

LAND OF THE BRAVE LORD
A MODERN STORY OF PERSEPHONE
by
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5/30/22

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FADE IN:

SUPER: The Greater Antilles - 500 Years ago.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

PERSEPHONE, the Virgin Goddess, frolics in the surf.

She runs to shore into the awaiting arms of her MAIDENS. They embrace her with Turkish cotton peshtemals, gently patting her dry.

TWO AFRICANS, standing post, unroll a scroll-like fabric screen for protection from the sun.

Persephone directs her Maidens down the beach, shooing them away. One defiant MAIDEN discretely remains behind.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

A TAINO WARRIOR stands at the forest edge, eyeing Persephone. He bites a pomegranate and sticks his tongue deep inside the fruit's center, lapping up the sweet nectar. The bloody seeds smear his face.

Disgusted, how a Princess would look at a bed bug, Persephone turns and walks off along the beach.

The Taino Warrior slams his HAND SWORD against a royal palm and chases after her catching her. They kiss passionately.

She heaves, rises, and falls with the lust of excitement. The Maiden looks on with narrowed-eye jealousy.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

A beached, LANDING BOAT.

A HANDSOME SPANIARD eagle eyes the lovers while protracting a temper-hard, SPYGLASS.

SPANISH CONQUISTADORS handle a battle-scarred, CASTILIAN ATTACK DOG. The Handsome Spaniard lowers his spyglass.

HANDSOME SPANIARD
Becerrillo, prance!

UNSHACKLED - a WILD-EYED DASH to BLOOD, BONES, and certain DEATH.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Persephone's Maidens notices the attack and frantically rushes back.

Persephone is captured and hurried off to the Landing Boat as the Taino Warrior fights off the rabid attack dog.

The Handsome Spaniard aims a musket and fires. The Taino Warrior drops, mortally wounded.

FADE OUT.

SUPER: Present-day - Jackson Heights, Queens, New York.

INT. THE GREEK FLAME RESTAURANT - DAY

MANNY CARMONA, Latino, 40's, tall, handsome, and charismatic, is looking over the menu with war buddy, mechanic hands, JOSE SANCHEZ, a 40's, short, bowlegged Latino. Manny is a dead ringer for the Taino Warrior.

They look over the menus.

MANNY

Gloria's going through the most dreaded time of her life, affecting her self-image and sense of femininity.

SANCHEZ

Change of life?

MANNY

No doubt. After sex, she gets all chatty on American history and then loses it, bawling like a baby. Irregular periods, hot flashes, night sweats. It's like clearing a minefield.

SANCHEZ

Careful, they kill or maim.

Sanchez reaches inside his wallet and gives Manny a business card.

SANCHEZ

You can take it to the bank. Hector Perez. Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning.

MANNY

HVAC. I have a guy.

SANCHEZ

He's not your typical HVAC technician. Hector's been moonlighting making money, hand over fist.

MANNY

Doing what?

SANCHEZ

Mrs. Hector is perimenopausal. One night during intimacy, she had a hot flash. Hector's body reacted like a human heat exchanger. Call it serendipitous, twenty years of experience in the HVAC business, or a God-given talent. He reduced her hot flash durations up to seventy-five percent. Now Mrs. Hector's found a way to cash in and has him making year-round hot service calls.

MANNY

He's sleeping with menopausal women?

SANCHEZ

No, not hand in glove. It's on the up and up. He wears a sterilized disposable hooded Tyvek coverall with a two-way zipper, storm flap, and booties. It's made from ortho-fabric, aluminized mylar, and nylon/spandex to repel temperatures up to 100 Celsius. They used something similar to space shuttles.

Manny pockets the card.

SANCHEZ

So that's what I'm walking into with Maria, middle-aged pillow talk?

MANNY
Brush up on your history.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT - GARAGE - DAY

A bustling transport company. VEHICLES decked are out like Puerto Rican Party Buses with colorful blinking lights, strobes, all the bells and whistles. DRIVERS prepare for the next shift.

GLORIA CARMONA, Latina, 40ish, is the Queen Bee of the operation and a dead ringer for Persephone.

MARIA SANCHEZ, (Sanchez's wife) in her late 30s, is a light complexion Latina.

Gloria's sweltering.

MARIA
It's winter, and you have the air on. It's colder than a witch's tit inside.

GLORIA
Where did Manny go?

MARIA
He went to lunch with Sanchez - The Greek Flame. I heard their clam chowder's excellent.

GLORIA
That's the third time this week since she's returned.

MARIA
Who, Sarita? She's middle-aged, twice married, with grown kids.

GLORIA
I'm in labor with Donna for what seemed like a lifetime, and Manny's doggin' around with that blue plate special.

MARIA
Gloria, that was twenty years ago. Why are you bringing it up now?

The phone rings.

MARIA
 (into phone)
 Carmona Transport. No, he's at
 lunch. Yes, she is; hold on.
 (to Gloria)
 It's time you face the music.

GLORIA
 (into phone)
 Mr. Marrero? I've decided to go
 with GM Manhattan. I'm sorry to
 hear that. I know what Manny said.
 I know you sold him his first van.
 Yes, it's final. We have a
 thunderstorm here; I need to get
 off the phone, okay? Goodbye.

She slams the phone down.

MARIA
 Thunderstorm?

GLORIA
 Just because we both speak Spanish,
 he thinks I need to do business
 with him? I can't stand that tight
 Cubano. Have you seen him strutting
 around town with Rosa? He's old
 enough to be her father. If I were
 Mrs. Marrero, I'd blow his balls
 off. That's right!

RICO, age 20, a good-looking Latino driver, enters.

RICO
 Mrs. Carmona, there's a flat on
 number seven.

GLORIA
 Thanks, Rico.

He leaves but glances back at Gloria and smiles like a
 kindergartner on picture day.

MARIA
 Rico Suave.

GLORIA
 Would you stop?

MARIA

He's gaga over you. He sneaks in every morning with your coffee and pomegranate muffin, and he acts like a kid with his hand caught in the cookie jar.

GLORIA

He's Donna's age.

MARIA

So? Royal Caribbean has a five-day cougar cruise leaving Barcelona in April. I won't tell Manny if you won't.

GLORIA

Not my style.

CUT TO:

INT. THE GREEK FLAME RESTAURANT - DAY

Manny gets an incoming video text message.

MANNY

Check this out.

He hands the phone over to Sanchez.

SANCHEZ

What the...

ROSA (V.O.)

Oh, oh, oh, oh yeah, Manny.

SEXTING: ROSA, AGE 20, LATINA, ATHLETIC BUILD, IS LYING IN BED. BESIDE HER LAYS A HANDGUN.

ROSA (V.O.)

Lock and load, baby.

SANCHEZ

She's sexhuddling with a 9mm Glock.

MANNY

It's Donna's friend, Rosa, valedictorian at Columbia, on full scholarship, and a gun enthusiast. She won't stop with this nonsense.

SANCHEZ

You triggered her white lightning.
Are you playing Mississippi skin
tag with this coed?

MANNY

Are you nuts? She's just a kid.

ROSA (V.O.)

Oh, Oh, yes, Manny.

SANCHEZ

Here's a girl who's comfortable
with her body, and a body is a
terrible thing to waste. Forward it
to me, would you?

MANNY

Oh, sure. Gladly.

Manny deletes it.

SANCHEZ

Dude?!

MANNY

I don't want anything to do with
this.

Sanchez stands.

SANCHEZ

You're heartless. I'm going to the
bathroom to wash my hands and beat
my meat. Order me the sole.

He leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. THE GREEK FLAME RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

MARRERO, a Cuban Male early 40's enters with Rosa.

SARITA, a middle-aged Hispanic waitress, walks up to wait on
Manny.

SARITA

Pretty one, isn't she?

MANNY

Yes, she is.

SARITA
She's half his age.
(beat)
Manny, I wanted to thank you for
what you've done for my boy.

MANNY
No problem. He's a good kid, and
he's working out just fine.

SARITA
Look at me - a middle-aged
waitress. I'm a mess.

MANNY
Don't be so hard on yourself.

SARITA
People used to tell me I was so
pretty, right, Manny. You used to
look at me as you looked at her. I
can't seem to find my used to be.

Marrero and Rosa walk up.

MARRERO
Manny, got a minute?

ROSA
Hi, Mr. Carmona.

MANNY
Hello Rosa.

MARRERO
(to Rosa)
Baby, get us a booth by the window.
I'll be right over.

ROSA
Sure. Bye, Mr. Carmona.

Rosa leaves.

SARITA
(to Manny)
The chowder?

MANNY
Yes.

SARITA
And Sanchez?

MANNY
Order him the sole.

MARRERO
(under his breath)
Sanchez dirty hand grease monkey.

Sarita leaves.

MARRERO
Have you gone loco hiring Rico? I was the invisible hand that brought together your passion play. If Gloria found out Sarita's son is working for you, I could see why she's acting toward me. Gloria has a whip in her left hand and a loaded revolver in her right - with her sites on me.

MANNY
Chill out. It's about you and Rosa, not Sarita.

MARRERO
I hope you're right for both our sakes. What happened to you, man? You used to be a stud sailor getting more tail than Fernando Lamas.

MANNY
It was Army.

MARRERO
Whatever. It was your business. I sold you your first van. I popped your cherry, so to speak. Now all I'm getting from your wife is the local weather.

MANNY
I'll see what I can do.

MARRERO
See what you can do? Aren't you listening? You don't see Mrs. Marrero running my shop, do you?

Manny peers over at Rosa.

MANNY
I don't see Mrs. Marrero anywhere.

Sanchez returns.

SANCHEZ
(to Marrero)
You're in my seat.

Marrero slowly rises.

MARRERO
Nothing, nothing. We're all on
sinking sand, my friend. You know,
maybe it's time you find another
business.

Marrero turns to Rosa and shouts like a scene from "My Big Fat Greek Wedding."

MARRERO
Opah! Hey Baby, what do the Greeks
know about love? I saw something
nice for you at that dress shop on
Roosevelt. Let's go try it on.

MANNY
I think Gloria closed the deal with
GM Manhattan. No wonder he's been
busting on me like a weak sister.

SANCHEZ
Good for her, she stiffed him. That
Casanova Frankenstein. A gypsy van
business during the transit strike
that was your idea - it was pure
genius. Gloria has the Midas touch.
Let her handle the details. Why
shake the money maker?

MANNY
I need something new, something on
my own.

SANCHEZ
Here we go again, something old,
something new, something borrowed,
something blue.

MANNY
Screw you.

