. The OLD BUS DRIVER wanders back from his shelter
toward the bus. Rain is still falling on his hat and
rumpled uniform, but he ignores it.

TOYA
Where did the woman go next? I
assume she moved on?

CLERK

You know, she told me an interesting story about World War Two. This's what made me bring it up.

+CLOSE ON TOYA'S EYES

A distant flash of lightning makes him blink.

CLERK (O.S.)

She told me that she had heard it as a little girl, when she came to New York City-- out East, you know. She said, "During World War Two..."

The clerk's voice fades into an oriental woman's voice.

WOMAN (V.O.)

"...there was a black man..."

+JACKIE ROBINSON (B/W)

hitting and then running in his Dodgers uniform.

+HANK AARON HITS HIS 715TH HOME RUN

A WHITE MAN turns up with the ball. Later, Hank signs the ball for the man.

+TWO BLACK AMERICAN SPRINTERS

hold their black rubber fists high while they listen to the American National Anthem at the 1972 Olympics.

+A BLACK SOLDIER (SUPER8/COLOR)

with a black casualty on his back walking within the jungle of Vietnam.

+A POINTER

slaps the surface of a map of Northern Africa (circa 1940-1945).

WOMAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
...who volunteered to be placed
within a surface-to-surface
missile and fired...

DISSOLVE QUICKLY TO:

+AN ANIMATED MAP OF THE REGION

with sweeping, wide black arrows that move from within
Africa toward Europe and the Mediterranean.

+A PROUD, STAUNCH, YOUNG BLACK MAN (B/W)

in uniform and at attention before a press conference; it
is as if he is on display rather than being interviewed by
the press. Flashes illuminate his face. His lower lip
pushes out in concentration.

OLDER BLACK MAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
...toward Africa. Upon landing,
he would speak through the
walls of the missile to the
natives and other passersby,
and thus, would frighten them
into worship of the object.

+SEVERAL WHITE SCIENTISTS

point to large diagrams of a missile's encasement. One of
the diagrams shows the interior of an unpressurized
nosecone with nylon straps and a leather sling for a seat.

OLDER BLACK MAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
The missile was known as
"Little Maniac." The man's name
was Alan, Jr.

+PHOTO OF BLACK MAN

tied to two trees with barbed wire.

OLDER BLACK MAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
Soon, the man lost his identity
to his purpose and his vehicle.
He became known as "Little
Maniac."

+DIAGRAMS FOR ENGINEERS

show a flap in the nosecone that covers several speaker-shaped hole patterns. One of the scientists lifts the flap and illustrates how one would speak through the holes.

OLDER BLACK MAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
His mother came to visit him
prior to blast-off, but he was
already encased within the
colorful weapon. She said...

+THE SEALED MISSILE

in full-color, sweeping, admiring shots, gleaming in the lights. It is painted like a huge red-white-and-blue Fourth of July toy rocket. (The voice of the man becomes the voice of a FRAIL, OLD BLACK WOMAN.)

FRAIL WOMAN (V.O.)
I realize that you are not my
Alan, Jr. You are Little
Maniac. Look at your beautiful
coloring: you are the colors of
the blood, the people and the
sky. You are truly beautiful,
Little Maniac.

+FIRE IN THE HOLE!

A rocket, any rocket, is seen from overhead as it lifts off. (An old, white MILITARY MAN speaks.)

MILITARY MAN (V.O.)
He was sent to the sky.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIELD - YOUNG, BLACK BOY

in 1970s dress, catches a grasshopper with a "LUKE CAGE: POWERMAN" comic book. He carefully places the grasshopper in the nose of a model rocket.

+THE MODEL ROCKET

is fired. It is viewed from the same vantage as the original full-size rocket. The miniature launch pad is located in a vast field.

+THE BOY

chases it down. The toy's parachute descends and finally reaches the ground. The boy picks up the rocket too hastily, and flings the hot toy from his hand.

MILITARY MAN (V.O.)

(continuing)

Once he had landed, I realized that the man strapped inside the missile would only last a week or two. He had no provisions...

+THE BOY'S HAND - ECU

as he opens nosecone. The grasshopper's legs push up, and the grasshopper flies out madly.

+THE BOY

chases the grasshopper.

CUT TO:

INT. MISSILE - THE BLACK MAN

who was seen earlier on stage. He is screaming, screaming, screaming from within the missile. Only his face is lit from the sun pouring through the holes of the nosecone.

MILITARY MAN (V.O.)

(continuing)

Once the steel alien had stopped talking, it would dry up and rattle like a gourd.

FADE TO:

+DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE - AFRICAN TRIBESMEN

painting themselves to accentuate their feminine facial features.

MILITARY MAN (V.O.)

(continuing)

And soon, the natives forgot its significance.

+MORE DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE - AFRICAN TRIBESMEN

cutting furrows into a YOUNG BOY's brow during his rite of passage ceremony. The blood drips into the sand below the chair which props up his head.

+MORE DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE - ANOTHER TRIBE

as it runs after its enemy and flings HUNDREDS OF ARROWS into the sky.

+MORE ARROWS

leave their bows.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINER - TOYA'S EYES

CLERK (O.S.)

I don't believe that such a project ever existed. She insisted that it had. She was going to leave anyway. I think our disagreement made her leave sooner.

TOYA

Where did she go?

CLERK (O.S.)

She told me I proved that this country was killed by our underlying fear of aliens. I told her that this country was built by foreigners, the melting pot...

(pause)
You want to know America, know
its foreigners...

CAMERA PULLS BACK from Toya's eyes to discover that he is now driving, and in a different, newer car. He passes a clear billboard sign: "Exit LA County, Enter CA Environs." The sign is framed by the familiar face of an American Indian.

FADE TO:

EXT. CA MEGALOPOLIS (2022) - DAY - SAN FRANCISCO QUADRANT

A jet plane tears the sky overhead. It comes from the Pacific Ocean and flies over the Golden Gate Bridge.

JET CAPTAIN (V.O.)
(in Japanese)
(Below is the Golden Gate Bridge. We will be arriving in the Northern Access Airport presently. Please make certain that all of your personal belongings have been secured. Thank you for flying Nippon America.)

+AIRPORT COMPLEX

A long row of colorful, new rental automobiles wait to exit onto a main airport access road. The traffic moves slowly. A stack of nine green arrow lights signal that a left turn is now acceptable. The traffic cannot move.

CUT TO:

INT. SONY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY - GREAT HALL

This is a very large museum. On one prominent wall, there is the flag which inspired Francis Scott Key's "Star-Spangled Banner." Below, is a mass of people that fill the great hall. There is a line of people who file past the museum's front desk. They quietly post the entrance fee which is listed in several denominations: EM (EuroMark), ¥ (Yen, of course), and as a novelty, \$. Most of the people in the line are oriental. They are dressed neatly and are carrying on several animated conversations. The clerks at the counter are Asian, also. In the b.g., Toya enters an alcove above which is posted the international symbol for TELEPHONE.

+PLEXIGLASS CASE

A model landscape builds itself before one's very eyes. CAMERA PULLS BACK from the HANDLE-CRANK that the YOUNG ASIAN GIRL uses to erect the landscape-cum-cityscape. Once again, she turns the crank, buildings begin to emerge from beneath the landscape, model trees are dwarfed by the model skyscrapers. Then, waiting to move on, the young girl allows the crank to unwind: slowly the buildings return to the earth, awaiting another hand's cranking.

+CASE - DETAIL ON TOYA'S REFLECTION

Toya reaches to touch the worn brass handle of the toy, but is beaten to it by a playful, JAPANESE YOUTH.

+TOY - CLOSE ON DATES

A window on the toy shows the dates ascending in increments that correspond to the growing buildings: 1800, 1860, 1890, 1900, etc.

+GREAT HALL

Toya moves on. He looks at his watch. An older Japanese man, the museum's CHIEF CURATOR, catches Toya's eye from across the room and waves to Toya in recognition. This man wears a name tag that lists his name in Japanese and English. The curator approaches Toya.

CURATOR

Have you been waiting long, my friend?

TOYA

No. It's good to see you again.

They shake hands.

CURATOR

It has been a long time. I remember you and your mother on the beach at La Jolla...

TOYA

And my father was there...

CURATOR
(embarrassed)
Yes. Your father is quite a
filmmaker. He must not--

TOYA
(abruptly)
I saw the film before I left.

DISSOLVE TO:

+GREAT HALL

The pair walks.

CURATOR
Have you had a chance to look
around? There are more
interesting things to see.

TOYA
You seem to have quite a
collection.

+CORRIDOR

The two are walking down a modern corridor of closed doors.
The curator opens one door.

+PORNOGRAPHY EXHIBIT - OVERHEAD - ENTRANCE

"The Legacy of American Pornography, 1776-2023." An
overview of the exhibit reveals literally nothing of its
contents. Most of the pornography is contained within
viewing cases. Only a few instances of soft-glossy porn
adorn the walls, exclusively portraits of women. In this
chronological progression, the pictures begin as anonymous
renderings and proceed to representations of more famous
women such as Marilyn Monroe and Rita Hayworth. The models
become more submissive and less innocent as the men proceed
through the exhibition. Toya looks down the wall almost
disapprovingly. Inwardly wincing. The curator makes no
mention of the subject matter, it could be an East African
artifact room.

CURATOR
(suddenly)
Why do you accuse me of knowing
where your mother is?

TOYA

I was interested in seeing your museum.

CURATOR

It seems a bit indiscreet, wouldn't you admit?

TOYA

It doesn't have to be this way. I haven't even brought up the subject. It is true that I am looking for her.

CURATOR

And perhaps I know something of her location?

+CENTER OF ROOM

CURATOR

(continuing)

I am fascinated by the primitive honesty which exists in this room.

The curator pauses.

CURATOR

(continuing)

Do you see the beauty here?

+INSERT - INSIDE OF ZOETROPE

A woman, naked, runs over several hurdles.

TOYA (O.S.)

In her movements?

CURATOR (O.S.)

I don't believe so. Look at the way her breasts sag as she lands. Ooof. No, not in the way she moves, but in the fact that she *does* move, and that someone thought to capture the movement. And, who knows, perhaps this man thought that he could rationalize it as science, physiology or the like.

+BACK TO SCENE

The two walk alone; their heels echo in the vast room.

CURATOR

(continuing)

What could it have taken for this young woman to jump hurdles while her Victorian corset and parasol hang neatly on a hook? Later, the motivation is easier to find.

+CLOSE ON TOYA

Toya stares blankly at the next work.

CURATOR

(continuing)

But you want to know about your mother. Not about these women.

TOYA

Yes.

CURATOR

Your mother was a very nice woman. But, I have not seen her. She notified me that she was going to return to America, but she never made contact with me if she actually did make it here.

TOYA

Not a word.

CURATOR

(offended)

What's that? I wish that she had contacted me. You seem to think that she is still here. Perhaps she eventually will make contact. I will contact you or your father as soon as she does.

TOYA

Just me. My father has given her up.

CURATOR

Probably a wise idea. I would not have a wife who does not respect my household.

(pause)

Excuse me.

TOYA

It is ironic you feared that your good name would be soiled simply by my visit...

CURATOR

You must forgive my defensiveness, Mr. Toya.

TOYA

And that you call *me* Mr. Toya...

+SECTION FOR HARDCORE EXHIBIT

They walk alone in the room.

CURATOR

Your mother was nicer than most women. Perhaps, though, she resented her marriage. Perhaps she...

TOYA

What are your thoughts on this piece, sir?

Toya points to a centerfold spread.

CURATOR

(begins to respond
honestly)

It seems to be representative of a movement within the industry to portray very clean women waiting...

TOYA

She *has* been here and you *have* seen her. What did she tell you?

CURATOR

Your mother is a very intelligent woman.

TOYA
But you won't tell me!

After apprehensively approaching the curator, Toya turns and begins to walk toward the door beneath the exit arrows.

CURATOR
(insistent)
She was *not* here.

