

**UNDER FIRE**

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A Musical

Book & Lyrics: Barry Harman

Music: Grant Sturiale

Based on the screenplay by: Ron Shelton & Clayton Frohman

Contact:

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**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

PRINCIPAL ROLES (7 M, 3 F)

RUSSELL PRICE, *a war photographer*

ALEX GRAZIER, *a senior correspondent*

CLAIRE STRIDER, *a journalist*

\*TACHO, *President of El Mirador*

\*PEDRO, *a young rebel*

\*MARCEL JAZY, *a spy*

\*ISELA CRUZ, *a local translator*

\*OATES, *a n American mercenary soldier*

\*HUB KITTLE, *American PR flak to Tacho*

\*MISS PANAMA, *paramour of Tacho*

ENSEMBLE (2 M, 2 F)

REGIS, *a British reporter*

FATHER TOMAS, *a radical priest*

CINCO, *a general in Rafael's army*

LAS HERMANAS, *Pedro's sisters*

WAR PHOTOGRAPHERS, REBELS, LA GUARDIA SOLDIERS, REPORTERS ,  
FRIEND OF MISS PANAMA, PARTY GUESTS, WAITERS

*\*All starred PRINCIPALS join the ensemble whenever it is not in conflict with their main roles.*

WHERE: In and around the Central American country of El Mirador,  
plus one short scene in Africa.

WHEN: A few years before the dawn of the Internet

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## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### ACT ONE

- 1- ONE PICTURE - *Price & War Photographers*
- 2- OATES, Part 1 - *Oates & Price*
- 3- GUAVA AND MANGO - *Pedro, Tacho, Price & All*
- 4- THE OLD GUARD - *Claire & Alex*
- 5- FEEL THE FIRE - *Pedro, Las Hermanas & All*
- 6- A TERRIBLE SPY - *Jazy*
- 7- OATES, Part 2 - *Oates & Price*
- 8- BOOM BOOM BOOM! - *Pedro*
- 9- PRICE'S BINGE- *Price*
- 10- THE OLD GUARD (reprise) - *Alex*
- 11- LA CULEBRA - *Tacho, Claire, Las Hermanas & All*
- 12- UNCHARTED WATERS - *Price & Claire*
- 13 - FOLLOW ME - *Isela & All*

### ACT TWO

- 14 - ADELANTE! - *Pedro, Isela & All*
- 15- ONE PICTURE (reprise) - *Price, Claire, Isela, Tacho & All*
- 16 - CORAZON - *Claire & Price*
- 17- TRIO - *Alex, Claire, Price*
- 18- A BETTER WORLD - *Price*
- 19- A BETTER WORLD (reprise) - *Alex & Pedro*
- 20- LOVE AND WAR - *Alex & Price*
- 21- WHEN AMERICANS DIE - *Pedro, Isela, Tacho & All*
- 22- FINALE - *All*

## PRODUCTION NOTES

UNDER FIRE is a musical about the power of the photographic image. As such, projections are key. All the various settings are intended to be established via photographs, and projection screens would be in evidence all around the theater - or in a more provocative production, a black box approach could be utilized in which the audience is totally surrounded by projection screens.

The three main American characters - PRICE, CLAIRE and ALEX - are three well-meaning journalists stepping into a n unfamiliar landscape of mysterious motives and shifting alliances. Anything the physical production can to do underscore that sense of displacement and bring the audience face to face with the realities of war is welcome.

The authors conceive the piece with an on-stage ensemble of no less than five musicians. Keyboard, percussion and three guitarists, one of whom plays bass guitar. These orchestrations are already in existence.

In an ideal world, several of the musicians would also be vocalists.

**ACT ONE - Prologue**

*We open on a chorus of PHOTOGRAPHERS, photojournalists from the American Civil War to the current era: the likes of Mathew Brady, Margaret Bourke White, Robert Capa. We can deduce the eras in which they work from the clothes they wear, the cameras they employ and the pictures they take, which flash on PROJECTION SCREENS all around us..*

*In Africa, carrying on in the tradition of these brave artists is RUSSELL PRICE - 30's, handsome, scruffy. PRICE carries three cameras, switching lenses, loading film. He's proud of what he does and damned good at it. Note: throughout the play, whenever PRICE shoots a picture, we see the results on the PROJECTION SCREENS.*

**MUSIC #1 - "ONE PICTURE"**

PRICE

ONE PICTURE  
CAN MAKE A MAN IMMORTAL.  
ONE PICTURE -  
IF YOU GET IT RIGHT.  
ONE PICTURE  
CAN RIVET THE ATTENTION,  
BEGIN A CONVERSATION,  
REVEAL A NEW DIMENSION,  
CREATE A TRANSFORMATION,  
DEFINE A GENERATION!  
ONE PICTURE...

ONE PHOTO  
CAN MARK A MAJOR MILESTONE,  
IN COLOR  
OR IN BLACK AND WHITE.

ONE SNAPSHOT  
CAN CAUSE AN INSURRECTION,  
ENGENDER RETRIBUTION,  
DETERMINE AN ELECTION,  
UNDO THE CONSTITUTION,  
INCITE A REVOLUTION.  
ONE PICTURE.  
ONE PERFECT MOMENT  
CAPTURED FOREVER...

*Gunfire! PHOTOGRAPHERS are plunged into  
the midst of battle, nervously making their way  
across their personal battlefields.*

PRICE

ONE PICTURE,  
AND YOU ARE AT THE FOREFRONT:  
TANKS RUMBLING  
AS BOMBSHELLS IGNITE.  
ONE PICTURE  
AND BAM! YOU'RE OFF AND RUNNING.  
THE CONVOYS MOBILIZING,  
THE SOUND OF ENGINES GUNNING,  
THE HELICOPTERS RISING,  
RISING AND RISING...  
  
THE ANXIOUS PERSPIRATION...  
THE TROPIC JUNGLE STEAMING.  
THE SENSE OF RESIGNATION,  
THE MASS OF PEOPLE TEEMING.  
THE SUDDEN CONFLAGRATION,  
THE ROCKET FIRES GLEAMING,  
THE TOTAL DEVASTATION,  
THE SHOUTING AND THE SCREAMING.  
AND COULD IT BE YOU'RE DREAMING?  
ONE PICTURE.  
ONE FLEETING MOMENT  
LASTING A LIFETIME...

PRICE & PHOTOGRAPHERS

ONE PICTURE  
CAN DOCUMENT AN ERA,  
BEAR WITNESS  
AND BRING TRUTH TO LIGHT.  
ONE PICTURE..

PRICE

CAN HUMANIZE A CONFLICT.

PHOTOGRAPHER

EMBOLDEN A CONVICTION,

PRICE

REVEAL THE REAL STORY,

PHOTOGRAPHER

BECOME A VALEDICTION,

PRICE

UNCOVER AN AGENDA.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

SUBVERT THE OPPOSITION,

PRICE

EMBED IN THE SUBCONSCIOUS,

PHOTOGRAPHERS

DISCREDIT SUPERSTITION.

PRICE

BEGIN A CONVERSATION...

PHOTOGRAPHERS

ASSIST COMMUNICATION.

PRICE

CREATE A TRANSFORMATION...

PHOTOGRAPHERS

ELECTRIFY A NATION!

PRICE & PHOTOGRAPHERS

DEFINE A GENERATION! DEFINE A GENERATION!

DEFINE A GENERATION!

ONE PICTURE

CAN MAKE A MAN.... IMMORTAL!

*The other PHOTOGRAPHERS fade back into history, leaving PRICE alone in Africa.*

*On the PROJECTION SCREENS, as will occur in every subsequent scene change, we see the legend establishing the setting.*

**Scene 1 - Plains of Chad. Africa.**

<SFX>: **HELICOPTERS OVERHEAD.**

*On the PROJECTION SCREENS we see the pictures PRICE is shooting: army helicopters rising over majestic African elephants.*

**MUSIC #2 - "OATES"**

<SFX> **ARMY TRUCK IN MOTION.** A *convoy moves on.*



*Among several masked African warriors is  
OATES: a cheerfully psychopathic mercenary  
soldier, high as a kite.*

OATES

...Price?

PRICE! HEY, IF IT ISN'T OLD PRICE-Y!  
WHAT THE FUCK YOU DOING HERE?

PRICE

Oates.

OATES

PRICE! AFRICA'S GETTING REAL DICE-Y.  
WHAT THE FUCK YOU DOING HERE?

You tuna-sucking piece of raw meat! Never thought I'd run into you in this cesspool!

PRICE

Well, you know how it is...

THOUGHT I'D TAKE A PRIZE WINNING PICTURE.  
YOUR SORRY ASS BEING BLOWN TO SMITHEREENS.

OATES

YEAH! THAT'D BE ONE SWELL FUCKIN' PICTURE:  
MY BRAINS ON THE COVER OF A MILLION MAGAZINES!  
HEY, I'LL TRADE YOU SOME COKE.  
I NEED A JOINT.

PRICE

Sorry. On the wagon.

OATES

PRICE-Y, THIS AINT NO JOKE.  
I NEED A JOINT.

PRICE

What can I say? Sorry, Oates.

OATES

Oh man, I can't believe this. I hate Africa.

DOPE-WISE, THIS PLACE REALLY SUCKS.  
IT'S A MAJOR PIT.  
TOO MANY COONS  
AND THEY'RE ALL DUMB FUCKS,  
AND THE PAY IS SHIT.

PRICE

Say, Oates. I thought you usually fight for the government?

OATES

I do. This is "the government."

PRICE

Oates. These guys are the rebels.

OATES

Fuck they are This is a government convoy to Caunda.

PRICE

Oates, I've spent three long years in Africa. This is the Abou-Dei Revolutionary Front.

OATES

No shit?

PRICE

No shit.

OATES

MAN, AIN'T THAT A REAL TWIST.  
I HAD NO CLUE.  
GUESS THEY'D BE REALLY PISSED,  
IF THEY ONLY KNEW.

Price-y, we're wasting our time in Africa. El Mirador, Central America, that's the place.

GUAVA AND MANGO,  
DANCERS WHO TANGO...

Cheap shrimp, lotta rays and real thin in the “spook” department, know what I mean?

PRICE

Actually, I have a friend stationed in El Mirador. Left Africa about a month ago.

OATES

Yeah? How’s he like it?

PRICE

She.

OATES

Oh. “She.” Price-y got himself a steady squeeze now?

PRICE

She’s just a friend .

OATES

But I’m betting you wish it was more than that, am I right?

PRICE

Not gonna happen, trust me. She’s my best friend’s lady. For years.

OATES

(handing him newspaper)

Well check this out. They got this rebel leader in El Mirador? Name’s Rafael. No one has ever taken his picture.

PRICE

Really. Hell, I’d get his picture.

OATES

I know you would, man, I know you would. Hell, if it was me? I’d go for ‘em both - the picture *and* the chick.

PRICE

(reading newspaper)

You’re gonna miss your ride.

OATES

Yeah, gotta run. See you in El Mirador, dude. That's where we're really gonna kick some ass!

*OATES runs off. PRICE addresses the newspaper in his hand.*

PRICE

Hey, Senor Rafael? Start practicing your smile. Russell Price is coming your way!

*He moves off as the scene changes to:*

**Scene 2: Streets of La Encantada**

*PEDRO, an adolescent boy of about 16 enters and addresses us directly.*

PEDRO

*Querido Tio Manuel.* Greetings from your nephew Pedro. I hope all is well in Montevideo, but the news here is very sad. My parents - your brother and his wife - are with the angels. They died defending our farmlands, at the hands of dictator Tacho and the corrupt soldiers of his militia. We are still in shock.

(forcing a smile)

The good news is my sisters and I have escaped and joined the rebel forces who have sworn to end Tacho's bloody rule. Even better, we learned the rumors whispered on the wind are true. The rebels have a new leader. - a fierce freedom fighter known only as "Rafael." The first night we join Rafael at his camp fire, he asks what we want from life. When I tell him my plans, the others laugh. But not Rafael. He says it is good to have a dream, it is dreamers who change the world. I knew then, I would follow this man anywhere.

(excitedly)

For months, our skirmishes with Tacho's soldiers took place only in the countryside. Now, Rafael vows to take our fight into the cities, so we have come to the capital - La Encantada. Till the time is right, we go about our business. Which for the *pobrecitos* in El Mirador means one thing. *El turismo* - tourism!

*PEDRO dons an apron, becoming a "local native" as other EL MIRADORANS enter, also in native costume, hawking their wares to the audience.*

<SFX> MARKET SQUARE, PARROTS  
SQUAWKING, CABS HONKING, ETC.

PEDRO

If only these gringos knew what lies beneath our foolish grins...

(assuming his “peasant” role)

*Bienvenidos, amigos!* Some fresh plantains today? *Si, muy dulce.* Very sweet!

MUSIC #3 - “GUAVA AND MANGO”

PEDRO

GUAVA AND MANGO,  
DANCERS WHO TANGO,  
BRIGHT-EYED CHILDREN GRINNING.  
CLOVE AND PERSIMMON,  
FULL-BREASTED WOMEN,  
AND THAT’S ONLY THE BEGINNING!  
BIG THINGS ARE HAPPENING HERE  
HERE IN LA ENCANTADA -  
LA CAPITAL DEL MIRADOR  
BIG THINGS ARE HAPPENING HERE.  
SOMETHING’S IN THE ATMOSPHERE.  
WAIT TILL YOU SEE WHAT LIES IN STORE!

*PRICE enters, shoots pics, jazzed.*

PEDRO AND SOLOISTS (ON EACH LINE)

PINA COLADAS,  
CRISP EMPANADAS,  
TRY A FRESH CIGAR FROM CUBA.  
SUGAR REFINING,  
FINE GOURMET DINING  
ALSO SNORKELING AND SCUBA!

PEDRO & ALL

BIG THINGS ARE HAPPENING HERE,  
HERE IN LA ENCANTADA!  
YOU ARE INVITED TO EXPLORE.

COME SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE.  
BUY YOURSELF A SOUVENIR.  
WE HAVE WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR.

PRICE

OH, I THINK I'M GONNA LIKE THIS WAR.  
YEAH, I'M REALLY GONNA LIKE THIS WAR.

PEDRO & HIS SISTERS

HAVE SOME PAPAYA,  
SWIM AT LA PLAYA,  
TAKE OFF SOME TIME TO SIGHT-SEE.  
DANCE IN THE NIGHTCLUBS,  
IF THEY'RE THE RIGHT CLUBS  
NEVER KNOW WHOM YOU MIGHT SEE!  
TAKE IN THE PLAZA,  
OUR PLAZA HAS A  
WEALTH OF ENCHANTING FOUNTAINS.

PRICE

WHAT ABOUT THE TALK OF INTERNAL STRIFE?

PEDRO & HIS SISTERS

(looking around, nervously)

ONLY IN THE VERY, VERY FARAWAY MOUNTAINS!

*Action morphs into a press conference with  
dictator TACHO. HUB KITTLE (TACHO'S  
American P.R. flak) is near. Also : TACHO'S  
paramour, beauty queen MISS PANAMA,  
advisor MARCEL JAZY and SOLDIERS.*

REPORTERS

*Senor El Presidente! Tacho! Over here! (ETC)*

TACHO

As the freely-elected leader of my people, I am proud to report:

STUDIES ARE SHOWING:  
JOB MARKETS GROWING.  
FOREIGN COMPANIES INVESTING.  
CRIME RATES ARE FALLING.  
SUBURBS ARE SPRAWLING.  
INDICATIONS ALL ATTESTING:  
GREAT THINGS ARE HAPPENING HERE,  
HERE IN LA ENCANTADA,  
AND ALL AROUND EL MIRADOR.  
GREAT THINGS ARE HAPPENING HERE.  
TAKE A LOOK AROUND, IT'S CLEAR.  
LIFE IS IMPROVING MORE AND MORE!

