

LUCKY DOG

BY

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PART ONE

INT. CAFETERÍA EL AMARILLO -- SMOKY NIGHT -- EL PATRONCITO

A neat and proper Mexican man sits carefully on a red padded bench seat in front of a yellow wall, shocking in its saturated color.

He wears a grey flannel suit with a cream-colored egyptian cotton shirt. On his head, a tightly woven straw hat. A thick mustache drapes like curtains around his mouth.

He is smoking, but the smoke comes from all sides in this dark restaurant. A cup of black coffee rests on the table beside him. Spoon arranged at a tangent to the saucer.

He carefully takes a drag of the cigarette and then speaks.

Straight ahead.

EL PATRONCITO

[You are old enough to know of the atrocities that the Americans perpetrated in Panama City. Perhaps you were even there. I don't know. But this you need to know.]

His eyes. Dark and round. His eyes are old.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[The same Americans who tore through the earth in the earlier part of the century, pushed through their ships, made their fortunes, and turned the canal over to the madmen they had trained to kill for them--in the School of the Americas and so forth--these same Americans came back to teach the Panamanians a lesson.]

He takes a sip of his steaming coffee. Wipes his moustache. Replaces the napkin.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[This may be a lesson you have learned, my friend, I'm not sure.]

Adjusts the coffee cup's handle. Parallel to the end of the table.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[The Americans came in and mopped the earth with poor souls like you. They were looking for the Panamanian Defense Forces, but they only seemed to find the poor imbeciles who lived

(MORE)

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)
in El Chorillo. And here they taught
the poor a very important lesson.
They taught the true Panamanians and
the rest of Central America something
they should never forget. They taught
you that they want to own you--or
maybe they do already, I don't know.]

Crisp Mexican Pesos. Four fifty-peso bills.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)
[They taught you that no matter how
hard you fight, no one can hear your
muffled cries when they suffocate
the television and newspapers, the
reporters. For three days they drew
a curtain around the city.]

The man slides the money across the table. A photo of an
American man. A sloppy man.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)
[And, my friend, what they taught
you when they brought down the
curtain, what they taught you behind
that curtain, only the survivors
know. Only you know.]

FADE TO:

San Cristóbal de las Casas. Chiapas, Mexico. 2005.

EXT. ESCUELA ABSALÓN CASTELLANOS -- THE BOY'S SCHOOL --
AFTERNOON

In the Mexican afternoon sun, a black Chevy Suburban idles in front of Escuela Absalón Castellanos. THE BOY, a young boy of 11 with dark features and tidy uniform, approaches the vehicle and waits as the door opens. Wordless, he places his backpack on the seat. The door shuts and the Suburban drives away.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LAS CASAS -- THE TRIP HOME

Old mountains ring the valley, and green grasses flow down the Sierra Madre and into the fields below. The Suburban lumbers down the raised road past VW Beetles and burros.

INT. SUBURBAN

In the back seat, the Boy is drawing pictures in a small notebook. The DRIVER looks up for a moment to watch him in the rear-view mirror. Typical. The Driver pushes the Boy's window button down. The Boy is holding his button upward. But he is not acknowledging the Driver. The window won't budge. The DRIVER looks again and smiles. An old joke.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LAS CASAS -- THE CENTER OF TOWN

Brightly colored Spanish colonial homes mix with buildings in bad shape. Tree-shaded yellow facades and blue doors. Metal roofs, walls pierced by plant stems. A bus passes, laying a thick cloud of exhaust over the honking cars.

INT. THE CONSULATE -- DRIVEWAY

Above the chaffing traffic, a modest compound of cement buildings clusters behind a renovated guard shack. The Suburban pulls through the swinging automatic gates and into the US CONSULATE.

FADE TO:

INT. THE CONSULATE -- THE BOY'S ROOM -- EVENING

It's dark in the Boy's room. A focused light above his desk. He is listening to a small headset. A cable runs to a compact SHORTWAVE RADIO set. His antenna is up. He is tuning, fine tuning.

Some static. But there is something he is on the verge of tuning in. It is a simple tune. Played with a child's recorder perhaps. Difficult to hear. The Boy reaches for a small pad of paper and a short pencil.

A VOICE comes through the static once the tune has stopped repeating. A bad dream.

A horrid electronic nightmare of a voice. Distorting, rarefying, contracting by the whim of the airwaves.

NUMBERS VOICE

One, five, seven, nine, three.

One, five, seven, nine, three...

The Boy meticulously copies the numbers. He flips a page and continues as the voice does.

The Boy looks small in his room. Too young to be doing anything important.

FADE TO:

INT. THE CONSULATE HALLWAY

The Boy shuffles down the marble hallway in his socks. His pajamas over his clothes. He swings and then softly lofts a CLOTH BAG toward the door at the end of the hall. It slides to a stop near the main door.

When he reaches the door, he sweeps the window sill above his head for a key. There it is. He swings the door slowly to minimize any creaking. When the metal resonates with even this friction, he stops. He squeezes through the opening.

INT. THE CONSULATE KITCHEN -- REFRIGERATOR

The Boy pulls a ziplock half full of meat from the bottom shelf and puts it into the bag. The door shuts heavy and solid. No more light in the kitchen.

EXT. THE CONSULATE -- SECURITY FENCE

Leaning against the wrought iron fence, the Boy puts on his shoes. He checks the contents of the bag and quickly pushes through a loose bar in the fence. He turns on a flashlight from the bag and disappears quietly into the darkness.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET

In the city, dogs obey the law of the jungle. No one walks here at night except for the dogs.

A dog shrieks in the distance.

A SMALL STREET DOG huddles next to a wall. It hears a sound off-screen and scampers into the night.

Under a lone light pole, a LARGE STREET DOG glides like a teenage athlete, making a gentle arc. Its shoulders roll while it jogs. Its short red fur has several long scars and a few round sores near its hips. The dog looks into the dark and sniffs the air.

EXT. A DRY WELL

The Boy looks over the wall at this dog. Still sniffing the air. The Boy makes a short whistle.

EXT. STREET

The dog spooks. Lowers its rear end and looks around quickly, running out of the light.

EXT. STREET SURFACE

A piece of meat splats on the street near the dog, and the dog flattens.

When nothing else happens, it stretches its neck toward the tidbit. A bright spot falls onto the meat from the Boy's flashlight.

Another piece of meat slaps the pavement. The Boy whistles again. Softly.

EXT. THE WELL

With the flashlight held straight over his head, still pointing at the meat, the Boy slowly walks toward the dog. The dog is magnetized by the meat. Almost crying, it cannot break the attraction of the meat.

The Boy throws another piece. The dog jumps.

EXT. STREET

The spotlight stays on the meat. The dog licking its lips. Leans. Grabs the slice.

FROM THE DARK

Too close, too fast, the Boy scuffs the street with his shoe. The dog turns its head away from the meat and shows its canines. A raspy growl. The spotlight flicks into the dog's eyes. Quick steps of the Boy's shoes. They grind to a halt.

THE DOG

Frozen between the meat and the light. Blinded for the moment. Its brown eyes glaze. Its neck stretches. It stops eating the scrap.

THE BOY'S BAG

Something wrapped in a red rag. The something is heavy.

THE DOG'S FACE

Worn, tired, thrilled. Smiling. The confused dog breaks down its mistrust. The salt of the meat means camaraderie.

The dog covers his canine teeth. Leans toward the smell of the Boy. Pulling the smell with his nostrils. Wanting to know more.

THE BOY'S HAND

He raises up the wadded rag for the dog to smell. Closer. Aiming.

STREET -- FROM SOME DISTANCE

A bright, round blast of light silhouettes the Boy as the dog's head and body are thrown against the wall. Due to the distance, half a second later, the pop. Tinny and unsatisfying as if heard through a pipe. A short squeal. Then the sound of the kid's scuffing feet running.

THE BOY

(in horror)

Ahhhhh!

FADE OUT:

The intro to "Get Down Tonight" by KC and the Sunshine Band plays at full volume in the dark. As if heard through Pioneer speakers while in the back of a 1977 Ford Econoline 150 Custom van, two captain's chairs, tinted windows, running lights and shag carpet.

KC

Baby, let's get together.
Honey, just me and you.
And do the things--
Ah, do the things
That we like to do.

The sound of a 50 year old man's voice in the dark. Your narrator, THE SPY.

THE SPY (V.O.)

Shit. The kid was nuts, that's for sure. But if he needed to get to the dogs, I could have offered him a better way.

FADE TO:

TITLE: PANAMA CITY, PANAMA. XMAS, 1989.

EXT. PANAMA CITY SKIES (1989) -- 3 ARMY HELICOPTERS

KC is blaring from the PA systems of two Huey helicopters flying in loose formation with another larger Chinook. The helicopters silhouette against the dregs of a Panamanian sunset.

HUEY PA SYSTEM

Do a little dance,
 Make a little love,
 Get down tonight.
 Get down tonight.

The helicopters pass high above the city, avoiding ground fire.

HUEY PA SYSTEM (CONT'D)

Ba-by,
 I'll meet you.
 Same place, same time.

INT. HUEY #1

Here is the YOUNG VERSION OF THE SPY. Back when he was young and stupid and in the Army. He wears a military-chic headset, and bops to KC and the Sunshine Band as if he were listening in-studio during the recording. As if he were going to punch in to KC, and the band, at any moment and say what a hit the song was going to be.

A patch on the dancing shoulder of the young Spy. It says, "1st Bn, 5th Psyop Group." Closer on "PSYOP". The Spy was a member of a Psychological Operations unit during the Invasion of Panama. He is the DJ for this operation.

HUEY PA SYSTEM

Where we get--
 We get together
 And ease our mind.
 Oh...

YOUNG SPY (V.O.)

On my mark, 30 seconds to Ice Cream Truck. "Mark."

Lights from the Huey's cockpit controls paint the face of its middle-aged pilot VIRGIL.

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL (V.O.)

I don't think they can even hear us
 at this altitude. What do you think,
 Robin?

INT. HUEY #2 -- COCKPIT

We can see the other two helicopters through the wind screen. The city lights below are sparse.

HUEY #2 PILOT/ROBIN (V.O.)

Fuck if I know. I wish we had a little
 more firepower and a little less
 glitz.

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL (V.O.)
I'm with you, brother. A kinder,
gentler Army, huh? Over.

HUEY #2 PILOT/ROBIN
We are prepared to widen out a bit,
as was our plan. Can you make us out
without running lights, Virgil?

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL (V.O.)
Affirm. We're waiting for DJ Baby
Huey here to orchestrate.

The GUNNER for Huey #2 turns to his pilot and smiles.

HUEY #2 GUNNER
Aw, I'll take care of you, Captain.

EXT. PANAMA CITY SKIES -- THE CHINOOK

Flanked by the Hueys, this hulking dual rotor helicopter seems to list to the right. On its right side it carries a long narrow tube. Beside the launch tube is a half-spherical dome. The Chinook screams past. Huey #1 looms behind.

HUEY PA SYSTEM
Do a little dance,
Make a little love,
Get down tonight.
Get down tonight.

INT. HUEY #1

The young Spy holds the headphone on his right ear, like a backup singer for Al Green.

YOUNG SPY
Two second fade on my mark. 5-4-3-2-
1. "Mark."

EXT. HUEY #1 -- PA SYSTEM SPEAKERS

Below the whine of the rotors...

HUEY PA SYSTEM
Do a little dance,
Make a little love,
Get...down...to-...

KC and the Sunshine Band fades into the night.

INT. CHINOOK COCKPIT

The CHINOOK PILOT is calm. He flips a toggle switch.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
 How do we think we are doing here,
 Ray? Do you think we're ready for
 this thing?

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.)
 No, I don't. We are nowhere near
 ready to...

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
 (interrupting)
 How about you, Freddy?

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)
 Shit, whatever. Let's do this and
 get outta here.

SCOPE

A grainy black and white scope pops to life. A wide, fine
 cross sweeps the street.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 System is online and ready to go.
 Over.

INT. CHINOOK COCKPIT

The Chinook pilot flips the toggle again.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
 Alright, I was told we were going to
 hear something new today gentlemen.
 What do you got? I'll show you mine,
 if you show me yours.

YOUNG SPY (V.O.)
 2 Second fade up of "Ice Cream Truck"
 on my mark. 5-4-3...

INT. HUEY #1

YOUNG SPY (V.O.)
 ...2-1. "Mark."

EXT. HUEY #1 -- PA SYSTEM SPEAKERS -- "ICE CREAM TRUCK"

From the speakers we begin to hear something sweet, yet
 agonizing. The sound is simple and clear, as if it had
 captured the pain of memory itself.

This recording is called "Ice Cream Truck".

This tune.

INT. CHINOOK

The two weapon specialists look at each other. They aren't sure they hear what they hear.

Ray closes his eyes.

The pilot flips his internal communication toggle.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
Boys, let's look for subjects. See
any volunteers?

Toggles again.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Naw, you're all still too close.
Break out about 50 meters more and
maintain your distance.

EXT. PANAMA CITY SKIES

The three helicopters screech past. Spreading out.

HUEY #2 PILOT/ROBIN (V.O.)
Okay, you gonna unveil your little
toy you've been keeping so hush-hush?

EXT. HUEY #1 -- PA SYSTEM SPEAKERS

Playing the sweet, dreamy tune. The kind that makes men cry when they are drunk and lonely and remember how simple it was to want something when you were a kid.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
Both your Hueys are too damn close.
Get the fuck back. Pronto. You wanna
watch the show or be the show? Stay
behind us at all times, please.

INT. CHINOOK

The Chinook pilot toggles his switch again, picking up the end of what's happening in the back.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)
--those kids.

UNDERPASS

There is a small crowd of kids from the neighborhood huddled behind the round supports holding up the overpass.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
What the holy hell do they think
they're doing?

BACK TO CHINOOK

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.)
 (sarcastic)
 Yeah, don't they know there's a war
 goin' on here?

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)
 (laughing a bit)
 No shit, Ray. No shit. What is this
 music?

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
 Freddy. I need you to focus.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)
 Okay, but what are the kids doing?

INT. HUEY #1

The young Spy is calm and smirking. Proud of his work. He
 boosts a few pots on his mixing board. Just to tweak.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
 Both Hueys keep to the perimeter of
 the colonia. Avoid our port side.
 Confirm.

The young Spy gives the Chinook pilot a crisp salute.

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL (V.O.)
 Confirmed.

HUEY #2 PILOT/ROBIN (V.O.)
 Confirm--

HUEY #2 GUNNER (V.O.)
 --Takin' fire, takin' fire.

INT. CHINOOK COCKPIT

The Chinook pilot cranes his neck in search of muzzle flashes.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
 Divert to the perimeter, but do not
 return fire. Do you read me? This is
 our fire fight to start. And besides,
 this ain't shit.

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL (V.O.)
 Roger that.

HUEY #2 PILOT/ROBIN
 (to gunner)
 Relax it, Jacko.

EXT. EL CHORILLO

The sturdy Chinook hovers, confident and high, over the middle of a wide, dried grass commons. The poorest neighborhood in Panama City, this place will bear the worst of the Invasion of Panama.

INT. CHINOOK

The two weapon specialists are nearly ready.

SCOPE

One PANAMANIAN BOY has made it to the middle of the commons. His crouching MOTHER follows him at a distance. He is looking up to the PA system and the Ice Cream Truck.

CLOSER

The mother crouches. She fears the helicopters. She is waving the boy back toward a tin-roofed shack. She cowers below the underpass.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.)
(frightened)
No. Not her.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
Whatcha got, Sister Ray?

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)
We can recommend a target, Captain.
11 o'clock and headed south/southeast
from trees off shanties ahead. Confirm
weapon charge, Ray.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.)
Weapon charge confirmed. But Freddy.
Really.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)
Really, Ray. I think you're afraid
of the weapon.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.)
Captain, can you confirm target.

The pilot toggles. Speaks into his mike. As if he speaks into a terrible void. He toggles again.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
 Okay, gentlemen, we've been given
 the nod. Target confirmation. Our
 objective is before us.

CUT TO:

INT. HUEY #1

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL (V.O.)
 (to the young Spy)
 Where'd the disco go, School boy?
 What is your little thing supposed
 to do? Incite alien abduction?

The young Spy peers over the bottom of the helicopter's
 closest window.

YOUNG SPY (V.O.)
 What the hell are they doing?

UNDERPASS

More kids peer from behind the supports.

HUEY #2 PILOT/ROBIN (V.O.)
 I'm with the Captain there. Looks
 like illegal alien abduction.
 (suddenly surprised)
 Look, there must be 15 other kids
 over against the east wall.

THE COMMONS

A spotlight follows the mother. Huey #2 cuts to the east.

INT. CHINOOK

Suddenly, a SHRILL ALARM.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)
 Bitch. We're gonna have to fire this
 thing off now. No matter what. It's
 too hot.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
 Give me a countdown, Corporal Mendez.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.)
 Aye. To fire on my mark. 20-19-18-
 17...

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)
 Hang on... Okay. Here we go.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)

We need more juice from your stereo,
brainiac.

The pilot toggles his switch. He toggles another. The alarm continues to bleat.

EXT. CHINOOK

The sound of Ice Cream Truck swells to fill the spaces between the whipping rotor blades.

But now Ray's voice can be heard counting. Together with the Ice Cream Truck, the two make a sort of dark harmony.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.)

17-17-17-alright-16-15...

INT. HUEY #1

Huey #1 rotates and takes the young Spy out of visual contact with the mother. But he hears the countdown over his broadcast.

YOUNG SPY (V.O.)

(hearing the countdown)

What the fuck?

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.)

...8-7-6...

The mother looks up at the number-reading helicopter. She yells for the boy. The spotlight stays on her.

CLOSE ON YOUNG SPY

He has full view of the Chinook now.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (CONT'D)

...4-3-2-1. "Mark."

A HORRIFIC, BUILDING ROAR drowns out all other sounds.

A DEEP RED GLOW reflects in the young Spy's eyes. He can't look anywhere but at the red light. He reaches and flips his system off.

FADE OUT:

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Fuckin ay, Freddy. Fuckin' ay, finish it. Finish it! You're not gonna quit now, are you? Finish her! Finish the goddamn test!

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)

Jesus. What? What? Come back, Ray!
Jesus. Come in... [then static]

Then we hear only helicopter blades, whipping out of range.

Okay, let's take a moment. Then...

THE SPY (V.O.)

And THAT is what the Boy could have
used on the dog. If he'd just asked.
Shit, his dad's the American Consul.

TITLE: "LUCKY DOG"

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Me? I'm nobody's son. I don't have
any idea what's going on. I'm doing
no insider trading. I've no hot tips.
No safe bets. I am completely in the
dark.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL, CHIAPAS (2005) -- PARQUE -- AFTERNOON

So finally we meet THE SPY, now a youngish middle-aged man
with a bit of grey showing in his poorly cut blond hair. He
wears green-lensed Ray Ban aviators and two days worth of
stubble. He is thin, rangy, hollow.

THE SPY (V.O.)

And that's where I like it. Yes.
That's where I like it. I'm just a
good soldier. I do my best to be all
I can be.

The Spy sees a pretty, YOUNG MEXICAN WOMAN (23) crossing to
an empty park bench, beneath a shade tree. She puts her purse
down next to her and begins to read a paperback.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Uhhh.

The Spy's eyes blink a few times, nervously. Then focus steady
on the woman.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

A soldier.

The woman greets her OLDER BOYFRIEND (42) as he arrives at
the bench. The man has come from his work. Strictly Mexican
bureaucratic chic: cell phone and black shoes. He notices
and comments on her novel. They kiss politely. A dog passes.
Sniffs.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

Nose clean.

As the Spy watches carefully, the older boyfriend pulls his girlfriend's neck toward him. And her waist. They kiss, as if they are about to *begin the beguine*. (Birds do it, bees do it, etc...)

The Spy's face registers nothing. Blank. Just recording.

FADE TO:

EXT. HOTEL SANTO TOMÁS -- AFTERNOON

The Spy walks into low rent office space in an overgrown, overrun blue and white colonial building. He noiselessly bounds up the stairs out of the cool, damp, dark courtyard.

As he reaches a door on the second floor he begins to hear a voice. A woman's voice.

LULÚ (O.S.)

Atención.

Uno, nueve, uno. Uno, nueve, uno.

Uno, dos. Uno, dos.

There is a pause and a strange tune.

It is Ice Cream Truck, but simplified. It plays a snippet and repeats. Slowly and awkwardly. The Spy cringes.

LULÚ (CONT'D)

(to herself, loudly)

Coño! Pinche maquina.

(gathering herself)

Atención.

Seis, seis, siete. Seis, seis, siete.

Uno, nueve. Uno, nueve.

The Spy passes and enters a door around the corner.

INT. LA OFICINA -- THE SPY'S DESK

A good-sized closet with a swivel chair, a half-desk, a two way mirrored portal, and a rack of thin electronic equipment. He sits at the desk so that he can shut the door. Oh-so-quietly.

Through the portal he can see the Numbers Woman, LULÚ, in the recording room. She is inaudible, until he puts on a WWII-like headset with microphone.

LULÚ

Tres, tres, ocho. Tres, tres, ocho.

Dos, uno. Dos, uno.

WATER VENDOR

AAAAAAAAAAAAAgua! AAAAAAAAAAAAAAgua!

THE SPY (V.O.)

You can get that one, right? Here vendors have to call right through the thick walls of the old Spanish colonial homes.

EXT. PARQUE BUS STOP

The park is lively in the crisp morning. Beneath a distant row of trees Lulú hurries toward a bus stop. She looks like she's headed to a job interview. Struggling heels, wet hair, and a clinging black skirt.

THE SPY (V.O.)

She really was beginning to get it. I mean I'm not sure how hard it is to read a few numbers and play a little tune, but some people...

EXT. PARQUE

The Spy is watching from a park bench. Still behind his green lenses. His hair seems pressed against his head on one side. He runs a few fingers through it.

THE SPY (V.O.)

Some people doubt themselves. If only she knew...

A Mexican teenage boy walks past the Spy with perfectly gelled hair. Rushing for his bus.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Like I said, I don't even know. And I don't want to. I just manage the little operation.

A couple of street dogs arc around the benches, necks lowering their heads to catch the early morning smells. One stops. Sniffs. Moves on.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And I guess I could imagine what these messages might say. But I don't.

The bigger of the two peeks at the Spy from around a low wall.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I call it "smoke". Though those Apache signalmen probably knew what their semaphores meant.

A group of buses leave the side of the park. Another vendor calls out. Exhaust hangs in the air. Swirling.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I like it because smoke eventually
 blows away without a trace. Me? I
 get the list of numbers. In the mail.
 Out in the open. We put on our little
 show. Riveting stuff.

The bigger dog approaches and slowly leans toward the Spy. The Spy gives him a gentle pat to his head and ruffles his collar.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Throw in a bit of music for the music
 lovers. The thing goes out over the
 shortwave to I don't know who for
 I don't know why telling them
 I don't know what. And that's the beauty
 of smoke.

The dog looks up at the Spy and smells his breath.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I don't know what my messages say
 because I don't have the *one-time-*
pad they use to decipher them. Each
 message has its own code--and it's
 used only once.

He slaps the dog's rear and sends him on his way.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Complete compartmentalization. Oh,
 didn't I say "sending messages 'to
 agents'"? "To agents in the field"?
 On their own as far as I...

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- MORNING

THE SPY (V.O.)
 (continuing)
 ...As far as I can tell.

The Spy walks in the shade down a narrow colonial street. On the street, a few burros, bicycle carts, automobiles. On the sides, the cochineal red head scarves, a grey and white rebozo, the purple and yellow and orange striped dress of a distant pueblo. A black stocking cap with a faded red star. The city is alive.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Come to think of it, there was
 probably a transmission or two for
 what I was told to do in Panama back
 in 1989. But to whom?

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- CORNER -- CONTINUOUS

The Spy takes a small poster out of his pack and tacks it onto blue and red masks and inflated chests: a thick pile of Lucha Libre posters curling up from the sun.

THE SPY (V.O.)

(continuing)

See, once again, that's the beauty of smoke.

His poster is a want ad for an "assistant".

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

"Wanted: Office Assistant. Must be good-looking, wear high heels, make coffee."

The sign doesn't say this. But, it, too, doesn't reveal anything about the nature of the position. When the time comes, neither will the Spy.

He turns the corner and walks further down the street.

EXT. HOTEL SANTO TOMÁS

The Spy pushes his way into the screeching gates of his office. The former luxury hotel, Hotel Santo Tomás. Now a botanical garden for the weeds of southern Mexico.

THE SPY (V.O.)

They began using shortwave for numbers transmissions back in the 70s...

(figuring)

Before the end of Vietnam? Messages to Cambodia?

(back on track)

They had used shortwave before, but not with a one-time-pad. And together, you have the most unbreakable message transmission system on Earth. That's what they told us in Psyop Training anyway.

He walks up the stairs to the second floor oficina. The only working offices in the courtyard.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

To be an agent or a spy? It's simple. You have to be able to keep a secret.

He opens the door to the recording room. Lulú's former room.

INT. RECORDING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

THE SPY (V.O.)

(continuing)

Do you know how hard it is to keep a secret? To keep a secret when it begs to be told?

He begins to clean up after Lulú. Trash bag. Sidral soda bottle with straw. Her book.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Do you know how lonely it is to keep a secret?

He picks a long, dark hair off the desk. Puts it into the bag slowly.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You can tell me. I don't know who you are, or where you are, or why you need to know.

He unplugs the headset and winds the cable into a neat coil.

EXT. OUTSIDE OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

The Spy vigorously sweeps the dust from the recording room onto the walkway.

THE SPY (V.O.)

(continuing)

It's another achievement of Cold War ingenuity. These numbers broadcasts. The Sov--the Russians, the Cubans, the Eastern Bloc: former Yugoslavs, former Czecholovacs, former Polacs-- just kidding, former East Germans, these places are still pumping out messages. How many are real?

He looks down over the railing into the unreclaimed courtyard below.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

How many are just noise? And how much traffic can fit within a normal number of transmissions without visibly increasing traffic?

He sweeps the office detritus over the side. The dust swirls in the orange light like a twisting animated bear.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Of course NATO still uses numbers, smoke.

(MORE)

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And the company still uses smoke.
 Probably more than anyone. The
 company. You like that? *The Company*?

INT. LA OFICINA -- CONTINUOUS

Inside his office the Spy begins to organize himself for another "show". Cables shifting. Keyboard in place. Levels change.

THE SPY (V.O.)
 The company uses it because it's
 cheap. And unbreakable. Why would it
 need anything else? When the best
 solution costs nothing?

He pulls a slip of paper from his pants pocket. Flattens it out on the desktop. Numbers sets.

He plugs in a keypad. And finally, he moves the microphone up and away.

There it is: Ice Cream Truck. He plays it unconsciously on the keyboard. He pushes a button on the top of the keyboard.

Each number sounds clipped, taken from a recording of Lulú's voice.

LULÚ (V.O.)
 Atención.
 Uno. Tres. Tres. Uno. Tres. Tres.
 Nueve. Nueve. Nueve. Nueve.

For each of the numbers Lulú speaks, the Spy is pushing a number on the keypad in front of him. Tracking the numbers from the paper list, ticking them off with a small pencil.

LULÚ (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Cuatro. Nueve. Cinco.
 Cuatro. Nueve. Cinco.
 Dos. Uno. Dos. Uno.

Pushing numbers on the keypad.

LULÚ (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Cinco. Seis. Siete.
 Cinco. Seis. Siete.
 Ocho. Ocho. Ocho. Ocho.

EXT. PARQUE -- AFTERNOON

A young couple sits on a park bench. The young woman leans her head onto the man's lap. She stretches her feet the length of the bench.

LULÚ (V.O.)
 Seis. Seis. Ocho.
 Seis. Seis. Ocho.
 Dos. Uno. Dos. Uno.

They haven't come up for air in some time. Lips sealing to lips like plumbing.

LULÚ (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Atención.
 Nueve. Ocho. Cinco. Nueve. Ocho.
 Cinco. Cinco. Dos. Cinco. Dos.

The Spy is sitting across from the couple. Under a tree. In the shade. Just looking.

Closer on the young woman. Her eyes open. Looking into his.

LULÚ (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Seis. Siete. Seis. Cuatro. Dos.
 Seis. Siete. Seis. Cuatro. Dos.

Her neck arches, her chin tilts upward.

And finally-- Ice Cream Truck. The simple tune that denotes the end of the transmission.

The Spy stares through his green lenses. Blinking back memory.

Ice Cream Truck plays over and over again. Slowly and simply.

The couple have finished their kiss. The young woman twists her head to hear what the man is saying to her. Her shirt tails have been creeping up. She pulls them back down and scrunches her nose at the Spy.

The Spy continues to stare, lost behind the green. Compartmentalized even from himself.

Ice Cream Truck wafts into the trees. In his head.

FADE TO:

EL ORBE HEADLINE: [EZLN: PRACTICALLY A THING OF THE PAST]

PHOTO: SUBCOMANDANTE INSURGENTE MACROS, SMOKING PIPE FROM BEHIND HIS BLACK SKI MASK.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL SQUARE -- MORNING -- SHOESHINE STAND

There is a man sitting at the shoeshine stand. Behind the newspaper. Under the shade. His face is behind the newspaper.

He likes his shoes to be clean. Just like his father did. His mother told him this.

He sits under blue and white stripes, keeping his head in the shade. He sits on a red sparkle seat. The man who shines his shoes works hard. As he shines the shoes, he tries to see just what is wrong with this man's face.

EXT. HOT CART -- A BIT LATER

There is a wide cart with food in it. A bicycle cart, just like home. The pots are full and steaming. The cart is orange. The food smells good. The guy wants to look at the man's face, too. He does not want to get caught doing it. The guy smiles.

HIS SHOES GLISTEN

Shiny black shoes. These belong to the man. They have belonged to him for a long time. He doesn't know who wore them before. They have gotten him to San Cristóbal. And now they are clean and polished. And he is wearing his black pants. Creased.

THE MAN'S HEAD

The man orders by pointing and saying

THE MAN
Este. Este. Este. Este.

The back of his head looks normal enough. But the guy facing him looks scared. His eyes move around a lot. Away from the man's face.

HOT CART GUY
Uno taco de carnitas, una empanada
de papas con chorizo, una gordita de
res, una de pollo con salsa verde.
Algo mas? Para tomar?

THE MAN
Una coca.

HOT CART GUY
¡Como no!

The straw bubbles in the coke bottle.

THE MAN'S FACE

The man's lips suck hard on the straw. His face does not look good. The man has been in a bad accident. His face has burns on it. His hair starts high up on his forehead. His nose is different. Probably because of the burnings. The man is 30 years old. He looks nice in his suit. It is black. It fits loose. There are earphones in his ears.

He thinks he will eat right there. The man eats fast. Like he is very hungry and hasn't eaten for a long time. He won't waste any of his food. He licks it off of his hands.

HOT CART GUY (CONT'D)

Servilleta?