SANCHEZ
Let her shine, panito. Keeping our
wives happy is much more important
than our happiness for sustaining a
successful marriage.

MANNY
Where did you hear that one?

SANCHEZ
I read it in the "Ladies Home
Journal."

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/OFFICE - DAY

Manny storms inside.

MANNY
The Pope of Jackson Heights just
served me up some humble pie.

GLORIA
Aye, Manny, please.

The phone RINGS.

MARIA
Manny, line two.

MANNY
What does he want now?

MARIA
It's not Marrero. It's the police
from Ponce, Puerto Rico.

MANNY
The police?

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/OFFICE - DAY

GLORIA
You spoke little about your papa.

MANNY
We weren't close. He left me with
my Aunt when Momma died. The last
thing I heard was that his coffee
venture went bust after Irma and
Maria. Get packed; we're leaving
Monday for the funeral services.
Bring the black dress, the modest
one, not too sexy; remember, we're
grieving.

The phone RINGS.

MARIA
Carmona Transport. Who's calling?
Gloria, line one. It's Isabella
Salazar, from Miami.

GLORIA
Who? Miami?

Gloria listens to the call. She turns to Manny.

GLORIA
She's interested in papa's
property.

Manny takes the phone.

MANNY
(into phone)
Hello, yes it is. Really. How many
acres? What's the offer? Say again.
We're arriving on Monday for the
services. What is the best number
to reach you? I'll be in touch.
Thanks for calling. Goodbye.

He hangs up the phone.

MANNY
Hot diggity dog!

GLORIA
What did she say?

MANNY
Maria, who's that lawyer your
sister knows in San Juan?

GLORIA
Manny! What did she say?

MANNY
I hope you're wearing your socks
because I'm about to knock them
off!

GLORIA
Quit playing!

He takes her by the hands.

MANNY
Eighty-six the black dress, little
Woman. Pack your bikini: Old San
Juan, 82 degrees, Barrachina's Pina
Coladas.

Maria makes the sign of the cross.

MARIA
Show some respect, for God's sake.
He's barely cold in the grave.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA'S/BEDROOM - NIGHT

MANNY
Donna's at Mercedes.

GLORIA
Did you lock the doors and turn off
the oven?

EXT. CARMONA'S BEDROOM SHOWER - CONTINUOUS

THROUGH STEAMED GLASS - Going with the grain with Bikini line
precision, Gloria parts the creamy lathered froth.

INT. CARMONA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She steps out of the bathroom a whole foot taller, wearing
leopard HEELS that accentuates her shapely legs. She's clad
in the sheerest black negligee. A quiver of light ignites
from her diamond-pierced navel.

GLORIA
I'm shiny clean, Papi.

Manny turns down the sheets inviting her in.

MANNY (CONT'D)
You've come a long way, baby.

GLORIA
To get where I got to today.

She opens a dresser drawer filled with scarves and wigs. She
pulls out a long silk scarf and walks toward the bed. She
straddles him and covers his eyes with the scarf.

GLORIA (CONT'D)
I'm going to blindfold you, Papi.

FADE OUT.

INT. CARMONA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Manny is fast asleep - Gloria's sweltering.

GLORIA
Are you awake?

Manny stirs.

MANNY
Yeah, yeah, what is it?

GLORIA
Manny, they based it on the law,
"once free, always free."

MANNY
"Born Free?" The lioness and the
orphaned cub?

GLORIA
No, "once free, always free." The
Dred Scott decision. Dred and
Harriet Scott filed a freedom suit
in Kansas in 1846.

Manny sits up and squints over at the table clock.

MANNY
Gloria, it's 3:00 am. And it was
Missouri, not Kansas.

GLORIA
You're right, St. Louis, Missouri.
It went to the Supreme court, which
ruled against them, stating that
Colored had no rights in federal
court, slave states did not have to
honor the "once free, always free"
doctrine, and...

MANNY
Gloria, what is it?

Tears start welling up in her eyes.

GLORIA

Oh, Manny, I'm on fire. I'm crying hot tears, Baby. You make me feel different, soft. It's like a shock straight to my head. It balances everything.

He pats her down with a small hand towel.

MANNY

Go on, little woman.

GLORIA

I was a clean girl when I met you. So shy. I can't control it now. I like to guji guji with you. I melt in your arms.

(beat)

Manny, you wouldn't leave me, would you?

He gently caresses her face.

MANNY

Of course not.

GLORIA

We have our differences, love, and bickering, but you know that I love you. I'm the only woman you can trust. We're life-mates forever.

She smiles.

GLORIA

When we cuddle together, I can smell your neck, my breasts warm against your back. My nipples seduce you.

MANNY

Baby, we're up in a couple of hours.

GLORIA

You're the only man I can talk to this way. I've learned to enjoy sex with you. Twenty years later, you still want me.

MANNY

Come here.

They kiss.

GLORIA

Manny, could we renew our wedding vows one day? Would you do it all over again?

MANNY

You know I would.

GLORIA

I'll never leave you. And I won't let anyone come between us. You understand, right? Say you love me.

MANNY

Sure I do, Baby. I love you.

He wipes away her tears.

GLORIA

(playful)

You baddie guy. Daddy, daddy, daddy, do.

MANNY

Come to cradle.

She nestles deep in his arms, closes her eyes, and drifts off to sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/GARAGE - DAY

IRIS, a driver, early 30's, Dominican, beautiful tall, sashays over to Manny. She's a dead ringer for Persephone's defiant jealous Maiden.

IRIS

Mannito! Mannito!

She bends down to open her backpack revealing full cleavage.

HOOTS, HOLLERS, and power lug wrenches.

She pulls out a nine-inch plantain and presents it as a sexy game show host.

IRIS

I heard about your papa, and I brought something to cheer you up.

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Gloria and Maria watch from the office window.

MARIA

Refuge in the bosom of Abraham.

GLORIA

You don't have to use the gospel of Luke to dignify titties.

MARIA

Oh, that's a mouth full.

GLORIA

Look at her making sex eyes with my man - fresh off the boat with her hillbilly ways.

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

IRIS

The plantain is longer than a banana and has a thicker skin; it has a sweeter flavor and keeps its firm shape when cooked.

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MARIA

Rico told me she once wrestled.

GLORIA

Get out.

MARIA

Her father was a government official in the Dominican Republic and was close friends with ex-wrestler and former mayor Jack Veneno. She wrestled for the Dominican Sisters of Mary of Ann Arbor. Rico said she's packin' a razor in her stockin', so watch yourself.

GLORIA

Quit fooling. What am I going to do with her? I can't fire her; he just hired her.

MARIA

I don't understand you. You have all the confidence to run this business, but you're a mess when it comes to Manny.

GLORIA

It's the fear of losing him.

MARIA

You want her out? Freeze her. You know, Titi Elvira, style.

GLORIA

Como?

MARIA

Write her name on a piece of paper, fortune cookie size, place it in an ice tray filled with water and then freeze it - she's cursed. Finito.

GLORIA

Hexing? A spell?

MARIA

It works. Trust me.
(laughs)
I'm just messing with you.

GLORIA

It's not funny.

MARIA

I know. I'm sorry. Listen; take another look at her E-Verify and I-9 form. I have a cousin who was once roommates with her sister, but you didn't hear it from me.

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Iris notices that Gloria's watching - they stare down the barrel at each other.

IRIS

(under her breath)
She's a hellhound with her lion's claws and serpent's tail.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA'S/BEDROOM - DAY

Daughter, DONNA CARMONA, age 20, enters with MERCEDES, age 19, and Rosa. Mercedes walks back into the living room.

DONNA

(to Rosa)

I got to pee. Hurry up and pick one and get out. We shouldn't be in here.

Rosa opens a dresser drawer to find several scarves and wigs inside. She puts on a blonde wig and Gloria's scarf and rolls play in the mirror.

ROSA

(male voice)

Hold it. Let me have a look at you.

No, your makeup should be more.

(female voice)

More what?

(male voice)

Like a whore.

(female voice)

Oh, Manuel. Love me like a whore.

Donna returns.

DONNA

Let's go!

ROSA

Is your father still driving us to the city?

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/OFFICE - DAY

Donna, Mercedes, and Rosa enter.

IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT, OFFICERS escort Iris out of the garage in handcuffs as Gloria follows behind.

DONNA

Daddy, what happened?

MANNY

Iris. I'll meet you downtown with bail.

GLORIA

Manny, it's not your business.

Iris eyeballs Gloria.

IRIS

I knew it was you. I'm his
sweetness of spring; you're his
bitter winter bitch.

GLORIA

Take your "double D" attitude, and
shove off for a long season.

IRIS

My friend has a gun and knows which
bullets go in it.

GLORIA

Don't threaten me.

IRIS

A lady doesn't threaten.

GLORIA

You? A lady? You're from a world of
truck stops and locker rooms.

MANNY

(to Gloria)

Hold your peace, woman!

IRIS

Do you think you can send me back
and shut me up? You're a curse upon
the dead souls.

DONNA/MERCEDES

Oh, my God.

GLORIA

Get her out of here. Her Chanel's
killing me.

IRIS

You're crazy!

GLORIA

You haven't seen crazy yet.

Donna and Mercedes back off as ICE walk Iris out. Rosa stands
her ground, giving Iris a once-over followed by a
condescending smirk.

MARIA

Donna, off you go. I'll get Rico to
drive you to the city.

Donna and Mercedes walk toward the van. Rosa lingers behind.

GLORIA
(to Manny)
You got a thing going on with her?

MANNY
Did you call Immigrations?

GLORIA
She stole her sister's green card
and identity. I don't know why
she's blaming me.

MANNY
She supports her sister and kid,
you heartless woman. I've had
enough of this. I should have cut
you loose ages ago.

Manny storms out.

GLORIA
You're the one who lied straight-
faced when I cried.

Manny stops dead in his tracks and turns.

MANNY
That was twenty years ago. I have
my demons to remind me - I don't
need you.

He leaves, passing Rosa.

ROSA
(under her breath)
Hi Mr. Carmona.

DONNA/MERCEDES (O.S.)
Rosa! We're leaving!

CUT TO:

EXT. CARMONA'S HOME - NIGHT

Manny's standing in the front yard as Gloria throws his
clothes out the second-floor window.

GLORIA

Go! Get out! Eat your clam chowder,
lobster bisque, or whatever cream-
based soup du jour with your
whores!

(shrill)

YEEEEEE AAAAHHH!

A TRUCK pulls into the driveway and parks - the signage reads
HECTOR'S HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING - GAS FITTING - WIRING -
INSTALLATION - 24 HOUR SERVICE.