+OUTER HALLWAY

Toya walks down a strangely lit hallway that is still a part of the exhibit. The walls of this narrow hall contain simulated graffiti depicting male and female genitalia, the intercourse of these items, etc. Toya continues through the hall toward what seems to be the final exit. Toya fumbles to open the door, then enters abruptly.

+FILM SCREENING ROOM

There are carpeted benches in front of the film screen that are occupied by Japanese men, smoking and watching quietly. Upon the screen is a rapidly edited snuff film. For an instant, Toya is mesmerized. Then, he continues out the exit, sending blaring white light onto the screen and viewers. They react with waving arms and drugged grunts. Once the door closes, they cease to react.

DISSOLVE FROM SCREEN TO:

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY - SUBURBAN L.A.

Toya, once again, is driving his new rental car. There is an L.A.-like tuft of skyscrapers in the hazy distance.

+TOYA'S POV - TRAILER

Abruptly, a LARGE SEMI-TRAILER hauling livestock passes in front of the camera.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES OUTSKIRTS (1975) - DAY - INTERSTATE

A Chinese man, about 30, with a backpack and dusty clothes, hitchhikes along an interstate highway on a hot, summer day. His name is NI MIN. The road signs he passes are no longer rusty, but have returned to their original vibrant

green. Several autos pass the man as he wearily thumbs. A blur of black auto slows as it passes Ni Min, and comes to a halt a few yards beyond him. He moves forward to the vehicle.

+CLOSE ON CADILLAC

It is Toya's black Cadillac, but in its original condition. There are NO DENTS, nor is there a sign of RUST. Nor for that matter, is there a sign of Toya. In the driver's seat, wearing green sunglasses and a simple but neat suit, is a young, working class salesman. A WHITE, AMERICAN MAN. Once Ni Min has seated himself within the car,

CUT TO:

INT. CADILLAC

The salesman is in a hurry and already has the car rolling as Ni Min closes the door. The interior of the car is clean and new.

AMERICAN

What time does the clock say?

+INSERT - L.E.D. CLOCK - 11:35 AM

NI MIN

It says eleven thirty-five.

+BACK TO SCENE - DETAIL ON DRIVER

AMERICAN

Damn, it must be fast. I thought I was making better time than that. I left L.A. at 5:00 this morning. I'm on my way east to St. Louis. They made me Midwest Regional Manager.

NI MIN

Who?

+CLOSE ON CAR PHONE

The American points to his car phone prototype.

AMERICAN

These...

Above the telephone, he hands Ni Min his BUSINESS CARD: "S. Alexander."

ALEXANDER

(continuing)

...mobile phones.

DISSOLVE TO:

+PASSENGER SIDE - DETAIL ON NI MIN

dirty and a bit ragged.

ALEXANDER

What is it that you do? Where are you headed?

NI MIN

I have been offered a teaching position in Kansas.

+CADILLAC

ALEXANDER

(flippantly)

It's not fashion merchandising, is it?

NI MIN

Excuse me?

ALEXANDER

What is your position? In what field?

NI MIN

In the Creative Writing Department at Kansas University.

ALEXANDER

You write poetry? Prose poetry?

NI MIN

Some, yes.

ALEXANDER

Have you thought about advertising?

NI MIN
For what?

ALEXANDER
Commercial products. I'm
looking for a new slogan--

NI MIN
I consider myself a Communist..

+CLOSE ON ALEXANDER

He finds the notion repugnant.

NI MIN (O.S.)
(continuing)
I won't hurt you.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

+PASSENGER SIDE - LATER

ALEXANDER
What made you become a
Communist?

NI MIN
For the most part, my father
was in the Revolution.

ALEXANDER
That's not the way, that's not
the way at all. You must choose
for yourself, everyday you must
choose: "Is this what is best
for me? Do I achieve success as
the end result?"

NI MIN
You must consider "success."

ALEXANDER
Yes, one must. I can succeed
and the benefits mean success
to all people... all who care to
benefit, that is.

NI MIN
Perhaps a Communist poet from
China might not.

+CADILLAC

Alexander's kind but serious demeanor shows from behind his glasses.

ALEXANDER

I don't believe that Communism can exist in practice, and I don't believe that at this point in history it should. We haven't achieved enough... there is no incentive to achieve, only to meet goals. No one invents anything by meeting goals alone.

(pause)

If I succeed as a Communist, it only means that one point is covered. Total success, and thus my own, depends upon each one of all the other points being covered as well. I know that accidents happen and, and that I cannot rely on everyone. At least one person is bound to fail. I don't want to have to depend on that one person.

(pause)

Each person must build a ship; the ones who don't, drown. At least I don't have to drown with a whole society; and, it's possible for me to take on passengers.

+CLOSE ON NI MIN

NI MIN

Your ship will float on the souls of those people...

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY JUNCTION - CADILLAC

as it passes by.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CADILLAC

The two men are silent.

ALEXANDER

That's very interesting coming
from you... and Mao. How many
souls does China float on?

NI MIN

China is tall and steep. It is
the people who fall off.

ALEXANDER

(sarcastically)
Is that Confucius?

CUT TO:

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY - ROADSIDE - NI MIN

as he jogs slightly. As a car passes, it honks mean-
spiritedly. He comes upon a road sign: "Lawrence, Kansas.
Kansas University ."

+CLOSE ON CARD

Ni Min holds Alexander's business card. Cars pass briskly
on the strip of road that leads toward Lawrence.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GALLERY (1998) - CLOSE ON OLDER CARD

PULL BACK from the business card taped to a bare wall. It
has begun to yellow with age. The business card is part of
some sort of installation exhibition. A gallery card
indicates the date the business card was acquired by Ni
Min: 1975. Next, we see a VIDEO MONITOR upon which is the
face of an OLDER AND SIGNIFICANTLY MORE SUCCESSFUL
ALEXANDER. He speaks once the applause has subsided.

ALEXANDER

...the fact of the matter is that
we have been denied the
technology... The PEOPLE have
been denied the technology. For
this...

On the monitor, there appears a phone with a video monitor.

ALEXANDER

(continuing)

...we have had the technology for years. This is not a device of the future, it is one of the past. And yet, it won't work. It's ready to work, it wants to, but it can't. Or rather, it isn't allowed to.

Applause.

ALEXANDER

(continuing)

I pledge to all of you, I pledge that the fruits of your labor and the labors of your sons and daughters shall not be wasted.

Great applause.

TITLE: "MARCH, 1993. C-M-T STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING."

The video excerpt begins to repeat itself. The CAMERA CONTINUES TO PULL BACK to reveal a huge, unlit C-M-T SIGN which rotates on a shortened pole. Next the CAMERA APPROACHES an architectural model of the Alexander Building (dated 1994) encased in clear plexiglass. Finally, the CAMERA ENTERS an immense room with walls of green marble. In the middle of the room, Venus de Milo and other larger-than-life sculpted versions of Venus are arranged in a circle. They are the only things seen in the room. From the public address system, ENRICO CARUSO's voice echoes to elicit an ultimate sense of pompous and calculated grandeur.

+GALLERY ENTRANCE - EVENING - CLOSE ON OPEN LETTER

from the Alexander Foundation. It states that Mr. Alexander extends his warmest regards to Ni Min and this so-called "biographical poem." Mr. Alexander is interested in the creation of an actual museum devoted to the subject. Would Ni Min be interested in curating such a project?

The letter is lowered to show a small, college crowd gathered in front of the entrance to the exhibit we have just seen. They begin to applaud what has been a public reading of the letter. The crowd begins to push politely toward the exhibit entrance.

At last, an OLDER NI MIN is seen. He folds the letter he had been reading to the crowd and puts it back into an

envelope. He walks away from the entrance and down an outer hallway.

FADE TO:

INT. ROOM (1998) - CLOSE ON MONITOR

TELE-MONI-PHONE: the first production monitor and telephone system. The face on the monitor is that of a clean-cut, well-dressed, young woman. She is a REPRESENTATIVE of the Alexander Foundation. She speaks to Ni Min (though he is not visible). In the corner of the monitor is the date on which this conversation originally took place: July, 1998.

REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Alexander was flattered by your biographical piece. What was your motivation, by the way?

NI MIN (O.S.)

I met your Mr. Alexander once. I was fascinated with him, immediately. As for the poem, it was written by Mr. Alexander; I only have assembled it.

REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Alexander assures me that he intends to leave any poetry writing to poets, like yourself, Mr. Min. There has been much positive response to your piece. Some feel that it is social commentary. Is this your aim?

NI MIN (O.S.)

Absolutely not. My aim was toward representation. Any commentary results from the visitors' own beliefs or interpretations.

REPRESENTATIVE

Very well, sir. Would you be interested in curating another Alexander exhibit?

NI MIN (O.S.)

I am pleased with the exhibit as it stands.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ALEXANDER MUSEUM (1999) - CLOSE ON MONITOR

A less sharp video monitor within the newly built Alexander Museum. Still, the same representative speaks with Ni Min. The date in the corner of the monitor still reads July, 1998.

REPRESENTATIVE

Like I have said, the response has been very positive. We feel that it is possible to expand upon the exhibition to fill an entire museum. Of course, this project would be funded by the Alexander Foundation.

NI MIN (O.S.)

The poem that I present is hardly a museum exhibit, though it is now located in a gallery. I am afraid you misunderstand my work...

REPRESENTATIVE

There seems to be a fine line between your poem about the history of Mr. Alexander and what people perceive to be a museum exhibit devoted to an individual. To most it is indiscernible.

The date that has been in the corner of the screen now jumps ahead six months: January, 1999.

REPRESENTATIVE

(continuing)

Now, we can discern this line.

+ALEXANDER MUSEUM - MAIN HALL

CAMERA PULLS BACK to show that the Representative's face now appears on a huge video monitor. Ni Min's new and improved exhibition includes wall-sized blow-ups of photographs of graffiti that protest Alexander's products and corporate actions. The items Ni Min has chosen for exhibition (including the taped conversation with the representative) are blatantly critical of Alexander.

REPRESENTATIVE

(continuing)

Your work is indiscriminate,
and I might add, in bad taste.
If this is some sort of joke,
sir, I suggest that you stop
joking. Mr. Alexander is a very
serious person.

NI MIN (O.S.)

You still misunderstand my
work, Ms. Baker.

REPRESENTATIVE

No, you misunderstand, sir.
This work must cease to exist.
Your commission is terminated.
You are required to remove your
things from the premisses to
make way for a real exhibition.

The monitor is shut off. A technician is seen pulling the electrical plug from a socket. An oversized, overdone display representing Alexander's business beginnings is wheeled past the monitor and into the exhibition with larger, more advanced monitors. There are more and more signs of the influx of propagandistic and immodest displays from Alexander's public relations department to replace Ni Min's exhibit.

+BACK WALL - CLOSE ON CARD

REPRESENTATIVE

(continuing)

You are also advised to
discontinue use of any image of
or related to Mr. Alexander.

A hand appears and rips a lonely, yellowed business card from its sullen wall. The hand is Ni Min's. He has overseen the destruction of his poem.

FADE TO:

INT. ALEXANDER'S OFFICE (2000) - CLOSE ON BROCHURE

which balances the details of the Alexander Museum with the tact of Disneyland. The colors are bright, the wording crass, etc. The brochure begins to fall away and reveals the hand holding it. The brochure falls onto a large, neatly kept desk. On the desk is an old, original, but very clean tele-moni-phone. The hand reaches up to the monitor

and gently turns it off. The hand removes an old cassette audio tape from the desktop and inserts it into a tape deck. The scratches of the original 78 rpm recording are heard first.

+DESK - ALEXANDER

as he stares from his desk. Caruso begins to sing to weak piano accompaniment. Alexander pushes away from his desk and approaches the big bay window that dominates the office and overlooks the vast metropolis below. He reaches to the window to open it; Caruso sings louder. The modern window, of course, won't open. Alexander pushes a paging button on his desk.

ALEXANDER
Miss Stewart, would you get
someone to...