PRICE

OH, I THINK I'M GONNA LIKE THIS SHOT.  
YEAH, I THINK I REALLY GOT THIS SHOT...

REGIS (BRITISH REPORTER)

(to HUB KITTLE)

How do you stand it: flak for a thug like Tacho.

HUB KITTLE

Two sides to every story, Regis. Tacho has a right to tell his, know what I'm saying?

REGIS

Mr. President. Would you comment on the latest reports of growing insurgency?

TACHO

Why do you reporters dwell on the small radical fringe in our great country? Why do you not write of the great advances I've made for El Mirador?

BAUXITE AND BISMUTH -  
SHIPPED THROUGH THE ISTHMUS,  
GROWTH IN EXPORTS IS PROGRESSING.  
TURQUOISE AND TOPAZ;  
EVEN THE POPE HAS  
GIVEN US HIS HOLY BLESSING...

*FATHER TOMAS leads on religious procession,  
all carrying posters of Jesus and Virgin Mary.*

FATHER TOMAS & PROCESSION

SANTA MARIA, SANTA MARIA,  
MADRE DE JESU CRISTO.  
SANTA MARIA, SANTA MARIA,  
SHELTER US AND SAVE OUR --

*PROCESSION turns its posters around  
revealing likenesses of RAFAEL. They are  
actually protestors against TACHO!*

FATHER TOMAS & PROCESSION

*Rafael! Rafael! Libertad o Muerte!* Down with Tacho! Rafael! Rafael!

FEMALE PROTESTOR

(motioning PRICE aside)

*...Americano?*

TACHO IS LYING!  
CHILDREN ARE STARVING!  
RED CROSS MONEY ALL DIVERTED.  
BRIBES AND CORRUPTION!  
MASS EXECUTIONS...

*SOLDIERS corner FEMALE PROTESTOR.  
FATHER TOMAS diverts SOLDIERS and she  
flees, leaving poster of RAFAEL behind.*

FEMALE PROTESTOR

*Viva! Viva Rafael!*

*SOLDIERS shoot poster of RAFAEL full of  
bullets. PRICE takes pictures of SOLDIERS.*

HUB KITTLE

(sotto, to musicians)

*Toque la musica. Play!*



ALL

GUAVA AND MANGO,  
DANCERS WHO TANGO,  
AND THAT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING!  
DON'T MISS WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE,  
HERE IN LA ENCANTADA.  
WE HAVE WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR.  
COME SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE...

TACHO & PEDRO

WELCOME TO OUR HEMISPHERE!

PEDRO, TACHO & ALL

YOU'RE GONNA LOVE...  
YOU'RE GONNA LOVE THIS WAR!

*During scene transition, PEDRO sells PRICE a copy of TIME magazine.*

**Scene 3 - Intercontinental Hotel , La Encantada.**

*Among the REPORTERS and HOTEL STAFF milling in the lobby is senior journalist ALEX GRAZIER. Back to us, he is talking to ISELA CRUZ a beautiful, stylish local translator. Brit reporter REGIS hails PRICE as he enters.*

REGIS

Price! Great picture, kiddo. Way to go.

PRICE

(magazine in hand)

Yeah, cover of "Time." Not too shabby, huh?

ALEX

(turns around)

So you approve?

PRICE

...Alex? Alex!

(embraces him, shows him magazine)

You had a hand in this?

ALEX

I sent in your photographs and called them "Pictures from a Lost War." The New York editors loved it, since none of them knew where the hell Chad was anyhow. It got you a cover, me a feature story, and packaged a class struggle in two words. Nifty, huh?

PRICE

Very. But Alex...what are you doing here? When you and Claire left for Africa, I thought you were headed for New York.

ALEX

I heard it was a neat little war with a great hotel. So for now, the anchorman job is on hold.

PRICE

But it's network news. What you've been working for.

ALEX

Exactly. What *I've* been working for. ...I want you to meet someone.

*ALEX waves over ISELA CRUZ.*

ALEX

Russell Price; Isela Cruz. She works for the hotel and helps out as a translator.

ISELA

My pleasure.

ALEX

Sit, sit. I'll get us a beer.

*ALEX moves to bar.*

PRICE

So. I hear you have a little misunderstanding down here, between the poets and the government.

ISELA

“Misunderstanding?” “Down here.” It’s called a war. It started in 1930, before you were born.

PRICE

Forgive me. It will be an honor to photograph your “war.”

ISELA

And I am sure your pictures will be very interesting. Now, if you will excuse me...

PRICE

Who’s Rafael?

ISELA

Rafael. Comandante Rafael. He is either a Marxist dupe of Russia and Cuba, or the most popular leader of a most popular democratic revolution. Take your pick.

PRICE

Doesn’t matter to me. He’s got a great face. How’d he like to be photographed?

ISELA

You’d never find him.

PRICE

Wanna bet?

ISELA

You would lose. He’s never been photographed. You must excuse me.

PRICE

Just one more thing. Is Rafael owned by the CIA or the KGB?

ISELA

The world is not divided into East and West anymore, Mr. Price. It is divided into North and South. By the time you people figure that out, it will be too late.

(referring to the magazine cover)

Congratulations on your elephants.

*ISELA exits as ALEX returns with beers.*

PRICE

Thanks for the magazine cover, partner. Man. Still can't believe you blew off that anchor job! But this is good, it'll be like old times. I really missed the three of us working together.

ALEX

Except you had no idea I was going to be here, did you?

PRICE

Well, no. But Claire is, right? I certainly assumed you'd be visiting..

ALEX

Right, right. So what exactly did bring you down here?

PRICE

I'm interested in this Rafael guy. Wanna be the first to get him on film. Do some clubs, get a suntan...

ALEX

Continue screwing my woman...

PRICE

(choking on his beer)

Alex! Claire and I never --

ALEX

No, I was wrong about that, wasn't I? You haven't slept with her. Yet.

PRICE

Wait. Is this why you turned down the anchor job? You thought I was gonna follow Claire to El Mirador? That's crazy.

ALEX

And yet here you are. And surprise, surprise, so am I. Defending my turf.

(as PRICE protests)

Save it, Russell. This is me. We both know you're an adrenaline junkie. Being shot at, cocaine. One way or another, you need your fix.

PRICE

C'mon, Alex, I haven't used in over two --

ALEX

And imagine what a high this would be: putting the make on your best friend's girl!

PRICE

Damn it, Alex, I *am* your best friend. At least, I thought I was. If I really wanted to make a move on Claire, don't you think I'm man enough to tell you?

ALEX

Funny. Why do I think you just did?

*Insulted, PRICE stands and throws down a few dollars.*

ALEX

I've seen the pictures you took of her, Russell. You're either lying to me or yourself.

PRICE

I took those pictures for you. As a gift.

ALEX

A gift? Or a warning?

*PRICE exits. From the opposite direction, enter CLAIRE STRIDER, an Americanized reporter of Latin origin: 30's, striking, bright. She carries an envelope.*

CLAIRE

I just heard: Price is in town?

ALEX

Surprise, surprise. Just checked in.

CLAIRE

So it's the three of us, together again. Good news, yes?

ALEX

Peachy. I see you found my little gift.

CLAIRE

Thanks for the thought, Alex. But no thanks.

ALEX

You're returning it? Claire, that's a first class ticket to New York.

CLAIRE

But buying it for me was not a first class move. What part of "I-don't-wanna-live-in-New-York-I-like-working-in-the-field" don't you understand?

ALEX

That's not why you're breaking up with me. You think I'm selling out, wanting this TV job.

CLAIRE

It's not just a "job," Alex. It's anchorman on network TV and God knows you earned it. I just want to earn my spurs, too,. It's not always about you.

ALEX

No, not always. But this damn well is.

CLAIRE

Don't. We had agreed on a clean break. Then you decided you had to follow me here. Fine. But you need to deal, Alex. It's time your prize student leaves the nest. She needs to see if she can fly on her own.

ALEX

I just don't want to lose you.

*But they both know: he already has. <SFX>  
Phone rings on table.*

CLAIRE

That's Charlie, from New York. I I need to file my story. Did you read it?

ALEX

Two split infinitives and a bit subjective, but I liked it. Very professional.

CLAIRE

Thanks. I had an excellent teacher.

(answers phone)

Hey, Charlie. It's Claire. So; turns out this President Tacho is an interesting guy. Showed great potential at the start. Then he got too used to calling all the shots. And now it's really sad because...

CLAIRE (CONT'D)  
(aware ALEX is staring at her)

...he just can't accept he's overstayed his welcome.

MUSIC #4 - "THE OLD GUARD"

CLAIRE  
(reading her story into phone)

"THE OLD GUARD  
KNOWS ITS REIGN IS AT AN END,  
BUT THE OLD GUARD  
HAS ITS FOOLISH PRIDE.  
IT'S A FUTILE EXERCISE  
BUT THE OLD GUARD ALWAYS TRIES  
TO MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO.  
SOME PEOPLE JUST CAN'T LET GO."

*CLAIRE continues, silently, as attention shifts to  
ALEX and his private thoughts.*

ALEX

WHAT A PERFECT METAPHOR!  
AN INGENIOUS WAY TO SAY  
THAT A LOVE AFFAIR IS ENDING  
AND THERE'S NO REASON LEFT TO STAY.  
SUCH A PERFECT METAPHOR  
THOUGH THE SITUATION'S GRIM,  
FOR THE WOMAN'S NOT JUST LEAVING YOU,  
YOU'RE LOSING HER TO HIM...

CLAIRE  
(into phone)

Price? Yes, he got in today. I'll send him your regards. OK, going on...

"THE OLD GUARD  
SEES WHAT LIES AROUND THE BEND,  
BUT THE OLD GUARD  
WILL NOT STEP ASIDE.  
CALL IT STUBBORNNESS, CALL IT GREED.

HE'S UNWILLING TO CONCEDE  
OR CONSIDER STEPPING DOWN.  
KINGS DON'T SURRENDER THE CROWN."

*Again, attention shifts from CLAIRE to ALEX.*

ALEX

WHAT A CLEVER METAPHOR,  
SUCH A NIMBLE WAY TO SHOW  
THAT THE CURTAIN IS DESCENDING  
AND SHE'S WISHING YOU WOULD GO.  
SUCH A CLEVER METAPHOR,  
SO URBANE AND FULL OF WIT.

ALEX/CLAIRE

THOUGH YOU/HE NEVER DREAMED  
YOU'D/HE'D PLAY THE ROLE  
THE PART'S A PERFECT FIT.

I'M/HE'S THE OLD FOOL,  
CLINGING ON TENACIOUSLY.  
THOUGH WHAT USED TO BE  
IS DEAD AND GONE.  
PITY THE OLD FOOLS  
HANGING ON FOR DEAR LIFE,  
BECAUSE THEY FEAR LIFE  
IS MOVING ON. MOVING ON.

CLAIRE

Moving on.

THE OLD GUARD  
KNOWS THERE IS NO TURNING BACK

ALEX

YET THE OLD GUARD  
TRIES TO STEM THE TIDE.



CLAIRE & ALEX

SUCH A FUTILE EXERCISE  
BUT THE OLD GUARD ALWAYS TRIES  
TO MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO  
WHY? I JUST DON'T KNOW.

ALEX  
SOME PEOPLE JUST CAN'T

CLAIRE  
SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO...

CLAIRE & ALEX

LET GO.

*Lights dim on CLAIRE & ALEX. As scene transition begins, PEDRO enters, followed by other REBELS carrying crates of rifles. REBELS unpack and inspect guns as:*

PEDRO

*Querido Tio.* Dear Uncle. New arm shipments are arriving every day. Cuba, Syria, North Korea - Rafael cares not who sends them. What matters is that news of the People's War has captured the world's attention! Meanwhile, my sisters and I now have another job, arranged by Rafael. Each weekend, we sing at the nightclub where all the important government people go to drink and dance. The women are all "muy bonita" but it feels a bit strange to be entertaining our enemies.

(slightly embarrassed)

And you should see the costumes my sisters wear! I know they do what they do for The Cause. But for the sacred memory of our parents I wish they did it with more clothes on!

*Enter LAS HERMANAS (his sisters) in very scanty nightclub attire, carrying PEDRO'S night club outfit on a hanger. PEDRO takes the costume, crosses himself and follows them off.*

**Scene 4 - Club El Fuego. La Encantada.**

*ISELA CRUZ enters, checking her watch.  
PRICE enters.*

ISELA

Mr. Price. And how are your elephants tonight?

PRICE

Thirsty. And yours?

*She smiles, consults her watch and moves off.  
CLAIRE, looking great, enters.*

CLAIRE

*Hola, Chico. Que tal!*

PRICE

Claire! Well, Central America agrees with you.

CLAIRE

Thanks.

(to BARTENDER)

*Cervezas, por favor?*

PRICE

And speaking like a native.

CLAIRE

They tell me Spanish is all I spoke till I was five. My dad was Colombian. Then we moved to San Diego and little Conchita Gonzalez was reborn as Claire Strider.

PRICE

Who is she now?

CLAIRE

A stranger in a strange land. You're gonna love it here. We've got good guys, bad guys, cheap shrimp.

PRICE

And Alex in the background.

CLAIRE

I hoped things wouldn't get messy, but he followed me here.

PRICE

To cover you or the war?

CLAIRE

Both.

PRICE

Alex seems to think we're having an affair. If we are, I wish you'd fill me in.

CLAIRE

Alex is an expert on military strategy. The best defense is a good offense.

PRICE

And what do you think?

CLAIRE

I think it's good to see you after three months. It'd be even nicer if you shaved.

PRICE

I'm hurt. Know what it takes to keep a three day's growth looking like this?

*Patrons drift in, including MISS PANAMA and two rich gay FRIENDS. PEDRO and LAS HERMANAS ascend to bandstand.*

PEDRO

*Buenas noches, amigos!*

(to BANDLEADER)

*La musica, por favor.*

(as BAND settles into a sexy groove)

Ah yes. Very nice. Welcome to the Club El Fuego., the hottest nightclub in El Mirador. You all know what "*fuego*" means, yes?

ALL

Fire!

PEDRO

Whoa! Be careful when you yell that word! We're not on fire here...yet. Right now, we're just ess-smoldering. But be warned. The temperature is going to rise. Because I plan to dance with every woman in the room!

**MUSIC #5 - "FEEL THE FIRE"**

PEDRO

CAREFUL, AMIGO!  
CHICO, CUIDADO!  
WATCH OUT, SENORA!  
MIRA, MUCHACHO.

ONCE YOU FEEL THE FIRE IN OUR MUSIC,  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE FEVER IN OUR SONG,  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE MELODY ENFOLD YOU,  
ALL YOUR LIFE YOU'LL WANT TO SING ALONG.  
LET YOURSELF BE DRAWN INTO THE MUSIC  
LIKE A MOTH IS DRAWN INTO A FLAME.  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE FIRE IN OUR MUSIC  
YOUR LIFE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME.

