

"THE GREENING"

Based on True Events

by

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FADE IN:

MONTAGE - SUGAR - VARIOUS

CLOSEUPS OF people drinking soda, opening candy bars, pouring sugar packets into coffee, etc. sugar uses.

TITLE CARD: The average person consumes over 150 pounds of sugar per year. Most of it is harvested in third world countries by people who make less than \$100 per month.

CREDITS OVER

EXT. SUGAR CANE FIELD - DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, 1979 - DAY

The sun lowers over a field. Dominican and Haitian WORKERS sweat while harvesting sharp, tall stalks of sugar cane.

Uniformed GUARDS patrol roads around the field, carrying rifles. There's not a happy face in sight - just misery.

CREDITS END

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

TITLE CARD: Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. 1979.

A group of BOYS ages 10-14 play baseball on a small dirt field next to the rows of sugar cane.

The PITCHER holds a makeshift baseball of tightly rolled socks. JAVIER PEGUERO (12), half Haitian, half Dominican, and a natural with the bat, stands at home plate. He wears an old baseball cap and his clothes are dirty, too small. The boys in the outfield taunt him as the pitcher prepares to throw the ball.

The pitch is thrown; Javier swings and with a loud *crack*, hits the ball far out into the field. It flies over the workers cutting the sugar cane.

From the POV of the ball, we see the entire plantation, a huge manufacturing plant and the turquoise ocean in the distance.

Javier's TEAM screams as he runs around the bases. He's faster than anyone. The outfield team scrambles towards the ball but gives up when they see Javier almost to third base.

EXT. SUGAR CANE FIELD - DAY

The ball lands in the field with a *plop* at the feet of GUARD

#1 as Javier completes his home run. The guard picks up the ball and tosses it in the air. His face is harsh and cruel looking. He's the type of man who gets a kick out of being violent.

The guard sneers as Javier runs over to him, hoping to get the ball back. He's apprehensive and nervous. Doesn't want to cause any trouble.

GUARD #1

(in Spanish, subtitles)

You're pretty fast, huh? Think you're gonna be a famous baseball player?

JAVIER

Can I have the ball back, please?

The guard plays with the ball, pretending to contemplate.

GUARD #1

No baseball players come from the bateyes. Don't you know that you'll end up cutting the sugar like your father?

JAVIER

I don't have a father.

GUARD #1

Everyone has a father, whether you know him or not.

JAVIER

I don't. Just give me-

GUARD #1

What have I told you about hitting the balls out into the field?

JAVIER

I didn't mean to. I won't hit it so hard next time.

GUARD #1

That's what you *mulatos* always say.

His face hardens and he grips the ball, tossing it in the air.

GUARD #1 (CON'T)

And yet, I'm still picking up your

stupid baseballs all over the fields.
If you don't have a father, who's
going to teach you respect?

Javier is silent, waiting for the worst.

GUARD # 1 (CON'T)

Tell your friends the game is over.

Javier's face falls as the guard walks away, throwing the ball into a bucket. It is full of other baseballs that have been confiscated. The guard continues to patrol the side of the field, walking over to another part of the

EXT. SUGAR CANE FIELD - CONTINUOUS

where JOSEPH PEGUERO, (60s) with sweat dripping down his face, has stopped to rest from his work. His face is weathered and wrinkled; his clothes hang off his thin frame. He is exhausted; too old to be working. His breathing is thick and heavy.

The guard sees him resting and walks over. He yells and when Joseph replies back, the guard slaps him across the face with the butt of his rifle. Blood from a cut on his lip begins to fall.

Javier watches the exchange with intense anger on his face. When the guard walks away, he runs over to Joseph.

JAVIER

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Are you alright?

Joseph looks over to the guard, whose back is to them. He pulls Javier in between the sugar cane stalks so they can't be seen. A bruise is already forming on his cheek.

JOSEPH

I'm fine. Did you get that
guard all riled up?

JAVIER

I didn't do anything.

JOSEPH

Just try to stay out of his way,
Javier. You don't want to make
things any worse for us.

JAVIER

I'm sorry. Next time that guard's
alone--

He relishes at the thought.

JOSEPH

Go, it's almost dinner. Pick up some
flour at the store for me, would
you?

JAVIER

Alright. Do you have any money?

JOSEPH

Not right now. Just use the store
credit.

JAVIER

Okay.

He turns to leave.

JOSEPH

Javier? Good hit.

He smiles and Javier grins.

JAVIER

Third home run this week!

As Javier leaves, Joseph goes back to cutting sugar cane,
sweat still pouring down his face.

EXT. BATEYE STREETS - DAY

Javier walks through the dirt streets of the plantation's
compound, the *bateye*. Small, dingy shacks stand next to each
other in straight rows. WORKERS walk down the streets, some
Haitian, others Dominican. All dirty, sweating, poor. None of
the buildings have electricity. A chain linked fence surrounds
the property. Trucks carrying more workers drive through the
street, blowing dust everywhere.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Inside a concrete grocery store with no windows. Liquor
bottles take up most of the shelves, barely any food is
stocked. ESPERANZA LIMA, 20s, beautiful but hopeless, works
behind a counter. She has seen too much of this place.

Javier walks in the door. Esperanza gives him a small smile.

JAVIER

Hi Esperanza.

ESPERANZA

Hi Javier. How is your grandfather?

JAVIER

He's tired. But he wouldn't want me to tell you that.

ESPERANZA

A man his age should be resting at home peacefully. Not living like this.

JAVIER

I could double our cut if he'd let me work.

ESPERANZA

You don't want to work in the fields.

JAVIER

That's what he says. He says school will get me out of here.

He rolls his eyes and pretends to browse the empty shelves, his eyes resting on the bottles of soda. He knows he can't afford it.

JAVIER (CON'T)

I'm going to baseball camp over in Santo Domingo soon.

ESPERANZA

I know. You've been telling me for three weeks now.

JAVIER

The more people I tell, the more real it seems.

ESPERANZA

Well, good luck to you, Javier.

JAVIER

I don't need luck. Just a chance.

ESPERANZA

We'd all like a chance to get out of here. Now, what can I get you?

JAVIER

A pound of flour.

ESPERANZA

That's it? It won't last two days. Don't you need any more eggs?

He's embarrassed.

JAVIER

For now... just the flour.

She reaches into a large barrel and scoops flour onto a scale, then dumps it into a paper bag. While she is doing this, Javier looks longingly at the soda, almost tasting the sweetness.

ESPERANZA

How do you want to pay?

JAVIER

With our credit.

ESPERANZA

You're going to be paying it off for centuries. You and everybody else here.

JAVIER

We were short on our cut last month.

He shrugs. It's happened before. She writes down the total on a tablet. She sees him eying the soda.

ESPERANZA

And the soda?

JAVIER

No... not today. Soon we'll have some money.

She looks around the store to see if anyone's watching and takes a bottle from behind the counter.

ESPERANZA

Here... you can pay for it next time.

She hands him the bottle and he takes it, thrilled.

JAVIER

Seriously?

She nods.

JAVIER

Thanks, Esperanza!

ESPERANZA

Go! I'll see you later.

He grins as he runs out.

EXT. BATEYE STREETS - DAY

Javier walks down the street, bag of flour in one hand, soda bottle opened, already drinking from it. A truck speeds by, dangerously close to hitting him. He jumps out of the way and drops the soda. It spills all over the ground.

JAVIER

Putá!

He looks up at the truck as it passes. The back is crammed with NEW WORKERS, all apprehensive and nervous. A MAN looks out at Javier. Their eyes connect. Startled, Javier stares back, recognizing him. The truck turns, out of view.

INT. JAVIER'S HOME - DAY

A dark, tiny shack with dirt floors. Two thin mats serve as beds. There are no windows. The walls are a bleak concrete.

Joseph washes from a bucket and changes out of his dirty clothes.

INT. JAVIER'S KITCHEN - DAY

In the kitchen, Javier makes tortillas in a frying pan over a small gas lighter as Joseph walks in the room. He sits at a small table.

JOSEPH

Almost done?

JAVIER

Almost. Grandpa, guess who I saw coming in on a truck?

Joseph shrugs. He has no energy.

JAVIER (CON'T)
Augusto Garcia. I swear it was him.

JOSEPH
Don't swear.

JAVIER
Why would he have to work here?

JOSEPH
Same reason we all do.

JAVIER
But baseball players make a lot of money! Right?

JOSEPH
Some do. But he hasn't played for a long time.

JAVIER
Maybe he'll play with me. He could teach me a few things--

He's already dreaming about his new best friend.

JOSEPH
You should probably leave him alone.

Javier puts the tortillas on a plate and sits down. They begin to eat.

JAVIER
Maybe they'll put him in here with us. It's been a while since Joseph...

He hesitates.

JAVIER (CON'T)
... left.

JOSEPH
I don't mind it being just the two of us for now. It's quieter.

JAVIER
It's boring.

JOSEPH

Sometimes boring is good.

As if to affirm his comment, a loud GUNSHOT sounds outside. Javier jumps up from his seat and rushes to the door.

JOSEPH (CON'T)

Javier, stay inside!

JAVIER

I just want to see who it is!

He opens the door and pokes his head outside.

EXT. BATEYE STREETS - NIGHT

Night has fallen. More gunshots ring and a group of GUARDS run by the house, heading towards the sound. An ALARM sounds throughout the streets.

INT. JAVIER'S HOME - NIGHT

Joseph gets up from the table and pulls Javier back inside the house.

JOSEPH

It's probably no one we know.

Upset, Javier pushes him away. He's strong.

JAVIER

One second!

He runs outside.

EXT. BATEYE STREETS - NIGHT

RESIDENTS of the bateye have come outside of their shacks to see the commotion. There is yelling, more gunfire. Down the street, two GUARDS are tackling someone to the ground.

Javier watches as one of the guards takes out a handgun and shoots the person on the ground. Dead. The alarm still rings but people have turned away from watching and are going back inside.

The body is dragged by the guards right past Javier. He looks at the face. It's a man. He doesn't recognize him but his face is filled with grief and remembrance. Joseph pulls him back inside. This time Javier doesn't object. The door closes.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

TITLE CARD: Eastern College, Philadelphia. 1979.

A huge tree stands in the middle of an American college campus. This is EASTERN COLLEGE, a private liberal arts school in a swanky suburb outside of Philadelphia. STUDENTS walk through the buildings, laughing, talking. Carefree. A SMALL CROWD has gathered around the tree where three student protesters hold hands, their backs against the trunk.

A bulldozer idles next to it, the DEMOLITION MAN with a Philly accent looking non-too-pleased. AMANDA DAVIS (19) is the leader of the protesters. A girl on a mission.

AMANDA

This tree is over four hundred years old! It deserves to be left here in peace!

DEMOLITION MAN

It's dead!

She looks up. It is indeed dead. She turns defiantly to the other protesters. BETH is her sidekick best friend. She's not as into the protesting as Amanda, but is there to support her friend. COLE, on the other hand, is a huge admirer of Amanda's. He'll do whatever she says.

AMANDA

Don't worry guys, I read into it. This tree has been here before the town was even settled. It's not going anywhere.

BETH

The tree is dead, though.

AMANDA

Help me out here, Beth.

The crowd watching snickers at the three protesters. Amanda doesn't care.

AMANDA (CON'T)

This piece of arborlic history should remain untouched!

BETH

Arborlic?

DEMOLITION MAN

It's sucking the oxygen away
from the other plants, lady.
It's gotta go.

AMANDA

Hey, don't call me lady... mister!

The demolition man rolls his eyes and revs the engine of the bulldozer.

COLE

Keep going, Amanda. We can win
this.

She nods and clutches their hands harder around the tree. Beth winces.

AMANDA

We're not going anywhere until
this tree has been taken off
death row and given a chance to
live!

DEMOLITION MAN

I've got instructions to take it
down today and that's what I'm
gonna do.

AMANDA

You'll have to go through us.

The bulldozer begins to inch towards them.

BETH

Um, Amanda? I'm not prepared to
die for a decaying pile of twigs.

AMANDA

Guys, we're this tree's only voice!

BETH

I think its voice died a long
time ago.

COLE

I'm with you, Amanda.

AMANDA

Thanks Cole.

The bulldozer is inching even closer to them, its loud engine causing the ground to rumble. An electric saw in front of the bulldozer turns on, aiming directly for them.

BETH

You think this guy would actually kill us?

AMANDA

Don't be stupid, of course he wouldn't.

But the bulldozer is not stopping. It's now only a couple feet away from them and not slowing down. As it inches even closer towards them, Beth bails and lets go of their hands, jumping out of the way.

AMANDA (CON'T)

Traitor!

It's even closer. The crowd is laughing harder. Amanda closes her eyes and prepares for the worst.

Just as the engine gets louder, a hand grabs her and Cole by the arms and pulls them out of the way. DR. CAMPO, a professor in his 40s with glasses and a balding head, looks at them with anger and amusement. He shouts at the demolition man.

DR. CAMPO

What do you think you're doing, trying to kill my students?

DEMOLITION MAN

Aww, I wasn't gonna do it... get your kids out of my way so I can do my job.

AMANDA

If killing innocent plants is your job then good luck in the afterlife, buddy!

DEMOLITION MAN

(under his breath)
Goddamn tree-hugging hippies.

He revs the bulldozer's engine.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

The commotion has stopped and the bystanders are drifting off to their classes. Dr. Campo walks with Amanda, Beth and Cole down the sidewalk.

DR. CAMPO

You need to find an issue that actually affects people on this campus. That tree had been dead for about six years now.

AMANDA

I know, it's just that protesting the ingredients in the mashed potatoes seemed a bit juvenile.

COLE

What's in them, besides potatoes?

AMANDA

You don't want to know.