At this point, his finger slips from the button, ending his transmission.

ALEXANDER
(continuing; to
himself)
...look at these windows.

MS. STEWART replies to Alexander.

MS. STEWART
I'm sorry, Mr. Alexander, I
didn't get all of that.

+PERSONAL ELEVATOR

An elevator door opens. Inside is Alexander. He pushes the button next to the intercom causing Caruso's voice to blare from the elevator's speakers.

EXT. ALEXANDER BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON - ELS - ROOF

Alexander stands on the roof, looking downward. (NOTE: Earlier, a model of this building had been a part of Ni Min's *Alexander* poem. The building should be recognizable as that previously represented in the model.)

+CLOSER ON ALEXANDER

as his hair is being blown wildly and unnaturally. It is UNUSUALLY THICK for a man of his age. He continues to stare down toward the city from the edge of the roof.

+FACE OF ALEXANDER

He stares intently but unemotionally. The wind blows fiercely. Caruso still sings courageously.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTANA SKY (2002) - DAY - CLOSE ON SPECK

SILENCE. A small speck of metal gleams in the air. The camera follows it as it falls. It is a glider or a small plane, high above.

+MONTANA FIELD - TRUCK - NI MIN

as he looks to the sky. On the side of his truck: "PROPERTY OF MONTANA UNIVERSITY."

FADE TO:

EXT. ALEXANDER ESTATE (2002) - LATE AFTERNOON

A spacious country estate holds a stately and well-kept house. In the front yard, there stands a TENT of circus proportions. It is beautiful and exact in its erection. There are white lights that have been hung evenly around the entire canvas structure. There is a LINE OF CARS waiting to be parked; there is a LINE OF PEOPLE waiting to be greeted by the host and to be fed. There are LOUD VOICES. There is a BLUEGRASS BAND, though it seems out of place at this very formal function. And then, suddenly, HE IS SEEN.

+ALEXANDER

is greeting his guests. He is alive and well. This is his estate, his party. His hairpiece is gone and people rub his head to comment on his baldness to him as they greet him. He seems happier; he smiles honestly at their comments.

INT. TENT - EARLY EVENING - PARTY

More of the party, the guests, the loud voices.

+TENT - BAND

which plays "WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN?" (a traditional gospel tune).

+TENT - ALEXANDER

as he mingles with the crowd. Pieces of the comments made by guests are audible: "Congratulations," "I'm sure this is for the best," "You've made it," etc.

+TENT - DINING TABLES - ALEXANDER

Seated, he eats a tremendous turkey drumstick. He drinks. He talks all the while.

+TENT - SERVANTS' AREA

Alexander stands toward the back to speak to JOSEF, one of his servants.

ALEXANDER

Will the champagne last, Josef?

+CLOSE ON CHAMPAGNE CHEST

This one holds twenty more bottles. There are several more unopened cases.

+TENT - JOSEF

JOSEF

Yes, sir. We have several more cases.

+TENT - ALEXANDER AND NI MIN

Alexander begins to turn when his arm is taken by a familiar hand. It is Ni Min.

ALEXANDER

Welcome. Good evening.

NI MIN

You might not remember me...

ALEXANDER
Of course, I remember you.

NI MIN
I...

ALEXANDER
You were the curator of the
Alexander Museum. The first
curator.

NI MIN
(Chinese)
Wuo xing chang dan.

ALEXANDER
Excuse me?

NI MIN
You really had your piece of
the American Dream, didn't you?

ALEXANDER
I suppose I did. It was time to
end all that.

Alexander offers Ni Min a glass of champagne. He waves it
off.

NI MIN
People will never forget what
you have done for them.

ALEXANDER
Well...

NI MIN
I know that I won't.

The champagne that Alexander drinks dribbles out of the
side of his mouth. The sip was a little too ambitious. He
wipes the corner of his mouth with his sleeve.

ALEXANDER
What do you mean by that?

NI MIN
I mean that I have learned
quite a bit through you.

In a drunken oversight, Alexander puts his hand upon the
anxious Ni Min's shoulder. Ni Min doesn't flinch.

NI MIN

(continuing)

For years, my poems were of
nothing but you.

ALEXANDER

Poems, that's what you call
them, poems. You are a
ridiculous man. What is your
name?

NI MIN

My name isn't important, it is
you...

ALEXANDER

Nonsense. My mother told me,
"Never trust anyone until you
know his name."

NI MIN

All this change of direction.
How could you stand to be away
from your work? You're not old
enough to retire. You still
have a few good years ahead.

ALEXANDER

Yes, and I want to enjoy them.
Say, let's hear one of your
poems.

NI MIN

I don't understand why you have
stopped. Did someone force you
to quit?

(pause)

I'm sorry, this is your party...

ALEXANDER

That's right, this is my party.
All these people are my
friends. If you think you are
my friend, you may stay.
Otherwise, you must leave.

+CLOSE ON JOSEF

JOSEF, the butler (and in this case, bartender) looks over
from his tray of champagne glasses.

+BACK TO SCENE

ALEXANDER
(cooling)
Follow me.

The two tensely move out of the tent. In the b.g., Alexander's friends eat, drink, laugh, etc.

ALEXANDER
(drunkenly sincere)
You know, I just lost interest.
This business holds no place
for me. I forced myself to fit
the mold. I never would have
had I not wanted to prove
myself so badly...

NI MIN
To whom?

ALEXANDER
(still sincere)
God, I don't know. To my, to
myself, I guess. No, to my
friends, I don't think they
thought I could do it or make
anything of myself.

NI MIN
But you have proved yourself,
now?

ALEXANDER
Look at them. Ask them.

NI MIN
What do you think they would
say now, now that you're no
longer working? Wouldn't they
think that you had the chance
to really push beyond anyone's
wildest dreams?
(pause)
What does your wife think?

+OUTSIDE TENT - CLOSE ON ALEXANDER

as he looks away and takes a tight breath.

ALEXANDER

I didn't ask her. She's not around to ask... Come to think of it, I - I don't think I asked you.

NI MIN

No.

+OUTSIDE TENT - BENCH

Weary, Alexander sits down on a wooden park bench. He has been breathing restrained breaths.

NI MIN

I'm sorry. I have followed your career so closely, since before the museum.

Ni Min sits down on the bench. Alexander's outstretched arm inadvertently touches his back.

NI MIN

(continuing)

Your strength was monumental.

Ni Min backs off from his interrogation. Alexander regains a certain amount of fire in his eyes.

ALEXANDER

Maybe I didn't eat my spinach. The fact of the matter is that I can do this and I have.

+OUTSIDE TENT - VIEW OF TENT IN B.G. - BENCH

A cry from his pining guests reaches Alexander's ear. He turns to wave, and smiles.

ALEXANDER

(continuing)

Coming. Be right there.

(to Ni Min)

I don't feel that I must defend myself to you...

NI MIN

Oh, I don't want you to.

They get up. Alexander stumbles a little. Ni Min aids him.

ALEXANDER
I just do what I gotta do.
Don't you?

NI MIN
We do what we want to do.

+CLOSE ON ALEXANDER

Alexander stops and looks, starry-eyed.

ALEXANDER
You mother-fucker...

Alexander swings hastily and loudly at the sober Ni Min. Alexander falls from the unexpected shift in weight. Members from the silenced guests rush sloppily to Alexander's side. Ni Min reaches down to help the bitter host. Alexander rejects his hand and stumbles once he has gotten up. He is brushing the grass clippings from his stained pants when the guests arrive at his side. Ni Min is escorted away by Josef.

JOSEF
This way, please.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT./INT. ESTATE GROUNDS - HOUSE

Josef and Ni Min disappear into the darkness of an unlit, unopened door. The door opens to a heavenly blast of light from a hallway. Josef leads Ni Min into a room.

JOSEF
This will be your room tonight,
sir.

Ni Min begins to speak but is halted by the softly raised hand of Josef.

JOSEF
(continuing)
It is best. I will wake you in
the morning.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT - VIEW OF NI MIN'S WINDOW

Ni Min looks from his darkened room back to the dying embers of the party he left hours ago.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING - SMOOTH FENDER/DENTED GRILLE

of the black Cadillac as it rests on the driveway beside the Alexander home. O.S., WE HEAR the trunk being shut firmly. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Josef as he speaks to Ni Min beside the auto.

JOSEF

It is Mr. Alexander's wish that the automobile become your property: with his regrets for the words and actions of the past evening. Of course, we will be responsible for the required paperwork.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST. LOUIS EXPRESSWAY - DAY - CADILLAC

The Cadillac glides toward the St. Louis Arch in the b.g. Caruso plays on the tapedeck. Ni Min drives with the windows shut. In the distance is a siren.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

Ni Min is still driving. In one sweeping pan, we see Ni Min, then what he sees in front of him (a long road). He is amidst farms. There are painted silos, sullen white farm houses, flat, flat fields of dirt.

+RURAL HIGHWAY - CLOSE ON SIGNAL

Ni Min's Cadillac signals to exit.

+HIGHWAY EXIT

The car waits at the exit ramp stoplight.

CUT TO:

INT. CADILLAC - GRAVEL ROAD

The car barrels down a gravel road. Caruso still blares.

+CLOSE ON SPEEDOMETER

The needle sustains a level 65 mph.

+REARVIEW MIRROR

Ni Min jerks up into the rearview mirror. There are only clouds of dust.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD

The Cadillac sprays gravel and dirt as it passes.

CUT TO:

INT. CADILLAC - STEERING WHEEL

Ni Min's hands yank the steering wheel to the left, then to the right. CARUSO.

+REARVIEW MIRROR

Ni Min's eyes search the reflection.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - STATIC SHOT

A cloud of dust hurtles forward, covering the black car and the tree which has stopped the Cadillac's bumper. Silence. The wind rushes past.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD (2022) - DAY - TOYA'S RENTAL AUTO

passes the accident site, many years later. There is no sign of an accident apparent to Toya. Overgrowth has covered the site.

+ENTRANCE TO PARKING LOT

as Toya's auto enters through a sturdy arch. The lot is adjacent to a building covered in stained, unfinished walnut. Inside is a replica of Ni Min's original *Alexander* poem, rebuilt by the Alexander Foundation following the death of Ni Min (in Alexander's car).

+ENTRANCE - CLOSE ON ARCH

which reads "*Alexander*, a poem by Ni Min."

+VIEW OF BUILDING

The front door of the exhibit is open. The door vacillates in the moving air. There is an odd pickup truck parked near the door. It is the only vehicle in sight.

CUT TO:

INT. BUILDING - CLOSE ON CARD

Inside the exhibit, a hand tears Alexander's business card from an otherwise empty wall.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT OF BUILDING

A sign hangs on the swinging front door. A spry old man, who works as the building's CARETAKER, is on his way out of the exhibit. He spots Toya.

CARETAKER

Now you come... Hey, you missed it. Everything got sold yesterday. Yep. Nothin' left. You already got a car. What're you here for?

TOYA

The exhibit is closed?

CARETAKER

Closed and sold.

TOYA

Sold? I was told that...

Toya points to a map.

CARETAKER
(interrupting)
Gone. Guess people don't care
about telephones anymore.

The caretaker fishes his keys out of his pants pocket. He reaches toward the door, to lock it.

CARETAKER
(continuing)
No one came anyway.

+BEHIND BUILDING - COVERED AUTOMOBILE

Behind the browned grass of the exhibit house rests a massive tarp covering an automobile. The tarp has "FOR SALE" in stenciled orange letters.

+FRONT OF BUILDING - TOYA AND CARETAKER

TOYA
You have something left?

Toya motions to the back.

CARETAKER
Nope. It's all gone.

The caretaker sees the tarp.

CARETAKER
(continuing)
Oh, the car. You need a car?
You got a car already. That's
yours ain't it?

Toya stares at the tarp.

TOYA
Oh, yes. But, may I see it?

The man ambles, trips, begins to limp toward the tarp.

CARETAKER
Okay, a quick look.

