FADE IN

EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY

A vast, green, mountain chained landscape extends its monumental structure with no limit to the eye.

SUPER: “Northern Colombia”

The gliding view descends to expose a cleared field on a mountain crest... A marihuana plant, facing the early sun-bathing light wobbles alone in the cold highland mist... there is people actively working about on their daily “special chores”. A log cottage with a twined palm leaf roof, releasing smoke, stands out in the middle of the camp.

It’s cold and the remnant fog refuses to dissipate. Huge piles of recently cut ripe marihuana branches are stashed in neatly uniformed rows...

Sat in chained row, the workers peel off the leaves from the branches and place them on large wooden trays. The peeled stems amount on one side forming stockpiles.

A young native kid with a marihuana stem in his hand wiggles among the working people teasing one group after another.

IN SPANISH

V.O. (SUBTITLE)
Oye Pablito! deja de molestar, déjanos trabajar.

Hey PABLITO lay off, let us work.

The kid runs away... finds another group... teases another worker... tickles his ear with a leaf from the stem he plays with... the worker shrugs and claps his ear thinking it’s a buzzing insect.

WORKER (SUBTITLE)
¡Oye Pablito!
Hey Pablito...!
Another crew carefully hang the leaves on artisan stretchers for the mild sun to roast them into a golden-pigmented smoking product. The rows of stretchers with hung sun-dried leaves begin to glitter its blondish patina.

The marihuana harvest gathering marches full steam ahead getting ready for the market.

Its destination: Gringo consumers.

EXT. APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS/PRIVATE AIRFIELD - DAY

SUPER: Northern Florida

Approaching from the distant sky a small twin-engine airplane looms from the horizon... its lights glitter as it shortens the distance.

The aircraft lands skidding on the runway... come to a stop... transits slowly through the middle row of neatly parked airplanes in direction to the only hangar in the airfield.

INT. HANGAR - DAY

Engines on, the plane enters the huge garage... slowly steers, parks and shuts off its engines.

Out from the hatch-door emerges JESSE, private licensed pilot in his late twenties sporting pilot sunglasses, western boots and a stout country visage... stretches out his dormant muscles inflating his chest with a deep gulp of air.

MAX an old veteran aircraft mechanic, with greased working clothes approaches the aircraft... there’s anxiety in his face as he pushes a step-rolling ladder.

MAX
(impatient)
Well, how was it? -- Is the turbo charger responding- Huh?

JESSE dodges, takes an impulse and jumps to the ground ignoring the step ladder... takes off his sunglasses.
JESSE
Not so good Max, the turbo-charger stalls above ten thousand feet. I can't rely on it, replace it.

Max scratches his head.

MAX
(stammering)
I can't seem to reason with you, I— I bring you the step ladder and you prefer to jump and— now you— want to replace the whole system.

Breathe-clean blows his sunglasses.

JESSE
Not the whole system Max, just the right engine turbo...

Max stalls.

MAX
I don't understand, I thought I had it right,

JESSE
Well, now you know you have it wrong. Don't blow things up as usual, I know it’s bait you’re hanging from your luring rod.

Leaning on the step ladder.

MAX
(ponders briefly)
It’ll cost a couple of grands you know— I thought I could save you some bucks overhauling it again.

Puts back his sunglasses... rigidly stresses his motive.

JESSE
Max, I'd wish you’d be more concern about my safety instead of the economy of your work... after all, I’m doing the paying and taking the risk while you sit you ass on the ground,
(exclaiming)
Jesus!

Max resists to good reason.

MAX
(stuttering)
All I- thought of- was to-...

JESSE
(adamant)
Do it Max, I need this bird flying one hundred percent within the next week... to be exactly, seven days.

MAX
But Jesse you have to understand I-- I can’t get replacement parts that quick, It takes time.

Jesse walks closer, almost breathing in his face.

JESSE
Max, Don't you remember the last time when we couldn't find that fuel injector in any of the local shops, and you... just happened to be the only one in possession of that specific piece?

Max shuns with guilt.

MAX
Sure Jesse... what’s wrong with that? I just happened to have one in-

JESSE
(cutting in)
No Max, you didn't just happen to have one. You were storing it for the right moment to show it up...
(a beat)
You, my dependable and disloyal old friend, are an opportunist.

Max takes the sting with ease.

MAX
Well that's true, I made a few bucks and did you a service, Didn’t I?.

4.
But now, I don't know if I can get this job done in time.

JESSE
Yes you can Max. You’ve probably got one stocked in you garage somewhere already... Just waiting for your cunning move to solve the problem.

Max fires back.

MAX
(cynically)
How did you know that? Maybe I do- Hey! I'm entitled to make an extra profit when opportunity strikes, don’t I?

Jesse drills him mercilessly.

JESSE
Sure you can. I can pierce your memory and suck everything out of your warped and twisted brain, you old buzzard, don’t try to dupe me.

Max reacts with his dignity blown up.

MAX
By my mother’s breasts Jesse! That’s not a kind thing to say to me, you make me sound dishonest and- opportunist, as though I-

JESSE
(cutting in)
Come on Max, don't simmer over something you know it’s fool-proof.

MAX
I resent that.

JESSE
I know you’re not dishonest but... you’re no ripe pear in sugar syrup either.

MAX
Why this is how you pay me? I'm only trying to make you listen to some reason,

Jesse takes a deep breath.
JESSE
Max you’ve been ripping me off since you’ve been working for me, but I don’t hate you for that... in fact I love you. Just try to be straight with me, I’m your boss, remember?

Max takes his cap off revealing his baldness, walks away and bends down under one of the airplane’s wings.

MAX
(grumbling)
This is not gonna be my day, no sir.

Jesse walks toward him, bends down close and smacks a kiss on his bald top.

JESSE
I love you Max, my life depends on you.

In response, Max pulls out a rag from his back pocket and wipes his top.

MAX
(disgusted)
Shit Jesse!

As he walks out from the hangar Jesse notices a police car parked in front of the hangar.

EXTERIOR
A police car with a cop inside sits waiting.

INTERIOR

JESSE
Max, What’s a police car doing out there?

Max shifts to get a closer look.

MAX
Oh! That’s VINCE the county sheriff... he’s all right, just waiting for me to have lunch together.

JESSE
Good or bad cop?
MAX
Best there is.

Max waives to the sitting cop.

MAX
Yeah, he’s a good cop... a crooked one but also happens to be my friend. Nothing to worry about.

JESSE
Anyhow, keep your mouth locked about my business.

MAX
(insisting)
He’s all right Jesse, take my word for it.

JESSE
I’ll have your greasy scalp if anything happens, remember that.

MAX
Yeah, yeah, you’ve said that a couple of dozen times before.

JESSE
(walking away)
Who knows?... This may be for real.

MAX
(looking back)
You don’t say...

EXT. HANGAR - DAY

Jesse walks out from the hangar peering back at the parked cop... nagging KATE, his girl, young with a brash personality and a smoking habit is waiting for him in a car.

INSIDE THE CAR

He steps in the car, buckles up and kisses her smoothly.

JESSE
Hi Hon, have you been here long?

KATE
Long enough to think a few things over.
JESSE
(leaning back)
And what runs in your bright spinning mind?
(a beat)
Did you make my flight reservation for Colombia tomorrow?

She lights up a cigarette, starts the car and drives away.

KATE
(smoking)
Your flight to Weed Land is scheduled for five AM in the morning and there’s just one airline flying there,

He rolls down his window for fresh air.

JESSE
Kate, I wish you’d swap the smoking habit for pot addiction, it’s healthier.

KATE
Not me honey, I stay straight in my grooves, in fact... why should I? I’m always high in spirit.

JESSE
Too bad you’re not better informed on the benefits of Cannabis Sativa and the pleasures beyond any social prejudice.

KATE
What? You sound like a lecturer, drop the speech, will you?

JESSE
Lecturing is what you need and not just on the pleasure of pot smoking.

KATE
Change the subject please, I’m a grown girl, old enough to be lured into a pot habit.

She releases the cigarette smoke in his face... He waives it off.
JESSE
(changing subject)
Shit, this Colombian airline should be more considerate with us tourists with ecological interest in their natural habitat.

KATE
Since when is a pot smuggler taken for a tourist...

OUT ON THE ROAD

The car drives into a speedway... a road sign reads:

INSERT: Ft. Lauderdale 165 mi.

JESSE (O.S.)
Do you really think I look like a smuggler?

KATE (O.S.)
(sarcastic)
No, you’re OK, except for your conspicuous stride and Texan boots... more like a midnight cowboy to me.

JESSE (O.S.)
You mean I stride like John Wayne?

KATE (O.S.)
It was John Voight not John Wayne. Please... Don't get carried away too far in your presumptions.

INT. JESSE’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jesse rolls a joint with the mastership of an old pot smoker.

IN THE BATHROOM

Kate before a mirror gets ready to reveal a surprise.

KATE
(lustful)
Jesse... Get ready for something you won’t resist...

BEDROOM
Jesse lights up the joint without responding.

    KATE (O.S.)
    Are you listening to me?

Takes a deep drag and coughs...

    JESSE
    (choking)
    I'm thinking-

    KATE (O.S.)
    You won't be thinking much after you see what’s coming to you...

Drags the joint repeatedly causing it to blink several times... relaxes briefly.

    JESSE
    (inhaling)
    Some other time Kate, I'm trying to put my head together... some things need to be solved ahead of my return to Colombia.

BATHROOM

Kate catches the reek coming from the pot smoke.

    KATE
    (sniffing)
    Are you smoking pot?

BEDROOM

    JESSE
    (exhaling)
    Yes I am...

BATHROOM

    KATE
    Do you really think you can piece your thoughts together smoking pot?

BEDROOM

    JESSE
    I always do.

    KATE (O.S.)
    Good, here I come!
Kate comes out of the bathroom in a scarlet transparent baby doll rig simmering for sex... She exposes her charm.

    KATE
    (sensuous)
    Voila! You like it?

Stunned by her sex-luring apparel drops his jaw.

    JESSE
    (dazzled)
    Shit.

Like a vamp on the prowl she jumps on top him forcing her way in the bed... Gets on top... interlocks... pants with desire.

Jesse without a chance to respond only has one thing to say:

    JESSE
    Kate! What the fuck ’s gotten into you?

Reduced to tameness, he gives in... she does the rest... toppled, she subdues him by his shoulders, straddling without control... disengages... engages again.

    KATE
    (panting with desire)
    A woman must milk her man before he leaves her nest.

    JESSE
    (being squeezed of his air)
    Can’t believe this.

Kate WAILS feigning an overplayed orgasm.

EARLY NEXT DAY

INT. MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT/COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Jesse waits for the airline call to board his flight. He sits by the counter of a coffee shop with a hot cup of coffee spiraling its vapor... as he lifts his cup, a solid GOLD ROLEX strapped to his wrist glitters its shine.

Kate sits by his side with still swollen eyes from the torrid night before... her face stiffs a repressed anxiety... can’t keep it back, she lets it out.
KATE
What if you get mugged... or kidnapped or whatever... I’m always hearing that Colombians are hard-core bandits.

Jesse lifts his cup, before reaching, suspends it... looks at her.

JESSE
Well you’re hearing wrong, because it just happens, that a hard-core honorable bandit is the one I have to see.

Kate with an unblinking gaze pressing for something she wants to say, but doesn’t come out.

Jesse puts his cup down.

JESSE
(soothing her)
It’s all right. I’ll be back in a couple of days as usual... I know what I’m doing. Trust me.

KATE
(concerned)
Sure Mr. Smug, all I wanna do now is hug you and wish you luck...

(embracing)
Take care of yourself.

JESSE
Come on Kate, take that bleak look off your face, it makes me feel as though you’re looking at me for the last time.

KATE
You never know.

JESSE
Jesus Kate, rub it off, bad luck sticks on easily.

She throws herself at him... hugs... cuddles closely for a brief lapse.

KATE
It’s just that I happen to love you, that’s all... just come back.
Time runs out... a loud speaker ANNOUNCES the airline’s departure.

LOUDSPEAKER (O.S.)
“Condor airlines announces its departure flight to Barranquilla Colombia, please follow gate 7 boarding room 12, thank you”

TO THE GATE

Embraced, they walk to the airline corridor hugging close... they untie... look at each other... Kate lands him a fervent kiss.

KATE
Please... call me when you get there.

Jesse walks away and disappears through the gate corridor.

Kate heeds in silence.

EXT. AIRPORT/NORTHERN COLOMBIA - DAY

The airliner lands skidding on the runway... passes alongside a blowing unicorn pointing the wind direction.

The airport resembles an abandoned airfield, primitive but functional amid barren land and a suffocating heat.

INT. AIRPORT/IMMIGRATION - DAY

The chamber for admission in the country is cramped with passengers, baggage carriers and a very HOT sweating temperature... Everyone sizzles.

A single row of people with Jesse in the lead wait their turn amidst the heat.

As he waits for his turn, a baggage carrier approaches pushing a cart... stops... swathes his sweating neck.

DIALOGUE IN SPANISH

BAGGAGE CARRIER (SUBTITLE)
Señor, a gentleman outside asked me to help you with your bag.
JESSE
No gracias, I’ll carry it myself.

Waived off, the carrier walks away looking for another passenger to squeeze a tip from.

Jesse waits holding the passport in his hand... the immigration booth opens... he steps in.

The immigration officer wearing a pair of thick frame eyeglasses and loose tie to dissipate the heat, shuffles through a log book.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER
(coldly)
Your passport señor...

Jesse hands him the document.

The officer takes it... opens it... glances over it to confirm the attached photograph and data... looks directly at Jesse.

Jesse grins back.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER
How long is the gentleman planning to stay?

JESSE
(cynically)
Just a short visit, I’d wish I could stay longer, unfortunately I can’t.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER
(bluntly)
How long?

Jesse responds calmly.

JESSE
Five or six days the most.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER
Is this your first visit?

JESSE
No, actually it’s my second... It’s stamped in my passport, you can see it.

The officer shuffles over the passport.
IMMIGRATION OFFICER
And what is the purpose of your visit, señor?

JESSE
Ecological, the Colombian mountains fascinate me, the richness of its environment, the landscapes and it's "products"--

The officer glares at him with distrust, stamps a seal, closes the passport with a clap and gives it back.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER
(dismissive)
Welcome to Colombia, Next please!
(END OF SPANISH DIALOGUE)

As Jesse walks out through the immigration gate he is abruptly intercepted by a husky mid-size colombian. BLAS, a dark skin half-breed in his fifties, wearing a flashy colored shirt, flaring gold and very dark sunglasses greets him as he exits the gate.

JESSE
(emotional)
Hey Blas! Here I am again...
(hugging)
It’s good to see you-

Jesse peers to his vividly colored shirt.

JESSE (CONT.)
... and your bright shirts.

BLAS
(perspiring)
In this heat even the colors fade fast.
(wipes to both sides)
Come along, lets get away from this boiler, can’t take it.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

It’s roasting hot.
They walk to a nearby unpaved parking lot... the heat is too much... Blas pulls his hankie from his back pocket and dries his sweating forehead.

JESSE
This heat seems alright to me, us gringos miss a lot of this simmering heat after our long freezing winters,

BLAS
Not me my good friend, I can’t be away too long from my air conditioner, this is hell for me.

Opens his arms raising to the sky.

JESSE
For me it’s heaven, God bless the tropics.

BLAS
As usual Jesse, you have your values upside down, hot is great and cold is pleasant.

JESSE
I’ll heed to that one.

BLAS
Anyway, it’s good to have you back,

They reach the parking lot and stop... Blas turns his head sidewise looking for something... he dries his exuding forehead again... swivels sideways with uneasiness.

BLAS
(rapt)
Where the hell are they?

As he questions himself, a late model four-door sub-urban truck pulls to their side with a sudden stop.

A black Colombian steps out of the truck to diligently open the back door... They leap in and drive away from the parking lot... a trail of dust clouds the speeding truck.

ON THE ROAD
BLAS (O.S.)
(to his men)
Where the hell were you, my orbs were almost melting waiting for you. Nojoda!

INT. TRUCK - DAY

The diver and rider sitting in the front remain silent crossing their vision with hinted alertness.

JESSE
Where are we heading to Blas? Aren’t we going into town and check in a hotel first?

Blas swabs the perspiration from his forehead.

BLAS
Not this time. We’re going straight to the landing field for you to look at and then to my ranch. Besides, the last time you were here I almost got thrown out of my house.

Jeff grins maliciously.

JESSE
Why was that? Because of me coming to visit you?

Blas slants his head with a yielding attitude.

BLAS
No, it wasn’t your visit, it was the three day long party in the hotel after you checked in Jesse, believe me, I had a hard time winning back my wife.

JESSE
You mean CARMEN? She steamed up at you because of my welcome party?

BLAS
It wasn’t your party Jesse, it was me taking part in it, and forgetting that I am a married man.

(a beat)
Let’s talk about our business all right?

Jesse laughs heartily.
JESSE
Shit, than she won’t be very pleased to see me,

BLAS
No, it’s all forgotten. She’ll be waiting for us at the ranch... as I was saying,

Jesse disregards the main topic being brought up by Blas.

JESSE
Waiting for us? You mean in the mountains? Were the weed is grown? ...Will MELBA be there too?

BLAS
Exactly, now listen to what I have to say it’s very important that you pay attention.

Jesse keeps on unheeding.

JESSE
(desirous)
MELBA? Sure... I’d like to see her, we have some unfinished tal to take care of,

Blas gives up.

BLAS
Well, just make sure your thing with MELBA doesn’t interfere with our business.

Coming back from his stray.

JESSE
Huh? Sure, Don’t worry Blas. Everything will run smooth as silk, personal affairs are set aside when it comes to business.

BLAS
Hope so.

ON THE ROAD

A group of native women, in their tribal long colorful gowns cross their way.

The women have their faces covered with a dark ointment lures Jesse's curiosity.
IN THE TRUCK

JESSE
Hey Blas, Are they on a warpath or something? That’s what our red skins used to do before going to war.

BLAS
No Jesse, it’s only a balm they use for protection against the burning sun.

JESSE
Oh...

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

The landscape is overwhelming with huge mountains cliffs as they start to track uphill.

The truck rides over a rough sinuous path with impressive gorges in the background, deep canyons and monumental highlands... The cliffs are intimidating... visibility starts tu blur as low hanging clouds settle on top of the mountains’ crest.

The truck climbs relentlessly seeking the highlands.

EXT. LANDING FIELD - DAY

After the escalade they come to a stop on leveled ground well above a two thousand feet.

Jesse and Blas step out of the truck... walk a few feet and stop to observe a straight grass-covered short landing strip.

JESSE
(shivering)
It’s chilly up here Blas, feel like back home.

BLAS
(inhales deeply)
Yes, it’s much better than where we were, Isn’t it?

Jesse observes the landing terrain with acute keenness... calculates its length... takes a few steps, squats and digs his hand into the humid soil.
Blas lingers anxiously for his opinion.

BLAS
Well, what do you think? Is it good enough for your airplane to take off with 1500 pounds?

JESSE
If my eyes don’t deceive me, yes, except...

BLAS
Except what?

JESSE
If the ground gets any softer than this...
(looks up)
Landing is no problem, taking off loaded is a different thing,

Blas gets closer and squats besides him.

BLAS
My friend, this soil is as hard as brick when dry, but with rain falling on it, is as soft and slippery as a snow field.

JESSE
(caviling)
That’s not very enthusiastic to hear Blas, and for what I can see
(looks upwards again)
some clouds are gathering for a celebration. I think it'll start raining here soon?

BLAS
Yes, I'm afraid that's a possibility.

JESSE
Shit, that’ll complicate my landing to pick up the weed.

They stand up and walk back to the truck. As they walk...

BLAS
Have faith, the rain will hold back until we are done,

Jesse looks at him with dismay.
JESSE
Have faith? Blas, How can faith save me from skidding in the mud and not being able to take off as planned?

BLAS
Don’t say that it’s bad luck,

JESSE

Good or bad it’s not safe, I won’t do it if it’s gonna get muddy... too risky.

BLAS
(persuasive)
But my friend everything is ready, the weed, the gas, the haulers. Everything! Don’t be so pessimistic, it won’t rain the day you’ll come, I assure you.

Jesse looks straight to his eyeballs.

JESSE
(peering)
Blas, you ought to be in heaven advising God if you can guarantee my safety on bad weather.

Blas patronizing clamps his arm around Jesse.

BLAS
The problem with you Jesse is that you’re not religious, you have no faith.

JESSE

Oh I’m religious all right, I believe in the good old green dollar, it’s written in the bill Blas “In God We Trust”

BLAS
Don’t be blasphemous Jesse or I’ll back of this deal right now!

Jesse halts, forcing Blas to do the same.

JESSE
Now we’re really in trouble, are you that serious?
They look at each other and... outburst with laughter. Resume walking... Blas shoves him.

BLAS
Come on let’s go back to the truck, Carmen is waiting for us at the ranch with a warm meal.

JESSE
And Melba’s warm arms too?

BLAS
Jesse you begin to worry me, your head is not centered where it should be.

JESSE
The problem with you Blas is that you`re a straight square-minded, hung by-the-tail married man and, I’m a god forgiven sinner.

BLAS
I suppose that makes a difference, hope we do better this time than last.

JESSE
I’m really sorry about our last venture, if things didn’t turn out as expected it was because of the stinking merchandise I was loaded with. We couldn't get a decent prize for it.

BLAS
Let's forget the past Jesse, I figured out what went wrong and who was responsible for our last failure,

JESSE
Don't tell me. Let me guess...?

BLAS
No, don't guess, that's my share of the responsibility, I'll take care of it.

JESSE
Well, I hope you find out who the cock-sucker was.

BLAS
I know.
They reach the truck... before stepping in Jesse clears out his doubt.

JESSE
I keep thinking... Did EL LOCO had to do anything with the load of shit I took back?

BLAS
He is the man

JESSE
And you're gonna kick his ass right?

BLAS
Exactly, in due time.

JESSE
Blas, this continues to be a difficult business with a beautiful partnership.

Jesse steps in the truck, Blas follows and shuts the door.

The truck drives away.

Clouds begin to descend settling for a resting place before the sun sets.

EXT. RANCH/ENTRANCE - DUSK

The truck drives through an iron gate guarded by a man with an M-1 carbine slung on his shoulder.

More armed men are seen standing alongside the gate way as they pass.

INSIDE THE TRUCK

Jesse’s curiosity can’t wait and asks.

JESSE
Why all the artillery Blas?

BLAS
Anything can happen up in these wild mountains, so I take precautions for your safety and mine.
JESSE  
(mocking)  
I thought you had prepared an honor guard  
for me.

Blas grins back with affection.

RANCH DRIVEWAY

They drive through and stop before a sturdy-built log ranch  
overlooking the landscape. The log structure is formidable,  
more of a country mansion then a cot.

ON THE FRONT PORCH

Two native women in their Indian robes, CARMEN middle age  
with a pleasant smile and MELBA younger, gracious with  
indigenous beauty, step down from the front porch to meet  
them... Carmen takes the lead.

Jesse opens his door and walks directly into Carmen’s arms.

CARMEN  
(fondly)  
Oh Jesse, it’s so good to see you and have  
you back with us again.

JESSE  
(hesitant)  
Me too Carmen, How’s everything? Your  
children? I– I thought you were mad at me  
from my last time visit.

CARMEN  
Yes I was you scoundrel, Why do you think  
we have you up here this time.

JESSE  
Let me guess...

Jesse looks for Blas.

Melba leniently waits for her turn.

CARMEN  
Everything is fine now, thank God, with one  
exception.

JESSE  
Yeah, what’s that?
Pinching him severely in the belly... Jesse howls with pain.

JESSE
Ow! Carmen...

CARMEN
That’s to remind you that you won’t be taking my husband away this time.

Blas lagging behind ducks the scene.

Carmen gives Blas an intimidating look.

Jesse apologizes for his past flaw.

JESSE
Oh no, it won’t happen this time, I cross my heart... maybe in the near future. Huh Blas?

Blas wipes his forehead and tries to yank Jesse inside.

BLAS
Come on let’s go in the house, the soup is getting cold.

Resisting, Jesse turns to Melba.

JESSE
(turning back)
You go in Blas, I’ll be along in a while.

Melba waits in the front steps.

A young kid suddenly appears and joins her... she squats and hugs him.

Jesse walks to her... freezes a short step apart... takes her hand.

She rises without taking her eyes off Jesse...

MELBA
So you’re back.

The kid steps aside.

They look at each other with a craving peer.
JESSE
Hi Melba, it’s really good to be back.  
(gazing strongly)
God you get more beautiful each time I see you!

MELBA
(unblinking)
And you bring back a most beautiful lie each time you come back...

Jesse breaks the ice... looks at the kid.

JESSE
Who’s the kid?, I didn’t know you had one.

MELBA
No Jesse it’s not mine. He’s an orphan my uncle picked up and he’s been here ever since...

Pulls the kid close to her.

MELBA
Come Pablito, meet Jesse our friend.

The kid approaches timidly, gazes at Jesse with fixed curious eyes.

JESSE
He’s sure got and intensive way of peering at people.

MELBA
Oh don’t mind him, he’s just never seen a gringo before.

JESSE
Never thought I was so weird.

MELBA
Run along Pablito.

The kid walks in the house looking back.

Melba seizes Jesse’s hand very subtly.

MELBA
Let’s walk, we have a lot to talk.

As they walk Jesse turns back his head.
The kid still gazing.

UNDER THE COVER OF AN OLD TREE

Jesse and Melba settle on top of a thick cut lumber without looking away from each other.

MELBA
So what brings you back?

JESSE
You mean you don’t know?

MELBA
Let me guess... marihuana?

Jesse smiles with cynical pleasure.

JESSE
Guessed right, but something else also brings me back,

MELBA
Let me guess again, me?

JESSE
Right again.

He kisses her tenderly.

MELBA
But you are a compromised man Jesse, and I'd like you here with me for a longer time, forever.

Separating slightly.

JESSE
Please don’t say that, It only makes it hard to leave every time I'm here with you.

MELBA
(sighing)
You know how long it’s been since you were here the last time?
JESSE
What’s a few months compared if we can spend a lifetime together and raise children among these wonderful marihuana fields?

She laughs heartily and lands an overdue kiss.

MELBA
You would probably make me a widow before our first child.

JESSE
Man, you sound just like someone back home. Tragically pessimistic all the time.

MELBA
Maybe it's because we both love you,

JESSE
You sure got a weird way to strip a man of his glee, especially now that I’ll be making good money.

Melba caresses his face and lands him another kiss.

MELBA
Come on let’s go into the house, Blas and Carmen are waiting.

They walk back to the ranch holding hands.

INT. RANCH/DINNING ROOM - NIGHT

Blas slurps his soup with a rhythmic exercise of hand and spoon... seems to enjoy every stroke.

BLAS
(without stopping)
Take a sit Jesse, you’re just in time to see me finish this home-made soup specially made for you... and me.

Jesse sits next with Melba.

Carmen intervenes.
CARMEN
When Blas told me you were coming all I could think of was our home-made chicken soup, I hope you like it Jesse.

JESSE
Well you just don’t know how much I miss your chicken soup Carmen, there aren’t any Latin restaurants were I live at and-

BLAS
(cuts in)
-Then you should visit a Latin food joint in downtown Miami, I do it when I’m there.

JESSE
I’ll do that, next time you come to visit me.

Melba serves Jesse abundantly from a soup kettle served on the table.

BLAS
(tasting)
I will soon, might even take Melba with me.

Melba feels the touch without taking her eyes away from Jesse.

BLAS
(swallowing)
Don’t mix business with women, my father always said. You’ll end up feeding birds in prison.

Carmen can’t let this blooper pass without a response.

CARMEN
(poignant)
Well! This comes as a surprise to me señor Blas, I’m mixed up to my teats with your business and it seems we’re doing fine, Aren't we my love?

BLAS
Watch your language woman. It’s different between you and me, we are an old couple.

CARMEN
No it isn’t, it can work just as well for Jesse and Melba. Why not?
BLAS
Eat your soup and shut up.

With her dignity hurt, Carmen complies humbly.

Jesse and Melba look at each other.

BLAS
(diverting)
So, do you have a date already in your head to pick up the load?

JEFF
I’ll have it, if you promise me that it won’t rain the day I come back for the weed.

Blas serves himself more chicken soup.

BLAS
(slurping)
How can I promise you that my friend, you’re asking me to play God.

Jesse takes his soup.

JESSE
Leave god out of this, a simple weather forecast will do... to decide.

Blas stops his spoon half way from his bowl.

BLAS
What’s the matter with you Jesse? You’re forgetting we are not in the United states, there isn’t any weather forecast here.

JESSE
Well, I’ll look for some satellite reports before making a decision, but I’ll still need a local report from the site here and-

One of Blas’ henchman bumps in interrupting.

HENCHMAN
Patron, LUCAS is here and wants to see you right away.

Melba reacts surprised.
MELBA
Who? My brother? How did he know I was here?

BLAS
I put him in charge of this operation, remember?

MELBA
I still don’t understand why he has to be here, at this very moment.

BLAS
You see Jesse, this is what happens when you mix family affairs with business.

Jesse unaware of what’s been growing in his absence wants to know the story.

JESSE
(curious)
Is there something wrong Melba?

She stops eating.

MELBA
You seem to forget that my brother never liked you. He's been giving me hell ever since, but I’ll fix this matter once and for all.

She gets up with steaming anger and abandons the table.

Jesse stops eating.

Blas wipes his mouth clean with a napkin and orders his henchman.

BLAS
Tell him to come in-

As his henchman walks away.

BLAS
(interrupting)
- never mind, tell him to wait for me in the living room, I'll be right there.

HENCHMAN
Si señor.
CARMEN
But Blas, you haven't finished eating your soup...

Blas stands up and walks away from the table leaving Jesse and Carmen looking at each other with dismay.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Blas enters the room to find brother and sister having an argument. LUCAS, a gun-cocky native sorts out the difference with a bickering attitude.

IN SPANISH SUBTITLED

LUCAS
(steaming)
What’s the gringo doing here?

Melba stands her ground.

MELBA
(fuming)
You mean you don’t know? I am well grown by now and capable of taking my own personal decisions without you telling me when and how...

The face to face confrontation heats up.

LUCAS
(poignant)
You sure don’t act your age, getting mixed up with a gringo you hardly know that's here only for business. You keep away from him!

She fires back.

MELBA
Why... look at you!, Are you something more, better or different of what he is?--

LUCAS
Just keep away from him!

MELBA
Aren’t you both doing the same illegal shit? Just who do you think you are to run my life?
LUCAS
I happen to be your older brother, Are you forgetting? And this has to stop now!

Blas intervenes to stop the quarrel.

BLAS
Please Melba settle this later, now I must ask you to leave us. Your brother must have something important for me to listen to interrupt my dinner.

Panting with emotional distress, she stops discussing, recovers and walks away.

BLAS
(continuing)
Carajos, this niece of mine has some temper, and as of you, what brings you here that’s so important to interrupt my dinner?

Lucas settles down.

LUCAS
It's EL LOCO PASCUAL again uncle, raising hell and making things difficult for us,

BLAS
Sit and cool down so you can speak clearly.

Lucas sits... Blas listens.

LUCAS
Uncle, El LOCO thinks he's been underpaid and wants a bigger piece of the profit this time, somehow he sniffed our next move.

BLAS
(fuming)
What! A readjustment of our agreement?, I paid him clean and clear as agreed! Doesn’t he recognize his responsibility in our last failed shipment, with the merchandise he duped me with?

LUCAS
Yes, I know that and you know that too uncle, but he thinks otherwise,
BLAS
I don’t give a damn what he thinks! Either he does things my way or I’ll put him to rest in a pine box.

LUCAS
(reasoning)
We can’t do that uncle, at least not yet, he holds our merchandise and part of the pay.

BLAS
My dear nephew I thought you knew your uncle by now, once I close a deal is settled, Do you understand?

LUCAS
Yes but EL LOCO is hard to reason with and stupid. I don’t want anything happening to our operation, particularly now that the gringo is here.

BLAS
Tell that cock-sucking bastard that I want to see him tomorrow...
(a beat)
After you and Jesse make the final check of the merchandise. I want top merchandise this time, make sure he gets my message.

END OF SPANISH SUBTITLE

Jesse bumps in the room... wants to know more.

JESSE
Sorry to interrupt Blas, I just wanted to know the time I’ll be leaving in the morning...

BLAS
No no, come in Jesse, this concerns you too.
(a beat)
Take a seat, you know Lucas don’t you?

Jesse extends his hand with courtesy.

JESSE
Sure do Blas, how are you Lucas?

Lucas responds ignoring him.
BLAS
I need to wipe out the difference between you two so we can get started,

LUCAS
(interrupting)
Excuse me uncle but the difference is between me and my sister, no one else.

BLAS
Yes I follow, but now it’s business we have to take care of now. What I want you to do early at sunrise tomorrow is-

Suddenly Carmen storms in the room holding a tray with cups and black steaming coffee.

CARMEN
This is for you Jesse, I know you like our colombian coffee very much.

Jesse takes his cup, smells the aroma and drinks.

CARMEN
(continuing)
And you Lucas...

Lucas takes his.

Blas extends his hand for his cup.

CARMEN
As for you old man, your coffee will be served in the kitchen.

Carmen walks away leaving Blas with his hand suspended in mid air.

BLAS
Never mind this woman... as I was saying, you’ll leave tomorrow for the hiding place, and this Jesse is very important...
(continuing)
once you’ve checked all the bundles one by one, make sure you mark them with a number and symbol that only you will recognize as ours, this is our only guarantee of good merchandise. You understand?

With respectful attention.

JESSE

Sure thing Blas.

BLAS

Is everything understood Lucas?

LUCAS

Clear uncle.

Blas gets up from his seat.

BLAS

Then there’s nothing more to say. Now I’ll retire to my bed to see if I can make your aunt to let me sleep for the night. I’ll see you two in the morning.

He walks out of the room leaving Jeff and Lucas facing each other.

Jesse breaks the ice.

JESSE

Lucas, I didn’t come here to stir a family feud between you and Melba, what is it that you dislike about me so we can settle it out.

Lucas shoots back spitefully.

LUCAS

As I said to my uncle, whatever difference there is, leave it between me and my sister. Clear enough?

Stands up and walks away.

Jesse eye-tracks him as he leaves.
EXT. RANCH/FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

The cool of the night finds Jesse sitting in the front stairs watching the armed men organize their night rounds.

One of the men crosses before him carrying a young goat strapped on top of his neck... the goat WAILS pleading for his life.

Behind him the front door opens, Melba comes out swaddled in a blanket... She shivers.

MELBA  How could you be out here, it’s so cold.

JESSE  Come sit by my side, I’ll warm you up.
        (a beat)
        Where is he taking that goat Melba?

She cuddles close touching bodies.

MELBA  That poor thing will be their breakfast in the morning.

JESSE  (stunned)
        You don’t say... that’s cruel.

MELBA  So what’s in your mind that has you out here and not with me.

JESSE  Oh I don’t know, it’s your brother with his attitude, makes me hazy to have to travel with him in the morning.

MELBA  He still thinks I’m a child he has to look over, it’s just the way he is, you’ll get along, he’s just jealous.

JESSE  Hope so, he acts as though I was here to snatch you.

Melba smiles and links closer.
MELBA

Are you?

JESSE

Sure like to, but I’ll probably won’t make it out alive... that kid goat has me thinking about your people and their habits.

Inquiring touchingly.

MELBA

Do you really think us Guahirans are borne killers?

JESSE

By the way your uncle handles things leaves me no doubt he won’t hesitate to whack anybody standing in his way... and your brother comes from the same breed.

She clasps his hand in hers with warm affection.

MELBA

That’s a risk you’ll have to take if you really want me.

JESSE

No doubt I really want you, but does it have to cost me my life? How am I going to enjoy living with you if I’m dead?

Melba starts to heat up.

MELBA

Don’t say foolish things, do you want to come in my room? Blas and Carmen should be asleep by now.

JESSE

What about your brother?

MELBA

Oh, he’ll be somewhere lurking in the night trying to catch you in my bed, but I have a plan...

JESSE

You shouldn’t make fun of his feelings... I take him seriously.
MELBA
(very seductive)
It’s not his feelings I’m thinking of now... can you read my mind?

Imploring to be kissed.

Jesse tries to kiss her, she backs off.

MELBA
No, not here, let’s go inside and... don’t make any noise, I don’t want my uncle getting up.

They stealthily walks back in the house... Jesse tails muffling his steps.

INT. MELBA’S ROOM - NIGHT

Melba fuming with sex starts to undress... Jesse marvels at her beautiful breasts and tanned silken skin... he brings her close and starts caressing her nipples.

They roll over -- he gets on top, accommodates and starts banging -- she gloats with pleasure... they interlock in one ardent fusion of sex intercourse... she squirms... he squeezes... they couple -- uncouple without stopping.

She extends her arm with an extreme effort and shuts off the light... it fades out.

INSIDE BLAS’ BEDROOM

Blas is awakened by the sudden thumping coming from the near wall, he tries to sit up but overrides his thought and lies back again... Looks at Carmen... she sleeps like a log.

Blas assumes what’s happening and goes back to sleep.

EXT. RANCH – SUNRISE

The morning breaks... a rooster sounds his CALL beating his feathers from a nearby fence.

IN THE KITCHEN

Blas sits caviling... Carmen still sleepy serves hot coffee on the kitchen table.
Jesse shows up in the kitchen dressed up and ready to go.

JESSE
Good morning Blas... Carmen.

Carmen with eyelids dropping heavy.

CARMEN
Come and sit, have some coffee before you leave, I can make you some eggs too if you want to?

He sits by Blas’ side.

JESSE
No thanks Carmen it’s too early for me to have breakfast, the coffee will do just fine.

Finds Blas buried in his thoughts.

JESSE
(continuing)
What’s wrong Blas? Is something bugging you?

BLAS
It’s that god damned bandido, EL LOCO, he wants to make things difficult for me in the last minute. I can’t afford his disrespect before his people and my men. I’ll have to dump him.

JESSE
You mean the thug I’ll be seeing in his hiding place?

BLAS
Unfortunately, yes.

JESSE
You do what you’ve to, if there’s no other way.

Blas looks at him appreciating his drift.

BLAS
It’s the timing to dump him what worries me.

Jesse drinks his coffee.
JESSE
Mmm, this is good. Don’t worry we’ll put some sense in his thick head. Trust me.

BLAS
No Jesse it’s not that simple, this braggart means what he says, besides being a very stupid man, he’s cruel and capable of making things go wrong,
(a beat)
He’s done it before and wants to play dice again.

JESSE
What’s he asking for?

BLAS
More money,

JESSE
Give it to him, if that’s what he wants.

BLAS
It’s not that simple. He wants it now, only after you get back safely he’ll get the money, then I’ll have him put away.

JESSE
You mean you’re not sure if we are coming back?

BLAS
No, he won’t harm you... yet. Might hold you for ransom.

Carmen intervenes from the kitchen stove.

CARMEN
(henpecking)
Blas don’t you start a war now or I’ll leave this house immediately.

Blas ignores her.

BLAS
Don’t mind this woman... As I was saying, the only way to deal with him is by playing his game our way. I’ll send some men with you and Lucas to look out for you.
JESSE
It sounds like my Pop dropping me at school in the middle of an earthquake.

Melba joins them at the table, her eyes sparkle with morning delight.

MELBA
Good morning everyone!

Blas looks at her conspicuously.

BLAS
I heard strange noises last night, it must have been some creature crawling in the night.

MELBA
Did you uncle?

Melba sends Jesse a malicious glance.

Jesse grins back.

Blas peeps at them simultaneously while drinking his cup.

A car horn BLOWS from outside the ranch.

MELBA
It must be Lucas, he’s always so punctual. Good luck with El Loco Jesse, let Lucas handle him he knows how.

BLAS
And be here before noon, I’ll have some roasted goat waiting for you.

Jesse finishes his coffee... as he leaves talks back.

JESSE
Roasted goat? Jesus Blas! That must have been the poor bastard wailing last night. No I won’t have any part of that.

Blas Grabs Jesse by his arm exposing his wrist with his gold Rolex.

BLAS
Also, put your watch away, it’s not safe here to be seen with gold like this.
Jesse neglects the advise and rolls back his sleeve.

    JESSE
    It keeps me in time wherever I go,
    (a beat)
    Besides, it might play magic for us...
you’ll see.

Blas is left with a riddle in his mind.

EXT. RANCH - DAY

Jesse walks out of the ranch.

Pablito stands alone gazing from the front steps.

    PABLITO
    Be careful gringo.

    JESSE
    Hey! Go back to bed will you?

    PABLITO
    I’ll be in the mountain with the mules
before you get there. You’ll need my help.

    JESSE
    What?

Pablito walks away.

Jesse confused looks back at the child... a pick up truck with Lucas inside at the wheel is waiting... he leaps in... checks the two armed escorts riding in the back... they drive away.

IN THE TRUCK

    JESSE
    What’s with this kid Lucas? He stares at me
as though I was something from outer space.

    LUCAS
    Don’t be concerned, he’s just like that.
He’s so fast climbing hills that he’ll be
at the spot before we get there.

    JESSE
    Yeah, but why is that piercing and sad look
in his face all the time?
LUCAS
When my uncle picked him up he was sobbing before the corpses of all his family.

JESSE
How was that?

LUCAS
Oh just an old family feud they had to pay for. The native law here is hard and cruel.

JESSE
You mean his whole family was wiped out?

LUCAS
That’s right, that’s why my uncle took him into custody after being the only survivor, otherwise he’ll be dead by now.

JESSE
That’s real bad. A beautiful land with such jagged feelings embedded in its people.

LUCAS
It's the law of the land here nobody can change.

JESSE
Well, let’s go do our thing.

ON THE ROAD
The truck climbs a mountain trail leading to higher land.

EXT. OPEN MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY
The trail leading to the highland hideout is sinuously treacherous... they cross through meandering paths and steep cliffs.

INT. TRUCK/CABIN - DAY
The off road driving gets rough with up and down bumping.

JESSE
How long will this ping-pong go on?

Lucas drives without loosing concentration.
LUCAS
This driving is nothing compared to the mule ride waiting for you.

Jesse is taken by surprise.

JESSE
Mule ride? Blas didn’t say anything about mule riding.

LUCAS
Maybe he thought if he told you, you might back away.

JESSE
No, I don’t back away easily, but I’d like to be told where and how I’m going.

LUCAS
(steering)
Haven’t you ever mounted a mule before?

Bumping up and down.

JESSE
Horses yes, not mules, Jesus! If this is going to be like this all along I think I’m gonna puke.

LUCAS
Then get ready for the ride of your life, I’ll make sure you are soothed with skin cream in case you scald your ass.

JESSE
If it’s Melba doing it, I won’t mind.

Lucas resents his joke.

Jesse grins with cynicism and puts his sunglasses on... the bumping continuous.

OPEN LANDSCAPE

After reaching a small grass field on top of a cliff, they stop.

INSIDE THE TRUCK

Lucas pulls the hand brake.
OUT OF THE TRUCK

Jesse gets out of the truck and stretches out his muscles... takes pleasure looking at the landscape.

Lucas inspects the surrounding field... sniffs something is wrong and walks to Jesse’s side.

LUCAS
(raising doubt)
The mules should have been here waiting for us with Pablito. I don’t like this...
(yells)
PABLITO!

JESSE
What is it Lucas?

Lucas keeps silent.

Something moves in the bush.

They both steer their attention to the moving shrubs.

The two armed escorts stand up in readiness.

Lucas on guard walks toward the bush -- Jesse wants to follow.

LUCAS
Stay in the truck

Lucas draws his 9 MM. pistol from his waste and proceeds cautiously... out of the bushes storms out a mule... shocked they all point their guns at the approaching animal.

A child’s VOICE shouts from the bush.

PABLITO(V.O.)
Don’t shoot it’s me, Pablito.

Lucas lowers his gun.

LUCAS
God damn Pablito, you shouldn’t do this, Why are you hiding?
The boy emerges from the shrubs pulling two saddled mules.

PABLITO
Because El loco went by here a short time ago with some of his men, drunk and cursing, and look!

Pablito points at a dead mule lying on its side a few feet apart.

Lucas freezes.

LUCAS
We better turn back, this imbecile wants to start something, and I’m responsible for your safety.

JESSE
(dauntless)
Fuck my safety Lucas, let’s go and see this brute and try to reason with him, he’s holding our merchandise and time is running out for us.

LUCAS
(adamant)
You don’t seem to understand, this son of a bitch is capable of any stupid move.

JESSE
But you also have to understand this, my flight down here is scheduled and paid for in advance, and if I break the timing there’s no guarantee for me landing back safely.

Lucas leaning against the truck thinks.

LUCAS
You mean your airfield is fixed?

JESSE
That’s right, landing there is not like here, that’s why I’ve got to keep my schedule.

LUCAS
Shit, you want to go on, don’t know how to solve this.

Jesse insists.
JESSE
No Lucas, let’s solve this ourselves, my
time is running out. I’ll take
responsibility for whatever happens from
here on.

LUCAS
You understand Jesse, that if we unwind
this brute’s temper we probably won’t come
back.

JESSE
Yes we will, trust me, I’ve got a surprise
for EL LOCO he won’t refuse, if he’s stupid
enough he’ll fall for it, if not... Our
time ran out.

Lucas looks at his two escorts for approval.
They nod back.
Pablito marvels at Jesse’s gold watch with curiosity...
touches it, then grabs the strap.

JESSE
Let go my arm kid.

PABLITO
Nice watch gringo, want to sell it? I can
get you a buyer.

JESSE
No, it’s not for sale.

PABLITO
Too bad. You’ll probably leave without it
anyway.

Jesse responds to the boy’s impudence.

JESSE
Hey! What is this?

PABLITO
What kind of Gringo are you? Travelling
with a gold watch.
(a beat)
Gringos carry chocolate, not gold.

Jesse grumbles.
JESSE
You’re making my day kid... run along, find a lizard to chase.

Lucas enjoys the act.

JESSE (CONT.)
You’ve seen too many movies and I’m not your cowboy, all right?

PABLITO
A gringo without chocolates is a fake.

JESSE
Jesus Christ! Will someone take this kid off me?

Pablito pierces him with keen eyes.

PABLITO
I think you’re a spy! not a smuggler.

The quarrel heats up, Lucas holds back his laughter but is forced to let it out.

LUCAS
(with laughter)
All right Pablito enough, and you Jesse better roll down your sleeve, it’s beginning to cause problems.

JESSE
Damn Lucas, what kind of kids grow up in here?

LUCAS
Its in their blood, to loot and make a life style out of the contraband that moves freely in these mountains... as for Pablito the problem is, he’s never been out of these hills, never seen a movie, yet he knows what a gringo is.

JESSE
Oh... Well, I’ll try to remember that.

Jesse explains his strategy... Lucas listens with skepticism.
JESSE (CONT.)
Here’s what it is, I want EL LOCO to see my gold flashing from my wrist, it’s bait for the trout. I'll lure him into passive obedience, you'll see...

LUCAS
How do you know he’ll fall for the gold watch so easily?

JESSE
Every brute does.

LUCAS
Oh...

Jesse makes his point.
Lucas accepts the scheme nodding without much trust.

They mount the mules and proceed single row Indian style... one of the escorts trails behind on foot keeping a rear guard.

Pablito makes himself comfortable in the truck’s bed and lies down. He thinks...

PABLITO (V.O.)
A gringo without chocolates, hum! Hard to believe...

ON THE MOUNTAIN TRAIL

Across a vast steep hill, the mules and riders follow up climbing with a steady pace.

Lucas leads... Jesse and one escort follow... the one on foot lags behind showing no fatigue.

A green weed field starts to reveal as they penetrate deeper into the mountain... Jesse snatches some ripe leaves from a weed plant to feel the scent.

Lucas looks back and smiles at Jesse’s approving gesture.

The last man on foot pants with exhaustion... suddenly two gun shots CRACK the undisturbed silence.

The two escorts react taking cover -- Lucas targets the direction of the shot -- Jesse freezes... nobody moves.
ABOVE HIGH GROUND

A man high above their ground flaring a carbine, reveals himself... makes a forward sign.

They follow.

EXT. EL LOCO’S HIDING PLACE - DAY

A large open MOUNTAIN tent with several armed bushwhackers and a few mules strung to their posts make the camp.

Lucas, Jesse and the escorts ride in and dismount.

Jesse takes off his sunglasses and peers his surrounding.

The bushwhackers look back at the visitor with distrust.

FROM THE TENT

A man holding a bottle of liquor waves them in... Looks boozed... stumbles.

Jesse and Lucas walk in.

The two escorts remain attentive holding the mules with hand on weapons.

INSIDE THE TENT

EL LOCO, tanned skin mestizo with feline piercing eyes is drunk to the butt... bluntly waves them in.

IN SPANISH SUBTITLE

EL LOCO
(unstable)
I see you found your way here- I left a mark on the trail for you to see, so... think first before you speak. What brings you here?

Lucas calmly talks back.

LUCAS
Yes we saw the dead mule, you’ll have to pay for it.

El Loco drinks recklessly from his bottle almost falling back... sits next to a small table by his side... his long barrel revolver on top of the table sends a message.
EL LOCO
(aggressively)
I don’t pay shit to people who owe me,

LUCAS
(nagged)
Here we go again, the same rumble, What is it with you anyway? What’s your problem with us?...
(continuing)
... the gringo is here to check the merchandise without delay and you’re not cooperating much.

Ignoring Jesse completely, El Loco shoots back.

EL LOCO
(brawling)
I’ll tell you what’s eating my guts, I’ve been working for your uncle for over twenty years by now, and I’m poorer and he’s richer, that’s what keeps me boiling inside! As of now, things are going to change...(drinks)

LUCAS
Loco why don’t you discuss this with my uncle some other time?, All we want now is to check the merchandise and be on our way.

Jesse sits silently... rolls up his sleeve subtly, revealing his Rolex.

El Loco shifts his eyes, eyeballs focused on the watch flaring from Jesse’s wrist... continues.

EL LOCO
No, it’s you I want to say this to. You’ve become his eyes and ears so hear me clear. I want to be able to leave this shit hole and enjoy life like you and your uncle, and I can’t,
(drinks)
The minute I leave this place the law gets hold of me, and... who cares?

With look hinged at the gold watch...
LUCAS
It’s what you’ve made with your life that’s got you running, don’t blame my uncle for your stupidity.

Steaming heat, El Loco goes for his long barrel revolver and points it at Lucas.

Lucas undaunted.

Jesse remains still.

EL LOCO
(soothing his anger)
You don’t seem to know or care less that it was me always fronting whatever problem your uncle didn’t front-

Circles pointing Lucas at close range.

EL LOCO (CONT.)
-It was me always getting rid of the shit and taking the blame! And now comes his nephew to tell me what to do... TO HELL WITH ALL OF YOU!

Lucas rubs his knuckles and looks at him unable to react.

LUCAS
I came here with this pilot to check out the merchandise you agreed selling. Now, if you want to finish this difference taking my life, DO IT NOW!

( )
Otherwise put your fucking gun away and lets go on with our business. Is that what you want?

El Loco reconciles his self-control... lowers the gun.

EL LOCO
All right, let’s talk business,
(shifting to Jesse)
Who’s this Gringo?

Jesse sitting mute.
LUCAS
He’s the pilot working with us, he is here to make sure he takes back good Gold Colombian weed, not the shit you loaded the last time he was here.

EL LOCO
Yes, I’ve heard that,

LUCAS
We understand.

END OF SPANISH SUBTITLE

El Loco looks again scanning for the Rolex... finds it.

EL LOCO
That’s a fine wrist watch you have there gringo. How much you paid for it?

JESSE
A couple of thousand dollars,

EL LOCO
I can recognize a fine watch a mile away...

JESSE
I’m sure you can Loco. You look like a man of good taste.

Lucas looks dismayed as Jesse’s strategy unfolds.

EL LOCO
(continuing)
How much you want for it? I want it,

JESSE
It’s not for sale.

EL LOCO
What? I can take it off you if I want to and pay you nothing.

JESSE
No doubt you could, but you’ll be making a stupid mistake.

EL LOCO
Ay Dios mio! Why does everybody think I’m stupid?
JESSE
You’re not stupid, unless you do the wrong thing, with the wrong person at the wrong time.

El Loco becomes interested... melts down.

EL LOCO
And why is that gringo?

JESSE
Because I’m going to let you have it for free, a personal gift in exchange for a simple favor,

Lucas observes.

JESSE (CONT.)
It’s yours to keep if you just show us the merchandise so I can check and mark it. That’s all there is to it.

Jesse takes the Rolex off his wrist and hands the watch over to him.

El loco stunned with disbelief doesn’t quite fall for the generosity... he examines the fine watch... takes some time to adjust to the striking gift.

EL LOCO
What kind of trick is this? You better be serious with me gringo, I don’t like being fooled.

JESSE
Oh I’m serious all right, with all due respect señor Loco.

EL LOCO
My name is Pascual. Are you sure of what you’re doing?

JESSE
Positive.

El Loco straps the Rolex to his wrist and calls his people.

EL LOCO
(shouting)
Muchachos! We’re going to see the merchandise, Get moving!
Lucas sits rubbing his chin... can’t believe what he’s just seen.

EL LOCO
Come on, it’s only a short walk to the pit. Gringo, I’m beginning to like you.

JESSE
My name is Jesse.

El Loco laughs with self sufficiency and takes the lead.

JESSE
Yeah Lucas, get on your feet, that’s why we came here isn’t it?

Lucas tracks following.

They follow close behind El Loco... he stumbles, falls and recovers... mocks his own drunkenness.

AT THE GRASS SITE

They reach a spot... two bushwhackers uncover a pit hole dug in the ground... the plastic cover is removed... a few dozen bundles neatly wrapped in waterproof plastic are revealed.

Jesse jumps of top of the bundles in the pit... pulls a buck knife from his pocket and starts making small incisive cuts... crouched carefully pulls out small samples from each bale... El Loco objects.

EL LOCO
Be careful gringo, it took some of my money and time wrapping this shit so you can take it back to your grass smokers.

El Loco laughs himself out and keeps milking his bottle.

Jesse disregards his mockery and continuous his careful inspection putting the samples in different small plastic bags.

After he’s done, has one thing to say.

JESSE
Man Lucas, this gold Colombian should make us some good old green dollars,
LUCAS
It’s all here, waiting for you to pick it up any time,

JESSE
Gotta figure how to start growing it in the states. A harvest of this kind is worth millions.

LUCAS
It won't work.

JESSE
Why not?

LUCAS
This product only grows here.

JESSE
Bull shit.

LUCAS
Why not take the seeds?

JESSE
I’d Rather take a small plant in a pot and go through customs with it, all I have to say is: Cannabis sativa is under extinction and better grow it here than there.

They laugh at the mock.

El Loco churns with resentment.

EL LOCO
Yeah, what about me, don’t I get credit for nothing, I do the selecting, I do the packing and safe-holding and I get what? Shit.

Lucas patiently rebuts.

LUCAS
Yes Loco, and don’t forget the extra weight you like to pack the bundles with.

EL LOCO
I’ll pardon you just this once for your insult.
LUCAS
Make sure you do that Pascual, no foul play this time, hope you act reasonably.

EL LOCO
Reasonably? I don’t understand...

LUCAS
That’s the problem with you. Enjoy the gold watch on your wrist... enjoy the ticking.

El Loco lifts his wrist very close to his ear.

EL LOCO
Yes this makes me very happy...
(listening close)
... but, can’t hear any,

JESSE
That’s because a fine watch doesn’t tick, it just runs silently.

EL LOCO
You’re very smart gringo, maybe we’ll do business in the future.

Jesse and Lucas look at each other.

El Loco detects their visual signal.

EL LOCO
(continuing)
You’ve made me happy with this gift gringo, as for you Lucas,
(shifting to)
I want good cash and soon. I did my part, you keep to yours.

JESSE
It's Been good meeting you Loco,

EL LOCO
Hey gringo!, I am El Loco only to my friends, but since I like you I’l let you call me Loco just this once. Next time I am Señor Pascual, understood?

JESSE
No problem Señor Loco Pascual, I won’t forget.
El Loco takes the sarcasm bluntly.

EL LOCO
Pascual, remember that.

The sun begins setting.

LUCAS
We better be getting back, it’s getting dark.

El Loco spits his resentment before they leave.

EL LOCO
And tell your uncle this is the last shipment I’ll do for him if he doesn’t recognize my good services!...
(drinks)
In cash with green color.

LUCAS
He’ll get your message.

BACK AT THE MOUNTAIN SPOT

Lucas finds Pablito sleeping in the truck bed... shakes him a little.

LUCAS
Wake up Pablito, we’re back.

Pablito sits up and rubs his eyes.

PABLITO
Where’s... el gringo?

Jesse stumbling from the long ride back responds.

JESSE
I’m here kid.

PABLITO
I didn’t think you’d come back.

JESSE
What made you think that?
PABLITO
Because I thought El Loco would hold you
for ransom or have you killed, or do
something with you...

JESSE
You think too much kid, I proved you wrong.

Pablito peers maliciously at Jesse.

PABLITO
He’s going to come for you.

JESSE
Who?

PABLITO
El Loco.

JESSE
Shit, go back in the bush.

Lucas takes pleasure in the nagging.

Almost dark, they speed back to the ranch... Jesse looks
back.

Pablito and the mules are left behind.

IN THE TRUCK

Jesse keeps looking back concerned.

JESSE
Are you gonna leave him on his own?

LUCAS
He knows his way around these trails better
than anybody. He’s been forced to survive
in the wild. Don’t worry about him.

JESSE
I still think we should have brought him
with us... there’s some things I don’t
understand about you people.

LUCAS
He’ll be at the ranch before we get
there... you’ll see.
INT. RANCH/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Gathered for a final talk, Jesse, Blas and Lucas sort out the last details... El Loco is the main topic.

BLAS
So that’s what he had to say.

Lucas reports on the encounter with El Loco.

LUCAS
Yes uncle, he wants a rearrangement of his cut, otherwise I presume he’ll hold back the merchandise now that he knows that Jesse is here and time is running out,

BLAS
Is he willing to go that far?

LUCAS
He’s stupid enough to do it and stall the whole operation, but given the compliment he got out of Jesse, things might run smoothly.

BLAS
What compliment?

JESSE
My Rolex.

BLAS
Your Rolex?

Jesse exposes his bare wrist.

JESSE
An expensive sacrifice for the benefit of our enterprise

BLAS
I’ll take care of that S.O.B. after you take off safely. That bastard crossed the limit of my patience.

LUCAS
What are you going to do uncle?

BLAS
I am going to make sure he gets what he wants... plus something more.
Lucas gives Jesse exchange an ominous glance.

JESSE
Blas, he’s just a stupid man with no common sense in his head, bragging for some respect, just let him know he’s important, that’s all he wants.

BLAS
No, he wont stop causing problems and discrediting me. I have been fair to him, hiding him from the law, supporting his two families and this is what I get.

Lucas leans back.

LUCAS
Whatever you want to do uncle, just let me know when.

BLAS
Only after Jesse takes off.

JESSE
There goes my Rolex, if I knew he was gonna get whacked, I would have thought of something else.

Blas turns his attention to Jesse.

BLAS
So, you have everything set to go back?

JESSE
Tomorrow morning, you’ve gotta give me the cords and radio frequency.

BLAS
I need a date and approximate time of arrival to set things up.

JESSE
To be exactly, seven days from now and approximately six in the morning as long as there’s fair weather.

Blas hands him a note.
BLAS
Here are your coordinates and radio
frequency, once you enter Colombian
territory, not before. Lucas will drive you
to the airport tomorrow.

As they speak, Carmen walks in the room surprisingly with a
tray of empanadas (assorted Colombian biscuits).

CARMEN
(gleeful)
Empanadas for our guest!

Jesse enjoys the honor of her hospitality by being first in
her preference.

JESSE
I love this woman

Carmen holds the tray.

CARMEN
They are specially made for you Jesse.

He picks one and bites it.

JESSE
This is delightful. Can I take some back?

Blas makes an unpredictable comment.

BLAS
Yes, and take her too,
(refers to Carmen)
I’ll help you pack her up in your bag so
you can carry her away for some time.

Carmen hurt, fires back.

CARMEN
Now! You will not get any of my empanadas,
you old bandit!

She quickly passes the tray over to Lucas before Blas can
take his... Carmen swiftly leaves the room with Blas
suspending his hand in mid air again.

Jeff and Lucas laugh it out... Blas swallows his anger.

JESSE
It’s not my fault this time Blas.
In comes Melba with another tray.

**MELBA**
Nobody treats my dear uncle like this...

Blas switches from raw attitude to pleasing gratitude.

**MELBA (CONT.)**
... This tray was specially made for you, it’s just one of your wife’s pranks to amuse herself.

**BLAS**
Thank you Melba.

Melba eye winks Jesse with something he understands... he gets up and leaves.

**JESSE**
Guess I better hit my bunk, it’s a long drive to the airport tomorrow and I don’t want to miss my flight, Good night.

As he walks out, Jesse finds Pablito standing in his way.

**PABLITO**
When are you coming back gringo?

**JESSE**
Hey! Stop calling me gringo if you expect me to bring you back chocolate, all Right?

**PABLITO**
All right, but when are you coming back?

**JESSE**
Soon.

Pablito goes for something in his pocket.

**PABLITO**
Here gringo,

Hands Jesse a rabbit’s foot.

**JESSE**
What’s this?
PABLITO
It’s good luck for you. I caught it myself and it’s been with me a long time. Now it’s yours.

Jesse looks curiously at the amulet.

JESSE
Thanks.

Pablito smiles for the first time.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jesse sleeps after the hard day.

Melba slithers in the room with astute slyness... opens the door, shuts it back carefully... squeezes herself in Jesse’s bed.

Jesse opens his eyes.

JESSE
(staggered)
Melba?

Melba already crouched to his body takes the initiative arousing him from his sleep.

MELBA
Did you think I was going to let you go without saying good bye?

JESSE
(stammering)
I thought you-- had forgotten?

Very much in control, she sets the rules.

MELBA
I am going to make you remember this night for some time to come, maybe you’ll want to come back for more.

JESSE
(helpless)
Got no doubt you’re good in these intrusions... God you’re lovely.
Melba kisses him ardently drowning his praise… sexually aroused, Jesse responds avidly and flips on top of her with sizzling desire… like a vamp, she goes for his neck sucking madly… he feels the pain.

JESSE
Ouch!

EXT. SOUTH FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY
The airliner lands on the runway.

AIRPORT IMMIGRATION GATE
Jesse walks out… looks for Kate… a car horn BLOWS

Kate in her car is waiting double-parked… a traffic cop WHISTLES and summons her to clear the driveway… he hops in the car and hastily drive out of the airport.

INT. CAR - DAY
Kate driving, anxiously wants first-hand report.

KATE
So, how was it?

JESSE
(skewing)
Pretty much the same as last time, except for a native dickhead that’s causing a problem, but it’ll be taken care of by the time I get back.

Kate, puzzled by the splintered feedback wants more.

KATE
What do you mean by that?

JESSE
Oh I don’t know Kate, he’ll probably have him shot, disappeared or something…

KATE
What? You gonna be part of that?
JESSE
Kate, it’s the way they handle things down there, Colombians are used to violence when it comes to solving problems, specially money.

KATE
Is that the kind of people you are involved with?

JESSE
Kate, its not me, it’s them, I don’t mix in their problems.

She glances at his empty wrist.

KATE
Where’s your Rolex?

Takes a brief moment to respond.

JESSE
(sighing)
I was mugged and was taken away by some bandits.

KATE
Mugged? You mean robbed?

JESSE
Exactly, me and this guy were driving to this hideout, when we were assaulted by these bunch of bandits and that was it,

KATE
You make it sound as if it was an exciting adventure,

JESSE
It was in a way Kate, I came out good out of it, didn’t I?

Gives her a grin.

Kate peers back again and finds another goodie.

KATE
And what’s that purple bruise on your neck?

Jesse begins to feel the noose in his neck tightening.
JESSE
Hey! Are you driving or browsing me?

KATE
(insisting)
Just, what are those bruises on your neck?

JESSE
Mosquitoes, you ought to see the size of
them blood thirsty suckers.

Not swallowing his response, she shoots back aggressively.

KATE
(mistrusting)
It looks more like she-vamps to me with
sucking lips and lashing tongues.

JESSE
Come on honey, quit the nagging. Aren’t you
glad to see me back in one piece?

KATE
Honey my ass!

He tries another tactic.

JESSE
Hey! Let’s go to CARL’S place, eat and have
a good time, I need to square out some
things with him.

She has something else in her mind.

KATE
(adamant)
No no, first we go to the hotel, make out,
search your bag and then go to Carl’s.
(firmly)
All right?

JESSE
(indulging)
OK with me.

OUT ON THE ROAD

KATE (O.S.)
I’ll show you what kind of mosquito I can
turn into.
JESSE
Shit Kate.

They speed through the expressway in the late evening Florida sunset.

EXT. NORTH MIAMI/RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A neon sign shines brightly on top of a restaurant.

INSERT: CARL’S BBQ RIBS

Jesse on the wheel now drives into a parking space in front of the restaurant.

INSIDE THE CAR

Before stepping out.

JESSE
Hope Carl is here,

KATE
He always is.

JESSE
I suppose you ought to know better than anybody.

KATE
Does CARL know you’re back?

JESSE
Not unless you’ve told him which I presume you’ve done.

KATE
Why should I?

JESSE
It’s not new to me that while I’m away he visits you and you cry over his shoulder.

KATE
I won’t take any of this from you Jesse.

JESSE
I can, cheating is part of my life, for you is a lifestyle.
KATE
How long have you known?

Jesse looks at her for a brief moment... she opens her door indecisive... looks down.

JESSE
Come on, let’s go in.

They head for the entrance. Jesse wearing an oriental high brim collarless shirt, is uncomfortable... stretches out the collar from his neck constantly.

Before entering, two intimidating looking bumpers greet them at the front door, SAL and Vinnie.

JESSE
(greeting)
Sal, Vinnie. How are you two?

SAL
Good to see you back Jesse.

VINNIE
Carl is waiting for you.

Jesse surprised by the unexpected welcome looks at Kate for an explanation... she bilks his glance... they walk in.

JESSE
(muttering)
See me back?, Waiting for me?, How did they all know I was back? I wonder...

Kate feeling alluded feigns innocence.

KATE
Me too.

INSIDE THE RESTAURANT

Live western MUSIC is the night show attraction.

CARL STEINBERG, the restaurant owner, business man in his mid forties's, always sporting a trim tailored jacket, sits in his personal table enjoying a beer.

Jesse and Kate are ushered to his cornered lurking place.

Carl stands up to greet them.
CARL
(feigning)
Jesse! I didn't know you were back, it's good to see you.

They sit, Kate takes the middle.

JESSE
You seem to be the only one kept in the dark about my return Carl.

Jesse glances at Kate with malice.

CARL
(giggling)
Why is that? Tell me about it, make yourself comfortable.

KATE
(hasty)
Hi Carl,

Carl looks at her with a wry glare.

JESSE
Just got here a few hours ago and everybody seems to know I’m back, except you.

CARL
Bad news travel fast, good ones lag behind, goes the old saying. It’s good to have you back Jesse, tell me about it. How did you find things down there?

Carl signs a waiter for service.

KATE
(sarcastic)
It seems you two have no manners on how to treat a lady.

CARL
(alluded)
Oh I’m sorry Kate, I didn’t mean to be rude, How have you been?

Kate unpleasant plays along.

KATE
Fine as usual, taking the stress of a housewife.
JESSE
We’re not married yet Kate.

KATE
We don’t have to, I just feel like one.

Carl relieves the pressure.

CARL
So, what can I offer you, A cocktail? Dinner? Name it,

JESSE
I’ll have a beer before my ribs.

The waiter responds to the call with pad and pen to take the order.

WAITER
What would it be Mr. Steinberg?

CARL
Bring us two beers please.

WAITER
Will that be all sir.

CARL
For the moment yes, thank you... Oh, wait one moment please...

Carl shifts to Kate.

CARL
(continuing)
...what about you Kate? What would you like?

KATE
(with disgust)
Nothing, thank you.

The waiter walks away.

Feeling the steam, Carl tries to defuse the situation.

CARL
That’s a fine Mandarin shirt you’re wearing Jesse. Did you bring it back in your trip?

Kate lands a stinger interdicting the praise.
KATE
He’s wearing it with his gorge up to conceal the mosquito stings he picked up in Weedland.

CARL
(confused)
What? Didn’t know it was that bad with insects over there.

Jesse goes for his collar with uneasiness.

She reaches for his shirt neck abruptly exposing the reddish tinged bruises in Jesse’s neck.

KATE
(steaming with anger)
Wrong Carl, it was Colombian stingers with teats and sucking lips.

Jesse pushes her apart and looks to Carl with shame.

Carl sticks to his neutrality.

Kate reacts aggressively.

KATE
(cranky)
Excuse me, I have to go to the ladies’s room to relieve my stress. Be back soon.

JESSE
Take your time.

Gets up roughly and walks away.

CARL
What’s got her fuming like that?

JESSE
You ought to know, she’s so insecure and unstable, anyway I didn’t come here for this, what I have is good news.

Carl turns to Jesse attentively.

CARL
(sitting back)
Speak up buddy, I’m receptive.
INSIDE THE LADIES’S ROOM

Kate snores a line of coke... feels the effect, leans against a wall.

BACK AT CARL’S TABLE

The waiter returns, serves the beer and walks away.

JESSE
Man Carl, what I’m bringing back is pure Colombian gold, once it’s here you ought to get a better price than anything done before, take my word.

CARL
What’s in your mind with this Colombian Gold premise?

Jesse drinks his beer.

JESSE
I want ninety per pound.

Carl cavils and responds.

CARL
That’s fifteen dollars above the usual seventy five we’ve been dealing with,

JESSE
Yeah Carl, but this stuff is prime Colombian gold, believe me, I checked it piece by piece personally.

CARL
Oh I believe you all right, it’s those Colombian rats stuffing the bales with rocks and shit and expecting to get paid for that. That makes me think twice.

JESSE
It wont happen this time, I did the inspection myself and the old man over there guarantees the quality for sure.

CARL
How sure?
JESSE
Blas is not a skunk, and anybody harming his business gets dumped. I put my face and blood before this man, he’s straight as a light beam.

Carl drinks from his mug.

CARL
Don’t take things too far Jesse, this is only business, you loose and win, things happen and you take the burden.

Jesse sits up attentively.

JESSE
So, What do you say?

CARL
I see no problem as long as it’s true Colombian gold, without the extra weight those crooks hid in the bales the last time.

JESSE
Carl, this has Blas’ personal signature on it. It won’t happen again

Carl ponders briefly.

CARL
Yeah, I take your word for it.
(ponders)
If he’s serious and straight as you say, there shouldn’t be any problem

JESSE
Then it’s done, have I got your signature on the contract?

CARL
Done.

Carl not so convinced goes along with Jesse’s zest.

CARL (CONT.)
No problem partner, you keep your guarantee, I’ll stand by the new price.
Kate heads back to them.

Carl sees her coming.

    CARL  
    The storm is back

Kate returns showing a gleeful attitude.

    KATE  
    Shall we dance my love?

Surprised, Jesse looks at Carl for an explanation.

Carl sits back.

    CARL  
    Go ahead and dance, I’ll be here all night,  
    the magic powder always does its stuff.

Jesse and Kate dash for their dance... She looks back.

Carl peers at her with subtle cupidity.

Folk-western MUSIC FILLS the night.

EXT. NORTHERN COLOMBIAN MOUNTAINS - DAY

A four-wheel drive and a pick-up truck climb a steep  
mountain trail. The pick-up truck trails behind. Four armed  
men ride in the back with their R-15 rifles in their laps.

INSIDE THE JEEP

IN SPANISH SUBTITLE

Lucas steers skillfully... Blas grips to a hand bar.

    LUCAS  
    Uncle, what makes you think El Loco won’t  
    take this visit as a weakness from us?

    BLAS  
    I have to put some sense in this man’s  
    head, he is unpredictable and I can’t risk  
    this shipment. I’ll Let him think he’s  
    taking advantage of me if that’s what he  
    wants.
LUCAS
I can understand that, my quiz is guessing what this imbecile will do if we don’t come to terms with him.

BLAS
If I remain silent it works on his favor, he’ll think he is entitled to all his claims and I need to tell him where he stands.

Lucas heeds in silence skimming the bad road.

ON THE TRAIL

The two vehicles continue to climb relentlessly... an awesome aerial view of the background marks the pathway to where they’re heading: El Loco’s hideout.

After some time they reach the spot... Lucas gets out gets out for a stretch... Blas remains in the vehicle.

From a higher position above a rocky gorge, they are detected by one of El Loco’s armed men... the BUSHWHACKER focuses his reptile piercing eyes on the visitors.

After making sure everything is secured, the bushwhacker descends closer, reveals himself and shouts.

BUSHWHACKER 1
Alto! Who goes there?

Blas rolls down his window shield to reveal his face.

BUSHWHACKER 1
Oh, It’s you Don Blas, Does Pascual knows you’re coming?

BLAS
(adamant)
If he doesn’t know, go tell him I’m here!

Another bushwhacker runs down a steep narrow trail leading to the hideout.

INT. EL LOCO’S LAIR – DAY

El Loco snoozes the morning off in a hammock -- The BUSHWHACKER storms in to report the alert.
BUSHWHACKER 2
(agitated)
Jefe, don Blas is coming, you need to get up quick, he’s here!

El Loco awakes... dismisses the alert with indifference.

EL LOCO
(slumbering)
Don’t be alarmed, I was expecting him.

The bushwhacker insists.

BUSHWHACKER 2
But Jefe, he brings some armed men with him!

EL LOCO
Don’t panic, I’ve got guns too, go and warn the others. They’ll know what to do in case something happens to me.

El Loco picks up his bottle of fine scotch and downs a generous amount... leans back in the hammock and waits.

OUTSIDE THE TENT
The bushwhacker runs to alert the others as told.

BUSHWHACKER 2
(shouting)
Everybody hide!

Everyone scrambles and disappear in the surrounding bush.

IN THE LAIR’S ENTRANCE
The two vehicles drive into a camouflaged entrance with shredded twigs and branches to deceive intruders... an armed man emerges from the bush and removes the obstacles.

After the entrance is cleared, they proceed to the hideout a short distance away.

The lair is creepy desolate... no one in sight.

Blas and Lucas get off the Jeep... walk toward the tent, Lucas holds a bag... two of the men riding in the rear of the truck, jump down and follow them.
Four of the six armed men remain in the truck. Two out of the truck, and the other two in the rear bed with weapons ready on maximum alert.

INSIDE THE TENT

El Loco, hanging in his hammock, waits with disrespectful apathy.

Blas walks in the tent and stops a short distance from him.

BLAS
Your exposed lack of respect tells me there’s something in your greedy mind Pascual, I’m here to listen.

Lying in the hammock with indifference.

EL LOCO
(disdainful)
The time for respect to be shared by me has come Patrón.

BLAS
Lucas tells me there’s great dissatisfaction on your side about our agreement and I’ve come to settle this matter now for good.

EL LOCO
Lucas says the truth but not complete.

Serene and resolute, Blas confronts the situation.

BLAS
Since when do you think you can treat me with disrespect and challenge my authority? Or is it your ambition that’s making you act so stupid.

El Loco undaunted ejects from the hammock so rapidly almost crashing against Blas.

Lucas and the two gunmen guarding him, react going for their weapons.
EL LOCO
(boasting his guts)
There’s no need to show me your strength
Patron, you may leave me lying dead in this
shack, but I guarantee you that non of you
will leave here walking...

Blas fuming with indignation controls his anger.

EL LOCO
(continuing)
...so if I am the stupid one, if that is
what you think of me, which one of you is
the wisest to start shooting!
(shouting)
GO AHEAD KILL ME!

Blas restrains his men raising his arm.

EL LOCO
(shouting)
WELL? START SHOOTING!

Lucas looks to his back to see if he has to react in case
they’re attacked... Nothing happens.

EL LOCO
(challenging)
You didn’t see a single of my men when you
drove in, Did you? But they’re out there
just waiting for the first shot to be
fired!

OUT OF THE TENT

EL LOCO (O.S.)
(shouting)
SHOOT ME DEAD, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

The SHOUTING is heard outside of the tent... strangely no
one reacts... El Loco’s gang remains invisible.

Blas’s men grip their guns on alert anticipating a
confrontation nearly about to happen... nothing happens.

IN THE TENT

Blas smothers the dispute with a smart move.
BLAS
(soothing)
How did we come to this Pascual? This is not the way we did things in the past.

El Loco turns his back.

EL LOCO
That’s right Patrón, but I’m getting tired playing the underdog, I want recognition and a better cut for my work.

BLAS
This is no time for a showdown Pascual, I have a business compromise to keep in a few days and you are part of it. If this disagreement is over money I have brought you an advance
(turning to Lucas)
Lucas the briefcase!

Lucas steps forward and opens the bag... throws it on the ground... a large amount of US dollars is disclosed.

El Loco coldly glances at the opened bag.

EL LOCO
How much is in there?

BLAS
Enough to end this difference right now. You’ll get the rest of you share after the plane takes off.

El Loco scratches the back of his neck.

EL LOCO
Whatever difference there is, I will forget as of this moment Patrón.

They shake hands and eyeball at each other for a brief moment.

Before leaving, Blas warns with decisive firmness.

BLAS
Make sure the merchandise is in the landing spot a day before the arrival.

EL LOCO
When is the arrival?
BLAS
I’ll let you know in due time.

EL LOCO
I’ll be there with the merchandise patrón.

Blas walks away with Lucas and his two men following.

OUT OF THE TENT
The two vehicles drive away while a line of armed men court their way out.

IN THE VEHICLE

LUCAS
He’s not reliable anymore uncle, he has to go.

BLAS
Yes I know, just remember, I don’t want him touched until Jesse leaves.

BACK IN THE TENT
El Loco fondles with the bills in the briefcase thinking he’s been the victor... a cynical expression in his face reveals satisfaction.

END OF SPANISH SUBTITLE

INT. APPALACHIANS/PRIVATE AIRFIELD/HANGAR - DAY
Max and Jesse observe a disassembled turbo-charger resting on a work bench... Max sweats... smudged with engine oil to his eyebrows sticks obstinately to his solution.

MAX
I can still save this turbo if you just give me some time.

JESSE
No Max, it’s a long flight to Weedland and I don’t have the time for your improvisation.
(firmly)
Replace it, and start now!

MAX
No problem, it’s your money... and my time.
JESSE
Yes, my money and your precious time,
that’s very valuable at this moment.
(hasty)
How long would it take you to have this
bird ready for a test flight?

Max wipes his face with a rag and thinks.

MAX
Well let me see, if I place a rush order—
beside extra cost—would take from four to
two five days for delivery... plus
installation.

JESSE
(interrupting)
Hey, hold on there. You mean a whole five
days for just delivery? No way.

MAX
Unless I go to the distributor personally,
(ponders)
To get it myself depending they have it
stocked... which of course would be extra
money for gas and—

JESSE
Wash up Max and get going.

MAX
But Jesse I haven’t had my lunch yet! a man
has to eat to perform his duties.

JESSE
You’ll pick up something on your way there,
you won’t faint. Anybody looking at the size
of your waist will determine easily you
have a good reserve stocked in your waste
basket.

MAX
Now, is that a nice thing to say?

JESSE
Get Max, I want that part in your bench by
tomorrow!

MAX
(stammering)
Well huh- I mean er- All right I’ll do it.
EXT. CARL’S BBQ PLACE – DAY

Jesse drives in the restaurant’s parking area... It’s empty but sees s police car with a cop in leisure (Max’s friend) parked not too far away.

He puzzles.

Gets out and walks in the restaurant overriding a sign:

INSERT: “Closed”

INT. RESTAURANT – DAY

Service personnel are cleaning the place... Carl sits by the bar drinking a beer.

At a table, a distance apart is Sal having a cup of coffee... Jesse pushes the door letting the light through and walks in... the morning glare shines directly in Sal’s face... He dodges the light.

Jesse approaches the bar and takes a stool by Carl’s side.

     CARL
     What brings you here so early? Wanna a beer?

     JESSE
     Yeah I need one.

Carl calls HELEN young and gracious bartender.

     CARL
     Helen, bring us two beers please,...
         (shifting)
     What’s wrong?

The bartender approaches.

     HELEN
     Foreign or domestic Carl?

     CARL
     You know what I drink.

     HELEN
     And the gentleman?
CARL
Any home brewed.

She nods pleasantly.

CARL
(continuing)
So tell me what’s nagging you?

JESSE
I'm stalled, it’s an engine part I need now, have to place an order for it and I don’t have the time.

The bartender returns, serves the beer.

HELEN
Here’s your beer sir,

JESSE
Thank you.

He sips and gulps three times.

JESSE
Man, this is good.

CARL
So what kind of part is it?

JESSE
(gasps)
It’s a turbo charger for one of the engines, and Max is on his way right now to see if he can get one somewhere in the city... I don’t know.

CARL
You still have that old raccoon with you?

JESSE
Yeah.

CARL
Let me see what I can do, got a part number or some kind of reference to start with...

JESSE
I’ll have to beep Max for it.
CARL

Do it.

Carl thinks ... a brief moment lapses... he’s got it!

CARL

Let me call this guy, he’s in the aircraft maintenance business, maybe he can help us.

Summons his bartender... she responds at the snap.

CARL

Helen please hand me my notebook, in my office desk please.

To Jesse.

CARL

Get the old haggard and have him give you a part number or reference, we're gonna need it.

JESSE

Let me use one of your phones.

CARL

Ask Helen.

Overhearing, Helen places a telephone over the bar counter... Jesse walks to it... she opens a drawer by the cashier’s stand and pulls out a hardbound agenda.

HELEN

Here you are Mr. Steinberg,

CARL

Helen... now the wireless phone please,

HELEN

Surely.

Jesse on the other side of the bar dials a beeper number, waits...

INT. MAX’S OLD PICK-UP/ON THE ROAD - DAY

Max driving... his pager beeps -- he answers. Needs to looks at the scrolling message... pulls out of the road.
EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Max drives into a gas service station... looks for a public phone.

Finds one... gets out of his truck, and walks directly to the booth.

IN THE BOOTH

Dials a number.

INT. THE RIB PLACE - DAY

Jesse waits... the phone rings, he picks it up.

JESSE

Max?

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

MAX

Yeah Jesse what’s going on I’m on my way to see if I can get the part as you told me.

JESSE

I’ve found some extra help, need the part number, I might be able to get it faster than expected.

MAX

Jesse I’m on my way to get it myself, I don’t understand your change of mind.

JESSE

Do as I tell you Max, just give me the part number and manufacture reference

(a beat)

No wait, I think you better get your ass over here quick,

MAX

Where are you at?

JESSE

I'm at Carl’s rib place.
MAX
All right I’ll do as you say, it’s your money and... my time,
(sighs)
Anything else?

JESSE
Yeah- I mean no, just get your greasy ass over here as fast as you can, All right?

MAX
I'll be there shortly.

Max makes a U turn.

EXT. CARL’S RIB PLACE - DAY

Max drives in his old pick up and parks next to the police car.

His friend and lawman, VINCE lies inside snoring... swings the door open, purposely bumps the police car with his door.

VINCE springs out of his slumbering nap.

MAX
I’ll be damn! So this is how you waste the taxpayer’s money, dozing like a croc on a sunny shore.

The lawman recovering from his numbness sits up.

VINCE
Oh... Hi Max, I was just taking a short break... What’s happening?

MAX
With short breaks like these every criminal will find his paradise here. In our community!

VINCE
Cut the bull shit Max, go find some real work will you? I do mine all the time specially guarding you hangar. Do you forget?

Max looks to both sides, dodges close and whispers.
MAX
Jesse’s got some real work for me and you coming up. Wanna join?

VINCE
He's not hauling refer again, Is he?

MAX
In fact he is, and we need security you can provide.

VINCE
Sounds luring, what’s in it for me

MAX
A fair chunk of the pie waits for you, but first you’ve got keep the tin-star buzzards away.

Vince looks up unresolved.

Max pats him in the shoulder.

MAX
Come over my place tonight and I'll tell you all about it over some beers. Got to go now, Jesse is waiting inside.

Max walks toward the restaurant’s entrance.

Vince is left thinking... starts the car and drives away.

BACK AT THE RESTAURANT’S BAR

Carl scrolls through some pages in his notebook... finds a number and dials. Drinks his beer while the phone rings.

The phone rings.

The call is answered.

CARL
Thank you
(pause)
Klaus Gimble please,
(pause)...
Tell him Carl Steinberg
(pause)...
thank you.
Covers the phone mic and asks Jesse for the part number. Max, already with them holds the information in his hand.

    CARL
    Got the part number?

Jesse takes the written information from Max and hands it over to Carl.

    CARL
    (continuing)
    Hello, Gimble?
    (beat)
    Carl Steinberg, how are you?
    (beat)
    Listen, I need a special favor from you
    (beat)
    Right, this is what it is, take this down, turbo charger for a twin engine aircraft...

Jesse shoves Max off.

    JESSE
    OK Max, you can go now.

    MAX
    Don’t I get a beer at least before I go?

    JESSE
    No Max, you’re working remember?

    MAX
    Shit Jesse, just one.

    JESSE
    Get max.

Max walks away grumbling.

As Carl speaks over the phone supplying the information needed, Jesse finds Sal lingering in his solitude... walks over to him.

    JESSE
    So what’s up Sal?

    SAL
    Oh nothing much since our last ordeal with the ballast found in the bales, It was very offensive for us.
JESSE
Yeah, I took notice out of Carl’s complaint and told the boss down there what had happened here.

SAL
(smiling)
Some stones where real neat, they look like lime stones out from some creek, I kept some for my wife’s garden.

JESSE
Sorry to have to stop you short of your collection of stones Sal, because it won’t happen again. That mess was taken care of by the boss himself, I was there personally.

SAL
Yeah, I hear the man down there is very rude but straight.

JESSE
Got it right. Take my word for it, the way he fixes his internal affairs leaves me no doubt that it won’t happen again.

Carl interrupts calling.

CARL (V.O.)
Jesse!

JESSE
Excuse me Sal, talk to you later.

Jesse walks back to Carl... hangs up the phone.

CARL
You’ll have the replacement part here by tomorrow afternoon. You can relieve the old man from the burden and save some money too, I’ll take care of it.

JESSE
Thanks, I’ll call Max and give him the bad news.

CARL
Bad news? I’ve just solved the problem.
JESSE
Not for Max, for him is the other way around. I know what I’m telling you.

CARL
Whatever rolls between you two is no concern of mine.
(sips beer)
Call on me any time buddy, remember, as long as we’re in this together you’ve got my backing and full support, I mean it.

JESSE
As it was said sometime before Carl. This is the beginning of a long lasting friendship.

CARL
I’ll drink to that.

Raises his mug and drinks.

INT. AIRFIELD/HANGAR - DAY

Before a working bench, Max unwraps the box with the delivered part... Jesse watches impatiently.

JESSE
Come on Max, hurry up I wanna see it.

MAX
(perspiring profusely)
You don’t seem to have any consideration for my age, I like to do things methodically and efficiently, but you’re always pushing me.

JESSE
Max, I’ve got no time to listen to your bull-shit crap, just tell me: Is it the right part or not?

Max finishes taking the wrapping apart and inspects the part.

MAX
Yeah, this it. I’ll have it installed by late tonight so you can make your test flight tomorrow.
JESSE
Love you Max.

Jesse takes off Max’s cap, kisses his bald head and walks away fleeing.

MAX
Shit Jesse, Why do you have to do that?
It’s disgusting to have another man kiss me!

JESSE
I’m your man Max, don’t you forget it.

MAX
(again)
Shit.

Max wipes his head with his greasy hand.

EXT. JESSE’S HOME – DAY

The front door opens with a slam... out comes Jesse rushing... Kate behind secures the door lock.

JESSE
Come on Kate, why do you always have to lag behind?

Kate twisting the key fires back.

KATE
Because- shit!

The key gets stuck.

KATE (CONT.)
A woman takes her time,

They get in the car, drive away in haste.

IN THE CAR

JESSE
(prickly)
Does it mean that because you’re a woman, time doesn't count for you?
KATE
Damn right! Because if I’m quick and prompt all the time—
(slants)
You’ll loose interest in me.

JESSE
What?

KATE
Please Jesse, don’t simmer over something you’re about to loose... just accept the facts as they are.

JESSE
What facts? All I want is to be on time in my schedule and you’re not helping me.

KATE
Honey, the airfield will be there, Max will be waiting, so what more could you ask for? You’re the king!

JESSE
With you blistering and nagging constantly, I won’t get in time.

KATE
If a queen doesn’t nag, she won’t get what she wants.

JESSE
And just what is it that you want Kate?

Kate goes flashing for his penis.

KATE
This.

EXTERIOR ROAD

The car swerves out of control.

JESSE (O.S.)
Are you nuts? I’m driving!

KATE (O.S.)
I know, it’s the excitement that turns me on.
JESSE (O.S.)
Stop it, stop...
The car keeps on swerving... curbs to the side and stops...
Kate has her day.

INT. AIRFIELD/HANGAR - DAY
Max cleans his hands with a rag, a satisfying expression in his face tells the work is done.

Jesse walks in a rush, Kate tracks behind him keeping the pace.

MAX
She’s all set and waiting for you boss,

JESSE
(hasty)
Can I take her up Max? Get me the flight log, I wanna take her up now.
(mumbling)
Why is this always happening to me?

MAX
I can presume why,

They both fix eyes on Kate.

Max smells quarrel... darts to the small office.

KATE
If it’s me you’re referring to I prefer to ignore you.

JESSE
Yeah Kate, you do that. It'll help me more than your constant fucking-nagging-shit!

KATE
If you think you can shove me off you’re looming in the moon honey. I’m coming up with you.

JESSE
This is definite a bad start for a day.

Max comes back running with the log book in his hand.
MAX
Here you are Jesse,
(huffing) )
Don't listen to the witch, just take her up and throw her out once you reach top altitude.

Kate overhears.

KATE
Shut up you old rag!

JESSE
I think I’ll take your advise Max.

KATE
(to Max)
Go find an oil can to dip your dick into,

MAX
Don’t go getting sour-puss now Kate, I may be old but can still thrust,

Jesse climbs the short ladder on the side of the aircraft.

KATE
But Jesse, I wanna go with you!

Jesse with half body in the fuselage.

JESSE (V.O.)
Not if you wanna come back in one piece.

She implores from down below.

KATE
Jesse?...

Jesse sticks his head out.

JESSE
Come on.

She climbs up and goes in with one last thing to say.

KATE
I hope one of these days your head gets chopped by a propeller, you fucking creep.

Max gulps.
INT. COCKPIT - DAY

Jesse buckles up, puts his earphones on and grabs the mic.

JESSE
Tower, this is Cesna 342 requesting permission for take off.

TOWER RADIO (V.O.)
Tower to Cesna 342 cleared for take off, proceed to runway...

The engines start and the plane fans out of the hangar.

OUT IN THE AIRFIELD

The plane takes off.

Max observes as the plane slowly climbs the sky.

IN THE COCKPIT.

Jesse pulls back the elevators... Retracts the landing gear.

JESSE
I’ve got to take her up to twelve thousand feet to see how she takes it, you wanna come along?

KATE
Do I have a choice, you moron.

JESSE
I'm taking Max’s advise seriously.

The meter gains altitude.

Rolling up her eyeballs.

KATE
(despiteful)
You make it sound as though there’s a personal relationship between you and this... machine.

JESSE
This machine... that I've come love, makes me happier than you. Anything against that?
KATE
No, nothing, it’s just that I didn’t know how close you were with your flying bride.

JESSE
Call it what you want Kate, because right now if she wanted to, she’ll take us down in a steep dive to hell.

As he speaks he pedals the rudder without Kate noticing it.

The plane banks... Kate jumps in fear.

KATE
(frightened)
What’s that? Why are we waving?

JESSE
Maybe she didn’t like what you just said.

Jesse grins with relief as Kate stifles her fear and leans back.

BACK IN THE HANGAR

A manorial sedan drives in the airfield.

Carl steps out with his two proxies.

INTERIOR HANGAR

Max organizes and cleans his work bench... puts away some wrenches in a tool box... hears STEPS approaching.

CARL (V.O.)
MAX! Are you here?

Max turns to find Carl walking toward him.

MAX
Oh, Hello Mr. Steinberg

Carl approaches with his two men behind.

CARL
Max, I told Jesse I’ll meet him here after his test flight, Where is he?

MAX
He’s up in the sky with his missy.
CARL
Well I hope he comes back intact.

They all laugh.

MAX
What can I do for you sir?

CARL
I need a phone to make some calls, where is one?

MAX
In my office Mr. Steinberg

Max directs Carl to the the small walled space.

CARL
I hate to say this Max but, Is it clean? I don’t want grease on my clothes.

MAX
Mr. Steinberg, my office is as clean as the kitchen in your restaurant.

CARL
You should come around some time to taste the ribs.

Max opens the door for him courteously.

MAX
I do my best but never get invited, sir. Us workers don’t have privileges.

Before he goes in.

CARL
You two wait for me out here... Max talk to the boys while I make my calls.

MAX
Sure thing Mr. Steinberg

Max peers at the two intimidating boys standing by the office door.

MAX
(continuing)
Hey, weren’t you the same two that did the refer hauling last time?
Sal and Vinnie look at each other maliciously.

SAL
That’s right old man except we were with working clothes at that time in case you got the wrong impression.

Max rubs his chin.

MAX
That’s why I didn’t recognize you from the start. You sure looked different in those forlorn pinafores, more like hoboes asking for a smoke.

Vinnie resents Max’s acute observation... shoots back.

VINNIE
They were not pinafores old man, they were overalls.

MAX
I thought they were both the same thing, working people don't mind using either one of the two.

Vinnie gives Max a menacing gaze.

VINNIE
Maybe you ought to shut your mouth old man before I wrench out your tongue.

Max bogs down...

IN THE OFFICE

Carl dials a number... waits... gets through.

CARL
JC? How are things in the big apple? (pause)
Listen I’ll be brief, everything is running smooth, wait for my call in a few days, (pause)
Right, just wait for my call, I’ll get back to you. Good bye.

Hangs up and dials another number... waits.
CARL
Chino? C here, How’s tinsel town doing?
(pause)
If you meet a star, bring her over for some BBQ
(pause)
I’ve got some gold silk coming up my way, Want me to set some aside for you?
(pause) )
fine, take care. Bye

Carl takes a brief break in his dialing... thinks, retrieving something from his memory.

OUT OF THE OFFICE
Waves Vinnie through the door glass to come into the office.
Vinnie steps in.

IN THE OFFICE

CARL
Vinnie, do you recall the dude from Jersey looking for refer last month? I think Viggio was his name, wasn’t it?

VINNIE
Yeah, What about him?

CARL
Need to talk to him, Got his number? You brought him here on some refer shopping mission, remember?

Vinnie extracts a small phone book from an inner pocket in his jacket... Shuffles through it... finds the data.

VINNIE
Got it, here it is.

Grabbing the phone book from Vinnie.

CARL
Let me see.

After looking at the number, he dials it and abruptly changes his mind... hands the phone over to Vinnie.
CARL
Here, you talk to him, ask him to come down to have a talk about his request on his last visit.

Vinnie grabs the phone and listens... the phone rings.

VINNIE
Hello, could I speak to Mr. Viggio
(pause)
Hello Viggio? This is Vinnie from Miami, How are things?
(pause)
I’d like to ask if you can come down to fill a contract?
(pause)
That’s just fine, I’ll pick you up... just call me in advance, you’ve got my number. Nice talking to you.

CARL
Well?

VINNIE
He’ll be here tomorrow night to fly back the next day. Can’t stay long.

CARL
Once you pick him up, bring him over to the restaurant to see how many pounds he wants.

VINNIE
Right.

EXTERIOR AIRFIELD
Jesse’s airplane approaches the runway for landing... lands and scoots heading for the hangar.

IN THE HANGAR
Max, Carl and his two boys wait attentively.

The hatch door opens... Max connects the step ladder... Out comes Kate.

KATE
Heavens! Didn’t expect such a reception, something must be sizzling in the pot.
Carl gets close and extends his hand to help her down.

    CARL
    It wasn't really meant for you, but since you're aboard, welcome back.

    KATE
    You're Always so gallant Carl, I wish some day Jesse will emulate your fine manners.

Jesse comes out... overhears her remark.

    JESSE
    It takes more than good manners to make a man... Sorry Carl no offense meant for you.

Kate snubbed walks away.

    CARL
    Jesse come over here I want to talk to you alone.

They walk some paces apart almost reaching the hangar’s gate.

    CARL
    Is everything running on schedule? I just talked to some buyers to stand by after we move, they’re hungry for weed.

    JESSE
    Yeah, I’m all set to take off tomorrow night, hoping to be there with... the next day’s early lights.

    CARL
    Great because the only way I’ll make them accept the new price is by showing some sample of the refer in advance, not the whole stock. I know one who’d probably wanna take it all, but I am a fair man to my clients.

    JESSE
    As I told you Carl, what I’m bringing back is pure gold, I’ve seen it, you can confirm my say after I get back

    CARL
    Than there’s nothing more to say. If I don’t see you, Good luck and safe return.
Carl and Jesse sake hands... signals his boys it's time to leave. They walk away.

Jesse frowns... turns his face to the vast open sky waiting for him.

IN COLOMBIA

EXT. MOUNTAIN LAIR - DAY

The sky looms with cloudy dark grey clouds threatening to burst... a row of mules are being loaded with two bales of weed strapped to their sides each... the bushwhackers, all set to transport the merchandise wait for their boss to start moving.

The tent door flips open... El loco emerges with straw hat, high rubber boots and a long barrel revolver tucked in his waist, no holster... Mounts a mule and gives the order.

IN SPANISH SUBTITLED

EL LOCO

Vamonos!

The caravan starts moving slowly with some men afoot hauling the mules, most hold semi-automatic M1 carbines strapped to their backs.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

Counterclockwise, a Renegade jeep climbs a narrow road with a pick up truck trailing close behind.

Armed men sit in the truck bed swagger their automatic assault rifles... a confrontation looms ahead.

INTERIOR JEEP

Lucas doing the driving takes on the road’s Steep curves with skill maneuvering... Blas gripped to a hand bar, can’t avoid the bumping.

LUCAS

It takes balls uncle to fly such a far distance in those small airplanes, load and turn back without rest.
BLAS
The gringos have been adventurous mavericks all their lives, they can take it, they’re natural pirates.

LUCAS
But this gringo courting my sister I don’t like it.

BLAS
Lucas my dear nephew, let the affair between a man and a woman roll over the hay, believe me, you’ll loose if you get between them.

A sudden bump throws Blas off his seat.

BLAS
Slow down.

LUCAS
Use your seat belt uncle you’re not buckled.

Blas disregards the advise.

BLAS
Besides, your sister is a grown woman and mature to do what she wants, if I was to deal with her temper I would leave her alone.

LUCAS
(steering)
Grown up yes, but not matured.

BLAS
Tell you again, never get between a man and a woman's love affair, you end up looking like a sap or a looser.

LUCAS
Guess you are right uncle. I’ll back away.

ON THE TRAIL

As they drive they come upon an Army controlled post with a military barricade.

They are waved to stop. They Stop.
An army platoon tactically dispersed, hides in the bush.

The young officer in charge recognizes the passenger as he approaches.

LIEUTENANT
Don Blas! What a surprise to see you up in these hills.

FROM THE JEEP’S WINDOW

BLAS
No surprise at all lieutenant, you know I own a ranch in these mountains.

LIEUTENANT
Precisely sir, my orders are to look for and capture marihuana smugglers reported to be in this area.

BLAS
Is that so, well I have something for you to put you off guard while I rest for a few days in my ranch.

INTERIOR JEEP

Blas open the glove compartment and pulls out a small package.

BLAS
(continuing)
This is for you and your men, not to abandon this post but to remain on guard while I am here.

The army officer sighs deeply with emotion after he unwraps the small bundle of money.

LIEUTENANT
(very indulgent)
Don Blas, you are very generous.

BLAS
I will have some more for you the next time I see you. You do a good job patrolling these hills so I can sleep peacefully.

The officer SHOUTS his order.
LIEUTENANT

Let them pass!

Blas waves good bye.

The barricade is lifted.

They continue on the road.

INTERIOR JEEP

LUCAS

That was swift uncle.

BLAS

Yes and I wish I could do the same with El Loco Pascual, too bad he is not as smart as this young lieutenant.

LUCAS

Yes uncle it’s a shame.

Unexpectedly rain starts falling on the windshield.

BLAS

Carajos! This rain is going to complicate things.

Blas rolls up his window.

Lucas follows doing the same with his.

LUCAS

Just what we don’t need now, God damn!

BLAS

Don’t curse! It might get worse if you’re heard up above the clouds.

LUCAS

Sorry uncle.

END OF SPANISH

IN THE U.S.

EXT. AIRFIELD/US - LATE NOON

Jesse walks to the airplane with Kate embraced.
Max next to the aircraft waits for Jesse.

JESSE
A twelve hour flight should have me there tomorrow by six am approximately, thirty or forty minutes loading... lets see
(looks up)
Six to six, that sounds rhythmic to me.
I’ll be back for supper babe.

Kate walks along in silence.

JESSE
(continuing)
Are you listening? Hey, not the same gloom again! I came back in one piece, Didn’t I?

KATE
Oh Jesse, I can’t help feeling like this every time you leave, I just can’t rub it off(sobs)...

JESSE
Just think like this, we’ll be a little richer when I get the job done.

KATE
I don't know. Is it always gonna be like this?

JESSE
For the time being, yes.

KATE
Will there be a stop to this risky business some day?

JESSE
I don’t know.

They kiss, hug and separate.

Turning to Max.

JESSE
OK Max, see you too for supper tomorrow.

Max waiting there, reveals a last minute surprise.
MAX
Sure thing Jesse. God be with you, but just in case, take this with you.

Hands him a 9mm. Browning pistol.

Jesse looks at the pistol, grins and tucks it in his waist.

JESSE
Sure thing Max, but you two make me feel like Columbus on his first voyage.

Steps in the airplane and closes the hatch door.

The engines start.

The plane takes off looking for the clouds.

Max and Kate watch in silence as the airplane blinking its lights disappears in the fading twilight.

IN COLOMBIA

EXT. RANCH - DAY

it rains heavily... Blas and Lucas arrive at the ranch... an armed man wearing a hooded raincoat opens the front gate.

FRONT PORCH

Carmen and Melba are waiting in the porch stoop... Carmen holds an umbrella... Melba spreads a towel.

Blas steps out and runs for the house before they can come to his rescue.

IN SPANISH SUBTITLED

CARMEN
But Blas, Why didn’t you wait I was coming to cover you.

Melba hands him the towel... Blas dries up.

BLAS
Never mind woman, just get me dry clothes and a shot of whiskey before I catch a cold.

Dries his face and arms.
...I don’t want Jesse to find me sick in a bed in the wrong moment.

INT. RANCH - NIGHT

Blas sits alone by a window contemplating the rain... the thunder sparks it’s flashing lightning... he drinks scotch from a glass.

Melba, seeing him alone and caviling, approaches... kneels beside him... holds his hand.

MELBA
(submissive)
What’s wrong uncle?

Blas gazes at the rain storming out of the window.

BLAS
(absorbed)
I’m worried...

MELBA
Yes I know, you care about Jesse and you also think the weather is not in his favor.

BLAS
Yes, and to know that he should be on his way here by now, keeps me thinking about him landing safely under this rain.

MELBA
Jesse can take care of himself, he’s a good pilot and you know it.

Blas looks at her with intensive concern.

BLAS
Melba, there’s something I want to ask you...

MELBA
Yes uncle.

BLAS
How close is your relationship with Jesse getting?
Melba bickers for a brief instant.

MELBA
Let's say that we like each other very much. You know him better than me, he's here one day, then somewhere else the next...

BLAS
It's because I have known him so well, that I care, this young man has guts and knows no limit to his business.

MELBA
His business is his way of life, and I happen to be very fond of him, that's all.

BLAS
I don't think you are being sincere with me.

MELBA
I'll respond with the same advise you gave my brother.

(sighs)
I am grown up and fully responsible for my decisions, isn't that what you told Lucas?

BLAS
Yes, but...

MELBA
But what? Or is it that you have another bigger complication,

(eyes fixed)
Is it El Loco Pascual giving you a hard time again?

BLAS
Yes.

A thunderous lightning bursts in the night flashing their faces suddenly.

BLAS
(stammering)
It's the ground too, by morning it will be slippery and soft and it will not hold an airplane without risking an accident, and...
MELBA
(interrupting)
Don’t say anymore, everything will turn out fine, you’ll see.

Blas remains immersed in his loom.

Carmen breaks the silence calling from her bedroom.

CARMEN (V.O.)
Blas, come to bed I can’t sleep without you!

MELBA
You better do as she says.

Melba kisses him fondly in his forehead and walks away.

Blas quibbles sealing his mouth with his fist.

CARMEN (V.O.)
Blas, Are you coming?...

He remains silent without responding.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

The airplane cruises the sky in darkness... only the strobes blink continuously challenging the lightning ahead.

INTERIOR CABIN

Jesse inserts a music cartridge on his tape player... breaks the dullness... listens and follows the Stones writhing his body... He’s alone and on his own.

OUT IN THE NIGHT

The plane flies in solitude, out of the dark sky, lightning strokes erode the night’s foul weather

IN THE COCKPIT

Jesse pops in a couple of amphetamines to keep awake as he continues his flight... the lightning pounds the sky intermittently... rain slithers over the windshield creating sinuous streaks of water.
INT. JEEP - SUNRISE

MATCH CUT

The same sinuous streaks of water slide over the Renegade’s windshield.

Blas looks apprehensive, can't keep his fingers still.

Lucas waits patiently with his hands over the steering wheel.

EXTERIOR LANDING FIELD

Rain falls on the drenched field.

The jeep poking a long transceiver antenna... a canvas-covered truck... a pick up holding four canisters of fuel, all wait on the side of the airstrip.

Armed men wearing ponchos stand vigilant near the canvas-covered truck.

INTERIOR JEEP

The transceiver emits high frequency SOUNDS... Blas and Lucas sit idle waiting for a sign.

IN SPANISH SUBTITLED

BLAS
(unease)
Is the transmitter tuned in?

LUCAS
Yeah uncle it's been on for more than an hour.

Lucas leans back in his seat... adjusts the radio squelch... waits patiently.

BLAS
Are the batteries fully charged?

LUCAS
Yes, to the peak, relax uncle.

BLAS
I didn't get much sleep last night, this god damn rain has to stop now!
LUCAS
Uncle, you're over stressing yourself, it's not heavy rain falling, it's just a dying drizzle.

BLAS
What ever it is it's water, and water is not good for us right now.

LUCAS
The ground will hold, you'll see.

BLAS
I'm not so sure, not until I see Jesse landed will I get rid of this pressure.

END OF SPANISH

As they speak Jesse's voice comes in over the radio transmitter.

TRANSMITTER (V.O.)
(repeated twice)
This is bird to base, do you copy me, over?...

Lucas unhooks the mic.

LUCAS
See what I told you, he's here.

Blas excites with an emotional posture.

BLAS
Quick, quick, answer him.

INTERCUT - RADIO TRANSMISSION

LUCAS
(holding the mic)
Base here, pick you loud and clear, over-

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Jesse in the cockpit holds his microphone, looks worn out, hair dispersed with swollen eyes.

JESSE
Right on target, positioning for approach, over-
INT. LUCAS JEEP - SAME

Lucas holds his mic.

INT. PLANE

JESSE
OK, I'm about forty five miles north east from your place, should be able to see me within shortly, over--

INT. JEEP

LUCAS
We have eyes scanning the sky just for you, proceed to land-

INT. PLANE

JESSE
That’s swell to hear, everything looks beautiful from up here, sweep the runway I’m coming in--

INT. JEEP

LUCAS
Everything is ready to start dancing, smoke signal being ignited now to guide you in with the wind-

EXTERIOR LANDING FIELD

One of the men lights up an old tire, black smoke spirals up in the air.

INT. PLANE

JESSE
Looks good! I see the smoke, I’m coming in, tell Blas everything is a hundred percent for the fiesta, keep the radio on.
INT. JEEP

LUCAS
Sure thing, will be here waiting for you with the whole band... safe landing.

INT. PLANE

From the air Jesse spots the smoke that spirals from the field down below.

INT. JEEP

Lucas remains by the microphone attentive for any last minute change.

END INTERCUT

EXT. LANDING FIELD

Blas steps out of the four-track Renegade and orders his men.

BLAS
Get the fuel and pumps ready, the plane is about to land, VAMOS!

The men respond diligently... two manual pumps and hoses are unloaded... everything is set for action... the men wait.

Blas peers out to the sky trying to spot the plane... a far distant WHIRLING sound begins to grow slowly... He tunes his hearing acutely.

BLAS
Everyone quiet...

The men freeze in silence... Blas is the first to spot the aircraft... a small speck in the distant sky begins to take form.

BLAS
(pointing)
There it comes!
Everybody looks his way... the plane is now more visible... with a dauntless dash the airplane cuts through the black smoke serving as wind director and lands -- it splashes water as it speeds over the drenched field.

AT THE JEEP

The load of tension is too much for Blas to bear... Hasty, walks back to the jeep... pulls out a bottle of scotch and sucks a generous amount.

Lucas watches how his uncle soothes his nerves gulping the liquor.

   BLAS
   I need this Lucas, one more landing like this you’ll to blame Jesse for whatever happens to me,

Lucas starts the jeep.

   LUCAS
   Come on uncle, let's say hello to Jesse.

They reach the airplane... Jesse undeterred by the rain, is already on the ground directing the man pumping the fuel into one of the wing nozzles.

Lucas arrives and steps out of the jeep. Blas remains in his seat away from the rain.

   LUCAS
   That was some landing, you almost caused my uncle to collapse with a heart breakdown.

Jesse turns over to face him.

   JESSE
   Hi Lucas, I thought Blas was used to this kind of excitement, sorry.

They shake hands warmly.

   LUCAS
   Good to see you again, you better go over to my uncle so he can take a good look at you.

Jesse walks toward the jeep... meets Blas.
JESSE
Hey Blas! I'm here again, it's me the real Jesse
From the jeep window.

BLAS
Don't fool around Jesse, it's been hard for me these last hours waiting for your arrival.

JESSE
Come out of the car, I wanna hug you, you old bandit.

Blas smiles and steps out.
Jesse hugs and squeezes him off his air.

BLAS
We have to load you quickly, an army platoon is near by and if they see us I'll have to double the bribe.

JESSE
Blas you ought to be thinking on spending your money wisely, instead of trying to save it all the time.

BLAS
That's easy for you to say because you're young and don't have my responsibilities. Come on! Don't lose any time we have to dispatch you quickly!

Blas grabs him by the elbow and both walk back to the plane.
The truck with the refer bundles parks close to the airplane... one of the men strips the top from the truck to reveal the bales.

Another one loads the first bale on his shoulder and dumps it in the airplane.

Jesse aware of how the load should be distributed leaves Blas momentarily.

JESSE
Hold on Blas, I've got to tell them how to distribute the load, Hey amigos! Hold on there...
Jesse climbs in the airplane and starts directing the loading.

JESSE

No no, straight rows on each side... that’s it.

As they perform the work, a massive burst of rain storms the crew... everyone runs for cover.

INSIDE THE AIRPLANE

Jesse arranges the cargo in orderly files... he's wet and restless but keeps on arranging the bales.

JESSE

Come on hurry up! Or I'll be stuck here for good!

OUTSIDE THE AIRPLANE

Defying the rain the crew restarts the loading.

Lucas runs back to the jeep fleeing from the rain.

INTERIOR JEEP

Lucas dripping water,

IN SPANISH SUBTITLED

LUCAS

Shit uncle, just as you feared, Jesse has to go fast before it gets worst.

Blas feels his premonition is starting to materialize.

BLAS

(ill tempered)

Damn rain! Is El Loco being taken care of as I said?

LUCAS

Some of the men are getting ready to go and take him.

BLAS

You mean they're still here? He's probably on his way here by now, intercept him before he gets here or there will be no take off, Nothing!
Lucas perceives trouble looming their way.

LUCAS
You want me to go and stop him?

Blas nods.

Lucas complies with the approving sign... leaves the jeep... calls some men,

LUCAS
Nos vamos!

... and drive away in haste.

EXT. EL LOCO´S LAIR - STORMING

Lucas approaches the hideout with his men -- torrential rain blasts the camp -- they storm in -- jump out of their vehicle, weapons ready -- snap directly to El Loco´s tent.

It’s deserted.

INT. TENT

The tent is empty... the hammock where El Loco is supposed to be is there, but he isn’t.

A bottle of liquor lies on the table half empty... they’re late.

Lucas picks up the bottle... thinks.

LUCAS
(to himself)
Where is he?, Where is everybody?

Thinks twice, looks to the men for an answer... perceives something is going wrong -- Snaps out of his thought.

LUCAS
(conclusive)
Shit! Let’s go back immediately.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DAY

El Loco dripping water, blazing a sawed-off M1 carbine, leads his men on his way to the airfield.
His eyes swollen with redness discharge a sinister look... It’s now or never for him to have it his way.

As they head for the showdown, someone is watching...

IN THE BUSH WEEDS

Pablito pokes out his head from the wet bush at the wrong moment... He’s seen, seized and brought before El Loco.

EL LOCO
What are you doing here boy?

PABLITO
(fearless)
I am looking for my mules before you shoot them.

EL LOCO
(distrustful)
Looking for some mules eh? I’ll send you where to find them. Shoot him.

As Pablito is being dragged to be shot, a barrage of thunderous lightning explodes in the sky sending El Loco and his men for cover... a huge tree receives a discharge... It burns and cracks sending everyone for cover.

They recover -- look for the kid -- Pablito is gone.

EL LOCO
(steaming fury)
After him, don’t let him get away!

Two men start the chase -- Pablito flees, he’s faster -- unable to catch him, aim their guns and fire... Pablito dodges and gets away.

MOUNTAIN TRAIL

Lucas and his men speed back to the airfield in a race against time.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - SAME

The rain begins to faint.

INTERIOR JEEP
Blas, unaware of what’s about to happen, looks through the windshield... his men finish squeezing the last bales into the airplane.

The rain is less now... Jesse aloft one of the airplane wings, makes sure the fuel tank valves are shut.

ON THE TRAIL

Lucas and his men rush back to the airfield desperately.

AT THE AIRSTRIP

Jesse about to close the rear door when... he sights a small figure running toward him... can’t see clear through the rain drizzle...

Pablito running bursting his lungs, YELLS out.

PABLITO
(breathless in Spanish)
EL LOCO IS COMING!

Jesse sees him clearly now.

JESSE
(muddled)
What the hell is this kid up to now?...

Pablito YELLS again.

PABLITO (SUBTITLE)
EL LOCO IS COMING!

INTERIOR JEEP

Blas hears the call... rolls down his window... pokes his head out.

El Loco with his men reach the airstrip -- sights the kid running the alarm -- jumps off his mule -- aims his M1 at the kid and FIRES.

Struck by the bullet, Pablito breaks down, falls and rolls over several times.

IN THE AIRPLANE

Jesse hears the shot and sees the kid falls -- Looks for the direction of the shot, but can’t see much.
El Loco aims his carbine again.

The shot misses Jesse by an inch perforating the plane’s hatch door he was about to close -- jolted, squats, crawls for his pistol -- jumps off and runs to aid Pablito...

finds him lying dead.

Lucas and his men finally reach the airstrip -- hearing the shots they run for the airplane to provide protection.

Lucas stops short of the airplane.

LUCAS
(shouting)
Jesse! Where are you?

Lucas sights the direction where the gunfire is coming from, signals his men to encircle the sighted spot.

EL Loco and his few men watch in fear as they are surrounded and overpowered... Lucas tightens the circle, leads the assault -- opens fire.

El Loco fearless fires back, brags -- a man running alongside Lucas falls -- another one dives for cover -- Lucas fires as he runs, continues gaining ground, when he’s close enough shoots his pistol repeatedly == El Loco falls back mortally wounded... without lowering his gun, Lucas cautiously approaches the dying man... has some last words to say before he goes.

EL LOCO
(muttering in Spanish)
Damn you and your kind Lucas... I'll see you in hell

Jesse storms in breathing anger, holds his cocked pistol ready to fire.

JESSE
(with anger)
Not before getting this from me you fucking stupid son of a bitch!

He empties his magazine on El Loco’s body with frenzied madness.

Perforated by the hail of bullets, El Loco flutters his eyes, rolls back and stiffs...
Jesse continuous to point the gun at the dead man... Lucas lowers it, kneels besides the body, grabs his hand and snatches the Rolex off his wrist.

LUCAS
You had it coming to you, you sick bastard,

Jesse tries to piece together all that’s happened... Looks to all sides.

JESSE
Why did he have to do this? I thought we had an agreement.

Lucas holds the watch in his hand.

LUCAS
Well, he can’t answer you now. You want your Rolex back?

Jesse stares... turns his back.

JESSE
No, keep it if you want it.

The rain is almost gone, only a slight drizzle is left of the stormy weather.

They go back to the site were Pablito lays... Jesse breaks the circle of people surrounding the boy’s body... picks it up and carries it to one of the trucks.

JESSE
Money is not worth it like this.

Blas, Lucas... all the rest heed in silence.

Pablito’s lies dead in the truck bed... He’s eyes still opened... Jesse looks at him with deep distress.

JESSE
Guess he’s with his family now.

Gently closes the boy’s eyelids.

AT THE AIRSTRIP

The plane takes off dissolving in the clouds.

Blas and Lucas glimpse in silence until the plane is no longer visible... turn their backs and walk away.
EXT. PRIVATE AIRFIELD - NIGHT

WAITING FOR JESSE’S RETURN

A police car stands guard at the entrance of the airfield... the night is quiet... the sole companion to Vince the cop.

IN THE CAR

The sheriff sits idle, a dim lit interior shows him shuffling over his ticket pad... grinds the time away.

A portable radio transceiver lying by his side activates with a voice.

    MAX (V.O.)
    Vince- Max here. Are you sitting on your butt?

The sheriff picks up the radio mic.

    SHERIFF
    I'm here all right, and I'd wish you’d be more respectful when you speak to me Max, I’m the Law, Are you forgetting?

    MAX (V.O.)
    Cut the bullshit Vince, you and I are old buzzards hungry for scavenge ain't we?

    SHERIFF
    I'll have to cut this conversation, now-

    MAX (V.O.)
    You do that, but just stay alert.

Vince shuts off the two-way radio and pans his head with a disapproving gesture.

ON THE RUNWAY

Max leans on one of the vans facing the runway, the portable transceiver in his hand.

    MAX
    (rebuffed)
    Vince, Vince?-- Huh... what the hell.

Puts down the radio... The night is quiet.
Two Vans stationed on the runway wait for Jesse’s late landing.

Sal and Vinnie are restless... walk in circles... Jesse is taking too long.

Max’s tranquility has him gazing at the stars... Sal breaks the quietude.

SAL
(hasty)
Max...

MAX
(gloomy)
Huh?

SAL
Max, you think Jesse will show up for sure?-- Or you think something might have happened to him?

Max takes his time.

MAX
Just be patient boys, we'll be seeing him soon... coming straight from heaven.

SAL
Vinnie is a patient man, but I'm a little hasty when it comes to waiting, did you verify if the sheriff is covering our back?

MAX
(gazing)
Just spoke to him, he's there...

Sal looks sideways with distrust.

SAL
(mocking)
This lawman is setting up a new standard for the future generation of rookies, ain’t he?

Vinnie bursts with laughter.

Max absorbed by the darkness doesn’t find the joke amusing.
MAX
(gazing)
Vince is all right, all he wants is a piece of the pie, just like you and me,

Suddenly he sees something.

MAX
(blinks his eyes)
Here he comes,

A pair of dimmed flickering lights emerge from the distant darkness.

Sal reacts with ignited excitement.

SAL
(exhilarated)
Hey Vinnie, start the van, HE’S HERE!

Vinnie moves and rushes to his Van.

The plane lands with the two vans trailing almost to the end of the runway... the short spree comes to a stop... the plane and vans meet. The waiting is over.

MONTAGE

--FARMHOUSE

Two men load the re-packed weed bales inscribed with: “VINCENT’S LAWN FERTILIZER” in a service Van marked on its sides with: “VINCENT’S LAWN CATERING”.

--SUB-URBAN RESIDENCE

A young couple works in mobile home stuffing the weed in smartly disguised double walled compartments. The out of state license plate reads: “NEW YORK”.

--CITY RESTAURANT

Vinnie waits seated in a restaurant... What appears to be the manager calls him to his office... Inside he’s handed a bundle of cash with a handshake. The deal is sealed.

--MALL PARKING LOT
Sal drives in and parks next to an old model station wagon... without leaving his car, the trunk door opens... the driver from the station wagon rapidly gets out... swaps a bale in his rear compartment... Sal hastily drives away.

--CARL’S BBQ RESTAURANT

Carl gives a party with invited business associates... Kate Max, Vince, Vinnie and Sal enjoy the good time... the booze and music is abundant.

Jesse, sitting alone in the bar excludes himself from the feasting bunch... gloomy holds the rabbit’s foot in his hand... he remembers Pablito in scene clips his return to Weedland.

FADE OUT.