DR. CAMPO

I understand your wanting to make a change but I suggest you move away from landscaping and into something you find a little more productive.

He smiles and turns down another path. Behind them, the tree falls to the ground with a loud crash.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

The college cafeteria. STUDENTS sit at tables eating lunch, talking with friends. Amanda, Beth and Cole wait in line with their trays to get food.

AMANDA

I guess it was pretty lame, huh.

COLE

No, not at all!

BETH

Eh... you've had better ideas.

AMANDA

Thanks Beth. Ugh, maybe Dr.

Campo's right. I need move
onto bigger things. But what?

They all think silently to themselves.

BETH

Nothing ever happens around here.

EXT. AMANDA'S HOME - NIGHT

Establishing. A large, old home on a quiet road, typical of the Main Line outside of Philadelphia. Immaculate landscaping, fancy lawn furnishings. Wealth.

INT. AMANDA'S HOME - NIGHT

Amanda sits at a counter in the kitchen, books open, doing homework. A TV with low volume plays the national news in the background. The house is furnished with the best appliances, furniture and accessories.

Her father, ROGER (50s) sits at a nearby table, reading glasses on, going through paperwork with a calculator. He's completely opposite of his daughter. He vaguely tries to makes conversation with her.

ROGER

School's good?

AMANDA

Yep.

ROGER

What did you do today?

AMANDA

Tried to save a tree.

ROGER

Can I ask why you can't just
do normal activities like tennis
or cheerleading?

AMANDA

I'm a cheerleader for the people.

He snorts laughter. She ignores him, watching the news. An attractive FEMALE REPORTER stands in front of a corporate skyscraper in New York City, smiling through her story.

REPORTER

Amnesty International released the findings of their report on corporate responsibility today, with conglomerate Pointe Atlantic coming in at number three in the world's worst. This is the fourth time Pointe Atlantic has been in the top 5, although executives are adamant about changing the company's image...

Interested, Amanda looks towards her dad.

AMANDA

Dad, what do you know about Pointe Atlantic?

ROGER

I know that we own 20,000 shares in them.

AMANDA

Is that a lot?

ROGER

The Littman's own 70,000. But yes, we're banking our retirement on them.

He relishes in the thought.

AMANDA

So are they bad like the news says?

ROGER

I don't care what they are as long as their numbers keep going up like they have. Did you manage to save the tree?

AMANDA

No, they tore it down.

ROGER

Ah well, there's plenty of trees.

Amanda turns away from him, disgusted.

AMANDA
 (under her breath)
 Plenty of corporations too.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. SANTO DOMINGO MANSION - DAY

A huge Spanish-style mansion overlooks the Caribbean. Palm trees sway in the breeze. The soft sound of classical music drifts out the open windows. Paradise.

INT. MANSION - DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - DAY

BROCK CONRAD (40s) talks into a phone. Handsome but tired, wearing designer khakis and a white polo shirt, he drinks from a glass filled with expensive liquor (even though it's morning) and paces around a living room.

BROCK
 Tell her she can have the
 Mongolian tribal masks if I
 can keep the Steinway-- I
 know I don't play it but neither
 does she! I'm gonna need it to
 sell so I can pay you people!

He takes a swig of his drink.

BROCK (CON'T)
 I'll be back on Wednesday, I'm
 working from my home in Santo
 Domingo... Alright, see you and
 the golddigging whore then.

He hangs up as MARIA, his grandmotherly Dominican housekeeper walks into the room.

MARIA
 Mrs. Conrad won't be visiting
 with us again, Mr. Conrad?

BROCK
 No, she won't and you can stop
 calling her Mrs. Conrad.

MARIA
 You go through wives faster than
 my grandson goes through diapers.

BROCK

I didn't know you had a grandson.

MARIA

I have five. Some of them I don't see much.

BROCK

Kind of like my cousins in New Jersey, but that's a choice. Did the papers come from New York yet?

She holds out a stack of newspapers.

MARIA

Yes, just got them now.

She hands him the papers. The front headline of *The Wall Street Journal* screams "POINTE ATLANTIC RISES ON AMNESTY WATCH LIST." He reads it and groans.

BROCK

Any more good news?

MARIA

The rhododendrons are dying. Can I bring you anything else?

BROCK

Another scotch would be perfect.

MARIA

Mr. Conrad, it's 9:30 in the morning--

BROCK

You're right, Maria. Better make it a Bloody Mary.

She sighs and leaves the room. He sits down on the couch, drink still in hand. He begins to read the newspaper article but gives up and tosses it to the ground, choosing a *Sports Illustrated* instead.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - DAY

Brock and JOHN PIERSON are on the green of the 7th hole at a swanky resort's golf course. Just membership alone to this place costs more than most homes.

JOHN

Your boy Espinosa's batting at
a what this season? .340?

BROCK

Almost. One of the best picks
last year by far. Those Dominican
kids know how to hit.

JOHN

Beats those spoiled Triple A
high school brats they bring up
from the minors before they're
even weaned from their mothers.

They play the hole. Brock's not that good, he just plays for
business. He misses his putt by a mile.

BROCK

Shit.

John hits his ball in a perfect line, right into the hole.

JOHN

Right in the hole, just the
way Pointe Atlantic's going.

BROCK

You flew all the way to the
Dominican Republic to lecture me?

JOHN

Not lecture. The board just wants
to make sure you see eye to eye
with their needs.

BROCK

Come on John, we're not sunk. Our
stock is still rising.

JOHN

I expect that Amnesty report
will cause a dip?

BROCK

Maybe for a split second. But
our shareholders know that we
can't be touched.

JOHN

You're the VP of Operations.

Of course you want to think that.

BROCK

Our film division has released five top ten movies this year. Crude oil prices are finally going down and that makes everybody happy. And we all know that no office worker can make it through the day without coffee and sugar. We're golden.

JOHN

The board is just concerned that your, uh, personal problems lately have caused you to be lenient on the press that's getting out.

BROCK

Tell the board to fuck themselves.

JOHN

You're the one who's going to be getting fucked if anymore articles like the one in the *Journal* come out.

BROCK

My loyalties are to Pointe Atlantic first and foremost. Ask my soon-to-be ex-wife.

He takes his putt and misses again.

JOHN

Yes, I'm sorry to hear that. Cassandra was a... lovely woman.

BROCK

Oh fuck off, John. She tried to sleep with half the marketing staff at the Christmas party.

JOHN

Even so.

It's Brock's third miss.

BROCK

Let's just call that an eagle?

JOHN

Over my dead body. Loser still

pays for lunch.

The men laugh.

EXT. CLUB RESTAURANT - DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - DAY

Brock and John eat lunch in the golf club's upscale restaurant. A beautiful young DOMINICAN WAITRESS serves them a bottle of Perrier. As she walks away, John admires her beauty.

JOHN

Beautiful country.

BROCK

If only Amnesty could see it the way we do.

They laugh.

FADE TO:

EXT. JAVIER'S HOME - DAY

Javier is outside of his shack washing dishes in a bucket of muddy water. The hot sun is already beating down on him even though it's early morning.

Joseph comes out of the house in his work clothes, wearing a thin straw hat. He coughs and a thick mucus comes out of his throat. He acts like it's nothing.

JOSEPH

I'm going to try and work a few extra hours today, Javier.

JAVIER

Grandpa, it's almost 100 degrees out here already.

JOSEPH

We need to bring in more than we did last month. I'm afraid we're already behind again.

JAVIER

Let me come help.

JOSEPH

No, no. You go to school.

JAVIER

I don't learn anything there.

JOSEPH

But how will you become a famous
baseball player if you don't
know your math?

He tries to laugh but coughs instead.

JAVIER

You're sick again.

JOSEPH

It's nothing. I'll see you tonight.

JAVIER

If you see Augusto Garcia, ask
him to come to one of our games?

JOSEPH

If I see him.

He gives a small wave as he walks over to where a pickup truck
waits. The back is filled with FIELD WORKERS. A few younger
men help Joseph up and the truck pulls away.

A SERIES OF IMAGES

EXT. SUGAR CANE FIELD - DAY

Joseph as he works in the fields. He bends over to cut the
sugar cane from the ground and throws the stalk into a
tractor. It's back-breaking work.

EXT. SUGAR CANE FIELD - CONTINUOUS

The sugar stalks are driven in the tractor towards the huge
manufacturing plant.

INT. MANUFACTURING PLANT - CONTINUOUS

The sugar cane is dumped from the tractor onto a conveyor
belt.

The cane is crushed by large rollers, the fiber separated from
the dirty juice.

The juice is thickened in large boilers. Crystals begin to
form during this process.

The crystals are blasted dry by hot air.

The brown crystals are dumped into a huge pile in a warehouse. This is unrefined, raw sugar.

EXT. SUGAR CANE FIELD - CONTINUOUS

A hand twists off the top of a Coca-Cola bottle. AUGUSTO GARCIA, late 20s, ruggedly handsome with a face that has seen failure, sits under a shady tree where he and other WORKERS are taking their short lunch break. Joseph joins them, sitting next to Augusto.

JOSEPH

My grandson seems to think you're a famous baseball player.

AUGUSTO

In another life maybe.

JOSEPH

So you are Augusto Garcia?

AUGUSTO

Like I said, in another life.

JOSEPH

Javier is a huge baseball fan. He's going to the camp over in Santo Domingo in a couple weeks.

AUGUSTO

I went to that camp. Look where it got me.

JOSEPH

Far enough for a 12 year old boy to know your name.

AUGUSTO

I'd rather he didn't. This isn't the sort of place I want to be signing autographs.

JOSEPH

This is true. The lower you are on the radar, the better.

AUGUSTO

I'm here to pay off my brother's debt and then I'm gone.

JOSEPH

Before you are gone, my grandson would appreciate if you could watch him play.

AUGUSTO

I can't promise anything. I'm not here to bond with the locals.

JOSEPH

Please Mr. Garcia, it would mean a lot. They play almost every night. There's a spot where it's open enough for a small field.

A loud whistle sounds and the workers are getting on their feet. Back to work. Joseph struggles to get up and Augusto offers him a hand.

JOSEPH (CON'T)

Thank you. I hope to see you at a game.

He smiles weakly as he walks back towards the sugar cane.

INT. BATEYE SCHOOL - DAY

A cramped classroom, used desks, used books, used everything. Javier and his CLASSMATES are handed glass milk bottles and a piece of flat bread by SENORA ORTIZ, a peasant woman with barely a fifth grade education herself.

Javier opens the milk and takes a gulp, but quickly spits it back into the bottle. He raises his hand.

JAVIER

Senora Ortiz? My milk is spoiled.

She gives him a sad smile.

SR. ORTIZ

I'm sorry Javier, but that's all there is.

A BOY next to Javier whispers to him.

BOY

Mine is too.

But he drinks it anyway. Javier pushes his away and nibbles on the bread.

INT. JAVIER'S HOME - NIGHT

Javier stands on a crate while Joseph measures and cuts fabric around his arms and legs. He's tailoring him a suit.

JAVIER

Make it look like ones the rich people wear to the opera.

JOSEPH

What do you know of the opera?

JAVIER

Esperanza had a magazine at the store with pictures in it.

JOSEPH

I'll make it look like one a boy would wear to meet baseball recruiters.

JAVIER

They don't care what I look like. They'll only want to see how I can hit.

JOSEPH

It doesn't hurt to look smart.

Javier looks at the fabric. It is old and worn.

JAVIER

This is your old suit?

JOSEPH

Was on my back the day I came to this country.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

EXT. SANTO DOMINGO STREETS - DAY

A 30-year-old Joseph walks the streets of Santo Domingo. The city bustles with markets, shops, well-dressed people. He wears a finely tailored suit and his darker skin stands out.

EXT. FABRIC SHOP - DAY

Joseph looks through the racks of fabric at a market shop on the street. He is approached by two SOLDIERS. One grabs him by the arm.

SOLDIER #1

You need to come with us.

He is confused as they pull him away from the fabrics.

INT. HOLDING CELL - DAY

Joseph is crammed in a holding cell with other HAITIANS. Some look as if they have been there for days. Others sleep. A GUARD walks by and Joseph pushes his way to the bars.

JOSEPH

Please, I don't know what's
happening. I am an honest man!
What have I done?

The guard stops and sneers at him.

GUARD

Calm down there, boy. We're just
taking a record of all Haitians
sneaking across the border.

JOSEPH

But I am not sneaking! I am a
tailor, I have come to buy fabrics!

He fumbles in his pocket and frantically pulls out papers.

JOSEPH (CON'T)

See!? I am only in the Dominican
Republic for a couple of days. I
have my papers here!

The guard grabs his papers and pretends to look them over. He slowly rips them in half as Joseph gasps.

GUARD

What papers?

He laughs as he walks away, leaving Joseph helpless.

END SEQUENCE

INT. JAVIER'S HOME - NIGHT

Joseph continues to tailor the suit for Javier.

JOSEPH

Hopefully it will bring you more
luck than it has brought me.

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

Amanda sits in Dr. Campo's class, listening to his lecture. He stands behind a podium, full of energy, speaking so forcefully that he occasionally spits.

DR. CAMPO

I have three things to say today.
First: While you were sleeping
last night, 30,000 kids died of
starvation or diseases related to
malnutrition. Second: Most of you
don't give a shit.

The class titters. He pauses and then speaks again.

DR. CAMPO

And third: What's worse is that you
are more upset with the fact that
I said "shit" than the fact that
30,000 kids died last night.

Silence.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Amanda sits at a table in the cafeteria. Beth slides into a seat next to her.

BETH

Hey Miss-Junior-Guerilla Activist.

AMANDA

Ooh, I like that. Listen, last night,
I got this great idea for our next
project from my dad.

BETH

Your dad? Does it involve comparing
the revenues and expenditures of
the Fortune 500?