Clothes fall from the sky and hit the truck's windshield like
a ton of bricks.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/OFFICE - DAY

Manny's carry-on bag is at the office entrance. Rico enters.

RICO

Van's ready, Mr. Carmona.

Gloria is watching from a distance.

SANCHEZ

(to Manny)

Look at her. She's as gentle as a
lamb with mint sauce. Let her come
along. Be a good time to clear the
air.

MANNY

I have to put her down for a while.
She's hemmed me in behind and
before, and you're not helping any.

SANCHEZ

How's that?

MANNY

Come on, panito. Old San Juan, 82
degrees, Barrachina's Pina Coladas.
Won't Maria change her mind?

SANCHEZ

She's not letting me go, and I
won't ask again. It's not about me.
Have you not been listening?

MANNY

Stop reading that nonsense. Look what you've become. We served the First Armored Division and saw major shit in Afghanistan, living off meals-ready-to-eat and Tabasco - ruggedized. That's what men do.

SANCHEZ

True that, but where is this conversation going?

MANNY

When it comes to Maria, she says, "Jump..."

SANCHEZ

And I ask, "How high?" I follow orders, okay. Now catch your flight and pay your respects.

Sanchez leaves.

Gloria sheepishly walks over.

GLORIA

The lawyer will meet you at the airport. Are you sure you don't want me to tag along? I could hide in the plane's wheel-well.

MANNY

It's only for a day or two.

GLORIA

Maria can run things, and Donna does most of the accounting anyway.

MANNY

Gloria?

GLORIA

I heard the Ramirez's called the police last night. Are you still angry with me?

MANNY

No. I explained the situation. They understood.

GLORIA

Did you find your sweater and slacks?

MANNY

They were in the McEvoy's pool.

GLORIA

I'm very close to you now,
especially in the last two years.
You have been a lot softer and more
interested in things that matter to
me.

MANNY

Yeah, sure, a lot of good it has
done me.

Donna walks up.

DONNA

Bye, Daddy. Have a safe flight.

He gives her a big hug.

MANNY

Bye, Baby.

By the look on Gloria's face, the reality is setting in that
Manny is going solo.

SANCHEZ

Rico's ready.

Manny gives Gloria a half-hearted hug and peck on the cheek
and then walks off.

GLORIA

Don't put me down, baby. Don't quit
me like that. You said you loved me
the other night.

Concerned, Rico leaves the van and comes in for a closer
look. Gloria turns to Donna.

GLORIA

He's not coming back. He's out that
door.

DONNA

Give us a break, will you? He's
back Wednesday.

MANNY (O.S.)

Damit! Where's Rico?!

FADE OUT.

SUPER: San Juan, Puerto Rico.

EXT. MARIN FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Manny arrives with CLARA MARTINEZ, an attorney in her 30s. Hispanic.

CLARA

May I have a minute before we go inside?

MANNY

I've been to wakes before. What's the problem?

CLARA

Your father's body is embalmed to make him look like he's still alive. A kind of propped-up action figure, if you will. It's a bit macabre, a Puerto Rican thing, but it's what he wanted.

MANNY

Are we finished?

CLARA

It sounds like we are.

CUT TO:

INT. MARIN FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Manny and Clara enter.

The embalmed body dressed in Taino warrior attire holds a machete recreating a scene from five hundred years ago.

CUT TO:

EXT. PUERTO RICO/CENTRAL MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY

An SUV navigates a winding road to higher elevations.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

MANNY

That was some sick shit back there.

CLARA
Salazar's in Miami, and we might
hear from her today with a solid
offer. Let me warn you, she plays
dirty, by hook or crook.

MANNY
How's that?

A sharp turn has Clara holding on.

CLARA
(to the driver)
Easy, cowboy.
(to Manny)
Your father left you an abandoned
forty-acre coffee plantation. She
builds hotels, and the site's
perfect for it. Salazar is
destroying the local coffee region;
this island is becoming a big chunk
of cement.

Clara looks a little sickly.

CLARA
Driver, pull over.
(to Manny)
Motion sickness; I'm going to
vomit.

EXT. PUERTO RICO/CENTRAL MOUNTAIN REGION ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Clara dry-heaves off the side of the road.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE HACIENDA - DAY

Manny and Clara exit the SUV. An abandoned coffee hacienda
has ghost-like loneliness in its neglect and decay.

SUPER: 40 acres.

A MULE WALKS BY, GRAZING ON THE LOCAL FOLIAGE.

The soft breeze rustles through the leaves of the trees.

CLARA

The bushes provide shade. Once cleared, there are hundreds of coffee trees underneath.

Clara's phone rings.

CLARA

I need to take this; it could be Salazar.

She runs back to the SUV as she sprays insect repellent on her shapely nude legs.

CLARA

(under her breath)

I don't do the country well.

An older man rides upon a pale horse. He is DON PEDRO, a very eccentric-looking man in his 70's

We will recognize him as Manny's deceased father from Marin's funeral home. He's nursing a Starbucks.

DON PEDRO

Did you know that we are standing on a Taino burial ground? Mortal remains nourish your coffee.

MANNY

It makes you think twice before your next Caramel Cocoa Cluster.

DON PEDRO

Married life suits you. You have a beautiful wife and daughter and a successful business. You put on a few pounds since I saw you last.

MANNY

Are you here to discuss my waistline?

DON PEDRO

We had a gentleman's agreement in Afghanistan - life-changing decisions in the heat of battle. The Taliban outnumbered you ten to one.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. AFGHANISTAN - DAY

CHUG, CHUG, CHUG, CHUG, CHUG, CHUG.

The TALIBAN pin down captain Manuel Carmona, Sergeant Jose Sanchez, and his TROOPS.

Manny is firing a .50 Caliber Machine Gun while Sanchez feeds the ammunition belt.

SANCHEZ
Fuckin' Alamo!

CHUG, CHUG, CHUG, CHUG, CHUG, CHUG.

Manny stops to look around. Half of his troops are dead or wounded. He makes eye contact with Don Pedro, wearing a Perahan Tunban and drinking Kahwah from a teacup. Manny nods, okay.

Hell in the Sky - as a lethal AC-130 Gunship lights up the enemy with its 25mm Gatling Gun.

SANCHEZ
FUCKIN' A! HEAVY METAL! THE CROWD
PLEASER!
(to the Taliban)
DIE MOTHER-FUCKERS!

25MM GATLING GUN - TTTTUKKKK, TTTTUKKK...

VOICE - INSIDE THE GUNSHIP (O.S.)
EN-GAGED!

TTTTUKKKK, TTTTUKKK...

VOICE - INSIDE THE GUNSHIP (O.S.)
EN-GAGED!

AN EXPLOSION - BOOM!

VOICE - INSIDE THE GUNSHIP (O.S.)
SECONDARY!

END OF FLASHBACK:

EXT. COFFEE HACIENDA - CONTINUOUS

DON PEDRO

It was short of miraculous that you and your half-tribe of Manasseh survived that Afghan graveyard. The butcher's bill is due.

MANNY

You got your pound of flesh; what more do you want.

DON PEDRO

Fate's tender hands have touched you. A warrior is reborn to fight another day.

MANNY

You're barking up the wrong tree. Those dog days are long gone.

CLARA (O.S.)

It's Salazar! We got an offer.

DON PEDRO

As you remember, she was seized against her will and sailed away as she wept.

MANNY

Who, Salazar?

DON PEDRO

Rushing waters won't quench her love; rivers can't wash it away. Her passion never dies.

DISSOLVE TO:

GLORIA IS LYING IN BED, CRYING.

INT. SAN JUAN/HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Manny's in bed, staring. He gets a video text message and quickly picks up the phone.

VIDEO TEXT: ROSA IS LYING IN BED WEARING A MALE, RIBBED, ATHLETIC TEE-SHIRT AND BLONDE WIG.

ROSA (V.O.)
Oh, Oh, Manny, hold my breasts in
your strong hands. Feel them. They
are big, round, and beautiful.

He deletes it and makes a call.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA'S/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Donna places ice cubes in her glass and pours a soda. She does a second glance once she sees a small ribbon of paper surfacing to the top - written on it, "Iris."

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA'S/BEDROOM - NIGHT

GLORIA
Manny?

INT. SAN JUAN/HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

MANNY
Did I wake you?

INT. CARMONA'S/BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

GLORIA
I'm lying in tears, drowning in the
dark. I wish you weren't away.

INTERCUT with Manny's hotel.

MANNY
I'm declining the offer.

Silence.

MANNY
Are you there?

GLORIA (V.O.)
Manny, you're keeping the seeds and
throwing away the watermelon.

MANNY

Look at it as a long-term business investment. There are men here who can manage things once it's up and running.

GLORIA (V.O.)

Wait, wait. Are you going to live there? We're already working hard and taking plenty of risks with our business here. It could carve up our wealth, and we end up dirt-poor tenant farmers.

MANNY

Gloria, please. Just for a few weeks, and then join me.

GLORIA (V.O.)

Manny, we can't dig up our roots and go down there on a gamble. We have stability. Is there something else? Are you leaving me?

MANNY

No, no, nothing could be further from the truth.

GLORIA (V.O.)

There's something wrong. I'm on the next flight out.

MANNY

Gloria, not yet. I need you to trust me on this. You do, right?

INT. CARMONA'S/BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gloria wells up as she hangs up the phone.

GLORIA

Yes. I do.

Donna storms into the bedroom, holding the soda-soaked ribbon of paper.

DONNA

Did you freeze Iris? Are you freakin' nuts?!

CUT TO:

INT. SAN JUAN HOTEL/LOBBY - DAY

Manny and Clara are waiting in the lobby of an upscale hotel.

CLARA

I have an agronomist joining us later. Are you sure you want to go through with this? Salazar will be gunning for you.

ISABELLA SALAZAR, a female land baron in her mid-40s, and her associate, DIEGO COLÓN-BECERRILLO, a middle-aged Spaniard, arrive. Becerrillo is a dead ringer for the Handsome Spaniard.

SALAZAR

(to Clara)

I need a few minutes alone with Mr. Carmona. You can sit!

(to Manny)

Mr. Carmona, please.

Becerrillo stabs Clara with a look.

EXT. SAN JUAN HOTEL/PATIO RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Becerrillo helps Salazar with her chair. As he turns to sit down, his jacket opens, revealing a shoulder-holster gun and, attached to his belt, a miniature scythe with a sheath.

The WAIT STAFF rushes over to take their drink orders.