*ALEX enters. Seeing PRICE and CLAIRE together, ALEX leads ISELA onto the dance floor. The dancing becomes a three-way competition between PRICE and CLAIRE, ALEX & ISELA and PEDRO and MISS PANAMA.*

LAS HERMANAS

CAUTION, COMPADRE.  
WATCH WHERE YOU'RE HEADING.  
FIRE IS LETHAL.  
WATCH OUT, IT'S SPREADING.

PEDRO

TOO MUCH EMOTION  
LEADS TO COMMOTION

LAS HERMANAS

COMBUSTION. ERUPTION.

PEDRO & LAS HERMANAS

LET THE FIRE TOUCH YOU, YOU'LL GET BURNED.  
HOT, HOT, HOT, HOT!

ONCE YOU FEEL THE FIRE IN OUR MUSIC,  
HEAR THE SOFT LAMENT OF OUR GUITARS..  
ONCE YOU LET THE MELODY ENFOLD YOU,  
YOU'LL BE DANCING UP AMONG THE STARS.  
LET YOURSELF BE DRAWN INTO THE MUSIC;  
GET INTO THE RHYTHM AS IT PLAYS.  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE FIRE IN OUR MUSIC,  
YOU'LL WANT TO SET THE WORLD ABLAZE!

LAS HERMANAS

STRANGER!  
BE MINDFUL HOW THE MUSIC WORKS ON YOU.  
YOU MAY NOT SEE WHERE THIS IS LEADING TO  
WHEN BLINDED BY THE MOON ABOVE.

PEDRO & LAS HERMANAS

DANGER!  
ONCE YOU HAVE LET THE MUSIC TOUCH YOUR HEART,  
THE LIFE YOU KNOW MAY START TO FALL APART  
AND YOU MIGHT EVEN FALL IN LOVE. IN LOVE. IN LOVE...

PEDRO  
CAREFUL, AMIGO!  
CHICO, CUIDADO!  
WATCH OUT, SENORA!  
MIRA, MUCHACHO!

LAS HERMANAS  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE FIRE IN OUR MUSIC,  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE FEVER IN OUR SONG,  
ONCE YOU LET THE MELODY ENFOLD YOU,  
ALL YOUR LIFE YOU'LL WANT TO SING ALONG.

PEDRO, LAS HERMANAS & ALL

LET YOURSELF BE DRAWN INTO THE MUSIC  
AND YOU'LL ONLY HAVE YOURSELF TO BLAME.  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE FIRE IN OUR MUSIC,  
THE MUSIC WILL SET YOUR SOUL AFLAME!!!

*PRICE and CLAIRE sit. ALEX chats with ISELA, who checks her watch again. A WAITER, passing by, exchanges glances with ISELA. MISS PANAMA joins FRIENDS at bar.*

PRICE

So. Give me the scoop on El Mirador.

CLAIRE

Let's see. Sixty years ago, our Marines invaded to protect American business interests and put down a peasant revolt --

PRICE

Not the history! The important stuff.

CLAIRE

Number one, there's two kinds of beer: Tona and Victoria. Victoria's better. Two: check out Miss Panama. Don't touch. She belongs to El Presidente, and word is any straight male gets caught with her, Tacho promises to personally --

ALEX

(joining them)

-- cut off his balls. Now why didn't I think of that?

PRICE

Gee, Alex. Was that another of your famous metaphors?

ALEX

No, that was real. OK, time for business, boys and girls. Take note of Mr. Marcel Jazy. Friend of wine, women and Tacho.

*MARCEL JAZY glides in, to a sexy Latin rhythm. JAZY is a too-charming man in an overdone white suit and hat. He joins MISS PANAMA and ISELA at the bar.*

PRICE

Who is he?

ALEX

A businessman without a business. Baby-sits Miss Panama for Tacho, and doesn't cover up his connections to Washington.

*ALEX waves to JAZY, who waves back, then expertly lights MISS PANAMA'S cigarette. ISELA looks at her watch.*

CLAIRE

Look at those moves. Since when does the CIA light cigarettes like that?

*A WAITER arrives with champagne, just as hooded and armed REBELS emerge from the kitchen. They approach the two MALE FRIENDS of MISS PANAMA.*

WAITER

(to PRICE'S table, low)

Please. Stay at your table and you won't be hurt.

*From his table, PRICE quietly shoots pictures.*

REBEL #1

(to MALE FRIEND of MISS PANAMA)

Stand up! We do not want to waste ammunition on a head as empty as yours. But believe me, we will.

MALE FRIEND OF MISS PANAMA

What is this? What do you want?

REBEL #1

Shut up! On your feet!

*MALE FRIEND resists. REBEL #1 takes out grenade and pulls pin, holding it in front of MALE FRIEND, who stands, frightened.*

REBEL #1

You are coming with us. Comandante Rafael will trade you, for the release of El Miradorans who care about our country!

*SFX: <CHAMPAGNE CORK POPPING>.  
The noise frightens REBEL #2, who whirls  
around and knocks grenade from REBEL #1's  
hand. SFX: <EXPLOSION!>*

*Pandemonium! Fire, shooting, gunshots, smoke  
and arrival of GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS.  
SFX: <SIREN>. JAZY watches as PRICE  
shoots pictures. REBELS flee nightclub.  
Helping them escape: PEDRO and LAS  
HERMANAS.*

*Scene 5 - Hotel Lobby & Streets of La  
Encantada.*

*Two areas, representing simultaneous action in  
different locales. In Area #1: CLAIRE files her  
story over the phone.*

CLAIRE

(to ALEX, as he enters)

It's Charlie. Says a terrorist bombing of a Central American restaurant isn't big enough to hold for the world section.

ALEX

Tell him we have pictures.

CLAIRE

He knows.

*In Area #2: PRICE passes a wall bearing  
RAFAEL'S cartoon likeness and shoots pics.*

ALEX

Tell him there were pieces of body in the piano and someone was singing "Blue Moon."  
What's he got better than that?

CLAIRE

The Pope in Egypt.



ALEX

(grabbing phone)

Forget the Pope, Charlie. This is a big story because it's the first sign of fighting in La Encantada. ...Well, grab a map and look up El Mirador. You drive to New Orleans and make a left. ...It happened in a roomful of press and CIA. How do I know they were CIA? They wore name tags!

*In Area #2: GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS  
surround PRICE, pointing bayonets.*

PRICE

Hey. I'm a journalist. *Mira! Jornalista!*

*PRICE hands passport to an OFFICER. In  
Area #1, PR flak HUB KITTLE enters, as:*

ALEX

Look, Charlie, we're backing a fascist again. I know that ain't news, but try and find an angle.

HUB KITTLE

Hey hey hey. Let's be careful how we throw words like that around. There's fascists and there's fascists, right?

ALEX

(ignoring him, into phone)

No, no pictures of Rafael yet. Nobody knows where the son of a bitch is!

(hangs up; to HUB)

Who in hell are you?

HU KITTLE

Hub Kittle. Lee and Knubb, Public Relations, New York. We got a client down here.

ALEX

A client?

HUB KITTLE

President Tacho. OK, I know what you're thinking...

*In Area #2: OFFICER pockets passport, then nods to SOLDIER, who jams rifle butt into PRICE'S gut. He collapses. In Area #1:*

HUB KITTLE

...But there's an untold story here. I mean the man has a point of view too, am I right?

*HUB follows CLAIRE and ALEX off as SOLDIERS drag PRICE off into the night.*

Scene 6 - City Jail. La Encantada.

*<SFX>: CLANK OF PRISON DOORS. PRICE is tossed into a cell, roughly.*

COMMANDANT

Your cell mate is a priest. Now you can confess your sins.

*A SOLDIER kicks PRICE, and he is left alone with a bloodied FATHER TOMAS.*

FATHER TOMAS

Cigarillo?

PRICE

(offers him one)

A priest? What are you doing here?

FATHER TOMAS

The government accused me of knowing Rafael.

PRICE

And the government is always wrong, eh?

FATHER TOMAS

This time they were right. Who are you?

PRICE

*Un periodista.* I want to meet Rafael.

FATHER TOMAS

Whose side are you on?

PRICE

I take pictures. Not sides.

FATHER TOMAS

No sides? Go home. You are nothing.

*Outside cell, MARCEL JAZY glides on, talking to  
COMMANDANT. JAZY exits.*

COMMANDANT

Senor Price. A terrible misunderstanding. You are free to go. Soon as you've signed.

PRICE

Signed?

COMMANDANT

Your visitation papers . To show you were not detained, just visiting. In case your embassy should ask.

PRICE

And if I don't sign?

COMMANDANT

You want your passport back, yes? Oh, I almost forgot. Your cameras.  
(drops one, purposely)

Ah. Tsk. *Lo siento mucho.*

*He exits. PRICE retrieves broken camera as  
ALEX and CLAIRE rush in.*

ALEX

You OK, cowboy?

PRICE

I'm fine. How did you know I was here?

CLAIRE

That little French guy. Marcel Jazy. Called Alex. Said he thought you'd been arrested.

PRICE

He was in here! I think he arranged to have me released. I wanna talk to him.

ALEX

You sure they didn't hurt you?

PRICE

They did worse, Alex. They got me interested. Now if it's the last thing I do, I'm gonna find this Rafael. First thing tomorrow, we interview that slimy French little --

*Immediate transition to:*

*Scene 7 - Garden courtyard of Marcel Jazy.*

*Sipping from a martini glass, JAZY joins  
CLAIRE, PRICE and ALEX.*

JAZY

Spy? "Spy" is such an odd word, Mr. Price. Nobody is really a spy anymore.

ALEX

You'll have to forgive Russell. He prefers pictures to words.

JAZY

You don't have to apologize. You're journalists.

CLAIRE

And you're a businessman.

JAZY

A businessman. OK, that sounds good. I'm a businessman. Martinis all around?

PRICE

Why was I arrested, why'd you get me released and who are you?

*A pouting MISS PANAMA enters in bikini and  
beach cover-up.*

MISS PANAMA

Marcel? *Marcel, la piscina. No agua!*

JAZY

*Si cara. No agua. Lo siento mucho.*

MISS PANAMA

You said there would be water in the pool this week!

JAZY

(to the Americans, sotto)

I assure you, if she dove in she wouldn't notice.

(to MISS PANAMA)

...My darling, the guerillas knocked out the pumping station on the road to Masaya, and we must ration water now. Next week, maybe things will be better.

MISS PANAMA

Then take this. I will sunbathe.

*She takes off cover-up, and hands it to JAZY.  
Blithely displaying her body, she moves to  
lounge chair, stretches out and sighs.*

JAZY

You were arrested, Mr. Price, because La Guardia - Tacho's secret police - are clowns who specialize in excess. You were released because I told them to release you.

CLAIRE

These are not the normal duties of a businessman.

JAZY

But they are the normal duties of a spy? All right, you win. I'm a spy. There. Happy? I feel much better.

MUSIC #6 - "A TERRIBLE SPY"

JAZY

I used to be more adept at this game, but now it seems everyone knows my secret. Well, that's what comes from being a slave to fashion. And having too many girlfriends.

IT'S HARD TO BE A SPY  
WHEN YOU ENJOY THE PUBLIC EYE  
AND HAVE A YEN TO BE THE CENTER OF ATTENTION.  
IT DOESN'T HELP AT ALL  
IF YOU ARE FOND OF ALCOHOL  
AND KEEP REVEALING THINGS  
YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T MENTION.

ESPIONAGE  
IS MY CHOSEN PROFESSION,  
THOUGH I HAVE A CONFESSION:  
I DON'T KNOW WHY.  
ESPIONAGE  
REQUIRES THE SKILL TO MOVE BEHIND THE SCENES,  
TO NAVIGATE THROUGH GO-BETWEENS,  
DO BUSINESS LIKE THE BYZANTINES,  
ADMINISTER AMPHETAMINES -  
TALENTS I NO LONGER EXEMPLIFY.  
OH ME, OH MY.  
I'M A TERRIBLE SPY.

I see you recognized Miss Panama? Shes's in love with me. I must get some water in that pool. And once a week I have lunch with President Tacho to discuss security measures against the insurgents, and all he wants to talk about is Miss Panama. He's worried about her.

ALEX

Because he thinks she's seeing another man?

JAZY

And assigned me to find out who it is! What will I do, he is sure to find me out. I am just no good with secrets...

AN AGENT'S BETTER SERVED  
IF HE CAN FUNCTION UNOBSERVED,  
HE SHOULDN'T CUT A SWATH  
OR STRUT ABOUT AND SWAGGER.  
IF ONLY I WERE SHREWD  
AND WORE APPAREL MORE SUBDUED  
BUT I'M MORE PARTIAL TO THE CLOAK  
THAN TO THE DAGGER!

ESPIONAGE  
IS A TAXING VOCATION  
NEEDING MORE DEDICATION  
THAN I SUPPLY.

ESPIONAGE  
NECESSITATES SUBTLETY IN SUBTERFUGE,  
THE HEART OF EBENEZER SCROOGE.  
AN EYE FOR SIZING UP A STOOGES.  
THE LIST OF GIFTS I LACK IS HUGE -  
TRULY THERE ARE TIMES I COULD ALMOST CRY.  
HARD AS I TRY,  
I'M A TERRIBLE SPY.  
AY YI YI YI,  
SUCH A TERRIBLE SPY!

(so casual)

So you have been to the city of Leon?

ALEX

We were heading to Masaya. They say the rebels have attacked the militia.

PRICE

Supposed to be nasty there. And a lot of people think Rafael's in the south. I wanna find out.

JAZY

No, it's not nasty yet. Give it a week. Were I you, I'd head to Leon. Nice cathedral. And un peu de bang bang.

CLAIRE

We're not doing a travelogue.

JAZY

Of course not. Only I've heard Comandante Rafael is moving his unit into the area.

MISS PANAMA

Marcel. *Estoy desesperado.*

JAZY & ALEX

She's lonely.

JAZY

(showing them out)

Forgive me, but I have to excuse myself. I must see to her. It is my job.

PRICE

So Rafael is in the city of Leon?

CLAIRE

That is what you said, yes?

JAZY

Did I? See, there I go again. A whisper, a mere rumor and I gossip shamelessly to anyone in sight. Truly, I am hopeless. Bon jour...

(after AMERICANS exit)

THE PROBLEM IS: I TALK TOO MUCH.  
IF A MATTER'S CONFIDENTIAL,  
REST ASSURED I'M A POTENTIAL LEAK.  
I'M A GOSSIP FREAK.  
(IT'S BECAUSE I'M WEAK. SO WEAK).  
THE PROBLEM IS: I ENJOY BEING PHOTOGRAPHED.  
SELF-CONSUMED AND EXTROVERTED  
I AM OFTEN DISCONCERTED  
KNOWING ESPIONAGE  
IS MY CHOSEN EMPLOYMENT.  
ASK ME IF THERE'S ENJOYMENT  
AND I REPLY:  
ESPIONAGE  
IS ONLY A DARK DESERTED ALLEYWAY,  
A TRADE-OFF OF A DOSSIER,  
A RECONDITE COMMUNIQUE,  
EN GARDE, EN FEINTE, AND THE TOUCHE!  
A GRAND BALLETT WITH BIRDS OF PREY,  
A GAME I PLAY WITH GREAT DISMAY,  
IT'S SIMPLY NOT MY METIER,  
I HAVEN'T GOT THE DNA!  
NOTICE: THERE'S A TEARDROP IN MY EYE?  
OH SOB, OH SIGH.  
I'M A TERRIBLE SPY.