AMANDA

Close. But not in the way that he'd appreciate.

INT. SCHOOL NEWSPAPER LAB - DAY

The college's newspaper room. Cole and Beth watch Amanda as she looks through microfilm of newspaper articles. She finds what she's looking for. It's dated a few years back and reads POINTE ATLANTIC BUYS MAJOR CARIBBEAN SUGAR PLANTATION.

AMANDA

Guys, we're going to go after a major American corporation.

Cole and Beth are silent for a few seconds and then laugh.

BETH

Amanda, as heroic as that sounds, what are we going to do exactly? Picket outside their offices?

COLE

What would we be picketing?

AMANDA

Last night on the news, Pointe Atlantic Corporation was named as third most evil company in the world.

BETH

Third? Why not go for number 1?

AMANDA

Because my parents own a lot of stock in Pointe Atlantic.

BETH

Oh, so it's personal.

AMANDA

I thought we could look into them. See why they're so bad...

COLE

All corporations are bad.

Amanda pulls out *The Wall Street Journal* article from the other day. She skims through it.

AMANDA

Skimping on wages... not providing any sort of health insurance or medical care... breaking child labor laws... etc, etc. Yep, sounds like a bunch of assholes.

She puts the paper down.

AMANDA (CON'T)

So where do we start?

They stare at her blankly. Finally, Cole speaks up.

COLE

Look, Amanda, you know I'm usually on your side with these things but this sounds like a lot of work.

AMANDA

It's not work if it's something we're passionate about!

COLE

Baseball season's starting soon and I'll be busy with practices...

BETH

You're on the baseball team?

COLE

I'm the manager.

She snorts.

COLE (CON'T)

It's a very dignified position! Anyway, why can't we just write to our congressman about filling in the potholes outside the senior center like we were going to?

AMANDA

That's not very exciting.

BETH

It is for the seniors.

AMANDA

Oh come on! Most of them don't even drive!

It's obvious she's not winning them over.

COLE

Maybe just something less intense.

AMANDA

You mean easy.

BETH

He means something that three college students can do.

The conversation is over. They're packing up their bags and heading for the door.

COLE

Sorry Amanda. I don't think Dr. Campo meant trying to take down a corporation when he said to find something more meaningful.

They're gone. Amanda sits in the room alone, looking at the microfilm news article.

EXT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - DAY

Amanda walks out to her mailbox and gets the mail.

INT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

The house is empty. Amanda shifts through the mail—mostly upscale catalogues and bills. A blue envelope catches her eyes. It's from Compassion International, a child sponsorship agency.

She tears it open and pulls out a letter with a picture of a sad-looking Hispanic girl with puppy dog eyes and tattered clothing. She stands in the mud. Amanda looks up, eyes full of determination.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Amanda walks over to a table where Beth and Cole are eating lunch. She thrusts the picture of the Hispanic girl onto the table.

AMANDA

Paulina. She's 5.

They look up at her.

BETH

My parents already sponsor like three of those kids.

AMANDA

Shut up.

She keeps going.

AMANDA (CON'T)

Her parents work 18 hour days on a sugar plantation and are paid \$2 for every ton. They might be able to live off of the sixty bucks they make a month, except that almost all that money goes to paying back the money they had to borrow just to get the job. Only thing is, they'll never be able to pay it back. They'll have to keep borrowing more and more to pay for food and shelter, if you can call the concrete 12 by 8 shack they live in with another family shelter.

She takes a breath.

AMANDA (CON'T)

Paulina will never go to school. Most of these *bateyes* don't even have running water, let alone career options. So the best way she'll be able to make money is by selling candy or worse- herself.

Beth and Cole are listening.

AMANDA (CON'T)

So, no schools, no hospitals, no jobs... except slaving away in temperatures up to 110 degrees. All so the rest of the world can enjoy their candy bars and soda. Paulina has no hope... no one there does. They are, by all accounts, modern-day slaves. Slaves that are owned by a company in the Dominican Republic called Dorado Granja. And guess who owns them?

She pauses. The others are silent.

AMANDA (CON'T)
Pointe Atlantic.

Beth and Cole stare at the picture, guilt on their faces.

BETH
Point taken.

COLE
We're in.

Amanda smiles.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. SANTO DOMINGO MANSION - DAY

Maria helps Brock load several suitcases into a waiting SUV.

MARIA
When will you be back with us,
Mr. Conrad?

BROCK
If I could do all my work from here,
I would.

MARIA
You don't like New York?

BROCK
I like New York. I don't like
Pointe Atlantic.

MARIA
Then why do you work there?

BROCK
Because then I can afford to come
here.

MARIA
You should quit your job and find
one in town.

BROCK
I don't think I could keep this
place by working as a bellhop at

the golf club, Maria.

MARIA

Maybe you don't need a house this big.

BROCK

Then where would you work?

MARIA

We're talking about you.

BROCK

My plane's waiting. I'll see you in a few weeks.

He turns to get in the car and she gives him a hug, surprising him.

MARIA

Have a safe flight.

INT. NEW YORK APARTMENT - NIGHT

Brock arrives home to his apartment, which has been stripped of half of its belongings. Moving boxes are stacked against a bare wall and a pile of burned photos have been crumpled up and thrown on a counter. The place looks sterile, cold, un-lived in.

He goes to the kitchen, takes a beer out of the refrigerator and walks into the living room. It's empty and lonely.

He picks up the phone and makes a call.

BROCK

Hi, Rebecca? Can you book me a flight to Santo Domingo for Saturday morning?

EXT. BASEBALL STADIUM - DAY

A major league baseball game. High ranking EXECUTIVES watch the game from a luxury suite. John Pierson walks over to Brock with GERALD HUGH, a wealthy Wall Street investor.

JOHN

Brock, I want you to meet Gerald Hugh. Gerald's the..

BROCK

Veep of Bertelsmann, I know. Nice to finally meet you, sir.

The men shake hands.

GERALD

You too. Your proposal was very intriguing. Bertelsmann has been looking for an outlet into Caribbean farming for a while.

BROCK

And our Dominican division is the best.

The crowd roars. A huge play has been made. The men stop talking and watch a PLAYER run the bases.

GERALD

Team's looking promising this year.

BROCK

We're shooting for the title.

GERALD

You must be spending 90% of your salary buying up players.

BROCK

95%

They laugh.

GERALD

So then the negative press hasn't affected revenues?

BROCK

We've been targeted numerous times but our investors are wise.

GERALD

If Bertelsmann buys Dorado Granja, we want to make sure that ownership doesn't come with any baggage.

JOHN

Take a trip with us. Brock's practically a full-time citizen down there.

BROCK

Going back down again tomorrow,
in fact. You're welcome to come
any time.

GERALD

Let's set it up. We'd like to get this
process moving.

Brock hands him a business card.

BROCK

Call my secretary, Rebecca. She'll set
it up for you.

GERALD

We'll be talking soon. I hate to miss
the rest of the game, but I've got
to run. My kid's got a piano recital.

JOHN

See you soon.

The men shake hands goodbye. As Gerald walks away, John turns
to Brock.

JOHN

What's this about you going to the
DR? You just got back.

BROCK

I can work from there. I can't stay
in my apartment right now.

JOHN

So get a hotel room! Look, Brock,
there's a big bonus involved in
the sale to Bertelsmann. Don't fuck
it up.

BROCK

I'll be back for the shareholder's
meeting next month.

JOHN

Next month! Man, what the hell did
Cassandra do to you?

BROCK

The Dorado Granja sale will go through.
The shareholders will be happy. I'll

entertain Mr. Hugh, find a local woman for him, booze him up. He'll be happy. We'll all get our bonuses. We'll all be..

JOHN

Happy. We better be.

They turn to watch the game. The BATTER swings and hits the ball far into left field. The CROWD goes wild.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

A much smaller CROWD goes wild as Javier hits the ball and runs towards first base. As he rests on the base, he sees Augusto standing with the crowd watching. He smiles, pleased.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - SUNSET

The game has ended. Augusto begins to walk away from the field but Javier catches up with him.

JAVIER

Hi! Did you like the game?

Augusto humors him.

AUGUSTO

Yes, it was very good.

JAVIER

What did you think of me?

AUGUSTO

You've got a decent swing.

JAVIER

I'm going to camp soon.

AUGUSTO

So you're that old man's grandson. He told me about you.

JAVIER

I saw you the first day you came. I'm going to be a baseball player like you.

AUGUSTO

You already are a baseball player.

JAVIER
I mean a famous one.

AUGUSTO
I see.

JAVIER
There's my grandfather! I'm sure
he'd let you come for dinner.

Joseph is walking towards them.

AUGUSTO
No, that's okay..

JAVIER
Grandpa, can Augusto come for dinner?

JOSEPH
It's fine with me.

Augusto shakes his head.

AUGUSTO
No, no, I don't want to intrude.

JAVIER
You're not intruding! Please?

JOSEPH
It's no problem.

Augusto sees Javier's puppy dog eyes.

AUGUSTO
Okay. But let me bring something.

Javier jumps up and down with excitement.

JOSEPH
We could use some eggs.

JAVIER
Let's go to the store!

He's already running towards the road. Augusto begrudgingly follows.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Javier bursts through the front door of the grocery store. Esperanza looks up from her magazine.

JAVIER

Esperanza!

ESPERANZA

Hi Javier. How's it going?

JAVIER

Awesome!

The door opens and Augusto walks in. Javier beams.

JAVIER (CON'T)

This is Augusto, he's a baseball player! Augusto, Esperanza.

Augusto and Esperanza look at each other a bit shyly. There's a spark.

ESPERANZA

Hello.

AUGUSTO

Nice to meet you.

A moment of awkward silence.

ESPERANZA

So... what can I get you?

JAVIER

Just some eggs. Augusto's coming over for dinner.

ESPERANZA

That's nice.

She smiles at Augusto knowingly as she gets a dozen eggs from behind the counter.

ESPERANZA (CON'T)

On your credit, Javier?

AUGUSTO

No, I'm paying for this.

He pays cash. Javier and Esperanza are impressed.

INT. JAVIER'S HOME - NIGHT

Javier, Joseph and Augusto eat dinner together. Javier is on cloud nine.

JAVIER

How many homeruns do you have?

AUGUSTO

239 at last count.

JAVIER

Did any teams from America ever try to recruit you?

AUGUSTO

No, I'm afraid I never got that far. Too many problems got in the way.

JAVIER

It's not too late. You could always...

AUGUSTO

It is too late.

JOSEPH

Javier, stop bothering the man with your questions.

AUGUSTO

No, it's okay. I just haven't talked baseball in a very long time. Sometimes it's easier to forget.

JAVIER

I won't talk about it anymore if you do one thing.

Augusto looks at him, amused.

AUGUSTO

What's that?

JAVIER

Play catch with me.

He grins.

EXT. BATEYE STREET - NIGHT

Augusto and Javier stand in the middle of the dirt street outside the house. They throw a sock ball back and forth. Joseph watches.

AUGUSTO

Your pitch is hard but flat.
If you hold the ball between
your fingers like this,

He demonstrates.

AUGUSTO (CON'T)

there will be more spin.

He throws it to Javier, who tries to hold it that way. He struggles and throws the ball crookedly.

JAVIER

Like that?

Augusto walks over to him and places Javier's fingers in the correct position. To anyone else, they look like father and son.

AUGUSTO

Try this. I know it feels
uncomfortable but it will be
your secret weapon.

Javier smiles, liking that. Augusto jogs back to where he was and Javier throws, this time perfectly. He looks over at Joseph, excited.

JAVIER

Did you see that, Grandpa?

JOSEPH

I did. Very good, Javier.

Javier beams with pride.

JOSEPH (CON'T)

But it is getting late. We should
let Mr. Garcia get some rest.

JAVIER

Alright. Can we play again
tomorrow?

Augusto can't help but feel flattered.

AUGUSTO
Maybe. We'll see.

It's enough for Javier. He runs to the door of his shack.

JAVIER
We can work on my swing. Goodnight!

He goes inside. Joseph struggles to get up from his spot.

JOSEPH
Thank you for being so kind to
my grandson. He doesn't get
much joy in his life.

AUGUSTO
Where are his parents?

CUT TO: FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

EXT. JAVIER'S HOME - NIGHT

A beautiful young girl, SELENA, barely just a teenager, hangs wet clothes on a laundry line outside of the same house where Joseph and Augusto speak. The streets are almost empty, with just a few stragglers heading home.

JOSEPH (V.O.)
His mother is dead. Javier was born
here...and he's never left.

A group of GUARDS approach in the distance, intoxicated and eager to stir up trouble. Selena keeps her head down, trying to go unnoticed.

JOSEPH (V.O. CON'T)
We don't know who his father is.

The guards stop where Selena works, taunting her, making sexual advances. She tries to brush them off and go inside but one of them blocks the entrance to the house. Fear rushes across her face.

GUARD
Hey, beautiful, are you going
to bed without me?

She hesitates, unsure of what to do.

SELENA

Please just let me go inside.

GUARD

You have to pay the toll.

He grins callously and his buddies laugh. She tries to go around him but he moves, blocking her.

GUARD (CON'T)

Don't try and run away from me,
baby. You hurt my feelings.

SELENA

Please...

He grabs her arm roughly, pulling her away from the door. The next few sequences are dark, blurry and violent.

FADE OUT

EXT. BATEYE STREET - NIGHT

Augusto's eyes darken, disgusted. Joseph smiles sadly.

JOSEPH

She died in childbirth. She
was too injured from the attack.

He walks to the door, the same door where his daughter once stood.

JOSEPH (CON'T)

It's good he met you. Such few
joys come to us here.