SALAZAR

Mr. Carmona, meet my associate and cupbearer, Diego Colon-Becerrillo.

Becerrillo gives Manny a solemn nod.

SALAZAR

Clara Martinez is not an honest broker. We all know that she has a dog in the hunt. Development is not the problem but the solution to this country's problems. My lawyers will have their way with her.

MANNY

Ms. Martinez had nothing to do with my decision, so call off your dogs.

Becerrillo emits a quiet, maniacal laugh.

BECERRILLO

(under his breath)

Hmmm, ha, ha, nice day, nice day.
As a dog returns to his vomit.

SALAZAR

Mr. Carmona, sugarcane, went bust in the mid-'60s by misguided government policy. Your father, may he rest in peace, knew it all too well. If not the hurricanes, fixed minimum wages are killing the coffee growers. Who will pick your cherries?

The WAITRESS arrives with their drinks. She efficiently serves and leaves.

Becerrillo swallows a taste of Salazar's wine.

SALAZAR

Our waitress is local. She will make two hundred dollars in tips tonight.

A drunken AMERICAN TOURIST spills his wine glass. The Waitress hurries over. He throws money at her.

AMERICAN TOURIST

Clean it up, sweetheart.

SALAZAR

American tourists might be ill-mannered, but they do tip. Why would she or anyone else want to pick coffee for day-old bread?

CUT TO:

INT. SAN JUAN HOTEL/BAR - CONTINUOUS

Agronomist, PRUDENCIO QUINTANA, joins Clara.

PRUDENCIO

That's him?

CLARA

Yes, with Salazar and her lap dog.

Prudencio stares at Becerrillo.

PRUDENCIO

Cerberus - colder than a three-dog night.

(beat)

(MORE)

PRUDENCIO (CONT'D)

I spoke with a colleague who works for the Defense Department and got some interesting information about your new landowner. He was Special Forces and a decorated war hero. His commandos took on the Taliban at an orphanage.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. AFGHANISTAN - DAY

We see SPECIAL FORCES evacuating CHILDREN from a building to awaiting Chinook helicopters.

.50 caliber machine gun - CHUG, CHUG, CHUG, CHUG.

Captain Manuel Carmona is holding a sword. A TALIBAN PRISONER kneels in front of him.

MANNY

Allahu Akbar!

WHACK!

Sergeant Sanchez kicks the severed head next to four others.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. SAN JUAN HOTEL/BAR - CONTINUOUS

PRUDENCIO

One of the locals killed was a so-called Taliban spiritual leader. A week later, they came after him with everything they had. Badly outnumbered, he lost half of his troops until he was rescued. Soon afterward, he parted ways with the Army with an honorable discharge and a few feathers in his cap. He's a PTSD survivor. End of career.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN JUAN HOTEL/PATIO RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Becerrillo returns Salazar's wine glass and nods.

SALAZAR

Eminent domain, Mr. Carmona. We must consider that it's expedient for us that one man should sacrifice for the people and that the whole country perishes not.

MANNY

We're talking private property.

BECERRILLO

Mr. Carmona, are you familiar with the tales of Juan Bobo? Often trickster, most time foolish, he never seemed to get it right. A pen-de-jo. Can you see the difference between a future of good fortune or a lifetime of bad luck? You can put lipstick and heels on a pig, but it is still a pig.

MANNY

Becerrillo - the notorious attack dog of the Spanish Conquistadors.

BECERRILLO

At your service.

SALAZAR

Mr. Carmona, it's a windfall for you and your family. Talk it over with your wife. I am sure she'll agree it's the right thing to do.

BECERRILLO

If she allows you to wear your poodle skirt over your head.

Manny quickly rises.

MANNY

I'll dog walk you, man!

BECERRILLO

Don't wring a dog by his ears.

MANNY

You don't hear me, do you?!

SALAZAR

Gentlemen, please, stop with the machismo. Sit down.

They stand their ground.

BECERRILLO

A nail that sticks up gets hammered down.

SALAZAR

Becerrillo, heel!

She presses a canine clicker -- CLICK, CLICK.

All ears, Becerrillo sits. She places a dish of table snacks in front of him.

SALAZAR

(to Manny)

Always follow a click with a treat.

Becerrillo cups a handful of Trail Mix and stuffs them in his mouth.

MANNY

Can he roll over and play dead, too?

BECERRILLO

Hmmm, ha, ha, nice day, nice day.

SALAZAR

Please, Mr. Carmona, sit down.

Manny takes his seat.

Salazar looks over and sees Don Pedro with two ATTRACTIVE LATINAS. He's nursing a Bloody Mary and looking much like, "The most interesting man in the world."

Don Pedro raises his glass to salute them.

DON PEDRO

Stay thirsty, my friends.

SALAZAR

Don't let him fill your head with his "rushing waters" nonsense. He's chasing rainbows. His psychopomp will never return to her feminine glory.

MANNY

What do you mean?

SALAZAR

You're a stranger in a strange land.

(MORE)

SALAZAR (CONT'D)

Accept my offer, Mr. Carmona, take
safe passage home, and let sleeping
dogs lie.

In a military posture, Becerrillo stands to attention and
clicks his heels.

BECERRILLO

God save the Queen!

FADE TO BLACK.

START NIGHTMARE:

EXT. BEACHFRONT - DAY

Manny reaches inside a broken vehicle window. There's a
struggle between him and Becerrillo.

POP!

GLORIA (O.S.)

(blood-curdling)

MANNY! NO! NO! NO!

END NIGHTMARE.

CUT TO:

INT. SAN JUAN HOTEL/ROOM - NIGHT

Manny gets out of bed and starts pacing a dark room - rapid
breathing - panic attack.

INT. SAN JUAN HOTEL/ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He throws ice in the bathroom sink, fills it with water, and
douses his face. He looks into the mirror.

MANNY

Bring it on!

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE GROVES - DAY

CLARA

When I was a child, I put
cockroaches in a big jar and let
them loose in the lobby of the
hotels. It would scare the American
tourists to death, and it was
hilarious to see their expressions.

MANNY

Then you became a woman and put
away childish things.

CLARA

So you say.

Her smile gives us a sense that she's charmed by Manny.
She comes closer as they walk together.

CLARA

You are now an official Puerto
Rican landowner. Let your feet
bring luck to our country.

She points toward the mountain.

CLARA

Look. Tres Picachos, the Three
Peaks.

As Manny turns to look, Clara comes closer and slips in a
kiss on the cheek.

Manny slowly turns.

MANNY

There's a charm about the forbidden
that makes it unspeakably desirable
- the whisper of temptation.

She takes out her handkerchief and wipes off his cheek.

CLARA

I'm sorry. I don't want to get
Maybelline on your marriage.

He smiles and walks off.

CLARA

(under her breath)
Dumb, Clara, dumb.

MANNY

Have you heard the word psychopomp?

CLARA

You are taking me back to my days at university. Psychopomp is Greek. It means a guide of souls, such as spirits, angels, deities, and things that escort the newly dead from earth to the afterlife. Why do you ask? Do you have an interest in Greek mythology?

MANNY

No, I just heard it in passing.

(beat)

What do you know about this Salazar woman?

CLARA

She's a capitalist potentate. A bitch on wheels; pardon my French. We're a small island invaded and influenced daily for centuries, first by Spain and now by the United States, and we still retain our culture and values. The coffee region and these mountains have always been the center of activity for the liberation of our people.

MANNY

Politics aside, Becerrillo is a work of art. Sampling her toxic brew, laughing and mumbling to himself, he's certifiably a strapped and daggered psychopath.

CLARA

I agree. He's rabid, just as dangerous dead as alive - a walking path of totality.

A 4x4 Suzuki Samurai pulls up and parks. Prudencio arrives with his colleague, JOEY ROJAS.

Joey wears a soiled round hat and tattered lightweight cloak and carries a bent, winged-staff scepter. He has a pet Chihuahua in a roped netted bag.

PRIMORDIAL MAN (O.S.)

WHO GOTTA MATCH?!

Joey raises his staff and points to Manny.

JOEY ROJAS
(stoned out of his gourd)
A scepter will rise out of Israel
and uplift the beggar from the
dunghill.

They start walking the perimeter of the property.

CLARA
(to Manny)
Prudencio is the finest agronomist
in these parts. He's no better
person to learn the land.

PRUDENCIO
You got your work cut out for you,
rains, pestilences. Irma and Maria
devastated this island. We dodged a
bullet with Dorian. Any tropical
storm approaching below the 14th
latitude line will cause problems,
and another hurricane could set you
back five years.

JOEY ROJAS
Not mistaken for "Her-ah-Kun,"
Utah, spelled like "Hurricane," but
if pronounced that way, will
undoubtedly piss off the vicinal
townfolk.

MANNY
Noted.

Manny turns back to Prudencio.

PRUDENCIO
You're picking from steep muddy
hills, and the bags are heavy. The
pay's low, \$7.25 for 28 pounds.
Getting labor from the city is
nearly impossible.

JOEY ROJAS
Yes, it's a sad business.
(he holds up a coin)
Got a quarter for a ten pee?

Manny digs into his pockets for loose change.

MANNY
Cute dog.

JOEY ROJAS

He's my certified service animal,
helps with my depression, and calms
my anxiety.

MANNY

Sorry, no quarters.
(to Prudencio)
What about the Dominicans?

PRUDENCIO

They're illegal. I am still at the
university; I can't risk it. Joey?

JOEY ROJAS

The police will lock you up and
throw away the key. But if you're
serious.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHFRONT - DAY

Manny and Joey arrive.

JOEY ROJAS

We're up with the chickens! Need to
stay, woke.

PRIMORDIAL MAN (O.S.)

WHO GOTTA MATCH?!

Joey has a roach clip attached to his scepter.

JOEY ROJAS

Spark it up, wake and bake. It's
four-twenty, high holiday. I like
my fries' extra crispy - Tennessee
red top.

(to Manny)

Partake?

MANNY

I'm cool. Can I trust this trader
guy?

JOEY ROJAS

He's a mendacious type known to put
razors in the rain barrel to get
em' rusty. And leaving dead
raccoons on your porch.

MANNY

It's now or never going my way.

JOEY ROJAS

I'm just trying to make a poor
man's dollar. That's what men do.

Two flatbed trucks arrive with UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS.

The TRADER gets out of the truck.

TRADER

Hey, Joey! Que Pasa?

JOEY ROJAS

Capital, my brother!

TRADER

You have the face; that only a
mother could love. Whew! You stank
like some ole polecat.