(dialing phone)

NOW WAVE BYE-BYE TO A TERRIBLE...

(into phone)



JAZY (CONT'D)

Have them followed.

...SPY!

*As the scene transitions various REBELS enter, wounded. PEDRO follows.*

PEDRO

Querido Tio Manuel. The fighting in Leon has been brutal. We suffered many losses. Cries of despair echo in the streets. But our cause is just and Rafael says the tide is turning. Today, however, I will not join the fight. It is a holy day. The Baltimore Orioles are playing the New York Yankees!

(takes out transistor radio)

And Dennis Martinez is pitching!

*Scene 8 - The Streets of the City of Leon.*

*<SFX>: DISTANT GUNFIRE, SCREAMS. PRICE enters, shooting pictures of REFUGEES streaming out of the city. As always, they appear on the PROJECTION SCREENS. Upstage: a pile of dead bodies. CLAIRE runs in, cowering, looking about.*

CLAIRE

Russell?

*He pulls her back into a doorway, as LA GUARDIA SOLDIERS race by.*

CLAIRE

Price, I'm glad we made it to Leon. I'm even gladder Alex went to Masala, and we're alone without him breathing down our necks. But there's one thing you should know.

PRICE

(checking light meter)

Yeah.

CLAIRE

I'm a coward. I hope you understand that. I don't wanna get shot.

Me neither.

PRICE

*He reloads his camera.*

CLAIRE  
So. Did you dream about Miss Panama last night?

PRICE  
Hell, no. I dreamed of you.

CLAIRE  
Have a good time?

PRICE  
We both did. ...Ever dream about me?

CLAIRE.  
Once.

PRICE  
How was I?

CLAIRE  
Fast.

*<SFX> PLANE FLYING OVER, STRAFING  
BULLETS, WOMEN WAILING. CLAIRE  
notices the pile of bodies.*

CLAIRE.  
Look at us. Being glib in the middle of this.

*An OLDER REBEL (RAFAEL) and a FEMALE  
REBEL rush in. She points to a house. OLDER  
REBEL knocks on a door.*

OLDER REBEL  
Pedro!

*PEDRO, listening to radio, holding a ball and  
glove, opens the door.*

PEDRO

(to FEMALE REBEL)

Are you loco, bringing him here? You'll bring La Guardia down on my cousin's house!

FEMALE REBEL

Pedro, you must help us. *Una vez mas!*

PEDRO

No! Go away! It's only the top of the fifth!

OLDER REBEL

*Pedro, por favor. Para Leon...y El Mirador.*

FEMALE REBEL

Enrique is dead. *Roberto tambien!*

PEDRO

(spotting PRICE and CLAIRE)

*Periodistas? Americanos?* See this? I put my autograph on this ball!

FEMALE REBEL

*Pedro, no hay tiempo. Ahora!*

PEDRO

Shh. When you go back to *Los Estados Unidos*, you give this ball to Dennis Martinez, yes?

OLDER REBEL

La Guardia has the church. You are needed.

PEDRO

OK, OK. *Periodistas* come too?

OLDER REBEL

*Si, si*, everyone come. *Vamonos! Vamonos ahora!*

*PEDRO takes CLAIRE'S hand. All race off, save PRICE who stays behind to shoot pictures of the body-strewn street.*

A VOICE

Price. Psst! Pricey!

(PRICE looks around, confused)

Price, you Motherfucker, I'm talking to you Those bastards? They away?

PRICE

...They're away.

*Crawling out from beneath the pile of bodies: a smiling, bloodied OATES - PRICE'S mercenary buddy from Africa.*

**MUSIC #7 - "OATES - Part II"**

PRICE

OATES!

OATES

PRICE!

PRICE

HELL!

OATES

SHIT!

BOTH

WHAT THE FUCK YOU DOING HERE?

PRICE

GOD DAMN...

OATES

JE-SUS!

BOTH

WHAT THE FUCK YOU DOING HERE?

OATES

Whaddy a think? Making my living off someone else's war, same as you. Least this prick Tacho pays a decent wage.

PRICE

Oates! Do you realize what those kids would do to you if I tell 'em you're here?

OATES

But you won't. We're buds.

PRICE

Buds? Jesus, Oates.

YOU ARE SUCH A WEIRD FRICKIN' ODDBALL.  
WOULD SERVE YOU RIGHT, BEING BLOWN TO KINGDOM COME.

OATES

SURE, BRING 'EM ON, THEIR WHOLE FUCKIN' SQUADRON -  
I'LL TAKE QUITE A FEW OF 'EM ALONG TO CHRISTENDOM.  
|HEY, I'LL TRADE YOU SOME CRANK.  
I NEED A JOINT.

PRICE

Spare me, Oates.

OATES

AW, PRICE-Y, DON'T BE A SKANK.  
I NEED A JOINT.

PRICE

Some things never change, do they?

OATES

View's changed, ain't it? Knew you'd wind up here. So, how you like El Mirador?

PRICE

It's beautiful.

OATES

The Oates-man steered you right, huh? Shitload of greasers though, ain't they?

*<SFX> GUNFIRE, SHOUTING.*

*OATES*

Beat it, pardner. Company's coming. I'm on the clock.

*OATES crawls back under pile of bodies. PRICE wavers a moment, then races off.*

**Scene 9: The Cathedral Rooftop in Leon.**

*<SFX>: PIGEONS. PEDRO, CLAIRE, REBELS and PRICE slip in along a parapet running along roof of cathedral.*

*OLDER REBEL nods to FEMALE REBEL, who carries cloth bag. She takes out grenade and proffers it to PEDRO.*

PEDRO

Not yet. First I talk with the pretty senorita.

(to CLAIRE)

So, you like younger men?

*<SFX> MACHINE GUN FIRE, SCREAMS.*

OLDER REBEL

Pedro!

FEMALE REBEL

*Ahora!*

PEDRO

It is my talent you need! I do it my way.

(flexes, to CLAIRE)

I have a golden arm. It is a gift. And a curse.

*Music #8- "BOOM BOOM BOOM!"*

PEDRO

HEY, SENORITA.  
C'MON, COP A FEEL  
HEY, MAMACITA,  
MY TRICEPS, MY BICEPS,  
THEY'RE HARDER THAN STEEL.  
YO, PRETTY LADY. REMEMBER MY NAME.  
MI BRAZO - MY ARM - IS MY PASSPORT TO FAME.  
I'LL BE GETTING TICKET TAKE PARADES,  
BUT I WON'T BE HURLING GRENADES...

*Crossing himself, PEDRO steps up to edge of roof and hurls grenade. He ducks back as:  
<SFX> WHISTLE & EXPLOSION.*

PEDRO

BOOM BOOM BOOM -  
GONNA PLAY AMERICAN BASEBALL.  
BOOM BOOM BOOM -  
GONNA BE THE NEXT BIG SUPERSTAR.  
AND WHEN I PLAY AMERICAN BASEBALL,  
GONNA BE THE NEXT LATIN WONDER,  
GONNA BE A MAJOR LEAGUE PITCHER.  
GONNA HAVE A FASTBALL LIKE THUNDER,  
GONNA GET RICH AND GET RICHER.  
GONNA GO ZOOM!  
BOOM BOOM BOOM!

HEY, MR. GRINGO,  
COME CHECK OUT THIS DREAM:  
I'VE LEARNED THE LINGO,  
I'M HOT AS A PISTOL, THE CREAM OF THE CREAM.  
I'M DATING A MODEL, I'M RAKING IT IN,  
ENDORING THE SNEAKERS THAT HELP ME TO WIN.  
COME AND SEE ME THREE YEARS DOWN THE ROAD.  
ONCE I'M IN THE MAJORS, I'M GONNA EXPLODE...

*Again crossing himself, he steps into open and  
hurls grenade. <SFX> WHISTLE &  
EXPLOSION. Bulls-eye!*

PEDRO

BOOM BOOM BOOM -  
GONNA MAKE AMERICAN DOLLARS.  
BOOM BOOM BOOM -  
GONNA BUY A BIG EXPENSIVE CAR.  
AND WITH THOSE GREEN AMERICAN DOLLARS  
GONNA BUY A HOUSE FOR MI MADRE,  
GONNA HAVE ROOMS BY THE DOZENS,  
COLOR TV FOR MI PADRE,  
THIRTY-EIGHT ROOMS FOR MY COUSINS.  
GONNA HAVE A POOL I CAN SWIM IN,  
OH, AND DID I MENTION WOMEN?  
VA VA VA VOOM! BOOM BOOM BOOM .  
BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOM.

LIKE JOSE CANSECO,  
MI NOMBRE WILL ECHO,  
I'LL BE THE GREATEST PLAYER OF ALL TIME.  
I'LL BE BATTING THREE TWENTY,  
I'LL BE MAGNIFICENTE  
LIKE ROBERTO CLEMENTE IN HIS PRIME!

*PEDRO tosses next grenade. <SFX>  
WHISTLE & LANDS WITH A THUD. No  
explosion. Then, when all are convinced it is a  
dud: <SFX> EXPLOSION! Victory!*

PEDRO

BOOM BOOM BOOM -  
GONNA PLAY AMERICAN BASEBALL.  
BOOM BOOM BOOM -  
GONNA BE THE BEST OF THEM BY FAR.  
AND WHEN I PLAY AMERICAN BASEBALL...



GONNA BE THE NEXT LATIN WONDER,  
GONNA BE A MAJOR LEAGUE PITCHER.  
GONNA HAVE A FASTBALL LIKE THUNDER.  
GONNA GET RICH AND GET RICHER.  
GIMME SOME ROOM...

*He tosses final grenade. <SFX> WHISTLES &  
EXPLOSION.*

PEDRO

BOOM BOOM BOOM!

PRICE  
(to OLDER REBEL)

We're trying to find Rafael.

OLDER REBEL

...Rafael was here. But he is gone.

PEDRO

But Matagalpa is next, no?

OLDER REBEL

Pedro, you control the ball better than your mouth. Stick to baseball, eh?

PEDRO

Si. Senorita, you be sure to tell Dennis Martinez: my curve ball is better than his! And to watch his back. Pedro Murillo is on his way!

BOOM BOOM BOOM -  
GONNA PLAY AMERICAN BASEBALL.  
BOOM BOOM BOOM -  
GONNA BE A BIG TIME SUPER --

*<SFX>: RIFLE SHOT! PEDRO, fatally  
wounded, falls back into CLAIRE'S arms.  
OATES appears, rifle in hand, all business.  
Seeing his bullet has met its mark, he races off.*

PRICE

Bastard! You son of a bitch bastard!

*PRICE grabs rifle from one of the REBELS.  
OLDER REBEL nods to other REBELS, two of  
whom take off in pursuit of OATES.*

CLAIRE

(as OLDER REBEL starts off)

Wait. What about Pedro?

OLDER REBEL

...Pedro is dead.

*OLDER REBEL exits. REBEL takes his gun  
back from PRICE, and he and remaining  
REBELS drag off PEDRO'S body. PRICE  
moves away, staring at blood on his hands. HE  
turns to CLAIRE, still in shock.*

PRICE

I...I picked up a gun.

CLAIRE

And you didn't take pictures. You OK?

PRICE

I know who shot Pedro. This guy I know, I ran into him. He was stalking the rebels.

CLAIRE

Why didn't you tell them?

PRICE

I don't know. Then they would've killed him, I guess. I - we're not supposed to interfere, right?

CLAIRE

It wasn't an easy call.

PRICE

It was the wrong call! Jesus, I gotta get outta here. Get drunk or stoned. Or both.

CLAIRE

Russell, we're reporters. Alex would have done the same thing.

PRICE

Is that supposed to comfort me? Because I don't exactly feel like a boy scout right now!

CLAIRE

You played by the rules.

PRICE

Alex's rules.

CLAIRE

The rules we're all supposed to follow.

PRICE

He was a kid, Claire. Just a kid who wanted to play baseball. And I got him killed!

*PRICE moves off, CLAIRE thinks about following, then exits.*

**Scene 10: Price's Binge.**

*PRICE enters, a half-empty bottle of bourbon in one hand, staggering through the streets of El Mirador. We see him score some blow, drink, and approach a prostitute, only to recoil when she is revealed to be a walking, bloodied corpse.*

*The people with whom PRICE interacts in this hallucinatory scene are a mixture of the actual and the imagined, as if he'd wandered into a "Day of the Dead" celebration populated with real monsters..*

**MUSIC #9 - "PRICE'S BINGE"**

PRICE

WITH MY CAMERAS,  
I PHOTOGRAPH THE WORLD I SEE.

BLESS MY CAMERAS.  
THEY DON'T SHOW ANY PART OF ME.  
I'M PAID TO DOCUMENT THE NEWS,  
TO FURNISH PURE, UNBIASED VIEWS,  
OBSERVE THE ACTION FROM SOME PEDESTAL ON HIGH.  
I TAKE PICTURES... WHILE CHILDREN DIE.

WITH MY CAMERAS,  
I PHOTOGRAPHED A COUP DE ETAT.  
I SHOT ARAFAT,  
THE DALAI LAMA AND THE SHAH.  
BUT I'M NOT MEANT TO INTERVENE,  
JUST BE A WITNESS TO THE SCENE.  
AT THE EXECUTION OF A GROUP OF BUDDHIST NUNS?  
I SHOT PICTURES... WHILE MEN SHOT GUNS.

I SEEK THE TRUTH;  
MY CAMERA RECORDS.  
BUT IS IT TRUTH  
MY CAMERA AFFORDS?  
YOU WANT THE TRUTH?  
THE UGLY TRUTH?  
THE LESS I'M IN MY PICTURES,  
THE MORE I WIN AWARDS!

AS A JOURNALIST  
YOU SOMETIMES WONDER "WHAT'S THE USE?"  
PHOTOJOURNALIST:  
IS THAT MY JOB, OF MY EXCUSE?  
WHILE HEROES SAY THEIR LAST "AMENS,"  
I CROUCH BEHIND MY CAMERA LENS.  
IS THAT THE SAFETY NET NEUTRALITY PROVIDES?  
IS IT MY CHOICE, OF WHERE MY COMFORT ZONE RESIDES?  
AS GOOD MEN DIE AROUND ME, ONE THOUGHT OVERRIDES:  
SCREW MY PICTURES!  
REAL MEN TAKE SIDES.  
REAL MEN TAKE SIDES.  
REAL MEN TAKE SIDES...

*PRICE stumbles off into the night.*

Scene 11 - Alex & Claire's Hotel Room.

<SFX> SHOWER RUNNING. CLAIRE is heard showering, as ALEX enters. Pictures are strewn on the bed. As ALEX examines them, we see pictures on the PROJECTIONS SCREENS: all of CLAIRE, smiling, goofing, frowning, etc.

CLAIRE  
(enters, in a bathrobe)

Oh!

ALEX  
...Oh. How was Leon?

CLAIRE  
Bloody.

ALEX  
(holding up pictures)  
I see that.

CLAIRE  
If you're referring to the photos Price took, they were a goof. We were trying to cheer each other up. Got pretty awful out there.

ALEX  
Pretty awful down here in general.

CLAIRE  
What's wrong. You OK?

ALEX  
You were right. This is a face made for television.

CLAIRE  
You decided to go with the network.

ALEX  
They'll pay me thirty grand a week to read the news. I'll be in sixty million living rooms every night. My vocal inflections will matter more than who controls Congress.

CLAIRE

And your name will be a household word.

ALEX

And my name will be a household word. I never should have come down here.