EXT. BATEYE STREET - NIGHT

Augusto walks home. The streets are dark, nobody around. He walks past an alley and hears a commotion. He stops and looks.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Guard #1 is glaring down at Esperanza, who is backed up against a wall. He grabs her face and puts his hands on her roughly. She spits at him and tries to struggle free. He hits her with his gun. Blood trickles from her head. It's like *deja vu*.

Augusto runs down the alley and shoves the guard away from her. Looks to see if she's hurt. The guard lunges at Augusto.

The men struggle with each other. Punches are thrown. Esperanza screams for Augusto to stop. He has the guard against the wall and hits him continually until he is still. His face is contorted with rage. The guard finally collapses in a heap on the ground. Dead, unconscious, we don't know.

Augusto looks at him with contempt but turns his attention to Esperanza, who is shaken.

AUGUSTO

They are animals here! Are you hurt?

He looks her over and sees the blood. He takes off his shirt and rips it in half, taking a piece to her head, applying pressure.

ESPERANZA

I'm fine...but you shouldn't have done that.

AUGUSTO

He would have killed you. Or worse.

ESPERANZA

Now they will kill you.

They look down the alley. No one is around. It's quiet.

AUGUSTO

Let them try.

INT. AMANDA'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Amanda, her Stepford-wife mother LYDIA, and Roger eat dinner awkwardly together.

AMANDA

Dad, do you know anyone who works at Pointe Atlantic?

ROGER

No. Why do you ask?

AMANDA

I want to interview someone there. For the paper.

ROGER

I highly doubt anyone there is going to take the time to listen to you.

He sneers. Amanda looks wounded for a second.

LYDIA

Roger. Remember what Dr. Stein said last week...

He rolls his eyes and sighs.

ROGER

You could try their PR department. But I'm sure they have bigger fish to fry right now than some concerned college student. Like their shareholders.

Amanda is quiet, playing with her food. Thinking.

ROGER (CON'T)

I'm even thinking of going to the next meeting. Let them convince me that my money's in the right place.

AMANDA

What meeting?

ROGER

The annual shareholder's meeting. It's next month, in New York.

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

Dr. Campo is busy scribbling notes on the chalkboard. Amanda bursts into the room, startling him.

AMANDA

How do I become a shareholder?

DR. CAMPO

You...you buy stocks. In a certain company or in a group.

AMANDA

And where can I buy them?

DR. CAMPO
Usually through a brokerage firm.

AMANDA
What's the closest one?

DR. CAMPO
Well, Merrill Lynch has an office down Route 30. But I would suggest you do some research before deciding to buy stock. It isn't really my area of expertise.

AMANDA
No, that's all I needed. Thanks!

She runs out of the room, leaving him frazzled.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

Cole and Beth are walking along the sidewalk to class when Amanda runs up behind them.

AMANDA
Glad I found you. Come on, we have an appointment at Merrill Lynch in 20 minutes.

They look at her, confused.

COLE
Isn't that a-

AMANDA
Yeah. An investment company.
I found a way into Pointe Atlantic.

BETH
How?

AMANDA
We're going to buy stocks in the company.

BETH
Isn't that expensive?

AMANDA
Not too bad. We only need one each. They're at \$87 right now.

Beth and Cole are quiet.

COLE

I don't think I can afford that right now, Amanda.

AMANDA

What do you mean? I thought we were all in.

COLE

We are. I mean, it's just...\$87 is a lot of money to a poor college student.

BETH

Yeah, not of all us have rich parents. Some of us live on campus and have loans.

Amanda is stung.

AMANDA

I know but... this is the only way. Look, I'll pay for yours.

They are offended.

COLE

Then it won't mean anything from us.

AMANDA

What?! Yes it will!

BETH

Can we at least think about it?

AMANDA

Fine. But in the meantime, I'll actually be doing something. Not just thinking.

She stalks away.

INT. AMANDA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Amanda stares at the piece of paper in her hands, the CERTIFICATE OF STOCK in Pointe Atlantic Corporation. It reads ONE SHARE.

Roger walks into the kitchen and she quickly hides the paper under her notebooks.

AMANDA

Hi, Dad.

He hesitates, looking like he's going to say something difficult.

ROGER

Amanda, look...I just want to tell you. I'm sorry for giving you such a hard time lately.

She looks shocked. He continues.

ROGER (CON'T)

It's just that...well you know I was disappointed when you didn't take Dartmouth's offer and decided to go to that leftie liberal school and follow around that wack-job professor-

AMANDA

Dad-

ROGER

Never mind. I just want you to know that I am proud of you, no matter what you decide to do.

He walks over and gives her a short kiss on the head.

ROGER (CON'T)

Even if it's tree hugging.

AMANDA

Thanks, Dad. I take it you and mom had a good session today.

He shakes his head and laughs.

ROGER

Can't I get any credit?

He notices her stack of papers.

ROGER (CON'T)

Looks like you're hard at work. What are they teaching you now?

He picks up the notebook.

ROGER (CON'T)
Social Justice and Global Poverty.
Sounds about right.

He puts it back on the pile and the certificate slides out, falling to the ground. She cringes and reaches for it but he gets to it first. His face darkens as he comprehends what it is.

His voice gets quiet with anger.

ROGER (CON'T)
What's this?

AMANDA
It's nothing.

She grabs it out of his hands.

AMANDA (CON'T)
Don't worry about it.

ROGER
Do you think I was born yesterday?
What do you think you're doing?

He's yelling now.

AMANDA
Nothing, I'm just doing research...

ROGER
Bullshit! Tell me what you're
planning to do right now!

She answers meekly.

AMANDA
I'm going to the shareholders
meeting. I'm going to make Pointe
Atlantic see how they're hurting
people. I'm going to make them change.

ROGER
You will do no such thing! Under
no circumstances will you be going
to that meeting! Do you know how
much money I have invested in

Pointe Atlantic? Do you even care about your mother's and my future?

AMANDA

You can't tell me what I can't do!

ROGER

Oh yes I can! You will not step a foot near that meeting. I forbid it!

He storms out of the kitchen. She stares at the certificate.

EXT. BATEYE FACTORY - DAY

Brock leads Gerald from Bertelsmann on a tour through the sugar cane factory. From an outsiders perspective, everything appears orderly and by the books.

BROCK

This is where we refine the sugar cane. As you can see, the machines are less than five years old and in perfect working order.

They walk by two FACTORY WORKERS and Brock gives them a friendly slap on the back.

BROCK (CON'T)

All the workers are trained extensively before they can work in here. Of course we don't need to here in the DR, but we have conformed to all OSHA standards.

Gerald nods. A bear of a man, dark with a hair bursting beneath his unbuttoned shirt approaches them. This is OVERSEER JUAREZ.

BROCK (CON'T)

This is Marco Juarez, plantation manager. He can tell you everything you want to know about running the place.

OVERSEER JUAREZ

Let's take a look at our fields. I think you'll like what you see.

INT. SUGAR CANE FIELD - DAY

Brock, Juarez, and Gerald walk through the sugar cane field. Workers peacefully work. Not a guard to be seen.

BROCK

The field workers take two 15 minute breaks a day and a half hour for lunch. All food is provided for them but they also have the choice of buying their own from the general store.

GERALD

Sounds better than at the office!

They laugh.

JUAREZ

They are well taken care of.

They walk by Joseph without a glance at him. He looks sickly, pale and has taken a second to rest. Juarez gives him a quick kick in the shins, which the other men don't notice. They keep walking and hear the sounds of children playing.

BROCK

Ah, my favorite thing about this place. The local children playing baseball.

They walk to the edge of the baseball field, where Javier and his friends are playing a game of ball.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

The sun shines a golden tone as it begins to set. Pure, unspoiled beauty. The men watch the game from a distance.

BROCK

Baseball is also the national pastime of the Dominican Republic. Maybe one of these little guys is a future Oriel!

GERALD

Looks like Pointe Atlantic has a sure thing going here.

BROCK

It's truly a paradise. Pointe Atlantic

is just blessed to be able to help the local economy and these children's families.

GERALD

It certainly looks like a slice of heaven.

BROCK

So we've pretty much seen everything there is to see. Shall we retire to my place for a pre-dinner drink?

The men walk towards an idling SUV, get in and drive off.

EXT. SUGAR CANE FIELD - DAY

Joseph clutches his chest, collapsing to his knees. He gasps for breath, eyes rolling back into his head. Shaking. Another WORKER sees him and runs over.

WORKER

Someone get help!

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

The game stops from the commotion of Joseph being carried out into the field. A group surrounds him. Someone tries to perform CPR, but it's not working.

Javier and the other boys run over. Javier pushes his way through the crowd and falls to the ground next to Joseph.

JAVIER

Grandpa!

He shakes him but there is no movement. He cries in agony. A hand pulls him out of the crowd. It's Augusto. Javier is inconsolable.

INT. SUV - DAY

As the SUV drives Brock and Gerald away from the fields, Juarez looks out the side view mirror. He sees the scene behind them, a crowd gathered around a man on the ground. A boy sobbing.

He glances at the other men, hoping they haven't noticed.

He says nothing and they continue driving.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Brock and Gerald enjoy cocktails on the balcony of Brock's mansion. Maria emerges from inside the house, her face ashen. Stricken with grief.

MARIA

Mr. Conrad, may I speak with you in private please?

BROCK

Of course, Maria.

They walk inside the house, out of earshot of Gerald.

MARIA

I just got a phone call that my brother died today from a heart attack. I must go and make arrangements.

BROCK

Oh Maria, I'm sorry to hear that. Take as much time as you need.

MARIA

It's just that...I need your help getting there.

BROCK

Where do you need to go?

MARIA

Dorado Granja. He died at your company's plantation, sir.

Brock is silent, with shock.

MARIA (CON'T)

I need official permission to get on the grounds. Will you take me?

INT. JAVIER'S HOME - NIGHT

Javier sits numbly on a mat on the floor, staring into space. Augusto and Esperanza talk quietly in the kitchen.

ESPERANZA

That old man should have never been working in the fields in

his condition. Stubborn, old fool.

AUGUSTO

It didn't seem like he had much of a choice. They were barely able to feed themselves.

ESPERANZA

Poor Javier.

She shakes her head sadly. There is a loud, brisk knock at the door.

Augusto opens it. It's the guard he beat up for attacking Esperanza. He's alive, but bruised. Surprised to see Augusto answering the door, his face quickly turns to scorn.

GUARD #1

Well well. Not who I was looking for but interesting to say the least.

Augusto speaks curtly.

AUGUSTO

What do you want?

GUARD #1

Overseer Juarez needs to see the boy.

Augusto and Esperanza exchange worried looks.

ESPERANZA

Can it not wait? He's just lost his grandfather...his only family here.

The guard sneers, unsympathetic. He strolls across the room and grabs Javier by the shoulder, yanking him up from his spot on the floor.

GUARD #1

That's why he must come with me.

Javier looks at them with dead eyes.

JAVIER

What's going to happen?

ESPERANZA

Don't worry, Javier. It will be okay.

But she doesn't look like she believes it. The guard leads Javier out of the shack, looking back at Augusto with spite.

GUARD #1

I will be back for you.

INT. OVERSEER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Guard #1 forces Javier into a dingy office. Overseer Juarez sits behind a desk, his feet up. He wears a gold chain, sunglasses, and smokes a cigar.

JUAREZ

Javier Peguero?

Javier nods nervously.

JUAREZ (CON'T)

Sit.

He motions towards a chair across from the desk. He flips through an old manila folder.

JUAREZ (CON'T)

You are the grandson of Joseph Peguero?

JAVIER

Yes.

JUAREZ

Your grandfather's debt to the plantation totaled \$2,359 at his death. Since you are his next of kin, this debt is now yours.

Javier is dumbfounded.

JAVIER

But I...I don't work in the fields. I'm still in school. Grandpa didn't want me to work.

JUAREZ

It's up to you to be the man now and work for your rent and food.

Once you've repaid us, you can go back to school.

JAVIER

But that's going to be impossible!
It will take years!

JUAREZ

I fail to see how that is my problem.

JAVIER

I'm supposed to go to baseball camp next week! I want my grandfather!

He begins to cry.

JUAREZ

Until your debt is repaid, you belong to me.

He turns to Guard #1.

JAVIER (CON'T)

Get him out of here. Take him to B Dorm.

The guard shoves Javier roughly out the door.

INT. B DORM - NIGHT

A dirty, noisy dormitory filled with bunk beds. BOYS of all ages are crowded in the room, shouting, fighting, some fitfully trying to sleep.

Guard #1 leads Javier, who is holding a few belongings, into the room.

GUARD #1

This is your home now.

He leaves as Javier looks forlornly through the room. He walks to an empty bed and sits down. He clutches his knees to his chest as he takes in his new surroundings.

EXT. PRIVATE AIRPORT - DAY

A private plane sits on the runway of a small airport. Brock shakes Gerald's hand as he sees him off.

GERALD

Brock, a pleasure indeed.

BROCK

Thanks for coming down. And let me know if you have any questions at all.

GERALD

I certainly have a lot of information to take back to New York. But between us, I'd say it's looking very good for Pointe Atlantic. You have a solid thing going here.

BROCK

I like to think so.

GERALD

I'll do my best to make sure this merger goes smoothly.

BROCK

I appreciate it. We look forward to doing business with Bertelsmann.

They shake hands again and Gerald walks up the stairs to the plane.

Brock gets inside an SUV waiting on the runway

INT. SUV - DAY

where Maria waits.

BROCK

Okay, let's go.

The SUV drives away.

They are quiet as they ride through the countryside of Santo Domingo. The sky is a brilliant blue, the fields are lush green. Palm trees sway. Mountains rise in the distance.

EXT. DORADO GRANJA ENTRANCE - DAY

The SUV turns down a dirt road, where a gate and a small security booth mark the entrance to the plantation. The SUV is waved through.