(takes a whiff)

Shit man! What's the stupidest
thing you ever did?

JOEY ROJAS

Spelled my name wrong.

TRADER

Now that's peak stupid. I heard
your sister ran off with a sailor
again.

JOEY ROJAS

True that. She married the squid
and moved to the Bronx.

TRADER

She looks like the dog that caught
the bus. Hee, hee, hee, hee.

JOEY ROJAS

You're going to get one big-ass
lickin'.

Manny restraints Joey.

MANNY

Enough already.

TRADER

Are you the one with the big
wallet?

Manny hands over a bag of cash. The Trader counts it while looking around, shifty-eyed. He nods toward the trucks.

TRADER

Get em' off!

A seventeen-year-old effeminate boy, DIEGO, helps his pregnant Mother off the truck. He follows her as he gently touches her hair.

TRADER

Let's go. Move it! We'll talk about the ball game tomorrow. You're in Puerto Rico because I'm a nice guy, and don't tell the police that you're here illegally.

DIEGO

Please, sir, my Mother's pregnant.

TRADER

Yeah, she's gonna shit another Dominican. As if this country didn't have enough problems already.

The Trader shoves Diego in the chest, knocking him down and almost knocking over his mother. Diego pulls out a small pocket knife.

TRADER

Get up, and I'll kill you like a dog. It doesn't matter to me that one turd's arriving and another one's leaving.

MANNY

Easy on him.

TRADER

Why are you defending these people? Look at them. They don't even look human. To me, they are just pigs that come here for our jobs.

MANNY

Then why bring them?

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE FIELDS - DAY

The Workers have gathered around Manny.

MANNY

Welcome. The task ahead of us is a difficult one. We have to harvest almost 40 acres in just a few weeks before the rains. If you want to work, we have plenty to do. If you don't, you're free to leave. I am aware that you're here without permission from the authorities. Although I respect the law, I need hard-working people, so please, feel at home. We start first thing in the morning.

CUT TO:

EXT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - NIGHT

Joey stands by the roadside. An Escalade pulls up.

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Inside are Salazar, Becerrillo, POCO LEON (Becerrillo's Rottweiler), and a couple of HENCHMEN. They exit the vehicle.

EXT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - CONTINUOUS

BECERRILLO

You reek like Louisiana swamp funk, pot and piss, and grinnin' like the butcher's dog.

Salazar gags and covers her nose and mouth with a handkerchief.

JOEY ROJAS

I think you are looking at this situation with a jaundiced eye.

BECERRILLO

Have you seen yourself lately, with your peau de soie complexion and sartorial demeanor? You're a scurvy and scabbed dirtbag.

JOEY ROJAS

Keep talkin' that shit, and I'm going to drop your name from my social media.

SALAZAR

Okay, okay, enough with the witticism. Get on with it.

JOEY ROJAS

As Willy Shakes would say, "The game is afoot." The dandy Nuyorican made a sweet investment, ha, ha, ha. But they'll be back in the Trader's bosom by daybreak.

Joey farts.

SALAZAR

I would appreciate a little refinement and sophistication in this matter.

JOEY ROJAS

I said, bosom. I could've said titties.

The Trader staggers out of the Clam Shack with a DANCER. He takes a piss on the side of the wall.

TRADER

(to the dancer)

Dance woman! What am I paying you for?

BECERRILLO

(to Joey)

Curb your bar dog.

JOEY ROJAS

(calls out to the Trader)

Hey, freaktard! We're in the presence of a lady.

The Trader turns.

TRADER

Joey, come on back inside. Let me buy you a drink and a lap dance. I shouldn't have talked about your sister like that because I never met her - the line was too long. Hee, hee, hee, hee.

(to the dancer)

Laugh woman! What am I paying you for?

SALAZAR
 (to Becerrillo)
 There's nothing dignified with any
 of this. Give him the envelope and
 let's go.

EXT. COFFEE FIELD - DAY

Manny heads out to the fields.

It has ghost-like loneliness as the soft breeze rustles
 through the leaves of the trees. The immigrant laborers are
 gone except for Diego and his Mother.

He makes a call.

MANNY
 Prudencio, where can I find Joey
 Rojas?

CUT TO:

INT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - DAY

Joey Rojas and the Trader are binging from the night before.
 It seems to be a lovefest.

DANCERS are sleeping on the bar chairs.

TRADER
 Yo dog face sister's so ugly when
 she was born your mama said, "What
 a treasure." and your papa said,
 "Yeah, let's bury it." Hee, hee,
 hee.

JOEY ROJAS
 Yo sister's legs are like the
 library; they're always open to the
 public.

TRADER
 Yo sister's like a squirrel; she
 always got some nuts in her mouth.

Joey hammers him, and a fight ensues. The Dancers wake and
 clear out. Joey's on the ground, getting the worst of it.
 Manny enters carrying a machete. He pulls the Trader off.

TRADER
 What the?

He drags him across the floor and props up his head on the bar countertop.

JOEY ROJAS
He ripped you off, man!

TRADER
Freakin' Judas.

Manny skillfully twirls the machete.

MANNY
For that's all she wrote.

TRADER
It's in the bag! It's in the bag!

Manny motions to Joey.

MANNY
Secure it!

Joey quickly burrows inside the bag, retrieving the money.

MANNY
Count it!

JOEY ROJAS
It's a couple hundred short, man.
He pissed away a Texas penny for
the ladies.

Manny slams the machete down inches away from the Trader's head.

TRADER
He's in on it, too - that spineless
snake in the grass.

JOEY ROJAS
He's lying, man. That's what the
fighting's all about - that it
would be well with me, for your
sake.

MANNY
When did you know that the workers
left?

TRADER
I told you, he's in on it too!

Joey kicks the Trader. He cautiously gives Manny the money.

JOEY ROJAS

I swung by this morning and saw
they were gone. I swear on my
newborn tooth. I had a bad feeling
about this asshole. Hell, he'll
steal the nails from the cross. We
cool?

Manny sheaths his blade.

MANNY

A fixed and steady-state.

The Trader bolts out.

JOEY ROJAS

Okay. So let's get this party
started - drinks on me.

Joey raises his glass.

JOEY ROJAS

Why does a dog lick his balls?

We see Joey's dog in the corner, trembling.

JOEY ROJAS

Cause he can! Ha, ha, ha.
Amicus humani generis. Friend of
the human race! Zicke zacke zicke
zacke hoi hoi hoi!

EXT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - CONTINUOUS

Manny and Joey exit the bar.

JOEY ROJAS

(squinting)

Damn, that old yellow moon is
burning my eyeballs.

Joey pockets Salazar's envelope.

JOEY ROJAS

I left a good tip for the ladies
inside.

Manny nods at the bulged envelope.

JOEY ROJAS

It's not what you think.

MANNY

They told me you've been binging
all night and never set foot out.

JOEY ROJAS

Throw me a bone, man! I feel like
Damocles with your big freakin'
sword dangling over my head,
hanging by a pubic hair. I'm just
puttin' things together. That's
what men do.

MANNY

I want fifty hired by Friday, or
it's your head. Understood?

JOEY ROJAS

Concrete solid, my brother.

CUT TO:

INT. BUMBOAT - DAY

Joey docks at a dilapidated pier.

JOEY ROJAS

Shit, man, these "AMs" freakin'
killin' me. I need to stay woke.

PRIMORDIAL MAN (O.S.)

WHO GOTTA MATCH?!

Joey lights up.

JOEY ROJAS

Spark it up, wake and bake. It's
four-twenty, high holiday. I like
my fries' extra crispy - Tennessee
red top.

CUT TO:

EXT. ISLAND/BEACHFRONT - CONTINUOUS

They walk a few hundred yards to a fenced-off perimeter. We
see an old eroded sign that reads:
"Keep out! Property of the United States Government."

JOEY ROJAS

Welcome to Vieques, my brother!

CUT TO:

INT. A SECOND BUMBOAT - CONTINUOUS

A second bumboat arrives loaded with UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS. Iris, the deported Dominican, is at the tiller.

IRIS
Mannito! My Mannito!

The boat comes too close, too fast, and crashes into the pier.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE FIELDS - DAY

The Workers, ALL FEMALES, have gathered around Manny.

MANNY
Welcome. The task ahead of us is a difficult one. We have to harvest almost 40 acres in just a few weeks before the rains.

Clara enters, dressed beautifully. She kisses Manny on the cheek as she greets him. Iris gives her a disapproving, smirk.

CLARA
It seems you're making progress. I am so proud of you.
(to Iris - a little taunt)
Oh, you must be the newly hired.

Iris notices that Clara is standing in fire ants.

IRIS
Let me warn you, sister, don't let the holes in my stockings bother your legs.

MANNY
Clara, meet Iris.

CLARA
Oww! Oww! Oww!

CUT TO:

EXT. BARN - DAY

WOMEN struggle to carry baskets to a machine that washes the cherries.

Inside we see machinery in which the cherries are being dried and husked. The husked and dried cherries are stored into 100-pound sacks in a large covered shed attached to the barn.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/OFFICE - NIGHT

Gloria is burning the midnight oil. A half-eaten muffin sits on her desk. Rico considerably walks inside with two coffees. She looks up.

GLORIA
Rico, you're still here?

RICO
I got your favorite Caramel Cocoa Cluster.

GLORIA
You're so sweet. Pull up a chair.

RICO
The muffin's probably stale by now.

GLORIA
Don't you have anyone special in your life? A nice girl? It's Friday night.

RICO
There's no place I'd rather be tonight.

He opens her coffee lid and hands it to her. She takes a sip as they lock eyes. He stands and walks behind her and starts softly massaging her shoulders.

RICO
Are you okay with this?

GLORIA
Just this.

RICO
Mrs. Carmona, relax. You're too stressed.

GLORIA
Oh, that feels good. It has been a long day.

He turns toward an Echo Dot that's in the office.

RICO
Echo, lights down, play Barry White
- "I'm Gonna Love You Just a Little
More, Baby."

She closes her eyes, both getting into the rhythm.

GLORIA
You're very good at this.

RICO
So I've been told.

He comes in closer, taking in her essence. He moves in to
kiss her. Gloria jumps out of her skin.

GLORIA
Echo! Lights up, music off!
(to Rico)
We have to stop!

RICO
Did I do something wrong?

GLORIA
Rico, I'm a married woman; my Manny
trusts me.

RICO
Did you have to say his name? He's
a fool to let you stay here with no
one to love. This was wrong. You
must think I am ugly, pitiful, and
stupid!

He turns to leave.

GLORIA
No, Rico! Wait!