CLAIRE

I'm sorry. But you know it's better this way.

ALEX

Don't worry 'bout me. I'm gonna be a star. Just promise me one thing? No surprise parties. I'd like to slip out of town without any speeches to anyone.

CLAIRE

Even Russell?

ALEX

Russell who? Maybe I'll see him before I go.

CLAIRE

I've got to finish my make-up. Tacho's having a press reception and I wangled an interview.

ALEX

Go.

*MUSIC #10 "THE OLD GUARD (reprise)"*

ALEX

THE OLD GUARD  
KNEW ITS REIGN WAS AT AN END,  
BUT THE OLD GUARD  
WOULD NOT STEP ASIDE.  
SUCH A FUTILE EXERCISE,  
BUT THE OLD GUARD ALWAYS TRIES  
TO MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO.  
WHY, I JUST DON'T KNOW.  
SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO LET GO...

*Lights dim on ALEX.*

Scene 12: President Tacho's Compound.

*Music blares! GUESTS surround TACHO, who is the life of the party, as SOLDIERS stand guard. Attending: ISELA CRUZ, JAZY, MISS PANAMA, her MALE FRIENDS. On bandstand: LAS HERMANAS, singing a disco song.*

MUSIC #11 - "LA CULEBRA"

LAS HERMANAS

LA CULEBRA - HE A SNAKE!  
TRUSTING HIM WOULD BE A BIG MISTAKE.  
LA CULEBRA - BE ON GUARD.  
FALL FOR HIM AND YOU'LL BE FALLING HARD.  
LA CULEBRA - SSS.  
LA CULEBRA - SSS.

*HUB KITTLE enters with PRICE and Brit reporter REGIS, all drinking.*

HUB KITTLE

Gentlemen, grow up. It's easy to fall in love with the underdog. But there's an upside and a downside. This stuff about a "Revolution of Poets?" Crap.

REGIS

And what exactly is Tacho's upside?

HUB KITTLE

His vision could come true. He destroys the insurgents, rebuilds the country, shitcans the purveyors of excess --

PRICE

-- of which he is the prime example --

HUB KITTLE

...stabilizes the economy and is savior of El Mirador, saving the world from the Communist threat - blah, blah, blah, bullshit, bullshit. OK, OK, I write this stuff, doesn't mean I buy it.

*LA GUARDIA soldier comes up to HUB and  
whispers in his ear.*

HUB KITTLE

Excuse me, boys. But this war may be over before it even gets started.

*HUB exits. PRICE and REGIS follow him.*

LAS HERMANAS

DON'T BE TAKEN IN  
WHEN HE TROTS OUT ALL HIS FANCY LIES.  
DON'T YOU TRUST THAT GRIN,  
BEWARE THE DARKNESS BEHIND THE EYES.  
LA CULEBRA - PRETTY MISS.  
LA CULEBRA - HE GO "HISS."

*CLAIRE arrives. TACHO leads CLAIRE by the  
hand onto the dance floor.*

CLAIRE

Mr. President, clearly you're in a party mood. Why don't we reschedule?

TACHO

Nonsense. You are a modern woman. Surely you can interview me while we dance?

CLAIRE

I suppose.

TACHO

We make a stunning couple, don't you think. My stomach is very flat. I have been working out.

CLAIRE

Stunning.

TACHO

I love this song. I'm told they dance to it at all your Miami *discotecas*!

CLAIRE

Mr. President, I've done a bit of research and have uncovered some...troubling facts.



TACHO

Have I mentioned I am on a salt-free diet?

CLAIRE

YOU OWN A FIFTH OF ALL THE LAND WITHIN THIS COUNTRY..

TACHO

IT GOES LIKE THIS; ONE HAND UPON THE HIP...

CLAIRE

YOU STEER THE FLOW OF ALL FINANCE,  
OWN AIRLINES, PORTS AND SEWAGE PLANTS  
AND ALSO THE MERCEDES DEALERSHIP.

TACHO

It is a crime to be a car dealer?

CLAIRE

THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF UNREST WITHIN YOUR COUNTRY.  
THE CAMPESINOS CLAMOR FOR REFORM.  
THE AVERAGE WORKER'S DAILY PAY  
IS LESS THAN EIGHTY CENTS A DAY  
STARVATION LEVEL'S FAR ABOVE THE NORM.

TACHO

Do you know my parents are gone seventeen years? And I have never missed a Sunday  
visiting their graves. Or putting out fresh flowers. Oh, oh, here comes the chorus!

(to GUESTS)

Everybody ready? *Uno, dos, tres, cuatro!*

*GUESTS rush to join TACHO in a line dance,  
pushing CLAIRE aside.*

TACHO & LAS HERMANAS/GUESTS

LA CULEBRA - HE BE BAD,  
WORSE THAN ANY NIGHTMARE YOU HAVE HAD.

LA CULEBRA - WATCH YOUR BACK.  
ANY MOMENT NOW HE MAY ATTACK!  
DON'T BE TAKEN IN/LA CULEBRA - HISS.  
WHEN HE TROTS OUT ALL HIS FANCY LIES.  
DON'T YOU TRUST THAT GRIN/LA CULEBRA - HISS.  
BEWARE THE DARKNESS BEHIND THE EYES. LA CULE --

CLAIRE  
(confronting TACHO)

THE WORD IS YOU'VE EMBEZZLED SUMS OF UNTOLD MILLIONS  
AND PLOWED IT INTO OFFSHORE BANK ACCOUNTS.  
THE REBELS CLAIM THAT YOU'RE A THIEF  
WHO POCKETS FOREIGN AID RELIEF,  
MISUSING FUNDS OF STAGGERING AMOUNTS.

*TACHO stops dancing, growing angry.*

CLAIRE

YOU'VE MURDERED OFF A RECORD NUMBER OF CIVILIANS.  
YOUR POLICIES AMOUNT TO GENOCIDE.  
REFORMS YOU PROMISED ALL WERE NIXED.  
ELECTIONS THAT YOU HELD WERE FIXED --

TACHO

FORGIVE ME, PLEASE, BUT NOW YOU'VE HURT MY PRIDE.

These charges are nonsense. I am the freely elected leader of my people!

CLAIRE

Except that you ran unopposed. And received more votes than there were voters. And can you comment on the thousands of indigenous natives who, over the years, have simply disappeared?

TACHO  
(to HUB, who approaches)

Get out or I'll put my foot up your ass!

*HUB whispers in his ear.*

TACHO

Forgive me, Miss Strider. I must end this most pleasant encounter. A great development!

CLAIRE

I have more questions, Mr. President.

HUB KITTLE

(as TACHO climbs onto bandstand)

He told you about his parents and the graveyard the flowers and stuff? Good, good,

*PRICE and REGIS re-enter to hear:*

TACHO

Friends! Wonderful news! Rafael, leader of the fanatical insurgents, is dead! Killed in an ambush by the brave soldiers of La Guardia. With this victory, the will of my people has been served. Now we really have reason to party, *eh amigos? Uno, dos, tres, cuatro!*

LAS HERMANAS & ALL

DON'T BE TAKEN IN  
WHEN HE TROTS OUT ALL HIS FANCY LIES.  
DON'T YOU TRUST THAT GRIN;  
BEWARE THE DARKNESS BEHIND THE EYES.  
LA CULEBRA...LA CULEBRA...LA CULEBRA...HISS!

*PRICE approaches ISELA.*

PRICE

Isela. They got Rafael. You believe that?

ISELA

(carefully)

Every six months, Tacho gives that speech. Maybe this time they lucked out.

*ISELA exits, as JAZY approaches PRICE..*

JAZY

Russell. Miss Panama would like her picture taken with Tacho. Would you...?

PRICE

Jazy. How the hell could Tacho find Rafael?

JAZY

Russell, please. I have my hands full here!

MISS PANAMA

Tacho! Come now, the light is good.

*She and TACHO pose, as PRICE takes photos,  
talking to JAZY as he does.*

PRICE

Is Tacho lying?

(JAZY shrugs)

Thought you knew everything.

JAZY

Tacho needs a victory badly. He needs to prove to your president he is still winning. He thinks Rafael's death is the proof he needs.

PRICE

Our president doesn't need proof. He just sent twenty-five mil in new arms to Tacho.

JAZY

No. The State Department is nervous about what's going on here. That shipment is on hold.

(to TACHO and MISS PANAMA)

Thank you. Very nice.

PRICE

Pardon my French. But whose fucking side are you on?

JAZY

I work for everybody. If there is a transition of power, I facilitate it. If not, I facilitate the status quo. Either way, I facilitate.

PRICE

Great job. I don't think Rafael's dead. I'm gonna find him.

JAZY

(looks around, then:)

Perhaps I can help. Call me.

*Scene 13: The Riverbank.*

<SFX> CRICKETS, RIVER SOUNDS.

CLAIRE enters with PRICE.

CLAIRE

You sure this is the spot?

PRICE

Jazy's contact said they'd meet us here. Damn. Can't believe Alex just waltzed off to New York without saying goodbye.

CLAIRE

He didn't want a fuss.

PRICE

No. This is a test. He's so sure I'll betray him, he left just so he can prove he's right.

CLAIRE

And is he? Will you?

PRICE

If I don't, it won't be because I haven't dreamed about it.

CLAIRE

No. Because he's your best friend. And some lines you don't cross.

PRICE

Something like that.

CLAIRE

You're a fraud, Price. By day: the big macho horndog. By night: a choir boy. Kind of sweet.

PRICE

It's that "light and dark" thing. Makes me irresistible.

CLAIRE

Price. What if this is a setup? We wouldn't be the first reporters kidnapped for ransom.

*REBEL appears, pointing a gun. Then another. PRICE and CLAIRE slowly put up their hands. REBELS pat them down. ISELA CRUZ, also in army uniform, emerges from shadows.*

PRICE

Isela...

ISELA

*Si.* A commander in Rafael's army. You are surprised? But many things in El Mirador are not as they appear.

PRICE

I still want Rafael's picture. If possible.

CLAIRE

But you already knew that. Didn't you?

ISELA

Mr. Price does nothing without announcing it at the hotel bar. Come. You'll be more famous. I'll take you to him.

PRICE

How far do we have to go?

ISELA

Far. Come or stay, I do not care. But I assure you, there will be no second chance.

*PRICE and CLAIRE join ISELA and REBELS on the raft, which makes its way down river.*

**MUSIC #12 - "UNCHARTED WATERS"**

PRICE

THE RIVER RACES ONWARD;  
THE RIVER ROUNDS THE BEND.  
WE'VE MOVED AWAY FROM SHORE,  
NOT KNOWING WHAT LIES IN STORE.  
WONDERING WHERE WILL WE BE AT JOURNEY'S END?

CLAIRE

WHERE WILL WE, WHERE WILL BE AT JOURNEY'S END?

PRICE

UNCHARTED WATERS,  
UNKNOWN TERRAIN.  
UNABLE TO STEM THE TIDE.  
UNCHARTED WATERS -  
HAVE WE BOTH GONE INSANE?  
THERE'S NOWHERE TO RUN, NO PLACE TO HIDE.

CLAIRE

THE SUN IS DYING SWIFTLY  
AND SOON WILL FADE FROM SIGHT.  
WE GAZE INTO THE DARK,  
THE FUTURE A QUESTION MARK,  
RECKLESSLY SAILING AHEAD INTO THE NIGHT.

PRICE

RECKLESSLY SAILING AHEAD INTO THE NIGHT.

CLAIRE

UNCHARTED WATERS...

CLAIRE & PRICE

UNSETTLING SKIES.  
UNEASY INSIDE MY SKIN.  
UNCHARTED WATERS -  
AND I SEE IN YOUR EYES  
WE'RE HEADING SOMEPLACE WE'VE NEVER BEEN.

CLAIRE

NO WAY TO KNOW WHERE IT'S LEADING TO...

PRICE

ALL THAT I KNOW IS, I'M WITH YOU.

CLAIRE

I'M WITH YOU.

(points out front)

Russell. Look...

*PRICE shoots pictures. On the PROJECTION  
SCREENS: decaying bones and human remains.*

ISELA

Our people. Campesinos. Butchered at the hands of Tacho's militia.

PRICE & CLAIRE

UNCHARTED WATERS,  
UNCERTAIN GROUND.  
UNABLE TO STEM THE TIDE.  
UNCHARTED WATERS,  
BUT WHEREVER WE'RE BOUND?

CLAIRE

I KNOW THAT I WANT YOU...

PRICE

I KNOW THAT I WANT YOU...

CLAIRE & PRICE

BY MY SIDE.

**Scene 14: The Rebel Camp.**

*A large tent, to one side. REBELS sit around:  
eating, talking quietly.*



*A YOUNG GIRL and BOY play on the perimeter. PRICE takes photos of them and THE REBELS.*

ISELA

You will be summoned. Wait here.

*ISELA heads toward tent. YOUNG GIRL rushes up to ISELA, hugging her.*

ISELA

Please, cara. Not today.

*ISELA moves off, into tent.*

CLAIRE

Pretty quiet for a group of people overthrowing a government.

PRICE

Yeah. ...Shoot.

CLAIRE

What?

PRICE

Rafael. He's dead.

CLAIRE

How do you know?

PRICE

Look around. I can smell it.

CLAIRE

But it doesn't make sense. Why would they bring us all the way here to see him?

*He shrugs. ISELA returns with COMANDANTE CINCO and FATHER TOMAS.*

ISELA

This is Comandante Cinco. And Father Tomas. Last evening, we took Matagalpa. The city of Leon is about to fall, and soon Athualpa.

ISELA (CONT'D)

By next week, we should be in La Encantada. In the days of our final offensive, the people of El Mirador must know Rafael is alive and well.

CLAIRE

*Queremos una fotografia!*

ISELA

We need a photograph. Come.

*She leads them to tent. REBELS draw back tent flaps. The inert, lifeless body of the OLDER REBEL - now revealed as "RAFAEL" - lies in state.*

CLAIRE

This man...this was Rafael?

PRICE

We met him, in Leon. But we had no idea.

FATHER TOMAS

No one did. He wanted the idea of Rafael, what Rafael represented, to be bigger than just one man.

CINCO

*Usted es un fotografo magnifico. Queremos que viva!*

CLAIRE

What did he say?

PRICE

(laughing, disbelieving)

They want me to take a picture of him. Of Rafael. So he'll look like he's alive.

ISELA

Why do you laugh?

PRICE

Because you're crazy.

FATHER TOMAS

Mr. Price. We have momentum, but many more lives will be lost. Even Washington is starting to admit: Tacho is not loved by his country men.

ISELA

They have detained twenty five million dollars in arms for Tacho at an airport in Florida...until they find out if Rafael is alive or dead.

FATHER TOMAS

If Washington thinks Rafael is dead, they will ship those arms to Tacho. And they will be used against our people.

CLAIRE

Oh my god. Russell...

CINCO

*Entiende?*

PRICE

I understand, yes. *Pero, Comandante...soy periodista.*

ISELA

This has nothing to do with journalism! We are going to win this war, with or without you. Enough of our people have been lost already. We only need to keep him alive a few more days. When the war is over, none of this matters.

PRICE

I don't...do this. I can't. We're reporters. Sorry.

ISELA

No. It is I who am sorry, because I am useless. I speak seven languages, but I can not find words to make you do this. And were he alive, my husband - who barely spoke one - he would have found the words.

CLAIRE

Rafael. He was your...?