BROCK

I haven't heard much about your brother, Maria. Were you close?

MARIA

Unfortunately, not as close as I wish. He came to this country when I was still young and our work has kept us apart.

BROCK

What does he do?

MARIA

He was a tailor by trade but the money was much better in the bateyes, he said. There are much more opportunities in the Dominican Republic than in Haiti.

BROCK

Do you miss it?

MARIA

Yes.

She says nothing more and stares out the window.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

A small crowd is gathered around a freshly dug grave in a graveyard on the outskirts of the bateye. A modest coffin awaits burial. The SUV pulls off to the side.

INT. SUV - DAY

Maria prepares to exit the SUV. As she opens the door, she realizes Brock isn't following.

MARIA

You are welcome to attend the funeral, Mr. Conrad.

BROCK

I don't want to intrude, Maria.

MARIA

You aren't intruding. We would be honored to have you there.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Brock stands uncomfortably among the mourners. His white skin amongst the dark Haitians and Dominicans receives many stares.

Augusto and Esperanza stand with Javier, who keeps his head down. The chaplain reads from the Bible. The casket is lowered into the ground. It is over.

The crowd disperses. Maria wipes her eyes and turns to Brock.

MARIA

I just need to have a few words with some people, Mr. Conrad. I won't be long.

BROCK

Take your time. I'll wait in the car.

He is relieved to get away.

Maria walks over to Javier, who watches several men shovel dirt onto the grave.

MARIA

Javier?

He turns around and looks at her. Esperanza and Augusto stand a few feet away, watching.

MARIA (CON'T)

My name is Maria Sanchez. I'm your grandfather's sister, which means I'm your great aunt.

JAVIER

Hi.

MARIA

I'm sorry I have never got to meet you or your mother. She died before I came to Santo Domingo.

He digs his foot into the ground.

MARIA (CON'T)

Javier, I want to ask my boss if you can come stay with me.

He looks up at her, dully.

JAVIER

I can't. I have to work. Grandpa left me with debt. I have to pay it back.

MARIA
How much is it? Maybe I can help.

JAVIER
\$2,359.

Her face registers shock. It's an unfathomable number to her.

MARIA
How is this possible?

Javier shrugs.

JAVIER
Grandpa was too sick to bring
in a good crop.

MARIA
You poor child! I will do my
best to do what I can to help.

She pulls him into a hug but he's limp in her arms.

MARIA (CON'T)
Here is my address. Write to me.

She puts a piece of paper in his hand.

MARIA (CON'T)
My boss is waiting. He was kind
enough to bring me here. He's a
busy—and very important—man. He
works at the company that owns
the plantation.

He glances up at her, unimpressed.

JAVIER
Then he is not a good man.

She releases him from her embrace.

MARIA
Keep faith, Javier.

She turns and walks back to the SUV. Javier watches as it
drives away. Esperanza and Augusto put their arms around him
and lead him away from the graveyard.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Augusto, Esperanza and Javier walk down the dirt road towards the bateye.

AUGUSTO

Javier, I wanted to give you something. To help you through this hard time.

He pulls a brand new BASEBALL—a real one, not one made from socks—out of his pocket and tosses it to Javier.

Javier says nothing.

AUGUSTO (CON'T)

I signed it.

He attempts to get a smile from Javier, but no success. Javier looks at the ball.

JAVIER

Thanks Augusto but I'm not going to play baseball anymore.

He throws the ball back to Augusto.

AUGUSTO

Why not?

JAVIER

Because it's pointless. I have responsibilities now. I was stupid to think I could ever become a professional player.

ESPERANZA

It's not stupid, Javier! You're so talented.

JAVIER

Oh please, what would you know, Esperanza?

ESPERANZA

I know that it's your dream.

JAVIER

There's no point to dream. I will never get out of here. This is my prison.

EXT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Amanda pulls her car into the driveway of her house and kills the engine. Through the window, she can see her parents arguing inside. Shouting at each other. Always angry. She looks at them, unwilling to go inside and deal with them.

Finally, she starts the car, turns around and drives back down the driveway.

INT. COLLEGE PLANETARIUM - NIGHT

Dr. Campo adjusts a large telescope in the school planetarium, a space in an old bell tower with an open roof to the sky. Amanda walks up the stairs into the room.

AMANDA

Anything good up there?

He looks up from the telescope.

DR. CAMPO

There's always something good, it's just a matter of being able to see it through all this light pollution.

He grimaces.

DR. CAMPO (CON'T)

But Venus is supposed to be visible tonight.

AMANDA

I think it's kind of a waste of time.

DR. CAMPO

Stargazing?

AMANDA

Yeah. Why look to the sky when there's so much going on right here on the ground?

DR. CAMPO

Sometimes you have to look up to find the answers you're searching for.

He looks into the scope and focuses it.

DR. CAMPO (CON'T)

Look.

AMANDA

I can see the sky with my naked eye.

DR. CAMPO

Not like this.

She walks over and looks in. We see millions and millions of stars, as far as can see.

AMANDA

Wow. Too bad we need a telescope to see all that.

DR. CAMPO

A long time ago you didn't need one. Anyway, what's on your mind?

AMANDA

I need to know how to get people to listen to me. No one wants to.

DR. CAMPO

You can't force anyone to listen to you.

She sighs.

AMANDA

I'm just afraid I'm going to have to hurt people to get what I want. To make change.

DR. CAMPO

What's more important to you, the relationships you have today or the legacy you leave behind?

She thinks.

AMANDA

They kind of rely on each other, don't they? Without any relationships, who's going to care what I accomplish?

DR. CAMPO

Exactly. When you were born, you cried and everybody else was happy. When you die, will YOU be happy when everybody else is crying?

She thinks about it.

AMANDA

I should get going. Good luck finding Venus.

DR. CAMPO

It's easy to find if you know where to look.

AMANDA

It's just that the searching is the hard part.

She walks out the door, as Dr. Campo looks up at the sky again.

MATCH CUT TO

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - NIGHT

A starry night sky. Augusto and Esperanza lay next to each other on the grass of the baseball field, looking up.

AUGUSTO

What do you see up there?

ESPERANZA

I see...stars.

AUGUSTO

Come on. Use your imagination.

She pauses and squints.

ESPERANZA

I see millions of tiny eyes, all staring down at us. In pity. And in relief because they are up high where no one can touch them. Where no one is looking down on them...because they are free.

She rolls over on her side, looking at him face-to-face.

ESPERANZA (CON'T)

I sound silly.

AUGUSTO

No.

He traces his finger along her delicate face, tenderly.

AUGUSTO (CON'T)

You sound like someone who has
lost hope.

ESPERANZA

Like my name, just a word. But
it sounds like a song when you
say it. Say it again.

AUGUSTO

Esperanza.

She leans over and they kiss—a mixture of sorrow, grief,
passion, and hope. A breath of fresh air in this forsaken
place.

ESPERANZA

I changed my mind. They look
like diamonds.

AUGUSTO

Have you ever even seen a diamond?

ESPERANZA

Only in magazines.

AUGUSTO

Someday you will see one in real life.

INT. B DORM - MORNING

Javier is asleep as a loud, obnoxious bell rings, signaling
the start of the day. It's still dark outside. He rises
sleepily and pulls on his worn out shoes. All the boys are
doing the same.

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - MORNING

Javier is crowded in the back of a dirty pickup truck. He eats
a rotten apple. The sun barely peaks over the horizon. They
are already off to work.

EXT. FIELDS - DAY

Javier works in the sweltering heat. He walks a row of sugar
cane, hunched over, cutting and throwing it into a wheel
barrow. He does this over and over. Sweat drips off his face.

EXT. TREE - DAY

Javier eats a meager lunch in the shade of a tree. Augusto walks over and stands over him.

AUGUSTO
Anyone else sharing your shade?

Javier nods his head 'no', not making eye contact.

AUGUSTO (CON'T)
Then you won't mind if I sit.

He sits down and begins eating his own food. They eat in silence. Augusto gives him his space.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

The day is ending and Javier walks by the baseball field, where a game is in full swing. He is tired and filthy. He doesn't look over at the players and continues walking.

INT. ESPERANZA'S DORM - NIGHT

Esperanza, Augusto, and Javier eat soup in Esperanza's dorm. A little better decorated and kept than Joseph and Javier's old place. Javier stares into his bowl, playing with the spoon. The adults exchange worried looks.

ESPERANZA
You don't like my soup, Javier?

She's teasing, trying to lighten the mood.

JAVIER
I like it.

He mumbles.

ESPERANZA
You must be famished, working out in the fields all day!

AUGUSTO
I'm sure Javier will eat when he is hungry. Just like he will play ball again when he is ready.

JAVIER
I told you, I'm done with baseball.

They are silent. Suddenly, Javier speaks.

JAVIER (CON'T)

Augusto, how much more debt do you owe?

AUGUSTO

\$75.

JAVIER

\$75! But that's nothing! You'll be out of here in no time!

Augusto exchanges another look with Esperanza, who speaks softly, slowly.

ESPERANZA

Javier, Augusto will be finished with his debt at the end of the month.

Javier looks at them in shock. He can't be losing Augusto too.

JAVIER

The end of the month? The end of the month?!

AUGUSTO

I can't stay here forever, Javier.

Javier is getting angrier. His voice rises.

JAVIER

But what am I supposed to do? I owe almost \$3000! I'll never get out of here!

ESPERANZA

Javier—

JAVIER

When were you going to tell me this? You were just planning on leaving me.

AUGUSTO

No, of course not—

JAVIER

Everyone will leave me. That's fine. I don't need you or anybody!

He gets up, shoving his soup away, spilling it. He storms for the door, slamming it as he leaves.

EXT. BATEYE STREETS - NIGHT

Javier walks briskly through the streets, head down. Rowdy men drink outside their dorms, shouting with each other. Glass shatters. Dangerous. They leer at Javier as he walks by, trying to stay invisible. Relief as he makes it back to B Dorm.

INT. B DORM - NIGHT

The scene is more chaos. Noisy, bored, angry boys with no one to watch or care for them. Javier gets in his bed and hides under the blanket.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

Brock paces back and forth in his living room, drink in hand. Contemplating. Maria can be seen in the kitchen, cleaning dishes.

BROCK

I'll be leaving for New York tomorrow, Maria.

MARIA

We'll keep the lights on for you, sir.

BROCK

I don't think I'll be coming back for a while.

He pauses as she stops what she's doing.

BROCK (CON'T)

My work has been suffering. It's this damn divorce...I don't think I've seen the inside of my office for weeks. And we have a shareholders' meeting next week and...the company's going through a big merger soon. I need to be there.

He sounds pathetic and they both know it.

MARIA

Of course. I understand.

BROCK
I'll try to find some renters to
keep you busy.

She gives him a knowing look and goes back to the dishes.

He downs the rest of his drink.

EXT. CAMPUS BENCH - DAY

Amanda sits alone on a bench, reading. Cole and Beth walk over
and sit down.

BETH
It's lonely being a renegade.

Amanda looks up and smiles weakly.

AMANDA
Which is why I'm giving it up.

COLE
Giving up? What do you mean?

AMANDA
I mean I'm done. No more stupid
protesting and advocating and
whatever else I thought I was
doing.

BETH
But—you love that stuff. It's
who you are!

AMANDA
Not anymore. I'm going to find
a new hobby.

COLE
What about Pointe Atlantic?

AMANDA
What about it? I sold my stock.

BETH
So you're not going to the meeting?

AMANDA
It's not worth it. It's not worth
having my dad on my ass every second
and alienating my friends.

BETH

You aren't alienating—

AMANDA

And there's just no point. I mean, how stupid am I to think that I could make a huge corporation change?

She laughs bitterly. Her friends are silent.

AMANDA (CON'T)

So do you guys wanna go to the mall or something?

INT. BROCK'S NYC APT - DAY

CASSANDRA, Brock's bimbo ex-wife, takes a painting off the wall and places it into a box.

Keys in the door. It opens and Brock walks in, sees Cassandra and throws his briefcase down in disbelief. She looks at him, caught red-handed.

BROCK

What the hell are you doing here?

CASSANDRA

Jesus, Brock, you scared the shit out of me.

She continues packing items into the box.

CASSANDRA (CON'T)

I'm getting the rest of my things. You're supposed to be in the Dominican Republic.

BROCK

I came back.

CASSANDRA

Unfortunately. Well, don't worry. I'll be out of your hair and life in a few minutes.

BROCK

Oh please, take your time. I would hate to rush your pillaging of things that aren't yours.

CASSANDRA

For someone who's been on vacation for the past three months, you're looking pretty pathetic.

BROCK

I've been working. Something you would know nothing about.

CASSANDRA

Ah, yes. Work, your first love.

BROCK

Well you've "loved" enough people for the both of us.

CASSANDRA

I don't understand why you even bother keeping this place. You're never here.

BROCK

What, are you spying on me?

CASSANDRA

Don't flatter yourself. I have the concierge call me when you go out of town so I can get the rest of my things without having to see you.

BROCK

Are you done?

She throws a couple of pillows from the couch on top of the box and looks around the room.

CASSANDRA

I think so. The rest is crap.

She picks up the box and carries it to the door, struggling to open it. He doesn't help her.

CASSANDRA

You look like hell, Brock. Have a fulfilling life.

She walks out and kicks the door closed.

INT. AMANDA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Amanda eats a bowl of cereal at the kitchen counter. She reads a fashion magazine, bored.

Roger, dressed in a suit, walks into the room and pours himself a cup of coffee.

AMANDA

Well don't you look spiffy. I didn't know you were job hunting.

He laughs.

ROGER

I'm not. The Pointe Atlantic shareholders meeting is this afternoon.

A flicker of disappointment in her eyes.