The guy hands him a napkin.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FORWARD OPERATING BASE, PANAMA (1989) -- LATE AFTERNOON --
HELICOPTER HANGAR

The Chinook C-47 rests on its gear in a hangar in the heat. A grey Hum-Vee is parked in front of the hangar door. The lights are blazing inside the hangar. A HELICOPTER MECHANIC pulls a hand truck past the Hum-Vee and toward the Chinook. Follow him inside past ANOTHER MECHANIC.

ANOTHER MECHANIC

(inside hangar)

Do you know that we are waiting for your part of this assembly? When is this mission--

You've seen Freddy before.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY

Let him bring it. Just get it right. We leave in an hour.

It is not easy to see what they are working on.

ANOTHER MECHANIC

Great. Just drop it on 'em. That's what it'll be ready for in an hour.

The Chinook pilot tips up his cap, looks up from his chair to the worrying mechanic.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHINOOK COCKPIT -- EVENING

The Chinook pilot has the engines warming up. Behind him, the weapons specialists and the mechanics bicker. He is set to go.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)

Yes, sir. It's strapped on. Let's see if it stays on.

(toggles and turns)

Wrap it up clowns. I don't give a fuck if that thing makes it home or not. Hey "Clem", I am ordering you to clear out of my cabin now!

The mechanic is worn out. He is finished, as finished as he can be. He picks up his tools from the floor of the helicopter. And leaves.

The Chinook weapons team keeps working.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 (toggles, calm)
 Okay friends, are we ready for this
 one?

Seen through the windscreen of the Chinook the young Spy wheels his equipment to the waiting door of his Huey. The PA speakers are permanently attached to the underside of the helicopter.

The Chinook whines under its payload. Its new weapon.

INT. HUEY #1 -- LATER

The young Spy is still putting things together behind the cockpit.

YOUNG SPY
 We've got--

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL (V.O.)
 You've got about twelve clicks.

The Huey's engine is warming.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
 (to mechanic)
 ...So what am I supposed to do, fly
 it dipping to the right like this?
 If you'd get your ass out of your
 head and think about flying--you're
 a *helicopter* mechanic, is that right
 Sergeant?

HUEY #2 PILOT/ROBIN (V.O.)
 Both Hueys ready to dust it.

YOUNG SPY (V.O.)
 (to his pilot)
 I just need two clicks. Maybe none
 if it keeps up like this.

HUEY #2 GUNNER (V.O.)
 (softly)
 I just need two chicks. Over.

INT. CHINOOK COCKPIT -- NIGHT -- NEARING EL CHORILLO

There are little metal pings behind the pilot's seat.

HUEY PA SYSTEM
 Do a little dance,
 Make a little love,
 Get down tonight.
 Get down tonight.

The pilot looks for flashes out his window.

CHINOOK PILOT

(calmly)

Taking a couple of hits here. Small arms. Don't want to open up the rear gun if we don't have to. Anyone?

(pause)

You two ready to put a quarter in the jukebox?

INT. HUEY #2

Pointing his machine gun out the Huey's door, the gunner opens up and lights up.

HUEY #2 GUNNER

Shiiiiiiiiiiiit. Near that rooftop unit.

HUEY PA SYSTEM

Ba-by,
I'll meet you.
Same place, same time...

The machine gun chugs.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL, CHIAPAS (2005) -- PARQUE -- AFTERNOON

The man with the black suit sits on a park bench. He is listening. In his earphones. There is something in his hand.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET

The suit is stiff when he walks. He puts something in his jacket pocket. He keeps his hand on it.

His earphones. They let him hear.

Birds do not sound like birds. People do not sound like people. He thinks it all sounds like water. He hears the water.

EXT. CAFÉ LA FE -- BUILDING IN BAD SHAPE

An old building is falling down. Its door is made of sheet metal. The man looks through its walls.

It is easy to hear the water. The man passes the SLOPPY MAN from el Patroncito's photo. The sloppy man is moving. The sloppy man turns to speak. And screeches like water.

THE CLICKER

In the man's hand. A small thing that counts. It counts things. It counts backwards. When the man gets to zero, he is finished.

THE SLOPPY MAN

Speaking to the man who counts. The water roars.

SLOPPY MAN

I wonder if you could tell me...

THE CLICKER

The thing that counts counts the sloppy man. The sloppy man is seventeen. The Clicker clicks from '018' to '017'.

"EL CLIQUERO: THE MAN WHO COUNTS WITH THE CLICKER"

The man, EL CLIQUERO, counts the sloppy man. He is close to the metal door. He looks at the sloppy man and blinks.

SLOPPY MAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Hablo ahh? Pro--

El Cliquero pushes the sloppy man into the metal door. The metal door opens. The sloppy man lands inside. He is inside Café La Fe. There are lots of weeds in there. And broken glass. And metal. And ants. Plenty of dirt.

The sloppy man tries to touch el Cliquero. He is scared. He tries to push him away. There is a lot of water. It sounds like water.

THE HEARING AID

The sloppy man touches el Cliquero's stomach. He pulls the earphones out of the old hearing aid. He doesn't mean to. But he is frightened.

Now the water is gone. The screeching is gone.

EL CLIQUERO

El Cliquero, the man who eats like he hasn't had food in a long time, pushes the sloppy man down into the dirt. He pushes the man's hands down. He can't hear what the man says.

He holds the man by his neck. The man is hurting.

He is so far from the water.

EXT. CAFE LA FÉ -- BUILDING IN BAD SHAPE

There is a small pop. There is a flash of light inside the metal door. El Cliquero opens the door and walks away.

The sloppy man doesn't come with him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL SQUARE -- LATE AFTERNOON -- SHOESHINE STAND

El Cliquero is sitting at the shoeshine stand. Behind the newspaper. Under the shade. His face is behind the newspaper.

He likes his shoes to be clean. Just like his father did. His mother told him about his father.

The man who shines his shoes works hard.

HARD WORKER

[At which slaughterhouse do you work?]

The man smiles at el Cliquero. He works hard to clean the shoes.

Soapy blood runs off the shoes. The square is dirty, too. It doesn't matter.

El Cliquero reads a newspaper.

EL ORBE HEADLINE: [FOX: MARCOS IS A CANCER IN REMISSION]

FADE TO:

INT. ELECTRIC UTILITY VAN -- MORNING -- THE SPY'S OTHER JOB

The Spy drives with his elbow hanging out the window of an old Mexican van. The cool air smells like the trees. Cars pass and the headlights shine through the cracked windshield. The Spy wears worn tan coveralls and cap. "Electricidad para el Progreso Mexicano"

THE VAN

As it moves through the city, the van carries aluminum poles and coils of cable. It has a sign: *Alumbrado Público*, Public Wiring.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARQUE -- AFTERNOON

The Spy sits on a bench in the shade. The coveralls gone. His black t-shirt says: ["Looking for a Girlfriend with Car"]. The line from his cap still shows in his hair. He patiently watches.

WOMAN WITH HEELS

A SHORT WOMAN walks with a heavy, wrapped pack on her head. The calf muscles in her legs.

She wears shining black strapped high heels.

A bony dog slinks behind her, watching the pack. Suddenly the dog shrieks. And the sound of a rock bouncing on the pavement. The dog curls itself and walks with a catch below its ribs. Limping.

A MUTE BOY runs up to the short woman, pointing back to the dog and holding out his hand. She pats his head and keeps moving.

THE CURB

A glossy red 1968 Chevy Chevelle stops near the park. The driver seems tired. Its pipes reverberate. Its back end is still in traffic. A bus honks its horn. The driver closes his eyes and leans his head on the steering wheel.

SPYING

Craning, the Spy watches the car.

THE CURB

The driver looks into the park as an economy-sized police car pulls up behind his Chevelle. It puts its lights on and honks the universal heavy police honk.

FROM THE FRONT

The driver looks up into his mirror and shifts in one clean movement. The Chevelle squeals its worn rear tires and lurches forward into traffic. To cover himself, the driver thrusts his hand out his window--to wave at the police car. More honking from the traffic behind him.

THE BENCH

The Spy follows the Chevelle down the street with his eyes.

LULÚ (V.O.)

(clipped)

Uno. Seis. Cinco. Uno. Seis. Cinco.

Dos. Nueve. Dos. Nueve.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE CONSULATE -- THE BOY'S ROOM -- AFTERNOON

A different simple tune. Flat and tinny in the darkened room. Through the Boy's headphones. The Boy is at his desk.

NUMBERS VOICE

Six, one, one, three, nine.

Six, one, one, three, nine.

He is trying to tune the SW radio. The English-speaking numbers voice passes, fading out.

THE NOTE, THE LCD TUNER

A SW radio frequency written hastily on a note. The LCD numbers of the SW radio pause and flit past the target frequency. He just can't get it.

SW RADIO

The Boy bends the antenna to find the frequency. Still can't. Wait, there is Ice Cream Truck. The digits show the frequency: 6900. For just a moment. And then it's gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- EARLY MORNING -- CONVERTIBLE

The Boy sits quietly in the passenger seat of a 1992 Chrysler LeBaron convertible. Red. He has been waiting a long time. He is tired. For whom is he waiting?

He rubs his eyes. Just a wall. Sheet metal wall.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE BOY AND HIS BAG OF JUICE

The Boy is wandering back to the car with a bag of juice. The sun blares, even at this hour. The juice glows orange. The Boy makes it back to the car. Still no one.

THE CAR RADIO

The Boy turns on the radio. Reverb announcer and brass band. The car door is still open.

SHEET METAL WALL

The Boy gets out to look between the gaps in the sheet metal. Into the weeds behind the wall. There are paths and lean-tos. A thin column of smoke rises. Someone's breakfast.

He sees a man behind the wall. Deep in the weeds. The man is Mexican. Suit. Curly hair. Mustache. The Boy begins to call out to the man, his Uncle Arsenio, but hesitates.

Because he sees another man. A menacing man with a terribly burnt face. His uncle talks with el Cliquero.

THE RED LEBARON

The Boy gets back into the car quickly. Clicks off the radio.

GAP IN THE WALL

His uncle climbs through the wall. A piece of it snags his pants and pulls one leg up over the top of his thin socks. A small rip.

THE RED LEBARON

Through a long straw the Boy slurps the last of his juice from the bag. His uncle looks in from the driver's side window.

UNCLE ARSENIO
Sobrino, did you get me one?

The Boy slurps, but he doesn't respond.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)
A juice? None left, huh? You probably
wouldn't share anyway, huh?

Arsenio swings into the driver's seat.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)
You don't mind if we give someone
else a ride, do you?

Aghast, the Boy looks back over his shoulder quickly. Looking for the strange man from behind the wall.

But there's no one there. Arsenio laughs as the car pulls away from the curb.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)
¡Un aventón!

EXT. THE CONSULATE -- LATER -- GATES

The consulate compound gates swing open to let the red LeBaron pass.

INT. THE CONSULATE KITCHEN

Arsenio and the Boy walk into the kitchen. The Boy's father, MR. ELSWORTH, CONSUL GENERAL is here. He is 55, grey military haircut, trim. Alabama accent.

ELSWORTH
If it isn't "Our Men in San
Cristóbal." Did you have a good..?
Bye...

The Boy walks past Elsworth and toward the stairs.

UNCLE ARSENIO
He wouldn't eat anything.

THE STAIRS

The Boy walks up the stairs with his backpack.

ELSWORTH (O.S.)

(to uncle)

Do you have any idea? It's no different here.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE CONSULATE ROOF -- NIGHT

The Boy steps through his window onto a ledge. He carries a long coil of wire. Antenna wire.

INT. THE BOY'S ROOM

He steps back through the window and into his room. Running the wire from the window to his desk. He wraps it around a screw on the wall. Then he connects the antenna to his radio.

THE SHORT WAVE RADIO

Flipping it on, the Boy settles into his seat. Overall, the signal is much more pronounced, clear. Still nothing is broadcasting from 6900.

THE FLOOR

The Boy lies on the floor of his room. Exhausted.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- NIGHT

A dog cries out for companionship in the distance. There is a half-moon low in the sky. A howl, closer. Footsteps in the dark.

THE BACKPACK

It gently thump-slaps the Boy's back. He lopes, in a crouch, toward a dry grassy knoll.

EXT. THE GRASSY KNOLL

The Boy is still in his school uniform. He is covered with dust and dry grass. He falls to one knee and opens his pack.

DOGS LOOK SMALL IN THE DISTANCE

They swirl around in the midst of courting each other. Snarls and yips. Fish in a barrel.

WALL NEAR THE KNOLL

A decaying wall follows the street that runs by the knoll. Street lamps make circles on the black street.

A dog trots down the sidewalk.

THE BOY

The dog on the sidewalk startles the Boy. He moves to the edge of the wall, past the entrance to the knoll.

THE DOG

It is a dog from a house. You can tell from its eyes. And its collar. A medium sized dog, a mutt with light brown fur and dark, expressive eyebrows. Now the expression is trepidation.

THE WALL

The Boy gives a greeting with his eyes. Overstating. The dog is wary. It begins to back up. The Boy offers meat. The dog is frightened, but can smell the meat. It crouches. Unsure. The Boy flings the meat gently in front of the dog. The dog wants to snarl, to protect the meat. But it can't.

THE DOG'S FACE

It looks down to the meat.

From the Boy there comes a whistle. It is the Ice Cream Truck tune. A wisp of the tune. Like the wind.

The dog looks up to the Boy.

THE BOY'S GUN

He pulls the pistol from the backpack. Aligns it to his eye slowly as he whistles. His eyes are wide. Blinking, he pulls the trigger.

There is a blinding sphere of light.

FADE TO:

EXT. HOT CART -- LATE AFTERNOON

El Cliquero eats at the cart again. He stands by the cart. He stares at the people who wait for food. And he eats. He hears water.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL SQUARE -- LATER -- EL CLIQUERO

He is walking. Hand in his pocket. Walking is slow. The water is crashing.

THE TREES

He looks into the tops of trees. Broken balloons and kite string hanging down.

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT: PHOTO OF AN AMERICAN MAN WITH A CANE AND STRAW HAT. STRIPED SUIT.

CAMBIO

There is a money-changing place. El Cliquero walks to it. A man in tan shorts looks at him.

EXTRAÑERO #1

...Ho-la...

And then passes.

The water is in his head.

THE CLICKER

The counter stays on '013'.

CUT TO:

INT. SAN CRISTÓBAL BUS -- LATER

El Cliquero rides an old bus. He is standing. A gringa woman walks by him and sits.

THE CLICKER

The counter stays on '013'.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- LATER

A poor Mexican man bumps into el Cliquero. He looks at the horrible face.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL BUSINESS OFFICES -- LATER

Three men walking. One is gringo, one is Japanese. One is Mexican rich man. The rich man wears a baseball hat and a suit. No cane.

He is part of the neo-liberalist destruction of the world.

THE CLICKER

The counter stays on '013'. His sister was thirteen when she left home.

THE RICH MAN'S FACE

Slowly moves past el Cliquero. Laughing.

But el Cliquero hears only water. And a hacking echo.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARQUE -- EVENING

The Spy sits in his van, watching the evening shadows creep across the park. He sees the hot cart, but no one is buying. The hot cart guy is reading a newspaper and smoking.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- NIGHT

The Spy is walking toward Hotel Santo Tomás. The shadows have taken over. Cars blur past. One car lights up the other side of the street. There is a skulking little boy in his school uniform. With a heavy backpack.

Smoothly, the Spy shifts to the Boy's side of the street, but keeps a good minimum distance. The Boy slouches forward as he walks. Deep within himself.

The Boy turns down the next street.

NEXT STREET

It's late and odd to see a young school boy out walking. But no one notices.

It's the bag that seems to attract the Spy's attention. The bulging bag thumping against his back. The Boy hunched forward.

At the corner, he disappears.

CORNER

The Spy makes it to the corner and watches.

The Boy walks toward a dead end. The houses here are half-finished. Rebar extends into the night sky. Swaying.

THE BOY

In disjointed moments, the Boy is flipping meat to a dog.

The Boy is fumbling for a zipper behind his back.

He is moving slowly, watching the dog's eyes.

Raising the pistol.

Too fast. Sickening.

THE SPY

At first cannot believe his eyes. He's just watching. Recording. Then he becomes nervous. Frustrated. Afraid that the Boy is going to--to what? He's afraid to speak, to stop it. To start it.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- CONTINUOUS

In the distance, like miniatures, the Boy raises the pistol in his hand and shoots the dog. The dog slams into a wall beside the street. But it bounces. Part of its muzzle is gone and it tries to shake. Whatever it is that's causing this feeling. To shake it off.

It ends up sitting drunkenly. Its bloody neck twitching. Up. Up. Up. Twitching up.

THE SPY (O.S.)
(to himself)
Oh-god-no.

Until the Boy shoots it again.

CUT TO:

EXT. PANAMA CITY SKIES (1989) -- NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

From below, a helicopter blade cuts through the night, reflecting the people scattering in all directions. Ice Cream Truck filters through in slow motion audio.

INT. CHINOOK COCKPIT

Radio static rises from the droning Ice Cream Truck. The Chinook pilot speaks into his headset.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)
(softly into radio)
--That's what I told him. Yes. We're there, yeah. Okay, you aren't going to get the confirmation, are you?

WEAPON SPECIALIST/RAY (V.O.)
Captain? This is it. We're set to go within a 2 click radius. Over.

EXT. EL CHORILLO -- THE UNDERPASS

A boy has shot out from the underpass and has run to a deserted street corner.

THE MOTHER

His mother approaches him like a street dog approaches meat. She sees the helicopter coming to them and she frantically waves her hands to get the boy to return to her within the safety of the underpass.

HER FACE

Her beautiful face, long eyelashes checking upward, timing the oncoming helicopter and her chances for getting him and for getting back.

She screams.

MOTHER

Virgilio! Ven acá! Vengaaaaaaa!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREETS -- NIGHT

Wake up. El Cliquero tells himself that he must wake up. Finish the job.

El Cliquero walks in the night. One piece altogether. He is ready. Hand in pocket.

Car coming from behind. Parking ahead.

THIS IS NUMBER TWELVE

A DRUNKEN GRINGO in lights. Stumbling. Near corner. With his cane. Striped suit.

DRUNKEN GRINGO

Ooh baby...

PARKING CAR

Man and woman in car. Yelling. Door opens. Ruining the chance. Woman on street. Yells.

STREET LIGHTS

Keep still. El Cliquero stops walking. Just past the circle of light. In the dark. Near wall.

The drunken gringo is moving past the car. He looks back. Wants to sit.

THE CAR NEAR THE CURB

The woman slaps at her man's face. Another. The drunk sees her.

DRUNKEN GRINGO (CONT'D)

Noooo. No, please don't do that...

She stops.

Another. Another. Like his mother.

THE DARK

His target walks, twisting back. Looking to the car.

DRUNKEN GRINGO (CONT'D)

Noo. That hurts a man.

THE CLICKER

012.

THE WALL

Black suit. Arm sweeps drunk to wall. To iron bars. A gate. Sloppy. Small pop lights up el Cliquero and drunk's face. Mouth open. Now believing.

The drunk's shirt burns. He lies on sidewalk.

Car alarms. A cane.

THE CAR NEAR THE CURB

The woman yelling. Stopped. No slaps. Yelling to the drunk. Angry. Stupid.

CUT TO:

EL ORBE HEADLINE: [ACCEPTING FOX'S CHALLENGE?]

PHOTO: THE DRUNKEN GRINGO'S BURNT AND BLOODY SHIRT.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAFETERÍA EL AMARILLO -- NIGHT -- EL PATRONCITO

A different night. El Patroncito is sitting at his usual table. Saucer and silver arranged in their rigid grid.

He stares straight ahead.

EL PATRONCITO

[You know Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos. Of this I am sure. You know who he is. Have I ever told you my theory about Monsieur Marcos?]

Smoke leaks from his nostrils as he drags his cigarette.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[My theory is that he is a little desperate. He is a little bit afraid.

(MORE)

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

He feels that he has been writing too many books and playing too many football games and screwing too many women. He feels that his revolution is going to be crushed because he isn't a rebel. He doesn't know how to fight. He only knows how to talk. As a man, this is my theory.]

Drinks coffee. Dries moustache.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[I have tried for months to figure out why he wants you to do these things. --Oh yes. It is Subcom Marcos himself who asks me to talk with you. But why? Why at all would this intellectual turn to the sort of violence that you can unleash? Perhaps he thinks that books are not working. But I think he is terribly desperate.]

He looks up, checking.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[You see, this is why you are so important. This is why you must never be caught. Because with your imprisonment, and torture, no doubt, you put the entire movement at risk.]

Pulls a long wallet out of his jacket. A photo.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[Here is your next. You have only two days. Two times the pay.]

He slides eight crisp 50 Peso notes across the table.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAFETERÍA EL AMARILLO -- LATER

El Cliquero walks out of the shadows. Leaving the cafeteria. Still hungry.

FADE TO:

EXT. AN UNIMPORTANT CHIAPAS STATE GOV'T BLDG -- MORNING

A lifeless, stuccoed white office low-rise is beginning to buzz with human activity. Like parking. Cellphones and newspapers. Light weight suits.

INT. GOV'T BLDG -- AN UNIMPORTANT FLOOR -- CONTINUOUS

Up a few flights of stairs, there is a floor with a front desk, a water cooler, a hallway of offices for the up-and-coming and a main room with desks for the rest.

A young PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1 waits in a chair by the front desk. She is admirably early for her appointment.

The FRONT DESK SECRETARY returns to her desk from the hallway.

FRONT DESK SECRETARY

[He's ready for you now. Please follow me.]

The secretary waves the young woman and her new Chinese briefcase down past the water cooler to the hallway of importance.

They stop in front of a door on the hall. Not the last door. The secretary knocks and peeks in.

FRONT DESK SECRETARY (CONT'D)

[Señor Eduardo, your first interview is here.]

INT. EDUARDO'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

This is a phony Mexican bureaucratic office. It's got to be. No stacks of papers. A nice assortment of legal books on the shelves. A large telephone with options. The shades drawn to keep out the morning sun. And EDUARDO MONTEALBAN, mid 40s executive director of *something* with neatly gelled hair, greying temples and glasses without frames around his lenses.

He welcomes the young woman. *Half-Fred Astaire, half-latin lover*. All professional. Sweeping his hand toward a seat.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN

[My d-d-dear, welcome. My name is Eduardo Montecalban.]

They shake hands. Gently.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1

[Delighted to meet you, Señor Montecalban--I call myself Adara.]

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN

[Is all well, can I get you something?]

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1

[It's very kind of you. Won't you have something?]

Eduardo gently waves an index finger for his secretary. She can go.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN

[C-c-cariño, I'm sorry to say that we don't have a long time for this interview. I have another meeting in a few minutes.]

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1

[I am sure you are a busy--]

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN

[I haven't had a chance to l-look at your resume, but I am convinced that it is very good. Since you have applied for the position, you must know the tiresome details, I won't bore you with any of that. Suffice it to say that we are looking for a very professional individual. V-very professional indeed.]

During the entire speech, Eduardo is staring directly into the woman's eyes.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN (CONT'D)

[Of course you have previous office experience, I am sure. And you live in San Cristóbal de las Casas...

(slight pause)

Of course. And let's see, you are not married. I am assuming, since you are not wearing a ring. Please stop me if I am on the w-w-wrong track, okay?]

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1

[Of course, señ--]

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN

[One thing we will make sure of, and we are quite firm on this m-m-my dear, is that you have a strong telephone voice. Very soft and smooth.]

The woman freezes. What the hell is this?

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1

[Este... I can assure you--]

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN

[Oh, ss-s-sweetheart, you are doing just great. Here's what I'd like for you to do.

(MORE)

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN (CONT'D)
 I'd like to hear your voice. Let's
 see, there must be something around
 here, es-es-este--]

He fumbles around his neat desk. Of course--

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN (CONT'D)
 [Cariño, please read this set of
 numbers for me. Just something random.
 But it will give me a sense of your
 voice. How is that?]

He hands her a scrap of paper.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1
 [Just read it?]

Eduardo nods.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1 (CONT'D)
 [Por su puesto. Este. "Uno, uno,
 nueve. Uno, uno, nueve. Dos, cinco.
 Dos, cinco...]

Eduardo indicates she should continue.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1 (CONT'D)
 Cinco, tres, nueve. Cinco, tres,
 nueve. Uno, cuarto. Uno, cuarto. [--
 They repeat, no?]

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN
 [Perfect. Lovely. Absolutely, you
 have a strong telephone voice.]

Eduardo is leaning back in his chair. Hands folded behind
 his head.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN (CONT'D)
 [Enough about the job, m-m-my love,
 tell me something about yourself.]

He is ready to hang on her words. To take notes if necessary.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1
 [Pues, I have a degree in
 communications from Benito Juarez.
 (warming up)
 My goals are to continue on to work
 in television--]

He brings his hands back to his lap and checks his watch.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN

[Oh, forgive m-me, darling, I, as I told you before, I have a meeting and now I am quite late. I am sure we will be contacting you very soon.]

They rise together and head out through his door into the hall.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN (CONT'D)

[Please, follow me, I'll show you out. This way.]

INT. EMPTY OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

There is a man in a medium blue suit waiting in an empty office. He is two feet from the door. He checks his watch.

The man waiting in the medium blue suit, too, has greying hair. With a bit of blond.

His hand reaches for the knob. Waits. Still looking at his watch.

The man opens the door and walks to the right down the hallway and toward the water cooler.

INT. HALLWAY

Eduardo and the young woman converge on the water cooler just as the man in the medium blue suit arrives.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN

[Look who's here. Pepe. This is M-miss...]

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #1

[Adara Morales Gutierrez. Mucho gusto.]

She reaches to shake the hand of the man in the medium blue suit. The Spy.

THE SPY

[José Kata-Petal. Encantado de conocerla señorita. Adios.]

FADE TO:

INSERT CLOCK (0900 HOURS)

INT. HALLWAY -- LATER

The secretary stops in front of Eduardo's office door. Not the last door. The secretary knocks and peeks in.

FRONT DESK SECRETARY
 [Señor Eduardo, your next interview
 is here.]

INT. EDUARDO'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

He welcomes the young woman: all professional. Sweeping his
 hand toward a seat. PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #2 enters.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN
 (to secretary)
 [Thank you, Elsabeta.]
 (to interviewee)
 [My d-d-dear, welcome. My name is
 Eduardo Montevalban. Please sit down.]

INSERT CLOCK (1003 HOURS)

INT. EDUARDO'S OFFICE -- LATER

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #3
 (clears throat)
 ["Uno, uno, nueve. Uno, uno, nueve.
 Este--este--dos, cinco. Dos, cinco..."]

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN
 [One little m-m-m-moment. Could you
 r-r-r-repeat this, but without the
 "este".]

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #3
 (clears throat)
 Claro que si, Señor. Perdon. "Uno,
 uno, nueve. Uno, uno, uno, nueve.
 Dos, cinco. Dos, cinco..." Este--
 (looks at Eduardo)
 Perdon. "Cinco, tres, nueve. Cinco,
 tres, nueve. Uno, cuatro. Uno,
 cuatro."

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN
 [Perfect. Lovely.]

INSERT CLOCK (1034 HOURS)

INT. HALLWAY

Eduardo and another young woman converge on the water cooler
 just as the *man in the medium blue suit* arrives.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN
 [Look who's here. This is M-miss...]

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN #4
 [Ana Inez Sumano Guzman. Mucho gusto.]

She reaches to shake the hand of the Spy.

THE SPY
 [Porfirio Diaz de la Santa Ana.
 Encantado de conocerla señorita.
 Adios.]

INSERT CLOCK (1102 HOURS)

INT. EDUARDO'S OFFICE -- LATER

The secretary knocks and peeks in.

FRONT DESK SECRETARY
 [Eduardo, your 1100 appointment has
 not arrived.]

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN
 [Call her cell phone and cancel,
 please. We won't have time. And it
 could get messy, you know...]

FRONT DESK SECRETARY
 [Of course.]

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN
 [How many more?]

FRONT DESK SECRETARY
 [Three.]

She closes the door while waving.

INSERT CLOCK (1306 HOURS)

INT. THE UNIMPORTANT MAIN FLOOR

Eduardo has loosened his tie and walks together with the Spy
 toward the stairs. Eduardo blows a kiss to the front desk.

EDUARDO MONTEALBAN
 Cariño, hasta mañana. Mi amor.

The Spy waves.

THE SPY
 Muchisímas gracias, señorita, muy
 amable.

They walk by an AMERICAN WOMAN sitting by the front desk.
 Waiting. A bit more casual than the professional Mexican
 women they've seen.

Eduardo raises his eyebrows as he passes to acknowledge her.
 He looks back to the secretary as they pass through the door.

She'll take care of any problems.

CUT TO:

EL ORBE HEADLINE: [WHO'S TARGETING FOREIGNERS?]

PHOTO: ANOTHER BLOODY ENCOUNTER WITH EL CLIQUERO.

EXT. PARQUE -- MORNING -- SPY ON BENCH

A copy of *El Orbe* lowers to show the Spy. He is now much more comfortably dressed, but still his hair is very neatly combed. He really isn't reading the paper. He is checking for something. When he's not keeping an eye on the hot cart.

THE HOT CART

The hot cart guy is working this morning, as he does every morning. Except Sundays and when he is called back to his pueblo to lay cement or discuss the water route to the city.

THE BENCH

The Spy does a subtle double-take back to the hot cart.

THE SPY (V.O.)

Okay. This is it.

Consulate General Elsworth is eating in front of the cart. There is a smiling MEXICAN BUSINESS MAN eating with him. Or rather, waiting for him to finish. The business man will eat at the drive thru on his way home.

As Elsworth reaches toward the hot cart guy...

FREEZE FRAME -- THE HANDOFF

...The hot cart guy hands him a small, flat package.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

End of the line.

BACK TO SCENE

The Spy rises, folds his newspaper, and makes a turn away from the cart. Behind a tree. To the street and away.

THE STREET -- CONTINUOUS

He turns a corner and sees his van at the end of the next block.

THE SPY (V.O.)

I've been watching for this hand-off for 3 months. What you just witnessed was the delivery of the famous one-time-pad.

He unlocks and opens the van door. Gets in. There is his electrical worker uniform, hanging.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And now it's on its way to the Consulate where it can be used to decode our numbers messages, the smoke.

THE VAN -- PULLS AWAY

In his uniform, the Spy drives down the street and out of site.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And now you're wondering how the hot cart guy got it? Well, it's a tangled route...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TUXTLA GUTIERREZ AIRPORT -- NIGHT

A plane lands at night.

THE SPY (V.O.)

The one-time-pad makes its first touchdown on the runway of the capital city, Tuxtla.

INT. TUXTLA GUTIERREZ AIRPORT -- MOMENTS LATER

An AIRLINE PILOT walks quickly pulling his black carry-on.

THE SPY (V.O.)

There it is. Captain Virgil Washburn, at the service of his majesty. He'll take the package nonchalantly to the nearest--

AIRPORT CANTINA

A BARTENDER flips a wet bar towel onto his shoulder and turns to take the Captain's order.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

--Cantina and drop it with the bartender, Josef. Gentle Josef, "el lobo".

The cash register rings and the bartender gives the Captain his change.

JOSEF'S CARRO

Josef shuts the trunk of his matte finish Fiat sedan in the airport parking lot

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And Josef makes the hour and a half
 trip back to Ocosingo--

CHIAPAS ROAD -- NIGHT

Josef's car moves toward a lit shack by the side of the road.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 --With few worries except to remember
 to buy garlic peanuts in the morning.