+BEHIND THE BUILDING - THE CADILLAC

The man pulls back the tarp to reveal the Cadillac.

TOYA
What kind is it?

CARETAKER
That's a Oldsmobile. About
1975.

TOYA
Oldsmobile...

CARETAKER
Got a big dent right here.

He points to the FRONT FENDER: the reworked and shoddily repainted aftermath of Ni Min's fatal accident.

TOYA
Oh...

CARETAKER
Runs good. The man who built
this --
(motions to building)
died in it. A Chinaman.

TOYA
Who built this?

CARETAKER
The poem.

+ANGLE ON CADILLAC

Toya sits in the car. The caretaker returns to the building to retrieve the Cadillac's keys.

CUT TO:

INT. CADILLAC - TOYA

Toya is in the driver's seat. The caretaker hands him the keys through the open window.

CARETAKER
Try it out.

+CLOSE ON DASHBOARD

as Toya turns the key. CARUSO BLARES until Toya can reach down and turn off the stereo.

CARETAKER
(reassuringly)
It's got a sound system.

EXT. ANGLE ON FENDER/CARETAKER

Toya is exiting the lot in the Cadillac. The dent passes slowly and clearly. The caretaker re-enters the building.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CADILLAC - ANGLE ON ROADSIGN

Toya drives past a sign that reads, "You are now leaving CA ENVIRONS."

FADE TO:

INT. CADILLAC - CLOSE ON TOYA'S EYES

watching the road.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WILDERNESS ROAD - CADILLAC

Toya on a different road, gently driving into reclaimed wilderness.

FADE TO:

EXT. WELL-PRESERVED ROAD (2023) - EARLY EVENING -
CLOSE ON WHEELS

The wheels of the Cadillac run smoothly across this surprisingly smooth stretch of road. There are no potholes here: this road stands in stark contrast to the conditions of previous roads.

INT. CADILLAC - VIEW OF SETTING SUN

Inside the auto, Toya turns his head to look toward the roadside. Soon there will be a grand sunset. Except for the road, there is no sign of civilization.

DISSOLVE TO:

+SUNSET

Orange-purple clouds surround the regal sun.

INT. CADILLAC

Toya calmly holds the steering wheel.

+CLOSE ON SPEEDOMETER

as the needle dives sharply. The steering wheel which surrounds the gauge violently cranks.

+STEERING WHEEL - TOYA'S HANDS

fight to wright the path of the swerving auto.

+REARVIEW MIRROR

Toya's eyes are drawn magnetically to the mirror.

EXT. ROADSIDE - CADILLAC STOPPED

Toya walks around the car to assess the sustained damage.

+CLOSE ON TIRE

It is flat. The white wall has been sheared off like an orange peel.

+BACK TO SCENE

Toya begins to change the tire. He is silhouetted by the now-almost-lost twilight. He opens the trunk. Toya extracts the spare and rolls it out onto the ground. It, too, is flat, and its lack of pressure causes it to fall against the body of the car.

+DETAIL ON TOYA

In the last light of the day, a thin coat of helpless panic is painted onto Toya's face. His head quietly scans the surroundings. He is alone. There are no people for hundreds of miles. There are only lone telephone cables, strung from pole to pole, following the road.

+BACK TO SCENE

Toya re-enters the auto.

FADE TO:

INT. CADILLAC - 4 AM - CLOSE ON WINDOW

From the outside, a gloved hand raps upon the window of the Cadillac. Toya is immediately startled into consciousness. It is not quite dawn. Through the window there is a NEATLY-CLOTHED CHAUFFEUR. He stands at attention in the headlight beams that filter through the exhaust of this dreaded limousine. As Toya tentatively opens his door, only the huge engine of the limousine can be heard.

CHAUFFEUR
(in Japanese)
Are you alright?

TOYA
Excuse me?

CHAUFFEUR
Do you speak English, sir?

TOYA
Oh, yes.

CHAUFFEUR
You may speak Japanese if you wish.

Toya is silent.

CHAUFFEUR
How may I help you, sir?

TOYA
I am unable to continue in my vehicle. I had a flat tire. The spare one is flat, also.

CHAUFFEUR
One moment, please.

The chauffeur returns to the limousine and converses with another party via two-way radio. He nods as he speaks. He motions to the Cadillac. He stops. He returns.

CHAUFFEUR

You are welcome to return to the house in our car and remain as the guest of Mr. Alexander. While you wait there, your auto will be repaired.

INT. LIMOUSINE - BACK SEAT

Toya's anxious face turns toward the rear window.

CHAUFFEUR

Do you have any bags, sir?

The hazard lights flash from the Cadillac in the distance.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIMOUSINE - 6 AM - VIEW THROUGH SIDE WINDOW

Early morning light and dew cover acres of soft grasses. Toya awakens and views the scenery through the closed windows of the now slowing limousine. The car turns onto a long, concrete and stone drive. It is obvious that this is the same estate of Mr. Alexander, yet many years have passed since last we have seen it. It now appears to be deserted, save for its well-kept lawn and landscape. As the limousine approaches the dormant fountain, the floodlights from the house automatically illuminate the driveway.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - LIMOUSINE

The chauffeur opens the back door and Toya sleepily stands up in the stark light from the house.

CHAUFFEUR

This way, sir.

Toya obediently fumbles behind the servant.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEXANDER HOME - FOYER - OLD JOSEF

Inside the grand estate's home, the lights are low. It is early morning. Old Josef now tends to Toya's needs.

JOSEF

(in broken Japanese)

This way, sir.

TOYA
When may I speak to Mr.
Alexander?

Josef turns, startled by the Asian's use of English and his unwittingly bold question.

JOSEF
We shall see.

+GREAT HALL

As they walk, the two men are dwarfed by the immense hall. Josef hushes Toya just as the guest is trying to speak. The two continue to walk.

JOSEF
(in a hush)
Follow me, please.

Toya's lightens his footsteps as he becomes conscious of the ECHOES they cause as he crosses the tremendous marble floor.

+LIBRARY

A beautiful, solid oak, handcarved door opens into the hall. Toya and Josef enter. This is the LIBRARY. All of the chairs are covered in leather with brass tacks. There are myriad books on the shelves, well preserved behind glass doors. Josef switches on several lamps.

JOSEF
(softly)
You will wait here.

TOYA
Thank you.

Josef disappears through the heavy door, shutting it WITHOUT A SOUND. Toya is weary as he looks about and sits in one of the chairs. At one end of the room there is an extremely large window that overlooks the back of the estate. The curtains billow softly.

+CLOSE ON VIEW THROUGH LIBRARY WINDOW

Outside, a person wearing white and riding a horse appears in the distance.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH (1998) - HORSEWOMAN

A bright, white beach with a young JAPANESE WOMAN in a white robe who rides atop a white horse. The horse is stamping impatiently. Its hooves fling the sand like powder. The woman looks down to the CAMERA and smiles. The horse revolves. The woman remains FACING THE CAMERA, but she does not speak. Her mouth opens but she utters no words.

CUT TO:

+BACK TO SCENE (2023)

Toya stands at the window.

+TOYA'S POV - WOMAN

A WHITE AMERICAN WOMAN sits upon a horse. She wears a white blouse and tan jodhpurs. She trots the horse around the house and out of sight.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIBRARY - NOON

Toya is nearly asleep in a deep, leather chair.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Well, where is he?

JOSEF (O.S.)
In the library, madam.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Has the poor man eaten anything?

JOSEF (O.S.)
No, madam.

Her voice is directly outside the door.

WOMAN (O.S.)
You haven't offered him...

JOSEF (O.S.)
(lying)
I offered, madam, but he
refused.

The door opens. It is the woman in tan jodhpurs, MRS.
ALEXANDER. She is confident and radiant. Toya is startled.

MRS. ALEXANDER
Good morning. I'm sorry that
you've been neglected. Josef
will return immediately with
your breakfast.

JOSEF
This is Mr. Toya, madam.

She approaches Toya. She extends her hand.

MRS. ALEXANDER
Mr. Toya. Pleased to meet you.
I am Mrs. Alexander.

TOYA
Thank you for your hospitality,
Mrs. Alexander. I am sorry that
I must impose like this.

MRS. ALEXANDER
Nonsense. Have you met my
husband yet?

TOYA
No, ma'am.
(clarifying)
Mr. Alexander?

MRS. ALEXANDER
Yes, of course. Enjoy your meal
and I will introduce you to
him.

Mrs. Alexander leaves. Josef enters with a cart that holds
breakfast foods. Once the door closes, Josef prepares
Toya's placesetting. Soon, VOICES emanate from an adjoining
room.

+CLOSE ON JOSEF

and his inevitable embarrassment.

MRS. ALEXANDER (O.S.)
He's in the library! What do
you mean?

OLD ALEXANDER (O.S.)
Let him stay in there 'til the
car's done.
(pause)
I'll stay here. Don't move me!

DISSOLVE TO:

+LIBRARY - MINUTES LATER

Mrs. Alexander is poised at the library's side door that accesses Mr. Alexander's sitting room. She speaks to Toya who has just finished eating.

MRS. ALEXANDER
Are you finished? This way,
please, Mr. Toya.

+STUDY

Toya, already standing, follows Mrs. Alexander through the side door that Josef is holding open. Through the door, the STUDY is lined with spartan wooden furniture against the walls only. Finally, at the end of the opposite side of the room is Alexander, leaning in his wheelchair, back towards Toya.

MRS. ALEXANDER
Mr. Toya, this is Mr.
Alexander.

+OLD ALEXANDER

As Toya walks over half the distance of the room, Alexander turns the chair around to face Toya. In his eyes, there is a glint of THE AMERICAN we had seen in 1975. Toya chooses a bench along one of the walls.

OLD ALEXANDER
You may sit down, Mr. Toya.

MRS. ALEXANDER
I'm afraid that I must leave
you two.

She draws near to Alexander and touches his shoulder. He turns his chair again, toward his corner.

OLD ALEXANDER
(ascetically)
Thank you.

Mrs. Alexander exits the room to the hallway. Josef shuts the door behind her, and remains in the room.

OLD ALEXANDER
So, Mr. Toya...

Toya almost responds.

OLD ALEXANDER
(continuing)
...Josef tells me...

Alexander simply and stubbornly trails off.

+CLOSE ON JOSEF

who gives a little smile for the old man's ways.

+BACK TO SCENE

It is absolutely quiet. The sunlight penetrates to the study's hardwood floor. Toya still expects Alexander to speak.

DISSOLVE TO:

+CLOSE ON JOSEF - LATER

By now, even faithful Josef has allowed his eyes to wander. He casts his eyes back toward his master.

+CLOSE ON TOYA

who has given up hope of a conversation. His eyes begin to wander toward the still-bright windows.

OLD ALEXANDER (O.S.)
I never liked that car. Always pulled to one side, bad alignment. Yeah, that was my car you bought. And lucky for you because you would be rotting now, rotting, my friend...

(pause)
Always had one thing or another
wrong with it.

+CLOSE ON OLD ALEXANDER

breathing with labor.

OLD ALEXANDER
There was one problem that was
my fault.

(pause)
I killed a young Hispanic boy
in that car.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ST. LOUIS INTERSTATE (1975) - DAY - CADILLAC

The new Cadillac is pouring down the highway. Alexander is at the wheel. He is speaking on his carphone. His words are inaudible through the glass window. Only the NOISE OF THE CAR'S TIRES on the pavement can be heard. As the car passes out of the frame, the St. Louis Arch becomes visible.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CADILLAC

There is a city stoplight. The Cadillac pulls up and stops. Suddenly, a young mother and her two young boys cross the street. The light turns green. One boy starts to scream excitedly at the Cadillac. The other boy joins in this screaming game, with the intent of annoying their mother. She hurries the screaming boys along, and off the road.

+VIEW OF URBAN RESIDENCES

The Cadillac takes a sharp turn down an urban residential street.

EXT. URBAN STREET

The Cadillac makes another turn.