AMANDA

Oh.

She flips through the magazine.

INT. BROCK'S OFFICE - DAY

Brock stands at the window in his office, overlooking New York City. His assistant REBECCA walks in, carrying a stack of papers.

REBECCA

Last minute numbers for you.

BROCK

Just put them on my desk.

She does.

REBECCA

The meeting's in two hours, Mr. Conrad.

BROCK

Yes, I know.

He sighs.

REBECCA

Are you ready for it?

BROCK
Piece of cake.

He quietly stares out the window.

BROCK (CON'T)
Is there anything else, Rebecca?

REBECCA
No, sir. Good luck.

BROCK
Thanks.

She leaves the office and he walks over to his desk, picking up the file of papers. He flips through it quickly and throws it in the trash.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Amanda walks on the sidewalk through campus to class. Dejected. A car pulls up next to her and screeches to a halt. Cole yells to her through the rolled-down window. Beth sits in the passenger seat.

COLE
Amanda!

She looks at them, mutters hello, and keeps walking. Cole drives the car slowly next to her.

COLE (CON'T)
Get in!

She keeps walking.

AMANDA
I've got class.

The back window of the car rolls down and Dr. Campo sticks his head out.

DR. CAMPO
It's cancelled.

She stops and gapes at him.

BETH
Get in!

Dr. Campo opens up the door and Amanda begrudgingly gets in next to him.

AMANDA
What's going on?

Cole and Beth turn around in their seats to face her.

BETH
We've got a meeting to go to.

She and Cole hold up their own certificates of stock, grinning. Amanda gasps in disbelief.

AMANDA
What? You bought stocks? But how—

COLE
Same way you did.

AMANDA
But...

BETH
It might have taken an outside source to make us see the error of our ways—

COLE
We're sorry we didn't believe in your idea, Amanda.

BETH
We want to give it a shot. We want to give those people a voice.

Amanda is stunned.

DR. CAMPO
Now, we have to hurry because we still have to go buy Amanda's stock back.

AMANDA
Well...

She sheepishly pulls out her certificate out of her backpack.

AMANDA (CON'T)
I might not have sold it.

They look shocked but break out in laughter.

BETH

Woohoo! That's the rebel I remember.

AMANDA

I'm going to get murdered at home.

BETH

You always said that if what we're doing doesn't piss a few people off, then we're not doing it right.

AMANDA

Alright. Let's do this!

COLE

You might want to put your seatbelts on.

He revs the engine and peels away.

INT. HOTEL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A large room with rows and rows of chairs. Brock, John, and five other Pointe Atlantic executives sit on a stage in the front of the room. A podium stands in front of them.

BUSINESS MEN and WOMEN mingle about, talking, some already sitting, waiting for the meeting to start. It's a packed house.

Amanda, Cole, Beth, and Dr. Campo walk into the room. They scan the room, looking out of place.

Amanda anxiously looks around for her dad but doesn't see him.

Dr. Campo motions them over to a row of empty chairs about halfway up the room and they quietly sit.

John gets up from his seat on the stage and walks to the podium, clearing his throat. He speaks into the microphone.

JOHN

If everyone could take their seats, we'll be starting in a few.

The crowd disperses to their seats and soon the room is silent. The atmosphere is tense and Amanda's face is drained of color.

JOHN (CON'T)

Good morning to everyone. I'd like to call the 1979 Annual Pointe Atlantic Shareholder Meeting to order. I'm John Peirson, Chief Financial Officer for the company and I will be serving as Chair of the meeting. Brock Conrad, Senior Vice President, will be serving as Secretary.

Brock gets up from his seat and shakes hands with John, who goes back to his seat.

BROCK

Thanks John. And thanks everyone for coming today. We have a lot to cover, so let's start off with reviewing the end of the quarter statements for Pointe Petrol.

He looks confidently at his notes and continues talking.

CUT TO:

EXT. BATEYE - DAY

Augusto, sweating and dirty from working in the fields, walks down the road towards the grocery store.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Esperanza is stocking shelves as Augusto enters. They greet each other with a kiss.

ESPERANZA

You're never going to get your work done if you keep sneaking off to see me.

AUGUSTO

I guess a part of me doesn't really want to leave.

She smiles.

ESPERANZA

You would be an idiot to stay.

He sighs.

ESPERANZA (CON'T)

Besides, your life is waiting
for you out there. I am smart
enough to know that this is only
a temporary thing.

AUGUSTO

It doesn't have to be.

ESPERANZA

You should get back to work.

She turns away from him and goes back to stocking. He looks at her for a few seconds before walking out the door.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Brock bangs a gavel on the podium.

BROCK

Let the record show that proposal
36b has been approved unanimously.
Next item on the agenda- Dorado
Granja, subsidiary of Pointe Atlantic.

The students, whose eyes were beginning to glaze over, snap to attention. This is what they came for.

BROCK (CON'T)

Our raw materials division continues
to be profitable and plans with
Bertelsmann to merge with their
cocoa division are moving forward.

He pauses and clears his throat, rushing through it.

BROCK (CON'T)

We are entirely optimistic of
continued success in the Dominican
Republic. Our numbers are reported
in your handouts. The floor is now
open to comments and questions.

Amanda gulps and stands, her legs shaking, the first to stand.
The others follow.

As she gets a better view of the room, she sees Roger in a row
to her left. His face is distorted in anger. She takes a deep
breath and turns away from him as someone hands her a
microphone.

EXT. BATEYE STREETS - DAY

Augusto walks back up the dusty road towards the field. Out of nowhere, two guards come up behind him and knock him to the ground with a club. It's GUARD #1 and a sidekick.

Guard #1 grins menacingly as he stands over Augusto, whose lip is bleeding.

GUARD #1

You seem to be in the wrong place.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Amanda holds the mic nervously.

AMANDA

Hi.

Her voice echoes around the room and everyone in the room turns to look at her. She pauses, unable to get the words out.

BROCK

Your question, miss?

AMANDA

Do you think you're doing a good job?

The room titters. Brock looks confused and stammers.

BROCK

Excuse me?

Amanda takes a breath, trying to gain confidence.

AMANDA

Do you think you and the other executives are doing a good job running Pointe Atlantic?

Brock laughs abruptly, caught off guard.

BROCK

How exactly do you mean your question?

AMANDA

I mean it as a moral question, Mr. Conrad. Do you sleep peacefully at night knowing that every person

working on the sugar cane farms
is going to bed in more debt than
they will ever earn from being unable
to pay for basic necessities?

BROCK

I have visited the plantation
numerous times and I assure you,
everything is up to the standards
we'd expect here at home.

Beth speaks up.

BETH

Then why has it been reported that
the life expectancy on Dorado Granja
is under 40?

BROCK

If you're speaking of the Amnesty
report, they were seriously mistaken
on many levels.

COLE

It's being reported that Pointe
Atlantic is being sued by the SEC for
failing to pay the Dominican
government taxes from revenues
produced from the sugar cane farms.
Why hasn't that been mentioned?

BROCK

Where did you get that information?

AMANDA

What percentage of your \$10 million
dollar bonus from last year did you
put back into the economy of the
Dominican Republic?

BROCK

Okay, I think these questions are
a little out of order. We have
serious business to attend to here.

DR. CAMPO

Their questions are quite serious,
I assure you.

BROCK

Who are you people?

She holds up her certificate of stock.

AMANDA

I only own one stock in this company, so you might not care what I have to say. But we came here today as messengers for the people of the Dominican Republic. The people who are cheated out of fair wages, proper housing, education, and nutrition because of the practices of Pointe Atlantic.

EXT. BATEYE STREETS - DAY

Augusto is being brutally beaten by the guards. They show no mercy, looking to kill.

AMANDA (V.O.)

The people who work on the sugar plantation owned by Pointe Atlantic make \$2 a day for back-breaking work in temperatures reaching over 100 degrees. With no unions to protect them from being exploited and manipulated by the people who run the plantation.

The beating continues. Augusto rolls into a ball on the ground, trying to protect himself.

Esperanza runs out of the store, hearing the commotion. She screams as she sees what's happening.

AMANDA (V.O.)

Pointe Atlantic has developed over 1/3 of the country's farm land into raising sugar cane—one of the unhealthiest substances on the planet. This crop is responsible for heart disease, diabetes, obesity...it goes on.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

AMANDA

While the first world enjoys our coffee in the morning and sodas and candy bars, the people of the third world—the people who

slave away to bring us the sugar—the people with no voice and who I speak for now—are unable to feed themselves properly because all of their land has been used up by your company. If that land was used to produce food, malnutrition would be decreased by 50%. The entire country has become a one-crop economy.

EXT. BATEYE STREETS - DAY

A plantation truck drives around the corner. With a last kick, the guards spit on the ground near Augusto and grab onto the back of the truck, getting away from the scene of the crime.

Esperanza is screaming and crying, holding Augusto in her arms, who is not moving.

AMANDA (V.O.)

With the millions of dollars Pointe Atlantic has made exploiting this country, how do you plan to pay them back? What about hospitals and schools in the regions that are too poor to take care of their own?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The room is silent, listening to the students.

AMANDA

Pointe Atlantic needs to realize that this company, in the end, does not belong to you. It doesn't belong to anyone in this room or anyone anywhere. It belongs to God.

EXT. BATEYE STREET - DAY

Javier walks down the street, a pick axe slung over his shoulder. He sees Esperanza and Augusto in the middle of the street, drops his tool and runs over to them.

AMANDA (V.O.)

Pointe Atlantic has been give the responsibility of being the stewards of Dorado Granaja and of the land in the Dominican Republic. It's your responsibility to make sure it

and the people who live there are
cared for in the way you would
care for your own.

Esperanza and Javier carry Augusto into a room and lay him on
a mattress. Esperanza frantically tries to bandage his
bleeding wounds.

AMANDA (V.O.)

Some day the true owner of Pointe
Atlantic will reclaim it. Will you
be able to justify your actions?
Will you be able to say you showed
compassion and love for the world's
poor—the people who right now are
slaving away, hoping that someday
their hard work will pay off?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A final pause.

AMANDA (CON'T)

Will you be proud of the job you
did?

The room is awkwardly quiet. Brock seems to have no words. A
camera flash goes off on Amanda and the other students. John
quickly intercepts Brock at the mic, tittering uneasily.

JOHN

Thank you. Next on the agenda
is Title 4, insurance holdings
for the division of copyrights...

His voice drones on as he changes the subject. Brock backs
away and sits down slowly in a chair, stunned into silence.
The atmosphere of the room has changed.

INT. BATEYE - NIGHT

Esperanza frantically bandages Augusto but it's looking bad.
Javier watches anxiously.

ESPERANZA

I don't have enough bandages.

JAVIER

What do you need? I can go find
something.

ESPERANZA

He needs to get to a hospital.

JAVIER

But the guards...they'll never
let him leave after tonight!

ESPERANZA

I'll have to sneak him out. I
know a way.

JAVIER

I'm going with you!

ESPERANZA

No, Javier! It's too dangerous.

JAVIER

But...

ESPERANZA

I said no!

Javier is silent, upset. He finally speaks.

JAVIER

But I know where we can go.

INT. SHAREHOLDER'S MEETING - DAY

The meeting is over and the crowd swarms towards the door.
Brock, who has remained in his seat, looks

ACROSS THE ROOM,

Where Amanda, Beth, Cole and Dr. Campo are seated, talking
amongst themselves.

John leaves the podium and storms over to Brock.

JOHN

What the fuck, Brock?

Brock sighs, tired.

BROCK

What would you have had me do,
John?

JOHN

You should have stopped that

little hippie tirade long before
I had to!

BROCK

Our shareholders are entitled
to their free speech.

JOHN

I don't give a shit about what
some kid owning one share thinks
about a multibillion corporation
they know nothing about.

BROCK

She was just telling everyone the
things that I've been seeing for
some time now.

JOHN

What are you saying? You're agreeing
with her about Pointe Atlantic's
practices?

BROCK

I'm saying she might have made some
valid points.

John is enraged.

JOHN

The words coming out of your mouth
are not appropriate for a Vice
President, Brock.

BROCK

Maybe I'm not Vice President material
then, John.

JOHN

What are you trying to say here?

As Brock opens his mouth to speak, they are interrupted by a
serious-looking, female REPORTER in her mid-thirties.

REPORTER

Excuse me, gentlemen. Wanda Revere,
Wall Street Journal.

JOHN

Oh, for fuck's sake.

WANDA

Was hoping I could a comment from
Pointe Atlantic on the allegations
made by the young lady over there.

She motions over to Amanda and her group,

WHO ARE STILL SEATED, but now looking worriedly at Roger, who
has made his way through the crowd and is storming towards
Amanda with an enraged expression on his face.

AMANDA

Uh oh.

Roger's voice shakes with anger as he speaks slowly to her.

ROGER

You. Get up. We're leaving.

She remains seated and speaks calmly.

AMANDA

I'm not leaving, Dad. I'm hoping
to get another word with the
Pointe Atlantic executives after
everyone leaves...

ROGER

This is not a discussion. You
either come with me now or you'll
find your shit on the curb when
you get home.

Amanda's friends look shocked.

DR. CAMPO

Mr. Davis, let's be civil here. I
understand your frustration, but
you should be very proud of your
daughter...

AMANDA

It's okay, Dr. Campo. Dad, I'm
not going with you and if you want
to kick me out, then you go right
ahead. I'm not going to step down,
especially not for you.

Roger looks flabbergasted at first but his expression turns
surlly.

ROGER
Suit yourself.

He turns and storms out of the room. Amanda lets out a deep breath.

BETH
Are you okay?

AMANDA
That felt good.

She grins at her friends, who grin back. Their attention is quickly diverted to John and Brock, who walk briskly towards them down the center aisle. The students stand up expectantly as they comes closely, but John walks right by without a glance towards them. Brock makes eye contact with Amanda but continues without a word.