A BULLETPROOF VESTED POLICEMAN shines a flashlight into the
 windshield of Josef's car.

JOSEF'S CARRO

When it stops, the policeman points his automatic rifle into
 the window.

POLICEMAN
 Buenas noches.

Josef is still. He slowly reaches into his jacket and brings
 out a package.

JOSEF
 Buenas.

Josef hands the package to the policeman.

POLICEMAN
 Si. Pues?

Josef hands the 100 Peso note and smiles. The policeman takes
 it and smiles. And laughs.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)
 Adelante! Vaya bien...
 (to himself)
 ¡Cabrón!

Josef's tail lights bleach the dark night red. The policeman
 laughs back to his shack.

DISSOLVE TO:

POLICEMAN'S SHACK -- EARLY NEXT MORNING

The sleepy policeman rubs his eyes and looks up the road
 toward a clip-clopping burro.

THE SPY (V.O.)
 The next morning the package is picked
 up by Claudio Herndandez Hernández
 en route to San Cristóbal.

A small fluffy brown burro trots quickly out of the morning sun. On his back, 20 bundles of just-cut alfalfa and his owner. The BURRO RIDER is straight out of a Mexican *Don Quijote*.

The burro rider, too, pays the policeman for the privilege of carrying the package.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- MORNING

Passed by cars, often honking and coming close to the animal, the pair make their way down a crowded one-way street.

THE SPY (V.O.)

So, the one-time-pad enters the city by burro. As Señor Hernández Hernández makes the rounds with his alfalfa, he stops at the servant's entrance for the Casa de la Familia Olguín.

CASA DE LA FAMILIA OLGUÍN -- FRONT DOOR

The MUCHACHA of the casa appears at the door to take the delivery. She is slight and lovely.

MUCHACHA

Muchas gracias, Señor Hernández.

SEÑOR HERNÁNDEZ

Todo por un beso, cariño.

THE SPY (V.O.)

The alfalfa is for the two rabbits the Olguíns keep in their upstairs garden.

CASA DE LA FAMILIA OLGUÍN -- LIBRARY

The muchacha brings a tray with the package tucked under the bowl of chocolate.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The package is for Señor Olguín's desayuno--

STREET -- MORNING

SEÑOR OLGUÍN walks his white miniature toy poodle on the sidewalk of a tree-lined street in the morning. The dog wears a collar and a sweater decorated with Zapotec caracols, the art of the ancient Mexican ruins.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

---And morning vuelta around the park.

HOT CART

Señor Olguín and his poodle wait in line for the hot cart.
He makes eye contact with the hot cart guy.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And finally we're back to the hot
cart, where--

THEIR HANDS MAKE THE SWITCH

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Señor Olguín makes the hand-off.

The package passes by a hot dog with jalapeños and nacho
cheese dip.

THE POODLE

Señor Olguín's poodle eats the hot dog out of his hand.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
For very little recompense, he assures
me.

The poodle is licking-licking-licking to get the chile juice
off its lips.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE VAN -- AS IT CONTINUES DOWN SAN CRISTÓBAL STREETS

Sun glasses. Cap. Tan utility shirt. It's amazing how
camouflaged the Spy is in his van.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's simple really.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOT CART -- MOMENTS LATER

El Cliquero eats. Still eating.

EL CLIQUERO
(full mouth)
Cuanto cuesta?

HOT CART GUY
(uncertain)
21.

He reaches in his pocket.

EL CLIQUERO
¿20?

HOT CART GUY
Si. Muy buen día.

El Cliquero has coins for the guy. The guy gives him a slip of paper. The paper is now greasy.

It says: "[The dog boy.]"

FADE TO:

<EL BAILE DE LOS PERROS -- DOGS AND COLLARS>

At eye level, a perfect dachshund waddles in the park. Its nails chitter on the concrete. Its metal tag tinkles. Back and forth it works its owner's leash.

A lost greyhound. Running from those trying to catch it. From its collar drags a chain. Its shoulder is bleeding. Its eyes are wild. To the dog it seems as if the whole park is chasing.

Bulldog. Snorting. Tongue bounces up and down after each step. The eyes are searching. Collar jingles. Eyes trapped in this ridiculous body. Finally, it finds a pole. Lifts its leg.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- CORNER -- UP THE POLE

The Spy is straddling an elevated electric pole near the transformer. Over 200 parasitic lines coming from the main line fan out above him, and nearly provide him with shade. Though he has a screwdriver out and is listening to a yellow handset, he is watching below. A building?

POWER LINES LAYERED THROUGH THE CITY

From his vantage point the power lines form a grid throughout the city, sloping up like an immense radio telescope.

For a moment, the sounds of the city, the honking, the yelling, the birds, the busses, all fade away.

FADE TO:

First, the cry of a large, hurt dog. Like Lassie. Then...

EXT. PARQUE -- NIGHT -- A LABRADOR RETRIEVER

There is a large black Labrador Retriever lying in a pool of its blood on a sidewalk in the parque. It wears a wide collar. It is trying to reach back to lick its wound. Its back leg jerks.

THE BOY

He looks down at the dog. Coldly. What are its chances? Who would notice if he...

THE LABRADOR

It gently paws at the Boy's foot.

A DENTED CAR

On the side of the road, the owner of the car recently dented by the Labrador checks the damage. To the car.

CAR OWNER/KILLER

[Fuck, is that your dog? Hey! I'm talking to you. Is that your fucking dog that ran out in front of me? And look at...and fucked up my car?]

THE BOY'S HAND

Reaches down to pet the dog. He ruffles it under the collar.

CAR OWNER/KILLER (CONT'D)

[Hey! Listen! Is that your dog?]

There is too much blood on the collar to read it. The Boy pets the top of the dog's head. The dog whimpers.

CAR OWNER/KILLER (CONT'D)

[Can you tell whose it is?]

The Boy looks back over his shoulder at the man.

SOMEONE ELSE stops.

CAR OWNER/KILLER (CONT'D)

(to the someone else)

[Did you see that? The deaf boy's dog ran out in front of me.

(to the Boy)

Do you need a ride home?]

The Boy reaches deeper into the dog's collar. It seems thick. He feels something.

EXT. THE STREET

The dented car slowly pulls away.

THE LABRADOR'S COLLAR

The collar has a thin wire that seems to attach to the dog's neck below the fur. The dog starts a low raspy growl. The Boy pulls the collar and the dog yelps suddenly, snapping its foamy jaws.

THE PARQUE -- DOG'S OWNER

A MAN WITH A LEASH wears jogging shorts and sunglasses. From across the park, he calls for a dog.

MAN WITH A LEASH

Bernardo?

THE LABRADOR

Its eyes roll back into its head. The Boy pulls on the line again. The dog's soul slips out through its lips with one last exhale.

MAN WITH A LEASH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Berni? Venga!

The Boy tugs once again. Something comes unstuck. The line is loose.

THE LABRADOR'S COLLAR

From beneath the dog's coat comes the line. It is attached. To what?

THE ONE TIME PAD

A 2 x 3 inch booklet slides out of the dog's skin, attached to the line. The Boy opens it. There are column after column of 5 digit numbers in tiny type.

DOG'S OWNER FINDS HIS DOG

The man is now running in arcs trying to find the dog in pain.

MAN WITH A LEASH (CONT'D)

Berni?!

He sees the Boy over the dog's body.

MAN WITH A LEASH (CONT'D)

OYE! JOVEN! ESPERATE!

He runs to the Boy. Can't lose the Boy. What does he know? Relax. Probably just loves dogs.

The Boy walks away. Smoothly. But he doesn't make it far.

The man reaches him and takes his arm.

MAN WITH A LEASH (CONT'D)

[What happened to Berni? What has happened? My god, is he dead?]

The Boy just turns and looks at the man. The man runs back to the dog's body with the Boy in tow. He has a grip on the Boy's school sweater.

At the dog's side, he sees the mess at the collar. The wavering line on the collar. And slowly turns up to the Boy.

He rips the Boy's bag off his back. The Boy strains with all his might against the man, hooking his hands into the straps of the pack.

The man hits the Boy across the face with his leash. Flattens the Boy on the sidewalk.

He rifles through the pack. (Oh shit the pistol.) But only books and notebooks fall to the ground. The man reaches into the Boy's pockets. Nothing. Where is it? Fuck!

The man roughly searches all over the Boy's body: his shorts, his socks, under his shirt, and in his mouth. Maybe it happened in the accident?

As the man hesitates, the Boy sweeps his leg under the man. He grabs his pack and makes for the street. Just misses a bus. And is gone.

FADE TO:

INT. RECORDING ROOM -- NIGHT

The Spy sits at the recording desk. A buzzer rouses him.

EXT. HOTEL SANTO TOMÁS

A young woman stands outside. The Spy shuffles his flip-flops to the gate and stops. He waits for her to speak.

ADARA

[Well, I was supposed to meet someone here.]

THE SPY

Sí.

ADARA

[And I, someone told me that I should be here at this time. For a, well, am I at the right place?]

THE SPY

[Yes, clearly. Come in.]

He opens the gate and they walk to the recording room.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

[This way.]

EXT. OUTSIDE OFFICE

He unlocks the door and looks over his shoulder to the gate.

THE SPY

[It is very important to be on time.]

ADARA
[I assumed so.]

They walk inside.

THE SPY
[And you've been told what you are
supposed to be doing, correct?]

ADARA
[Not very clear to-- but I am ready.]

THE SPY
[Right.]

He walks to the desk. The equipment.

THE SPY (CONT'D)
[You can put your things over here.
Keep the desk very neat.]

ADARA
Sí, claro.

THE SPY
[Okay. I am going to assume that
everything is going to be clear, so
let's save some time by just
listening, okay?]

ADARA
Sí, señor.

He points to the items on the desk.

THE SPY
[Microphone. Switch, from mic to
keyboard. Simple fader.]

He walks to the corner of the room.

THE SPY (CONT'D)
[This is the shredder. For paper. We
clean it out every night.]

He points to the shelf over the desk.

THE SPY (CONT'D)
[This is where you'll see an envelope
when you arrive. If you see no
envelope, work is over for the day.
Simply close and lock the door and
go home.]

He sweeps dust off the shelf.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

[Now, if there is an envelope, you open it. The memo inside will look like this.]

He pulls out a folded memo from his shirt pocket.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

[A memo has a header and a body. Both are of extreme importance.]

He puts the memo on the desk.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

[We are going to transmit the memo over shortwave radio.]

Adara's eyes open a bit. This is news to her.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

[You will notice that the memo only contains numbers. Nothing more.]

NUMBERS MEMO

The header is in bold and has eight numbers.

Two lines below, the body of the memo. It consists of 36 rows of five digits.

BACK TO SCENE

THE SPY (CONT'D)

[Your job is to introduce and to read memos over the shortwave radio that we have set up.]

ADARA

[How do I introduce them?]

THE SPY

[I'll get to that.]

ADARA

Gracias.

THE SPY

[The reason that it is so important that you arrive at work on time is that people are relying on these messages, and that I have automated the shortwave broadcast. You just have to wait for the lights and then talk into the mic.]

This seems as if it must be too simple to Adara.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

[So that's it. And then, and this you cannot forget, you must shred the memo in the shredder when you are finished. Okay? Have any questions?]

ADARA

No.

THE SPY

[What?]

ADARA

[Well, not yet.]

THE SPY

[Everyone has questions.]

ADARA

[Okay.]

THE SPY

[Go ahead.]

ADARA

[What's the introduction?]

THE SPY

[Oh, it's just something to identify the message to parties.]

ADARA

[Okay, thanks.]

THE SPY

[It's simple. Are we done?]

ADARA

[Yes.]

She thinks a moment.

ADARA (CONT'D)

[Oh, another thing.]

THE SPY

[Another? Still?]

ADARA

[I can ask later.]

THE SPY

[Okay.]

FADE TO:

INT. HOTEL SANTO TOMÁS -- NIGHT

Adara peers through the black iron gate.

ADARA

Hello?

Flip-flops shuffle and smack in the dark. And then stop.

THE SPY

[Good evening. Oh, there's no light.
I always... Sorry.]

ADARA

[Don't worry about it. It's fine.]

The gate swings. Creaking.

THE SPY

[I am sorry I don't have your key.
You're ready for the next...for the
next training?]

ADARA

Claro.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL SANTO TOMÁS -- COURTYARD -- ANOTHER NIGHT

Adara is walking through the courtyard on her way to the stairs. The lights flicker and die. She stalls.

THE SPY

(from above)

[Hey listen, can you get the circuit
breaker?]

ADARA

[How?]

A small flashlight spot wavers on her forehead.

THE SPY

[Yeah. Make a right into the front
office. You can't miss it.]

ADARA

[I can't even see the front office.]

The spot shows the door to the office.

ADARA (CONT'D)
[How can I not miss it?]

THE SPY
[It's all part of my plan, Adara.
Big plans.]

INT. HOTEL SANTO TOMÁS -- FRONT OFFICE

Cob-webs. A headlight shines through the windows along the ceiling. Too high up to help.

She inches forward. Shuffles. Suddenly she trips and nearly falls. She catches herself on her feet.

THE SPY (O.S.)
[Just reach left now.]

ADARA
Huh?

She reaches left and finds the wall. Her hand hits the center of the circuit breaker box.

THE SPY (O.S.)
[Top button!]

She flips the top lever and the lights reappear.

She laughs.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RECORDING ROOM -- LATER

It seems more comfortable here. Better organized. Warmer.

ADARA
Uno, uno, tres. Cuatro, cinco.
Uno, uno, tres. Cuatro, cinco.

Adara sits in the desk chair. There is a fan rotating.

THE SPY (V.O.)
[Remember, in the field, it is
difficult to hear these broadcasts.
Make sure that you speak clearly and
clearly end each series.]

She nods.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
[Adara. Now we'll try the broadcast
sequence.]

She swivels to see the Spy through his two way mirror.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
[Everything okay?]

ADARA
[You can go faster if you'd like.]

THE SPY

He smiles.

THE SPY
Sí, claro.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARQUE -- HOT AFTERNOON

The Spy is sitting on his usual bench. Did he comb his hair?

Suddenly Adara appears. She wears a white rebozo. Straight-faced and business-like.

ADARA
[Is everything okay?]

THE SPY
[Yeah. How are you?]

ADARA
[Very well, thank you.]

She breaks into a smile that she had been trying to keep to herself.

THE SPY
[Did you eat?]

ADARA
[No, you told me about these tacos.]

THE SPY
[The family has been making the same
tacos here in this park for 40 years.]

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOT CART

The two stand in line for the hot cart's tacos.

THE SPY
[Tomorrow you're on your own.]

ADARA
[Yes, truly?]

THE SPY
 (talking tacos)
 [How many do you want?]

ADARA
 [What time?]

THE SPY
 [Always at 2000 hours. Always on
 Fridays.]

ADARA
 Claro que sí.

THE SPY
 How many?

ADARA
 Four.

THE SPY
 (to the guy)
 Por favor, diez tacos con todo.

ADARA
 [Beef, right?]

THE SPY
 [They're all beef.]

HOT CART GUY
 Sí.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARQUE -- BENCH

They sit on the bench to eat their tacos. Adara has a bottle of water.

THE SPY
 Provecho.

The Spy squeezes a lime onto his tortillas.

ADARA
 Gracias.

As they eat, the tacos drop precious meat onto the styrofoam plates.

THE SPY
 [Why did you come back to Mexico?]

ADARA
 [What do you mean?]

THE SPY

[You've been to the States.]

ADARA

[Like most people.]

THE SPY

[And I'd say that you went to college there.]

ADARA

[And where do you get your information?]

THE SPY

[By observing.]

She laughs.

ADARA

Sí, I went to Michigan.

THE SPY

[Really? What did you study?]

ADARA

[What do your observations tell you?]

THE SPY

[Inconclusive.]

ADARA

Math.

THE SPY

Brainiac.

ADARA

I like math.

THE SPY

You and thirty other people.

She laughs.

ADARA

Sí, verdad?

He lifts another taco from the stack.

ADARA (CONT'D)

I was getting a PhD.

THE SPY

Okay.

ADARA
And I left last year.

THE SPY
[And this was on your resume?]

ADARA
[I don't think so. Why worry people.]

THE SPY
[Why are you back in Mexico?]

ADARA
[My brother died.]

THE SPY
[I'm sorry.]

ADARA
[It may have been your fault. I don't know.]

The Spy doesn't react.

ADARA (CONT'D)
[A joke.]

THE SPY
[Why joke?]

ADARA
[I came back to take care of my mother.]

THE SPY
[What happened to him?]

ADARA
[We don't know. He had fallen in with some revolutionaries. Small time. But the governor decided he should be killing them. It's easier to kill the small ones.]

THE SPY
[And he just went away.]

ADARA
[Vanished. Not even a trace of his blood or one of his shoes. Or a photo for the police page.]

THE SPY
[It's rough now. I'm sorry.]

ADARA

[Sure. But it's simple. It seemed so terrible when it happened, but now it happens all the time. It happened to two kids yesterday. They don't hide them any more. Sí, don't worry about it. It's nothing to make a movie about.]

FADE TO:

EXT. PARQUE -- NIGHT

The park is quiet. The dog is still lying on the walk. The blood pool is drying.

JOGGER'S CAR

The jogger, the dog's owner, is waiting in his car. Watching the park. Waiting. Not looking away. Scanning.

CORNER BY THE FARMACIA -- THE WALK

The Boy is peering around the corner. Back to the park.

BESIDE THE DEAD DOG

There is an orange pickup truck. Below it, a pile of wet trash. Below the trash, something.

ROW OF CARROS

At the end of the row of parked cars, the Boy is crouching. Watching. He looks under the truck he is behind. He can see beneath the cars, they form a tunnel. He buttons up his school sweater as high as it will go. And climbs under the truck.

THE TUNNEL OF CARROS

The Boy crawls on his belly through the trash and wet muck of the street. A bunch of wet newspaper gets caught under his neck. He pushes it to the side. Quietly.

JOGGER'S CAR

He talks on his cellphone. He taps rapidly on the seat. He sniffs. He wears his sunglasses. He is fucked.

THE TUNNEL OF CARROS -- FURTHER

The Boy's chin is smudged dark grey. He pauses under the front bumper of a car. The next car is a Fiat. Should he go around? Is the curb tall enough to conceal him?

The taillights of the Fiat go red. The exhaust pipe blows out on the Boy. It backs up to the bumper and bumps it. Then it is gone, leaving a gap in the tunnel.

The Boy looks behind him to make sure that no car is waiting. He turns onto his back and pushes himself with his feet along the edge of the curb. A car passes. The Boy feels naked on the ground as the headlights pass.

He makes it to the next car and crawls underneath.

BESIDE THE DEAD DOG

The trash under the pickup. The Boy's slow ruffle on the street. He pushes himself to the tire beside the dog.

UNDER THE PICKUP

The Boy looks out from the oversized tire. He scans the park. He finally sees the Jogger's car. And the Jogger talking. The Boy slowly, patiently, reaches across the ground into the pile of wet newspapers. And pulls out the pistol. And back again. He pulls out the One Time Pad. He rolls onto his back and breathes. His head in the muck. Happy.

He gathers his bag and puts the pistol and pad into it. He looks out to the street for traffic.

He hears another bus. Perfect.

He crawls back two more cars and looks for a way to escape. The bus is near. He crawls out to behind the rear wheel of the car. And bolts.

THE STREET

The bus honks, a slight squeak of the brakes, and it passes behind him. The Boy runs to the corner near the farmacia.

A car, a red Chrysler LeBaron turns on its lights.

THE BOY'S FACE

Freezes. The Boy's uncle, Arsenio, leans out the driver's window.

UNCLE ARSENIO

(calmly)

[What the hell are you doing?]

The Boy continues to walk down the street. Past the LeBaron. It starts to back up.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)

(impatient)

[Shithead, get in the car.]

INT. THE CAR -- FOUR CIGARETTES IN THE ASHTRAY

The passenger door swings open and the Boy gets in. The uncle keeps backing up quietly toward the next street to turn around. He turns to look at the Boy.

UNCLE ARSENIO

Christ you smell like shit. The window--
the window!

(as he's turning)

[Oh, Jesus, the seats...]

EXT. THE STREET

The LeBaron's front wheels squeak as it makes a hard turn down the side street.

INT. THE JOGGER'S CAR

His cellphone is on the dash. The driver's door is open. He is listening to the radio. The radio plays "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" but we cut in on, "oh-weem-oh-wet-oh-weem-oh-wet..."

INT. THE CAR -- CONTINUOUS

The uncle smokes another cigarette.

UNCLE ARSENIO

You know I don't smoke, don't you?

The Boy doesn't hear him. The night air blows the mud on his chin dry.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)

Take this and clean up. At least
clean up your face.

The Boy takes the handkerchief and wipes the dry dirt on his chin. Buffing it. The bag is safely at his feet.

They travel in the silence of a San Cristóbal night.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)

You know your father would have been
here.

The Boy looks down for a moment. To the bag.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)

He loves you. And he is busy. Since
my sister died. But he just can't go
chasing you all over the city.

The Boy looks at his uncle.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)

Yeah, that's my job. Right?

A car honks and passes.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 You know I loved your mother, too? I
 wish you'd talk to me. It gets lonely.
 And you wear me out, you know? You
 little shit.

He takes the Boy's chin.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 You know?

The Boy stares.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 And this bag of yours.

Here we go.

UNCLE ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 Son of a bitch. You little asshole.

The Boy stares at him still.

EXT. THE CAR

The LeBaron rattles into the lights of the street. Suddenly,
 it SLAMS ON ITS BRAKES AND COMES TO A HALT. It reverses
 surreally and moves backward twice as fast as it had been
 going forward.

INT. THE CAR -- MOMENTS EARLIER

The Boy stares at the uncle, who is speaking backwards to
 him. Angry. A car honks and falls behind. The Boy looks up
 from his bag. The silence of the San Cristóbal night. The
 Boy smears some dirt on his chin. The uncle blows out another
 cigarette and puts it back in the pack.

INT. THE JOGGER'S CAR -- MOMENTS EARLIER

The jogger listens to the radio. "Emoh-ette-oh--emoh-ette-
 oh..."

EXT. STREET -- MOMENTS EARLIER

The Boy jumps out of the moving car and freezes on the side
 of the street.

The car's lights go out.

THE BOY'S FACE -- MOMENTS EARLIER

Trouble drains from the Boy's face. He is happy.

THE STREET -- MOMENTS EARLIER

The Boy runs backward from the corner of the street just behind a bus and to a car. He crouches.

UNDER THE PICKUP -- MOMENTS EARLIER

He takes out the one time pad and pistol from his bag and hides them under some trash. He slides himself feet first under cars and to the curb. And back through the entire tunnel of carros. The dirt rubs off him onto the street.

JOGGER'S CAR -- MOMENTS EARLIER

Talking on his cellphone still. Upset.

ROW OF CARROS -- MOMENTS EARLIER

He sees something in the trash under the orange pickup beside the dead dog. The Boy peers under the row of cars.

CORNER BY THE FARMACIA -- THE WALK -- MOMENTS EARLIER

The Boy leaps back to the corner by the farmacia.

JOGGER'S CAR

The jogger is scanning the park.

EXT. PARQUE -- NIGHT -- MOMENTS EARLIER

The dog is still lying on the walk in the quiet park.

INT. ELECTRIC UTILITY VAN -- NIGHT -- MOMENTS EARLIER

The Spy lifts his binoculars and puts them down and then lifts them again.

EXT. CORNER BY THE FARMACIA -- THE WALK

The Boy peers around the corner. Back to the park.

THE VAN

The Spy pulls out his cellphone and calls a number.

THE BOY

The Boy crouches behind a row of parked cars.

THE JOGGER'S CAR

The jogger picks up his ringing cellphone.

JOGGER

Bueno.

He taps on the seat. Not really scanning. Just talking.

THE TUNNEL OF CARROS

The Boy crawls on his belly through the trash and wet muck...

THE VAN

The Spy talks. Cars honk. People shout and laugh in the park.
A loud bus fumes by.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A SUBURBAN MEXICAN HOME -- AFTERNOON -- THE SPY'S DREAM

From the inside a door opens. The interior of the house is dark. The light blinds. And the Spy steps in through the blinding light.

THE SPY

You're up...

A woman in a bathrobe answers the door. She is bald. This is BEATRIZ. Her face is warm and and her eyes are dull. She is crying.

BEATRIZ

You are late.

She takes his hand and leads him to the kitchen.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

I need to finish this tea. Would you like some?

THE SPY

¿Negro?

BEATRIZ

Manzanilla, my stomach can't take black.

The Spy doesn't respond, but putters around the kitchen. Opening cabinets.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

Are you looking for something?

THE SPY

Where does he keep them?

The Spy tries to divert his feelings of embarrassment. He knows he shouldn't be looking in her cabinets. Why is he?

THE SPY (CONT'D)

I love you, you know?

She puts her tea on a saucer and walks it out of the kitchen. Toward the stairs.

BEATRIZ

Come on.

THE SPY

(lost a bit)

Oh, I'm coming right behind you. Do you need a hand?

BEATRIZ

Later.

INT. BEATRIZ'S BEDROOM -- THE SPY'S DREAM

The Spy follows Beatriz into the room. There is a large bed with its covers pushed to the bottom. She spills her tea on the bedside table.

BEATRIZ

Shit.

On the table is a photo of the Boy and the Consulate General, Elsworth. They lean their heads together against a blue sky.

She walks to the window and with difficulty pulls the curtains. The white curtains. On the side of the bed, the Spy removes his shoes.

THE SPY

Where did your hair go?

She starts to laugh. He joins her.

BEATRIZ

It all came out at once.

THE SPY

Do you have a wig?

BEATRIZ

You think I still go out?

She wraps her hand around the back of his neck. And pulls him close to her. He reaches into her robe.

THE SPY

Ummm.

He pulls the robe off of her shoulders.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

Are you cold?

She kisses him. As her robe falls to the carpet, Beatriz stands naked in front of him. The skin pulled taut against her ribs. Her skin is red with heat.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

Do you hurt?

BEATRIZ

No. You are so sweet to ask, darling.

They slowly sit on the edge of the bed. Kissing. He leans her back with his kisses. She reaches under his shirt and pulls it off over his head.

She lies back against the pillows painfully.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

Can you...?

He adjusts a pillow under her neck. She exhales a heavy breath.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

Oh, thank you.

He kisses her again. Face to face, he looks her deep in the eyes.

THE SPY

(drawing a breath)

Oh my god, you are so *hot*. It almost hurts.

BEATRIZ

Ouch-ouch.

He fidgets. He looks up to her again.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

Okay.

He leans in.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

Aaagh. Wait. Okay.

The Spy groans. Beatriz winces. And breathes short breaths. Not possible.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

Try again.

The Spy closes his mouth and gives a light kiss.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

(quietly)

This isn't for you... Try again.

THE SPY

We can't.

Beatriz rolls onto her side away from the Spy. He holds her.

BEATRIZ

You asshole.

(quickly)

What will you do when I'm gone? Do you still pretend you're a spy?

The Spy holds her breasts in his hands. She leans her head back against him.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

Tell me something stupid like you used to do in college.

He kisses her ear.

BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

Some stupid theory you've been working on.

THE SPY

(immediate)

Okay, let's take man's fascination with breasts for example. Did you know Koreans believe that a woman's upturned chin represents the head of a penis?

BEATRIZ

What are you talking about?

He sits up on his elbow.

THE SPY

The Koreans.

(touches her chin)

This part is the head. Try it. Look up.

She can't help but laugh. He reaches in and holds her breasts up from the bottom.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

My thesis is that breasts therefore represent testicles and this is why men are so fascinated with them-- especially when they are taut and the nipples are erect. Just like the tension before erupting in ejaculation. By sight, men know what this means and they like it.

She is still laughing.

BEATRIZ

No, stop...

THE SPY

Try it.

She looks up to the ceiling. Posing for him.

BEATRIZ

Maybe you can just beat me off.

She moves his hands up to her neck. As she looks upward, she starts to cough. A cough of significant congestion. Raspy and full.

THE SPY

Wait. Come here.

He tries to hold her. She waves him off. She is frightened. Finally it slows. She is still breathing heavily.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

Come here.

She leans back on him. They are both pointed toward the bedside table. And the photograph.

BEATRIZ

He's your son...

SMASH CUT TO:

¿WHERE THE HELL IS THIS HAPPENING?

Bright, painful light on light brown skin. The beautiful, taut, naked back of a latina. She lies face down. A slow rhythm, breathing still. Perceptible. The light shifts. Two small indentations at the top of her pelvis.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE SPY'S TRUE BEDROOM -- MORNING

Tired, the Spy looks up at the ceiling.

THE SPY (V.O.)

How can my head be so cruel?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE CONSULATE -- THE BOY'S ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Television snow. Blips. The blank spiral at the end of a vinyl LP. A simple music box. These are in the Boy's ears. In his headphones. And then the voice. A punched, pre-recorded voice. A little girl. Not much older than he.

NUMBERS VOICE

(in the headphones)

Achtung. Neun, sechs, sieben, acht,
 sieben. Drei, ein, ein, vier, neun,
 neun. Zwei, drei, fünf, sieben, vier,
 acht...

Then the music box comes back, manic and too fast. Repeating.

There is a knocking sound behind the music box. Radio interference? The Boy cocks his head. And finally moves one headphone above his ear.

The knocking is from the door. He slips in his socks to the door and cracks it. His father.

ELSWORTH

Listen. This is your personal
 invitation to come downstairs. I
 have asked you several times and it
 is time to come, now. You still have
 about 20 hours of community service
 left. This will do for about 8 hours.
 Got it, Jocko? Get a move on.

His father shuts the door and walks back down the hallway.

INT. THE CONSULATE SITTING ROOM -- 10 MINUTES LATER

The Boy walks down the stairs and into the sitting room where the guests talk. He wears his school uniform. The guests remark.

ELSWORTH

You are wearing shoes, right? Good.
 The kids are out back.

GUEST #1 WIFE

Does he speak Spanish?

ELSWORTH

He hardly speaks at all.

The sitting room door slides open to reveal a thick grassy lawn surrounded by a high fence. Less than ten American children ages 2 to 7 run through the grass in their shorts and Sunday shoes. They turn to look at the tinted glass door as it opens to reveal the Boy. A few boys laugh.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE CONSULATE -- THE YARD

The Boy sits near the house. His head is in the shade. Two FOUR-YEAR-OLD BOYS are asking him questions. A girl, MICHAELA, sits in the shade, too. She is quiet and watchful.

FOUR YEAR OLD #1
Why are you sitting here?

FOUR YEAR OLD #2
Are you blind? Can you see this?

The boy thrusts his fingers at the Boy's eyes. They blink.

FOUR YEAR OLD #2 (CONT'D)
I told you he could see.

FOUR YEAR OLD #1
What's that on your sweater? Come
on, look.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CONSULATE DINING ROOM

Elsworth stands in front of the door.

ELSWORTH
Guests. I hope you are ready for the
experience of a lifetime. Our Señora
Rosalita has prepared for your delight
a meal of epic proportions.