+DETAIL ON PASSENGER SEAT - MAP

Alexander is listening to COUNTRY MUSIC. He negotiates another tight turn. His map rests open on the passenger seat.

+CLOSE ON ALEXANDER'S FACE

as he looks down at the map, and squints. O.S., a CAR HORN HONKS loudly. Alexander looks up and slows down. He glances back down at the map as his CAR PHONE RINGS.

+CLOSE ON HAND

Alexander's hand, in slow motion, reaches down toward the phone. Before he picks it up, the hand jerks back toward the wheel. The country music continues at regular speed.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION ZONE

The car makes a sudden sharp turn at regular speed. There are road signs of warning.

+FROM OPPOSITE SIDE OF STREET

Alexander's car must make another sudden turn. In the path of the Cadillac is a construction site which Alexander is unable to avoid. Here, one YOUNG HISPANIC BOY plays by fencing in front of a guardrail and a substantial drop-off. The auto collides with the boy, sending him THROUGH the razor-sharp fence and OVER the guardrail. The guardrail stops the car. Remnants of the boy's clothing are left on the wire. Pieces of the boy have fallen over the drop-off.

+A POLICE CAR

immediately comes from the opposite direction with its lights on. The car pulls into the wreckage area. The POLICEMAN gets out of the car. He, too, is white. Alexander is out of his car. He stares at the boy below.

POLICEMAN

Are you okay? This is a
terrible place for
construction.

Alexander is still looking over the edge of the drop-off.

ALEXANDER

It's a terrible place to play..

POLICEMAN
(now curious)
How much have you had to drink
today?

ALEXANDER
I haven't had a thing to drink!

POLICEMAN
Step away from the edge,
please.

+THE CROWD

People from the neighborhood are congregating now at the
scene. The officer tightens up.

POLICEMAN
Please stay back, folks.

+THE WALL

The policeman approaches Alexander and sternly glances over
the side, seeing the horror for the first time.

POLICEMAN
What the hell is this? Oh my
god.

The crowd surges forward with the policeman's frightened
comments. He pushes them back and reaches for his radio.

POLICEMAN
This is patrol 19 Zebra 41. I
have a possible homicide
victim: Hispanic youth, male.
Please send medical assistance...
and crowd control.
(to Alexander)
Hey, get that car outta here!
Get in the car and get it out!

ALEXANDER
I didn't even know...

+CLOSE ON POLICEMAN

POLICEMAN
For christ's sake, get outta
here! Get the hell outta here!
Are you deaf? OUT!

The policeman pushes Alexander toward the car.

INT. CADILLAC - DETAIL ON CROWD

Alexander gets into his car and backs away to the sounds of the protest of the crowd. "HEY, HE DID IT," etc. The policeman screams at Alexander through the Cadillac's window.

POLICEMAN
Get the hell outta here!

Alexander stops his car. The people are rocking it. The policeman threatens them.

POLICEMAN
(to crowd)
Hey, move it, we have to get
back! Get back, GET BACK... BACK
AWAY FROM THE CAR!

The policeman is flailing his billyclub in panic. Members of the crowd are peeling themselves from the car. Some of them tear at the license plate for proof. The policeman is in shock.

+ALEXANDER'S POV - THROUGH REAR WINDSHIELD

as he tentatively pulls away. The policeman is pushing the front of the crowd away from the edge of the wall. An ambulance arrives. Another policecar arrives.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ALEXANDER ESTATE (2023) - STUDY

Alexander speaks to Toya.

OLD ALEXANDER
And that is how a white man
gets away with murder and
becomes a very rich man and
lives in a house like this.
Yes, yes. That's how I got this
rich: with loaded dice and my
own personal dealer. What do
you think of that, Josef?

JOSEF
I think you're tired, sir.

OLD ALEXANDER
Yes, indeed. I am tired. Josef,
take me to my room.

JOSEF
Yes, sir.
(to Toya)
If you'll excuse me.

Toya doesn't respond. Josef pushes Alexander out of the room in the wheelchair.

+TOYA'S POV - THROUGH WINDOW

Toya looks out to the same area as before. Josef reenters the study.

JOSEF
By the way, your car is now
ready.

Toya does not respond. The window is extremely bright.

MRS. ALEXANDER (V.O.)
My husband is actually quite
brilliant, but he is a man who
has seen disaster. He cannot
deny it, he was a witness...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GARDEN - VIEW OF CADILLAC IN B.G.

The Cadillac is parked near the lawn. Toya stands next to the bench upon which Mrs. Alexander sits.

MRS. ALEXANDER
(continuing)
He wants to leave this land,
but he cannot. He tells us the
land is evil. The land resents
our presence, and has ever
since Man appeared via the land
bridge. Since the dawn of
prehistory, she has been trying
to rid herself of mankind. She
whispered poisonous secrets to
the ancients, and used her
riches like a general uses his
men. Mr. Alexander gives us
four examples:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OLMEC CITY IMAGES - EARLY EVENING

Gradually, the CAMERA CLOSES IN on a carved stone wall that becomes visible through tall grass. The symbols on the wall are, at first, indistinct, but from one to the next, they become more and more defined. Finally, each symbol is as clear as it had been on the day it was painted or carved. A hand reaches out to a depiction of what appears to be the head of a BALLPLAYER and smudges it.

+CLOSE ON IMAGES OF BALLGAME

Painted images depict the ancient game of POK-A-TOK, favored by the pre-Columbian empires. Men in traditional garb are positioned around a ball. The next image shows a player without a head, with blood spurting from his neck. A new man sprouts from the dead player's blood.

+CLOSE ON CARVED JAGUAR IMAGE

A symbol of the jaguar god mounting a woman who subsequently gives birth to a jaguar-child.

+OLMEC CITY PLAN

Modern map of an ancient Olmec city.

DISSOLVE TO:

+ANCIENT OLMEC CITY

The map of the city becomes the ancient Olmec city itself.

INT. STADIUM (PRE-COLUMBIAN) - DAWN - HOLDING ROOM

An Olmec man waits within an empty room. There is a string of incense smoke that twines itself about his facial features. He is stretching his legs and arms. He is a POK-A-TOK BALLPLAYER.

+CLOSE ON BALLPLAYER

being strapped with ceremonial protective gear. There are heavy stone ornaments on leather straps around his head,

his neck and his waist. The weight of the items draws his facial features out of line, toward the ground.

INT. SMALL HUT - MONTHS EARLIER - CLOSE ON COUPLE

The Ballplayer and a YOUNG OLMEC WOMAN kiss. She smiles and ducks her head out of the frame. He reaches down into her hair to pull her back to face him. Instead,

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BREEDING ROOM - SILENT - CLOSE ON WOMAN'S FACE

screaming, though SHE CANNOT BE HEARD. Her eyes are very drowsy, she fights to keep them open.

+TABLE

From the head of the table, a WOMAN PRIEST soothingly attends to the needs of the face-down Woman. Unseen priests firmly secure a thick cloth over the Woman's body. CAMERA PULLS BACK to the MALE PRIESTS crouching with strong ropes on either side and in front of the table. They stare at the crate located at the foot of the table.

+THE JAGUAR'S CRATE

The PRIMARY PRIEST stands ready with a leather muzzle. Two more ATTENDANTS stand to one side of the box with a leather thong and tether. One of the attendants, upon the priest's signal, gradually opens the front door of the box. The drowsy jaguar tom stumbles out of the opening. Immediately, one of the attendants straps the leather thong around the cat's abdomen and the muzzle around his jaws. The two ropes already tied in slip knots about the cat's wrists are pulled taut by the attendants at the head of the table. The front attendants gently pull the cat's paws up onto the back of the Woman covered by the tarp. CAMERA PULLS INTO the Woman. She has become less drowsy and is panicked by the nature of the activity. She attempts to peer over her shoulder at the cat. The woman priest thoughtfully prevents her from doing so.

+ANGLE ON TABLE

The primary priest is reaching down past the uncovered thighs of the Woman to the penis of the jaguar. He begins to stroke it.

+CLOSE ON WOMAN'S FACE

as she sobers, abruptly.

CUT TO:

EXT. STADIUM - NOON

The stadium that surrounds the ballcourt holds a crowd shrieking for the ballgame to begin. The Ballplayer is the primary source of the excitement: he darts about on the top of the slanted ballcourt walls inciting the spectators to violence. Meanwhile, the remainder of the formal procession files into the arena.

+BALLCOURT FLOOR - GAME

The Ballplayer dives to reach a ball, to keep it off the ground. The crowd roars.

CUT TO:

BREEDING ROOM - SILENT - TABLE

The jaguar has gripped into the tarp with its claws. It rests on the young Woman's back.

+CLOSE ON WOMAN'S FACE

Her eyes are glazed, pupils dilated.

CUT TO:

+BALLCOURT - EDGE OF STANDS

The Ballplayer nears the crowd to make a close play. He is beaten and scratched and slapped. He lashes back at the crowd after missing the play. The crowd roars at the backlash.

CUT TO:

+BREEDING ROOM - TABLE

The ropes pull the jaguar from the Woman back toward the crate. In a panic, and now fully aware, the jaguar drags

its claws down the tarp. The Woman tries to move but is restrained to allow the jaguar to be safely retracted.

CUT TO:

+BALLCOURT - CLOSE ON BALLPLAYER

The head of the Ballplayer is bashed by the heavy, hard-rubber ball. He is stunned momentarily.

CUT TO:

+BREEDING ROOM

The Woman is being wrapped in a ceremonial robe. She is in shock. The crate is gone.

CUT TO:

+BALLCOURT - WALL

On the wall, the Ballplayer falls backward toward the crowd. As he fields the ball, his back hits the wall, then his head is yanked back by a FERVENT SPECTATOR until it, too, hits the wall.

CUT TO:

EXT. PUBLIC WELL - DAY - CITIZENS IN B.G.

The Woman, still in ceremonial robes, gets water for herself at the well. Other citizens stop and stare at her from across the courtyard. A soft, round bulge pushes from her abdomen beneath her robe.

CUT TO:

+BALLCOURT - GAME

The Ballplayer, now vengeful and bloody, sweeps his leg beneath PLAYER ONE, forcing him to miss the play. The Ballplayer's eyes look sternly toward the next play.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHADE TREE - NOON - ANGLE ON WOMAN

The Woman, now with a huge abdomen, sits in the shade of a tree, fanning herself.

CUT TO:

+BALLCOURT - GAME

The Ballplayer glances at two new players (PLAYER TWO and PLAYER THREE) who suspiciously congregate around him. All three wait for the upcoming play. The Ballplayer's eyes look upward; the eyes of the other two players remain forward and abstracted.

CUT TO:

INT. BIRTHING ROOM

The Woman, now in a loose-fitting, bright white muslin smock, is lead into a birthing room by several priests. She is seated in a wide chair with her legs supported.

CUT TO:

+BALLCOURT

The Ballplayer breaks through the restraints of Players Two and Three to run over and up a wall. The Ballplayer slips once, then looks up to the ball's trajectory. An INTERFERING SPECTATOR shoves the Ballplayer out of the pathway. The Ballplayer grabs the spectator by the neck and strikes him stealthily between the ribs: dead. The crowd reacts with shrieks. There is an ANIMAL-LIKE SHRIEK heard over the crowd.

CUT TO:

+BIRTHING ROOM - CHAIR

The Woman in the chair holds her head back in pain. Clear liquid flows out onto the white muslin of her smock. It drips onto the floor. No one steps up to help her.

CUT TO:

+BALLCOURT - OFFICIAL BOX

Above the court, an official holds up ONE FINGER. The CAMERA SWINGS with the gaze of the crowd to the center

column of the court. Then it FOCUSES UPON the top, primary (and unintelligible to us) symbol.

+BALLCOURT - CLOSE ON BALLPLAYER

A ball is bumped into the air. The Ballplayer is struck in his side by the head and shoulders of PLAYER FOUR. The Ballplayer stumbles, bracing himself with one hand. Still, his motion is forward.