Disappointed, the students slump back down in their seats.

COLE
They totally just ignored us.

BETH
What assholes!

Confused, Amanda tries to keep her spirits up.

AMANDA
They heard what we had to say.
Hopefully they'll take it to heart.

DR. CAMPO
We did what we came here to do. I
think that's more than we could
have asked for.

AMANDA
They won't forget about us. Come on,
let's get going.

They begin to gather their belongings but are interrupted.

WANDA
Excuse me. I was hoping I could
have a word with you guys.

She stands in the aisle, pen perched on pad, smiling down on them.

EXT. BATEYE STORE - NIGHT

Esperanza and Javier drag August's unconscious body behind the convenience store, hiding behind a shrub.

A PICKUP TRUCK idles as the DRIVER loads up the back with empty crates and bottles from the store.

ESPERANZA
(whispering)

On my signal, we make our move.

Javier nods.

The worker goes back into the store.

ESPERANZA (CON'T)

Now!

They lift Augusto and drag him over to the truck. Javier climbs in the back and leans down to pull Augusto up. He drags his body to the corner of the bed and covers it with a tarp.

Esperanza starts to climb into the back of the truck but hears the door to the store slam shut.

As the driver makes his way back to the truck, Esperanza frantically dives behind the bushes and Javier ducks under the tarp with Augusto.

The driver hasn't noticed them. He loads a final stack of crates onto the bed of the truck, slams the gate closed, and climbs into the driver's seat. He shifts into drive and slowly pulls away from the store.

Esperanza peeks her head out from behind the bush and watches them drive away, horror in her eyes.

EXT. BATEYE ROAD - NIGHT

Under the tarp, Javier listens to the sound of the truck driving down the gravel road. Augusto is still unconscious beside him.

EXT. BATEYE GUARD STATION - NIGHT

The truck slows to a stop at the small guard station at the entrance/exit of the bateye. The GATEKEEPER comes out and walks to the back of the truck, inspecting it.

GATEKEEPER
Unseasonably cold night.

DRIVER
Been hurting the crop.

The guard grunts, poking around the truck, aimlessly opening crates.

GATEKEEPER
Yankees are going to clinch
the pennant.

DRIVER
I hate the Yankees. What's the
score? This piece of shit truck
doesn't have a radio.

GATEKEEPER
5-2, bottom of the sixth.

He reaches for the tarp covering Javier and Augusto. Javier
sucks in his breath.

GATEKEEPER (CON'T)
Peterson better not give up any
runs in the ninth, like last time.

DRIVER
Always preferred the Red Sox myself.

The guard releases the tarp, looking at the driver
incredulously.

GATEKEEPER
I've always questioned your sanity,
Jose.

He shakes his head.

GATEKEEPER (CON'T)
You're clear. Have a good night.

DRIVER
You too.

He gives a small wave as he pulls away. Under the tarp, Javier
breathes a sigh of relief.

EXT. AMANDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Cole's car pulls into Amanda's driveway. A lone duffel bag sits on the porch, the lights turned off.

AMANDA

I guess that answers that question.

She gets out of the car and picks up the bag, taking it back to the car.

The car backs down the driveway and pulls away. From the house window, Roger watches the car drive down the road.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

Amanda sleeps on the floor of Beth's dorm. The early morning sun beams through the window and on to her face.

The door opens and Beth rushes into the room, holding a newspaper.

BETH

Oh my god. Wake up!

She nudges Amanda with her foot, who groggily looks up at her.

AMANDA

What is it?

Beth tosses the newspaper down and

MATCH CUT TO:

It lands on Brock's desk.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

The front page of *The Wall Street Journal* blasts a huge headline reading: POINTE ATLANTIC DENIES SHAREHOLDER ALLEGATIONS.

Brock sighs and looks up at John, who stands next the desk.

JOHN

Emergency board meeting.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

Twenty top-ranking BOARD MEMBERS of Pointe Atlantic sit around a long, polished table in the board room. Copies of the *Wall Street Journal* article are placed at every seat. A TV with the stock report plays silently in the background. The members speak seriously. This is D-Day for the company.

MEMBER 1

The Dow's reporting that Pointe Atlantic's stock is down almost 50 cents since the article came out this morning.

Another member interrupts him.

MEMBER 2

My brokers are predicting a twenty point drop.

MEMBER 1

And the West Coast hasn't even woken up yet.

Another member reads directly from the paper.

MEMBER 3

The *Journal* describes Pointe Atlantic executives as "cold, condescending, and conniving" and says that the meeting yesterday was "nothing but a comical farce in which the sinking conglomerate all but ignored the dismal end-of-quarter numbers and public outrage over the inhumane treatment of workers on its numerous third-world plantations."

He looks at John and Brock.

MEMBER 3 (CON'T)

This couldn't be more fucked up.

The men grumble to each other until another member speaks up.

MEMBER 4

I want to know exactly how a group of three college students managed to wreak this much havoc on a billion-dollar company.

JOHN

They had a professor with them...

MEMBER 1

So a lowly professor at a third-rate religious college is the reason why I lost over a million dollars this morning?

MEMBER 2

And who let them into the meeting? Why aren't there rules for this shit?!

BROCK

Well, they had bought shares so technically they were shareholders in Pointe Atlantic.

JOHN

Something we had no control over.

MEMBER 4

But you let the girl go on for almost five minutes! Was every executive asleep at the wheel?

MEMBER 2

What steps are PR taking on this?

JOHN

We're working on a pitch to various outlets...

MEMBER 2

Working on it?

MEMBER 1

You need to do better than that! Someone dropped the ball big time on this.

Various arguments between the group start up. Member 3 walks over to the TV and turns it up.

MEMBER 3

Everyone shut up!

A news broadcast plays on the TV. A REPORTER stands outside Pointe Atlantic headquarters in front of a huge crowd of PROTESTORS waving signs.

REPORTER (O.S.)

...where hundreds of protesters have gathered to express their disapproval of company practices in the Dominican Republic.

MEMBER 1

Dear god, is that outside?

Footage cuts to protestors being interviewed.

PROTESTOR 1

I owned about 15,000 shares and dumped them all as soon as I heard about how Pointe Atlantic is taking advantage of innocent laborers that can't even feed themselves. It's not right and someone needs to teach Pointe Atlantic some corporate responsibility.

CUT TO:

Another PROTESTOR speaks to the reporter.

PROTESTOR 2

I think it's sad when a company made of the smartest and most powerful people can't even answer the tough questions from a couple of kids.

PROTESTOR 3

I definitely won't be purchasing any Pointe Atlantic products and I'm telling everyone I know to do the same.

REPORTER

Almost all of the protestors I spoke to here have sold their stock in Pointe Atlantic at the opening of the market today. Predictions are showing a decline of up to 50%, which could prove disastrous for overseas investor relations. This could just be the wakeup call the corporation needed. Angela Blackstone, Channel 6 News.

The news cuts back to the anchor in the studio and John turns off the TV in disgust.

A young man in a suit runs into the board room.

JOHN

Steven, I told you not to interrupt me for anything!

STEVEN

I'm sorry, Mr. Pierson. Bertelsmann has retracted their offer!

JOHN

WHAT?

STEVEN

The Roja Granada deal is gone.

JOHN

SHIT!

John flings his briefcase at Steven, who runs out of the room. A furious swarm of activity erupts between the men in the room.

Brock sits quietly in his chair, stands up and looks down to the protestors below, contemplating. He turns back to the board members.

BROCK

Everyone shut the hell up and listen to me!

John looks at Brock, shocked he would yell at the board. He laughs nervously.

JOHN

Brock, please, let's be diplomatic.

BROCK

Can it, John! You've pioneered Pointe Atlantic into this mess by turning a blind eye to the corruptness that's gotten us here. There's only one way to redeem ourselves now or else they'll be teaching this in Public Relations disasters 101 for a hundred years.

He pauses.

BROCK (CON'T)

We need to get those kids in here

and let them save us.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

It's early morning and the pickup truck carrying Javier and Augusto pulls into a gas station. The driver gets out of the cab and walks into the small store attached to the station.

Javier throws the tarp off of himself and Augusto. He shakes Augusto, bringing him to semi-consciousness.

JAVIER

Augusto! Can you hear me?

Augusto's eyes flicker briefly as he struggles to speak.

JAVIER (CON'T)

Don't say anything, you need your strength.

Javier glances over at the store, where he can see the driver paying the cashier.

JAVIER (CON'T)

You need to pull yourself together for one minute and get out of this truck. I'm not strong enough to pull you out myself.

He slides himself over to the end of the truck, careful not to be seen. He opens the latch to the truck bed and it falls down. Inside, the driver is shoving some bills into his pocket and heading for the door.

JAVIER (CON'T)

We have to be quick!

He drops to the ground and pulls Augusto's legs, but he can barely move him an inch.

JAVIER (CON'T)

Please, Augusto! We can't get caught!

Augusto groans and tries to move, but falls weakly back down. The driver opens the door to go outside, but turns around to say something to the cashier.

JAVIER (CON'T)

Esperanza is going to get hurt if we don't get back to her soon!

The sound of Esperanza's name stirs something in Augusto. He uses all of his strength and pushes himself down the truck bed until he reaches the end. Wincing in pain, he sits up and dangles his feet off the edge of the truck.

Javier takes his hands and helps him slide down and on to the ground, where he collapses.

JAVIER (CON'T)

Good job, Augusto! We just need to crawl a little bit away.

He helps Augusto slowly drag himself over to another gas pump and leans him against it just as the driver approaches his truck. The driver looks at them in disgust.

DRIVER

Tell your old man to put down the bottle at night. Fuckin' *mulatos*.

He gets in the truck and drives away, not noticing that the bed door hangs open.

INT. DR. CAMPO'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Campo sits in his office grading papers. The phone rings, he answers.

DR. CAMPO

Dr. Campo.

His eyes widen as he listens to what the person on the other end says.

EXT. COLLEGE GROUNDS - DAY

Beth and Cole are sitting next to the stump of the tree that they had protested for. Amanda approaches.

AMANDA

Hey. Do you know why Dr. Campo asked to meet us here?

COLE

No clue. We were hoping you knew.

AMANDA

I have no idea either.

Dr. Campo strides towards them with a smile on his face.

DR. CAMPO

Amanda, I think you're going to want to sit down for this.

She looks at him warily and sits on the stump. He sits next to them.

DR. CAMPO (CON'T)

So, remember that little saying I've repeated numerous times in class?

BETH

Make sure your name's on your work before you hand it in?

He laughs and shakes his head.

DR. CAMPO

No. You can make a difference. And you have.

The students look at each other, confused.

DR. CAMPO (CON'T)

I received a call from the Pointe Atlantic corporation today. They want to meet with you three.

AMANDA

The three of us? What about you?

DR. CAMPO

You've already proven that you can accomplish whatever you set out to do, on your own. Now you just have to finish what you started.

EXT. CROWD - DAY

The protesting outside Pointe Atlantic headquarters is still going strong. Steven pushes through the crowd towards the entrance, leading Amanda, Cole, and Beth who take it all in.

BETH

All these people are here because of the article!

COLE

What do you think they want to talk to use about?

Amanda doesn't know.

AMANDA

I just hope they don't laugh us
out of the building.

They push through the crowd in anticipation.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

The board members sit around the room waiting for the students to arrive. John pulls Brock to the side to speak to him in private.

JOHN

You better fix this, Conrad, or
you'll have an easier time finding
a job as a janitor in one of the
sugar cane plants than anywhere in
the first world again.

Brock's eyes narrow.

BROCK

Oh, I'll fix it, John. Don't worry.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Amanda, Cole, and Beth are led down the hallway towards the Pointe Atlantic board room.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

As the door to the room opens, the men in the room go silent and look expectantly towards the students. John approaches them with a cheerful façade, shaking their hands as they are led towards the table.

JOHN

Ah, you've arrived. How wonderful.
Thanks for coming in with such
short notice. Please have a seat.

He motions towards three empty chairs.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Javier puts a quarter into a pay phone and holds the phone to his ear.

JAVIER
Hola. Maria?

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Esperanza wipes down the shelves of the general store, a blank expression on her face. The door opens and the two guards from the night before enter.

GUARD #1
Where is he?

ESPERANZA
I don't know what you're talking about.

He walks over to her and stares menacingly in her face.

GUARD #1
Don't make me do to you what I did to him. Where is he?

ESPERANZA
I told you, I don't know! I tried to clean his wounds but left him in his apartment. That's the last I saw him.

The guard slaps her.

GUARD #1
Liar! I'm going to give you one more chance to tell me where he is.

She looks at him directly in the eyes.

ESPERANZA
I. Don't. Know.

The guard glares at her but his face widens into an evil grin.

GUARD #1
Maybe you will tell the Overseer.

He grabs her arm and pulls her out of the store.

INT. MANSION - DAY

Augusto lays on a clean, white bed. A window blows fresh air into the room. His wounds are covered with white gauze and he breathes slowly and soundly.

Maria wipes a wet cloth on his face as Javier watches from a chair next to the bed.

JAVIER

I have to get back to the bateye.

MARIA

You're not going anywhere, *mijo*.
You need to rest.

JAVIER

We can't just leave Esperanza there.
They're going to question her. She
was the last to see us!

MARIA

I'm sure she'll be fine.

JAVIER

You don't understand. They did this
to him. They'll do it to her too.
Where's your boss? The guy owns the
bateye.

MARIA

Oh no, Javier. He doesn't own it. He
just works for the company that owns
it.

JAVIER

But he could help us! He could stop
them from hurting us.

MARIA

Mr. Conrad is much too busy to get
involved in our lives. He has bigger
things to deal with.