She takes him by the hands.

GLORIA
This is wrong. I think you're a
wonderful young man, but you must
understand. I have one heart and
direction, and I've given it to
someone else.

RICO
Will there ever be hope for a boy
like me?

GLORIA

Yes. Give it time, and one day the
right girl will come along, who
will make you happy and love you
dearly.

She hugs him motherly and kisses him tenderly on the cheek.

GLORIA

Now go, rest, and dream.

FADE OUT.

EXT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - NIGHT

Alfresco, Joey's sitting on a wooden chair, eating clams.

An Escalade arrives.

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Inside are Salazar, Becerrillo, Poco, and a couple of
Henchmen.

SALAZAR

I prefer to stay inside.

They exit.

EXT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - CONTINUOUS

Joey stands and tosses the clams.

JOEY ROJAS

(stoned out of his gourd)
Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth.

BECERRILLO

What are you talkin' about?

JOEY ROJAS

He got his wetbacks. But don't mess
with this dude. He's on his muscle.
With a jawbone of an ass, he'll
slay a thousand men.

BECERRILLO

Who is he, Samson?

JOEY ROJAS

He nearly circumcised that dick head, and if I'm not careful, my head's on the chopping block, too.

BECERRILLO

Enough of your vain jangling. Where are they from?

JOEY ROJAS

Not south of the Rio Grande. Iris, a Dominican, brought the talent in. You know Iris.

BECERRILLO

No, I don't know nobody named Iris.

JOEY ROJAS

You don't know nobody by the name of Iris?

BECERRILLO

I don't know, no, Iris.

JOEY ROJAS

No?

SALAZAR

Okay, enough about Iris. I want you to trail them, nail them, and then jail them.

She hands an envelope to Becerrillo to give to Joey.

JOEY ROJAS

You mean, round them up, then smoke em' out?

Becerrillo shakes his head.

BECERRILLO

You fool. If you rounded them up, why would you smoke them out? You have them. You smoke them out, and then you round them up, entiendes?

Joey looks confused.

JOEY ROJAS

As Willy Shakes would say, "It's all Greek to me."

SALAZAR

Let's keep it simple. Notify the police with the details, and let them close up his sweatshop. Facile comme le bonjour.

JOEY ROJAS

Le freak, c'est chic.

She raises her window.

Becerrillo hands Joey the envelope.

JOEY ROJAS

You got a couple of days, three days tops, until they find out about your side hustle. So I call the police like the lady said, huh?

BECERRILLO

Don't get bigassedly with me.

JOEY ROJAS

She's paying, how about you?

Becerrillo slaps the money out of his hands. The Henchmen draw their guns.

BECERRILLO

Do you want to be the richest man in the cemetery? Pigs get fat, but hogs get slaughtered.

JOEY ROJAS

Do not threaten me, man, and do not ever freakin' hit me again.

CUT TO:

EXT. HACIENDA - DAY

Diego is fits Iris for a dress.

CUT TO:

EXT. THATCHED STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Outside the structure, several fires are going with large pots on them.

CUT TO:

INT. THATCHED STRUCTURE - DUSK

Manny enters. Diego takes his hat and then brings over a large water bowl to wash his hands. He sits down to a warm plate of rice, beans, and plantains.

Iris and the others enter.

MANNY

Hola, buenas noches.

Manny's shocked by Iris' transformation. Her dress is elegantly understated, with thin straps fallen to accentuate her comely shoulders.

IRIS

I have a surprise for you.

She starts strumming a guitar and begins singing.

IRIS

"Oh, I will never forget the first
night we met was love I was
searching for. My heart was beating
faster and faster, oh so much
faster, faster than it did
before..."

CUT TO:

INT. THATCHED STRUCTURE - NIGHT

MANNY

Gracias. I must be getting back. We
have a big day tomorrow.

CUT TO:

EXT. HACIENDA - NIGHT

Manny is alone or thinks he is.

IRIS (O.S.)
Have you ever seen so many stars
before? We're like two steps from
heaven.

He turns.

MANNY
Iris?

IRIS
Mannito, do you believe in love at
first sight?

She leans in to kiss him. Manny stops her.

MANNY
Iris stop.

IRIS
Do you doubt my love?

MANNY
You have it all wrong.

IRIS
Do you not find me attractive?

She moves closer, locking arms like a skillful wrestler,
pinning him closer to her.

IRIS
I put aside my virgin belt.

Manny breaks free.

MANNY
Iris, please, you look gorgeous
tonight. But to me, you're like my
sister. And I am like your brother,
and that's how it must be between
us.

IRIS
Your sister? Would little sister do
this?

She throws her arms around his neck to plant a passionate
kiss.

MANNY
Iris, stop!

IRIS

You need me, and I know you must want me.

MANNY

This is nonsense! I wish to be kind to you, but I am a married man.

IRIS

I come to you willingly, like this, and pity is all I get? I could have any man in an instant! Married or not! But I offer myself to you, Mannito. Besides, your wife is a fool to let you stay here alone with no one to love.

She makes a final concerted effort.

IRIS

Take me, Mannito; make me your woman, if only for one night.

She kisses him on the lips - Manny's stone-cold.

MANNY

Iris. She trusts me. I am so lucky to have my Gloria.

IRIS

Did you have to say her name? You must think I'm ugly, pitiful, and stupid!

She runs off.

MANNY

No, Iris. Stop.

He catches her and takes her by the hands.

MANNY

Iris, you are none of those things you said, but understand; I have one heart and direction, and I've given it to someone else.

IRIS

Oh, Mannito, Will there ever be a boy who will love me as much as you love her?

MANNY

Give it time, and one day the right
boy will come along who will make
you happy and love you dearly.

He hugs her fatherly and kisses her tenderly on the cheek.

MANNY

Now go, rest, and dream.

FADE OUT.

INT. HACIENDA - NIGHT

Manny makes a phone call.

MANNY

Are you sleeping?

GLORIA (V.O.)

No, I just got in. Is everything
okay?

INTERCUT with Manny's hacienda.

MANNY

I miss you.

GLORIA (V.O.)

Oh, Manny, I miss you, too.

MANNY

Do you remember when we were on the
beach in Puerto Vallarta? You
wearing your bikini and being all
salty and back at the hotel without
showering? I was kissing you all
over, getting Mexican on you, a
little lime, a little tequila, and
your sexy body?

GLORIA (V.O.)

Your small kisses all around my
lips - kissing my breasts -
touching me everywhere.

MANNY

I wanted you then, right there on
the spot.

GLORIA (V.O.)

It was like you ordered everything to make me weak, the sea, the night, the moon, your face. Oh, Manny, come home. If I don't have sex with you soon, I will become ill or commit a serious crime.

MANNY

Slow down. We'll get there, not tonight, not yet. I still have too much to do.

GLORIA (V.O.)

Too much to do, you say. Okay, I'll let you get your act together, but I'm gunnin' for you soon.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE FIELD/SOUTH END - DAY

A sprawling marijuana field.

PRUDENCIO

It's marijuana - fifteen to twenty feet high, probably originated in Florida. They knew your father was ill and wouldn't have found it.

MANNY

I find it strange that no one is watching it.

PRUDENCIO

It looks to be about a couple, three acres, a thousand, fifteen hundred plants, or more. Street value?

He looks over to Joey.

JOEY ROJAS

(stoned out of his gourd)

You break the bank and bring home the bacon; you can bet my bottom dollar.

PRUDENCIO

(to Manny)

You should notify the police immediately.

JOEY ROJAS

You're talkin' ten pounds of shit
in a four-pound bag.

MANNY

He's right. It would bring too much
attention to my workers, and the
investigation could last for weeks,
maybe months, delaying the harvest.

JOEY ROJAS

Listen to El Bravo. He's leading
point, bringing the people
together, guiding them toward an
answer.

PRUDENCIO

(to Manny)

What do you suggest, then?

Manny thinks for a minute.

MANNY

We burn it just before dark.

JOEY ROJAS

You push too far; you break
people's bottom line.

MANNY

Como?

JOEY ROJAS

That you're trying to catch the
devils' herd.

MANNY

Come here! You look like some sad-
face saint. What's with the hangdog
- you know something about this?

JOEY ROJAS

I'm just waitin' for the senator.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE FIELD/SOUTH END - DAY

Manny lights a fire using two foxtails.

PRUDENCIO

It's a controlled burn from north to south, and with the slight breeze, it should burn out at the road's end.

A massive smoke and fire.

PRIMORDIAL MAN (O.S.)

WHO GOTTA MATCH?!

Joey's standing downwind, taking in nature's bong.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO - DAY

Prudencio walks to his car.

A van pulls up. Becerrillo's HENCHMEN jump out and kidnap him. The DRIVER speeds off.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

They tie and gag Prudencio.

Sitting inside is - PABLO - bug-eyed and wearing facial war paint. He lowers his painter's palette to reveal a straight razor.

CUT TO:

EXT. BURNT MARIJUANA FIELD - DAY

Iris is riding a miniature pony.

IRIS

"Dominique, nique, nique s'en allait tout simplement.
Routier pauvre et chantant.
En tout Chemins en tous lieux.
Il ne parle que du bon Dieu.
Il ne parle que du bon Dieu..."

She notices something, stops, and dismounts. Prudencio's mutilated corpse is propped up as a scarecrow.

CUT TO:

EXT. HACIENDA - DAY

Manny and Joey quickly hop into the 4x4 Suzuki Samurai and drive off as Iris points the way.

CUT TO:

EXT. BURNT MARIJUANA FIELD - DAY

MANNY

Cut him down!

JOEY ROJAS

He didn't deserve to die this way.
He's going to pay for his sun-
drenched slaughterhouse.

MANNY

Who, man! Come clean. I gettin' it
from both barrels.

JOEY ROJAS

They call him Pablo, like Picasso.
He does the dirty work for the drug
trade - half Spaniard, half
Comanchero - the Wawahhee tribe,
the fornicators.

Joey points out the torturous details.

JOEY ROJAS

His telltale signature. Scalped him
to annihilate his soul. Mutilated,
so that he enters the Happy Hunting
Ground looking like some freaked
up, "Guernica."

MANNY

All gave some. Some gave all.

(to Joey)

I want you to find me this cubist
butcher.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODED AREA NEAR JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR -
NIGHT

Joey is walking toward the 4X4 Suzuki.

JOEY ROJAS
(stoned out of his gourd)
"Chickity-check yo self before you
wreck your self..."

CUT TO:

INT. 4X4 SUZUKI SAMURAI - NIGHT

Manny and Iris are sitting inside. Joey joins them.