CUT TO:

+BIRTHING ROOM - CLOSE ON LEGS

The Woman's hands struggle with the long, limp head of the child. She continues to pull. The rest of the child's body emerges from the smock. The umbilical cord is shredded in the middle. She chews through it there.

CUT TO:

+BALLCOURT - GAME

The ball lands in the dust. PLAYER FIVE runs to fetch the ball. He carries it back to the fallen Ballplayer and hurls it from over his shoulders upon the resting head of the Ballplayer. Upon impact, the Ballplayer's body doesn't move.

CUT TO:

+BIRTHING ROOM - MOTHER

The long-headed child is silent in its mother's arms. Surreptitiously, she reaches to move the child's arm: it is limp. She hides it from the suspicious gazes of the priests. She forces a smile from her dead child's lips.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEREMONIAL ALTAR

SEVERAL PLAYERS carry the body of the fallen Ballplayer toward an altar, separate from the ballcourt. The Ballplayer's bright shirt is stripped from his back.

CUT TO:

+BIRTHING ROOM - ANGLE ON PRIESTS

The priests, anxious to worship the new god, approach the sweating, nervous mother. She covers the child, and pulls it toward her body.

CUT TO:

+CEREMONIAL ALTAR

A priest with a long-toothed mask arranges the body of the Ballplayer upon a stone block.

CUT TO:

+BIRTHING ROOM

The priests demand to address the hidden child. The mother refuses, grasping the corpse as if it were life itself. The mother is screaming; the priests are prying her arms away from the child. Finally, once the Woman's arms are separated, PULL INTO the limp head and arms of the child as it is seen by the priests. The mother is screaming still.

CUT TO:

+CEREMONIAL ALTAR - NECK

CHOP! A swift axe sticks in the Ballplayer's neck. The axe is withdrawn and brought down again, severing the Ballplayer's head. Blood, and a SHRILLY LAUGHING LOON in the dense vegetation beyond.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GETTYSBURG (1862) - MORNING - MEADOW

A crow caws over a vast, silent meadow. A thick, smoky fog has settled onto the earth. To the side of this meadow are trees that lead up to a hill. Beyond this hill is another, larger hill.

+CONFEDERATE CAMP - CLOSE ON MAP

A white-gloved hand waves over a map of the same area. The sleeve above the glove is GREY. The hand points to the meadow on the map.

+UNION CAMP - CLOSE ON HANDS

A white-gloved hand holds an open gold pocket watch. The watch is folded and put into the vest of a BLUE uniform. The gloved hand reaches for a pair of binoculars, then lifts them to a pair of eyes.

+UNION'S POV - MEADOW

CAMERA PANS the vast meadow, beginning with the smaller hill. Nothing is evident.

+CONFEDERATE CAMP - WOODLET

A white-gloved hand holds the map seen earlier. It is put into a grey jacket's inner pocket. Thousands of rank and file Confederate soldiers are in line behind the closing of the open jacket. The soldiers do not move, they engulf the trees.

+UNION CAMP - FOX HOLE

A UNION TROOPER chews on a weed and bends a branch around itself until it breaks off. He and his company uneasily search the area below their encampment on the hill with their eyes. Nothing. Two NERVOUS UNION SOLDIERS speak in the last few moments of silence.

UNION SOLDIER ONE

How do we know, how are they gonna tell us again?

UNION SOLDIER TWO

They'll come around to us just like yesterday.

UNION SOLDIER ONE

I just want to know when the shelling will begin.

UNION SOLDIER TWO

(soothing)

They'll tell us... they will...

+CONFEDERATE CAMP - RIVULET - CLOSE ON FISH

within a small stream that flows directly in front of the preparing Confederate ranks. The fish dart about, unaware.

+CONFEDERATE OFFICERS' TENT

An OFFICER with long hair and beard leaves his tent; each button is buttoned, everything is picture perfect. He sprays himself one last time with an atomizer and flings it back into his tent. He mounts his horse, a charger. Every bit a showman, the officer rotates his horse on its hind legs, in front of the men. The men react favorably and intently. They want to surge and to scream, but are restrained by their officers. The officer backs his horse up to the rivulet, so that he can address his troops.

+UNION'S POV - MEADOW - NOTHING IN SIGHT

From high above the meadow, no movement can be seen. No Confederate attacker is visible.

+CONFEDERATE CAMP - EMPTY - RIVULET

The stream is half-emptied, the fish flap where there once had been water. There are boot prints in the mud and broken fish pieces. Steady, ear-splitting ARTILLERY SHELLS can be heard but not seen. More smoke slowly billows into the woods.

+UNION CAMP - FOX HOLE

Soldier One is crouched with hands over his ears, screaming.

UNION SOLDIER ONE
(livid)
THEY DIDN'T TELL US! THEY
DIDN'T TELL US!

UNION SOLDIER TWO
Be quiet there! BE QUIET!

Soldier Two tries to put his hands on his comrade to quiet and comfort him, but is rejected. Soldier One is balling up. SEVERAL SHOTS whiz by, aimed at the noise. Soldier Two lifts up the butt of his rifle and brings it down upon the noisy soldier. Soldier One is silent.

+WOODLET - THE CONFEDERATE LINES

are still together and neatly kept. They move through the trees in a half-crouch, but in step. It is silent now, except for the occasional and inadvertent bullet. The officer's steed marches steadily forward. The officer is silent.

+WOODLET - CLOSE ON CONFEDERATE OFFICER

OFFICER
TAKE THAT HILL!

PULL BACK to the Confederate ranks which light up as if they had been electrified. The REBEL YELL is cut short by the incredible volley of ARTILLERY AND MUSKET FIRE from directly in front of them.

+UNION'S POV - MEADOW - CONFEDERATE TROOPS

View of the Confederate troops from 200 yards. Heads and arms and knapsacks and blankets and dirt fly into the air. There is a cloud of dust. Amazingly, the Confederate soldiers get off a volley of their own. The saplings and plants around the Union troops are cut by the speeding musket balls. Balls hit flesh, embankments, trees, leaves, etc. None of the balls ricochet. The SOUND SPLITS THE AIR. There is a WHIR LIKE 1,000,000 INSECTS overhead.

+CONFEDERATE LINES - MEN

The Confederate lines are decimated in every sense. The dead and near-dead impede the soldiers who remain on their feet. A SHELL EXPLODES, digging up the dead bodies and killing ten more men. The rest advance to the sound of their PANICKING OFFICERS. Another volley of MUSKET FIRE and another 100 men fall. Not only do they go down, but their arms are torn off, pieces of their Southern heads are picked away, their eyeballs are shot out, teeth are knocked out of their gaping mouths, holes are punched into their sides and legs, etc.

+UNION CAMP - A UNION OFFICER

hoarsely yells out his orders with sabre in hand, waving it overhead. The hand is SHOT OFF. Valiantly, the man grabs the bloody wrist with his only other hand (to stop the bleeding). He, bleeding and completely dependent upon his legs for balance, falls from his horse.

+MEADOW

The vast meadow is now an animal wasteland. Wretched and wrenched bodies cover most of the earth. An artillery canister uselessly explodes in the midst of the meadow.

+DETAIL ON MEADOW

where officers' horses are dead and dying. Several struggle to regain their feet, but merely manage to move some of the dead bodies that are packed around them.

+MEADOW - UNIDENTIFIED DEAD MAN

stares blankly as blood continues to pour out a hole in his head. DYING HORSES can be heard against the background of CRACKLING FIRES and RUMBLING BOMBSHELLS. The blood from the man's head makes its way down to a puddle of blood from ANOTHER MAN.

+WOODLET

A riderless white charger carries the crooked saddle of its former rider, with the shiny black boots still stuck in the stirrups. The horse attempts to rub off the awkward hardware with the aid of a tree trunk.

+MEADOW - UNIDENTIFIED DEAD MAN

The man with the hole in his head is a UNION TROOPER. His blood still runs down to meet the next man's pool of blood. The next man is a CONFEDERATE SOLDIER. The pool has reached its capacity and has begun to overflow. The run-off streams down into a little creek that traverses the meadow.

+MEADOW - LATE AFTERNOON - NURSE

A drop of blood, the reddest red, falls in the intense, orange sun. It is now quiet. The guns are silent. Another drip of blood forms on the end of the dead man's chin. A white hand reaches up to catch it with a fingertip. Red blood on a pale, white finger. Pigs snort in the background. The finger lifts the drop to her mouth: it is a FEMALE FIELD NURSE dressed completely in white. She crouches and tastes the blood.

DISSOLVE TO:

+FARM FIELD - PUDDLE

Pigs surround and drink from a large puddle of blood. The puddle also feeds into the meadow's stream, which is a cloudy, dirty, reddish brown.

CUT TO:

+MEADOW - EARLIER THAT DAY - AMBULANCES

A group of ambulance wagons gallantly move away from the battle, carrying their wounded. The SHELLS ARE ONCE AGAIN BURSTING and the MUSKETS BARKING. Two shells land amongst the ambulances on their route to safety. The wagons explode, overturn, and burn. The flames from the wagon covers continue to crackle even as we

FADE TO:

+INSERT - DIAGRAM OF 15TH CENTURY SPANISH SHIP

The sound of the CRACKLING WAGONS becomes the CREAKING from the interior of a wooden ship.

+INSERT - STERILE PHOTOS OF MODERN SMALLPOX VICTIMS

CUT TO:

INT. SPANISH SHIP (1500S) - SUB-GALLEY

Musty, wooden planks make the room appear to be a long box or shed. Within the room are beds, dirty and broken down; they are barely elevated from the floor and the rats. There are no windows. The walls leak salt water from between the planks.

+CLOSE ON BED

There is the LONELY MOAN of an OCCUPANT from one of the beds. Upon closer inspection of the next VISIBLE OCCUPANT, it becomes obvious that he has a pox: there are red and porous infected pores on his ears, neck, face and every other exposed piece of skin. All other occupants carry the same symptoms. They are delirious and sweaty.

+BACK TO SCENE

From above, there is a loud, disquieting RAPPING on what must be the ceiling. The heavy pounding continues in sharp bursts of three. It wakens several of the bedridden: their breathing becomes more pronounced and raspy. The room becomes misty with the disease-laden breath of the damned. O.S., dragging FOOTSTEPS stir.

CUT TO:

+SAME COMPARTMENT - LATER

This time the occupants are SCREAMING. No words can be made out, only the pitiful protest of the dying against something less weak, some thing not as lost.

+CLOSE ON BED

A blanket is pulled from the bed of an occupant. The blanket itself is beautiful, but the DYING MAN does not shriek for the loss of beauty.

+CLOSE ON BLANKET

There is more POUNDING from above. A DARK HAired MAN wraps the blanket with paper and twine in the blackness of a corner of the room. There is more pounding.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHIP - DAY - POOPDECK

There is sunlight. A SPANISH SAILOR bangs on a trap door that leads below. He covers his mouth and nose as he lifts the hatch with a hooked pole. Muffled CRIES and a rolling dusty pocket of air float out from the tank. The Spaniard's eyes betray his panic. He thrusts his long hook into the darkness and retracts it with one of the blanket packages dangling from the end. From below, a DYING MAN'S WORDS are heard.

DYING MAN (O.S.)
F-r-i-o...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OCEAN - DAY - SPANISH LONGBOAT

Brisk sea water bears up and rocks a sleek longboat as it is rowed away from the ship. One OFFICIAL-TYPE is standing at the bow as if he were crossing the Delaware. The sailors make the boat crawl steadily through the waters. Several of the paper packages are visible within the boat. Gulls fly overhead.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEXICO - WOODED AREA - POV TREES

A thickly wooded area is seen from within. The OCEAN can be heard from O.S. The gulls LAUGH. There are no humans here.

+OCEAN SHORE - TRACKS IN SAND

where several longboats have been run up onto the sand. The occupants are gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF VILLAGE - DAY

The golden cross of the Catholic Church sits atop a great staff. It wavers and shimmers.