*ISELA nods, then holds out her hand. YOUNG GIRL rushes over to her.*

ISELA

She is ours.

(as YOUNG GIRL whispers to her)

*No, cara. No hay problema. Shh.*

CLAIRE

Russell? If you take this picture, you'll take it for all the right reasons. And I won't write a story saying Rafael is dead.

PRICE

I'm not gonna take it! First day of Alex's journalism class, Claire. Reporters cover the news. We don't make it. Jesus!

ISELA

His mind is made up.

PRICE

Damn right it is!

ISELA

I do understand, Mr. Price. My daughter's father was a man of honor, too. I only wish, just once, you had sat with us at the campfire at night, and heard him speak. "Always remember, *mis amigos*. It is not for ourselves we fight. We, we are already like ghosts, dead to the world. But not our children..."

FATHER TOMAS

"For the children, there must always be hope. For the children..."

ISELA & FATHER TOMAS

"...we must bandage our wounds. For the children, we must fight on again tomorrow."

**MUSIC #13 - "FOLLOW ME"**

ISELA

FOLLOW ME. FOLLOW ME  
TO A PLACE WHERE CHILDREN DANCE BENEATH THE SUN.  
DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?  
ALL THE CHILDREN THERE ARE SMILING, EVERYONE.  
SAFE AND WARM, FREE FROM CARE,  
AT HOME, AT SCHOOL AND AT PRAYER.

SOME DAY, WE'LL BE THERE. FOLLOW ME.

FOLLOW ME,  
TAKE MY HAND,  
AND WE'LL LIVE TO SEE OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS THRIVE.  
FOLLOW ME...

FATHER TOMAS & REBELS

FOLLOW ME...

ISELA

TAKE A STAND.

FATHER TOMAS & REBELS

MAKE A STAND!

ISELA

SO THE CHILDREN OF OUR CHILDREN WILL SURVIVE.  
LET THEM KNOW, LET THEM SEE  
THE WORLD GOD MEANT THIS TO BE.

ISELA & ALL

SOME DAY, THEY'LL BE FREE! FOLLOW ME.

ISELA

GIRLS AND BOYS DESERVE TO SLEEP IN SILENCE  
AND TO DREAM THEIR DREAMS IN PEACE.  
LET THEM LEARN ANOTHER WAY THEN VIOLENCE -  
AS LIFE COULD BE. AND SHOULD BE.

ALL/ISELA

FOLLOW ME!...FOLLOW ME!  
FOLLOW ME!...FOLLOW ME!  
TO THAT PLACE WHERE CHILDREN DANCE BENEATH THE SUN.

ISELA/ALL

COME ALONG!/...  
COME ALONG!  
JOIN MY SONG!/...  
JOIN MY SONG!  
THEY WILL LEAD A BETTER LIFE WEN WE ARE DONE.  
FREE TO RUN,  
FREE TO BE  
AS FREE AS CHILDREN SHOULD BE.  
LET THE BELLS START TO RING!  
LET JOY AND LAUGHTER TAKE WING!  
LET THEM PLAY.  
LET THEM SING.  
FOLLOW ME!

*Music continues under, as a torn PRICE makes his decision.*

*He nods to ISELA, checks lights with his meter as CINCO and REBELS gather.*

*CINCO and a 2nd REBEL raise RAFAEL'S body, so it appears that RAFAEL is sitting up at his desk. For the moment it appears that RAFAEL seems to be alive.*

*PRICE moves into place and takes the picture. Camera flashes.*

*On the PROJECTION SCREENS: PRICE'S picture of RAFAEL, with a laughing CINCO and 2nd REBEL, holding up a newspaper reading "Rafael Muerto."*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Scene 1 - In and around El Mirador,

*The ghost of teenaged PEDRO - wearing a white, ghostly version of the clothes he died in - stands before a huge copy of the faked photograph by PRICE.*

PEDRO

The power of the photographic image. The man known as Rafael is no more, murdered by a stray bullet during the siege of Leon - just as I was. But in the hearts of our countrymen - thanks to the photo taken by the American - the spirit of Rafael lives on, leading the battle, fighting on to another day.

(proudly)

Our deaths were not in vain. And now the song of freedom spreads throughout the land!

MUSIC #14 - "ADELANTE"

PEDRO

ADELANTE!  
EVER ONWARD, EVER ONWARD.  
ADELANTE!  
TILL THE BATTLE HAS BEEN WON.  
FOR THE DAY IS NEAR,  
PREPARE FOR THE HOUR OF RECKONING.  
THE WAY IS CLEAR,  
A VOICE IN THE WIND IS BECKONING -  
A VOICE THAT RINGS THROUGHOUT THE LAND,  
A VOICE THE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND,  
A VOICE OF HOPE WHEN HOPE IS GONE.  
AND NOW THE VOICE IS GOING STRONG  
AND CALLING ALL TO MARCH ALONG.  
ADELANTE - SOLDIER ON!

Rafael has fallen, but a new leader has stepped up to lead the people in their noble struggle.

*ISELA enters, with FATHER TOMAS and  
COMANDANTE CINCO.*

ISELA

VENCEREMOS!  
WE SHALL TRIUMPH, WE SHALL CONQUER!

ISELA, FATHER TOMAS & CINCO

VENCEREMOS!  
LET US DO WHAT MUST BE DONE!

ISELA

FOR THE TIME'S AT HAND.  
HOW LONG CAN A PEOPLE NOT BE FREE?

ISELA, FATHER TOMAS & CINCO

THE TIMES DEMAND  
THAT WE PUT AN END TO TYRANNY  
AND FOUND A WORLD WHERE MORE THAN FEW  
WILL LIVE TO SEE THEIR DREAMS COME TRUE -  
THE DREAMS WE CHERISH IN OUR HEARTS.  
A WORLD WHERE NO ONE NEEDS DESPAIR,  
WHERE EACH ONE GETS HIS RIGHTFUL SHARE.  
ADELANTE - NOW IT STARTS!

LAS HERMANAS

SEE THE LONESOME SPARROW  
DARTING THROUGH THE SKY?  
SEE THE WAY HE FLIRTS WITH FREEDOM  
GLIDING WHERE THE CURRENTS LEAD HIM UP ON HIGH?

ISELA & LAS HERMANAS

LIBERTY IS PRECIOUS -  
WORTH THE FIGHTING FOR.  
IT'S TIME WE PUT THE PAST TO REST.  
TOO LONG OUR PEOPLE WERE OPPRESSED.



BUT SOON A NEW DAY WILL ARISE,  
AND BIRDS WILL FREELY ROAM THE SKIES FOREVERMORE.

*Brandishing weapons or placards with the  
likeness of RAFAEL, more REBELS enter and  
join in song.*

REBELS

VIVA RAFAEL! VIVA RAFAEL! VIVA RAFAEL! VIVA RAFAEL!

I SELA, FATHER TOMAS & CINCO & ALL

ADELANTE! ADELANTE! ADELANTE! ADELANTE!

PEDRO, I SELA & ALL

ADELANTE!  
EVER ONWARD ONTO GLORY.  
WILL YOU BE THERE  
WHEN WE GREET THE DAWNING SUN?  
ON THE DAY YOU DIE -  
WHAT ARE YOU TO BE REMEMBERED FOR?  
THE DAY YOU DIE -  
DON'T YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED MORE  
FOR STANDING FOR A NOBLE CAUSE?  
FOR FIGHTING ON WITHOUT A PAUSE?

PEDRO

WHAT WILL THE SAY WHEN YOU ARE GONE?

PEDRO, I SELA & ALL

AND HOW ELSE THEN WILL VILLAINS FALL,  
UNLESS WE ANSWER TO THE CALL?  
ADELANTE - SOLDIER ON.  
ADELANTE - SOLDIER ON.  
ADELANTE!!!

MUSIC 15 - ONE PICTURE (reprise)

*ISELA and REBELS remain at center. In another area, CLAIRE joins PRICE in his darkroom.*

PEDRO

The picture of Rafael has greater power than anyone could have predicted. Already it is wringing changes all over El Mirador..

PRICE

(to CLAIRE)

OK, just as a point of reference, look at these. Pictures I took in Africa.

*CLAIRE looks at photos: battle scenes. We see them on the PROJECTION SCREENS, as:*

PRICE

ONE PICTURE,  
AND YOU ARE AT THE FOREFRONT,  
TAKES RUMBLING AS BOMBSHELLS IGNITE.  
ONE PICTURE  
AND BAM! YOU'RE OFF AND RUNNING.  
THE CONVOYS MOBILIZING,  
THE SOUND OF ENGINES GUNNING,  
THE HELICOPTERS RISING, RISING AND RISING.  
(handing her a new set of photos)

OK. Now check these out.

*CLAIRE examines the new pictures, moved.*

CLAIRE

PORTRAITS OF A PEOPLE -  
PEACEFUL, YET AT WAR.  
FACES WEARY AND FORSAKEN,  
DIFF'RENT PHOTOS THAN YOU'VE TAKEN HERETOFORE.  
FACES ROUGH AND TUMBLE,  
ELOQUENT AND TRUE.

A CHILD WHO'S OLD BEYOND HIS YEARS,  
A WIDOW FIGHTING BACK HER TEARS,  
A SOLDIER AND HIS DOG AT PLAY,  
AND IN EACH PORTRAIT ON DISPLAY  
A SIDE OF YOU - NOT ON VIEW.  
I NEVER KNEW...!

*CLAIRE and PRICE kiss. In another area, a  
furious TACHO enters reading newspaper,  
followed by a LA GUARDIA GENERAL, JAZY,  
HUB KITTLE and MISS PANAMA.*

TACHO

WHY DO THEY ALWAYS WRITE THAT I AM FANATICAL?  
WHY AM I ALWAYS UNDER ATTACK?  
WHY DON'T YOU GO AND HUNT DOWN THIS RADICAL?  
TEAR OUT HIS HEART! BLOW HIM APART!  
WHEN WILL YOU START HITTING BACK?

PEDRO, ISELA & REBELS

VIVA RAFAEL! VIVA RAFAEL! ADELANTE! ADELANTE!

TACHO

NO EXCUSES! HOW MUCH LONGER?

PEDRO, ISELA & REBELS

EVER ONWARD! EVER STRONGER!

TACHO

WE MUST CRUSH THEM! END OF STORY!

PEDRO, ISELA & REBELS

GOD IS WITH US! ONTO GLORY!

ALL

ONE PICTURE  
CAN CHANGE THE WORLD FOREVER.  
BEAR WITNESS  
AND BRING TRUTH TO LIGHT.  
ONE PICTURE  
CAN HUMANIZE A CONFLICT,  
EMBOLDEN A CONVICTION,  
REVEAL THE REAL STORY,  
BECOME A VALEDICTION,  
UNCOVER AN AGENDA,  
SUBVERT THE OPPOSITION,  
EMBED IN THE SUBCONSCIOUS,  
DISCREDIT SUPERSTITION.

PRICE

BEGIN A CONVERSATION...

ALL

ASSIST COMMUNICATION.

PEDRO

CREATE A TRANSFORMATION...

ALL

ELECTRIFY A NATION!

PRICE & PEDRO

DEFINE A GENERATION!

ALL BUT PRICE & PEDRO

DEFINE A GENERATION!

ALL

DEFINE A GENERATION!  
ONE PICTURE  
CAN MAKE A MAN...IMMORTAL!!!

*As the stage empties, PEDRO watches as PRICE places his newly developed pictures in a folder, leaving them behind in a file cabinet.*

PRICE

Done. How about a drink to celebrate?

CLAIRE

Depends. Does that invitation include dinner?

*PRICE and CLAIRE move off. As they do, MISS PANAMA, followed by MARCEL JAZY, enter PRICE'S darkroom, searching.*

PEDRO

For a noble cause, a good picture is - as the saying goes - worth a thousand words.

*MISS PANAMA finds and shows picture folder to JAZY, who nods and quickly spreads them out on a table.*

PEDRO

We should recall, however, that certain pictures are also valuable to the other side.

*Using a small picture, JAZY takes pictures of PRICE'S photos. <SFX> SHUTTER CLICKS.*

JAZY

OH ME OH MY!  
SUCH A TERRIBLE SPY!

*He and MISS PANAMA move off.*

**Scene 2: Intercontinental Lobby**

*CLAIRE is with PRICE, tuning a guitar.*

CLAIRE

...so I say, “Your Excellency, your views on trade deficit may be all well and good, but if you don’t remove your hand from my butt in two seconds - “ OK. Do I have paella stuck in my teeth?

PRICE

No. Why?

CLAIRE

You’re staring. Which, to be honest, I find very unnerving. *Que es la problema, chico?*

PRICE

*No hay problema.* In fact I can hardly begin to tell you just how much “*no hay problema*” I’ve been feeling lately.

CLAIRE

Me too. Can you believe I’m playing the guitar again?

PRICE

What were you, some closet rock and roll chick?

CLAIRE

No, *mi abuela* - my grandmother - taught me. OK, here goes nothing. Translated and very rough.

**MUSIC #16 - “CORAZON”**

CLAIRE

SKIES ABOVE WERE DARK AND GREY,  
TILL THE FATES SENT YOU MY WAY.  
ALL MY SKIES ARE BRIGHT AND BLUE -  
SINCE YOU.

WHERE THERE ONCE WERE SHADOWS,  
NOW THERE’S ONLY SUNLIGHT.  
EVERY TIME YOU SMILE AT ME MORE STORM CLOUDS DEPART.  
CORAZON. CORAZON.  
CORAZON MEANS YOU’RE IN MY HEART.

I WAS LOST AND DRIFTING;  
WONDERED WHAT WAS MISSING.  
EVERYTHING SEEMED POINTLESS WITH NO REASON OR RHYME.  
CORAZON. YOU'RE MY OWN.  
YOU ARE IN MY HEART FOR ALL TIME.

NOW IT'S CLEAR. NOW I SEE.  
HEAVEN MEANT YOU TO BE HERE WITH ME.

IF LIFE IS A QUESTION,  
THEN YOU ARE THE ANSWER.  
ALL AT ONCE I FOUND WHAT I HAVE YEARNED FOR SO LONG.  
CORAZON. CANCION.  
YOU ARE IN MY HEART, YOU'RE MY SONG.

PRICE

NOW IT'S CLEAR. NOW I SEE.

CLAIRE

HEAVEN MEANT YOU TO BE HERE WITH ME.

CLAIRE & PRICE

IF LIFE IS A QUESTION,  
THEN YOU ARE THE ANSWER.  
ALL AT ONCE I FOUND WHAT I HAVE YEARNED FOR SO LONG.  
CORAZON. CANCION.  
YOU ARE IN MY HEART, YOU'RE MY SONG.  
CORAZON. CANCION.  
YOU ARE IN MY HEART, YOU'RE MY SONG.

PRICE

Marry me.

CLAIRE

...What?

PRICE

I want us to get married.

CLAIRE

Price. I know the tequila is strong, but --

PRICE

Don't joke. I never dreamed I'd say this to anyone. Be with me, Claire. Let's make a life together. Have a home, kids --

CLAIRE

Stop! Why is it men fall who fall in love with me never fall in love with *me*? Russell, yes, there's something special here. But this is exactly why I broke off with -- oh god.

*CLAIRE has just seen ALEX, now the well-dressed network anchor, enter and hail a waiter.*

PRICE

What's he doing here?

CLAIRE

I have no idea.

ALEX

Well, hey strangers! Congratulations!

PRICE

On what?