JOEY ROJAS
He's inside drunk-ass, whackin' his
one-eyed jack.

Manny turns to Iris.

MANNY
Are we good?

IRIS
For you, Mannito.

JOEY ROJAS
Juke joint's gonna be jumping
tonight. So let's don't lose our
heads.

EXT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - CONTINUOUS

Pablo staggers out of the bar, spent. He takes a piss on the
side of the wall and then pours beer on his prick to clean
off the sex.

IRIS
Hi, Pablo.

He turns, squints, and sees Iris with a guitar. He gives her
a once-over.

PABLO
"Girl with Mandolin."

JOEY ROJAS (O.S.)
As Willy Shakes would say -

WHACK!

Manny decapitates Pablo with a machete. Pablo staggers back
and falls through the door inside the bar.

CUT TO:

INT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - CONTINUOUS

The headless body starts dancing to the beat of the music, then finally flails and falls.

CUT TO:

EXT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - LATER

WITNESSES are questioned. The POLICE CHIEF arrives. An EAGER LIEUTENANT addresses him.

EAGER LIEUTENANT
Chief, a most brutal murder!

POLICE CHIEF
Go on.

EAGER LIEUTENANT
A headless man was found in a
topless bar!

The Chief tries to keep a straight face and then cracks up, laughing.

CUT TO:

EXT. JULIO'S CLAM SHACK AND TOPLESS BAR - NIGHT

Remnants of an ongoing police investigation. Joey stands roadside. An Escalade pulls up.

BECERRILLO
You dooper, drunk, and an everyday
loser.

They kick the shit out of Joey. The dog runs off.

JOEY ROJAS
Pablo had it coming to him. He
killed Prudencio.

Becerrillo stops the beating.

BECERRILLO
Pablo was abiding the Queen's
business.

JOEY ROJAS
You are a lying dog! It's not her
kind of servile work.

TRADER
Powder burn him!

BECERRILLO
Sit bitch! I want you to testify
against Juan Valdez. You're through
playing it both ways.

JOEY ROJAS
I'm done going the way of the
weasel.

BECERRILLO
Don't bite the hand that feeds you,
lonesome slow.

JOEY ROJAS
I live in the world, but the
world's dirt does not smear me.

BECERRILLO
Have you seen yourself lately? You
look half-past dead!

JOEY ROJAS
Can't you hear?! He played his
cards and had the better hand; you
get bad-beat, a-hole!

BECERRILLO
As Willy Shakes would say, "Kill
him with kindness!"

Joey gets beat again.

BECERRILLO
The washed sow is now wallowing in
the mud. It is time you pay the
butcher's bill in blood.

JOEY ROJAS
Screw you!

BECERRILLO
Hey pig, smoke this!

POP!

Becerrillo shoots him dead.

JOEY ROJAS
(dying breath)
Seen better days.

BECERRILLO

Put him in a box and throw it in the dumpster so the crows don't get him.

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE FIELD - DAY

POLICE swarm the Hacienda.

POLICE CHIEF

Are you Señor Manuel Carmona?

MANNY

Who's asking?

POLICE CHIEF

Señor Manuel Carmona, you're under arrest for the murder of Pablo Diaz-Francisco-Heap-Bad Redskin, and for harboring illegal immigrants. Jail them!

The Eager Lieutenant steps up and shouts out a command.

LIEUTENANT

Round them up, then smoke em' out!

The Police Chief turns.

POLICE CHIEF

You fool, if you've rounded them up, why would you smoke them out?

CUT TO:

INT. MANNY'S JAIL CELL - NIGHT

DON PEDRO

Clara is back tomorrow to post your bail. They're going to drop the murder charge.

MANNY

Said, who?

DON PEDRO

They found Joey Rojas in a dumpster full of clamshells and spent condoms, possible payback for Pablo's murder.

MANNY

Joey's dead? What about the others?

DON PEDRO

They're transporting them tomorrow
to San Juan for deportation.

MANNY

And Iris?

DON PEDRO

Like you, they've isolated her.

CUT TO:

INT. IRIS' JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Iris huddles in a dark corner.

CUT TO:

INT. JAIL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Becerrillo and the Trader approach the cell.

BECERRILLO

Welcome to the snake pit.

IRIS

Psycho killer, Qu'est-ce-que c'est?

TRADER

I'm ready to raw dog.

Becerrillo opens the cell door, locking the Trader inside.

BECERRILLO

Have at her.

TRADER

Aren't you gonna wet your beak?
There's plenty to go around.

Becerrillo leaves.

INT. IRIS' JAIL CELL - CONTINUOUS

The Trader gives Iris a once-over.

TRADER

You're as country as cornbread.

He slowly moves in, cornering her.

TRADER

I bet you like that good ole'
country ham: hot biscuit, honey
dip.

IRIS

Sweet potato pie.

The Trader smiles, revealing a missing front tooth.

TRADER

Hee, hee, hee. You're one sick
puppy. I'm gonna butter your
biscuit right here on the spot.

IRIS

My pumpkin-face pimp.

She sashays over to an old bed and pulls off a dirty sheet.
With her teeth, she starts tearing it into three long shreds.

TRADER

Jailbreak, El Chapo?

She turns.

IRIS

I'm going to blindfold you, lover.

She seductively moves in closer. The pumpkin-face pimp lights
up like a jack-o-lantern.

TRADER

Mommy, Mommy, Mommy.

IRIS

Mommy loves you, lover.

Iris lifts the Trader off the ground and performs an Inverted
Atomic Drop as skillfully as the late wrestler, "Rowdy" Roddy
Piper. She takes the bed-sheet shreds, gags, and hog-ties
him.

TRADER

(gagged)
MMMMM, MMMMM.

She pulls a razor from her stocking and puts it up to his
throat.

IRIS

Shhh.

TRADER
MMMMM, mmmm.

She breaks a wooden stool. With stool leg in hand, she returns. She sticks her tongue in his ear and whispers.

IRIS
Fresh off the boat with my
hillbilly ways. Now bark like a
dog.

TRADER
MMMMM, MMMMM.

IRIS (O.S.)
OOOEE! BOW-WOW, OOOEE, BOW-WOW!

CUT TO:

EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS/STUDEBAKER BUILDING - DAY

Rosa makes her way toward the 125th Street subway station. She accidentally drops some financial papers.

BECERRILLO
Excuse me, are these yours?

ROSA
Oh, thank you.

She looks up and does a second glance.

CUT TO:

INT. ROSA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Becerrillo wraps a scarf around Rosa's neck and tightens it.

BECERRILLO
Yeah, baby.

She reaches from under the pillow and pulls out the 9mm Glock. She places it up to his head and COCKS the hammer.

CLICK!

BECERRILLO
Huh?

ROSA
Time you go, lover.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMONA TRANSPORT/OFFICE - DAY

GLORIA
He was massaging my shoulders. I
could hardly breathe. He is very
romantic and sexy; oh my God,
forgive me. He's just a boy.

She turns and sees Becerrillo listening.

GLORIA
(whispering)
Why didn't you tell me someone was
here? What's he doing stooping by
my door? Did he hear me?

MARIA
I don't know. I didn't see him come
in.
(to Becerrillo)
May I help you?

He steps forward.

BECERRILLO
My flowered-face Maiden with the
delicate ankles.

MARIA
Do you know this guy?

BECERRILLO
Why sow your field with mingled
seed? You have tasted the soul of
the underworld - will you not
return to your husband?

MARIA
Gloria, have you been married
before?

GLORIA
Get Sanchez; this guy's crazy.

Maria eases out of the office.

GLORIA
Why do you darken my door?

BECERRILLO

He has fallen in love with another man's wife. She is bound by the law as long as her husband lives, but if her husband is dead.

GLORIA

(iron-jawed)

I sit a queen and am no widow!

Maria returns with Sanchez, who is wielding a crowbar.

BECERRILLO

(to Sanchez)

Well, what do we have here?
Cavalier King Charles?

GLORIA

Where's Manny?!

BECERRILLO

He's imprisoned for killing a man.
I'm told that one of his accomplices and lady-friend, a full-bosomed Dominican, worked for you.

SANCHEZ

That's bullshit, Gloria. A double-tongued liar. Just give the word.

BECERRILLO

I am sure your bark is worse than your bite.

Sanchez raises the crowbar.

SANCHEZ

I suggest you and your dawg pound take a freakin' hike.

Becerrillo's Henchmen step forward. THREE MECHANICS enter to counter.

BECERRILLO

Look, it's the Pep Boys - Manny, Moe, and Jack.

Rico enters with FIVE ADDITIONAL MECHANICS.

BECERRILLO

Unneeded drama. The howling of dogs does not shame the moon.

Gloria gestures for her mechanics to stand down.

GLORIA
I'm going to ask you for the last
time, where's my husband?

He opens his hand, revealing a business card. On the flip
side are hand-written numbers.

BECERRILLO
Bread crumbs to find your way.

Gloria reaches to take the card. Sanchez grips the crowbar.

SANCHEZ
It's a trap, Gloria. I wouldn't
trust him from the kitchen to the
front door.

Becerrillo points to Rico.

BECERRILLO
(to Gloria)
See the resemblance? The waitress'
boy. Your husband's love child.
Hmmm, ha, ha, nice day, nice day.

Becerrillo turns and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL POLICE STATION - DAY

Iris and the Dominicans have boarded the bus. The Trader
exits.

TRADER
That puta violated me!

Manny exits with Clara just as the bus pulls away in a plume
of smoke. He chases it.

CLARA
Manuel!

The Dominicans lean out the windows.

DOMINICANS
Good-bye, Don Manuel! Good-bye!

Manny sees Iris, Diego, and his mother sitting together,
looking defeated.

MANNY
Iris! Iris!

The bus picks up speed as Manny tries to keep pace. Iris kisses her two fingers and places them against the window. She mouths the word "Mannito."

CUT TO:

EXT. PUERTO RICO/CENTRAL MOUNTAIN REGION ROAD - DAY

A rental car is winding up the Central valley.

CUT TO:

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

SANCHEZ

Gloria, take the next left.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL POLICE STATION - DAY

Manny approaches Clara.

MANNY

Follow the bus, do whatever legal wrangling possible to bring them home. Go!

CLARA

What about you?

MANNY

I'll eat the bust and fight it later. Now get going!

CLARA

I'll drive you.

MANNY

No, follow the bus!

Manny flags down a local truck.

CUT TO:

INT. RENTAL CAR - DAY

Gloria cautiously pulls up to a smoldering hacienda.