+END OF PROCESSIONAL

An ORNAMENTAL PRIEST holds the staff upon which the cross rests. The priest is among the contingent from the Spanish longboats. The packages are stacked neatly in front of the group. Beyond the packages by twenty yards is what appears to be a Central American pyramid. One package is sprayed with a golden bottle of perfume. A SPANISH OFFICIAL respectfully lifts a package with a ten foot hook and begins to walk (slowly and ceremoniously). He halts. Bending on one knee, he unthreateningly extends the package in the direction in which he bows in supplication. The supplicant raises his head with his eyes and smiles as if adoring the Nativity. He nods again.

+CLOSE ON PACKAGES

The paper-wrapped packages lie upon soft grasses. A red hand ornamented with golden rings and gold upon its wrists, a strong but gentle bare hand, reaches down to touch the paper package. The hand begins to untie the twine and unwrap the paper. Beneath the packing is, of course, a glorious but pox-infected blanket. The hand caresses the smooth material.

+CLOSE ON ATTENDANT

The official Spanish attendant still looks down.

+SEVERAL OTHER ATTENDANTS

squint in anticipation of pain.

+ROYAL FAMILY

The reddish hand grasps the heavy material in his stately hand and lifts it up and out of the package. The hand belongs to a PRE-COLUMBIAN KING. The King gracefully wraps himself in the blanket, satisfied. He rubs the cloth against his cheek. His QUEEN advances to receive her own blanket. Beside the Queen is a younger woman, the PRINCESS, just as graceful and beautiful as the King and Queen. A blanket is lowered by hook to the Queen. Her eyes trace the path of the hook en route to the ground.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VILLAGE - WEEKS LATER - CENTRAL SQUARE

Loudly from the center of the village come the SCREAMS of tortured souls, swirling in a damned paradise. A troop of Conquistadors trot into the square on their armored steeds, keeping excited youths at a distance with their lancepoints, touching the boys on the shoulder or the chest. In the b.g., several stone structures burn from the inside out. Dead and dismembered bodies, some naked, line the area.

+SMALL PATH

upon which a few SPANISH TROOPS tramp by on foot. They brandish swords which the natives do not fear until a trooper hacks through a row of children. He then checks the edge of his blade.

CUT TO:

+ORIGINAL CEREMONY

During which the priest's golden cross had glinted in the sun.

CUT TO:

+BACK TO SCENE

A charred, body smolders on blackened grass.

+PYRAMID STEPS - DETAIL ON SHADOWS

Upon the steps of the pyramid, shadows of birds reel.

+ABOVE PYRAMID

Indignant birds fly within the sky above the trees and pyramid. A woman is heard SCREAMING in the b.g., then she is quiet. The fires of the village continue to CRACK AND SPIT.

+SQUARE

In the center of the village, a FOOT SOLDIER takes a YOUNG BOY by the wrist and lifts him up to kiss him. Once the boy is close, the Spaniard views the boy's affliction: the pox. He lowers the boy suddenly and searches the underside of the boy's arms: the pox. The soldier yells and ejects the boy's arm from his hand and checks his own. Knowing that he will now contract the disease, the soldier takes the boy's wrist once again and cuts off the arm. The foot soldier is then run through with a lance from above: a CONQUISTADOR has detected the transmittance of the disease. The rider removes the lance from the dead soldier's back, breaks it, and throws it to the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE - STONE ROOM - VIEW OF TREE

Through the open doorway of this stone room, there is an extravagant tree with hanging blossoms.

+FLOOR

On the floor, there are wide drops of blood, grouped together and singular, leading away from the door. There are a woman's small footprints in the spillage. The footprints lead to a woven cotton mat, the blanket cover, and the King. His daughter, in white, kneels at his side. She is the source of the blood. The King is silent and carries the pox on his face. The Princess has clear but bruised and cut skin. Blood flows from her waist-- staining the white cotton robe between her legs.

+CLOSE ON WOMAN'S HAND

She wipes the sweat from the broken skin on her father's forehead. She then reaches for his hand and brings it to her swollen lips.

FADE OUT.

The young woman bursts out with a SCREAM of frustration beneath the BLACK OF THE SCREEN.

FADE IN:

INT. SLAVE SHIP (1600S) - CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS -
CLOSE ON PARROT

whose beautiful, talon-like beak mimics a WOMAN SCREAMING. As more of the bird is shown, we see it perched on a stand in a ship captain's quarters. There are beautiful books, immaculate leather furniture, polished brass lamps, etc.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY - SLAVE SHIP

The ship is low in the water.

+INSERT - ANTIQUATED MAP OF AFRICA

complete with the bounding fish and slithering seabeasts represented in the ocean areas.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

The CAPTAIN, a white man, writes in his log book. The parrot SCREAMS.

EXT. SLAVE SHIP - DECK

Freshly swabbed, clear and clean.

+INSERT - DIAGRAM OF A SLAVE SHIP

Simple and undetailed.

+BACK TO SCENE

A spray of sea water washes over the deck. There are MUFFLED SCREAMS of absolute and unchecked terror.

+INSERT - MORE DETAILED DIAGRAM OF SLAVE SHIP

representing the livestock quarters of the slaves.

+BACK TO SCENE

A more substantial amount of water rushes over the planks of the deck. There are SCREAMS, LESS MUFFLED.

+INSERT - THE DETAILED DIAGRAM

Details and dimensions. 18"x24"x72." Eighteen inches high for each slave's compartment.

+CLOSE ON THE CAPTAIN'S LOG - ROLLING SCRIPT

"During the eighth week..."

+DECK - CLOSE ON PLANK

The SCREAMS are now very audible.

+INSERT - THE DIAGRAMS

Rows and rows of manacles. The dimensions and distances between each set are given.

+CLOSE ON THE LOG

"Few livestock have perished. I am pleased with..."

+DECK - PLANKS

There is screaming and the uncontrolled POUNDING of bodies against wood.

+INSERT - DIAGRAM

A cross-section of the ship shows the holding chambers. And the depth of each deck.

+BACK TO SCENE

A small crowd of sailors have gathered on board; one appears with the Captain when he arrives.

+CLOSE ON CAPTAIN

He nods.

+DETAIL ON PRYING

The sailors pry up the deck in front of the Captain who aims his pistol into the hole and FIRES. The hatch is replaced. The decks remain silent only for a moment, then resume their hysterics. The Captain motions again and the hatch is removed again. Another hatch also is pried up.

+VIEW OF DARKNESS IN HULL

The shallow first level of the holding compartments is visible. Suddenly, a BLACK MAN emerges from below, unshackled. He runs to the side of the ship, pushing aside amazed sailors amid the gunshots. Taking a DEEP BREATH in stride, he jumps into the ocean.

FADE OUT.

The padded sound of a HEARTBEAT and BUBBLES passing. Then, there is the sound of WATER RUSHING by the head.

FADE IN:

EXT. WESTERN AFRICA (1600S) - SUNSET - SAVANNAH

A bird flies overhead. The sun is setting in a magenta sky.

FADE OUT.

The sound of the HEARTBEAT and the WATER. The heartrate is a bit faster than before. It fades into the sound of DRUMS.

FADE IN:

+SAVANNAH - DETAIL ON DEAD MAN

A dead white man lies in the tall, wild grasses of the savannah. His face is swollen, his neck askew.

DISSOLVE TO:

+SAVANNAH - DETAIL ON WOMAN

(Through the sounds of the HEARTBEAT and WATER) A tall, thin BLACK WOMAN dressed in a flowing gown of cotton holds a spear at her side. Her face is as solid as her athletic stance, then she breaks into a less serious grin. The CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY FORWARD, but doesn't reach her.

FADE OUT.

The HEART and the WATER. Then the sound of NAILS BEING POUNDED. MEN SCREAMING. The RATTLE of unforgiving CHAINS.

FADE IN:

+OCEAN - DARKNESS

A faint view from deep within the ocean.

FADE OUT.

The sound of a GASP for breath and then AIR BUBBLES RISING. CHOKING. Another faint GASP.

FADE IN:

+SAVANNAH - CLOSE ON WOMAN'S HAND

It moves.

FADE OUT.

Now, only the sounds of CALM WATER.

FADE IN:

INT. ALEXANDER HOME (2023) - STUDY

The curtains are billowing gently. The outdoors are framed eerily by the curtains. We are back in the Alexander estate.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALEXANDER ESTATE - GARDEN

Mrs. Alexander still sits in the garden. Toya stands.

TOYA

That's not the United States I
see at all.

MRS. ALEXANDER
No. You...

TOYA
What I see now is sad.

MRS. ALEXANDER
No. Pitiabile, but not sad.

+DETAIL ON TOYA

Toya touches her shoulder.

MRS. ALEXANDER
Don't feel sorry for me. The
old man doesn't touch me, and
all I wanted was to have this
quiet...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CADILLAC - DETAIL ON TOYA

Toya drives the Cadillac.

MRS. ALEXANDER (V.O.)
Don't feel sorry for me. Your
car is ready, Mr. Toya.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CADILLAC - NYC MEGALOPOLIS ENVIRONS - TUNNELS

As Toya speeds along, the late afternoon sun melts through the rear windshield. As the CAMERA PANS TO the front of the car, it is obvious that the Cadillac rides upon a high quality paved surface. He passes through a tunnel. At first, all is dark, then the pink fluorescent lights that line the interior of the tunnel become visible. It is SILENT.

+FURTHER

Toya encounters an even smoother road.

+OTHER AUTOS

He has reached an even wider, smoother road. Now there are other autos that share the once lonely path. He enters a tunnel. As he exits the tunnel, the afternoon sun shoots across his face.

+INTRACITY HIGHWAY - EARLY EVENING

Now there are even more autos crowding the expansive highway. What had been late afternoon has become a prematurely dark, early evening. The sounds of the TRAFFIC build to great intensities.

EXT. INTRACITY - AERIAL

From above, great patterns of traffic can be seen. The sounds of the TRAFFIC are louder still. Toya's auto is lost from sight.

+INTRACITY - SIGNS

Several street names are labeled on bright green traffic signs beside the roads. The now visible headlights and taillights of the traffic streak, celebrating the day's death. This must be a thoroughly modern city to sustain such traffic.

FADE TO:

EXT. NYC - EVENING - DOWNTOWN

The spires of modern NYC jut up into the twilight horizon.

CUT TO:

INT. NYC - CAFÉ - OVERHEAD

A crowded café reminiscent of post World War II Eastern Europe emanates a LOW RUMBLE. Finally, Toya is visible as he sits in an inconspicuous booth. There is a WAITER attending to him. The waiter's face is not visible.

WAITER

No, I honestly find Japanese culture fascinating.

TOYA

But there is so much here.

WAITER
It's time has come.

TOYA
You speak as if it is over...
(pause)

WAITER
Why are you here?

TOYA
My mother.

WAITER
How's that?

TOYA
My mother ran away to America.
I have been trying to find her.
Of course, this place is too
big.

WAITER
New York?

TOYA
All of it. The United States. I
began last year and I leave
tomorrow, once I've seen the
sights and sold my car.

+DETAIL ON WAITER

His eyes have been surgically altered to appear slanted.

WAITER
(in drugged
remembrance)
My mother died in the riots.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MODERN AIRPORT - DAY - CLOSE ON JET

A huge, modern passenger jet screams as it glides by on its
wings, occupying the entire screen. The jet moves from
right to left, East to West.

DISSOLVE TO:

Silence.

INT. NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE (2000) - SILENT -
HEAVY TRADING

as the numbers on the stock board encircle the traders.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. URBAN AIRPORT - DAY - SILENT - RUNWAY

upon which planes taxi. Persons can be seen inside the terminal.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. REMOTE MOTEL - DAY - SILENT - PARKING LOT

A station wagon carrying a family pulls up to a room. Other autos pass on the nearby highway.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SMALL CINEMA - EVENING - SILENT - SIDEWALK

A cinema is surrounded by small town storefronts. Several couples pass through the front doors to the theater.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VAST FIELD - DAY - SILENT - A LARGE TRACTOR

tills the earth.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STATE CAPITOL DOME - DAY - SILENT

A golden bronze state capitol dome glistens.