ALEX

On what? The Washington Post, the Times, networks, wire services. Everyone's picked up the picture. It's fantastic.

CLAIRE

Isn't it?

PRICE

That's the word for it.

CLAIRE

And you came back...why?



ALEX

Because of Russell. The whole East Coast is falling in love with Rafael. They were sure he was dead this time. His mug's on every T-shirt in Central Park, and somebody wants to do a musical about him.

(as WAITER approaches)

Champagne, to toast your scoop. My students did me proud.

CLAIRE

So you look good. Things OK?

ALEX

I'm happier in New York, sure. Things are great. You guys?

PRICE

Terrific. Now I'm a little slow here, Alex. What exactly did you come back for?

ALEX

Russell, it's a great story. I want to talk to Rafael. Get an exclusive. And you're the only man in the world that can take me to him.

HUB KITTLE

(enters)

Alex! Welcome back! I've got Tacho ready for that interview. Now a good time?

ALEX

Perfect.

(exiting, with HUB)

See you guys.

CLAIRE

We've got to tell Alex the truth.

PRICE

No way.

CLAIRE

I'll tell him. He deserves to know.

PRICE

No, we don't owe him anything!

CLAIRE

How can you say that? He's covered your ass since you were fresh out of journalism school.

PRICE

I know. But he won't understand.

*Ghost PEDRO enters and watches as:*

CLAIRE

Before you came to El Mirador, you wouldn't understand. I'm not sure I understand even now. What do we do?

PRICE

I'll take Alex to find Rafael, but we won't find him. It'll look like we tried.

CLAIRE

That's just making the lie worse.

PRICE

Think I don't know that?

CLAIRE

(exiting with PRICE)

You're right. I don't want to tell him either...

PEDRO

A difficult position to be sure. But is it truly accurate to say Rafael is dead? How can he be, when his spirit lives on so brightly in the minds of his comrades? How dead is a man for whom so many are willing to give their lives?

*Scene 3: Streets of the City of Sebaco*

*<SFX> GUNFIRE. Three REBELS, hands tied, are pushed on by a SOLDIER. One of the REBELS is FATHER TOMAS. Pistol in hand, OATES enters, looking at a clipboard. One of the REBELS appeals tearfully to OATES.*

REBEL #1

*Por favor, tengo seis hijos. Su madre esta muerto. No me mates, por Dios!*

OATES

What's he saying?

FATHER TOMAS

He will leave behind six children, and their mother is already dead. In the name of God, he begs you not to execute him.

*OATES nods, and shoots FATHER TOMAS instead. <SFX: PISTOL SHOT. Then he shoots the other two REBELS. <SFX> PISTOL SHOTS. OATES enters checks on his clipboard. SOLDIERS start to drag bodies off as ALEX and PRICE enter.*

OATES

Hey, Price-y. How's it hanging, dude.

ALEX

(seeing bodies)

Oh god...

OATES\

Listen, no pictures, OK? Might look bad.

PRICE

Jesus, Oates. You get paid by the body or by the hour?

OATES\

I get paid same way you do. When I do my friggin' job. What the fuck you doin' in Sebaco anyhow? Place is about to blow.

PRICE

You didn't have to nail Pedro.

OATES

Who?

PRICE

Pedro. The kid at the church, the baseball player. In Leon.

OATES

You expect me to remember one kid? Price-y, there's a motherfuckin' war going on here.

PRICE

He was fifteen and you blew his brains out, Oates. How could you not -  
(seeing corpse of FATHER TOMAS)

Oh, no. No...

ALEX

...You shot a priest?

OATES

What can I tell you, Pops? Lotta sad stories.

PRICE

You son of a -- !!

*He rushes OATES, and the two go down in a heap. OATES, being the pro, soon has PRICE pinned and shoves an automatic in his face.*

OATES

I'd prefer not splattering your brains in a dump like this - I got priorities!

(to ALEX)

Your buddy wants to be a hero, Pops. Get him outta here before he's a statistic. Be a shitty little town to buy it in.

PRICE

Screw you, Oates.

OATES

Still got a sense of humor, huh Pricey? Hey, got any good dope? Tough place to find good dope.

PRICE

(points at FATHER TOMAS, angrily)

Why him?

OATES

Him? C'mere and look. You too, Pops.

(takes pictures off clipboard)

OATES (CONT'D)

See these? Your mug shows up in any of these pictures, and you try to make it through Sebaco? I own your ass.

PRICE

(leafing through pictures, frantic)

Who - who gives you these pictures, Oates?

OATES

What is this, an interview? I ain't that dumb.

ALEX

Off the record.

OATES

Off the record? Some Frog give 'em to me. High up. Somehow, he got someone to take pictures of the rebel camp.. Hey, look at this one. Nice maracas, huh?

PRICE

Oates, is she dead yet?

OATES

Not yet. But give me a few hours.

*PRICE rushes OATES. ALEX drags him off.*

OATES

What is your problem, man? We're the ones getting our butts kicked! Jesus. They're just a bunch of goddamn chili pickers!

**Scene 4: A Square in La Encantada.**

*Night. A large statue of TACHO on horseback dominates the square. A furious PRICE enters followed by CLAIRE and ALEX.*

CLAIRE

What makes you so sure it was Jazy?

PRICE

Oates said it was a Frog. How many Frenchmen you know around here? That bastard arranged for me to get to the rebel camp, knowing damn well I'd bring back pictures.

ALEX

Russell. It wasn't your fault somebody stole your stuff.

PRICE

It was! I was played, Alex! Set up. People died, thanks to me!

CLAIRE

And a lot more are alive, thanks to you.

ALEX

Meaning what?

*PRICE looks at CLAIRE. She nods.*

PRICE

(points at statue)

There, Alex. This is what we wanted to show you.

ALEX

We drove through three roadblocks a half hour before curfew - to see a statue of Tacho?

PRICE

It's not Tacho. It's really Mussolini. Tacho went to Italy to commission a statue of himself. He found a warehouse of Il Duces on horseback, got a great deal on one, brought it back and switched Mussolini's head with his. Can't tell, can you?

ALEX

What is he talking about?

CLAIRE

I think what he's trying to say - what we're trying to say - is that things aren't exactly what they seem to be.

ALEX

I get it. This is where you finally confess you two have been getting it on. Well, ain't this a hoot? Two guys in the tropics, in love with the same dame.

CLAIRE

Alex. That's not why we're here.

ALEX

The hell it's not! I left the country because of him and I came back because of him. And now the cutest couple in town has me looking up a horse's ass on a midnight tour of the capital. What in hell are we doing here?

CLAIRE

Rafael is dead.

ALEX

....When? Wait. In the picture, he's dead?

PRICE

Dead!

ALEX

What? How the hell --?

CLAIRE

Who cares how?

PRICE

Alex, I think I finally saw one too many bodies. Tacho is a murderer. I thought the war would end sooner. How many reasons do you want?

ALEX

You stupid son of a bitch! Did he talk you into this?

CLAIRE

No. I wanted Rafael to be alive.

PRICE

If you were there, you'd understand.

ALEX

You fools! Idiots! Don't you dare try and tell me who's sentimental. I've seen a hundred Rafaels. And a hundred Tachos!

MUSIC #17 - "TRIO"

ALEX

DON'T SAY "IF ONLY YOU' BEEN THERE!"  
YOU KNOW DAMN WELL THAT I'VE BEEN THERE!  
MASSACRES, MURDERERS, MARTYRS - I'VE SEEN IT ALL!

ALGERIA AND ANGOLA;  
POL POT AND THE AYATOLLAH!

PAPA DOC, MAO TSE TUNG, PINOCHET, TITO...  
(points to statue of TACHO)

ALL OF THEM WORSE THAN YOUR FRITO BANDITO!  
WAR IS OBSCENE, AND I'VE SEEN IT ALL!

BUT WE HAVE A SACRED TRUST.  
PEOPLE HAVE GOT TO TRUST  
WE'LL WRITE THE TRUTH.  
THIS THE IS THE CALL WE SERVE;  
JOURNALISTS MUST PRESERVE  
AND SERVE THE TRUTH!  
NOBODY HERE SUBVERTS  
OR SKIRTS THE TRUTH!  
NOT ON MY WATCH! NOT IN MY HOUSE! NO...

CLAIRE

Alex, this isn't about journalism. Sometimes there's more to life than journalism!

ALEX

DON'T TELL ME ETHICS DON'T MATTER!  
I'LL HAVE YOUR HEADS ON A PLATTER!  
LOOK AT YOU, BOTH OF YOU, HOW YOU TWO PLAYED ME!  
ARE YOU BOTH SATISFIED, NOW YOU'VE BETRAYED ME?  
AND HERE I THOUGHT I HAD SEEN IT ALL...

PRICE

YOU AND YOUR PRECIOUS "TRUTH."  
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THE TRUTH  
IS BLACK AND WHITE?



YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH?  
WHAT MATTERS MORE THAN TRUTH  
IS WRONG AND RIGHT!  
NOW THAT I'VE MADE THAT LEAP,  
I SLEEP AT NIGHT...

ALEX

NOT ON MY WATCH!

CLAIRE

ALEX, TRY AND UNDERSTAND IT...

ALEX

NOT IN THIS LIFE!

CLAIRE

IT'S NOT AS IF WE PLANNED IT!

ALEX

NO...

PRICE

WE'RE WASTING OUR BREATH!  
HE'S LECTURING ON ETHICS  
AND WE'RE TALKING LIFE AND DEATH!

ALEX

(simultaneous with CLAIRE and PRICE)

I WAS YOUR COLLEGE PROFESSOR,  
BEST FRIEND AND FATHER CONFESSOR.  
LOOK AT YOU, BOTH OF YOU, HOW YOU MISLED ME.  
WHEN I THINK BACK ON THE LIES THAT YOU FED ME...  
NOW I CAN SAY I HAVE SEEN IT ALL...

CLAIRE

(simultaneous with ALEX and PRICE)

WE'RE NOT ON OPPOSITE SIDES HERE  
NO HIDDEN MOTIVE RESIDES HERE.  
NOBODY WANTED TO LIE OR MISLEAD YOU.  
IF WE DID WRONG, WHAT WE DID WAS MISREAD YOU.  
IF YOU'D BEEN THERE AND HAD SEEN IT ALL...

PRICE

(simultaneous with ALEX and CLAIRE)

YOU AND YOUR PRECIOUS "TRUTH."  
NOW THAT I'VE LEARNED NO TRUTH  
IS BLACK AND WHITE  
I SLEEP AT NIGHT!

PRICE

Told you he wouldn't understand!

CLAIRE

Of course he does! Rafael may be a lie he despises, but he damn well understands it.

PRICE

We did the right thing. Whatever he says. In my gut, I know that!

CLAIRE

Then don't let him take it away! Price, Alex is a great teacher. He didn't teach us to examine *his* conscience. He taught us to examine our own. Tell him. *Tell him.*

**MUSIC #18 - "A BETTER WORLD"**

PRICE

I CAME DOWN HERE TO LOOK FOR RAFAEL.  
I FOUND HIM, BUT I FOUND MYSELF AS WELL...

I HAVE WITNESSED BLOODSHED,  
I HAVE WITNESSED WAR.

DAMNED IF I CAN TELL YOU  
WHAT THE BLOODSHED WAS FOR!  
THIS TIME IT WAS DIFFERENT -  
I SAW SOMETHING MORE.  
HOPE. HOPE FOR A BETTER WORLD.

PEOPLE OF CONVICTION,  
YEARNING TO BE FREE,  
SHARING IN A VISION  
OF WHAT FREEDOM COULD BE.

HOW COULD I REFUSE THEM,  
WHEN THEY ASKED OF ME:  
“HELP? HELP MAKE A BETTER WORLD...”

I KNOW THE GUIDELINES,  
CHAPTER AND VERSE.  
AND THEN YOU FACE A CHOICE BETWEEN  
“BAD” AND “WORSE.”  
BAD AND WORSE...

YOU SAY THERE’S NO HONOR,  
NOT WHEN PEOPLE LIE,  
I SAY “WHERE IS HONOR  
WHEN WE STAND IDLY BY?”  
HOW CAN WE DO NOTHING?  
HOW DARE WE DENY  
THEIR HOPE -  
HOPE FOR A BETTER WORLD?  
A BETTER WORLD...

ALEX

You realize you’ve both put your careers in my hands. Biggest story of my life and what am I supposed to do with it?

CLAIRE

You’ll have to make a decision. Like we did.

ALEX

Nice choice. Subvert everything I believe in, or destroy the two people in the world I love most.

PRICE

If that's what you choose, Alex, we'll respect it. We brought this on ourselves.

*PRICE and CLAIRE exit. ALEX starts off, as  
British reporter REGIS enters.*

REGIS

Alex! Good to see you. Say...found Rafael yet?

ALEX

Not yet.

REGIS

Bit of a strange one floating around about that. There's a rumor that Rafael is really dead. That Price's picture is a phoney.

ALEX

...That's a crock. Rafael is alive.

REGIS

Is he? Good for him. And good for the people of this country.

*REGIS exits. Ghost PEDRO enters.*

**Music #19 - "A BETTER WORLD (reprise)"**

ALEX

I KNOW THE GUIDELINES, CHAPTER AND VERSE.

PEDRO

AND THEN YOU FACE A CHOICE BETWEEN "BAD" AND WORSE."

ALEX

I SAY THERE'S NO HONOR, NOT WHEN PEOPLE LIE...

PEDRO

BUT HOW CAN THERE BE HONOR WHEN MEN STAND IDLY BY?

ALEX

STRANGELY, IN THE END, WE DO SEE EYE TO EYE:  
HOPE...

PEDRO

HOPE.

ALEX & PEDRO

HOPE MAKES FOR A BETTER WORLD.  
A BETTER WORLD...

*Transition to:*

**Scene 5: No Man's Land.**

*SFX: SCREAMS, DISTANT GUNFIRE.  
PLANES OVERHEAD. ALEX and PRICE enter,  
holding white flags, uneasy and overheated.*

PRICE

Alex, hold up. I thought Jazy's place was down this street, but everything is so bombed out, I don't know where the hell we are.

ALEX

I gotta send my network something, Russell. An interview with a sexy French spy is the least I can get away with.

PRICE

I know, but with all these roadblocks... Let's try again tomorrow. This doesn't feel good to me at all.

ALEX

Yeah, well...you get used to that.

PRICE

So we're finally talking about it.

ALEX

“It?”

PRICE

Yeah “it,” Alex. Claire. And me. And you. We’ve gotta get it in the open already.

ALEX

Did you learn nothing from all our years trotting the globe? Newsmen want to make a point, we never attack head on. We use a metaphor. The most powerful tool in the English language. Try a metaphor, Price.

PRICE

And what do you suggest, Alex? We’re out here in the middle of friggin’ no man’s land, totally lost, no idea what’s around the corner!

ALEX

See? Wasn’t so hard. God, look at this city. Beautiful once, and now... Why do we do it? We have a chance for meaningful connection, to show benevolence and generosity of spirit. And instead we choose savagery. What in God’s name is wrong with us?

*MUSIC #20 - “LOVE AND WAR”*

ALEX

MEN SPEND THEIR LIVES ON THE BATTLEFIELDS  
OF LOVE AND WAR,  
FIGHTING FOR DOMINANCE WHILE LAUNCHING CRUSADES,  
SETTLING THE SCORE.  
THEN ONE DAY THE FIERCE COMBATANTS  
RE-ESTABLISH RAPPORT.  
A HAND IS EXTENDED;  
THE FENCES ARE MENDED  
IN LOVE AND WAR.