SANCHEZ
What happened?

Two Henchmen walk out from behind the building.

SANCHEZ
Gloria, get out!

She quickly backs up but is stopped from behind when
ADDITIONAL HENCHMEN draw their guns.

CUT TO:

EXT. HACIENDA - DAY

They pull Gloria and Sanchez out of the vehicle. Becerrillo
walks up.

SANCHEZ
Let the lady go.

BECERRILLO
She'll be in good hands at San
Felipe del Morro - Old San Juan.

A Henchman pistol-whips Sanchez.

BECERRILLO
No. Don't kill him. He's her errand
boy.

He gives Gloria a once-over.

BECERRILLO
My, my, my. Why don't you put on
that old housecoat, get in the
kitchen, and start rollin' me up
some dough?

Gloria slaps him.

CUT TO:

EXT. METROPOLITAN POLICE STATION - DAY

The Undocumented Immigrants make their way off the bus. Iris
stays seated.

OFFICER
Let's go.

Defiantly Iris remains seated. The officer walks to the back of the bus as the DRIVER watches from the rearview mirror.

OFFICER
I said, get off!

Iris hits the officer knocking him unconscious. She quickly moves to the front of the bus and throws the driver off, then gets behind the wheel and makes her escape.

CUT TO:

EXT. PUERTO RICO/CENTRAL MOUNTAIN REGION ROAD - DAY

Manny looks around for another hitch. On the distant horizon, he sees a car heading in his direction. The car stops beside him and he looks inside.

INT. ROSA'S/RENTAL CAR - DAY

MANNY
Rosa?

CUT TO:

INT. ROSA'S/RENTAL CAR - MINUTES LATER

ROSA
I spend most of my time between Columbia University and Stamford Tactical firing range. I just finished finals so you could say; this was my quest to find you.

MANNY
Would you please stop with the video texts?

ROSA
Don't you like me, Mr. Carmona?

MANNY
I'm a married man and old enough to be your father.

ROSA
I like older men. I like the way they treat me. They have stability and confidence and know what they want without drama.

MANNY
You can find those qualities in
boys your age.

ROSA
I am not interested in boys my age.

Manny throws up his hands, shaking his head. He sighs.

MANNY
Turn left; it's about a mile.

CUT TO:

EXT. HACIENDA - DAY

Manny and Rosa drive up to the Hacienda and see the burnt-out structure and the damaged rental car. Sanchez slowly regains consciousness.

FADE OUT.

EXT. PUERTO RICO/CENTRAL MOUNTAIN REGION ROAD - DAY

Manny, Sanchez, and Rosa wind down to lower elevations.

INT. ROSA'S/RENTAL CAR - DAY

ROSA
Always keep your gun pointed in a
safe direction. Do not point it at
anything you don't want to shoot,
and always keep your finger off the
trigger until you're ready to
shoot.

Sanchez gives Manny a suspicious look.

CUT TO:

EXT. PUERTO RICO/CENTRAL MOUNTAIN REGION ROAD - DAY

Like ships in the night, Iris passes Manny.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLD SAN JUAN/STREET - DAY

Manny and Sanchez exit.

MANNY
(to Rosa)
Keep the engine running.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FELIPE DEL MORRO/OLD SAN JUAN - DAY

Large white gala tents are throughout the 70-acre esplanade lawn. PEOPLE in business are partying with HIGH-END WORKING GIRLS.

SALAZAR
Welcome to El Morro, the 16th
Century Citadel built in honor of
King Philip II of Spain. Known as
the "Killing Fields," it could be
dominated by cannon fire to curtail
any threat - land or seaborne. Let
us honor the past and embrace our
future. Salute!

Becerrillo returns Salazar her wine glass. They toast.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLD SAN JUAN/STREET - DAY

Rosa pops the trunk and opens a neatly packed suitcase. We see her Glock handgun inside. She places it in her inner thigh holster under her dress.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FELIPE DEL MORRO/OLD SAN JUAN - DAY

Manny and Sanchez arrive.

SALAZAR
Mr. Carmona? So glad you could make
it.

He walks past Salazar and lunges at Becerrillo.

MANNY
Where's my wife?!

They fight it out like junkyard dogs. Partygoers start leaving in earnest as Sanchez and the Henchmen break it up.

SALAZAR

She is safe, Mr. Carmona, and will
join you at your choice and time.
Call it an exchange, if you will,
and then you can all go home and
live on easy street.

BECERRILLO

Mere mortal Manny, poor in lore and
legend. Every dog has its day.

MANNY

Isla Hueso, Playa de la marea de la
muerte. Dusk.

BECERRILLO

Apropos. Bone Island, Death Tide
Beach.

He tosses Manny Gloria's navel pierced diamond.

BECERRILLO

Proof of life.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH/PUBLIC ACCESS ROAD - DAY

Manny and Sanchez exit the car.

SANCHEZ

The dude was wearing a big iron on
his hip.

MANNY

I saw it.
(to Rosa)
Now get out of here. Go on. It's
not safe.

ROSA

Will I see you again?

Sanchez gives Manny the stink-eye.

MANNY

It's not what you think.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHFRONT - DAY

We see mangy, stray canines wandering the beachfront.

EXT. BEACHFRONT/NEAR FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Manny is alone, hiding. Don Pedro appears. He drops a burlap bag before him, revealing a machete, MREs (military meals ready to eat), and Tabasco sauce.

DON PEDRO
A trip down memory lane.

EXT. BEACHFRONT - CONTINUOUS

Three Escalades drive along the shoreline, lining up facing inland. The vanity plates read: "Nina," "Pinta," and "Santa Maria."

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Becerrillo sits in the front passenger seat. Gloria's cuffed to the rear door.

GLORIA
Manny! Manny!

EXT. BEACHFRONT/NEAR FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Heedlessly, Manny walks out from his cover.

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Becerrillo rubs his fingers and thumbs together in anticipation.

BECERRILLO
Come on like a bird in a fowler's
snare.

Gloria hits him.

GLORIA
Manny! No! Go back! Go back! It's a
trap! It's a trap!

Becerrillo yanks her back inside and commands Poco to attack.

BECERRILLO

Prance!

The other vehicles release their DOGS which make a tri-point attack.

EXT. BEACHFRONT - CONTINUOUS

We hear the SOUND of an engine.

Sanchez has rigged a plow mount to the 4x4 Suzuki Samurai's front, which now resembles a snowplow. He centers the blade and drives into battle when - Clara appears out of nowhere.

SANCHEZ

Who are you?!

CLARA

A friend of Manuel's.

SANCHEZ

Get in the back and stay down!

EXT. BEACHFRONT - CONTINUOUS

Poco and the dogs tear into Manny's leg with lock-jowl doggedness, felling him.

Joey's dog turns tail and runs.

Rosa shoots one dog in the head and then the second one. Manny is bleeding profusely. He starts limping toward Gloria, pulling Poco with him while whacking him until his bloodshot eyes roll back inside his head. Loss of blood brings on dizziness, falling blood pressure, and derangement.

MANNY

(looks up to the heavens)

Deliver me from the power of the dog.

He sees Poco's severed head still attached to his leg. With a thousand-yard-stare, he continues the suicidal march.

CUT TO:

START MIRAGE:

EXT. PRISTINE BEACHFRONT - DAY

We see Gloria running out of the surf.

MANNY (V.O.)

Gloria, you have given me the greatest possible happiness. You have been in every way all that anyone could be. I owe all the joy of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good. If anybody could have saved me, it would have been you. Everything has gone from me but the certainty of your goodness.

He falls to his knees and looks up, pleading, pitiful, tears welling up.

MANNY

Don't leave me.

END MIRAGE.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACHFRONT - CONTINUOUS

Rosa arrives.

MANNY

(under his breath)

Don't leave me.

ROSA

I won't, Mr. Carmona.

MANNY

I want my Gloria.

ROSA

Let's get her.

She helps him up. Sanchez drives up in the 4x4 Suzuki Samurai.

SANCHEZ

Oh, shit, Panna, you're fucked up!

Sanchez shot in the arm stalls the 4x4. Suddenly, Iris takes command of the vehicle.

SANCHEZ

Who are you?!

IRIS

Get him in the back and stay down!

Iris drives the 4x4 toward Becerrillo's vehicle as the others follow behind. Rosa fires her gun, killing the remaining Henchmen.

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Gloria pummels Becerrillo. He pulls out his mini-scythe.

BECERRILLO

Consider this a divorce.

EXT. BEACHFRONT - CONTINUOUS

Iris lowers the tractor blade smashing the window. Becerrillo drops the knife as Manny lunges inside.

MANNY

Nobody puts Baby in a corner.

INT. ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

They struggle. Becerrillo goes for his gun. Gloria reaches for the knife, just a finger's breadth away.

Becerrillo gets an advantage.

BECERRILLO

(to Manny)

You rig it, you ride it.

ROSA

(to Becerrillo)

Hi, lover.

Rosa fires her gun - an empty clip.

CLICK, CLICK.

Becerrillo hesitates for a canine clicker second just as Gloria stabs him in the neck.

GLORIA

Considered!

BECERRILLO
AAAAGGGG! CHAAAA! CHAAAA!

Becerrillo pulls the trigger.

POP!

Manny drops, mortally wounded.

GLORIA/IRIS/CLARA/ROSA
(blood-curdling)
AHHHHH! MANNY?! NO, NO, NO! NO!

FADE OUT.

EXT. COFFEE GROVES - DAY

Sanchez is wearing a sling to support his arm from the flesh wound.

SANCHEZ
Let's go to pay our respects.

Clara, Iris, and Rosa make their way toward the mountain overlooking the burial grounds.

EXT. MOUNTAIN APEX - CONTINUOUS

DON PEDRO
Rushing waters won't quench her
love; rivers can't wash it away.
Her passion never dies.

Our psychopomp, Gloria, stands on an ancient stone staircase in her larger-than-life state of immortality. She's dressed in majestic splendor, wearing a changing color flower fabric gown and towering over the land like CHRIST THE REDEEMER, OF RIO DE JANEIRO.

Beside her is Manny, barefooted and dressed in a white linen burial shroud. She turns to him and takes his hand. Together they descend the ancient ruins.

MANNY/GLORIA

(in unison)

I Manuel/Gloria, take you
Gloria/Manuel, to be my lawfully
wedded wife/husband, to have and to
hold from this day forward, for
better for worse, for richer for
poorer, in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish, until death
do us part.

They are swallowed up into the bosom of the underworld and
vanish.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END