CUT TO:

INT. STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - SILENT -
DETAIL ON PLATFORM

Inside, at a modern chamber, a man speaks. He motions to the next speaker. A state flag and an American flag rest in pole standards.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MAJOR LIBRARY - SILENT - LOBBY

There are patrons looking at the books and wandering through the grand lobby.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NEIGHBORHOOD BAR - DAY - SILENT - DETAIL ON BAR

There are several men sitting calmly at the counter. A strong woman polishes glasses behind the bar.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MIRRORED BUILDING - DAY - SILENT - DETAIL ON MEN

Two men, similar in appearance, discuss a topic beside a building with tinted and mirrored windows. The angled reflection of the rest of the city lies behind them.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - SILENT - PERFUMES COUNTER

A young man carries a basket of perfumes. He approaches an older woman to sell his wares. As a silhouette passes in front of the two,

CUT TO:

(NOTE: There is sound once again, yet the sound is NOT SYNCHRONOUS; the sound ECHOES THE EVENTS from PREVIOUS SHOTS.)

+THE STOCK EXCHANGE

The figures from the NYSE board continue to encircle the floor. The rest of the room is completely dark. The SOUND of MEN YELLING AND SELLING blares from the Stock Exchange's empty floor.

+THE AIRPORT

A string of suitcases have fallen from a luggage transport. There is a disabled jet burning on the runway. There are no

emergency vehicles. The engines of jet SURGE pleadingly. There is an ANNOUNCEMENT over the airport public address system.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
American flight #31A now
departing from Gate 5.

+THE MOTEL

The pink door to the room is open, revealing only darkness within. Still, the family's station wagon is parked in front of the room. Left midway between the auto and the room, a doll bleeds profusely. A television set DRONES in the b.g.

+THE CINEMA

A door to one of the viewing rooms is propped open eerily by an unseen object. From within the viewing room, an ACTOR'S VOICE is heard over an on-screen telephone. The glass cases of the concession stand are obliterated. The marquee outside reads, "The Sun is Sick." The box office is smashed.

ACTOR (O.S.)
...going to crack your skull and
piss in your blood!"

+THE FIELD

The tractor is in the middle of the field. Its door has been flung open wide. The cab is vacant. From within the cab, the radio BLARES a broadcast of a baseball game.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
A hit!

A tractor's throttle SHRIEKS, then decelerates. The radio becomes audible again. The machine's tires are on fire. The field is dry and bare and black.

INT. THE STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

In front of the governmental seats stand two charred flagpoles. There are no people left in their chairs. Finally, there is an arrow that has pierced the back of one of the seats. A gavel POUNDS on a desk. A woman ANNOUNCES a bill number.

SPEAKER (V.O.)
Discussion will follow.

+THE LIBRARY

The ceilings of the library are adorned with the wise statements of philosophers from the ages. The shelves have been emptied of books. Finally, it is obvious that the books are two feet deep on the floor. There is the shrill TWEETING caused by an unchecked book tripping the theft monitor. It drones on.

+THE BAR

There is a beer tap on, now bubbling empty. Beer is soaking the floor. The two men who were at the counter are now strewn recklessly through the beer-drenched floor. A cash register drawer can be heard OPENING, the bell RINGS.

BARTENDER (V.O.)
\$15.22.

From a TV's boxing match:

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Round eight!

+THE MIRRORED BUILDING

Of the two men who were conversing on the city sidewalk, one has a riot knife which he pulls out, and with an incredible underhand swing, catches the other man in the lower chest.

FIRST MAN (V.O.)
I'm getting nervous about the whole situation.

SECOND MAN (V.O.)
My wife was crying all this morning.

FIRST MAN (V.O.)
Maybe she's pregnant.

SECOND MAN (V.O.)
I don't think so.

FIRST MAN (V.O.)
It was a joke!

The dead man's nerves still struggling, he spills his blood onto the mirrored window. Other people on the sidewalk scatter like frightened sheep.

THE SOUND BECOMES SYNCHRONOUS AGAIN.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - PERFUME COUNTER

The young salesperson approaches the older lady. She turns away. He is persistent.

SALESPERSON
Would you like to try this
"odour"?

The woman extracts a can of MACE from her purse and sprays-sprays-sprays the man squarely in the face. The man's TORTURED SCREAM inundates the soundtrack and screen. DOLLY BEGINS (NOTE: the CAMERA becomes an important player as it backs away from the wailing man). As the rest of the panic stricken shoppers begin to scatter, the CAMERA MOVES TOWARD the revolving doors of the store and HITS the old woman from behind. The CAMERA PAUSES as she falls to the marble floor with a SICKENING THUD.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY - MIRRORED WINDOWS

The CAMERA STREAKS THROUGH the revolving doors. Once outside, WE SEE the mirrored sides of the building: the two original fighting men have been outside this building, the department store. One man is dead and emptied of his lifeblood, the other is gone. The CAMERA CONTINUES to float smoothly forward into the streets, as it will throughout the remainder of the sequence.

+STREET #1

A metro bus passes almost normally. A BLACK MAN crosses the street cautiously, but is hit from behind by an auto. The auto stops. The WHITE DRIVER gets out and kicks his victim. And again. The driver is shot by an unseen assailant. His car is stolen by ANOTHER WHITE MAN who drives off in another direction.

+STREET #2

Down the next street, a POLICEMAN holds the head of a MAN down with his boot. He shoots the man. CAMERA PULLS BACK to

reveal that both men are policemen. Just as a car passes the scene, a metal RATTLING is heard. A bomb rolls to a halt just behind the two men.

+CLOSE ON POLICEMAN

The standing policeman turns toward the rattling sound. The bomb explodes.

+VIEW OF SKYLINE

A PLANE overhead does a roll and plummets head-long toward a building. Once it has passed from sight, there is an explosion. There are little spot fires all along the streets.

+STREET #3

Down the next street, the manhole covers have been lifted. Another bus passes calmly.

+STREET #4

A WOMAN parks her car in the middle of the street. She gets out. She drops a match in the gas tank. The CAMERA TURNS and begins to MOVE AWAY from the impending explosion. Seconds later, scraps of auto blow past the CAMERA from behind. Tracer bullets whiz by the CAMERA from the other end of the street. The CAMERA TURNS the corner.

+STREET #5

A bus stops at the appropriate place. An OLD MAN with shopping bags readies himself to board the bus. He is smashed from behind and pinned against the bus by an automobile. The DRIVER of the auto gets out and climbs into the bus. The bus pulls away. The anguished wail of people can be heard, O.S. An OLDER RELIGIOUS MAN warns the CAMERA DIRECTLY.

 OLDER RELIGIOUS MAN
 Go to the churches! Everyone
 knows of a safe place, GO TO
 THE CHURCHES!

He is hit by a Brink's truck. Coins spill from the man's mouth. As he coughs up the coins,

OLDER RELIGIOUS MAN
(dying)
Thank you, Lord!

CAMERA TILTS UP to a WHITE GLIDER as it passes over the city.

CUT TO:

INT. GLIDER - DETAIL ON PILOT

Only the sound of the WIND is heard. The MALE PILOT looks down upon the city.

+PILOT'S POV - CITY

Within the city, there are many fires raging, illuminating the streets.

+BACK TO SCENE

The pilot smirks... and ejects. As he plummets to the earth, his parachute never opens.

CUT TO:

+THE CITY - STREET #6 - CORNER

An entire street of shops explodes. The CAMERA TURNS down the next street. Here, a THIN AND WEAK MAN in his late 50s is casually, but intently, pushing the ruins of a corpse into the gutter so that its head will occupy the path of an oncoming bus's wheel. Strangely, the buses are still running. A BYSTANDER drags the body out of the way and shrieks at the old sadist in dismayed horror.

BYSTANDER
Why?!

+CLOSE ON WEAK MAN

Clear in his accusation.

WEAK MAN
He murdered...

+NARROW STREET #7 - DETAIL ON COWERING MAN

At the end of the street, a MAN cowers over a half-open manhole. He eventually addresses the moving CAMERA, as it reaches him.

COWERING MAN

The heads are in here...

The man looks back down into the too-dark manhole, then glances up, frightened by what he sees behind the CAMERA. From behind the CAMERA, a DARK-HAIRED WOMAN runs in blind terror. A MAN WITH A HATCHET follows her. As he catches her, he knocks her to the ground: she still screams. He raises the hatchet to cleave her head; she screams right into his unseen face. She screams into the CAMERA.

+CLOSE ON HATCHET MAN'S FACE

which is the face of the waiter from the café. It quickly becomes docile and kind. He drops the hatchet and releases the woman, but doesn't move.

+THE WOMAN

shows signs of oriental descent. The woman rises to her feet. It now is obvious that this incident has taken place in front of the mirrored building with which the sequence began. The woman, crying, begins to run. As she rapidly moves away from the building, more and more of the building's mirrored surface becomes visible. As more mirrors become visible, so too, do the dead, the stunned, the wounded, the frightened: all reflections.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAFÉ (2023) - DETAIL ON WAITER

The waiter, his hair a bit more disheveled than before, still stands next to Toya.

WAITER

That is the only time that I saw reason take over, when he released her. Perhaps it was the fear... that made contact.

The waiter blinks awkwardly and pulls at the corner of his newly slanted eyes.

TOYA

Where are you from?

The waiter is still blinking as if he has something in his eye.

WAITER
Somewhere out in the middle.

Toya tilts his head back in anticipation of an actual answer.

TOYA
Do you miss it?

WAITER
I don't even know where it is.
I just know that it's filled
with a bunch of freaks and
inbreds. But then, so is New
York.

The waiter laughs to himself, quietly.

TOYA
If you feel that way, then why
do you stay here?

WAITER
(excusing himself)
I've been planning to go to
Europe or the Northern
Territories. Once I get the
money.

+CLOSE ON TOYA

who looks away.

WAITER (O.S.)
It's hard to save anything in
this city.

+DETAIL ON MANAGER IN B.G.

Both men notice the MANAGER.

TOYA
(distant)
I can imagine.

The manager motions to the waiter. The waiter hands Toya his bill.

WAITER

Here's your check. Wait for a while, I'd like to talk to you some more.

The waiter makes his way toward the kitchen. Toya waits until the waiter has passed through the double doors of the kitchen. Toya lays the money down for the bill and hastens toward the exit of the café. He nearly bows to the HOSTESS as he passes her.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LA GUARDIA AIRPORT (2023) - DAY - PARKING LOT

Toya's Cadillac waits to enter the airport parking facility. He reaches out his window to take a green parking ticket from an old machine. He proceeds through the ticket area.

+DETAIL ON CADILLAC

Toya is behind the Cadillac, staring into the trunk well. He shuts the lid without removing any of the items contained in it. He begins to walk for the terminal.

+DETAIL ON SIGN

Midway through the parking lot, Toya carelessly drops the parking ticket. He soon passes a sign that informs him he must pay the maximum price for a lost ticket. He enters the airport terminal.

+RUNWAY

A modern passenger jet leaves the runway.

+SKY

It flies from right to left, East to West.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOKYO (2023) - LATE AFTERNOON - CITY STREET

Toya is found within a mass of people. It could be NYC. As time passes, it is evident that the constituents of the crowd are all Japanese. Suddenly, and momentarily, an older

woman is seen brushing against Toya... against his back. This is his MOTHER. Though disturbed, Toya turns only half-heartedly: now, even the Japanese shove each other. He doesn't see the woman's face. The two keep walking.

+CITY STREET - CRANE

Now, Toya and the woman are even farther apart.

+FURTHER

Some of the blaring neon signs of Tokyo are visible now. Toya is a speck in the mass of people and light.

+SIGNS

Toya is lost from sight. The heavens of advertizing mock the mortals below. In the b.g., a neon rose blooms.

FADE OUT.

THE END