SEÑORA ROSALITA stands in bright local dress in front of the
kitchen doors. She is not smiling.

ELSWORTH (CONT'D)
Rosalita has brought the culinary
magic of her native Oaxaca to our
table. Tonight we will have all seven
of the famous moles, with chicken,
beef, pork, goat, tongue and tripe.
You will eat chapulines, fried
grasshoppers, and even gusanos, the
worms, or the larva of the
grasshoppers. It is all delicious.
And Señora Rosalita brings you only
the best. And from the Isthmus above
us, garnaches made with frijoles and
organ meat. So I hope you like it
spicy. Does anyone like their food
picante?

The blank faces of his guests.

ELSWORTH (CONT'D)
Oh for goodness sake, I'm just
kidding. How's fried chicken and
mashed potatoes?

The guests erupt in laughter.

ELSWORTH (CONT'D)

And margaritas and piña coladas?
Anyone?

GUEST #2

A Tom Collins?

The aiy-aiy-aiys follow the laughter. Señora Rosalita waves and walks back into the kitchen, taking off her head covering. On cue, Mariachi music rises smoothly from the speakers in the wall. Young men bring out platters of fried chicken, bowls of mashed potatoes, gravy boats, rolls, a light green salad.

GUEST #1

If I'd have to eat any more of those
beans! Free-holles! I thought I
smelled something good.

INT. THE CONSULATE BREAKFAST ROOM -- THE KIDS' TABLE

In a dark brown wood paneled room off the kitchen, the kids are being put in their seats. The Boy is listening to his shortwave receiver through his headset. There is nothing to tune in, but he wants to appear detached. He sits in the back corner. No other child remains seated.

There she is. A beautiful young american girl, KATHARINE, 13 years old with long dark blonde hair and a slo-motion grace that reminds one of fever visions that wounded soldiers in army hospitals have of nurses carrying water and fresh sheets in the afternoon light. Katharine is trying to get the two four-year-olds to sit. The food is coming to the table and being ladled onto the kids' plastic plates.

KATHARINE

(to the boys)

Sit so you can pray, okay?

She smiles to the cold Boy. Someone sets Coca-Colas (tm) down at the table. Warm.

INT. THE CONSULATE DINING ROOM

There is a hush. As if the air had been sucked out of the room. Heads are bowed, the guests are arranged around the table. Katharine now sits at the far end of the table opposite Elsworth.

GUEST #2

A-men.

Elsworth keeps his head still a bit longer.

ELSWORTH

Ah-men... Friends, "Provecho" as we
say in Mexico. Bon apétite.

Although there are quite a few drinks already on the table, the young men are taking drink orders. One stops a little too long next to Katharine's seat. KATHARINE'S DAD turns to see what is taking him so long.

KATHARINE

Daddy...

The guests are serving the meal to themselves. And passing. Making pools in their potatoes for the gravy.

Katharine's father turns to Elsworth.

KATHARINE'S DAD

Elsworth, there is a giant suckin' sound down at this end of the table. Quite a spread. Cheers.

ELSWORTH

Mi casa es tu casa. My house is at your disposal.

KATHARINE'S DAD

How much do you think I could get for it?

Laughing, KATHARINE'S MOTHER passes another plate.

INT. THE KIDS' TABLE

With static in his headset, the Boy watches the children eating, blowing the end papers off their straws, flipping food. Hamburgers and fries.

GUEST #1 (O.S.)

How do you get along with all these Catholics?

(to the lone Mexican)

Sorry I don't mean to single you out.

INT. THE DINING ROOM

The MEXICAN GUEST shrugs. His GRINGA WIFE is nervous.

MEXICAN GUEST

I'm with you--

The guests laugh.

MEXICAN GUEST (CONT'D)

As a Christian, I find it hard to deal with the imagery here. And so much of it is pagan. You know what I mean.

GUEST #1
Speaking of imagery, what about these
pictures I see of fellows--

Chiming in.

GUEST #1 WIFE
And ladies--

GUEST #1
--Yes, and ladies, in ski masks and
pipes? It's like they're going to
rob a gas station.

Elsworth seems serious.

ELSWORTH
Ahh. Our friends the EZLN or the
FLZN if you prefer. The Zapatistas.
Led by our very good friend,
Subcomandante Marcos.

GUEST #1 WIFE
It sounds so WWII Germany.

ELSWORTH
Perhaps that's precisely what they
are trying for. I don't know. What I
do know is that their fervor is dying
out like their over-farmed forests.
Don't get me wrong, don't show up in
the Lacandon Jungle after dark, but
who cares, right?

GUEST #2
What I want to know...
(nods to girlfriend)
Where do we go from here? What
happened to NAFTA? 911?

INT. THE KIDS' TABLE

The table is a wreck. Unattached buns, ketchup, pickles
strewn. A young boy spills his milk. It runs onto the Boy's
lap.

ELSWORTH (O.S.)
What I am saying is that NAFTA worked.
And now we are on to the second phase.
Who has heard of the PPP?

INT. THE DINING ROOM

The Mexican guest motions with his fork.

MEXICAN GUEST

The Plan Puebla Panama, claro que sí.

ELSWORTH

Here is a Mexican idea. It's being presented as a Mexican idea. And indeed the PLAN is to develop the undeveloped Mexico and Central America. Power, security, transportation, tourism. Doesn't that just about cover everyone at the table? Now the fact that it's being funded by the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz, and other regionally-oriented banking organizations means that we have a way in. For all intents and purposes, this is a way for us to recoup the losses of NAFTA.

GUEST #1 WIFE

That giant sucking sound.

ELSWORTH

Sometimes that sound isn't all bad, my dear.

Laughs.

ELSWORTH (CONT'D)

But look at the opportunities we have in Central America taking this approach--instead of the Iraq approach.

GUEST #1

Development--

ELSWORTH

Exactly. Instead of war, we have development and progress. There will be problems, but no one can dispute the efforts are attempts at progress.

MEXICAN GUEST

And the Zapatistas?

Katharine takes a larger bite of chicken than she should. Elsworth stares. She is seated at the other end of the table from him. She is gorgeous. And distant.

ELSWORTH

Yes. Well. The Zapatistas sit and smoke while their jungle is cut down around them.

He breaks his eyes away from Katharine.

ELSWORTH (CONT'D)

But what we really want here is some information you can use. Right?

INT. THE KIDS' TABLE

One very small kid is crying. She has a french fry in each nostril. The Boy is gone from his seat.

ELSWORTH (V.O.)

The soonest, most significant payout is to be the hydroelectric project at Lago Espejo.

INT. THE CONSULATE DINING ROOM

GUEST #2 GIRLFRIEND

The red clay village?

Katharine looks across the table to the door behind Elsworth.

ELSWORTH

Mike? She speaks?

The Boy stands in the doorway. He waves once. To Katharine.

ELSWORTH (CONT'D)

Yes, red clay, very good. And the origin of most of this city's masa-- or corn meal--for tortillas. It also has an incredible potential for hydroelectric power. The valley is a natural reservoir waiting to happen. It probably was at one time. Thus the red clay, no?

The Boy heads into the kitchen.

ELSWORTH (CONT'D)

Though it is risky, since there are pockets of resistance, there seem to be a number of such villages that are choosing to be relocated, to be retrained.

MEXICAN GUEST

To be shown the money.

ELSWORTH

Precisely. And tied together with the other energy projects, the transportation projects, it is bound to be successful.

GUEST #1 WIFE

The way I heard it, it used to be that they used to make money to fund the fight against communism, but now it's a fight against communism to make money.

GUEST #1

Who's "they" honey?

KATHARINE'S DAD

FBI, probably.

GUEST #1

Could be...

They laugh.

MEXICAN GUEST

It's a plan packed with pesos.

Elsworth motions to one of the young men to bring out the next round.

INT. THE CONSULATE KITCHEN

The Boy sits at the kitchen table with Señora Rosalita. In front of 6 boxes of Kentucky Fried Chicken, coleslaws. She pats his head.

SEÑORA ROSALITA

Quieres una quesadilla, corazón?

He shakes his head.

Dishes and platters begin to make their way back into the kitchen. Elsworth pokes his head through the door.

ELSWORTH

Hey there, Jocko. Rosalita, vamos a ir a la oficina. Queremos el tequila y unos whiskys, de acuerdo? ¿Hay algún problema?

SEÑORA ROSALITA

Ahorita, Don Elsworth. Claro.

Elsworth passes away like a rain cloud.

THE BOY

Si, por favor, mamita, una quesadilla.

Rosalita's right hand is burnt and shriveled.

KATHARINE'S DAD (O.S.)

(in den)

This is a mahogany desk, isn't it
Don? It's all gone, all that wood,
isn't it?

INT. THE CONSULATE (ELSWORTH'S) DEN -- BLACK/WHITE

The men spread out in the den. Overstuffed chairs. Many books,
but untouched.

ELSWORTH

Call me John.

In a dark corner, there is a canary in a cage.

GUEST #2

John, can we bring democracy to this
place? Or is it a lost cause?

An eagle spreads its wooden wings over the bookcase. A snake
in its mouth.

GUEST #1

When do you see the highways being
connected? When can we get trucks
all the way through from Panama in
one day?

Katharine's dad reaches into Elsworth's outstretched cigar
box and pulls out a long cigar. Habana. The other men are
already smoking them.

KATHARINE'S DAD

Will everything be lost when and if
there is a rebellion?

OVERSTUFFED CHAIRS

The men laugh and slap each other's backs. Their necks tilting
their heads back and laughing.

A MIRACLE

The tequila has changed to VODKA. As if a silent film, silent
and black and white, the bottle moves too fast to fill the
three shot glasses on the side table. Spills. Small puddle.

MORE CIGARS

Clouds of thick grey smoke billow about the heads of the men
in the den. Backslapping.

DANCE HALL GIRLS

In the fictional den, girls in 1890s dance hall dresses hang
on the necks of the Capitalists. Grind in their laps.

A SLOPPY KISS

One dance hall girl gives Katharine's dad a sloppy kiss on the mouth. She shoves him back into his chair when she is done.

HOWLING IN SMOKE

Laughing and yelling, the men shift the girls around. A point needs to be made.

DRILLING THE DESK

Elsworth, the 1890s Capitalist Pig, repeatedly drills the desk with his index finger. Rap, rap, rap.

THE COSSACKS

Long-coated, furry-hatted policemen, the Czar's dreaded cossacks, smoke thick cigarettes along the walls of the den. Long barreled rifles with bayonets. Their cold, light-colored eyes, dart from side to side...

INT. HALLWAY

The Boy hesitates shortly and knocks on the door to the den. It swings wide.

THE BOY

Goodnight.

ELSWORTH

Goodnight, Jocko. And thanks.

The men are playing Nintendo. Two game controllers. A kung-fu fantasy game. Katharine's dad sits on the desk. His player decks a lightweight girl fighter operated by Guest #1.

GUEST #1

Oh, shit!

GUEST #1 WIFE (O.S.)

You coming, Rick?

The door closes slowly. The Boy looks back to the dining room table. One last look at Katharine.

He heads to the stairs. Three steps up.

ELSWORTH

Hey, Jocko. After Abuelita's your
all caught up, okay?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAFETERÍA EL AMARILLO -- NIGHT -- EL PATRONCITO

The Patrón looks tired. Slower.

EL PATRONCITO

[Perhaps you know this already.
Perhaps I don't need to tell you
this. The governments of America
have a plan to improve the lives of
the people from Puebla, Mexico all
the way down to Panama. It's a plan.
They call it the Plan Puebla Panama.
Yes. Good name.]

He fumbles for his coffee. Stirs it.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[You see when the banks and oil mad
capitalists got tired of paying wages,
they decided to develop this part of
the world. You see at first, all we
had for them was bananas and mahogany
and coffee. Now we provide them with
slaves. And these slaves can be used
to mine the precious resources that
were locked in here without a road
out. Now there will be roads through
the jungle. And just for fun they
will to make a superhighway to replace
the Panama Canal.]

EL CLIQUERO

El Cliquero looks blankly at the Patrón.

EL PATRONCITO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

[Some of the men that Marcos has
been targeting are interested in
creating a hydroelectric power network
to harness the water in Central
America.]

BACK TO SCENE

He begins to take out his wallet.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[And when they are done, they'll pipe it to the United States. Over our heads and under our feet.]

FADE TO:

EXT. THE PARQUE -- AFTERNOON -- FIESTA

The Spy rests on a cast iron bench, recently painted kelly green. He wears his trademark Ray Ban sunglasses. A Brasil futbol jersey and jeans. He has a taco in his hand. A beautiful hand wrought taco de res from the hot cart guy. The taco is good, but his view is more interesting.

POV THE SPY -- UN JOVEN Y SU NOVIA

On a bench opposite the Spy, not far from the hot cart, sit two young Mexicans. The young man, not far from his indigenous roots. Still he wears jeans. He wears a plaid shirt. And his girlfriend is in love with him.

Her straight black hair falls over her face, covering her sloping, gently-bowed indian nose. Her hair makes a space for them to hide. Inside her hair they are no longer on a park bench. They are no longer in front of Señora Jiménez from the nearby la Estetica Francesa. They are alone.

They kiss. He leans his forehead into her hair. They speak. Their lips nearly touching. Wanting to touch, even if it fouls their speech.

THE SPY

He takes his sunglasses off, taking a break. He squints as he cleans the green lenses. He can't help but look. Neither can you.

Behind him, the park is filling up with half-built small-scale roller coasters and bumper cars. The signs of a Mexican feria in el parque.

LOS JOVENES

Melting together. Oh what you'd give for this love of theirs.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARQUE -- THAT SAME NIGHT -- MIDWAY IN FULL SWING

A Mexican carnival midway screams.

Girls scream the thrills of being alone and free with their friends in the dark.

Heavy metal spinning rides scream with a rheumatoid pain felt in their joints and rotors, waiting to rest.

Hawkers scream their rutted carnival chants.

And Mexican popular music with saturated bass screams from the Pas of rides that for 15 minutes maintain a tight 4 meter orbit through painted caricatures of movie actors and artists.

ORBITING RIDE

The queer, orbiting ride is tucked into a back corner of the midway. The seats twist like teacups, but, without the ride operators' help, the ride is too calm.

THE OPERATORS

Like nimble indio lumberjacks in the mahogany monterías, the men jump in and out of the deadly metal love seats and, timing the chopping, give them circular momentum. Some eat churros while they push, hanging them from their lips like corn husk cigars. Some just smoke.

THE SPY

He stands in the wet gravel not far from the orbiting ride. It really is an amazing sight, and he watches it like he is waiting for a car accident.

AN ARM

A woman's arm snakes behind the Spy and taps him from the other side. He looks away from the ride, but doesn't see.

THE SPY'S ASSISTANT

Suddenly, there is his assistant. It is Adara, right? Something has changed in her. She smiles, but doesn't speak.

ORBITING RIDE

Together they watch the ride operators time after time just miss the slashing cars.

The silence is long and painless and drowns out the screams.

<EL BAILE DE LOS PERROS -- DOGS FUCK IN THE STREET>

A bitch in heat. But this particular dog has been through it before. She's small, but her teats swing down like the she-wolf who nursed Romulus and Remus. Her eyes are clear. And this is what makes her so easy to identify with.

Two white studs and a smaller black dog with tan clown face bunch up as they follow the bitch.

She can't help but push her tail to one side as she stands by a trash can.

The three males rush up behind her. Growling and jumping up onto their back legs. The black dog tries to be as fierce as he can. He bites the other two, his constant companions.

One of the white dogs rolls the smaller male. Pins him to the ground. The smaller one squeals.

The other white dog makes the bitch in three strides. He takes her initial bites as part of the compromise. He lifts her hind legs up with his front paws, pulling her back to his humping. The bitch screams. She throws her head back and to the side to gnash her teeth at him.

His tongue drapes down from his smiling face. Just doing God's work. A force of nature. And it happens hundreds of times per night here in the city.

FADE TO:

NOTE TO READER: YOU THINK DOGS FUCKING ON SCREEN WAS HARD, WHAT FOLLOWS IS NOT GOING TO BE PRETTY

I just spent the last hour wondering why I was writing this (and tying up some loose ends of the el Cliquero sequences). And it seems I reject the notion that a movie (or a movie script) cannot or should not hurt. My work in the recent past has been criticized for lack of direct confrontation of the issues of the day (and this from the professor who showed me a film made purely of moth's wings). But I believe that the senseless pain that people feel every day due to circumstances beyond their control, and seeming like fate but truly the implications of some dumb fuck bureaucratic butterfly's wings flapping in Washington, in Mexico City, in Tuxtla Gutierrez, at the dinner table--I believe that this pain is the true issue. And so much the worse when those wings are miles across, paid for by the american taxpayers, and flap to the rhythm of hateful religious bigotry and personal financial greed. So here it goes.

THE CLICKER

010.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- THE SAME NIGHT

The street is still hot.

El Cliquero walks on the hot dry sidewalk. His hand is in his pocket. Hot black suit. Death is in his hands.

A POLICEMAN

A metropolitanero cop looks into el Cliquero's eyes. Crossing the street. Steady.

THE SKY

Billboard with muchacha in a string bikini on a cellphone.
Walking uphill.

A light changes to red. He cannot go.

THE STREET

There are no cars. Street is empty. The stoplight is still red.

A STREET CORNER

Green light. Cross street. Stops. The wall is opened. A lot of grass inside. Stop. Hands out of pockets.

EL CLIQUERO

Something about the grass. The grassy knoll.

OLD SHOES

A piece of meat splats near his foot. He looks up. There is a dog.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GRASSY KNOLL -- CONTINUOUS

The Boy whistles for the dog. Will it take another piece of meat? There's more in the bag. He walks slowly to the dog. Bundle in his hand. Here...

Something frightens the dog. A sound? It bolts. Shoot it from here?

THE CLICKER

009.

CUT TO:

THE DOG

El Cliquero aims at the dog. Lead it. Why? Habit. Why shoot the dog?

A boy steps in front of el Cliquero's pistol. STOP. Let pistol fall to side. This boy. The dog boy.

EL CLIQUERO
¿Que haciendo joven?

CUT TO:

THE BOY

The Boy is scared. A man, the same man he saw with his uncle that morning. El Cliquero. He sees the pistol. The dog is getting away. He can no longer hope to...

THE BOY

Pues... Buscando a mi mamá.

CUT TO:

THE BOY

Light falls on his mouth. The boy's voice. He can hear it through the water.

EL CLIQUERO

¿Sí? ¿A dónde?

THE BOY

[...Gredelos...]

Water.

EL CLIQUERO

¿Cómo?

The boy moves back into the light.

THE BOY

En la sangre de los perros.

THE DOG

Pointing to the dog. Now far.

EL CLIQUERO

¿Sí, verdad...?

THE BOY'S ARM

Something. The boy is feeling his arm. Near the shoulder. He dropped his bundle. Blood. He is looking at it. A good amount of blood between his fingers. The boy falls to a knee. The bundle is heavy and probably holds something important.

CUT TO:

EL CLIQUERO

The Boy is down. He is grabbing his shoulder and a spray of blood has slapped the wall and now it is flowing from his shoulder and through his hand. El Cliquero just stands there. But then something happens. Why won't he help the Boy? The Boy needs his help. Didn't he hear THE SHOT? The Boy is looking, but he can't see anything. He is looking, but he needs help. Soon. Dizzy. The Boy screams out.

SOMEONE SHOT THE BOY

When the Boy screams, el Cliquero moves. The sound of the scream in his hearing aid.

And then, from somewhere comes the Ice Cream Truck theme. As if it's playing just for them. El Cliquero searches for the source.

He sees the boy is hurt badly. The boy tries to get up and stumbles. Stay down, he motions.

El Cliquero is scanning the roofs. This is the time. They have come for him. He will give them something. He pulls his pistol. Get out of the light.

El Cliquero pulls back out of the light. Back to the shadows.

THE BOY'S FACE

Shallow breaths. El Cliquero is gone. The dog is gone. His arm is numb. The blood pounds in his ears. He needs to move. Get help for himself. It is difficult to swallow. Now. Now.

NOW HELP THE BOY

The Ice Cream Truck theme. When you think you have all the time in the world, you may be running out. Not for you, but for the boy. For his mama.

There he goes. He tries to stand. El Cliquero whistles to him. Was it loud enough?

The boy tries to stand. He needs help. Go to him. Just a boy. He's up. Whistle. Go to him. Now.

El Cliquero moves. The boy moves. He can't, he's dizzy. No. He turns.

The boy finds his eye. Reaches out. What is he thinking about?

The boy is hit again, in the skullcap. Like a fountain from the parks of el Cliquero's youth. When the fountains had water. The water blows onto his face as if he were ever going to make it to the ocean again.

The boy is two meters from el Cliquero. He falls away from him.

THE DOG

From across the knoll, the dog turns.

THE BOY

His calves. Red soaked white socks. The shorts. Escuela Absalón Castellanos shirt. The body is empty. No movement.

The body looks as if it has been here in the gravel and grass forever.

FADE OUT:

LA MÚSICA

In the dark. A cheap radio plays latin music. And behind the music, a soft breeze.

FADE TO:

EXT. LATIN AMERICAN CEMENT BUILDING -- LATE MORNING

A boy swings a hammock in the morning heat. A palm tree gives him shade. And the metal roofs.

A bird circles the tree and lands in it.

A TRANSISTOR RADIO

The boy holds a Japanese transistor radio, butterscotch pudding colored. The antenna is broken off at the thickest segment. The wrist strap is dirty, but intact.

The boy flips the tuning dial. Misses. Returns to the latin station and flips it again. It hits an American rock and roll station dead on.

THE CEMENT BUILDING

The hammock, the kid, the palm tree and the sky. And Loverboy playing on the radio. "You wanna piece of my heart? You better start from the start..."

An American troop transport flies just overhead, low and loud and fucking big. The palm tree sways.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE GRASSY KNOLL -- MOMENTS LATER

By the boy's leg. There is a radio. El Cliquero bends to touch it. He pulls it. Still connected to the boy's headset. Red light on.

THE RADIO

He pulls the boy's headset plug out of the jack. Then he stands up.

THE HEARING AID

He pulls the cable out of his hearing aid and plugs it into the boy's radio. Quiet. He turns it up. Snow. White noise. The water is gone.

MISCELLANEOUS

The boy's bundle. And what's in the backpack? Gently, el Cliquero unwraps the boy's pistol from the bundle. Without much surprise, he picks it up. Puts it into his coat pocket.

The backpack. It holds some meat and books. A bolsita of meat. That goes into the other pocket. A school book. That stays.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOLE IN THE SHEET METAL WALL -- LATER

El Cliquero pushes through the metal wall. Light from a small fire.

THE FIRE

He drops the bag of meat by a leg at the fire.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EL CLIQUERO'S CUARTO -- LATER

A hammock. A shelf. El Cliquero finishes rolling a corn husk cigar. He lights it. A few people squat by the fire. Cooking the meat.

He sits in doorway. Smoking. Dust on his suit.

EVEN LATER

The suit jacket hangs. He pulls himself into the hammock wearing a white tank top and his pants. He pulls on a hat. A black hat. A ski mask. A black ski mask, it comes down over his eyes.

EL CLIQUERO'S EYES THROUGH THE ZAPATISTA MASK

They stare out of the holes in the mask. He closes them to sleep.

FADE TO:

INT. HOLE IN THE SHEET METAL WALL -- LATER, BUT NOT MORNING

A flashlight. On the end of a rifle. An M-16. At least four dark blue helmets with night vision goggles. Peering through the hole in the wall.

Firing. Dust flying. Leaves falling. Wood splintering. Sparks and embers. The door to el Cliquero's cuarto. Bullet holes, torn off the hinge. The jacket hangs on the wall. The hammock is empty. The ski mask is gone. With el Cliquero.

The helmets push the bodies with their boots. They thrust their rifles into dark spaces.

DISSOLVE TO:

LA UNIDAD HEADLINE: [SON OF US CONSUL MURDERED. EZLN DESPERATION?]

EL ORBE HEADLINE: [ZAPATISTA TERROR:] ¿CÓMO JAMÁS? PICTURE OF THE MASSACRE.

LA CONSTITUCIÓN HEADLINE: [DEATH THROES OF EZLN?]

FADE TO:

PART TWO

INT. STATE COLLEGE DORM ROOM (FALL 1984) -- NIGHT -- BEATRIZ

It's funny that for the first two times you have seen Beatriz she has been having sex. Well, the first didn't count, did it? I mean it was a dream. And this is a flashback. She really is a wonderful person, healthy, sexual...sure..., smart. So warm it's hard to believe. Especially at this state college. She is like a dream. Like the dream a man has before he is a man of the perfect partner. Friend, lover, confidant: someone he yearns for, but doesn't need to yearn for, because her love of him is so complete and perfect. Like I said, a dream.

Anyway, it's dark, but a streetlight burns through the window. And it is clear, but cold. A quick burst of snow dust. Voices from below travel well.

Inside, Beatriz is dripping sweat. Her eyes are open. She is moving slowly and breathing. Her hair is... she has hair. She looks young and full and her hair is wavy. But one strand is stuck to her forehead. Wet. She is wearing a navy blue college sweatshirt. Her neck is taut and naked under the collar.

While the light falls on her face, it doesn't illuminate *his* face until he leans up to kiss her--

YOUNG BEATRIZ
(surprised as you are)
Who the hell are you?!

It's not the Spy. Who the hell is it? It's just SOME GUY. But, she's joking with him.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)
Oh, don't be mad--I kid with you.
Come here.

She kisses his mouth.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)
Come to me.

INT. STATE COLLEGE DORM HALL -- CONTINUOUS

The young Spy as seen earlier, in Panama, but younger and stupider. He is tipsy and wearing a brown corduroy jacket lined with fake lambswool.

His companion is JODI (pronounced JOE-DIE when she's drunk) THE ROCKER. She is a heavy metal local girl who shocks him, thrills him, and embarrasses him a little bit. Why? She is gorgeous, tall, has long curly hair, a soft body, and he loves her. He doesn't know what to talk about with her, but if he would just shut up and for once trust what his hormones are telling him it would all work out.

Oh. There was that little incident with her kickboxing ex-boyfriend showing up at his room late one night, and when he answered the door and Jodi was asleep in his bed... just feet from the door... teased red and black hair sticking out over the pillow and end of the bed. And nothing happened-- the guy just didn't see her or didn't recognize her hair. He even apologized. Before someone phoned the authorities. Yeah.

Well, that's another script.

In this script, they stop at the door.

YOUNG SPY
Okay. Where's my fuckin' key?

JODI
Lemme check--

Checking his pockets.

YOUNG SPY
(ticklish)
Oh, stop, here, I got it. Waitamminute.

He cranes his neck. What's happening inside?

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)
Oh shit. [Laughs and cringes] He's
in there with Charro!

Jodi leans to the door and listens.

JODI
(and this is an example
of how great Jodi
was)
I thought preppy assholes were
supposed to leave a tie on the door
knob when they were fucking someone.

YOUNG SPY
Hey, I'm a preppy asshole.

JODI
You're not a preppy.

He leans her against the wall near the door. And kisses her.

JODI (CONT'D)
You smell like pabst blue ribbon.

He looks at her in her long ratty coat, her teased up red hair, her deathly white makeup. Black lipstick.

YOUNG SPY
No, you're the preppy. Follow me.

They walk to the lounge.

INT. STATE COLLEGE DORM LOUNGE

Ungodly hot in there. The steam radiators hiss hatefully and clang an uneven rhythm. The young Spy cranks open a window. Some relief comes with a rush of heavy, cold air.

They take off their coats.

YOUNG SPY
But enough about me.

JODI
Have you finished your tape loops?

YOUNG SPY
My homework?

JODI
Shut up. You said you were working on a new one for me. No Throbbing Gristle again? This time?

He leans back on the couch. She sits across from him.

YOUNG SPY
Shit, I really wanted to play them for you.

JODI
We can wait until she leaves.

YOUNG SPY
I think she's staying.

JODI
Come on, bud, you can sneak in there.

He laughs.

YOUNG SPY
No, just let me tell you about it. You know I've been taking the audiology class.

JODI
Yeah, I wanna take that, too.

YOUNG SPY
I wish I could tell you this with a straight face. We had a woman come in this Friday. She has this thing, this dial, that makes these subsonic noises at certain frequencies.

(MORE)

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

But the frequencies correspond to, well, to real things. Like to atomic weights. And the atomic weights correspond to elements. Like uranium. You know me, I quit taking chemistry in high school. Enough is enough. But Ray, Ray Snyder, the drug guy. He is helping her set up and he dials in the atomic weight of some drug that he makes--

JODI

Or tries to make...

YOUNG SPY

Wait a minute, he dials it up and I put on the headphones and I can't fucking talk. It's a downer. I can barely get my hands up to the headphones to take them off. It's fucking brilliant. She's trying to use it to beat cancer or some shit like that, but think about it...

JODI

Okay, so what did you do?

YOUNG SPY

Think about it. What would you do?

JODI

Crack some books.

He shrugs and nods.

JODI (CONT'D)

What?

YOUNG SPY

Well. I took the theme from the ice cream truck.

JODI

Mister Titty Twister? It always makes me cry.

YOUNG SPY

The sound...

JODI

Yeah, that song.

YOUNG SPY

Yeah, I got that song.

JODI

Fuck off.

YOUNG SPY

No, I got it.

JODI

(dawning finally)

Wait. They could just give you the frequency for cyanide. Then what? They must be doing it now.

YOUNG SPY

Who's "they"?

JODI

Well if they're teaching it in a state school don't you think the government already knows?

YOUNG SPY

This is a good school.

JODI

But you got high?

YOUNG SPY

Yeah!

JODI

And then it went away right away?

YOUNG SPY

When I took off the headset. But--

JODI

Fuck.

YOUNG SPY

Yeah. Sounds like bullshit. I'm gonna play it for you tomorrow.

JODI

What did you do to it? What element?

YOUNG SPY

Not an element. A lack... of something. Subtractive.

JODI

You took something away? From what?

YOUNG SPY

From the normal sound of a human body. With all the elements in harmony. A disharmony. You'll see.

(MORE)

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

You'll feel it, then tell me what it is. I'll play it tomorrow. You'll hear it.

JODI

You are fucked up. But it sounds cool. Can you sneak in?

He laughs.

YOUNG SPY

Tomorrow.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COLLEGE DORM COURTYARD (FALL 1984) -- DAY

First a droning warm up loop. Almost sounds like feedback. A vibration.

Typical day in the courtyard. Volleyball. Guitar. Frisbee. Hand-holding. Some outside studying. Very little studying. Another source of music: a little radio. An old Lambretta scooter.

A few people look up to the source of the drone. But it's a small annoyance on an otherwise beautiful day. And they've heard it before.

DORM WINDOW

One huge speaker is tilted up into the window of the Young Spy's room. Three feet tall. The screen is off to show its tremendous woofers and tweeters. Like megaphones. They ring with the vibrations of the loop.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE DORM -- THE FOUR TRACK RECORDER

The cassette on the four track spins. The drone continues. Then slowly it shifts. Another sound, coming through in fits. Grinding. A shrill scratch.

COURTYARD

The students cover their ears. Some yell up to the room. "Come on...!"

Jodi sits cross-legged, leaning against a wall. Looks up from her book.

THE FOUR TRACK RECORDER

The grinding ticks away as the cassette turns. A plastic, hollow clicking sound. And then, a low rumbling bass hum.

COURTYARD

A few faces turn up to the window. Suddenly, the Ice Cream Truck theme surfaces from the bass hum. Smiles. A laugh echoes.

JODI

She looks around to the others. They recognize the tune.

THE FOUR TRACK RECORDER

Turns and turns.

DORM WINDOW SPEAKER

From inches away, the paper cones pump and throb to the sweet Ice Cream Truck theme.

THE FOUR TRACK RECORDER

Turns as it plays. The Young Spy's hand slowly twists the volume knob, fading out. Then, index finger pushes "halt" on the German-made recorder.

INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM -- DOOR

The Young Spy's door creaks slowly. It is silent in the courtyard. A bird. A car passes.

YOUNG SPY

Jodi?

He takes off his headset.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LADYMAN'S CAFE (WINTER 1984-5) -- ENTRY

The Young Spy carries his backpack and waits to be seated. A dyed blonde waitress grabs a menu and walks him to the back.

LADYMAN'S WAITRESS

One?

She puts the menu down at a table, barely watching.

LADYMAN'S WAITRESS (CONT'D)

(swivels back)

Coffee?

YOUNG SPY

Yes.

He sees another waitress in the front end of the cafe. She is joking with the Ladyman's regulars at the pie counter. It's Jodi in a yellow uniform and white apron.

She doesn't look back.

LADYMAN'S WAITRESS
What can I get ya this afternoon?

YOUNG SPY
Coffee?

LADYMAN'S WAITRESS
Yeah, it's brewing now.

YOUNG SPY
Can I still get eggs?

LADYMAN'S WAITRESS
After 2pm we don't serve breakfast
anymore. You know that by now, honey.
How about a tuna fish salad?

YOUNG SPY
And fries?

LADYMAN'S WAITRESS
Chips...

He folds the menu and gives it to her.

LADYMAN'S WAITRESS (CONT'D)
I'll be right back.

DISSOLVE TO:

ICEBERG LETTUCE WITH A LITTLE TUNA LEFT

He lifts the last chip to his mouth and slides off the bench
grabbing the check. "Thanks (heart) Laurie."

He shuffles to the counter. And to Jodi. She is reading.

YOUNG SPY
Busy?

JODI
You all set?

YOUNG SPY
Hi.

A guy in a plaid touring cap turns on his stool. Nosey.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)
Well?

JODI IS NORMAL

Jodi has bleached the red and black out of her hair. Her lips
are pale pink, in fact she's not wearing any makeup.

She looks soft and too warm. Tired. Feverish.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

Anything?

JODI

Wanna give me your check?

She takes his money and check, ringing up quickly. He takes her outside. Looking at the shithead on the stool.

YOUNG SPY

Excuse us.

They only make it a few steps outside.

JODI

I can't go anywhere. I'm on till 8.

YOUNG SPY

What happened?

JODI

It made me want to eat dirt, you fuck. Okay? Dirt! I'm sitting there watching the courtyard and all I can think of is scratching, digging, scraping away the grass to get at the earth. And to eat it.

YOUNG SPY

Whoa.

JODI

I still want to.

Nothing.

JODI (CONT'D)

Yeah. So way to go. Don't make anything for me again... That was enough. Plenty.

He hands her a book.

YOUNG SPY

Here's your--

And as she's going back through the door.

JODI

And please forget how you did that.

THE PIE COUNTER

Jodi turns off the coffee behind the counter. Pies revolve in the case. There goes key lime. Banana cream.

GUY ON STOOL

What you reading, Jodi?

She looks at the book the Young Spy handed her. It's hers. "Jodi Watley." It is a history of medieval medicine. The cover: a woodcut of the body divided into sections.

JODI

One of my witch books. Medieval elements.

(turns sharply)

Wanna borrow it, Jimbo?

The man waves his arms to ward it away.

FADE TO:

INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM (SPRING 1985) -- DAY

The telephone. Its cord spirals imperfectly from the base to the handset. It's always tempting to try to fix these things. Especially while talking with your mom.

YOUNG SPY

...Right.

He walks to the window, stretching the cord to its limits. Pulling the base. He pushes the windows open.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

This past weekend? Did she bring...?
Oh.

He sits on the bed.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

Hmm.

Lies back.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

Yeah. Huh? Oh, yeah. Nearly everything I wanted. Still can't get that, that--right. I guess you have to be a minor in it to get in. Yeah.

Sits back up.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

What? You did? How are they? That's good...Why?

He stands and walks to his desk.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

Wow.

Sits at his desk. Turns on desk lamp.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)
Okay, Mom. No, I'm okay.

Straightens papers.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)
I don't know---oops. Something
happening? Yeah. I have to go, too.

He swivels in his chair. He looks out the window.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)
Oh, I--I think I did something stupid
today. No. It's too late. I'm--anyway.
Naw. I'll tell you about it next
time. We're both in a hurry. Yeah.
It's small. It's about a girl. Yeah.
It's fine. Sorry. Okay. I love you.
Yep. Okay. Love you, Mom. Bye.

He hangs up.

He swivels back. Looks at the paper on his desk.

MILITARY DOCUMENT

At the bottom, a signature unreadable. The name blank is not filled in. An oversight. Moving up, it is easy to read that the document is confirmation of someone's US Army recruitment. His.

INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM

The Spy leans back in his chair. The cicadas are cycling. It is hot and green outside.

FADE TO:

INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM (FALL 1985) -- AFTERNOON

Fall leaves. Orange and red trees, and a rustle of wind. The windows in the Young Spy's room open onto the courtyard. The speaker is turned away from the window. The Velvet Underground play a live version of "I'm waiting for my man".

The Young Spy lies on his (or is it his roommates?) beanbag chair. Not far from sleep.

The door creaks open. Slowly like the wind.

YOUNG SPY
Okay--

No one speaks up.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

Come in!

He leans his head over to see the door. Someone waves a book--
"Introduction to the History and Philosophy of Science" by
Noretta Koertge.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (O.S.)

Peace--I surrender.

YOUNG SPY

Yeah, come in. Ted's not here.

Sweet Beatriz pushes the door open with her head.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

No, your book. I am ready to get rid
of it.

YOUNG SPY

Oh. I was looking for that.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

I had it, remember?

YOUNG SPY

Right. But Ted's not here.

She puts the book down on his bed.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

That doesn't matter any more. Ted
and I broke up. A month ago?

YOUNG SPY

Oh, I wondered why I hadn't seen you
lately.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

We're still friends. He's a nice
guy. Thanks for the book.

She moves to the door.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

You make that music outside?

He rolls his head over again.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

That repeating thing.

YOUNG SPY

Yeah. I do.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

It's cool.

She closes the door softly. And is gone.

YOUNG SPY

Thanks...

A NOTE IN THE BOOK

"Do you have anything a little more mindless? But really, do you have something that is an easier introduction? I'd like to borrow. By the way, my roommate tells me that you look great in a towel! Ciao, Beatriz. PS How does she know?"

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEXICO CITY AIRPORT -- WINTER 1985

Flight information in Spanish echoes around foreigners in white linen suits. Beatriz leads the Young Spy by the hand through the airport.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

Oh, quick, give me a kiss.

He does. She won't let go.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

You think Forrest Hall is a place to keep virgins, you should see my family's house.

YOUNG SPY

Huh?

She winks at him and they move on.

A small group of 10 people all shriek at once. And Beatriz, too.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

¡Mamá, Papi!

She rushes to them and embraces and kisses each one. He is left flat-footed in his flip flops, shifting and watching.

When the kissing dies down. More than a few are staring at the Young Spy.

YOUNG SPY

Ho-la.

FLIP FLOPS

PAPÁ DE BEATRIZ

Hi, young man. Nice to meet you.

They shake hands. He gives a kiss to her mother. She is losing her hair.

MAMÁ DE BEATRIZ

¡Qué guapo!

EXT. AIRPORT SIDEWALK -- LATER

The Young Spy and Beatriz's father walk side by side. They don't look at each other openly, but sneak glances. When the sound of incoming planes dies away, the sound of the flip flops. Her father glances down.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MEXICO CITY STREET -- LATER

Three cars pull through a gate. Beatriz gets out of the first one. The Young Spy from the third.

INT. THE MONFORTINO HOME -- KITCHEN

A line of Beatriz's relatives snakes through the kitchen and into the home. The Young Spy drags his bag near the back.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (O.S.)

[Where did he go?]

INT. THE MONFORTINO HOME -- LIVING ROOM

A dream-like miniature waterfall flows from the top of the living room wall. The water pours over a ledge, down the wall, and into a pool near the floor.

There are more people here. The grandparents, seated, very old and Spanish. Of course, for them, the important thing is that Beatriz has come home. The boy is something she brought, a present. But that can wait.

BOBBY is Beatriz's younger brother. Wild and thin. He is in university in la Ciudad.

BOBBY

(to Young Spy)

¿Qué tal?

YOUNG SPY

Hi.

BOBBY

Sprachen Zie Deutsch?

YOUNG SPY

No.

BOBBY

Me neither. Let me take you to where they are going to keep you.

He grabs the bag and drags it out of the living room. Beatriz raises her eyebrows to the Young Spy as he leaves the room. That is the way it is.

INT. THE MONFORTINO HOME -- OLDER BROTHERS' ROOM

There are two beds in here. An air con unit. Green flower curtains. Very dark. A fireplace.

BOBBY

You want a shower? They'll be a while.

The bag on the bed.

YOUNG SPY

Later.

There is a matrix of pictures on the wall.

BOBBY

Señor, let me introduce you to the Monfortino family. Mira. This is the best information you can get.

He points to the wall.

INSERT: PICTURE #1

BOBBY (CONT'D)

This is--

YOUNG SPY

Lee Harvey Oswald--

BOBBY

No, this is Alvaro. He is a doctor who lives in Michoacan.

INSERT: PICTURE #2

BOBBY (CONT'D)

This is a picture of two melons.

YOUNG SPY

Holy--

BOBBY

My oldest sister Carolina.

INSERT: PICTURE #3

BOBBY (CONT'D)

This is Ricky. He is in the States.

INSERT: PICTURE #4

BOBBY (CONT'D)
This is Carlitos. My brother who
died. This is his room.

YOUNG SPY
How did he die?

BOBBY
In a car.

INSERT: PICTURE #5

BOBBY (CONT'D)
This is me when I was a boy. I love
that bike.

INSERT: PICTURE #6

BOBBY (CONT'D)
This is Alfonso. Mi primo. How do
you call that?

YOUNG SPY
Huh? Your what?

BOBBY
Cousin, I think.

INSERT: PICTURE #7

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Bruno with his caballo in Oaxaca. He
is crazy now.

YOUNG SPY
What happened?

BOBBY
Nothing. He's just crazy.

INSERT: PICTURE #8

BOBBY (CONT'D)
This is Celi. My other sister. You'll
meet her later. She is more beautiful
than Beatriz, no?

INSERT: PICTURE #9

BOBBY (CONT'D)
This is Daniel. He is like a
revolutionary. He looks like Fidel.
He doesn't smoke, though. Doesn't
like cigars.

INSERT: PICTURE #10

BOBBY (CONT'D)
This is Eduardo. El olvidado.

INSERT: PICTURE #11

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Esther. She does smoke cigars. There she's in Paris. She lives in Barcelona with her cats. I miss her.

YOUNG SPY
She is your sister, too?

BOBBY
No, of course not. My primo. Whatever that is.

INSERT: PICTURE #12

BOBBY (CONT'D)
This is Eva. Not related. I don't know how her picture shows up here. That's my house, though.

YOUNG SPY
She looks like Esther.

BOBBY
It might be Esther again. I don't know.

INSERT: PICTURE #13

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Nieves. "Snow". Because he's so cool. He's a lawyer now.

YOUNG SPY
He *is* wearing a suit.

BOBBY
Yeah, but he could play rock.

YOUNG SPY
No more?

BOBBY
No.

INSERT: PICTURE #14, 15, 16

BOBBY (CONT'D)
And this is Severino, Arsenio, and Vichana. Look at that gut. He's proud of that gut.

YOUNG SPY
You swim around here?

BOBBY
Mostly at the beach. Not here.

YOUNG SPY
And check out that hair.

BOBBY
Yeah, Arsenio likes the jungle. And
it makes his hair crazy. Chinos.

YOUNG SPY
China?

BOBBY
No, curly. You'll like him. I know
he'll like you.

RETURN TO SCENE -- OLDER BROTHERS' ROOM

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Okay, you should take a shower now.
More fun later. Then you can meet
the picture people. Ciao.

The door swings closed. The wind blows through the bars on
the windows. You can see some of the city through the
curtains. Water tanks and trees. A truck passes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT -- AFTERNOON

A miniature brown Fiat sedan. The doors are open. Beatriz's
mother is handing in a tied package of food wrapped in cloth.
Beatriz squeezes past the Spy into the back of the car. A
YOUNG ARSENIO sits in the driver's seat. He looks pretty
much like his picture on the wall. Long wide curls of black
hair--not quite an afro. A fuzzy, wide mustache and eyes
black as the night.

The engine is chattering. It is hot and they are impatient
to go. Beatriz's mother won't let go of her hand. Her father
is running up to clean the windshield.

YOUNG ARSENIO
No. No. Está bien. Por favor, esta
bien. Gracias. Gracias. Hasta luego.
Hasta pronto.

YOUNG BEATRIZ
Bye Mamí. Bye Papi.

The Young Spy waves as they back out of the drive.

YOUNG ARSENIO
Say hello to granny...

The parents wave at the gate.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT -- TWILIGHT

Beatriz hangs on the Spy's shoulders from the back.

Wide, dry, flat land ringed with mountains. Cactus. Maguey Agave. Dust is already caked around the windshield.

EXT. MEXICAN ROAD -- TWILIGHT

Behind the Fiat, a dust plume rises 20 feet high and 300 yards long. Telephone poles.

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT -- MORNING

The first bits of light appear between the mountains as the Fiat winds around the tree-lined road. Below, up and down the mountains, native milpas--personal farming plots--with rows of corn, cotton, beans.

YOUNG SPY
Are you tired?

Arsenio shrugs. Beatriz is asleep in the back. The Spy settles back. Arsenio lights a joint. For himself.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MEXICAN ROAD -- AFTERNOON -- THE PUEBLO

The Fiat ambles down a red earth road, passing small homesteads. The wheels sink deep into the dry, smooth potholes.

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT -- CONTINUOUS

Arsenio turns the Fiat down a long straight road between two green fields.

YOUNG ARSENIO
[It's down here. Remember?]

YOUNG BEATRIZ
[No. How could I?]

YOUNG ARSENIO
[She will remember you.]

YOUNG SPY
Is this it?

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)

Every morning she makes the tortillas
from her own masa. You can't stop
her.

YOUNG SPY

Oh?

They finally come to a halt. Their abuela is patting the
window, impatient for it to open.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

Abue!

FADE TO:

INT. CAFETERÍA EL AMARILLO -- SMOKY NIGHT -- EL PATRONCITO

El Patroncito waits. He looks down to his coffee. He adjusts
the spoon.

Another drag. Looks to where the door might be. The bill
lies under some change in front of his coffee. He neatly
taps the lit cigarette in the ashtray to put it out. He slides
out of the booth.

Empty booth.

FADE TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL MARKET -- MORNING

The shortwave radio is in the street. Near the curb. Under
the leg of a sleeping dog.

SHORTWAVE RADIO

It plays the Ice Cream Truck theme. Over and over.

EL CLIQUERO

He sleeps, too. Between the bodies of the three short-haired,
scabby dogs. He wears his stocking cap, rolled up, his suit
pants and tank top. Cold and dirty, he could be a borracho.
His eyes are too clear.

He pulls his headphones out from under one of the dogs. He reaches for the shortwave receiver.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. EL CLIQUERO'S CUARTO -- NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

His hearing aid lies near the empty, swinging hammock.

DISSOLVE TO:

BACK TO SCENE

El Cliquero rolls over to the curb. He realizes where he is. And why. A heavy black wool skirt brushes by him. The woman has a board full of goat heads resting on her head. She is walking into the heart of the market. A place to hide.

The dogs awaken as he walks away.

INT. SAN CRISTÓBAL MARKET -- SERIES OF SHOTS

A) Time passes quickly.

B) A native Mexican woman nurses her child on the ground. A dog sniffs the baby as it passes.

C) A stand is filled with Chinese electronics. TVs, radios, toys, lights, cameras. A man watches listlessly.

D) A man pedals a bicycle with a stone front wheel to sharpen a long machete.

E) Dogs walk in twos and threes, slinking past food.

F) Three women in black wool skirts and bright colored jackets brush by el Cliquero with their wares.

G) It is beginning to get dark.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL MARKET -- TWILIGHT

El Cliquero is tired. He sits on a crate near a red Coca-Cola tent. Tent flap is blowing in the wind. A girl runs by him and kicks his foot as she passes. It hurts. He turns.

From around the corner, a black combat boot splatters mud. It is followed by another. And then a herd of boots running past. The flap blows and covers him. He pulls the flap around him.

Once they are gone, he looks up. Can't hear. Can't feel them. Are they staring down at him?

He moves to hide behind the tent. He slips between it and the brick wall of the inner market, invisible in the concave fold of canvas.

The canvas blows. Pushes against his arms and face.

EL CLIQUERO

There is a female scream that he cannot hear. A baby cries; he can't hear it. Shouts he can't hear. But he can remember. And remembering is stronger than hearing.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SAN CRISTÓBAL MARKET -- MORNING -- BEHIND THE FLAP

He spent the entire night standing. Listening. Tricks on his inner ear and no sleep. He squeezes through the gap between the tent and the market building. And back into the market.

NARROW MARKET AISLE

He walks past a broken tent prop. A stand has been pulled down into the mud. 100 tomatoes crushed into the walk. Few tienditas are left standing. The Chinese stuff is fine. A woman passes him. Her face is cut. Swollen. A baby is on her back.

No sign of the black boots.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SAN CRISTÓBAL MARKET -- LATER -- COMEDORS [FOOD STALLS]

Hungry. El Cliquero smells the cooking food. The dogs smell it, too.

A small stall. A woman with green plastic shoes cleans up. Several of her tables are cracked off mid-leg. She sweeps. He watches.

THE BROOM

He walks to her and he takes the broom. She resists until he pulls hard. Her face is blackened. From her ear, around the back of her neck. Her eye has a broken blood vessel. She yells at him.

He waits until she walks back to her stall.

EL CLIQUERO

He watches her for a moment. Then he begins to fix the broken tables and chairs.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE COMEDOR

A bowl of soup cools on the table. He has just fixed the table. The old woman owner with white hair.

She calls to him. His back is turned. The woman with the plastic shoes takes him by his elbow and shows him the soup. He looks from the soup to the owner, then back.

AT THE TABLE -- LATER

His ski mask hangs out of his pocket. Over the back of his chair as he eats. Two boys race past. They pull it from his pocket.

Most stalls are fixed now. A few customers come in.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE COMEDOR -- LATER -- THE KITCHEN

He is inside the kitchen. It is quiet. He leans against a wall inside.

He fumbles with the shortwave radio. Turns it on. He pulls out his hearing aid headphones. The antenna. He plugs in his headphones.

THE RADIO

He tunes the dial. Past baseball. Past old music. Past numbers. And a music box.

EL CLIQUERO

Sudden. The woman with plastic shoes grabs his arm hard. And then she drags him toward the back of the kitchen. She shoves him. Out the window. She follows. Up and over.

MARKET ALLEY

In a narrow alley, the two of them run toward the main market building. She pushes him the whole way. He turns his head to the left. He passes gaps in the walls and he sees the boots. Running to the comedor.

INT. MAIN MARKET BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

They arrive in the main building. Fruits. Piles of bread. Mounds of cheese. Meat hangs. She drags him to a mausoleum shaped meat counter free-standing at one end of the building. Meat drapes down on top of the counter's paper covering. Nearly touching the floor. His savior lifts one end of the paper and the heavy, fly-specked beef.

She shoves him under it, to a small, square door.

INT. UNDER THE MEAT COUNTER

El Cliquero crouches. She shoves him again. Through the door. And then she swings it closed. The darkness is shocking. He can see to make it to the lower part of the space.

Furthest from the door.

She covers the door frame with paper and meat. Even darker.

How long? The smell of the meat. He takes long, quick breaths.

The door quickly opens again.

THE CLICKER

She puts *the clicker* just inside the door. How did she get it? And then it's dark again. Long, quick breaths. Close.

FADE TO:

INT. UNDER THE MEAT COUNTER -- LATER

Dark. The breathing is slower. Asleep. Shuffle at the door. The door swings open to more darkness. A vague female outline. She's back. He wakes immediately. Calm.

ZAPATISTA WOMAN

[You awake?]

EL CLIQUERO

(too loud)

[Hey, who are you?]

ZAPATISTA WOMAN

[We're not safe yet. Keep it down just a bit.]

EL CLIQUERO

(to himself)

[Woman, what are you doing? Don't you know who I am?]

ZAPATISTA WOMAN

[Well we got a pretty good idea. They want you pretty bad.]

EL CLIQUERO

(to himself)

[Why are you doing this?]

ZAPATISTA WOMAN

[They say my brother called for the municipales to turn themselves in. To disarm and turn themselves over to the FPR for their crimes.]

He grunts. Clears his throat.

ZAPATISTA WOMAN (CONT'D)

[So he was assassinated. And I wasn't here.]

(MORE)

ZAPATISTA WOMAN (CONT'D)

The Governor is taking a tough angle on the revolutionary groups, hacking them away like the overgrown selva.]

She reaches into her jacket.

ZAPATISTA WOMAN (CONT'D)

[But they just pruned my brother. My little brother. My little brother who used to listen to me and read my ranting letters--he listened and read, and then he believed. And then he started to fight and then he started to win his luchas. And people started to listen to *his* ranting speeches.]

Still feeling for something.

ZAPATISTA WOMAN (CONT'D)

[It taught me something. Somos todos Zapatistas. Divided we fall, as the americans used to say. If two members of the FPR die shot in the heads--no one gives a shit. What do they even stand for? But if the government starts killing Zapatistas, we're like sacred cows. See what happens: the world explodes. As long as the world doesn't forget us, no?]

She strikes a match.

ZAPATISTA WOMAN (CONT'D)

[Don't you think?]

The match lights up her face. It's Adara. Not the woman with plastic shoes. She sees his face.

ADARA

[Oh, you got it bad, eh?]

A drag. And we see her again.

ADARA (CONT'D)

[Where are we taking you? Huh? You don't talk much...]

She crouches and moves closer. She reaches out her hand. To his face. He doesn't flinch. Perhaps he has forgotten.

ADARA (CONT'D)

[Did this just happen?]

She turns his head gently and touches his face. More triage than a caress.

ADARA (CONT'D)

[No. I guess no. You can't hear me, can you? You've seen some action, though. You seem to be doing alright. Tough little shit.]

CLOSE ON HER HAND

ADARA (CONT'D)

[Here.]

She hands him the clicker.

BACK TO SCENE

She smiles. She offers him her cigarette. He waves it off with a reproachful finger.

She smiles again.

ADARA (CONT'D)

[Tough little shit. And straight arrow.]

FADE TO:

EXT. EL CHORILLO APARTMENTS (1989) -- EVENING -- GRASS

Sirens are serenading the city. There is a rosy sky. End of the day. At the end of this day, things will be very different.

A young boy plays in a patch of grass. Above, approaching, but still kilometers away, helicopters. One of them plays the Ice Cream Truck theme. He is interested. What is it?

His mother looks down from their 12th floor walkup balcony railing. She tilts her head to hear the song. It is beautiful. She sees him. As if he were watching TV.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXPLOSION

One of two 2-ton bombs falls on El Chorillo. A building is cut in half.

CUT TO:

EXT. EL CHORILLO (1989) -- AN HOUR LATER

Two identical high rise towers burn together.

Helicopters swarm the air. At least 30 buildings are now on fire. On the ground, people try to run in a crouch. Afraid to stand. Afraid to be noticed. A spotlight swipes the grass. Throbbing machine gun fire. Bullets whistle past.

The young boy we saw earlier. His face is burned. His shirt. He is walking. In the distance, behind him, a wide blackened spot. And a body. Face down. Distant.

US troops stream past in diamond formations.

THE PHOTOJOURNALIST

A guy in a tan vest with two 35mm cameras slung on his shoulder. His third camera is pointed at the half-building. Still on fire.

He is shot from above. A PA warns him as he bleeds.

HUEY PA SYSTEM

Warning! Members of the media, photographers, journalists: due to hostile and extreme conditions members of the US military cannot ensure your security. Please evacuate the area as soon as possible! Your presence is in danger of compromising the operation. We urge you to comply immediately. Thank you for your cooperation.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HUEY #1 (1989) -- MOMENTS LATER

The tiger shark mouth on the side of the helicopter seems to be laughing.

INT. HUEY #1 (1989)

The Young Spy leans against the wall of his helicopter. His headphones are low on his neck. He sits on his helmet.

YOUNG SPY

Cap.

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL

Kid.

YOUNG SPY

Fuckin' eh. Did you know about this?

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL

I couldn't have told you if I did.

He wraps the cable around his headphones and places them in his bag.

HUEY #1 PILOT/VIRGIL (CONT'D)

But I didn't. I had no idea.

YOUNG SPY

Me neither...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PANAMA CITY SKIES (1989) -- AFTERNOON

Another helicopter whines overhead. This little war is finished. Below, a line of desert tan Humvees passes rowdily. An American flag is draped on an antenna, flapping heavily.

INT. HUMVEE (1989)

The Young Spy stares out the window. A suburban, middle class, white family sits in folding chairs. In their front yard. Picket fence. Fucking picket fence. They are standing now, clapping.

They hold up signs, hand-made last night.

"Thank you for a job well done!"

EXT. HUMVEE (1989)

A lone middle finger pressed up against the glass. Good-bye Panama.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARQUE -- AFTERNOON

The Spy. His black t-shirt has white letters: "¿Cuántos carajos más?" He is eating three tacos on a bench.

What is he watching?

THE SPY

Me neither...

Ice Cream Truck lingers in the air.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RECORDING ROOM -- DAY

Adara sits, reading the numbers.

EXT. OUTSIDE OFFICE

Just arriving, the Spy quietly slips into the office.

RECORDING ROOM

Adara looks up from the sheet of numbers during the musical refrain.

TWO WAY MIRROR -- REFLECTION OF ADARA

She can't see a thing on the other side.

THE OFFICE

He stares at her as she reads.

ADARA'S EYES

She winks at him. And smiles.

TWO WAY MIRROR -- REFLECTION OF ADARA

She still can't see a thing on the other side.

OUTSIDE OFFICE

The door gently bangs, open and closed, with the wind. The Spy is gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUEGO DE PEYOTE TATTOO SALON -- NIGHT

The Spy's electric utility van is parked not far from El Juego de Peyote Tattoo Salon. A neon sign shows a beheaded Mayan ballplayer. His head falling into a pipe, to be smoked. The screen door is closed. The overhead fans are slow.

INT. JUEGO DE PEYOTE TATTOO SALON -- NIGHT

The Spy is in a red vinyl barber's chair with his sleeve rolled up over his shoulder. The needles hum and clack in the green-blue fluorescent light.

He is wearing his Ray Bans. The green lenses hide his drunken eyes from the night.

HIS ARM

In large block letters, "Soy Espía".

It means "I am a Spy".

FADE TO:

INT. THE GUYS' ROOM (ABUELA'S HOUSE, 1985) -- PREDAWN

The young Spy wakes in his bed. A mosquito. The thin whistle of a bird. A grinding sound. He rolls over and looks through the window to a view of the valley.

He sees a muddy brown stream. He sees a large number of corn milpas.

Arsenio is asleep. The thin sheet is at his waist. On his smooth chest, the tattoo: "Soy La Revolución" and the snarling head of a pitbull.

He leans back to the pillow and is gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE GUYS' ROOM -- LATER THAT MORNING

Arsenio is not in his bed. The young Spy is already feeling the heat. A cock crows.

EXT. ABUELA'S HOUSE -- THE GREEN CROSS

Beatriz's little ABUELA is kneeling in front of a tall, green cross behind her house. The cross has a white circle on each of its three ends. It is draped with a dried pine branch.

He squats at the edge of the house and waits. And watches.

Water from above the property drains down past the cross, around the house and over the side of the hill down to the pueblo. This is the pueblo's main source of water.

When she is finished with her prayer, she stands and turns toward the Spy.

ABUELA

(to the Spy)

[My son! Why didn't you join me? We could both pray for the water.]

She waves him toward her with her hand pointing down to the ground.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

[Oh, you don't speak Spanish, do you? Tzotzil? No.]

She laughs. A large laugh for such a small being. So welcoming.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Pues, I guess I have to speak to you in English, no? But, oye, you'll be healthier if you speak Spanish. Look at me. I'm 93. I don't speak too much Tzotzil. Not too much English. Just Spanish. And I live long time.

Laughs again. From the back of her throat.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

You probably hungry, but you missed breakfast! It's early! How long you slept. If you have hungry tonight, pues, you remember to get up early. Okay?

YOUNG SPY

Yes ma'am.

ABUELA

Be friendly, like me. Call me Abuela.
Like Beatriz. Then you'll, este,
have something in common.

YOUNG SPY

Where is she?

ABUELA

She left hours ago, hijo. With
Arsenio. It's just you and the old
lady today.

YOUNG SPY

No Abuela.

ABUELA

Hijo, we must to the pueblo. The boy
broke the big dish. Arsenio. He is
too busy for a boy. He doesn't watch
the big dish. It fell and broke.

The Spy smiles.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

We'll go. You can carry it for me.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ANOTHER BUILDING

From a distance it is possible to see the Spy pulling out a very small midnight blue car from another building on Abuela's property. He jumps out to help Abuela into it. They pull away.

INT. MIDNIGHT BLUE MINI MORRIS

The woman looks small even in the Mini. She quietly watches the landscape pass.

EXT. ABUELA'S PROPERTY -- BIRD'S EYE VIEW

The hilltop house is the source of a stream that feeds the village below. Its water pours over the limestone hillside and cascades into a muddy pool 50 feet below and then continues to the pueblo's milpas and cisterns.

ABUELA (V.O.)

And don't tell anyone I speak English
with you, okay?

EXT. ABUELA'S PUEBLO

As the car makes its way down the hill, it follows the water. From time to time, there are exposed deposits of white calcium or lime. Along the way, the stream feeds nearly every garden plot.

ABUELA (V.O.)

That water makes our teeth strong.
White hills of cal. It used to be
that we didn't drink any milk.

A lone man in white takes off his hat as the car passes.

ABUELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Just water with cal in it -- and in
our tortillas.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MIDNIGHT BLUE MINI MORRIS

The Spy pulls into the center of the pueblo. Men tip their hats to the car as it passes.

ABUELA

They haven't seen the car in years.
Runs good, no?

YOUNG SPY

It's fun.

A group of burro drivers and their carts stop and wait for the car to pass. Hats in their hands. Smiling.

ABUELA

(panicked)
¡Cuidado!

YOUNG SPY

What?

A little dog is crossing the street behind the burros.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

The dog? It's fine.

ABUELA

They don't know about automobiles,
hijo. Cuidado, nada mas.

A man scoops up the dog in his arms and waves their car forward. Abuela gives him a wave.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

(to the Spy)
Beep the, the, este--

She leans over and honks the horn to thank the man.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

We go up to the next street and stop.

MINI MORRIS

continues up the street. People staring. Another dog crosses.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S PUEBLO STREET

The Spy walks with Abuela on the side of the street. Two dogs turn and come to them. These dogs are well-fed and gentle. Without the skittishness of the dogs in the city. No fear in their eyes. They smell in the air for what Abuela may have brought them.

ABUELA

Ah, sí.

She hands them a scrap from her bag and they go on their way smoothly.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

¡Alcatraz! Ven. Amigo.

A large cream-colored short-haired mix breed lopes to her. He leans against her.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

¿Dónde está tu novia? Ah, aquí estas.

A regal collie. Well-groomed.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Mira, este tipo.

(pointing to Spy)

¿Puedes creerlo a este tipo? ¿Puedes verlo? Sí, el novio de Beatriz.

She laughs. The two dogs trot off together.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Adios. Nos vemos.

They continue to walk.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLAY FAMILY HOUSE

There is a fire behind a house ahead. The fire reaches over the roof of the house. Abuela is unconcerned.

They walk to the gate.

ABUELA

Here.

The Spy knocks on the gate. It is warm from the fire.

The gate opens onto a yard with an outdoor kiln and a young girl, ODELIA, from the family.

ODELIA

¡Mamá! ¡La Fuente! ¡La Fuente!

Her mother, ALEJANDRA, arrives at the gate out of breath.

ALEJANDRA

[Good morning. Please come in.
Welcome. Welcome, Señora. Welcome.]

ABUELA

[Just some small business, don't get
excited. *This* is a gringo.]

ALEJANDRA

[Nice to meet you. Just a little
moment.]

YOUNG SPY

Hola.

Alejandra goes into the house to get drinks. Abuela finds a seat.

ABUELA

That's a fire for pots.

YOUNG SPY

Oh.

ABUELA

The pots in this pueblo are the best
in all of Mexico. Strong and
beautiful. And they are the thinnest.
You can drop them. They don't break.
You have to bury them to get rid of
them!

She laughs.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Do you know the secret?

The fire?

ABUELA (CONT'D)

We passed the pool of clay. Under my
house. The clay is mixing itself in
that pool.

(MORE)

ABUELA (CONT'D)

All parts they mix themselves perfectly. The way they make pots here, no one makes them in this way-- because no one has this clay. But it's all luck. They don't know any other way. Still, they're very good.

Alejandra returns with a pitcher of limonada and glasses. She sets the tray down and serves Abuela.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

[Thank you, my dear. Thank you. I'm so thirsty. How are your man troubles? Sit and tell me. He can't understand a word we say. Eh, novio?]

The Spy smiles. He knows that word.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

[Okay, tell me everything, but you don't have to use the word "boyfriend". That's the only one he knows, plus "gracias" and "si".
(to the Spy)
Verdad?]

YOUNG SPY

Sí.

Alejandra laughs.

ABUELA

[What did I tell you?]

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S PROPERTY -- MORNING

The Spy staggers out of his room. It is early. Not much light. He is rubbing his head.

The Abuela is smoking a pipe in her outdoor chair.

ABUELA

I told you *early*. You call this early? Okay, you hungry?

YOUNG SPY

Yeah!

ABUELA

Maybe you can learn to get up Mexican early? You think you can do that tomorrow?

Puff.

ABUELA (CONT'D)
The boy is looking for you.

YOUNG SPY
Who?

ABUELA
The boy. The one you came with. He went over the hill again. He is coming back. Look for him! Over there. Over the hill. Go on.

So he starts walking up. A dry, grassy hill. The one the stream passes through.

ABUELA (CONT'D)
(calling to him)
I don't know why he goes up there. He knows the stream is working just fine. You ask him. I just want to know. He's always going up there.

He is hungry, but amused. He continues moving upward.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S HILLTOP

Chicharras, Cicada-like insects, make a sound like grinding metal. It's not hot yet, but the sun is intense. And the Spy doesn't know what to make of it.

ARSENIO

Just cresting the hill. Smoking. He stops. Without seeing the Spy, he unzips his pants and pisses into the stream. The stream that provides water for the pueblo.

YOUNG SPY
(feigning disgust)
Hey! I gotta drink that.

YOUNG ARSENIO
Come and get it.

The Spy laughs.

YOUNG SPY
What do you want?

Arsenio takes a long drag.

YOUNG ARSENIO
Abuelita has spoken, no? Did you bring work gloves? It's gonna be a bitch if you didn't bring work gloves.

YOUNG SPY
Don't got 'em.

They walk down the hill together.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S HOUSE

Arsenio and the Spy crouch down at the side of the house where the stream passes. The soil is being carved away. The foundation is in danger of washing out in a strong rain.

YOUNG ARSENIO
Shit. See this?

He pokes at the eroded soil with his red Puma running shoes.

YOUNG SPY
Yeah, she should move the house,
huh?

YOUNG ARSENIO
She can't move.

YOUNG SPY
No?

He walks away. Where?

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Shit. Where did he go?

The Abuela is asleep in her chair.

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)
(teasing)
Abuelita...

Arsenio returns suddenly.

YOUNG ARSENIO
Don't do that. She needs to sleep.

He has a shovel. It has seen better days.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
You've been in the pueblo with her.
You seen the way they act. Right?

He hands the shovel to the Spy.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
They call her La Fuente.
(MORE)

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 "The Source". For them, she is the source of everything they have. The water comes from her house. Their fucking sacred clay comes from her water. And their maíz, their corn, from the clay and the water. So you see she can't just move. And she doesn't want to. We just keep fixing it. That's all, okay?

Arsenio takes a knife and plunges it into the beam that has been exposed.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 Right. So you start digging out the, around the post here. Okay? And I'll get some help for us and be right back. We have to replace it.

He starts to walk down to his Fiat. He turns.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 No gloves, right?

YOUNG SPY
 Nope.

YOUNG ARSENIO
 Do as much as you can. That's it.

He starts the car, turns it around, and is gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S HOUSE -- ONE HOUR LATER

The Spy is digging into the chunky clay around the corner of the house.

ABUELA
 ¡Madre de Dios! What the hell are you doing?

She is awake.

YOUNG SPY
 Arsenio told me to start.

ABUELA
 What are you doing to my house?

The Spy puts the shovel down and rests his wrist on it.

YOUNG SPY
 Do you have any water?

ABUELA

Don't drink the water, gringo!

He takes another cut at the clay. She screeches.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Stop it! You don't know what are you doing!

YOUNG SPY

Hi. Why don't you sit down and smoke your little pipe. Mellow out. We're just fixing it. The beam is rotten and needs to be replaced. Arsenio is coming back soon. With help.

She laughs at this last part.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S HOUSE -- HOURS LATER -- TWILIGHT

The Spy has finished digging out the beam. The shovel is planted near the house. Car lights move across the bottom of the house. The Fiat.

Arsenio gets out of the car. By himself. He walks to the house. The Spy is sitting on the back step. Looking uphill.

YOUNG ARSENIO

You did a good job. Thank you.

YOUNG SPY

Where is our help?

YOUNG ARSENIO

Hmm.

As he gets closer, the Spy can see that he has a black eye. A bit of blood still glistens from his eyebrow.

YOUNG SPY

Didn't work, huh?

YOUNG ARSENIO

No one wanted to come here this late. They'll come tomorrow morning. They're scared of this place at night.

YOUNG SPY

Your head looks like my hands.

YOUNG ARSENIO

Oh yeah? Shit. Lemme see.

He takes the Spy's hand. In the fading light it is swollen and blistered.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 Yeah, what did I tell you. We can
 soak them. No more work for you.
 They can handle the rest.

He falters slightly on his way up the steps into the house.
 There is a faint light inside.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 They'll be here early.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ABUELA'S HOUSE -- EARLY MORNING

The Spy is seated at the table. Abuela laughs as she comes
 to the table with a platter.

ABUELA
 You got hungry? Eh, gringo?

Beatriz walks sleepily through the dark doorway.

YOUNG BEATRIZ
 (yawning)
 [What did you say, Abue?]

ABUELA
 [Are you hungry, too, my dear? Your
 novio is hungry from missing so many
 meals.]

Abuela gives each of them a serving of her enchiladas with
 red mole. She gives him another.

ABUELA (CONT'D)
 [Just one muchacho at the table at a
 time, it seems.]

She flips a fried egg onto the enchiladas. The Spy smells
 it. And then, hot chocolate in bowls.

YOUNG BEATRIZ
 [Sit and eat, Abue.]

ABUELA
 [Don't let it get cold. Like your
 brother.]

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S HOUSE -- LATER

The Spy is washing the dishes in a tub outside the house.

YOUNG ARSENIO
 (from inside)
 [Fucker.] Did you eat my food?

Abuela rounds the corner. More dishes. She yells to Arsenio.

ABUELA
 [If you weren't so lazy and drinking
 you would wake up for my breakfast!
 Until the *comida*!]

He groans.

ABUELA (CONT'D)
 (to the Spy)
 I just want you to know three things.
 Okay?

The Spy turns with weak soap on his hands.

ABUELA (CONT'D)
 I just want you to know that I used
 to be gringa like you.

He smiles.

ABUELA (CONT'D)
 Yes, I did. Many years ago. I came
 here, and at that time I was the
 whitest thing anyone had ever seen.
 Not like now. See how my skin turns
 black, too? Now I am still gringa,
 but they have fear of me. And their
 grandparents have had fear of me.
 It's in their blood.

He laughs.

YOUNG SPY
 I'm afraid of you.

ABUELA
 Sí, that's what I know.

YOUNG SPY
 What else?

ABUELA
 [Keep washing. This is not time for
 you to be lazy.]

He goes back to his dishes.

ABUELA (CONT'D)
 [Another thing.] You see the cross,
 no? The one I pray to every day?

YOUNG SPY

You're católica? ¿Verdad?

ABUELA

No. No soy catolica. [Are you trying to learn Spanish, little man?] That cross, that green cross was here when that bastard Cortés and his murderers set their dirty feet on this land. It was here, I am telling you. And what else?

He squints at the cross.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

The Trinity. We had that, too. These indios, this valley, they all knew about the three. Sun Moon Earth. That's three, no? See those circles on the cross? That's the Trinity. Before the Spanish told us this. We know it.

THE CROSS

It glistens pale green. The pine branch draped over it drips with dew.

ABUELA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And that Jesús? We know him, too. He is the Sun God.

YOUNG SPY (O.S.)

The Son God?

ABUELA (O.S.)

That's right. Everyday the Sun crosses the sky. That is Jesús. That's right. The Sun God.

BACK TO SCENE

ABUELA (CONT'D)

But I don't pray for the cross. It may live forever. Or maybe it's just wood. I pray for my land. This water to flow. For my family and my pueblo. Perhaps the Sun God can hear my prayer. For sure the priest, the man with the--the belt, he cannot help. I pray for my family, and I pray for Beatriz.

He looks up from the dishes.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Sí, hijo. I pray for her to be happy.

She stops.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Can you make her happy? I'm not very sure. I think I am getting to know you, but I don't know who you are.

BEATRIZ

She is peeking out a window. Watching the grilling. Ready to laugh.

ABUELA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You know that people here when they get married, they expect gifts, hijo.

BACK TO SCENE

ABUELA (CONT'D)

The man needs to prove that he can take care of a woman and a family. What the hell can you do? You don't wash dishes so well and you can't get up for breakfast even. How can you work?

YOUNG SPY

I got up today.

Abuela laughs. He still washes the dishes. Just about ready to dry.

ABUELA

That's good for one time. But I really don't care about work. I care about happy. Sometimes a work can make you happy. But I want my Beatriz to be happy. You know, gringo?

YOUNG SPY

Sí, lo sé, Abuela.

BEATRIZ

Beatriz smiles. Convulses with a little laugh she can suppress.

ABUELA (O.S.)

[Okay, you can speak a little Spanish. That's good.]

BACK TO SCENE

He walks past the damaged corner of the house and dumps the water. The corner has been fixed. Abuela follows him at a distance.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Pero, I think you are a little too different from her. You know, gringo, you are a strange muchacho.

He kicks the beam to test it as he passes again.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

¡Cuidado! I think they drop you on your head.

As he replaces the tub he sees the valley again.

YOUNG SPY

It's beautiful.

ABUELA

You know I saw this valley 90 years ago? When I was so small? This was my grandfather's land.

YOUNG SPY

Well, he had good taste.

He wipes his hands.

ABUELA

I just hope you are good for something.

He smiles and takes her hand.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

To make her happy.

He bends way down and kisses her cheek.

BEATRIZ

She smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TUXTLA GUTIERREZ AIRPORT (1987) -- LOBBY WINDOW

Beatriz waits in a black leather airport chair as a small Mexicana plane comes to a stop. A staircase moves into place and the passengers disembark.

CUT TO:

INT. TUXTLA GUTIERREZ AIRPORT (1987) -- DOOR TO TARMAC

There is a man with a Marines haircut, green aviator Ray Bans, tight t-shirt and heavy boots who walks through the door toward her. The Spy. She is still looking at the plane.

YOUNG SPY
This is military me.

YOUNG BEATRIZ
Don't you have something to change
into?

He drags his duffel across the tile floor. He reaches out to her.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)
Arsenio is in the car. Vámanos.

BEATRIZ

She is beautiful. She looks back at him and smiles.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)
You'll make someone a nice wife
someday, you know that?

She reaches for his hand.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)
Come on. Let's go.

She reels in his arm and puts his hand around her waist.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT (1987) -- LATER

The Spy is smashed into the back seat, lying on his duffel. Boots out the passenger window. Beatriz turns to him from the passenger seat.

YOUNG SPY
Where are we?

Waves her hands: just you wait.

YOUNG ARSENIO
Don't you have a compass in all that?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT (1987) -- LATER

Off the main road, Arsenio drives down two tire tracks. Tree branches dent and scratch his car.

Up a small hill, the road disappears.

EXT. BEACH ACCESS (1987)

The Fiat spins its wheels in the sandy trail as it moves forward slowly.

YOUNG SPY
Is Granny here?

YOUNG BEATRIZ
No, but she is waiting for you at
her house...

She kisses him.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)
...Tomorrow.

They get out of the car. A towel. A basket of food. Arsenio sighs in the driver's seat. The door creaks shut.

They walk to the lip of the beach. Blue sky, deep green water, and white sands.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH (1987) -- AFTERNOON

The Spy is 50 meters from shore. Swimming back. Arsenio and Beatriz watch him from their towels. Smooth stroke. The water dances with light. It is very warm.

The Spy stands up and walks.

Beatriz wraps him in a towel. He is cold. Her warm lips. His cool arms. Enjoy it while you can. You'll both be too hot too soon.

Arsenio walks down to the water.

THE BEACH TOWEL

He runs his fingers through her hot, thick hair. She lies back onto the towel. A quick glance for Arsenio. Swimming. Her bikini top is wet. He kisses her ribs. Her neck. Then her mouth. Her dark brown eyes stare at him.

THE OCEAN

Arsenio bobs in the deep water. Gently, with the waves. Watching the shore.

CUT TO:

THE BEACH TOWEL (1987) -- LATE AFTERNOON

The Spy is sleeping. His buzz-cut head. Suddenly, the sound of the Fiat racing its engine. But for the Spy, who knows what it is?

He rolls into the hot sand and stands. A tall wave breaks. Water shoots up quickly to the towel and to Beatriz, lying face down.

HER BACK

Still out of sorts, he watches. The strap of her bikini is loose. The wind blows it. Her back is cadaverous in the waning light. As the water soaks the towel, Beatriz wakes.

YOUNG SPY

He's ready to go.

FADE TO:

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT (1987) -- EVENING -- MOUNTAIN ROADS

The engine roars. All four cylinders. The little Fiat is doing its best to keep itself on the road. The winding road takes them above corn and the farmers' shacks. The Spy is sleeping.

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT (1987) -- NIGHT -- SAN CRISTÓBAL

They pull into the center of San Cristóbal. There are tarps tied to trees, covering smoking comals and women in aprons. Dark, wet trees. A church courtyard.

They stop at a one of the comedors to eat.

EXT. COMEDOR "LUCY" (1987) -- NIGHT

Hearing the description of the menu, the three walk stiffly to their seats.

Soon, they have eaten and the food is paid for. Arsenio is gone. The Spy walks away with Beatriz.

EXT. PARQUE (1987) -- NIGHT

The Spy and Beatriz walk through shallow puddles. They arrive at a bench--a bench that the Spy will know quite well in 20 years--and sit.

There is a MAN IN A LINEN SUIT sitting in a bench across the park from theirs. Smoking. Tired.

Beatriz looks at him and then back to the Spy.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

Kiss me.

The man coughs.

YOUNG SPY

Yes.

He kisses her. She puts her hand on his shoulder.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

There's something about this parque.
I remember being here when I was
very young. And the way the jóvenes
kiss...

They kiss again. Como los jóvenes.

YOUNG SPY

Hot blood?

YOUNG BEATRIZ

In this park. It is more.

The Spy nods to the guy in the linen suit.

YOUNG SPY

[And this guy?]

YOUNG BEATRIZ

[For him, too. It is more.] Better
than the movies, no?

She turns to him.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

[What will you do when I am gone?]

YOUNG SPY

Where are you going?

YOUNG BEATRIZ

When you leave me.

The man coughs again. Get busy.

YOUNG SPY

We'll I won't leave you. That's all.

He puts his arm around her neck.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

It won't be long now. Til you're in
Atlanta. Til you become a spy.

YOUNG SPY

--It's not a spy, it's--

YOUNG BEATRIZ

--And a killer. Instead of being
with me.

Pulls her closer. It's not easy.

YOUNG SPY

That's what you're talking about.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

What else?

She pulls him closer.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

What else should I be thinking of?

He stares at the man.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

What could it be that you are thinking?

He isn't biting.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

How are you going to change?

He shrugs.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

How are you going to do it?

YOUNG SPY

I've been thinking about our Abuela. And how I look forward to seeing her. You haven't told me anything about her. How is she doing?

She pushes him back.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

[You little shit.]

This time, the man in the linen suit laughs.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

She's not your abuela. She's mine. And it's sad. You know? Get your own, you know? Don't pretend.

He laughs. It hurts.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

You don't belong here.

The Fiat rolls up. Just in time.

As they're walking to the car.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

[Neither do I.]

YOUNG SPY

What?

YOUNG BEATRIZ

Nothing.

DISSOLVE TO:

<EL BAILE DE LOS PERROS -- DOGS EATING FROM THE STREET>

EXT. ABUELA'S PUEBLO STREET (1987) -- DAY

The Abuela walks in front of the Spy. She carries her painted Chinese parasol. They walk in a line on the narrow side of the street. Two dogs lope several paces back.

EXT. ABUELA'S PUEBLO STREET (1987) -- FURTHER

Three other dogs eat their meal from the gutter. But they eat calmly. Without a hint of greed. As the Abuela comes closer, they turn and smile at her. Wagging their tails.

ABUELA

¿Su comida, no? Buen provecho.
Provecho.

They look at the Spy.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

(without looking back)
They know you now. Say hello.

Sheepish.

YOUNG SPY

Hi.

ABUELA

(to the dogs)
[He's not well-educated, forgive us!]

As they look down the street, there are several groups eating their gutter meals.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

(to the next group)
¿Todo bien?

The dog looks up and woofs gently.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

¿Muy bien? Provecho.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S PUEBLO (1987) -- PARQUE

A dog eats grass and then kicks up the remaining blades behind it, into the air.

Abuela and the Spy sit on a park bench. She shades herself with the parasol. She mops her brow with a small white handkerchief.

Several dogs cruise through the shaded walkways.

Abuela nods to the grass.

ABUELA

Do you want some?

The Spy looks at her.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Maybe you have been feeling like eating dirt instead?

YOUNG SPY

No...

A smiling dog passes.

ABUELA

Did you know what happens when a dog eats your soul? When a dog eats your soul, people eat dirt. Nada más.

With this, she stands.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

That's all they want. Dirt. To eat. It's simple.

Slow steps. Another dog passes.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

They try to get back their lost souls by eating dirt.

YOUNG SPY

How do you know?

ABUELA

Are you getting hungry? For dirt?

The Spy is straining to comprehend.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

That's how you know.

YOUNG SPY

Is that some local legend?

ABUELA

¿Mande, mi corazón?

The Spy walks on, behind her.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

The dogs are happy with their own souls here. You know? I make sure of that. No one kicks them or poisons them here.

A burro brays in the distance.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Pues, that's just what dogs do. No es una leyenda.

She shuffles on.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

(smiling)

[You don't have to be embarrassed. I can make you some very tasty dirt.]

YOUNG SPY

¿Maned?

FADE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S HOUSE (1987) -- DAY

The Spy's duffel sits against the shady side of the house. Not far from the stream. The Fiat is warming up just downhill.

YOUNG ARSENIO

Nos vemos, Abuelita. See you soon. Amigo, let's go.

The Spy is looking for Beatriz. Abuela points over the top of hill.

ABUELA

Allá, hijo.

He jogs quickly up the hill. Maybe she's not up here. He keeps jogging. The Fiat honks from below. It seems far away.

He is out of breath, but is near the top of the hill. He needs to walk.

YOUNG SPY

Beatriz!?

He crests the hill. And he can hardly believe what he sees.

EXT. RESERVOIR (1987)

There is a large reservoir over the top of the hill. A strong stream splashes into the opposite end. Beatriz sits on the gentle shore.

YOUNG SPY

Hi. We're going. What are you doing?

She doesn't turn.

YOUNG BEATRIZ

I wanted to say goodbye from here.

He crouches to her.

YOUNG BEATRIZ (CONT'D)

Goodbye.

He hugs her awkwardly. He kisses her, trying for her mouth and getting part cheek and part lip. It hurts.

YOUNG SPY

Ohh.

The Fiat can be heard from here.

FADE TO:

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT (1987) -- AFTERNOON -- CARRETERA TO DF

Arsenio pilots the Fiat down the flat, wide road to Mexico City, el Distrito Federal. In the afternoon haze they watch the Sierra Norte gradually move past them. Scrub, cactus, fence, a ranch. Very few ranches. And not another car.

The Fiat is running at about 4500 RPM. It is hot and the windows are down. They are quite a pair: the curly-haired Mexican and the Marines-chic American.

The Cure: "La Ment".

YOUNG ARSENIO

Take the wheel.

Arsenio turns around to light his joint in the back seat. He rotates back.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)

Thanks.

He seems to smoke the entire thing in one puff. He offers what is left to the Spy. The Spy tries to take it--

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)

No. It'll burn. Just smoke it from my hand.

He holds Arsenio's two fingers like a roach clip. It glows like the color of the western sky. The cherry burns Arsenio's fingers and he flips it out the window.

YOUNG SPY

You got more?

Sucking his burnt finger.

YOUNG ARSENIO

Ahorita más.

CARRETERA

The Fiat speeds into the distance as the sun sets on the cardboard mountains to the West.

FADE TO:

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT (1987) -- NIGHT

The dashboard lights Arsenio's face as he smokes a joint. He holds it backwards to put it up to the Spy's lips.

YOUNG ARSENIO

Drag it, baby.

YOUNG SPY

How fast will this thing go?

YOUNG ARSENIO

I've had the pedal to the floor for the past 20 minutes.

YOUNG SPY

Shit!

YOUNG ARSENIO

It goes a little faster down the hill.

They laugh. The Spy feels the air with his cupped hand. He presses it forward as if he were lifting weights. Zzzzzzzzip! An insect hits his hand.

YOUNG SPY

Shit!

YOUNG ARSENIO

Again?

THE SPY

He shakes his hand.

YOUNG SPY

I think I fucked up.

YOUNG ARSENIO

It's over, huh?

He looks out the window. What does it feel like?

YOUNG SPY

Yeah.

BACK TO SCENE

YOUNG SPY (CONT'D)

Where did that lake come from? Does anyone ever swim there?

YOUNG ARSENIO

The indios believe that they would be pulled down into the cave at the bottom if they were to swim in it. Or even walk near it. My bisabuelo told them that one.

YOUNG SPY

Your who?

YOUNG ARSENIO

Great-grandfather.

He puts out the joint on the Spy's arm.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)

Bis-a-buelo.

YOUNG SPY

God damn it! What the fuck are you doing?

He looks at the Spy for a moment. Not the road. He shrugs.

YOUNG ARSENIO

Need to roll another one.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ARSENIO'S FIAT (1987) -- LATER

The two are quiet. Arsenio is smoking. He is delirious.

YOUNG ARSENIO

You know, bitch, you made me think of bisabuelo again. Now you gotta hear about him.

YOUNG SPY

I don't want to fuckin' hear about him. Or any of your pinche family for that matter.

Arsenio puts his hand on the Spy's shoulders. The Spy flinches.

YOUNG ARSENIO

He wore only flannel suits. Tailored.
And egyptian cotton shirts. That was
later.

The Spy doesn't bite.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)

(answering)

Later than what?

YOUNG SPY

Tell yourself.

YOUNG ARSENIO

He kept things very neat. His coffee
cup, his spoon, his servilleta.
[Everything in it's own place.]

So what.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)

The only time in my life I met him,
he slapped me.

You deserved it.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)

Why? When I brought him his coffee,
the handle was crooked. I was ten.
That was the only time I met him.

YOUNG SPY

What's that again?

YOUNG ARSENIO

Fuck you.

Arsenio looks out at the straight road.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)

He won an indio woman in a bet. A,
her... She was beautiful. Beautiful.
She made men's mouths water. An indio.
Before that, he didn't wear tailored
suits, that was sure.

The Spy takes a look.

YOUNG SPY

What was the bet?

YOUNG ARSENIO

He bet an indio, stupid fucking indio,
that he couldn't--I don't really
remember. I think I knew at one time.

(MORE)

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 Anyway, the indio couldn't win the bet. It was impossible. But since Bisabuelo was ladino, it was impossible for the indio to refuse.

YOUNG SPY
 Why?

YOUNG ARSENIO
 He'd be killed, or jail. So he bet his daughter. I don't know, maybe he wanted to get rid of her anyway. But the important thing was that as a wedding gift the indio gave him La Fuente. Though it wasn't una fuente yet.

They pass a brahma bull very close to the road.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 So my bisabuelo becomes anxious and moves the family to Mexico. He takes the indio and she is the muchacha. For five years she is the muchacha with their other muchachas. Maybe she thought she would replace his wife. Maybe she thought she was too beautiful. His wife used to beat her. To beat her face. And other places. One day the indio disappeared. She got lost in DF. That's all. She was trying to find masa. Many people each year are lost in DF. It's true. And she was one of them.

The wind rattles the open windows.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 And it was that year that the spring sprung from the house. From the house that my bisabuelo won in the bet. After that, he started wearing his suits. That's what she says.

YOUNG SPY
 Who?

No answer.

YOUNG ARSENIO
 Can you hold this?

He offers the Spy the wheel.

YOUNG ARSENIO (CONT'D)
 'Cause I need to lie down.

The Fiat's engine slows. The Spy steers them to the side of the road and pulls the emergency brake. The tires lock up in the gravel.

YOUNG SPY

Fuck.

He pushes Arsenio into the back seat.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEXICO CITY AIRPORT (1987) -- MORNING

The Spy hefts his duffel onto his shoulder and walks through the early morning airport.

THE FIAT

It waits outside the terminal for Arsenio to wake.

EXT. MEXICO CITY AIRPORT (1987) -- THE SKY OVERHEAD

An airliner lifts off, headed for los Estados Unidos.

FADE TO:

EXT. CAMP BUTLER (1987) -- 0730 HOURS

Marching boots. A withering heat in hot, fucking Georgia. Even at 730 AM you wouldn't wish this on anyone. And if that weren't enough...

THE FACE

We are presented with the bulldog face of a textbook case drill sergeant. He's spitting on the lens.

SERGEANT ASSHOLE

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THE ARMY IS
RESPECT FOR ME, RESPECT FOR COUNTRY,
RESPECT FOR THE RIGHT WAY OF DOING
THINGS. YOU WILL LEARN WHAT TO CALL
THINGS. YOU WILL LEARN HOW TO PUT
YOUR FUCKING RIFLE TOGETHER AND HOW
TO KEEP IT CLEAN. YOU WILL LEARN HOW
TO FOLD THE CORNERS OF YOUR BED. YOU
WILL LEARN THAT IN TIME YOU CAN LEARN
TO DO ANYTHING. BUT YOU WON'T LEARN
THIS UNTIL YOU ARE BROKEN DOWN FROM
THE PISS-ANT MOMMAS BOYS THAT YOU
ARE AND MOLDED INTO THE FUCKING MORONS
THAT WE WANT YOU TO BE! DO YOU
UNDERSTAND ME?!

THE CROWD

A textbook crowd of young recruits answers in unison.

RECRUITS

Sir, yes, sir!

SERGEANT ASSHOLE

NOOOOOOOOOOOO! YOU MOST CERTAINLY DO NOT UNDERSTAND ME. HOW CAN YOU? ARE YOU ALL SO SOPHOMORIC THAT YOU BELIEVE YOU HAVE ACHIEVED THE LEVEL OF MORON SO EARLY? YOU JUST GOT OFF THE FUCKING BUS. OR ARE YOU SIMPLY PARROTING? LET ME TELL YOU MOTHERFUCKERS SOMETHING: THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MORONS AND IDIOTS. YOU OBVIOUSLY HAVE A LOT OF HARD WORK BEFORE YOU CAN BE MORONS, BUT YOU FALL RIGHT INTO BEING IDIOTS. IT'S A NATURAL FIT. GODDAMN DROP AND GIVE ME ALL THE PUSHUPS IN YOUR BODY! I WANT THEM ALL. PUSHUPS UNTIL YOU'RE MORONS. ALL OF YOU!

A tinge of groaning from the still unseen recruits. This is going to be a long one.

SERGEANT ASSHOLE (CONT'D)

AND IF I SEE ANY OF YOU FUCKING OFF LIKE THESE GODDAMN "PSYOP" FAGGOTS...

THE SPY

In jogging clothes and his Ray Bans. He is panting with his small group near a fence.

SERGEANT ASSHOLE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

...THAT YOU SEE PASSING THE DAY ON THEIR BACKS WITH THEIR LEGS UP IN THE BLISSFUL RESTLESSNESS OF PEACETIME, I WILL CHOP OFF YOUR FUCKING HEADS. DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?

RECRUITS

Sir, yes, sir!

SERGEANT ASSHOLE

(fading from hearing)

HOW CAN I BE CLEAR TO YOU IF YOU ARE NOT YET MORONS?

RECRUIT #1

Sucker--

YOUNG SPY (O.S.)

Don't do it--

RECRUIT #1
 (in the b.g.)
 Sir, no, sir!

THE SPY
 Anyway, you get the idea. Followed
 by:

SERGEANT ASSHOLE
 (in the Spy's voice)
 I'll have your fucking head for that,
 General. Did I tell you that in my
 fucking army you all start as Generals
 and work your way up to being
 privates? Blah, blah, blah.

PSYOP TRAINEES

An unassuming group of six older recruits. Most from officer's
 training. And soft.

SERGEANT ASSHOLE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (in the b.g.)
 PRIVATES ARE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THINGS
 THE ARMY HAS AND I MEAN TO MAKE YOU
 THE MOST MOTHERFUCKING BEAUTIFUL
 PRIVATES THE ARMY HAS EVER SEEN. DO
 YOU UNDERSTAND ME?

YOUNG SPY
 (to the PSYOP guys)
 I'll bet he's had some *beautiful*
 privates.

The Psyop trainees chuckle as quietly as they can.

SERGEANT ASSHOLE (O.S.)
 (back to full force!)
 I CAN'T HEAAAAAAAAAAR YOU!

PSYOP TRAINEE #1
 Let's get back. Sarge is gonna be
 done with his cereal by now.

They brush themselves off and jog back toward the barracks.

As they fade into the distance...

YOUNG SPY (V.O.)
 If I'd just been in his company,
 none of this would have happened. It
 seemed easier at the time.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAMP BUTLER CONFERENCE ROOM (1987) -- 0900 HOURS

"PSYchological OPERations" is spelled out on the chalkboard.

SERGEANT BRUCKER
 Of course, by now, you all know what
 PSYOP stands for.

A chuckle.

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)
 And I take it you've read your
 historical overview.

TRAINEES
 Yeah.

THE SPY (V.O.)
 This was Sgt. Brucker. He caught me
 off-guard...

Sgt. Brucker flips open a pamphlet.

SERGEANT BRUCKER
 "PSYOP are operations planned to
 convey selected information to foreign
 audiences to influence their emotions,
 motives, objective reasoning, and
 ultimately, the behavior of foreign
 governments, organizations, groups,
 and individuals."

Folds it.

THE SPY (V.O.)
 He was a good guy. Somehow noble and
 pitiful. Like a high school teacher
 you admire.

SERGEANT BRUCKER
 We might note that if we were to be
 comprehensive here, this definition
 would include "non-foreign audiences"
 as targets, too.

The sergeant moves his cap back on his head. Takes it off.

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)

So we have four types of PSYOP, who can--Mason? In order from most general to most specific or targeted.

PSYOP TRAINEE #4

Strategic, operational, tactical and consolidation. Sir.

SERGEANT BRUCKER

And operational supports?

PSYOP TRAINEE #4

It supports the campaign, sir, in a defined geographical area leading up to a war, during a war--or an OOTW--and after the war has ended.

SERGEANT BRUCKER

OOTW?

PSYOP TRAINEE #4

Operation other than war, sir.

SERGEANT BRUCKER

Very good, Mason. Very good. Let's look at what I call The Continuum. Okay?

From left to right he writes "Covert Activity -- PSYOP -- Civilian Affairs -- Marketing -- Journalism".

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)

So we have Covert Activity, espionage, etc, furthest afield from Journalism. Of course, this is just based on the perception of the public, right? The intent of journalism is to do what?

PSYOP TRAINEE #2

To provide objective treatment of factual information, sir.

SERGEANT BRUCKER

Sheesh. We have some brainiacs. Riley, where did you do officers training?

PSYOP TRAINEE #2

Texas Christian, sir.

SERGEANT BRUCKER

Top of your class, no doubt.

PSYOP TRAINEE #2

Near it, sir.

SERGEANT BRUCKER
Top must've been a conscientious
objector, huh?

PSYOP TRAINEE #2
That's Texas Quaker, sir.

SERGEANT BRUCKER
Good one.

He turns back.

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)
Does anyone see the line that
separates espionage from PSYOP
activities? Or the line between CA
and marketing? Or journalism?

PSYOP TRAINEE #3
It's really only a continuum on the
board, sir. In my head it's a sphere,
and they're all orbiting.

SERGEANT BRUCKER
Don't tell me, ROTC Santa Cruz? Never
heard of spherical continua? Don't
teach *that* at the beach, do they?

Laugh.

PSYOP TRAINEE #2
I think we'll see more use of
journalists as PSYOP in the future,
sir. Instead of rejecting them,
embrace them, and then control them--

SERGEANT BRUCKER
Easier said than done.

Sgt. Brucker puts his eraser back in the chalk tray.

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)
Interesting thought about the
journalists, though. And we've been
trying to use them for years. Did
pretty well in WWII. But let's think
a moment about where it will stop. --
Another continuum--Let's step out of
our boots for just one sec. Okay? We
are the Army of the United States of
America. Aren't we? On our agenda,
what? To protect the citizens and
the interests of the country. The
government, the President, serves
the people of this country--but let's
think, where would operational PSYOP
stop according to Mason's definition?

Hesitations.

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)

Well, Mason told us that operational PSYOP happens somewhere, before, during *and after* war--or OOTW, an operation other than war--doesn't that just about cover every moment? We call citizens a "non-foreign" audience. So PSYOP attempts to control the minds, emotions, motives, reasoning, etc, of all foreign and non-foreign audiences? I mean have we missed something gentlemen?

Laughs.

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)

How do we clarify the interests of the citizens if they are subjected to our operational psychological operations? Aren't we programming them? Aren't we telling them what they're interests are, and then fighting to protect those interests?

He smiles.

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)

Let's look at the continuum again.

He adds a word to the right of "Journalism". "Citizens."

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)

And let's add another point. The interests of the citizens. Do we need to implement a balance here? A check and balance-balance here?

They are mulling this one over.

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)

Are we going to find that with our weapons of the future--the star wars, the howitzer, the trebuchet, the sling, the femur--for those fans of "2001..."--that we are wholly inappropriate to determine--rather--to establish the interests of the citizens? Because when you're looking down the barrel of a trebuchet, who's going to disagree?

Hmm.

PSYOP TRAINEE #3

What's a trebuchet, Sarge?

SERGEANT BRUCKER

A french cow-slinger, son. ICBM of the Middle Ages. Covert, secret action is the furthest from the citizens' interest. And who's right next door to the spies? That's right. We are.

He underlines.

SERGEANT BRUCKER (CONT'D)

PSYOP. It ain't SPYOP. The more covert, secret, and self-serving your psychological operations are, the more they are like espionage. And that's not the Army's business.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAMP BUTLER CONFERENCE CENTER -- CONTINUOUS -- HALLWAY

The trainees are filing out. Sergeant Brucker walks out of the class to speak with the Spy.

THE SPY (V.O.)

It's embarrassing, but I got a lot of this in the Army. Listen.

SERGEANT BRUCKER

Hey, hi. I just wanted to ask, why PSYOP, son? These guys, you know, scored pretty well. Mostly business majors. Why do we get you?

THE SPY (V.O.)

And I'd say something like, "Well, I, I'm... Thank you, sir."

SERGEANT BRUCKER

We just do. Good luck, son.

YOUNG SPY

Thank you, sir.

Sergeant Brucker stops walking away. He turns back to the Spy.

THE SPY (V.O.)

And this is where he recommended me for some sort of advanced training.

SERGEANT BRUCKER

Oh, I've recommended you for advanced training. Nothing too special. I feel sure that it will be approved.

He turns and walks again.

YOUNG SPY

Thank you, sir.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UNMARKED TRAINING FACILITY (1988) -- 1815 HOURS

Large and square white stucco buildings squat between mature trees. It can't be far from the golf course. And in fact, a young american guy in a gold golf shirt jogs up to the young Spy. The Spy is walking with his duffel to the administrative building. The guy in the golf shirt is THE SPOOK.

But it is nearly impossible to see any of this. It is completely impossible to hear any of the dialogue.

Why? Once we see the Spook for the first time, there is a MIND-ALTERING SCREECH that comes from the seats in the movie theater. At least it seems that is where it's coming from. MAKE IT STOP. NOW.

THE SPOOK

(inaudible)

Well, here he is. Where have you been? I've been watching out for you for some time.

He smiles like a Sunday-come-to-meeting preacher who's just found the woman who made the doughnuts.

YOUNG SPY

(inaudible)

I've been kind of sick.

Very interested in what the Spy has to say. Leaning in.

THE SPOOK

(inaudible)

Some kind of intestinal something or other, right?

He checks the Spy's reaction.

Eventually the SCREECH dies down; it includes a low, nauseating rumble. But it is still impossible to hear the speech clearly.

YOUNG SPY

(inaudible; suspicious)

Right... Well, it seems to have run its course.

Trying to be funny. Sly. The fuck.

THE SPOOK

(inaudible)

That's one way to put it.

He laughs. Some of it echoes in the Spy's mind.

THE SPOOK (CONT'D)

(inaudible)

But I really have to say I am excited
you are here. My name is Agent
Hollowell.

They shake hands. THE SPY SCREAMS IN VOICE OVER. AND SOME
DEVIL READS NUMBERS, SOME MOTHERFUCKER REVEALING THE HIDDEN
CODE TO LIFE. THE SCREAM, UNINTELLIGIBLE AND RAW. THE TOUCH,
THE MEMORY OF THE TOUCH,

YOUNG SPY

(inaudible)

Yeah, thanks. I'm, well... You must
know my name if you know what's
happening in my colon.

THE SPOOK

(inaudible)

I don't get many people like you to
talk to here. Mostly, just, you know,
those "without the gift".

They enter the admin building. The low-level screech continues
even over the--

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOLLOWELL LAB (1988) -- MONTHS LATER -- 0300 HOURS

The young Spy sits at a workbench with headphones and a
cobbled-together set of audio equipment. A Nagra reel-to-
reel recorder. A pegboard circuit. He adjusts the rheostat.
The nauseating rumble adjusts accordingly. Lower.

And now, as if from the parting clouds, a calming, clean
rendition of Ice Cream Truck. It washes away the screech.

The Spy turns on his stool.

THE SPOOK LEANING AGAINST THE DOORWAY

There he is, grinning. Shaking his head at his luck. He gives
the Spy the thumbs up. Laughing.

FADE TO:

EXT. UNMARKED TRAINING FAC. (1988) -- 0830 HOURS -- THE LAWN

Ice Cream Truck still playing, beautiful and terrible.

The Spy sits alone eating his lunch on a park-like bench
among the wide-leaf trees and close-cropped grass.

A bird hovers high over the trees. A black bird circling.

The trees sway slowly with a chill breeze. Fall is coming.
Sweet smelling grass.

A dark, slinky German Shepherd dog. It bounds through the tall grass under the trees and pauses at the edge of the lawn. It is surprised by a noise. Flighty as they are. And it bolts for the meadow.

What is he eating?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SPY'S QUARTERS (1988) -- MONTHS LATER -- 0600 HOURS

The screech is coming back. It is still very low.

The Spy is sleeping. Trying to sleep. Early morning light.

The Spook cracks open the door.

THE SPOOK

(inaudible)

Rise and shine. Today's your day,
you big stud. Out of the skunk works
and into the fray.

YOUNG SPY

(inaudible)

Fuck off and let me sleep. You're
like a fucking vampire. Don't you
ever sleep.

THE SPOOK

(inaudible)

Don't you?

CUT TO:

INT. HELICOPTER HANGAR (FORWARD OPERATING BASE, PANAMA, 1989) --
LATE AFTERNOON

The screech. And the Ice Cream Truck. They duel each other.

THE SPOOK

Look, man, this is going to happen.
I have no idea how you could be
fucking this up now, but the plan is
a good plan and it has been in place
for months now, so don't come back
to me on the fucking *day of* and tell
me that it ain't gonna happen, 'cause
I'll lug it there myself if I have
to, understand? I'll zap the
motherfuckers myself, comprende?
Christ! Captain?!

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY

Sir, I'm not telling you that we
can't do it. It is going to happen.
There was a mixup with the mechanics--

THE SPOOK

Captain?!

The Spook passes the Spy and doesn't even see him.

YOUNG SPY

All set?

The Spook commandeers a radio from a nearby mechanic.

THE SPOOK

Captain, your crew seems to have a
problem. Can you tell me about it?

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)

Yes, sir. I read you loud and clear.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HELICOPTER HANGAR (1989) -- LATER AFTERNOON

The Spook is smoking. The screech is winning out.

He leans over to talk to the Spy over the top of the screech.

THE SPOOK

You know, I'm not a spook. I just
work at Link.

YOUNG SPY

Where's that?

THE SPOOK

Oh, Jesus. You don't know Link?

The screech rises.

THE SPOOK (CONT'D)

(barely audible)

You'd better get going.

CUT TO:

INT. HUEY #1 (1989) -- THE DOOR

The Spy climbs into the Huey. He turns to look back.

THE SPOOK

He waves with smoke curling up to his eyes. Then the big
thumbs up. The painted-on, assured smile. He still has the
radio. He talks into it. Drops the thumb. And the smile.

EXT. HUEY #1 (1989) -- PA SYSTEM SPEAKERS

Does the screech come from the speakers? Or from the whining engines?

INT. CHINOOK COCKPIT (1989) -- MOMENTS LATER

The captain is ready to fly. Still the screeching.

CHINOOK PILOT (V.O.)

(to the Spook)

Yes, sir. It's strapped on. Let's see if it stays on.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JUEGO DE PEYOTE TATTOO SALON (PRESENT DAY) -- NIGHT

The whine and screech bleed over the Spy's red and swollen tattoo.

FADE TO:

PART THREE

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL CHURCH -- MORNING -- STREET CORNER

A quiet morning. A quick, woolly black skirt rushes past. An alfalfa-laden burro clacks the other way.

The electric utility van is dewy and cold.

After a moment, a rectangular piece of sidewalk rises up by itself. The Spy, warm with effort, climbs out and replaces the lid.

He carries a large loop of copper wiring around his neck and shoulders. He swings the van's door closed and loosens the parking brake. He starts the van by coasting downhill and releasing the clutch. Quietly. Then he is away.

INT. ELECTRIC UTILITY VAN -- MOMENTS LATER

The wipers flip a few times and stop. The Spy makes a turn down a narrow San Cristóbal street and accelerates uphill.

THE SPY (V.O.)

How could a little wack-job boy get
this before me?

Electric wires pass overhead. And the hills in the distance.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And they killed him for it. How did
he...?

The van passes a primary school as the children are filing through the metal security doors.

THE KIDS

A mother holds the hand of a crying child. One child strikes another. One swings his lunch bag. Two girls chase another girl.

THE SPY

He turns his head as he passes the kids. Then he looks straight ahead.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Fuck me.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE PARQUE -- AFTERNOON

The Spy sits at his usual bench. Green t-shirt and red Pumas. The Ray Bans, of course.

THE SPY'S EYES

But his eyes are working overtime underneath the green lenses.

AROUND THE CORNER

The vendor with the triangle comes chiming into the plaza.

THE EMPTY FOUNTAIN

Two schoolgirls laugh on the edge of the stone fountain.

UNDER THE TREE

There is Lulú, his former assistant. Her orange umbrella. Her white skirt. She approaches the hot cart quickly. But she diverts before she reaches it. Still in a hurry for her bus.

THE SPY

Relaxes in his seat. Looks over to the hot cart guy.

He is rolling the worn latex gloves off his hands. He nods to the Spy. He brushes the remnants of the gloves off his hands. Then waves.

The Spy, too, waves.

NEWSPAPER MAN

The Spy buys a newspaper. 7 pesos. He unfolds it.

EL ORBE HEADLINE: [PPP-POWER: HYDROELECTRICITY WILL SAVE MEXICO]

PAGE TWO HEADLINE: [ZAPATISTA "CHATTER" HIGH IN HIGH COUNTRY]

PHOTO: SUBCOM MACROS, SMOKING PIPE. TALKING INTO HIS HEADSET.

THE SPY

He walks to the hot cart. The hot cart guy looks up. Why is he nervous?

THE HOT CART GUY

He unrolls another pair of gloves from his hands and plops them into the trash. He smiles as he puts on his last pair. He throws the cardboard box into the trash.

The Spy watches as the guy makes his trademark snatch of the tortilla in making a taco. He spansks the tortilla, separating the top one from the pile. He is running out of tortillas, too.

THE RED CLAY GIVEAWAY

THE TORTILLA MAN brings new tortillas from the open trunk of his old Dodge. The dark blue Dodge is covered from the windows down with red clay dust. Where has he seen this before?

The tortilla man slams the trunk lid. A cloud of red dust. The same as the dust from Beatriz's abuela's pueblo. His car is the same color as the abuela's Mini Morris.

THE HOT CART

The guy takes the Spy's money. The gloves are already wearing thin. The guy looks him in the eye.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ELECTRIC UTILITY VAN -- EVENING

The Spy is climbing the hills and mountains that he once saw in Arsenio's Fiat. He is headed back to La Fuente.

THE VAN

It slowly bumps over a tope on a mountain road. From a distance its headlights look weak.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S PUEBLO -- NIGHT -- THE CHURCH

The moonless night. The van passes the church slowly and turns a corner toward the Abuela's hill.

IN THE VAN

The Spy is wearily making the last kilometer. His eyes stretch. Suddenly he swerves. A thud.

THE SPY

Fuck--

He pulls to the side of the road.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

Oh no.

BEHIND THE VAN

In the red glow of the taillights the Spy finds a lump. It is not moving.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

Oh... Come on.

He reaches down to the dog he has hit.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

Hey you. Oh, buddy.

He turns the dog over. It has been quite dead for quite some time. The Spy screams. It echoes in the quiet streets.

Then the rumble of the van's exhaust. He gets back in.

BACK IN THE VAN

The weak headlights point his way through the streets to the Abuela's house.

Up the next street he sees more lumps. Closer, they, too are dead dogs. Up the following street, too. More dead dogs. They line the walkways.

UP THE HILL

The sun is starting to cast a paleness on La Fuente's hill. There is a static mist hanging in the air. There is her house. More dead dogs, having tried to make their last pilgrimage to her.

Their bodies cross the road. He stops the van. He must move them to be able to pass.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S PROPERTY -- CONTINUOUS

The van pulls toward the house. It stops behind the dark blue Mini Morris. Caked with red clay dust. Long dead. He puts out the van's lights.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Is everyone in the village dead? What happened?

But he hears a soothing sound. Pat-pat-pat-pat. He walks to it. Creeping. There is la Fuente. She is here. She is making tortillas. As she does every morning. She grunts a bit as she pats.

ABUELA

Oye. You made it on time. You must hungry.

THE SPY

Abuelita...

In the shadow of morning she raises her hands as if to say, "Wait, don't touch me."

THE SPY (CONT'D)

[What happened to your friends?]

She listens to him, cocking her neck to one side. Her eyes are having a hard time focusing.

ABUELA

Have you hungry?

She pants, sweating from her simple work. She looks back to him.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

It's funny, mira. I... I don't have anything for you to eat.

She chuckles.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

I think I am the lazy one esta mañana, verdad? But it's not right because you stay away so long and then come back. How can I know?

She chuckles, but it is not far from crying.

THE SPY

[Where are the people here? Why are all the dogs dead?]

She pats more masa. Very softly.

ABUELA

[That's what I have been asking myself. Where are they? I haven't seen them in a few days.]

THE SPY

[Has it only been "days"?)

ABUELA

[How did you learn to speak Spanish? What happened to you? Where did you go? I thought you were another one of guys. Always looking around with their little telescopes...]

She adjusts her knees on the soft ground.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

[There. And she left you a gift, too. Not just the boy. But you never took it.]

Breathing is difficult.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

[But my mama gave me a great gift, didn't she?

(MORE)

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Isn't this a wonderful little house?
I never wanted to leave it. Did you?]

THE SPY

No.

ABUELA

My mother was my muchacha india.
[That's right. Just india. My mother
gave me this place and all that I
am. And she made me breakfast in the
morning. And sometimes I woke up too
late and had to work until the comida
without food. And I was hungry, then,
I'll tell you. I never wanted to go
back to Mexico, that's for sure. Did
you?]

THE SPY

No, cariña. Do you want to go back
now? I can take you.

ABUELA

[You know that my mother taught me
about dogs? Because a dog once ate
her soul. That's why her father sold
her. But I thanked the dogs. They
kept her soul safe and they gave me
mine. And they keep her soul still.
Just down that hill.]

She motions downhill.

ABUELA (CONT'D)

[You. You go. There are still people
here. I hear the burros...] down,
down, downstairs.

She motions to a ledge above her. She had nearly forgotten.
Hurry up!

ABUELA (CONT'D)

Oye. He left you the thing. You should
take it. [Bring it back to him. You
don't really need it.]

THE SPY

[Who?]

ABUELA

The boy. You knew him, once.

He reaches up to the top of the ledge. A small booklet. He
flips it open and fans the pages. Columns and columns of
numbers.

The ONE-TIME-PAD that the Boy took from the dead dog in the park. The one the Boy worked so hard for.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ABUELA'S PUEBLO STREET -- LATER

A few men with blue masks pull dead dogs by their back legs out of the street. There is a pile of bodies covered with white lime powder. Just like the powder they add to tortillas.

The Spy passes slowly in the electric utility van. The men wave him on emphatically. Their white coats becoming pink with the red clay dust.

As he continues further from la Fuente, he begins to see more people. He sees the dark blue Dodge. The tortilla car. It pulls into the street, some distance before him and drives ahead. A red cloud.

SERIES OF SHOTS -- BACK TO SAN CRISTÓBAL

A) The van tips as it takes the curves of the mountain roads.

B) A police checkpoint, the Dodge passes. The utility van is waved on.

C) The carved out, eroding hills of San Cristóbal. The utility van trails the Dodge in the distance.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOT CART -- DAY

The dark blue Dodge pulls up to unload the tortillas at the hot cart. The hot cart guy is anxious. He meets the tortilla guy quickly, before he is out of the car. Hand on the door. From a distance the Spy can't make out what he is saying. He motions at the hot cart. The tortilla guy pushes gently out of the car. The two talk: face to face and frenetic. The hot cart guy won't let him open the trunk. He pounds on the trunk.

INT. ELECTRIC UTILITY VAN -- CONTINUOUS

The Spy is watching.

THE SPY (V.O.)

You never know what you are going to get when you eat on the street.

NEWSPAPER MAN

He taps on the Spy's window. Paper? The Spy wags a finger, no.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL SANTO TOMÁS -- AFTERNOON

The gate swings open in front of the Spy. He carefully locks it and moves toward the stairs.

INT. RECORDING ROOM

The Spy passes through the door. He pulls the envelope off the shelf and leaves.

THE SPY (V.O.)
Poor kid, really.

INT. LA OFICINA

He places the one-time-pad on the desk and sits.

POV -- LOW RES CAMERA IN CEILING

He takes down a book from the shelf. He opens the envelope and scans the code.

THE SPY (V.O.)
Got in way over his head.

BACK TO SCENE

Does he hear something? He checks the recording room through his window.

THE SPY'S EYES

He looks down to the one-time-pad.

THE CODED MESSAGE

He looks at the code from the envelope. At the top of the page is the number 56489. He fans the the one-time-pad until he finds the corresponding number at the top of a page.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Now, *I* had to sit through the crypto
class, not *him*.

He writes numbers from the one-time-pad beneath numbers on the coded page.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Lazy shits. It's not ascii.

FADE TO:

INT. CAFETERÍA EL AMARILLO -- NIGHT

The man in the flannel suit waits patiently for his coffee. He straightens his hat. He turns to the camera.

EL PATRONCITO
 [It should be here in just a moment.]

He looks straight ahead, without the least compulsion to speak. The waiter arrives with the coffee.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)
 [Is it still hot?]

WAITER
 [Yes, of course, sir.]

EL PATRONCITO
 [One moment, please.]

He sips the coffee noisily.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)
 [Very good. That is all.]

WAITER
 [At your service, sir.]

He wipes his moustache with his white cloth napkin. He pulls out a hearing aid (circa 1970) and slides it across the table.

EL PATRONCITO
 (to the camera)
 [Go ahead. You know, I wasn't sure if you were going to make it. You know what I mean? Things have been pretty difficult for you over the last few weeks. But here you are.]

Another sip. He tears open a sugar and adds it to his cup.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)
 [I was remembering today how we met. Do you remember? You probably do. It was the Zapatista Cafe. Just outside. Just after you had passed your test. Remember? I remember watching you. Waiting. And you were waiting, too. It took you all day to give up, I saw it.

(MORE)

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

It's pretty much a popularity contest there, and you didn't think you were too popular that day, did you? No.]

He stirs sugar into his coffee and places the spoon next to the saucer. Perfectly.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[I watched you brush the guard at the door. Just a moment. Even he may have missed it. But I watched you start the fight. And he, the one with the rifle, he did not pick it up.]

Sip. Wipe. The pattern.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[It's not so easy to bump someone with a rifle. It takes some cold blood. Or maybe some too hot blood. No?]

He wipes the spoon and replaces it.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[So I waited until you were on the colectivo for the border. Back to... to... back down south somewhere, no? And you sat next to me, remember? You didn't think that was fate, did you? But you see, that's just the way he works. You know that now. You know that he likes to work in strange ways. He's a bit like a kung-fu master, don't you think? But you were surprised that we had a mission for you so soon, weren't you?]

He strokes the outside of the coffee cup.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[You know once I had to tell a man not to return to his house, that his family was going to be poisoned, that if he returned he would be killed, too. That his lovely daughter and son would die with his mother and wife. And he should just wait. That he should just wait here and have coffee with me. And that later, hours later, he should come out with me and get drunk and never return to his home. And to the bodies.

(MORE)

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

Well, I wish that I could have told you not to go to your home. Well it was more like a temporary home, wasn't it?]

A small adjustment to the spoon.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[But you looked good in your suit. They have some nice, inexpensive suits here. We'll have to find you another one. Don't you think?]

And now, a corresponding adjustment to the napkin.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[I can't tell you how happy we are to know that you are still alive. And well. Now, to keep you that way. It was real luck that you came to us.]

He slides a manilla envelope across the table.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[So the same arrangement as last time. It's good to keep things the same. Here you have it. And you know that Marcos feels this may be the last mission like this. He thinks you have other things that you could contribute to the Zapatistas. I think he's right.]

He pushes a paper bag across the table. Very light weight.

CUT TO:

THE MAN IN THE FLANNEL SUIT -- CONTINUOUS

He keeps talking but it's as if his audio were just cut. He adjusts his spoon again. Drinks. Wipes his moustache.

EL CLIQUERO

Is he listening? He stares blankly at el Patroncito. He hears only static. A little bit of modulation.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EL CHORILLO APARTMENTS (1989) -- NIGHT -- THE 12TH FLOOR WALKUP

The young Panamanian boy's mother dances by herself to Cuban music, framed in the light of the kitchen. The broken antenna of the transistor radio leans against the cut out wall.

COUCH

The young Panamanian boy is lying on the couch. Asleep.

THE KITCHEN

The mother dances. An invisible hand on her hip. Twisting. Sometimes dancing can be like making love--or how you wish making love would be. For the eyes.

THE MOTHER'S EYES

Her eyes are intent on her invisible partner. She looks up to him. When she turns with him, she looks at him out of the corner of her eyes.

BACK TO SCENE

The mother dances. Cutting steps. Slowly coming to a stop. Turning.

THE PHOTO

There is a photo of the mother and a man, the boy's father. He is smoking a pipe. He holds it in his teeth like Marcos. On the side. Like he enjoys talking and smoking the same amount and at any time should be able to do either one. Of course, he is not Marcos. And the boy, although he is asleep, doesn't even dream that he is. But he will always remember the photo of the man with the pipe.

THE VIEW FROM THE 12TH FLOOR RAILING

The Cuban music plays. But there are sirens, too. Dogs bark. A motorcycle roars. Panama City, 1989. El Chorillo before it burns.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LA OFICINA (PRESENT DAY) -- NIGHT -- DESK

Notes. There are about five pages of notes in front of the Spy. Starting on one side it is possible to read what has been decoded.

"BEGIN/EZLN/DIVERSION/PROCEED/AS/PLANNED/STOP"

"ARTILLERY/SANTIAGOXXX/TIMED/WITH/CHARGES/LAFUENTE/STOP"

"CHARGES/DESTROY/LEVEE/MASSIVE/FLOODING/STOP"

"DOWN/TELECOM/NO/EVACUATION/BLOCK/EGRESS/NO/SURVIVORS/STOP"

"PREVENT/STRUCTURAL/DAMAGE/BELOW/LEVEE/STOP"

"PREVENT/INFRASTRUCTURE/DAMAGE/OUTSIDE/PUEBLO/STOP"

"TELEWISE/FOX/WARNING/EZLN/IS/TRIGGER/STOP"

"CLEARED/CONFIRMED/STOP"

"END"

ANOTHER PAGE

The last page of notes contains an different set of numbers. Numbers the Spy has just written out. He places this page into the envelope and seals it.

EXT. LA OFICINA -- MOMENTS LATER

The Spy locks the office and walks toward the recording room door with the envelope.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RECORDING ROOM -- DAY

Adara unlocks the recording room door and enters. The door stays open.

FADE TO:

INT. RECORDING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Adara is intent on the message. She leans toward the mic. Her hands reach out for a button moments before she needs it.

ADARA
(in progress)
...Cuatro, tres, nueve...

She slowly slips off her headset and lowers it down past her thigh. Looking down as she speaks the numbers.

EL CLIQUERO

He rests his head on the carpet. He looks up and takes the headset. Adara turns it up as loud as she can. Sound is bleeding from the earphones. Her numbers. Static. She gently puts them on his ears. He looks up to her.

BACK TO SCENE

She looks down to him, too. Smiles. Glances back to the numbers.

ADARA (CONT'D)
Atención: Siete, seis, seis...

She reaches the slider. Smoothly, she brings it down. She lowers the level on her numbers, and Ice Cream Truck leaks from the headset, wafting upward. She checks his eyes.

Double checks.

EL CLIQUERO'S EYES

He stares while he listens. The numbers return.

ADARA (CONT'D)
 ...Cinco, siete, ocho. Cinco, cinco,
 cinco, cinco, cinco, cinco...

SMASH CUT TO:

THE CLICKER

Click. 235. Click. 236. Click. 237. Click. 238. Click. 239.
 The clicker is counting upward. 242. The sound of a cantina
 jukebox: José Feliciano singing Xmas carols. Drunken english
 conversation. A howling laugh.

INT. TINA'S CANTINA, PANAMA CITY (1989) -- A HOPPING NIGHT

The doors swing open for two more gringo customers.

GRINGOS
 (to their friends)
 ¡Hola!

THE CLICKER

Click. 249. 250. The doorman counts off.

DOORMAN
 Buenas noches! Welcome, welcome.

THE DOORS

The young Cliquero walks through the doors with a full case
 of Chiclets, cigarillos, Tic-Tacs, peanuts. He is wearing a
 skeleton costume--no mask, just a shaved head of brown hair.

The doorman tries to hassle him for money, but this doesn't
 last.

YOUNG CLIQUERO SELLING

He's good and fast. Flashing smile. Sells two instead of
 one. Of whatever. The gringos smile, too.

THE JUKEBOX CORNER

More blessed Xmas carols. A DRUNKEN GRINGO motions over to
 the boy. The boy's smile lights the dark corner.

YOUNG CLIQUERO
 Sí, señor. Para servirle.

DRUNKEN GRINGO 2

Oye, amigo. A pack of cigarettes,
por favor.

The boy hands him the usual. Just one. Reaches for his lighter.

DRUNKEN GRINGO 2 (CONT'D)

No, no, no. I want the whole thing.

YOUNG CLIQUERO

Sí, aquí tiene, señor.

The drunk reaches into the tray and takes a whole pack of Marlboros. He puts one in his mouth and the pack into his shirt pocket. The boy--it's a mistake, but he does it--reaches into the man's shirt pocket to retrieve the pack. He thinks it might be a joke. The man catches his little hand.

DRUNKEN GRINGO 2

Whoa there. I'm gonna pay you. Hey!
What the hell are you trying to do?

The man motions over to the doorman.

The doorman takes the boy by the arm.

DOORMAN

[Little fucker, you are gone.]

DRUNKEN GRINGO 2

Hold it, hold it. I'm gonna pay him.
But hey, you know.

YOUNG CLIQUERO

His eyes shoot from the gringo to the doorman.

DRUNKEN GRINGO 2 (CONT'D)

(to doorman)

Gimme that clicker. You don't know
how to use it, anyway.

THE CLICKER

The doorman hands the clicker to the man.

DRUNKEN GRINGO 2 (CONT'D)

Here, look. You take this.

The gringo turns the knob that makes the clicker count down.

DRUNKEN GRINGO 2 (CONT'D)

And when you have counted down to
zero--each sale is a click--I'll pay
you a twenty dollar bill. That's
called *interest*.

YOUNG CLIQUERO

Looks up.

DOORMAN

[Count every sale you make with this machine. When you are to zero. You'll get \$20US. Now get the fuck out of here. You fucking monkey.]

He looks down at the clicker. The doorman kicks him toward the swinging doors.

EXT. THE STREET IN FRONT OF TINA'S CANTINA (1989)

The boy comes shooting through the doors. His case spills. He starts to gather what has fallen. The doorman exits. He holds his hand out for the clicker. No matter what the gringo said, he wants it back. There's a popping motorcycle passing by the cantina.

The boy runs to the motorcycle. It stops down the street. The boy jumps on, turning his case around behind him.

And he is off. The doorman throws a bag of peanuts at him. Short.

EXT. MOTORCYCLE EN ROUTE HOME (1989)

The boy hangs onto his older friend.

FRIEND

[Why do you work that fucking cantina?]

The boy looks ahead.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. EL CHORILLO APARTMENTS (1989) -- TWILIGHT

The boy jumps off the back of the bike without it stopping. He puts his hand to his mouth and yells.

YOUNG CLIQUERO

¡Adiós!

He finds the spot behind the shrubs to hide his case. He sees a group of children playing.

But they're not playing. He joins them.

PANAMA CITY SKIES

A storm? It seems to be too dark, too soon. Green.

EXT. 12TH FLOOR WINDOW (1988)

El Cliquero's mother leans out to find him. No. He's often late.

MOTHER
¡¿Virgilio?!

MOTHER'S EYES

She finally spots him.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
¡Virgilio!

PANAMA CITY SKIES

It's not a storm. It's one or more helicopters. Loud, military helicopters. A hint of the screech.

EXT. 12TH FLOOR WINDOW (1989)

She bolts from the window. Guessing. Just guessing.

INT. EL CHORILLO APARTMENTS (1989) -- STAIRWELL

Babies crying. People slow from a long day. People dreading to leave for a long night's work. The boy's mother spins her way down through the mass.

EXT. EL CHORILLO APARTMENTS (1989) -- EXIT

She makes it to street level. Now she needs to find him again. Come on. The helicopters are near. What is that noise? Music?

In the distance, a luminous artillery shell lands. A bright flash that stays lit. She screams.

EXT. EL CHORILLO APARTMENTS (1989) -- THE COMMONS

The kids with the boy are quiet. They look up at the helicopters. They twist their heads to hear the music from the helicopter. ICE CREAM TRUCK.

CLOSE ON YOUNG CLIQUERO

The boy is frightened. But he can't cut his eyes loose from the ICE CREAM TRUCK helicopter. He moves. Forward. Slowly. The boys around him can't stop him. They don't try. They just reach out and brush his sleeve as he passes them.

He walks in a crouch toward the edge of the open space in the middle of the commons. He crouches and stops. He is shivering.

EXT. COVERED WALK FROM APARTMENTS (1989)

She runs as fast as her vinyl flats will allow. She cranes her neck to see him as she runs. The helicopters are overhead. Are they landing?

POV CHINOOK

For just a moment. The radios are cackling. The crew is anxiously preparing. Below, the boy has decided to walk into the open. The mother is poised under the covered walk. Calling.

CLOSE ON MOTHER

She calls to the boy.

MOTHER
¡Virgilio! Ven acá. ¡Ahora!

She glances up to the hovering machines.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
¡Ven conmigo inmediatamente!
¡Virgilio!
(under her breath)
Putá.

She needs to get him.

THE COMMONS

The boy has made it to the center. He is lost. The mental control of ICE CREAM TRUCK has taken over his body completely.

MOTHER
¡Virgil! ¡Oye!

CLOSE ON YOUNG CLIQUERO

Absurd, like a cheap toy with its batteries running low, the boy raises his arms straight and dances to the strange music. It cannot be escaped. His eyes are vacant. He has the clicker. He's squeezing it.

POV CHINOOK

The radio traffic. Clarifying. What is the weather? A joke. A laugh. The crew is in countdown.

WEAPON SPECIALIST/FREDDY (V.O.)
(over his radio)
There she goes.

A VIEW OF EL CHORILLO -- ELS

Three green helicopters hover in the green sky a mile away. The Chinook is much higher. Straight over the commons.

Suddenly, the Chinook jumps. A ray of red light comes from the belly of the large helicopter. Angled slightly down. Into the commons. What sound does the of the finger of God make? Perhaps the sound of your father crying in front of you in the kitchen before he goes to work. Whatever it is, it blocks all other sounds from the ear. And the mind.

INT. CHINOOK COCKPIT (1989)

The interior of the Chinook is crumbling. One of the front windows cracked. The aching sound reverberates in the metal of the helicopter. The two weapons specialists are ripping their helmets off. In panic. They can't hear each other. Dying.

The pilot is trying to rally them. And save the craft at the same time.

CHINOOK PILOT

Strap in, gentlemen, now! Goddamn it!

(in the radio)

Nope, I've lost 'em both. I am 3 seconds from autorotation. Copy that? Someone didn't do their homework on this one.

CLOSE ON CHINOOK PILOT

He'll try one last time. He turns to the men.

CHINOOK PILOT (CONT'D)

(nope)

Jesus christ.

The rotors whine.

EXT. THE COMMONS (1989) -- THE DIRT

Coughing. The sound of the Death Ray still hums in the concrete buildings of el Chorillo. In the panes of glass. In the trees.

Crying. The city is swirling with sirens. But here is the dirt. Black dirt.

Screaming. It's high pitched. Hoarse now. Take a breath, okay? It just keeps going.

There is the boy's hand. Wrapped around the clicker. Caked in mud.

There is the boy's shirt. He's still wearing it. Something splattered on his shirt. Tomatoes? He is sitting up.

His neck and face. They are splattered with the same tomato stuff. He is trying to wipe it off. And he is screaming. Screaming without taking a breath.

The boy's mouth is screaming, but the sound of it fades away. Just as his hearing is now gone. His eyes, protected by one timely blink, are fixed on his mother. From behind him, parents from the building call to him. They make no sound. They wave him toward them. How can he go to them if he doesn't hear them?

THE BEAUTIFUL NAKED BACK OF HIS MOTHER

Here is the cafe-colored skin of his mother's back. The hairs stand up. She must be cold. Flapping in the lit night air, the cinder shreds of her white nightgown. Edges glow in the breeze. There are two points on her lower back. Two points that pull in toward her skeleton. Very normal. Connective tissue. But, he has never seen these before. Here is where his father held her when they danced.

Smoke blows thick when the wind changes. The smoke comes from a bit higher up her back. From her shoulders. Somewhere close.

But the smoke shifts. And there is her back again.

FADE TO:

EL ORBE HEADLINE: [PPP-POGROM? SECRET PLANS FOR PPP DISCOVERED]

INT. CAFETERÍA EL AMARILLO (PRESENT) -- NIGHT -- EL PATRONCITO

El takes down the copy of El Orbe from in front of his face. He folds it neatly. Places it to the right of his cup and saucer. He adjusts it. There.

The hat on his head is tilted. He looks down to his suit. In this light it looks like his bisabuelo's suit. The day he hit him. The day he met him.

EL PATRONCITO

Muy buenas noches amigo... [Listen, we don't have much time and I want you to know something very important. The papers tell me something you must know. It is horrible. And what they are trying to do to our compañeros, amigo... We've got to try to do something.]

As usual, there is no response from el Cliquero from off-screen.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[You see they are trying to destroy my grandmother's pueblo. For some time now they have known that it would make an ideal energy plant. Since my grandfather's time they have known this. A hydroelectric plant. But the fuckers, excuse me, they say they cannot find another place for these people to live. Oh, yes, the hydroelectric plant would mean flooding the entire village. I have to tell you, amigo, when I just closed my eyes I saw my abuela and Juan Diego and la Virgencita de Guadalupe swirling with the dogs in the flood.]

El Patroncito checks up to el Cliquero to make sure that he is getting this.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[Oh, yes, they say that it is impossible to retrain and relocate these monkeys. Of course, the monkeys themselves say this, too... They say it is easier to drown them.]

He takes a sip of the cooling coffee. Dries his lips.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[The monkeys don't say that.]

Smoke is thick near the ceiling.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[Of course, amigo, the worst part of this whole mess is that they are going to blame it on the, on our compañeros. Sí, and on Marcos, too. And then, I think, they'll bomb them out of existence. Like they've wanted to for a long time, no?]

He fixes his hat.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[And then all that we've worked for. All of it is gone.]

He looks up.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)

[Do you know this word, "pogrom"? Funny word. It means genocide. And it means indios. Sí, like you--]

THE SPY

The Spy--not el Cliquero--sits opposite el Patroncito in the cold green glow of the fluorescent lights.

EL PATRONCITO (CONT'D)
[--And like my abuela.]

THE SPY
Hey, old man. How did you get so old?

BOTH SIT AT THE TABLE

EL PATRONCITO
[Just let me finish. There is only one thing we can do now.]

THE SPY
What's that?

EL PATRONCITO
[Kill the messenger. Stop the messages.]

THE SPY
How did you get so skinny? Let me get you something to eat.

He looks for a waiter.

EL PATRONCITO
[I can't eat what I want to eat.]

THE SPY
You look like shit.

EL PATRONCITO
[Yes, amigo.]

THE SPY
And you're the only one left. Now that your abuela is gone. Huh?

EL PATRONCITO
We can help her, no?

THE SPY
First we must kill the messenger.

EL PATRONCITO
Claro.

THE SPY
And the one-time-pad, was it the boy who had it?

EL PATRONCITO

The boy is a good boy.

THE SPY

But you had to kill him. Was he your messenger?

EL PATRONCITO

Where is the boy?

THE SPY

Yes, where is the boy? Where did they bury him?

EL PATRONCITO

Did they take him back to the States?

THE SPY

In a box...

A waiter passes.

THE SPY (CONT'D)

He was the last piece of Beatriz.

Arsenio waves him off.

EL PATRONCITO

[Yes. She was indio, too. The last piece of the indio.]

THE SPY

Don't you know who I am? Have you ever seen this face before?

He takes off his sunglasses.

EL PATRONCITO

[Who are you?]

THE SPY

I'm the messenger...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAFETERÍA EL AMARILLO -- MOMENTS LATER

The Spy walks out through the front door and down the street. And keeps walking.

THE SPY (V.O.)

What? Haven't you ever seen a guy commit suicide before?

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- MOMENTS LATER -- EL EJECUTIVO

Okay, I know it's late. After this guy, I promise not to introduce any more characters. Just relax, I think you'll like him.

Under a streetlight we see a bright orange four-door with black fringe hanging from the rear view mirror. Long fringe. There are two police-style antennae bowed from their magnetic bases on the roof to the trunk. Across the top half of the car's windshield is spelled in red, white and blue letters: "EJECUTIVO" or EXECUTIVE. The engine is revving.

In the driver's seat is el Ejecutivo, sometimes assistant to the Spy. He leans out the open window. He's heavy and his smile is contagious. Even during suicide.

EL EJECUTIVO

Oye, jefe, quieres un aventon?

The Spy had nearly walked by him without seeing him.

THE SPY

[What do you say? You have the car back.]

EL EJECUTIVO

[Sí, jefe. Here it is. I am mobile again. Come in and ride and I'll show you how great she is.]

THE SPY

[My van is just here around corner.]

El Ejecutivo settles back into his seat. The Spy never really comes to a complete stop.

EL EJECUTIVO

[Whatever you want, jefe. You have your reasons. When should I come by tomorrow?]

THE SPY (V.O.)

I'll tell you what my plan used to be...

EL EJECUTIVO

(fading into b.g.)

[Because I can't come until the afternoon. I have to take my aunt to see the doctor. She'll be fine, but she has some trouble walking with her feet.]

THE SPY (V.O.)

I was going to top the Death Ray and
Ice Cream Truck...I had something
that would...

The Spy waves to el Ejecutivo telling him that sometime in
the afternoon will be adequate for him, too. He doesn't
believe this. He'll be dead.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- CORNER -- OVERHEAD

The Spy walks around the corner and vanishes.

THE SPY (V.O.)

But I decided against it. Technology
itself cannot help us--and the people
cannot prevent technology from falling
into the wrong corporate hands.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- THE VAN -- OVERHEAD

The electric utility van starts and pulls away from the curb.
Cars stop for it as it leaves. Then they, too, pass. A bus
passes.

THE SPY (V.O.)

The Death Ray was a product test.
Product development.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- ORANGE FOUR-DOOR -- OVERHEAD

The orange four-door crosses two lanes to make a right. It
squeezes between two stopped cars, and rolls a tire onto the
sidewalk.

He guns the engine and the car pops off the curb. And he is
away. A woman turns with her son and shakes a finger at him.

He is a good driver.

THE SPY (V.O.)

And if it hadn't killed the crew
that fired it, too, it would have
paid out handsomely.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAFETERÍA EL AMARILLO -- THE RED LEBARON -- OVERHEAD

Arsenio's red LeBaron emerges from the parking lot beside
Cafetería El Amarillo. It smoothly passes and its lights
flip down and spread out as it smoothly passes into the moist,
advancing night.

THE SPY (V.O.)

You may not know this, but the Death Ray was invented by a tall skinny man in his barn.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- THE VAN -- OVERHEAD

The van continues. It passes a door with a fiesta spilling out into the street.

THE SPY (V.O.)

Burned the barn down, but he really stumbled onto something big. That's another story.

A brass banda surrounds the door in a semi-circle. The semi-circle deforms to allow the van to pass.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- ORANGE FOUR-DOOR -- OVERHEAD

The orange four-door waiting at a light. A taxi to the side. The light changes. A honk. El Ejecutivo waves a spread-fingered hand up and down. Tranquilo, amigo. Relax. The orange car rumbles ahead.

THE SPY (V.O.)

What would I have broadcast with it anyway? An apology?

Ten more cars and trucks pass through the light.

Then the red LeBaron passes, too.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- THE VAN -- FROM THE BACK

The van turns a corner and makes its way up a steep, narrow cobblestone street. At the top of the hill, a large church.

THE SPY (V.O.)

Okay, I'll just tell you one thing it had--one innovation: it could not be dismantled without replacing all the wire in the city.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- THE RED LEBARON -- FROM THE BACK

The red LeBaron passes under strings of lights--red, white, and green--bowing toward the street.

Ahead is the orange four-door. The orange car makes a left. The LeBaron makes a left. Carefully. It hits the curb, rolls up onto it, and comes back to the street. A hubcap rattles on the sidewalk.

THE SPY (V.O.)

How about that? Just as the local grid flows, the transmitter could evolve or heal itself when a piece or section was removed. And it would send its messages 2500 miles on a clear day.

The orange four-door is further down the street. And it slowly turns again. The red car follows.

What the hell is going on?

CUT TO:

INT. ELECTRIC UTILITY VAN

The lit interior of the van. Yellow. Some tools shift on the metal floor.

THE SPY (V.O.)

But, like I said. I decided against it.

The driver is Adara. She is the only one in the van. She is wearing a pair of coveralls like the Spy wears. Dirty and well-worked.

She makes a hard, slow turn and continues to head up the hill to the church.

CUT TO:

INT. ORANGE FOUR-DOOR

El Ejecutivo looks up to the rear-view mirror. Lights glint in his eyes. He looks back to the road.

EL EJECUTIVO

[I think you should get into the back, amigo. I know how uncomfortable you are making me look like your chauffeur, but you should get over it and get down. Got it?]

The Spy is in the orange car.

El Ejecutivo stops him for a moment, holding his arm. He turns a corner sharply and slows. The Spy climbs into the back quickly. Rolling into the seat and out of sight. El Ejecutivo pushes on.

ORANGE FOUR-DOOR REAR-VIEW MIRROR

El Ejecutivo watches the red LeBaron turn too wide and back up to continue following.

EL EJECUTIVO (CONT'D)
[He drives like my abuela on medication.]

BACK TO SCENE

The orange four-door stops at a yellow light.

EL EJECUTIVO (CONT'D)
[I'm sorry, jefe, I know it's illegal to stop for a yellow light, but I had to give this guy a chance. He'll never be able to follow us if I make the light. What's he trying to do, anyway?]

THE SPY
[He wants to kill me.]

EL EJECUTIVO
[If you stood right in front of his car, he couldn't kill you. Where do you think you left your van, amigo?]

CUT TO:

INT. ELECTRIC UTILITY VAN

Adara pulls the van up to the Dominican monastery. The Spy's connection to the underground network.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL CHURCH

Adara slides the van door closed. She lifts the rectangular cover in the sidewalk, revealing another, deeper hole and foot holds. She props the lid, drops in her bag, and turns on her flashlight. She climbs down into the sidewalk.

The lid lowers. The light under the lid becomes more faint and disappears.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE RED LEBARON

The radio plays static.

The driver has a difficult time making a turn, slapping the wheel as he cuts it. His right arm pulls the hearing aid out of his ear.

It is el Cliquero. Has he ever driven a car before?

He can see the orange four-door in front of him. Just out of reach. He is breathing hard. Out of frustration, he punches the accelerator with his foot. He looks down and releases the hand brake that had been on for the entire ride. Shit.

His frustration is getting the best of him. But the car handles much better *without the brake on*.

CUT TO:

INT. ORANGE FOUR-DOOR

El Ejecutivo checks his mirror again. Pretends to raise his eyebrows.

EL EJECUTIVO
[He's learning, jefe.]

In the mirror, the LeBaron draws closer.

THE BACK SEAT

The Spy is staring up to the ceiling of the orange four-door.

EL EJECUTIVO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
[Listen, where are we going, jefe?
What do you want to drink?]

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TUNNEL ENTRY

A flashlight illuminates a wide, low slit that runs below the street above. Adara squeezes through it. A truck passes overhead. Her thick backpack is held in place until the truck passes.

She moves toward a tunnel.

INT. SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL

Adara crouches as she walks into a sagging brick tunnel--the secret passages of 16th Century Spanish priests. Her backpack brushes the heavy stone.

INT. ORANGE FOUR-DOOR

The Spy looks up to the ceiling of the car. The green light from comedors and street lamps.

EL EJECUTIVO

He twists his neck to talk to the back seat. Is the Spy listening?

EL EJECUTIVO

[You really should see this guy, jefe. You know this is like Mexican NASCAR. You ever seen NASCAR, jefe? In LA they have it all the time. All the chavos are wearing fucking NASCAR hats.]

THE SPY (O.S.)

[When was the last time you were in LA?]

EL EJECUTIVO

[Just last month. While my car was a piece of shit. I went to see my uncle.]

THE SPY (O.S.)

[I've never been to LA.]

EL EJECUTIVO

[Maybe you should go, jefe. Maybe you should go with me.]

He steers around a bus.

EL EJECUTIVO (CONT'D)

[You're worse than when I left, you know?]

A honk.

EL EJECUTIVO (CONT'D)

[You didn't respond, jefe...]

The Spy mumbles something in the back seat.

EL EJECUTIVO (CONT'D)

[When I left, you were going to go to the beach, cabrón, remember?]

THE SPY (O.S.)

[Yeah, well, I couldn't find the phone number for your cousins.]

EL EJECUTIVO

[But, whatever happened to the beach? When's the last time you needed my cousin to hold your hand to the beach?]

THE SPY

[I've been working.]

EL EJECUTIVO

[How long have you been a mexican?
(MORE)]

EL EJECUTIVO (CONT'D)
 How long? And see how much you still
 hang onto your imperialist customs.]

The Spy finally has to laugh.

EL EJECUTIVO (CONT'D)
 [Too much work, cabrón. How's it
 going, anyway?]

THE SPY
 It's done. [It's done.]

EL EJECUTIVO
 I can speak English. You don't have
 to, to--como se dice...

THE SPY
 Translate.

EL EJECUTIVO
 [Ay cabrón, I got you. Finished,
 how? Without me? It was my idea in
 the first place, so how could you
 finish it yourself without asking my
 permission? You didn't test it--?]

A flash. He snaps his eyes up to the rear-view mirror.

EL EJECUTIVO (CONT'D)
 [Shit, he's here. Where are we going?]

THE SPY
 [Lose him and we'll go to the hotel.]

EL EJECUTIVO
 [Do you have unas cervecitas, or how
 is your hospitality? We can stop.
 Tacos, too?]

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL

There is a bend in the tunnel. Frayed, wet roots sweep over
 Adara. Don't get the backpack wet.

And there is a light. Fluorescent green like the food shops.
 Just one.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE RED LEBARON

It is easier to drive. Every minute. It has taken a long
 time, but el Cliquero can make easier turns. He is passing
 cars.

THE SEAT

In the passenger seat: one pistol, one clicker, one worthless hearing aid.

The lights pass over them.

BACK TO SCENE

El Cliquero. Driving. How is Adara doing? Will she succeed? He passes a slower car.

CUT TO:

INT. ORANGE FOUR-DOOR

El Ejecutivo can see the LeBaron a block behind. Three blocks left to the hotel. Hotel Santo Tomás.

THE SPY (O.S.)

[This old man is trying to kill me, I think.]

EL EJECUTIVO

[Which old man?]

THE SPY (O.S.)

[The one following us.]

EL EJECUTIVO

[Cabrón, there must be a lot of people who want to kill you. This guy is young. And, ooh, this is one ugly guy.]

THE SPY

He sits up and looks.

EL EJECUTIVO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

[I've been trying to lose him at the lights. He's getting better, he's a natural.]

THE SPY

[Fucking lose him!]

EL EJECUTIVO (O.S.)

[Nothing's gonna happen to you.]

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET -- TOPE (SPEED BUMP)

The orange four-door picks up speed. Approaching a speed bump.

EL EJECUTIVO (V.O.)

[Watch this.]

The car's front wheels kick up on the front of the speed bump. El Ejecutivo floors the accelerator. The car rises hops the bump and continues.

The red LeBaron bottoms out on the bump. At the same speed. Its muffler rattles and slides to a stop on the street.

EXT. SAN CRISTÓBAL STREET CORNER -- TWO MORE BLOCKS

The light is about to change. Flashing green. The orange car roars around the corner as the light turns red.

The LeBaron takes the turn at 40 MPH. There goes the other hubcap. Onto the sidewalk and away.

CUT TO:

INT. ORANGE FOUR-DOOR

Through the windshield. AGUA PARA USO HUMANO. A 10,500 Litro water truck is taking up the entire street. The hose snakes into a home just past the hotel.

THE SPY

Motherfucker.

EL EJECUTIVO

[Careful.] Evasive acción.

He slams on the brakes. Pops it into reverse before it stops. The LeBaron rams into the rear.

INT. THE RED LEBARON

Screeching brakes unheard by el Cliquero. Blood on his face. The steering wheel is hard.

INT. ORANGE FOUR-DOOR

El Ejecutivo is trying to push his car past the LeBaron.

EL EJECUTIVO

[What were you worrying about, jefe?
I told you, I'd take care of--]

His right shoulder explodes. The front windshield. A hole in the back windshield near the Spy's head.

Red, wet glass on the dashboard. The water truck.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

The green light glows from a place set into the tunnel wall.

EL EJECUTIVO (V.O.)

(in the car)

Go. Oooooow. Go now. I'm okay. [I'm
shit, but I'm okay. Go.]

THE JARS

Rows of jars filled with aged-yellow formaldehyde line a ten
ancient shelves. The light spreads through the liquid and
into the tunnel.

THE SPY (V.O.)

(in the car)

You come with me.

Inside the formaldehyde float human fetuses. Some with
deformed smiles. Some with curling tails. Some suck their
thumbs. They are labelled. Each with the name of a priest
and a nun. Or just a priest.

ADARA

(to herself)

Where the fuck is it?

Her flashlight beam sweeps behind the jars.

EL EJECUTIVO (V.O.)

(in the car)

[Look, I want to live.]

BACK TO SCENE

Adara peers over the shelves, but sees nothing. Nothing she
wants.

THE SPY (V.O.)

(in the car)

[Me, too. Me, too.]

She turns back toward the entrance. It must be here somewhere.
She starts to walk. She trips slightly over a raised brick.
Smiles.

EL EJECUTIVO (V.O.)

(in the car)

Then you go. We'll both live.

She puts a hand out to reach the wall. Higher. She brushes.
A wire shelf drops. Behind the shelf, a computer jack.

ADARA

[Here it is.]

INT. HOTEL SANTO TOMÁS -- COURTYARD

The gate swings roughly. But there is no one pushing it.
There are no footsteps. A light on in the recording room.

THE STAIRS

Blood on the steps, but no one is walking.

LA OFICINA DOOR

The door moves slightly. Swinging slowly toward the inside wall. Revealing.

INT. LA OFICINA

A tape plays on the deck in the rack. It begins with Ice Cream Truck. And then the Spy's voice.

THE SPY (V.O.)
 Ignorance begat mistrust.
 Mistrust begat greed.

EL CLIQUERO

El Cliquero looms over the Spy.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And greed begat violence.
 And violence begat greed.
 And greed begat mistrust.

He strikes the Spy across the face with his elbow.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And mistrust begat ignorance.
 And ignorance begat greed.
 And greed begat greed.
 And this greed begat the CIA.

Again.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And the CIA begat Manuel Noriega.
 And Noriega begat a coup d'etat.
 And the coup begat a far-reaching
 greed. And the greed begat the
 Invasion of Panama.

The Spy opens his mouth wide to breathe through the blood.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 The invasion begat an excuse for the
 Death Ray.

Slumping.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And the Death Ray caused the death
 of a mother.

El Cliquero stands over the limp body of the Spy.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And this death begat a boy.

The Spy holds the one-time-pad. Up to el Cliquero.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And this boy begat violence.

A CAFETERIA TABLE

A coffee cup.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And this violence begat mistrust.

A saucer.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And this mistrust begat ignorance.

A teaspoon, tangential to the saucer.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And this ignorance begat greed, an
age-old greed, begotten in the heart
of the boy's great-great grandfather.

A well-manicured hand adjusts.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The great-great grandfather's greed
begat his daughter, and his daughter
was the source--la Fuente--of all
things good and right in her village
and her world.

ADARA'S EYES

She works quickly.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And although la Fuente was borne by
his greed, she died by his greed.

BACK TO SCENE

The Spy stirs slowly on the floor.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And the greed, too, begat a
hopelessness within me.

The Spy is caught.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And I gave birth to the Ice Cream
Truck.

He is ready.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And the Ice Cream Truck begat the
 death of a mother... of a boy's
 mother.

LOVELY BEATRIZ

She holds her son's head in her lap. Stroking.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And I loved the boy's mother... whom
 I killed.

THE COMPUTER SCREEN

First appears a dialogue box. "Broadcast in progress. Press
 x to cancel."

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And the love begat mistrust.
 And the mistrust begat ignorance.

She presses "x".

"Current broadcast cancelled."

BACK TO SCENE

El Cliquero looks down to his hand. To the clicker.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And the ignorance begat greed.
 And the greed, too, begat Ice Cream
 Truck.

THE CLICKER

It reads "000". The kids in the mercado have drained the
 last digits of his revenge.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And Ice Cream Truck begat the death
 of a boy's mother.

El Cliquero's burnt eyelids. Steady above his warm brown
 eyes.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I didn't know the boy's mother...
 whom I killed.

The pistol is pointed down to the Spy's head. It's barrel a
 burnished blue-grey. And it does not shake.

THE SPY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And the boy's loss begat violence
 and the violence, greed.

INT. THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Adara has put the Spy's computer onto the wire shelf. It is connected to the jack.

THE SPY (V.O.)
 And what has the greed begotten this
 time?

THE COMPUTER SCREEN

">: Copy EZLN.mov, /broadcast"

">: Run broadcast(EZLN.mov);"

"Broadcasting..."

Color bars and a test tone.

DISSOLVE TO:

A WOMAN'S NAKED BACK (1989)

The naked back of el Cliquero's mother. She lies face down. Her shirt has been pulled up to her neck.

EL CLIQUERO'S EYES

His dark eyes stare down at the Spy.

BACK TO SCENE

The shirt flaps in the wind. There are two indentations in her back, just above the hips. Where the hips used to be. The indentations caused by connective tissue, pulling inward.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #1 (V.O.)
 Oh, Jesus! It's going down.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #2 (V.O.)
 Sharkbait. We're losing the gun ship.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #3 (V.O.)
 Copy that. We are scrambling here as
 fast as we can. We're thin.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #1 (V.O.)
 Fucking get them here, now! Oh, Jesus,
 they are going down! They are going
 down! [Crying.]

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #4 (V.O.)
Oh God, look at that! What happened?
What happened? [Crying.]

FADE OUT.

Helicopter blades whip the air. Slower and slower until there
is no sound at all.

THE END.

CREDITS

SERIES OF SHOTS

A) The Boy riding in the red LeBaron with his uncle Arsenio. Riding through the roads that lead to the Abuela's pueblo.

B) The uncle looks at the Boy. The Boy is silent. He asks the Boy a question.

C) The LeBaron kicks up dust in the pueblo. Dogs watch the car.

D) The Boy meets the Abuela. He is reserved, but she grabs him. Holds him hard.

E) It is time for the three of them to eat. Her table is set.

F) The Boy is getting a haircut in the pueblo's barbershop.

G) The old Fiat is parked in the back of the Abuela's lot. Rusting.

H) The Boy tries to hold the Abuela's hands. They are blistered. Blistered badly from the poisoned maíz. It hurts her.

I) Time to return to the city. The Boy won't leave his Abuela. He cries. He doesn't want to let go. She whispers to him.

ABUELA

Corazoncito, your mother loved you
very much. You'll always be with me.

FADE OUT.

FORMATTING NOTES:

Dialogue contained by brackets [...] is meant to be spoken in Spanish and subtitled. This version of the script is meant for English readers.