PRICE

Alex, does this mean you’re OK about me and Claire? I never meant it to happen, never believed it could, but --

ALEX

Russell. Please?

PRICE

...Right. Metaphor.

MEN RENDER VERDICTS AND THEORIZE  
ON LOVE AND WAR.  
TRYING TO JUSTIFY THE BATTLES THEY'VE WAGED  
AND NOW DEPLORE.  
LOOKING BACK, THEY SEE SO CLEARLY  
WHAT THEY CHOSE TO IGNORE:

BOTH SIDES TAKE A BRUISING,  
AND BOTH WIND UP LOSING  
IN LOVE AND WAR.

ALEX

Well, well. So a few of my rants on the state of journalism actually paid off.

PRICE

Sure they did. I just pretended to fall asleep...

ALEX

MEN TEND TO ACT TOO PREDICTABLY  
IN LOVE AND WAR.

PRICE

SOUNDING THE BATTLE CRY AND BEATING THE DRUMS  
MAKES THEIR BLOOD ROAR.

ALEX

WHY DO MEN REPEAT THIS FOLLY?

PRICE

CAN'T THEY SEE WHAT'S IN STORE?

ALEX

THEY RATTLE THEIR SABERS  
AND THREATEN THEIR NEIGHBORS.

PRICE

HOSTILITY DEEPENS;  
THE COST OF LIFE CHEAPENS.

ALEX AND PRICE

THERE'S CARNAGE AND KILLING  
TILL ONE DAY, GOD WILLING,  
THE BITTERNESS CEASES.  
THEY PICK UP THE PIECES...

PRICE

A HAND IS EXTENDED...

ALEX

...THE FENCES ARE MENDED.

ALEX & PRICE

IN LOVE...IN LOVE...  
IN LOVE AND WAR.

ALEX

So. Whatever happened to our friend Isela?

PRICE

You don't know? She's an officer in the guerillas' army.

ALEX

I slept with a Commie?

PRICE

...You and Isela?



ALEX

Yeah, once or twice. You?

PRICE

No. Claire's the one, Alex. There aren't gonna be any others. Not for me.

ALEX

Good. She deserves that.

(looking off)

Soldiers. Why don't I just ask for directions?

PRICE

Just be careful, OK? Wave your white flag.

ALEX

And you take some video. I gotta send the network *something*. ...Not that it matters in the scheme of things, but before Claire and I split, did you and she -- ?

PRICE

God, Alex. No! Jesus. You're my best friend.

*ALEX nods, smiles and exits. PRICE turns his video cam in the direction in which ALEX exits. We see what he shoots on the PROJECTION SCREENS. We see ALEX approaching two LA GUARDIA SOLDIERS, holding out his other hand as if to say "I'm lost." He talks to the SOLDIERS a moment, then suddenly one forces him to his knees, tossing away ALEX'S white flag. ALEX smiles back in PRICE'S direction. Before we realize what is happening, the other SOLDIER takes out a pistol and shoots ALEX dead. PRICE stares a moment, then howls:*

PRICE

You bastards! You fucks! Alex...!

*<SFX> GUN SHOTS. Realizing he is being shot at, dodging BULLETS, PRICE flees, his video cam in hand.*

*The image of ALEX being shot plays over and over as we transition to:*

**Scene 6: Intercontinental Lobby.**

*A news conference, with REPORTER milling. CLAIRE enters.*

CLAIRE

What's going on?

REGIS

No one knows. Hub just called a press conference.

*HUB KITTLE moves forward.*

HUB KITTLE

Ladies and gentlemen? El Presidente has an announcement. He will take no questions. I have prepared statements if you want them.

TACHO

(at mike)

It is with grave concern and great sadness that we announce that senior American correspondent Alexander Grazier has been murdered.

*CLAIRE reacts. Other REPORTERS fire questions at TACHO.*

TACHO

Please, we have no other details. The only certainty is that this heinous act was perpetrated at the hands of guerilla terrorists, operating in the *Distrito Internacional*. Thank you.

*TACHO exits, as REPORTERS follow him. REGIS stays with CLAIRE as she processes her grief. Bells toll. Ghost PEDRO enters.*

**Music #21 - "WHEN AMERICANS DIE"**

PEDRO

WHEN AMERICANS DIE,  
THE WORLD IS AGHAST.  
NEWS TRAVELS FAST  
WHEN AMERICANS DIE.

HUB KITTLE

Jesus Christ, Claire, a human tragedy, what can I say?

CLAIRE

Go to hell, Hub. Get outta my way.

REGIS

(to HUB)

I don't understand. Why would the rebels want to kill Alex? They've been using the media so carefully till now.

*HUB shrugs, mystified. They move off, as TV  
NEWSCASTERS appear on the PROJECTION  
SCREENS, their reports overlapping.*

1ST NEWSCASTER

The American news establishment was shocked today by the shooting of senior newsman Alex Grazier. Grazier was on assignment when...

2ND NEWSCASTER

...the government in El Mirador insisting the death was caused by local terrorists...

3RD NEWSCASTER

...the question remains if this will shift the tide of opinion against the rebels, who till now have been winning the battle for hearts and minds in this war-torn country.

PEDRO

WHEN AMERICANS FALL,  
REVENGE IS THE CRY.  
PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW WHY.  
THEY CURSE AT THE SKY.

AND THE THIRD WORLD  
SCRATCHES ITS HEAD,  
MOURNING ITS DEAD,  
CHILDREN UNFED.  
SAYS THE THIRD WORLD:  
WHY SUCH A FUSS?  
WHAT ABOUT US?  
WHAT ABOUT US?  
WE BARELY MERIT DISCUSSION,  
AND LOOK AT THE REPERCUSSION  
WHEN AMERICANS DIE.  
WHEN AMERICANS DIE.

*Lights change. In another area, we see a  
bloodied PRICE running, still fleeing for his life.  
Lights restore, as CLAIRE re-enters, followed by  
HUB and REGIS.*

HUB KITTLE

Claire, you can't go looking for him.

CLAIRE

I lost Alex. I'm not giving up on Price!

HUB KITTLE

Tacho's given orders. No reporters in the field - especially Americans.

REGIS

Hub's right. It's getting weird out there.

CLAIRE

But Russell could still be alive. Or wounded.

HUB KITTLE

Claire. It's a bloodbath. You wouldn't last ten minutes. And the odds are that --

CLAIRE

Don't you say it. Don't you dare say it!

REGIS

(referring to TV in hotel lobby)

Claire. Hub. Look. Something's come up...

*On the PROJECTION SCREENS:*

NEWSCASTER #2

...the following pictures were just delivered to our offices. We warn you in advance, they are rather shocking..

*The video of ALEX being murdered is shown.*

REGIS

It's Alex.

HUB KITTLE

And Tacho's soldiers. Oh, god. Claire, I swear to you. I had no idea.

REGIS

Don't watch, Claire.

CLAIRE

No, it's OK. Don't you see? Price was with Alex. He took those pictures. Somehow he got them over to the station.

REGIS

He could still be alive. C'mon, I'll help you look. Coming, Hub?

HUB KITTLE

I better work on my resume. Something tells me I'm gonna be looking for a new job.

*HUB, REGIS and CLAIRE move off, as  
PEDRO, TACHO and ISELA are each featured  
in different areas.*

ISELA

WHEN AMERICANS DIE,  
FOR SOME IT'S A GIFT.

PEDRO & ISELA

MOUNTAINS CAN SHIFT  
WHEN AMERICANS DIE!

TACHO

WHEN AMERICANS FALL,  
THE GROUND STARTS TO CRACK.

ISELA & TACHO

TIME TO TAKE A NEW TACK

PEDRO, ISELA & TACHO

AND NO LOOKING BACK!

*Representatives of the Third World - Africans,  
Arabs and others enter.*

PEDRO & ALL

AND THE THIRD WORLD  
LOOKS ON IN AWE,  
HARDENS ITS JAW,  
NERVE ENDINGS RAW.  
CRIES THE THIRD WORLD:  
WHAT CAN WE SAY?  
LIFE GOES THAT WAY  
HERE EV'RY DAY.  
OUR WORLDS AND CULTURES ARE DYING,  
AND WOULD YOU HAVE US START CRYING  
WHEN AMERICANS DIE?  
WHEN AMERICANS DIE...

NEWSCASTER #1

The American State Department has announced it is withdrawing all support of the current regime in El Mirador...

*MISS PANAMA and JAZY enter. TACHO takes MISS PANAMA'S hand, roughly, and turns his back on JAZY, who moves off.*

NEWSCASTER #2

...and rebel forces have now taken over the capital city. The head of the new provisional government will be announced at a rally sometime tomorrow...

*ISELA smiles, and exits.*

3RD NEWSCASTER

...while the deposed dictator will be taking residence in Miami, where he reportedly owns two Mercedes dealerships and a Taco Bell franchise...

*TACHO and MISS PANAMA exit.*

PEDRO AND ALL

IN THE THIRD WORLD,  
SOME SHED A TEAR.  
SOME PEOPLE CHEER,  
SOME PEOPLE SNEER.  
SAYS THE THIRD WORLD,  
WHY SUCH A FUSS?  
WHAT ABOUT US?  
WHAT ABOUT US?  
WHAT ABOUT US, WHAT ABOUT US, WHAT ABOUT US?

WE ALL INHABIT THIS PLANET.  
IT CAN'T BE MORE CRUCIAL, CAN IT,  
WHEN AMERICANS DIE?  
WHEN AMERICANS DIE?  
WHEN AMERICANS DIE?

PEDRO

Fifty thousand of my countrymen have perished. And now, one Yankee. Finally, Americans took notice. Suddenly, they were outraged at what has been happening here. Maybe...maybe we should have killed an American journalist fifty years ago?

*He stares us out, and we transition to:*

Scene 7 - Outside A Stadium, La Encantada.

MUSIC 22A - "ADELANTE MARCH"

<SFX>: CROWDS CHEERING. Natives of the newly-liberated El Mirador dance through the streets, hugging and kissing and toasting. CLAIRE and HUB enter, as a handmade casket wrapped in an American flag is moved on.

HUB KITTLE

Sorry the casket is so makeshift. Alex deserves better. Any word on Price?

CLAIRE

I tried all the hospitals. Nothing. I'll keep looking.

HUB KITTLE

Look, I *am* sorry. I was doing my job. I have a family to support. Put me in some unpleasant situations.

*HUB exits. More people celebrating move by.  
CLAIRE regards casket, then addresses the air.*

CLAIRE

Damn it, Price. You should be here, to see it all. Don't do this. Things were just finally making sense.

MUSIC #22B - "CORAZON (REPRISE)"

CLAIRE

Come home to me, damn you. Come back.

CORAZON. CANCION.  
YOU ARE IN MY HEART, YOU'RE MY SONG.  
CORAZON, CANCION.  
YOU ARE IN MY HEART, YOU'RE MY --

*Two YOUNG MEN WITH GUNS roughly usher  
in MARCEL JAZY, his hands tied.*



JAZY

Miss Strider! Perhaps you can help?

1ST YOUNG MAN WITH GUN

*Asesino! Callete!*

JAZY

These young men are confused. They think I had their families killed.

CLAIRE

But isn't that what you do? Murder people?

JAZY

"Murder" is a word for criminals. I have a job to protect the stability of a continent.

2ND YOUNG MAN WITH GUN

*Pig. Hijo de puta!*

CLAIRE

I can't help you, Mr. Jazy.

JAZY

You people! Sentimental shits. You fall in love with the poets, the poets fall in love with the Marxists, the Marxists fall in love with themselves. The country is destroyed and in the end we are stuck with tyrants!

CLAIRE

Or maybe this time, you chose the wrong side.

*YOUNG MEN WITH GUNS drag JAZY off.  
More CELEBRANTS dance past, and then  
ISELA and her STAFF enter, followed by  
REPORTERS. This scene looks very  
reminiscent of the first time we met TACHO.*

REPORTERS

Madame President? Please! Over here...

ISELA

Please, no interviews now. There'll be a conference after the rally. ...Miss Strider. I was sorry to hear about Mr. Grazier. Alex was a good man.

CLAIRE

Yes. He was. How is your daughter?

*PRICE enters, his arm in a sling.*

PRICE

She doesn't have one.

CLAIRE

...Price? Thank god. You're OK?

PRICE

I'm fine. But Miss Cruz here lied to us. She has no children. And she wasn't married to Rafael.

ISELA

Rafael was a dream, Mr. Price. We needed to keep the dream alive, at any cost. Now it is tomorrow and my country is free. And the work begins.

*ISELA and entourage move off. A MAN in tourist clothes enters, beer in hand: OATES.*

OATES

Hey, Pricey! So it's all over. We made it!

PRICE

Oates. What are you doing here?

OATES

Free country, ain't it? Now. C'mon, Pricey, I'll buy you a beer.

PRICE

Maybe another time.

OATES

...You gonna turn me in?

*(as PRICE moves away, toasting him)*

To the price of freedom, bro. See you in Beirut.

*OATES moves off. PRICE sees casket.*

PRICE

...Alex?

(CLAIRE nods)

Sons of bitches.

<SFX> *POLITICAL RALLY, CHEERS, ETC.*

CLAIRE

C'mon. You'll want to take pictures.

PRICE

I think I'll leave that to someone else.

(to YOUNG BOY passing by)

Hey, *muchacho*. Knock yourself out.

*He tosses his camera to the YOUNG BOY, who catches it excitedly and runs off with it.*

CLAIRE

Price. Why?

PRICE

Because Alex was right. The stories we write, the pictures we take? People trust us to report the truth. We call ourselves reporters, we owe them that.

CLAIRE

You think we fell in love with too much?

PRICE

What I think is: I'd do it again. But what if other reporters played that fast and loose with the truth? If we never knew who we could trust?

*As if in answer, a collage flashes on the PROJECTION SCREENS - pictures of TV talking heads, reporters past and present, those we personally choose to believe are principled and those we assume lack integrity.*

PRICE

Imagine living in a world like that.

*PRICE and CLAIRE head upstage, as the bows begin.*

**MUSIC #22C - FEEL THE FIRE (BOWS)**

ALL

STRANGER!  
BE MINDFUL HOW THE MUSIC WORKS ON YOU.  
YOU MAY NOT SEE WHERE THIS IS LEADING TO  
WHEN BLINDED BY THE MOON ABOVE.  
DANGER!  
ONCE YOU HAVE LET THE MUSIC TOUCH YOUR HEART  
THE LIFE YOU KNOW MAY START TO FALL APART  
AND YOU MIGHT EVEN FALL IN LOVE.  
IN LOVE. IN LOVE!

GROUP A  
CAREFUL, AMIGO!  
CHICO, CUIDADO!  
WATCH OUT, SENORA!  
MIRA, MUCHACHO!

GROUP B  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE FIRE IN OUR MUSIC,  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE FEVER IN OUR SONG,  
ONCE YOU LET THE MELODY ENFOLD YOU,  
ALL YOUR LIFE YOU'LL WANT TO SING ALONG.

ALL

LET YOURSELF BE DRAWN INTO THE MUSIC  
AND YOU'LL ONLY HAVE YOURSELF TO BLAME.  
ONCE YOU FEEL THE FIRE IN OUR MUSIC,  
THE MUSIC WILL SET YOUR SOUL AFLAME!!!

END ACT TWO