She takes a blood-soaked bandage from Augusto's body and
throws it in bucket. Javier looks at it, dejected.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Brock sits at his desk while John looks out the window.

BROCK

The press conference is at 4. After
that, I'm getting on a plane to the DR.

JOHN

I don't see how you can leave at

a time like this.

BROCK

It'll make the things I'm saying at the conference look legit. I'm heading down there to put everything into action.

John hands him a piece of paper.

JOHN

I worked up some statements. Keep it short and sweet.

BROCK

I've got it under control. No one will even remember this story tomorrow. I'll be so boring, the media won't even report on it.

JOHN

Well, Brock, I have to say, I'm impressed with the way you handled things today. Especially with those stupid kids.

BROCK

Whatever I can do to help the company.

JOHN

I almost believed your bullshit myself.

He heads for the door.

JOHN (CON'T)

Just make this all go away.

Brock watches him leave the office and begins to read the piece of paper.

INT. COLLEGE COMMON ROOM - DAY

A group of students are watching TV in the common room of the dormitory. Amanda walks into the room, followed by Cole and Beth and immediately changes the channel to a news station.

GIRL ON COUCH

Hey, we were watching that!

AMANDA

Sorry, but I think you can catch

Rocky and Bullwinkle some other time.

The three of them plop on the couch and the other students leave in annoyance.

The TV changes to a live conference feed of a podium set up outside Pointe Atlantic headquarters.

COLE
It's starting!

BETH
Turn it up!

AMANDA
Okay, okay! Quiet!

She turns up the TV as the voice of the anchor is heard off screen.

ANCHOR (O.S.)
We're just joining a press conference held by Pointe Atlantic who will be issuing a statement regarding recent allegations of human rights violations in overseas operations.

On the TV, Brock steps up to the podium. John is beside him.

EXT. CONFERENCE - DAY

John leans in to whisper to Brock.

JOHN
You reviewed the statements?

BROCK
Yeah, I reviewed them. Here's what I think about them.

He pulls the piece of paper from his pocket, crumples it into a ball and tosses it to the ground.

JOHN
Brock, what are you...

Brock puts a huge smile on his face and steps up to the podium, speaking into the dozen mics set up by various media outlets.

BROCK

Thank you everyone, for joining us here today. Let me first start by reinforcing Pointe Atlantic's commitment to justice for all beings around the world. Recent events have come to light regarding the treatment of workers in our plants in the Dominican Republic. It has come to our attention that on certain plantations, our employees are entrapped in a debt bondage system and are lacking access to even basic human necessities.

He glances at John, who is listening with rapt attention.

BROCK (CON'T)

The enslavement of another person is in essence the enslavement of himself. Ponte Atlantic has abused the trust of its shareholders, the public, and most importantly, the people it employs across the globe. This is not what Pointe Atlantic stands for and we are truly sickened that these practices have occurred under our watch. We are eager to prove to the world the kind of company we are supposed to be.

He pauses.

BROCK (CON'T)

That's why Pointe Atlantic is committing today to invest \$500 million dollars over the next five years into programs that will bring about radical change into the lives of people in the Dominican Republic.

There is a loud, collective gasp from the crowd at the news.

INT. COMMON ROOM - DAY

Amanda, Cole, and Beth practically fall off the couch.

AMANDA

\$500 *million* dollars?!

INT. OFFICE - DAY

In Dr. Campolo's office, he stares at the TV in disbelief.

DR. CAMPO
Jesus Christ!

EXT. CONFERENCE - DAY

The reporters start firing questions at Brock. John lurches forward and puts his hand over the microphone to stop Brock from continuing.

JOHN
Are you insane?! That wasn't the deal!

Brock ignores him. The media are furiously taking photos and writing notes.

BROCK
We will be partnering with Mt. Cedar's Sinai Hospital to create health clinics in every Dominican community. For every acre of farm land that Pointe Atlantic grows sugar cane on, another acre will be put aside to grow food for the Dominican people. In addition...

JOHN
Brock, I must insist this stop right now!

BROCK
In addition, we will be building a university that will train doctors, lawyers, nurses, and engineers, that all Pointe Atlantic employees will be able to attend free of charge.

He pauses and takes a deep breath.

BROCK (CON'T)
And, of course, all outstanding debts incurred by workers living on Pointe Atlantic-run plantations will be erased starting this second. A new system will be put in place to ensure that something like this never happens on our watch again.

BROCK (CON'T)

One last thing. I am announcing
my resignation as Pointe Atlantic's
Vice President of Operations.

The crowd of reporters begins shouting questions at Brock. He holds his hands up to quiet them.

BROCK (CON'T)

Corporate responsibility starts
with personal responsibility,
something that I am ashamed to say
has not been part of professional
life, nor that of my personal one.
Therefore, I take full blame for
the inhumane treatment of the people
of the Dominican Republic and step
down in hopes that social justice
can flourish in my absence. John
Pierson will be answering any further
questions. Thank you.

He steps away from the podium and slaps John on the back.

BROCK (CON'T)

Go get 'em, old buddy.

He turns his back on the crowd and walks away, leaving John and the rest of the executives utterly blindsided.

INT. COMMON ROOM - DAY

The three students stare at the TV, speechless. On the screen, a sweating John tries to answer questions.

BETH

What just happened?

AMANDA

I think...I think we just accomplished
what we set out to do...

Her voice trails off.

BETH

\$500 million dollars...

COLE

That's half a billion dollars.

They are silent, staring. Slowly, they turn to each other, smiles wide, ecstatic. Suddenly, they are off the couch, hugging each other, screaming, and dancing around in joy.

EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

Brock exits a private jet and walks towards the waiting SUV.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

Brock enters his Dominican house wearily. As he hangs up his coat, Maria hurries into the room.

MARIA

Mr. Conrad! We didn't expect you tonight! Oh my goodness, I'm so sorry, I've been so busy... please, let me get you a drink...

She scuttles into the kitchen.

BROCK

It's okay, Maria. I don't need a drink tonight. I just need to sleep.

He goes into the living area and collapses on the couch. Maria timidly follows him.

MARIA

Mr. Conrad...something happened today. I felt I had no choice. I understand if you will be upset...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Maria and Brock stand in the doorway to the bedroom where Augusto is asleep, still covered in bandages. Javier snoozes in the chair next to him.

MARIA

They came from Dorado Granja, sir. I couldn't turn them away.

EXT. DOMINICAN ROAD - NIGHT

Brock's SUV speeds down an empty road.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Brock drives, with Javier in the passenger seat. Brock glances at the boy, who stares straight ahead in silence. Brock attempts some Spanish.

BROCK
(in broken Spanish)
I'm going to help your family.

JAVIER
It might be too late for help.

INT. OVERSEER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Esperanza sits in the interrogation chair in the Overseer's dank office. Her arms are tied behind her back and a bruise has formed on her cheek. Overseer Juarez sits behind his desk. Guard #1 stands at the doorway.

JUAREZ
I do not wish to harm a beautiful woman such as yourself. It would be a waste.

ESPERANZA
Then don't.

He sighs, feigning frustration.

JUAREZ
I don't think you understand my plight. Augusto Garcia owes me money for his brother's debt. If he has left without paying, then he has committed a grave crime against me.

He walks over to her, leering at her face.

JUAREZ (CON'T)
His debts must be paid by someone.

ESPERANZA
I am of no relation to him. I fail to see how his debts can be passed on to me.

JUAREZ
It's just the way things are.

Of course, there are always ways
to pay besides in cash.

He grins smarmily and nods at the guard, who leaves the room.

EXT. BATEYE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The SUV plows through the entrance to the bateye without stopping. The gatekeeper bursts out of his shed, yelling and waving at the car to stop, dust blowing in his face.

We follow the car down the dirt road towards the center of the bateye, where the dorms are located.

INT. SUV

Javier points out the window to the general store.

JAVIER

Right here!

The car screeches to a halt and Javier throws open the door, heading toward the store.

INT. GENERAL STORE - NIGHT

Javier bursts into the store, which is empty. He can see a sign of the struggle - a broken jar on the floor, boxes strewn about.

Brock enters the store.

JAVIER

She's not here. They must have
taken her.

BROCK

Where?

JAVIER

Overseer Juarez's office.

BROCK

Overseer Juarez? That's not his
job title. There's no such position!

JAVIER

There has been as long as I've
been here.

BROCK
How long is that?

JAVIER
All my life.

Brock looks confused. He pulls his cell phone out of his pocket and tries to dial out, but no luck.

BROCK
Shit! Those bastards have shut off my phone already! Where's the nearest phone?

JAVIER
In the Overseer's office.

INT. OUTSIDE THE OVERSEER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Javier and Brock peek around the corner of a hallway, looking at the Overseer's office door. The guard is leaning lazily against the wall.

BROCK
Hopefully they haven't heard about my departure from Pointe Atlantic yet.

Brock sucks in a breath and strides confidently towards the guard. Surprised, the guard raises his gun towards him.

GUARD #1
Stop! No one's allowed in here tonight!

BROCK
Excuse me? Since when are guns permitted inside? This is an extreme violation of company rules.

The guard sneers at him.

GUARD #1
And who are you to tell me about rules?

Brock feigns anger and pulls out his Pointe Atlantic ID.

BROCK
I'm the man who pays you. This is

my company and I'm telling you to hand over your weapon to me immediately or you'll be fired.

Conflicted, the guard doesn't know what to do.

GUARD #1

I can't let you in there. The Overseer is busy.

BROCK

The Overseer doesn't makes the rules around here. As of this moment, he is no longer employed by the company. Give me your gun or you'll be joining him.

It's enough for the guard. He shrugs and hands over the rifle.

BROCK (CON'T)

Now, you can leave me to deal with the Overseer.

Bewildered, the guard leaves his post and walks down the hall, away from the office. He passes by Javier, who looks at him smugly.

JAVIER

It's not over for you.

Grasping the gun, Brock kicks in the door to the office.

INT. OVERSEER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

As Brock kicks in the door, the Overseer jumps back from Esperanza in surprise.

BROCK

Back away!

He points the gun at Juarez, who puts his hands up.

JUAREZ

Mr. Conrad! What a surprise! What are you doing here?

BROCK

Cut the bullshit, Juarez. Your little charade is over.

JUAREZ

Charade? What charade? I am just interrogating Ms. Lima on some missing produce at the store.

Brock walks over to Esperanza and unties her hands, never pointing the gun away from Juarez.

BROCK

You sick sonofabitch. You were hired as production supervisor for the plant, not to become a dictator.

JUAREZ

I don't know what you're talking about...I've done nothing but the job I was hired to do.

BROCK

And everyone here will testify to that?

Juarez is sweating bullets, knowing it's over for him.

JUAREZ

My workers are very loyal to me.

Javier peeks his head in the doorway.

JUAREZ (CON'T)

You! You're the one behind this?

BROCK

Come on in, Javier. He can't hurt you anymore. Esperanza, is it?

She nods.

BROCK (CON'T)

Tie this bastard up.

He pushes Juarez down on the seat with the barrel of his gun and Esperanza quickly ties his hands behind his back.

BROCK (CON'T)

If I was anything like the piece of scum you are, I would leave you tied up and let everyone here have their way with you.

Juarez is panicking.

JUAREZ

I was just doing my job!

Brock walks over to the phone that sits on the desk.

BROCK

But I'm sure there are people
in prison who would be happy to
have their way with you there.
So we'll leave that to them.

He smiles as he dials.

EXT. BATEYE ROAD - NIGHT

Brock, Esperanza, and Javier—along with a large crowd of bateye residents—watch as the POLICE force the handcuffed Juarez and all of the guards into the back of pickup trucks, just like ones the workers go to the fields in. The crowd cheers as the trucks pull away, their police lights flashing.

FADE OUT

EXT. A SUGAR CANE FIELD - DAY

The sun is high over an empty sugar cane field. There are no workers in sight. Stalks sway in the breeze.

TITLE CARD: ONE YEAR LATER

We hear shouts and cheers in the distance.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

CLOSE ON JAVIER'S FACE. Concentrating, squinting in the sunlight. He wears a shiny baseball helmet. The crowd cheers his name.

He swings hard and we hear the crack of the bat as it connects with the ball.

FROM THE POV OF THE BALL we see that he's running around a brand-spanking new baseball field. He sprints towards first base, wearing a white, clean uniform.

As the ball flies higher, in the distance we see new buildings—a hospital, school, new apartments. Paved roads. Everything is sparkling and new, beautiful. The ocean shimmers in the distance.

Back on the field, Javier runs past second. The outfielders can't get to the ball.

IN THE STANDS we see Esperanza and Augusto standing up, cheering for Javier as he runs.

ESPERANZA

Go Javier! Go, run, run!!!

AUGUSTO

That's my boy!

He runs past third, sprinting towards home plate. The crowd is on their feet, screaming for him. The outfielders have the ball, they throw it at the PITCHER, who is in position to get Javier out. The pitcher flings the ball at the catcher, who grabs it and taps Javier as he slides across home.

The crowd holds their breath and then the UMPIRE throws his hands to the side.

UMPIRE

SAFE!

The crowd goes wild. Javier gets off the ground and runs over to his coach—Brock—who slaps his hand in a high five.

We zoom out away from the stadium as the cheers fade in the distance.

TITLE CARDS:

Over the next five years, Pointe Atlantic followed through on their promise of putting \$500 million into the Dominican Republic, which brought about radical change in the lives of the people of that region.

The country's economy is no longer dependent on a single crop.

After the infamous Pointe Atlantic shareholders' meeting, the New York Stock Exchange changed the rules to state that one must now own more than one share to speak at a shareholders' meeting.

Javier Peguero went on to bat over a .300 for the Baltimore Oriels.

FADE OUT: