



Gatito Inmigrante

Alfredo M. Bravo de Rueda E.

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(Second draft with some camera directions)

by
Alfredo M. Bravo de Rueda E.

Based on the novel The Fables,
By Alfredo M. Bravo de Rueda E.

Dedicated to Joaquin Luna

GROUL GUFF, a mixed shorthaired apricot Vizsla with drop ears, in work clothes is operating a serger, breathing with difficulty.

SWEATSHOP OWNER, apricot Turkish Angora male cat with black stripes.

RAUL AARF, middle-aged mixed dark brown Sussex Spaniel.

MEAU MICKAU, dark gray Russian Blue cat.

GATITO INMEEGRANTE, mixed caramel colored cat. Real name: Joaquin Gatito Migran

ALFGUAU BRWAU, middle-aged small white shorthaired dog with black mouth and ears

SMUGGLER CAT, cat with rough character

SMUGGLER DOG, dog with rough character

MICHELLE TANCRUARF, small white, bearded Dandie Dinmont Terrier, semi-haired, with white hair on his forehead and drop ears.

DUKE, black Mudi dog.

CHARLES, bearded and short apricot and cream Cairn Terrier of prick ears.

GUSTAVO, a small red and white shorthaired Italian Greyhound with big semi drop ears and a pointy mouth

KIM, a small female black Schipperke dog with prick ears and a foxy face

RODOLFO UFGH, yellow Labrador Retriever

SENATOR SANDERF, Golden Retriever

ATEH TAYARIH, snake

CHIEF HAGEL, old hairy apricot and cream Briard dog

DAVID, white dog

JON, gray and white Bearded Collie.

CHIEF KRUFORF, Chief of the immigration police, hairy white Komondor.

POLITICAL APPOINTEE, Pinfeather dog, bearded, white.

RACHY CORRY, white Labrador Retriever

RAFAEL, small shorthaired black and white Staffordshire Bull terrier with semidrop ears.

GANG MEMBER KILLED BY GROUL, brown dog.

GANG LEADER, black and white Finnish Lapphund with apricot spots

MIAC, black cat.

GISELLE, black female cat.

GANG LEADER, white, gray and dark gray Javanese Tabby Poin with long mouth

FRANCISCO AGUOSTA, small, fat brown semi-hairy Affenpinscher, bearded, with semi-drop ears.

GOVERNOR #1, Basset Fauve de Bretagne, a small brown hound with long ears and a big mustache.

LAST GOVERNOR TO VOTE AT FREEDOM PLAZA, old, big white and apricot Saint Bernard with black spots on his drop ears and long cheeks.

ARISTOCRATS #1 and 2. Apricot and white hairy collies.

MAIN ARISTOCRAT: short haired dark brown Weimaraner with drop ears.

FADE IN:

SEQUENCE 1

1. INT. POORLY LIT SWEATSHOP. Very hot day but windows are closed. Animals are working behind sergers while the owner walk around watching them. Heavy breathing because of the heat.

VOICE IN OFF

Since the Second Big Drought of the year eighteen ninety eight, the inflow of poor, desperate immigrants to the Southern Country has made many demagogues very popular. But the Second Big Drought was not the only scourge plaguing the lands above the Northern border. And every time some hardship like a bad crop or a drought happened, new demagogues came up to seduce the Southerners into believing that all their grievances could be traced back to those mixed immigrants. And the most popular of those demagogues is Michelle Tancruarf, a member of the conservative elite who won a great deal of power in the so-called conservative wave of the year eighteen ninety nine thanks to his campaign against mixed immigrants.

(CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT. SCENE OF A PODIUM, SOMEWHERE IN NAYAK, TANCRUARF IS GIVING A SPEECH TO AN EXCITED AUDIENCE
CUTS BACK TO THE WORKSHOP)

Meanwhile, in the Northern Country, without economic opportunities, and with most animals worrying more in their own survival than in local politics, animals like Groul Guff (CLOSE UP OF GROUL WORKING BEHIND A SERGER), an architect who soon realized his lack of pedigree would not let him amount to anything in life, had very few alternatives. Another one who, finding that any change inside the Northern Country was beyond his control. Another one who, like many among the Northerner poor and their impoverished middle class, saw the Second Big Drought coming to finally evict him from his most modest dreams, desperately tried to cross the border to the Southern Country.

(CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT. GROUL IS CROSSING THE BORDER WITH SOME OTHER ANIMALS. GROUL IS AFRAID BUT KEEPS RUNNING.

CUTS BACK TO THE WORKSHOP.)

So one day, leaving behind all illusions of rescuing his career, Groul crossed illegally to the South. At least, in the South he could stick to the hope of some day escaping poverty, of something happening. At least, it was not Northern Country. But nowadays he preferred not to think of all those years spent, wasted actually, in the school of architecture. The sole idea that he could have been a good architect, had he had a chance, still

came from time to time to haunt him, to depress him. Maybe in his next live. Unfortunately he did not believe in the next live. (CLOSE UP: GROUL SCOFFS BUT HIS EYES ARE SAD).

But even then he didn't dream of returning to the Northern Country, where his career had become nothing but a name printed on a diploma, a ghost, a painful piece of paper that would for ever scar his soul.

(FLASHBACK OF GROUL RUNNING AFRAID AS HE CROSSED THE BORDER)

And he remembered again the day he crossed, with fear and mixed feelings in his heart; the end of his infernal trip, when he found in front of him a beautiful city, a city that even then he felt would never be his; a city he would have wanted to smile back at him; a city that, no matter what, would always have its doors closed for him; a city that would only allow him through its dirty backyard door, the backdoor that had brought him to this ugly sweatshop where he was now working in textiles; a sweatshop that gave him the impression that he was still in the Northern Country, that he had never left, that coming here had only been a dream.

(CUTS TO: EXT.: Groul remembers his old job. STORE IS CLOSED, FRONT DOOR, AT MORNING. MUFFLED SOUNDS OF THE CONVERSATION. He's in front of his distressed employer, who speaks to him with dropped his eyes. Groul says nothing, just leaves in silence.)

Groul had lost his previous job and barely escaped a crackdown just because it happened in his day off. And the day after the owner told him that many of his friends had been arrested, that he could not have him anymore and that he didn't even know how he was going to pay the fines and still meet the deadlines on his contracts. But the now dirty street only seemed to add pain to his now ex-boss's grief. So Groul just turned and left the place to never return.

(CUTS TO: INT.: SWEATSHOP. Groul drinks avidly from a 3-liter bottle of water. The owner walks among the rows of machines watching the workers, talking to himself, complaining about imaginary bad workers (MUFFLED), staring now at RAUL AARF, who looks insecure before the owner.)

And there he was Raul Aarf, now under the close watch of the owner. Aarf, like him, was in the group of Gatito Inmeegrante.

(CUT TO: MEAU MICKAU is folding and packing the pieces already finished)

Meau Mickaw, also from Gatito Inmeegrante's group, was working in the sweatshop. And it had been in that group where Groul had tried to find whatever the closest to hope he could get under the new circumstances.

(CUT TO: Groul, behind the serger, is drying the sweat on his forehead. As he takes another sip from his bottle, he gives a glance at Raul Aarf. The owner seems to be reprimanding him again.)

Once Raul Aarf told Groul that he had been an accountant in the Northern Country. But one day his job had been taken from him with a lame excuse and given to a well connected dog of pure race. *'Welcome to the club!'* Groul almost told him then. And all those times of hard, good work had counted for nothing. Welcome to the club again and again. Raul and his wife had a very hard time when they crossed the border because they were not that young and because they had not cared to be in shape in a long time. And no, for Raul it had not been easy to get used to manual work after all those years crunching numbers in an office.

On the other hand, Meau Mickaw was still young and, aware of the bad times, he saved as much as he could. But although he never talked much, the reason why he never said anything about his plans was different. He had none. And yet, he was saving for that non-existent plan. One of his contradictions. You could say that he was bitter already despite his young age. But Groul had to admit that he himself was not optimistic either; not any more. Nevertheless, the group of Gatito Inmeegrante, though hopeless, somehow around him found, if not hope, at least something similar to that, or something that passed for that... And that was much better than the absence of light or, in the case of the lucky ones, the self-deceit he had seen in others.

(CUTS TO: THE OWNER PASSES BY GROUL, ALMOST CATCHING HIM DISTRACTED, BUT HE'S TOO FOCUS ON RAUL NOW.

GROUL GLANCES AT THE CLOCK ON THE WALL, WHICH IS ABOUT TO MARK TWO IN THE AFTERNOON, THEN HEARS HEAVY STEPS ON THE STAIRS AND BANGING ON THE DOOR. HE STARTLES. RAUL TURNS TO HIM AS IF TRYING TO FIND AN ANSWER. IN AN INSTANT, MEAU MAKES A SIGNAL TO GROUL AND RUNS. GROUL RUNS AFTER HIM, PULLING RAUL IN HIS WAY OUT. RAUL LOOKS AS IF HE WANTED TO MAKE A QUESTION BUT DOESN'T. PANIC SOON TAKES OVER THE SMALL FACTORY WHILE THE POLICE YELL ABOUT DOCUMENTS. SOME ANIMALS TRY TO FORCE THEIR WAY OUT THROUGH THE DOORS BLOCKED BY THE ANIMALS IN UNIFORM BUT ARE BEATEN BY THE BIGGER AND MORE NUMEROUS MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE. THE OWNER OF THE SMALL FACTORY IS ASKING FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE.)

2. CUTS TO: INT.: STORAGE ROOM

MEAU LEADS GROUL AND RAUL TO THE STORAGE ROOM, JUMPS TO THE TOP OF SOME BOXES AND REMOVES THOSE HIDING THE VENTILATION OUTLET. GROUL JUMPS TOO AND PULLS HIMSELF UP THOUGH WITH SOME BRUISES. BUT RAUL CAN'T JUMP HIGH ENOUGH TO GET THERE. GROUL, HIS EYES REDUCED TO SLITS BY THE EFFORT, GROWLING, EXTENDS HIS HAND AS MUCH AS HE CAN TO HELP HIM AND, AFTER SEVERAL DESPERATE TRIES, RAUL GRABS HIS HAND BUT NOW GROUL CAN'T PULL

HIM UP. RAUL IS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO PULL HIMSELF. RAUL IS NOW SLIPPING FROM THE GRIP OF HIS HAND. GROWLING, GROUL MAKES A LAST DESPERATE ATTEMPT BUT RAUL'S SWEATY HAND KEEPS SLIPPING. THE IMMIGRATION POLICE BREAK INTO THE WAREHOUSE.

RAUL'S FACE MAKES EVIDENT HIS DESPERATION AND GROUL WANTS TO JUMP BACK TO THE WAREHOUSE TO HELP HIM BUT HE REALIZES IT'S TOO LATE AND TURNS TO MEAU AND THEN BACK TO RAUL, WHO IS YELPING AND WHOSE EYES ARE GROWING MOIST. MEAU PULLS GROUL WITH HIM INSIDE OF THE VENTILATION OUTLET.

3. CUTS TO: EXT.: ROOFTOP. MEAU AND GROUL ARE RUNNING. GROUL LOOKS ANGUISHED. MEAU SHOWS NO EMOTION. GROUL HEARS (MUFFLED IN THE BACKGROUND) RAUL'S DESPERATE VOICE AND IMAGINES HIM HANDCUFFED BY THE IMMIGRATION POLICE.

RAUL

Pleeease!

MEAU AND GROUL JUMP TO THE NEXT ROOFTOP, GROUL TWISTS HIS ANKLE. THEN BOTH TAKE THE STAIRS TO THE STREET FLOOR AS THE IMMIGRATION POLICE REACHES THE ROOFTOP OF THE SWEATSHOP.

MEMBER OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE (panting, yelling)
Suspects in their way to the street by the opposite side of the block.

4. CUTS TO: BACKSTREET. PANTING, GROUL AND MEAU REACH THE STREET. GROUL IS LEANING MEAU'S SHOULDER AS THEY KEEP RUNNING. BUT HE LOOKS MORE DISTRESSED THAN TIRED.

5. CUTS TO: INT.: SWEATSHOP. RAUL IS PUSHED BY THE IMMIGRATION POLICE WITH THE REST OF THE ANIMALS ARRESTED DURING THE RAID. HE LOOKS CONFUSED, UNABLE TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS THAT OVER AND OVER THE IMMIGRATION OFFICERS DIRECT AT HIM (MUFFLED VOICES OF THE POLICE MEMBERS). HE STARTS TO CRY.

FADE IN: TITLE

GATITO INMEEGRANTE

SEQUENCE 2

6. CUT TO. INT.: BARELY LIT WAREHOUSE. A DOZEN ANIMALS ARE NOW SURROUNDING GROUL. ONE OF THEM IS TENDING TO HIS ANKLE. GROUL GETS BACK TO HIS FEET.

ONE OF THE ANIMALS IN THE WAREHOUSE

Sit down or try to control that limping, dog.

GROUL

It hurts!

SAME ANIMAL

Then sit down...

GROUL NOTICES THAT MEAU KEEPS BRIEFING GATITO ABOUT THE RAID (MUFFLED). SADDENED, GATITO WAVES AT THE REST, CALLING THEM, AND THEY SURROUND HIM.

GROUL

We have to try with the gangs again! It's Aarf we are talking about, Gatito.

GATITO IS ABOUT TO SPEAK BUT MEAU SPEAKS FIRST.

MEAU

This was not the first time something like that happens to us, Groul. In other times we could help our friends get back, but since Tancruarf came to power crossing somebody back is almost impossible. The smugglers we knew are gone. Now, all that is controlled by the gangs. You know that, Groul. We have to find some other way but the gangs is not! Even the good guys who left water or food in the border for animals like us have been arrested. It's a crime now to leave us water. It's other times now, Groul. The last time we tried to get back our friends with the gangs they just kept our money and even kept our friends who went with the money and gave them to the immigration police as if they were a fucking offering...

(MOMENT OF TENSE SILENCE. MEAU HESITATES. HE REALIZES HE HAS BROUGHT A PAINFUL ISSUE TO GROUL. GATITO GLANCES AT ALFGUAU BRWAU.)

ALFGUAU BRWAU (with moist eyes)

I was his best friend. I know his wife, his house, his whole life... Hours talking about what should've been and never was. The last times he kept telling me about his struggles with manual job and his asshole boss. He had learned his skills through books. Numbers was his thing. But he was not being judged on numbers. Raul kept telling me about the embarrassment of looking slow or clumsy when he had been used to do things much more difficult than that... And I don't know why I am talking about fucking numbers and sergers when my friend is gone. But that's what we talked the last times.

(TURNING TO GATITO) Gatito, you know it's difficult. You have been there before. The door will open. And it's worse when there are children... His wife will greet me with a smile, as always. She will then see a bad omen in my face and frown. And it's then when I will say I am bringing bad news to give her some time to prepare herself for the worst. Then I will tell her about the raid. That's when, little by little, she will realize what all that implied. So she will say that it had to be a mistake, ask me if I am sure, that it could not be true. Then she will seem in shock, confused, looking for a place to sit. I will reassure her that the group will help her go through any financial trouble she might have. But she will not care at that moment for that. And, if she's lucky, if somebody can be lucky in those circumstances, she will cry there in front of me and open her soul while I am still there. But when there are children is worse. I would have to see once more the children who had been playing in the background and are now looking at me, confused, their childish mischief gone. And then I will have to leave knowing that I have left something irremediably broken in my friend's wife...

SEQUENCE 3

7. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE'S DORM. GATITO LIES ON A MATTRESS. HE IS THINKING. THE IMAGE OF HIS PARENTS POPS OUT IN HIS MIND. THEN HE PICTURES HIMSELF LYING IN A BED AT HIS PARENTS' HOME.

8. CUTS TO: INT. DAY. GATITO'S BEDROOM AT HIS PARENT'S HOME IN NORTHERN COUNTRY. HE LOOKS SADDENED, UPSET. HIS FATHERS ENTERS THE ROOM, HIS FACE SHOWS HE REALIZES THERE IS NO GOOD NEWS.

GATITO'S FATHER

What happened with the interview?

GATITO

Same thing. Why should it have been different?

GATITO'S FATHER (sighing)

Had I known... It was other times, but I should have known. I should have sent you to Southern Country when it was easier to use the regimen of pets. You should have studied there. Not here...

GATITO

I didn't know either.. I should've done my research... Something... I should've quit and do what you say but I believed them. My school advisers, those idiots who had told me my talent would open any door for me... And after all my hard work

and your sacrifice, my graduation was the last day of my career. Mixed and low born, I should have realized sooner that I had no future as a lawyer, at least as the kind of lawyer I wanted to be. I trusted them because I assumed they knew better that world of which, so far, I had only heard in lectures or seen in photographs. They told me I belonged to that world. And I, excited, had shared that hope you and mom only to see in your faces... You realized long before me that for those advisers my future was simply unimportant. But by then I didn't want to listen. Until everything went wrong and I listened. And when I didn't show up at their offices any more, they didn't miss me either...

GATITO'S FATHER

I also got caught in that mirage, son. We both fucked up for not realizing this is a world of castes. I should've realized earlier what I should've always known, that we belong to a caste...

GATITO

If I could have given at least one chance to prove myself... It feels empty inside...

(GATITO SEES HIS FATHER OPENING THE DOOR AND HIS MOTHER GETTING IN, HER FACE ALSO SHOWS DISAPPOINTMENT, RESIGNATION. CUTS TO: INT. NIGHT, DIFFERENT BED-COVER: GATITO'S BEDROOM. GATITO'S FATHER LOOKS SADDENED, DROPS HIS EYES.

GATITO'S FATHER

Mimi was here. She left this for you. Her family is leaving for Southern Country and she's saying goodbye.

(GATITO READS THE NOTE. THEN HE STARTS TO CRY QUIETLY. HIS DAD SAT AT HIS SIDE AND CRIED WITH HIM.)
(CUTS BACK TO GATITO'S BEDROOM, HIS MOTHER AND FATHER BEFORE HIM.)

GATITO'S FATHER (getting emotional)

Joaquin... I have been talking to your mother... (PAUSE) We feel that we should've known better before we let you surrender to your career with all that passion, before you put that much into it. (GATITO'S FATHER SIGHS; PAUSE) Here you will never amount to anything or even be able to save enough to open a business. We think it is better if you leave for the Southern Country, work for some time, save, and, if you still want, come back. I wish I had realized this before those fucking advisers... They just never cared. I am your father and I know that I should've known better... (GATITO'S FATHER LOOKS

ANGRY FOR A MOMENT) Gatito, your mother and I have... seen that if you stay here you will waste your life and grow bitter. And we don't want that. We have some savings. You will use them. And I don't want to hear any complaint. It's a loan. When you are settled and your situation improves, you will pay us back. The worst you could do now, to us and to yourself, is to stay here. We don't want to see you turning into a broken animal.

GATITO TRIES TO SAY SOMETHING BUT HIS FATHER'S EYES ARE FIRM. AND ONLY WHEN HE SEES GATITO'S OBJECTION DYING IN HIS LIPS, HE DROPS HIS EYES DROP TO THE FLOOR.

9. CUTS TO: INT.: TRAIN STATION. GATITO AND HIS PARENTS ARE AT THE TRAIN STATION. HIS FATHER HUGS HIM, TRYING TO SMILE, TRYING TO LOOK FIRM TO THE END, WITH HIS BAG STILL ON HIS HAND. AND THEN HIS MOTHER HUGS HIM. HER EYES ARE MOIST. SHE THEN KISSES HIS LEFT CHEEK, HIS FOREHEAD, HOLDING HIM AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. AN ANIMAL START CALLING THE PASSENGERS.

SEQUENCE 4

10. CUTS TO: EXT.: DESERT, AT NIGHT. THE SMUGGLER, A CAT, IS GUIDING GATITO AND OTHER FOUR ANIMALS ACROSS THE BORDER. THE FOUR ANIMALS LED BY THE SMUGGLER ARE PANTING. THE ANIMALS ARE DRESSED WITH COATS FOR THE COLD NIGHT. THEN THEY SEE A DOG EMERGING FROM BEHIND THE DARKNESS OF THE DESERT. THE DOG TALKS TO THE SMUGGLER AND IGNORES THE OTHERS. THEN THE CAT LEAVES. THE DOG TAKES OVER. THEY CONTINUE FAST WALKING. GATITO NOTICES A FAT DOG ACCOMPANIED BY ANOTHER DOG IN HIS GROUP. THE FAT DOG IS PANTING REALLY HARD. THE FAT DOG BEGINS TO FALL BEHIND AND GATITO HELPS HIM.

THEY KEEP WALKING AND THEN THEY SEE A SHACK WITHOUT WINDOWS.

11. CUTS TO: INT.: SOME SHACK. MANY BOXES ARE PILED. ONE DOG TRIES TO SAY SOMETHING BUT THE SMUGGLER TAKES HIS FINGER TO HIS CLOSED LIPS MEANING THAT THE DOG SHOULD STAY SILENT. THEN, AFTER A SHORT PAUSE, THE SMUGGLER FINALLY SPEAKS.

SMUGGLER DOG

Even here it's still dangerous. We are going to rest for half an hour and then we are going to walk faster. We're going to a ranch. Once there we are going to wait for the night. And when it's night we're leaving for Nayak City. In Nayak you are going to give me your handwritten notes for your relatives and then we'll wait for your relatives to pay. After that, you are free to go.

THEN THE SMUGGLER DOG IS INTERRUPTED BY THE DOG WHO TRIED TO SPEAK BEFORE.

DOG WHO COMES WITH THE FAT DOG

My friend here needs more water. He is really exhausted...

(CLOSE UP OF THE FAT DOG, WHO'S STRUGGLING WITH HIS BREATHING) BUT THE SMUGGLER DOG DOESN'T ANSWER. HE JUST TURNS HIS BACK, REMOVES A BOX FROM ONE OF THE CORNERS AND TAKES A BIG BOTTLE OF WATER. AND ONLY THEN HE FINALLY ANSWERED TO THE DOG WHO HAD TALKED TO HIM BEFORE.

SMUGGLER DOG (expressionless)

Tell your friend that we are going to be walking fast for two hours. He has to be ready.

THE DOG TAKES THE BOTTLE TO THE FAT DOG. GATITO BEGINS TO LOOK FOR A SPOT WHERE TO LIE DOWN ON THE DIRTY FLOOR.

12. CUTS TO: INT.: SAME SHACK. GATITO OPENS HIS EYES AND CAN SEE AGAIN THE DOG WHO HAD SPOKEN TO THE SMUGGLER, THIS TIME OFFERING HIS HAND TO HIS FAT DOG FRIEND, WHO, AFRAID, IS LOOKING AT HIM FROM THE FLOOR. THE OTHER DOG EXTENDS HIS HAND AND PULLED THE FAT DOG UP.

13. CUTS TO: EXT.: THE DESERT, a DARK NIGHT. THE FIVE ANIMALS ARE WALKING FAST AS THEY FOLLOW THEIR GUIDE. SOON THE OTHER ANIMALS ARE PANTING AGAIN. NOW GATITO CAN HEAR OTHERS FALLING, GETTING UP AGAIN AND RUNNING TO KEEP UP WITH THE REST. BUT THEIR GUIDE NEVER TURNS BACK. HE KEEPS WALKING AS IF THEY DIDN'T EXIST. AND SOON THE REST HAVE TO PRACTICALLY JOG TO KEEP UP WITH HIM. THEN HE CAN HEAR AGAIN THE HEAVY BREATHING OF THE FAT DOG AND HIS PANICKED VOICE WHISPERING TO HIS FRIEND AS HIS FRIEND IS TRYING TO REASSURE HIM. THEN GATITO NOTICES THAT THERE ARE NO STARS ON THE SKY AND ALMOST TRIPS. IT'S ALMOST DAWN. (CLOSE UP OF THE GUIDE) THE GUIDE TURNS BACK AND NOTICES THAT THE GROUP IS FALLING BEHIND. HE SIGHS ANNOYED AND SLOWS DOWN A BIT. THEY KEEP WALKING. (CLOSE UP OF GATITO) GATITO IS EXHAUSTED BUT NOW CAN SEE THE RANCH. THE RANCH IS BEFORE THEM.

14. CUTS TO: INT.: A SHED INSIDE THE RANCH. THERE ARE TOOLS, BOXES AND TRASH EVERYWHERE. THE SMUGGLER DOG TAKES THEM IN. GATITO NOTICES THERE IS A WINDOW THROUGH WHICH HE CAN SEE NOW THE SKY TURNING BLUE.

SMUGGLER DOG

Now, rest. I'll bring you food later.

THEN GATITO TURNS TO THE FAT DOG AND HIS FRIEND. THE FAT DOG IS GRIMACING WITH WHAT SEEMS A MIXTURE OF PAIN, SADNESS AND DESPAIR. HIS FRIEND IS WHISPERING SOMETHING AS HE EXAMINES HIM. HE LOOKS WORRIED. THEN GATITO FINDS SOME PIECE OF CLOTH THAT HE FOLDS TO MAKE A PILLOW, PUTS IT UNDER HIS HEAD AND FALLS ASLEEP.

15. CUTS TO: INT.: SAME SHED, MID AFTERNOON. SOME MEMBER OF THE GROUP WAKES HIM UP.

SMUGGLED ANIMAL #4

They brought us this to eat. It's better than nothing. But still...

Gatito tries to smile and inhales deeply. He feels cold again.

GATITO

Have they said anything else?

SMUGGLED ANIMAL #4

Nope... They'll let us know when we leave for Nayak.

GATITO NOTICES AGAIN THE FAT DOG, WHO, NOW VISIBLY COMPOSED, IS TALKING TO HIS FRIEND.

16. CUTS TO: INT.: SAME SHED, AT NIGHT. The guide opens the door.

SMUGGLER DOG

Let's go!

THE GROUP OF FOUR GUIDED BY THE SMUGGLER IS NOW FAST WALKING AGAIN IN THE DESERT. SUDDENLY, THE GUIDE WAVES HIS HAND TO MEAN THAT THEY HAVE TO STOP. THEN A CAT COMES OUT OF THE DARKNESS OF THE DESERT AND APPROACHES THE GUIDE, WHO SEEMS TO KNOW HIM. GATITO SEES THE FAT DOG AND HIS FRIEND LEAVING WITH THE CAT. GATITO'S EYES SHOW IT'S NOT GOOD NEWS FOR THEM. GATITO AND THE ANIMAL #4 CONTINUE WITH THE DOG.

SMUGGLER DOG (CLOSE UP)

We are close to Nayak. Two groups will bring less attention.

THE GROUP KEEPS FAST WALKING AND NOW GATITO CAN SEE THE MOUNTAINS.

17. CUTS TO: EXT. MOUNTAINS, NIGHT. GATITO, ANIMAL #4 AND THE SMUGGLER DOG ARE CROSSING THE MOUNTAINS. GATITO AND ANIMAL #4 ARE PANTING, TIRED DUE TO THE STRENUOUS CLIMBING. THEN HE CAN

FINALLY SEE NAYAK CITY FROM THE TOP OF ONE MOUNTAIN, ILLUMINATED BY ITS ARTIFICIAL LIGHTS. HE GETS EMOTIONAL.

18. CUTS TO: INT.: GATITO'S BEDROOM AT HIS PARENTS' HOME.

GATITO'S FATHER

I can get you Mimi's address... if you want...

(GATITO SHAKES HIS HEAD.)

I have the address of a friend who left for Nayak some years ago. I hope he still remembers me. He can guide you while you get familiar with the city, shelter you for some time until you get a job and can make some money. I've already talked to him. He'll be waiting for you. You'll have the pay for the smuggler but never, for any reason, show that you have money on you. My friend will say he'll have the money. You'll pay the smuggler when you see Roger. That's his name.

19. CUTS TO: EXT.: DARK ALLEY. GATITO, ANIMAL #4 AND THE SMUGGLER DOG ARE JOGGING THROUGH A DARK ALLEY. BEFORE THEY LEAVE THE ALLEY BEHIND, THE SMUGGLER DOG CHECKS BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET AND THEN RUSHES TO A DOOR FOLLOWED BY GATITO AND ANIMAL #4.

20. CUTS TO: INT.: A ROOM IN NAYAK CITY, STILL AT NIGHT.

SMUGGLER DOG

Okay, this is Nayak. Don't turn the lights on. Tomorrow you will write to your relatives and you'll wait here until they pay the other part. Now, rest.

THE SMUGGLER DOG POINTS TO A SHELF WHERE SOME BLANKETS HAVE BEEN PILED UP IN DISORDER. THEN HE POINTS TO THE WOODEN PART OF THE FLOOR AND TURNS TO GATITO.

SMUGGLER DOG

You can sleep there.

(THE IMAGE OF THE FAT DOG AND HIS FRIEND CROSSES HIS MIND IN A FLASH. THE FAT DOG IS SAYING SOMETHING INAUDIBLE).

SEQUENCE 5

21. CUTS TO: EXT.: CONSTRUCTION SITE, DAY. GATITO IS NOW WORKING AS LABORER IN A CONSTRUCTION SITE, CARRYING BUCKETS AND OTHER MATERIALS WITH OTHER ANIMALS.

22. CUTS TO: EXT.: PARKING LOT, DAY. GATITO AND THE OTHER THREE LABORERS ARE IN FRONT OF THE SUBCONTRACTOR. THE OTHER LABORERS SMIRK AS THE SUBCONTRACTOR INTERROGATES GATITO.

SUBCONTRACTOR JORGE

And what did you say your experience was?

GATITO

This is my first experience in construction... I studied law in the Northern Country... but you see that I've worked hard!

SUBCONTRACTOR JORGE (scoffing, condescending)

But this is a kind of work where you really need to be strong. I don't think this is for you. Why don't you sell insurance instead? I really don't think you're cut for this kind of work. This kind of work requires muscles. Do you know that? And honestly I am afraid that you could get hurt in a construction site... This is not for you... Carlito...? Pablito?

THE OTHER LABORERS BEGIN TO LAUGH. GATITO LOOKS SADDENED AND UPSET.

23. CUTS TO: EXT.: ROGER'S HOUSE, AFTERNOON. GATITO, WHO IS SAT ON THE FENCE, LOOKS BEATEN. ROGER, WHO LOOKS WORRIED, APPROACHES HIM.

ROGER

Gatito..., you know I am a friend of your father; that he asked me to help you until you could get back on your feet. Well..., the fact is that there's a store needing somebody to re-stock the shelves and take care of the cash box. Are you interested? It's not great pay but it's easy job. And they have newspapers. You could use the slow hours to read.

(GATITO TURNS TOWARD HIM WITH EXPECTATION.)

24. CUTS TO: INT.: A CONVENIENCE STORE. GATITO IS BEHIND THE CASH BOX, AN OPEN NEWSPAPER AT HIS SIDE, WATCHING THE PREMISES FROM BEHIND THE COUNTER.

STORE OWNER (old dog)

Slow, Gatito?

GATITO

It's always slow at this time...

STORE OWNER

I know. I know. Just teasing... It's just... I always see you reading the papers in your time off, or when it's slow... Don't take me wrong. That's good. I like that. I like you. It's just that a guy like you, coming legally, would have had a lot of opportunities, doors opening to him. And nobody has given me a good reason why a guy like you is not coming legally... I would like to hear your take.

GATITO

Unfortunately, coming legally to the Southern country is not a matter of merits or exams or anything that depends on character. I came the way I came because there was no other way for animals like me... without a sponsor of good race. We are guilty of having been born in the wrong country. And with TANCRUARF putting us all in the same sack...

STORE OWNER

That Tancruarf.. That piece of shit... How can he have any supporters in a decent country?

GATITO

Tancruarf is the self proclaimed leader of the authentic conservatism in Nayak City and a rising star of the Nayak Patriot Party. Here he is in the paper declaring that mixed immigrants from the Northern Country will, sooner or later, corrupt the society of the Southern Country; that mixed immigrants, sooner or later, will take jobs from the Southerners and predate on them, robbing and raping them. He says many other things too before reading a list of names of criminal immigrants that supposedly proved his accusations.

STORE OWNER

We are living in shitty times, my son... If this Tancruarf gets elected to any office, it's because these are shitty times...

25. CUTS TO: INT.: ILLUMINATED STUDIO. TANCRUARF AND THE INTERVIEWER ARE SAT IN FRONT OF THEIR MICROPHONES.

INTERVIEWER

And those opinions about immigrants..., are they limited to illegal immigrants or cover all immigrants?

TANCRUARF

It is especially directed to illegal immigrants but even legal immigration has to be restricted to only those animals imported

by solvent Southerners of good race under the regimen of pets. Now even naturalized pets and pets want to bring pets! And that's completely contrary to the interest of the hardworking animals of good race of Nayak.

More, there's no excuse for legal immigration or for twisting the regimen of pets because right now those immigrants count with legal channels to come here legally. They just have to get in line and come at a time determined by the merits of the applicant. The law is actually too generous as you see...

INTERVIEWER

Hmm...

26. CUT TO: INT.: STORE. Gatito reads the interview to Tancruarf in the newspaper, looks worried.

VIZLA DOG

Tancruarf in the news? But if the Southerner citizens know so little about the realities of immigrants, legal or no, in a moment of deep distress, somebody like Tancruarf might lead them to belief almost anything about anybody if he knows how to push the right buttons.

GATITO REALIZES A CUSTOMER IS IN FRONT OF HIM. ALL OF A SUDDEN A VIZLA DOG APPEARS IN FRONT OF HIM, AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COUNTER. HE GETS ENGAGED IN THE CONVERSATION THOUGH AND TURNS THE PAGE TO SHOW GROUL SOMETHING, STARTS READING, INCREASINGLY UNCONVINCED.

GATITO

It seems there is some good news though. Pets and former pets, those who have been able to adjust their status from pet to citizen under the old regimen, are forming an organization to defend the image of immigrants of the misrepresentations made by Tancruarf's wing of the Patriot Party. That organization, it says here, is going to present a friendly portrait of immigrants and is going to be known as... the Dancing Doggies.

The Dancing Doggies announced that they are preparing a parade, a march where they would, with flags of both the Southern and the Northern countries, introduce themselves through their typical dances and share their typical dishes with the public... They are trying to move the hearts of the citizens of Nayak by incarnating a cute image, opposed to the negative stereotype created by the Patriot Party... In short, they were trying to appeal to their pity.

VIZLA DOG

And that's the good news...? Ah! May I fill a job application?

GATITO

Ah?

VIZLA DOG

A job application... May I fill one?

GATITO

Sure... Wait here. Let me see...

GATITO OPENS A DRAWER AND SEARCHES AMONG SOME PAPERS UNTIL HE EXTRACTS A SHEET OF PAPER.

GATITO

Here you are. We might need somebody in two weeks. What's your name?

GROUL

Groul. Groul Guff.

SEQUENCE 6

27. CUTS TO: INT.: SOME OFFICE. TANCRUARF IS SAT ON A TALL CHAIR, THINKING.

CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME PARK. TANCRUARF AS A BOY IS SAYING SOMETHING (INAUDIBLE) TO A MIXED DOG OF HIS AGE, TANCRUARF LOOKS ARROGANT, AND THE MIXED DOG PUNCHES HIM OVER AND OVER, EVEN AFTER HE FALLS TO THE GROUND. ON THE GROUND TANCRUARF COVERS HIMSELF WITH HIS ARMS BUT THE MIXED DOG SITS ON HIS HIPS AND KEEPS PUNCHING HIM. HIS NOSE IS BLEEDING WHEN THE MIXED LETS HIM GO. NOW TANCRUARF IS CRAWLING ON THE FLOOR. THE MIXED DOG, HIS EYES HURT BY WHATEVER TANCRUARF HAS SAID, THEN LEAVES, HIS SNOUT WRINKLED BACKWARD, YELLING AT HIM UNINTELLIGIBLE WORDS.

29. CUTS TO: INT.: TANCRUARF'S OFFICE. CLOSE UP OF TANCRUARF'S FACE, HE LOOKS WOUNDED FIRST, ANGUISHED, BUT THEN DETERMINED.

CUTS TO: INT.: A BIG ROOM FULL OF ANIMALS, BLURRY. TANCRUARF IS YELLING AT THE LOCAL LEADER, WHO IS BEHIND A PODIUM.

TANCRUARF

And you know why we haven't make progress as conservatives? Because you are weak on immigration! And I don't know what you are waiting for! Are you waiting for them until those immigrants take all our jobs, until their gangs rule our streets and

they change our way of life for ever? What does it take for you to do something?

(NOW THE ATTENDANTS NOD AND APPLAUD AT TANCRUARF. TANCRUARF CONTINUES SPEAKING.)

LOCAL LEADER

I believe Michelle is addressing an important point but, sincerely, you are taking it out of all reasonable proportion, my dear Michelle...

TANCRUARF

You represent these constituents. Prove your point! Let's have an election in one month, you and me, and I challenge you to embarrass me if it is true that I am alone in this! Immigrants, especially mixed immigrants, are a national threat in the waiting. They will take our jobs, organize criminal gangs, spread disease and pretty much do everything to destroy our way of life, not to mention their well known depraved lust for the Southerner females of good race. They will end up turning the Southern Country in a carbon copy of the Northern Country. And there is only one way to stop them.

LOCAL LEADER

I believe that if we retake this point in our next session... It's late already anyway...

(THEN ONE ATTENDANT RAISES HIS HAND TO TAKE THE FLOOR. AND THEN ANOTHER AFTER THAT ONE; AND THEN ANOTHER, ALL OF THEM PROTESTING (INAUDIBLE). AFTER THAT MANY ANIMALS COME TO CONGRATULATE TANCRUARF, DUKE AND CHARLES AMONG THEM. BOTH DUKE AND CHARLES SMILE AND LOOK AT TANCRUARF WITH ADMIRATION.)

(CUTS TO: INT.: SMALL OFFICE WITH DESKTOPS FULL OF REPORTS. DUKE AND CHARLES ARE WORKING FRANTICALLY CHECKING ON REPORTS, MAKING PHONE CALLS, ETC.)

30. CUTS TO: INT.: PACKED AUDITORIUM, TANCRUARF AND THE LOCAL LEADER ARE BEHIND PODIUMS. A BANNER ANNOUNCES THAT THIS IS THE DEBATE IN THE RACE FOR LEADER OF THE LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE PATRIOT PARTY. THE CAMERA SHOWS ALTERNATIVELY THE LOCAL LEADER, SPEAKING APOLOGETICALLY AND TANCRUARF YELLING FURIOUSLY.

LOCAL LEADER

Fellow conservatives, I have to warn you, I don't like the course all this is taking. If you choose somebody like Tancruarf to represent you, they will never again take us seriously. And, please Michelle, don't read again your list of criminal immigrants...

TANCRUARF

(TURNING TO THE LOCAL LEADER) But it's already happening! I am not making up those names. It's not something we can joke about... (TURNING TO THE AUDIENCE NOW) That's why you have to decide now who is the leader who can protect you the best of this plague!

31. CUTS TO: INT.: TANCRUARF'S OFFICE. TANCRUARF SMILES SATISFIED.

SEQUENCE 7

32. CUTS TO: INT.: BIG ROOM. A BANNER REVEALS IT'S THE OFFICES OF THE DANCING DOGGIES. THE LEADER, GUSTAVO IS ADDRESSING THE ATTENDANTS. GATITO CAN BE SEEN AMONG THEM.

GUSTAVO

Legalizing illegal immigrants and adjusting the status of those who were pets? Is that possible? Of course, it is! But only... only if we can show the citizens of Nayak that we are not the enemy... because everything is possible if we have faith. But we have to show them they we're their friends. We have to tell them our stories. And you will see. They will like us. How can they not like us? We have our food! We have our dances! How can somebody hate us if we introduce ourselves that way? Ah?

GUSTAVO MAKES A PAUSE AND AN ACTIVIST RUNS TO THE STAGE, WAVING HIS ARMS AND INVITING EVERYBODY TO CHANT SLOGANS.

ACTIVIST

Where there is a heart, there is a will. Dancing Doggies! Dancing Doggies!

BUT SOON THE CHANTING TURNS INTO SHOUTING AS MANY ATTENDANTS GET CARRIED AWAY BY THE EMOTION. SOON AFTER, AN ASSISTANT INVITES THE ATTENDANTS WITH HIS ARMS TO FORM A LINE.

ASSISTANT

Brothers! Brothers! We need to take your information to contact you for our future activities.

Gatito reluctantly gives his information when his turn comes and then waits for Gustavo. Gustavo is surrounded by a group of excited followers. Gatito looks anxious. He wants to have a word with him and begins to rehearse in his mind what he wants to tell him. But the followers are not leaving. Gatito looks nervous.

GATITO (thinking)

Why the gross inexactness and outrageous lies spread by Tancruarf have spread unopposed and that hasn't been mention even once in the meeting? I really would like to help you with that. After all, I have been a lawyer...

THEN GATITO HEARS A VOICE BEHIND HIM.

RODOLFO (frowned, inquisitive)

May I help you?

GATITO

Ah? No... I mean I was waiting to talk to Gustavo.

RODOLFO

About...?

GATITO LOOKS UNCOMFORTABLE, HESITANT FOR A MOMENT.

GATITO

Why are you not doing anything about all those lies Tancruarf is saying every day about us? I would like to help with that...

RODOLFO (still frowned and inquisitive)

Why?

GATITO LOOKS SOMEWHAT ANNOYED NOW.

GATITO

If you believe those lies are not going to gain him sympathizers at some time... I mean, what if some immigrant commits a hideous crime? Somebody like Tancruarf can use that to put the whole public opinion against us as a whole, no matter how cute we look. Worse, if somebody like him gains power, you can imagine what kind of laws he will pass? And then...

RODOLFO (now looks friendlier)

I know what you mean. But, between us, no, there is nothing like that..., I mean an educative program to expose animals like Tancruarf. Between us, I am of the same opinion. And your

background is...? You seem to have studied something... Ah!
By the way, my name is Rodolfo Ufgh. Yours?

GATITO

I'm Joaquin Gatito. I studied law. Why?

RODOLFO

To have an idea whether we can help each other or you are full
of shit. Come on! Let's go to the kitchen. We have to talk longer.

GATITO

And Gustavo?

RODOLFO

Do you prefer to talk to Gustavo for ten seconds, if his fan allow
it, or to talk to me, who has an idea of what you want to do and
who is here almost every day?

GATITO THEN GLANCES AT GUSTAVO AND THE FACES OF THE OTHER
ANIMALS SURROUNDING HIM. THEN THE ACTIVIST WHO HAD MADE THEM
CHANT SLOGANS APPROACHES THE GROUP.

RODOLFO (behind Gatito)

That means the fan club is closed for the day anyway. So...?

GATITO

Okay...

GATITO FOLLOWS RODOLFO TO THE KITCHEN.

33. CUTS TO: INT.: TRAIN WAGON. DAY HE LEFT THE NORTHERN COUNTRY.
GATITO IS SAT CLOSE TO THE WINDOW.

34. CUTS TO: INT.: KITCHEN AT THE DANCING DOGGIES'S OFFICE.
RODOLFO SHOWS GATITO A SEAT. GATITO'S FACE SHOWS MIXED
FEELINGS.

RODOLFO

Trust me. If the people are misinformed, that's because they have
not been able to have contact with the reality of the immigrant on
the ground. That's why Tancruarf can pile new lies over the old
lies and nobody notices. He even lies openly about immigrants
having a legal way to come here based on merit... Bullshit. And
yet, nobody calls it by that name...

(RODOLFO MAKES A PAUSE TO HAVE A BIG BITE OF HIS SANDWICH; THEN
SWALLOWS FAST TO CONTINUE. GATITO HAS BARELY TOUCHED HIS.)

And it doesn't have to be something like a hideous crime committed by a criminal immigrant. They can make up one, use another one of their own bold lies, and the people will believe them as long as it makes sense with the rest of the picture... I mean, the stereotypes Tancruarf spreads everyday about us. (AND HERE RODOLFO STARTS WHISPERING) And if our leaders don't expose those lies, then that can make things only worse. It's like conceding, right? Ignoring the lie will look like conceding, that we are accepting the lie as a fact in front of so many, many animals. Then too good if you are cute, but if I have to choose between my job, my security, my children, etc., and you, I'm sorry, but I will deport your ass, no matter how cute you are. Besides that, the number of immigrants is growing. When they saw a few of us, many of them found easy to ignore us, but when we are not that few any more, then many will not find easy to overlook us.

(RODOLFO THEN MAKES A PAUSE, DROPS HIS EYES ON THE SMALL TABLE WITH THE TWO SANDWICHES AND THE TWO CUPS OF COFFEE, AND TURNS TO GATITO.)

GATITO

There's something I don't understand. If they don't see things the way you do, what are you doing here? You think you can change them?

RODOLFO (grimacing and shrugging)

I am talking to you, to start. Look, I have been here for what? Three months? Enough time for me to realize that an argument like this will not go through around here. To be honest, I'm getting tired. That's why I am giving me some extra time just to find animals like you, who realize how dangerous can be to ignore the facts on the ground, especially when somebody like Tancruarf is rising in the Patriot Party. (A GRIN REAPPEARS ON RODOLFO'S FACE AND HE SIGHS). If I told you the things I have seen here... (RODOLFO MAKES ANOTHER PAUSE) That's why I've preferred to be bold with you, to know already whether I am loosing my time or not, because I need numbers to try to change something here and I am just a quasi-volunteer without contacts to bring money, press and all the damn things you need to keep even a circus like this open... We need numbers. You see? Animals don't follow animals with nerdy faces like mine or yours, even if they are right.

GATITO (frowning)

Let me try to bring... I don't know how many. We could try working something in written though, something to offer to the animals we want to attract.

RODOLFO (frowning)

Unfortunately most immigrants around here don't like to read. It's as if they had decided to embrace the negative stereotype instead of fighting it.

GATITO

Animals like us do.

RODOLFO (looking hesitant)

And, if you bring many animals, I'll have to see how I justify them to Kim. She will want to know.

GATITO

What? You first say that you need numbers and now you are having doubts? And who is Kim?

RODOLFO GRINS. SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED, HE DROPS HIS EYES TO THE FLOOR.

RODOLFO

No... It's just that... I think that I'm afraid. It looks like you are for real. Here animals get used to talk and talk only. (THEN RODOLFO MAKES A PAUSE) Okay... Let's do it... In a week? That will give me time to prepare something in written and you, cat, bring as many animals as you can. And Kim? Gustavo is the front leader, the guy everybody likes. But Kim is the gal who makes the decisions. She tells Gustavo where to go. Gustavo is a naturalized pet. Kim is a citizen.

SEQUENCE 8

35. CUTS TO: INT. NIGHT: AUDITORIUM. TANCRUARF IS RANTING FURIOUSLY BEHIND A PODIUM.

CUTS TO: INT. LIMOUSINE. DUKE AND CHARLES GET IN AFTER TANCRUARF.

TANCRUARF

Congratulations, guys! It's mid 97 and in six months we have placed challengers in pretty much every district of Nayak. That's your hard work giving fruits. And I feel this guy I have just endorsed is another winner. That's why we are having now a meeting with the snake.

DUKE (grinning)

Speaker Ateh Tayarih, a snake known by his enemies as Ateh the Liar, and nothing less than in Tayarih's house. And that is something really important in the Patriot Party.

TANCRUARF

Ateh the Liar has even conceded me to have you two in the meeting. That's good.

36. CUTS TO: INT.: LUXURIOUS RESIDENCE. TANCRUARF AND TAYARIH EXCHANGE HANDSHAKES (TAYARIH EXTENDS A SMALL ARM FROM HIS BODY) AND SMILES AT THE DOOR. THEN THEY ALL GO TO THE LIVING ROOM AND SIT DOWN.

TAYARIH

So we have a rising star in our party... Good! But even rising stars must realize that the good of the party comes before the good of their own careers, right?

TANCRUARF (following Tayarih with attention)

We are all for the future of the party. But I feel there is something you want to bring upfront. I like that. A frank conversation. Sir...?

TAYARIH

That so far you have succeeded inside conservative territory but you haven't won new ground for us. There are conservatives who have worked very hard, for years, to gain those districts for us and now you have simply dethroned them, just like that.

TANCRUARF (looking uncomfortable now)

That they have won some districts for the party doesn't mean that somebody else wouldn't have been able to do the same. They just came earlier, *sir*. Precisely gaining new ground is the next step for us, and that's something they have not been able to do... But we need your support for that. We just have replaced the old leaders for new ones, better ones.

TAYARIH (smiling reluctantly)

Don't take me wrong. Here in the party we see with good eyes a rising star like you. We just would like you to moderate your tone... just a bit. You are frightening some small business owners that have supported us for years.

TANCRUARF (sounding more defiant now)

Lukewarm moderation is not what the people want, sir. And we are the best proof of that.

TAYARIH, FROWNING, DROPS HIS EYES TO HIS DESK FOR A MOMENT; THEN HE RAISED HIS EYES BACK AT TANCRUARF.

TAYARIH

Look, I know in politics you have to give things to obtain things. That's how I got to be Speaker. We are willing to support your candidacy for mayor of Nayak City if you tune down a bit. We want to direct all your strength to our opponents' districts. You have already made enough cleansing in ours, after all. Don't you agree?

TANCRUARF (grinning, dropping his eyes)

I agree, sir. And I realize that if I fail, the party will get rid of me and my followers, so I'll accept with just two conditions. I keep my team and I manage my budget. Ah! And I get to nominate my own candidates to the Nayak City Council.

TAYARIH

You get to nominate up to a half of the candidates and you discuss the budget with me.

TANCRUARF

Okay. I can live with that.

TAYARIH

Well. Then it looks like we have a deal. Keep your part of the deal and we'll be friends, Michelle.

37. CUTS TO: EXT.: OUTSIDE TAYARIH'S RESIDENCE. NIGHT.

CHARLES

I know that having a private channel to the Speaker and being nominated for mayor are great honors but... haven't we conceded too much?

TANCRUARF

On the contrary, we still can keep our fundraising out of the budget and we get to manage those funds any way we want. And, after the elections, we can always get the other conservative leaders to sign pledges to our principles... and renegotiate.

CHARLES

But... will they let us?

TANCRUARF (smiling)

If we lose, they'll get rid of us immediately. And if we win, how are they going to stop us?

CHARLES (still hesitant)

There are still some months until November. How can you be sure they are not going to betray us?

TANCRUARF

I can't. But until we get the nomination we will expand our base as much as possible... just in case Ateh the Liar changes his mind.

(CHARLES LOOKS REASSURED.)

TANCRUARF (smiling again)

I need you tomorrow morning at eight in our local headquarters with something already in your mind.

SEQUENCE 9

February, 1897...

38. CUTS TO: EXT.: OFFICES OF THE DANCING DOGGIES. GATITO IS KNOCKING AT THE DOOR WITH GROUL AND OTHER TWO ANIMALS, ONE OF WHICH IS MEAU. RODOLFO WATCHES THEM FROM THE WINDOW.

RODOLFO (thinking)

Yes, the cat came back. Let's see who he brought. Hopefully, nice guys with expectations within reason so this doesn't end up looking like a conspiracy against Gustavo and Kim. If they ask, we are going to develop a pilot project and offer it to the board of the Dancing Doggies. That's it.

39. CUTS TO: INT.: KITCHEN at the offices of the Dancing Doggies.

RODOLFO (smiling)

You know? I have been reading some history. There are some good ideas you can take from there. (NOW IN A LOWER VOICE, LIKE A WHISPER, AS HE GETS CLOSER TO GATITO'S RIGHT EAR) You remember I told you that one of our problems was that immigrants didn't like to read. Well, nine hundred years ago another leader, one known as the Muslim Kitty had a similar problem. She created these Study Circles, small groups that, by studying and sharing information, could set straight the interpretations of their holy book and get back their faith, which had been corrupted by some Ayatollah Manuel Rehal. We have a similar problem here with the truth about

immigrants, which has been twisted by Tancruarf beyond recognition, right Gatito? Then, let's create our own study circles.

(RODOLFO THEN GLANCES AT THE OTHER THREE BEHIND HIM, TURNS BACK TO GATITO AND WHISPERS AT HIS RIGHT EAR AGAIN) Of course, that makes sense if we can bring more animals. We can bring more animals, right? Well, we need to make a document, you know? Tancruarf has said so many stupid things that, to begin with, we should be able to easily find some evident contradictions. We need to share that document and other documents too, of course, with the study circles and through the study circles. I have some documents I want to pass you. It's real evidence that Tancruarf is full of shit. We then need to define what channels, besides the study circles, we are going to use to share that info with the general public.

(GATITO STARES AT RODOLFO A BIT UNCOMFORTABLE. RODOLFO KEEPS SPEAKING THOUGH WHILE HE SERVES COFFEE FOR THE FIVE OF THEM.)

You know who came this week here? Senator Sanderf. Senator fucking Sanderf was here. Everybody was telling him how much they loved him, that they were his fans, that they all wanted him to be his boyfriends... And he was almost bored, like those animals who don't like too much ass kissing. I liked that! But when he came to me I asked him '*Would you accept a contribution on immigration, sir, on policy and politics?*' And you know what? He looked at me and his response was '*If you have one, sure.*' Senator Sanderf is a dog of his word, Joaquin. And you know what? I told him that I might have one for him in a week and he said that if so, he could pass by again in a week. Of course, Bitch Kim looked as if she was going to vaporize me with her eyes, but I didn't care because if you don't take an opportunity like that when it pops up, you might never see one of those again...

GATITO

Wait, wait, wait! Senator Sanderf was here?

THEN RODOLFO, SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED, STOPS WHISPERING.

RODOLFO

And he is coming back. We need something in writing for him... and more volunteers. We can't look like we represent just... the five of us. Ah! Buddies, forgive my manners. (TURNING TO THE OTHER THREE ANIMALS) It's been a great week and I got carried away. Rodolfo... My name is Rodolfo.

GATITO

And how will you know exactly when Senator Sanderf is coming back?

RODOLFO

Theoretically, through Kim, (THEN RODOLFO MAKES A PAUSE TO BITE HIS SANDWICH AS HE PASSES OTHERS TO HIS GUESTS), but actually his chief of staff will call me to let me know. It happens I know him.

GATITO (frowning)

How much support do you think Gustavo and Kim can give us?

RODOLFO (smiling a bit nervously)

It can only increase with time. Well, let's talk business... I'm passing you a study on the economic impact of immigration and another one on the ways available to come legally. It's amazing how the people have been led to believe something so out of the realms of reality. Our constitution bans titles of nobility and, I believe, the establishment of castes too. Nevertheless our current immigration system is a fucking system of castes. And you will not believe it, but so far nobody has put that in fucking written words. It would be great if you could bring me something in written before the end of the week. Then, seriously, we have to bring more volunteers and form study circles with them.

GATITO (looking amused with Rodolfo's challenge)

I'll do my best to bring something in written before the week ends. Still, the priority should not be to have something written in a week but to have something good. As you yourself said, having the attention of somebody like Senator Sanderf is a once-in-a-lifetime shot and we don't want to waste it. We don't want the tide to change for worse and catch us with a low guard. I don't know why I never thought of the Muslim Kitty and her study circles before but yes, I like the idea. That's precisely what we need. But what if Gustavo and Kim don't like our ideas...?

RODOLFO

They will. Let me take care of that. Don't you trust me?

GATITO (more at ease now)

Now, if we are successful, we are going to need some more room. Can you get us some more room... here, Rodolfo?

RODOLFO (not looking as confident as before)

Yes, I believe I can.

GATITO

Good. Then give me a few days.

THEN THE GROUP CONTINUES CHATTING AND LAUGHING.

SEQUENCE 10

40. CUTS TO: INT.: GATITO'S ROOM, NIGHT. GATITO IS WORKING AT NIGHT WITH HIS TYPEWRITER. HE LOOKS SLEEPY. A CUP OF COFFEE AT HIS SIDE. CUTS TO: STORE. NEXT MORNING. GATITO LOOKS SLEEPY IN FRONT OF THE CASH BOX.

GROUL

Good news if you can still hear me. Up to ten more guys coming this weekend, not counting those they can invite. We would just need some place to meet though...

GATITO

I'll find a place for this Saturday. Do you think we could meet this Saturday?

GROUL

As far as it's in Nayak, yes. These guys are not just mouth. They want to do something. They may not be the brains of the century but they are the real thing. They are smart enough to realize that what Gustavo and Kim are doing is bullshit. So, we have to offer them something one hundred percent better. I told them of the risk of doing nothing and that tomorrow Tancruarf could end up in a position of power...

GATITO

And the other two guys?

GROUL

Doing what they can. I especially like this Meau Mickaw. He's very young, but you see him and you say '*this is a no nonsense cat.*' They might bring some invitees too. Hey! It doesn't have to be a shiny ass hotel. As far as they all can physically fit in, even on each other's laps... and if you can give me an address for Thursday at the latest, it'll be okay. You look tired, cat!

41. CUTS TO: INT.: GATITO'S ROOM, NIGHT. TWENTY ANIMALS PACKED IN THE SMALL ROOM ARE ATTENDING GATITO'S MEETING.

42. CUTS TO: GATITO'S ROOM, BLURRY IMAGE OF ROGER TALKING TO HIM.

ROGER

Joaquin, this is something I have been wanting to talk to you about. I notice that you are very busy, your stuff... It's politics, right? I know you may want to do the right thing, but you are bringing too much light on yourself... and on me. Go ahead with your meeting for this time, but remember that you are not the only one member of this household who is... not legal. I'm not asking you to leave but, please, change your address. I don't want this address in anything linked to you. You understand? I am responsible for my family and for this household... And, please, don't take too long.

43. CUTS TO: GATITO'S ROOM. Gatito is addressing his friends.

GATITO (a bit nervous)

Guys, Tancruarf represents the ferociously anti-immigrant wing of the Patriot Party and I don't need to tell you that the only way to stop him is by making a good case for immigration reform. The problem is that the dialogue has been polluted so much by the many lies Tancruarf and his allies have said about us that the only way to completely discredit him is by passing an immigration reform bill that makes evident Tancruarf's lies. And there's some good..., interesting news I want to share with you. We might have access to Senator Sanderf. But we have to look serious in front of him. We have to come with ideas that make immigration reform acceptable in the middle of all that disinformation. And here is where we have to make our part because we will have to help spread those ideas. Otherwise the project won't have any chance of success. Animals won't support what they don't know.

ATTENDANT #1 (raising his hand)

Joaquin, but why are we going to duplicate efforts when the Dancing Doggies are already doing that?

GATITO

Unfortunately, they aren't. But I trust you to keep this among us. We don't want to fight the Dancing Doggies but we have to be... *a different brand*. Look, the Dancing Doggies try to present a cute image of us; they want to appeal to their pity to get an amnesty passed. I want a fair reform which gives us all a fair chance. An amnesty in this ocean of misinformation can be easily twisted if Tancruarf gets enough power to implement his hatred against us by turning it into law. And what good is an amnesty if we can't get solvent sponsors of good race anyway?

I'm not going to lie to you saying that this is going to be easy or that it will be enough to have the truth on our side to succeed. We'll need to do some political work to help Senator Sanderf help us, and that implies risks. But that also implies the hope of a change for the better, which today we don't have, or do we?

THEN GATITO LOOKS AT THEM, AT EACH ONE OF THEM. SOME OF HIS GUESTS DROP THEIR EYES. BUT NOBODY MAKES FURTHER OBJECTIONS.

GROUL (raising his hand)

Look guys, I know you have jobs, families, e-t-c, but if you don't grow some balls now you will live the rest of your lives regretting it and, worse, you will have to see the faces of your relatives and friends knowing that you could have done something and that your cowardice was more important to you than your love for them. And then, wow, it won't matter how good the excuses you make could be. You will know that they are bullshit; that you betrayed them. Is that enough or you want to go home until our next meeting?

ATTENDANT #2 (raising his hand)

Are we going to meet Senator Sanderf too?

GROUL

Sure. Our next meeting will be next week. We are going to the office of the Dancing Doggies and we'll meet our contact with him there. If we are lucky, that same day we will know when we are meeting the senator.

GATITO NODS TO ENDORSE GROUL'S WORDS.

44. CUTS TO: EXT.: ROGER'S HOUSE. END OF THE MEETING. THE GUESTS ARE LEAVING.

GROUL

Hey, Gatito! Let me introduce you a new guy, a real friend. His name is Raul Aarf and that is his wife.

45. CUTS TO: INT.: GATITO'S ROOM, NIGHT. GATITO LIES ON HIS BED, THINKING.

CUTS TO: EXT.: ROGER'S HOUSE (BLURRY). GATITO IS FINALLY ALONE WITH GROUL.

GROUL

Gatito, cheer up! We're starting something and you look as if we were coming from a funeral...

GATITO

Just some news I didn't want to share with the other guys... so far, Tancruarf has been a local figure, relatively unknown beyond the limits of this electoral district though the most outspoken of them all. No more. He might be running for mayor. (GATITO SIGHED). On the good side, the document is ready at last. It sets the record straight about Tancruarf's lies, about the ways through which an immigrant could come legally, none of which depended on his character. All of them require good contacts with sponsors of good race. And even the avenues to liberate yourself of that regimen of diminished rights known as the regimen of pets by becoming a citizen is going to progressively be closed by the conservatives from Tancruarf's line. The document even presents the standard of immigrant we proposed as part of such reform, one to which Tancruarf's conservatives could not oppose without looking phony as they accused immigrants of being precisely the opposite. I also propose channels through which immigrants could get involved with the mainstream culture, like hours of volunteering, civics tests, and fast adjustment of status for those of outstanding character. In short, what we're asking is a fair shot to demonstrate that we're worthy while leaving the regimen of pets intact for those who have sponsors. It's not a case for amnesty but for reform.

GROUL

Gatito... about your document..., many have relatives in Northern State. I mean wives, children... What if their relatives, for some reason, don't pass the test? That means that they would not be able to reunify with their families until they pass the test?

GATITO

No, it means that they would not be able to work legally until they pass the test but they would still have them with them... to make sure they pass the test the next time. Until they pass the test, they would have to cover their expenses and they would be subject to a diminished status, kind of like the regimen of pets but without quotas because they would not have working visas, but they would not be deported. In any case, you are right. I should've made that point a bit clearer.

SEQUENCE 11

46. CUTS TO: INT.: CONVENIENCE STORE. Gatito and Groul are talking.

GATITO

Nobody deserted after we gave them copies of the document?

GROUL (using a casual tone)

No one so far... You are lucky to have me.

GATITO (smirks)

I've heard Tancruarf pays better.

GROUL (looking serious)

You're right. I might try an application with him. I might even offer him the head of a troublemaker cat who wants to mess up with him. Joaquin I believe is his name. What do you think?

GATITO LAUGHS AND NOW GROUL LAUGHS TOO.

47. CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT: OFFICES OF THE DANCING DOGGIES. RODOLFO IS SHOWING UP BY THE WINDOW. FROM THERE, HE SEES GATITO AND HIS GROUP BY THE DOOR WAVING AT HIM.

CUTS TO: EXT.: MAIN DOOR. RODOLFO IS OPENING THE DOOR. HE THEN HUGS GATITO AND GREETES THE REST OF HIS GROUP. THEN RODOLFO SHAKES GROUL'S HAND AND MAKES A HAND SIGNAL TO THE REST, INVITING THEM ALL INSIDE. RODOLFO GLANCES AT THE TWENTY ANIMALS COMING WITH GATITO AND FOR A MOMENT SEEMS WORRIED.

RODOLFO

Actually I wasn't expecting that many of you, guys. Sorry. You'll have to fit the best you can. The good news is that I can get coffee and sandwiches for you all (GATITO HANDS RODOLFO HIS DOCUMENT) What's happened to you, cat? Insomnia?

GROUL

He's been so passionately looking forward to see you again that he hasn't been able to sleep... if you know what I mean.

RODOLFO (laughing)

After we are finished with immigration, we can make a movement for those rights too.

48. CUTS TO: INT.: KITCHEN AT THE DANCING DOGGIES. NOW RODOLFO'S GUESTS ARE SEATING DOWN AND RODOLFO BEGINS TO READ GATITO'S DOCUMENT, SKIPPING PARAGRAPHS BUT NODDING ON THE PARTS WHERE HIS EYES GO MORE SLOWLY.

RODOLFO

Good! We are going to use this week to review the document and organize the study groups then.

ATTENDANT #1

And when are we going to see Senator Sanderf?

RODOLFO

By this hour, at our next week meeting, I should be able to tell you when.

ATTENDANT #1

Can you get a room a bit... larger by then?

RODOLFO (smiling)

Yeah! Honestly I wasn't expecting that many of you today, but so many of you coming and knowing what you are coming for... I guess is good news. The least I can do is getting you a larger room for our next meeting. (Thinking: *Fortunately nobody's asking whether Kim and Gustavo approve of what I'm doing here.*)

Well, now make yourselves comfortable. Get some coffee with your sandwiches and make them last because I don't have more. And get a break before you hear our speeches because I know that's what you have come here for.

MANY OF THE ATTENDANTS THEN LAUGH AND GATITO, SMILING, GENTLY PULLS RODOLFO TO THE DOOR WITH HIM. THEN GATITO FROWNS WHEN THE OTHERS CAN'T SEE HIM.

GATITO

We have done our part. We are going to need to meet here. I had to pile them up in my room for our first meeting and my landlord has already told me that it is better if I begin looking for some other place to live. Besides that, we have to define what the study groups are going to do. If we lose their trust, we won't get it back.

RODOLFO (frowning, shrugging)

I know. We are on the right path but things might've gotten a bit more... complicated than I expected...

GATITO (staring at Rodolfo)

About Senator Sanderf?

RODOLFO

No, no... Sanderf is a dog of his word. It's something his chief of staff told me when I went to visit him to reassure him, to tell him about our meeting. Tancruarf's followers are saying that Speaker Ateh Tayarih, Ateh the Liar, has promised him the nomination for Mayor of Nayak City.

GATITO

I read about that rumor too. Can't he be wrong about that?

RODOLFO

It's still late February and I know how it sounds when the elections are still in November, but it must be true. Tancruarf wants to corner him on his promise, so Ateh the Liar doesn't betray him later. And Tancruarf has identified himself so much with this issue that Senator Sanderf would be more than happy pushing for immigration reform and using us in his organization. That's the good news. The bad news is that Tancruarf could be getting on his side the editors of the two most influential newspapers of Nayak City. You know what it means? We cannot make any fucking mistake or they will use it against us magnified ten times. And if that happens and Sanderf is then forced in the middle of the campaign to drop one issue, he'll drop ours. That also means that it could be dangerous for us. And Tancruarf could use violence against us. He has goons. Then he could even use the public force to retaliate against us if he wins.

GATITO (dropping his eyes, looking even more worried now)
And what alternative do we have? If he wins and we do nothing, we are screwed up anyway.

49. CUTS TO: INT. MORNING: KITCHEN OF THE DANCING DOGGIES. Gatito and Rodolfo can see Senator Sanderf entering the building.

RODOLFO

Good all your group could make it. As soon as his chief of staff confirmed that the senator was coming, I called your store. Let's cross fingers...

(GATITO AND RODOLFO LOOK EXCITED FROM THE WINDOW. BUT, AFTER WAITING FOR A LONG TIME, SHOWN BY A WALL CLOCK, SENATOR SANDERF IS STILL NOWHERE TO BE SEEN. STILL BY THE WINDOW, NOW GATITO LOOKS WORRIED AND RODOLFO, EMBARRASSED).
CLOSE UP OF RODOLFO

RODOLFO (unconvincingly)

He must still be with Gustavo and Kim. Gustavo must be boring him with his endless ethnic stories... Wait here! I'm bringing him with me.

RODOLFO LEAVES THE ROOM. CLOSE UP OF THE FACES OF GATITO, GROUL, MEAU, RAUL AND THE OTHERS AS ENDLESS MINUTES PASS; THEN OF GROUL AGAIN, WHO LOOKS INCREASINGLY ANXIOUS. GATITO ADDRESSES HIS FRIENDS TO DISTRACT THEM FROM THE TENSE WAIT.

GATITO

Guys...

RODOLFO THEN ENTERS THE ROOM, FROWNED AND SHRUGGED, SEEKING GATITO'S ATTENTION WITH HIS EYES. SO, GATITO FOLLOWS HIM OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN.

RODOLFO

I have to talk to you, Joaquin.

GATITO

What's happening?

50. CUTS TO: INT.: CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN.

RODOLFO (dropping his eyes)

Senator Sanderf is not coming.

GATITO (looking outraged now)

What do you mean '*he is not coming*'? We've all seen him getting into the damn building!

RODOLFO

Joaquin... Kim kept him in his office... and then led him out of the building by the back door...

GATITO

What?!

RODOLFO (sighing)

Somehow Kim knows about what we are doing here and she doesn't like it. She kept Sanderf in her office and told him that we have not been authorized by Gustavo or by her and that any future actions should be coordinated with her. She offered him support in the next elections, but told him that any future action had to be assessed according to the guidelines of the institution...

GATITO

What guidelines? That's bullshit! And Gustavo...?

RODOLFO

You're right. That's bullshit and Gustavo will do whatever Kim says... I'm sorry...

(GATITO, WITH MOIST EYES, OPENS HIS MOUTH BUY SAYS NOTHING. HE'S FRUSTRATED.)

(PLEADING NOW) Joaquin, this is not over. I'll fix it, somehow. Just, please, give me some time. I'll talk to Sanderf's chief of staff. I'll find some other place. We have not come to this point to give up, not when somebody like Tancruarf is rising!

(GATITO DROPS HIS EYES TO THE FLOOR. HE LOOKS BEATEN.)
Joaquin... Get hold of yourself! (A MOMENT OF SILENCE ENSUES. RODOLFO LOOKS ASHAMED NOW.) There's something else... Kim has said that you have to leave. We can't use again this office for unauthorized activities.

GATITO (grimacing in disgust)
And what else are we going to do here? Dance with flags? Look cute?

RODOLFO (trying to reassure Gatito)
Don't get bitter, cat. I'll get you another place. Just give me a week. You work in a store, right? Give me the address and I'll look for you or I'll call you in a week. They still have a phone, don't they? And if you can't use it any more, I'll send you a fucking telegram. This is not over. This can't be over!

GATITO TURNS TO THE ROOM WHERE HIS GUYS ARE WAITING WITH CONFLICTED EMOTIONS. GROUL SHOWS UP AT THE DOOR WITH A GRIN BUT, AS HE LOOKS AT GATITO'S SADDENED EYES, HE REALIZES THAT SOMETHING IS GOING WRONG.

GATITO
Groul...

RODOLFO
I know, my friend. I know... but we need you here.

BUT NEITHER GATITO NOR GROUL ARE PAYING ATTENTION TO HIM NOW. THEN GATITO CLOSES HIS EYES AND NODS WITH INTENSITY BEFORE INHALING DEEPLY, HIS EYES STILL CLOSED, AND EXHALING THE AIR SLOWLY THROUGH HIS MOUTH. THEN GATITO REOPENS HIS EYES AND WALKS BACK INTO THE ROOM WITH DETERMINATION IN HIS EYES FOLLOWED BY GROUL. RODOLFO STAYS OUTSIDE WATCHING GATITO AND GROUL GET INSIDE THE ROOM.

51. CUTS TO: INT.: KITCHEN OF THE DANCING DOGGIES, WHERE GATITO'S GUYS ARE WAITING WITH EXPECTING EYES. WHEN GATITO ENTERS THE ROOM, ALL THE CONVERSATIONS CEASE AND ALL THE EYES TURN TO HIM. SOME EYES LOOK WORRIED NOW; SOME OTHERS ARE UNEASY; BUT MOST EYES ARE STILL HOPEFUL.

GATITO (raising his eyes to his group)

Guys, there has been a small problem. Senator Sanderf will not be able to join us today. He was here to join us, but had an unexpected call and had to leave.

GATITO SEES THE DISAPPOINTMENT IN SOME FACES.

Also, we have learned from his office that Tancruarf might be running for mayor. (GATITO CAN SEE THE INCREASING UNEASINESS AMONG HIS FRIENDS) And you know what would help Tancruarf the most in this moment? You giving up. That would make his work easier. Guys, we will find not one but many difficulties and disappointments in our way, but you are the only thing that stands between Tancruarf and your friends, between Tancruarf and your relatives, between Tancruarf and all you love.

GATITO CAN SEE SOME LIGHT GETTING BACK TO THE OPAQUE EYES HE HAD IN FRONT OF HIM, LEAVING THE DISAPPOINTMENT BEHIND.

But now we have to leave this place. In a few days we'll find a place to meet and we'll decide then what to do next, while we wait for another opportunity to meet Senator Sanderf.

52. CUTS TO: INT.: CORRIDOR. Accompanied by Rodolfo, Gatito and his group begin to vacate the building in order.

CUTS TO: EXT.: FRONT OF THE BUILDING. Gatito looks up to the floor where the offices of the Dancing Doggies are. He notices somebody looking at them, partially hidden behind a curtain.

RODOLFO

Joaquin... I have the number of the store... the address, if you have it, please...

GATITO (still looking at the building)

If you have to decide between...

RODOLFO

If I have to decide between you and them, I'll decide for you, but not now. We have to wait, to see if we can use the umbrella of the Dancing Doggies. As pets and citizens they can open doors we can't... Let me see how I can fix this. Just give me time and do not give up.

GATITO, THOUGH STILL DISAPPOINTED, NODS AND WRITE IN THE PIECE OF PAPER RODOLFO HANDS HIM. RODOLFO, SADDENED, SEES GATITO AND HIS GROUP LEAVE.

53. CUTS TO: INT.: KIM's OFFICE. Gustavo is staring at the floor. Kim is yelling at Rodolfo.

KIM (angry)

How do you dare to use the facilities and contacts of the institution without our knowledge? Who do you believe you are? Fortunately, we could escort Senator Sanderf out of the building before he could see all that... But hear me, and hear me well, the next time you pull a shit like this, you will be expelled from the Dancing Doggies. If you don't like the way the institution is run, create your own, but as long as you are in the Dancing Doggies, you will follow the fucking guidelines. And you better bring volunteers to the dancing march we are planning for March instead of using the assets of the institution for you pet projects. Okay?

(RODOLFO THEN LOOKS AT GUSTAVO, BUT GUSTAVO'S EYES ARE STILL FIXED ON THE FLOOR. THEN RODOLFO HIMSELF DROPS HIS EYES TO THE FLOOR.)

Are you listening to me? Now, if you bring them to the orientation session to the dancing march, that's okay. That would be part of your job anyway, but now I want them out of this building! You hear that?

RODOLFO NODS AND LEAVES.

RODOLFO (thinking)

Fucking Kim!

SEQUENCE 12

54. CUTS TO: EXT.: OUTSIDE THE BUILDING WHERE THE SENATORS' OFFICES ARE, EARLY MORNING.

55. CUTS TO: INT.: FRONT DESK, LOBBY INSIDE THE BUILDING.

RODOLFO

My name is Rodolfo. I'd like to see Senator Sanderf's chief of staff, please. He knows me... No, I don't have an appointment.

GUARD #1, WHO IS IN FRONT OF RODOLFO, TURNS TO GUARD #2. GUARD #2 OPENS A DOOR AND LEAVES THE SMALL ROOM.

CUTS TO: RODOLFO (CLOSE UP OF RODOLFO) AS HE WAITS.

CUTS TO: GUARD #2 AND A FEMALE CAT ENTER THE SMALL ROOM.

FEMALE CAT

The chief of staff is unavailable right now...

RODOLFO

That's fine. I can wait...

FEMALE CAT (looking uncomfortable)
He may not be available for the rest of the day.

RODOLFO (trying to smile)
He knows me...

FEMALE CAT
Yes. We will send you a telegram to the Dancing Doggies to let you know when you can meet...

RODOLFO
No. Not to the Dancing Doggies, please. It's something... personal.

FEMALE CAT
Where, then?

RODOLFO
Here... My address.

HESITANT, RODOLFO WRITES HIS ADDRESS IN A PIECE OF PAPER, HANDS IT TO HER THROUGH GUARD #2 AND LEAVES WITH HIS EYES DROPPED, FROWNED AND SHRUGGED.

SEQUENCE 13

56. CUTS TO: INT.: TANCRUARF'S NEW, LARGER, MORE LUXURIOUS OFFICES. TANCRUARF HAS IN FRONT OF HIS DESK THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY. BOTH NEWSPAPERS ARE ENDORSING HIM. HE LOOKS SATISFIED. NOW HE TURNS THE PAGE. IN AN ARTICLE OF THE NAYAK DAILY ATEH THE LIAR FINALLY ADMITS THAT HE SUPPORTS TANCRUARF FOR MAYOR OF NAYAK CITY.

THEN TANCRUARF OPENS THE EXAMINING POST. ONE ARTICLE SHOWS CHIEF HAGEL, NAYAK CITY CHIEF OF POLICE, PRESENTING TWO BRUISED ANIMALS, A DOG AND A CAT.

TANCRUARF (smiling, reading)
It has been established that they belonged to a gang formed by criminal immigrants, most of them probably illegally in the Southern Country as are the two presented last night by Chief Hagel of the Nayak City Police Department.
(CHARLES AND DUKE ENTER THE ROOM. TANCRUARF KEEPS COMMENTING THE NEWS.)

Charles, they have endorsed us. Call the editor and tell them I want an article and an interview. Then call the other paper that has endorsed us, the Nayak Daily, and ask them the same. Then

call the Hanty Show, the radio show. Tell the Hanty that I want to talk in his show about this. This is our chance! Destiny has laid this chance before us. Duke, I need a rally with a banner saying something about the lives of our children threaten by these illegal immigrants, these two... Think of something catchy for the banner and then bring it to me for approval.

SEQUENCE 14

57. CUTS TO: INT.: STORE WHERE GATITO WORKS. GATITO LIES WITH HIS ELBOWS ON THE COUNTER, READING THE NEWS ABOUT THE NEW GANG OF CRIMINAL IMMIGRANTS PRESENTED BY CHIEF HAGEL. AT THE SIDE OF THE STORY, AN INTERVIEW TO TANCRUARF SHOWS HIS PHOTOGRAPH. GATITO WORRIES.

58. CUTS TO: INT.: STORE (BLURRY). Gatito remembers his conversation with Rodolfo at the convenience store.

GATITO

Fortunately the group has hold during these two weeks and now we're meeting, provisionally, at an abandoned warehouse. So far, we have been studying, preparing ourselves and preparing leaflets to convince people of the legitimacy of our position. We have even decided to support Sanderf and the local liberal candidate to the House, even if the liberals don't want anything to do with us... I don't want to imagine Tancruarf as mayor... at least we have to do something to separate the wheat from the shaft among immigrants. Otherwise everybody's going to start identifying immigrants and criminals. And that issue seems to be Tancruarf's favorite... What Tancruarf can do with photographs of criminal immigrants really worry me, Rodolfo...

RODOLFO (pleading)

I know, I know, my friend. Just give me some time. Things have not been evolving as I hoped, but we can't afford to give up now, can we?

GATITO

What's the Dancing Doggies's position on the gangs?

RODOLFO (shrugging)

They don't have one. Kim doesn't have one.

GATITO (his smile turning into a grimace)

They are letting Tancruarf pollute the media unchallenged...

RODOLFO (his eyes seemingly shrinking in his face)

I know, I know. It's stupid.

GATITO (looking at Rodolfo with friendly eyes now)
Look, Rodolfo. You have been our best ally so far. We need you more here. You are wasting your time with them. And even I can see that this is beginning to affect you...

RODOLFO (pleading)
Let me try just a bit more, okay? Just a bit more.

CUTS BACK TO: INT.: STORE: CLOSE UP OF THE PHOTOGRAPH OF CHIEF HAGEL PRESENTING THE TWO GANG MEMBERS.

58. CUTS TO: INT.: CONVENIENCE STORE. Gatito is reading the newspaper. The Dancing Doggies announce a pronouncement about the gang members presented by Chief Hagel.

GATITO (thinking)
We have to be there. Somebody has to show that we are not all stupid...

GROUL (approaching Gatito from the other side of the counter)
Something wrong?

GATITO PASSES THE NEWSPAPER TO GROUL.

GROUL
On April 6? We have to be there...

GATITO
Groul, please convoke a meeting for tonight to explain the group the situation and to appoint the committee that will go with us to the press conference.

GROUL
Does it have to be right now? Can't it wait until I finish my shift?
I need hours cat...

59. CUTS TO: INT.: AN ABANDONED WAREHOUSE WITH DIRTY WHITE WALLS. SOME ANIMALS ARE SAT ON BROKEN BOXES, SOME ON THE FLOOR. SOME ARE ON THEIR FEET. GATITO RAISES HIS HAND AND STARTS ADDRESSING THEM.

GATITO
Now more than ever we have to stay united. We have to show that we are different. We have to work harder. Don't think of me.

Don't think of yourselves. Think of those you love and, because of them, don't give up.
Now, we need a committee to bring our voice to the Dancing Doggies. Volunteers...?

60. CUTS TO: INT.: AUDITORIUM. A BANNER ANNOUNCING THE DANCING DOGGIES PRESS CONFERENCE.

CUTS TO: INT.: AUDITORIUM. GATITO, GROUL AND OTHER FIVE ANIMALS COMING WITH THEM. FROM THE STAGE, AN ASSISTANT CALLS TO ORDER. THERE ARE JOURNALISTS IN THE FIRST ROW, THE MOST ILLUMINATED PART OF THE AUDITORIUM. IN FRONT OF THE PODIUM, ONE JOURNALIST HAS THE BADGE OF THE EXAMINING POST AND ANOTHER ONE SHOWS THE BADGE OF THE NAYAK DAILY. AT THE CENTER OF THE STAGE KIM IS SAT AT GUSTAVO'S SIDE.

ASSISTANT #1

Silence, please! The press conference is going to start. You will have time to speak later, but now we must let our leaders begin...

61. CUTS TO: INT.: STAGE, KIM SPEAKING BEHIND THE PODIUM.

KIM

The people of Nayak are people widely known for their compassion. And you know that our message is a message of friendship... Therefore, it's in that spirit that I plea to you to be understanding with those misled souls presented by Chief Hagel, to consider their crimes as the unfortunate outcome of their disadvantaged origins, and to forgive. If they just receive as much love as they need to compensate for all the hatred they must have seen in their lives, I am sure they will change and will be your friends as any member of the Dancing Doggies is. So, I am making this plea to you, people of Nayak, because we, the Dancing Doggies, believe in your generosity...

CUTS TO: INT.: CLOSE UP OF GATITO. GATITO LOOKS PERPLEXED.

CUTS TO: INT.: STAGE. KIM HAS FINISHED AND RETURNS TO THE TABLE WHILE GUSTAVO APPROACHES THE STAGE.

GUSTAVO

Representatives of the press, members of the Dancing Doggies, public in general, I welcome you to this open meeting and press conference convoked by the Dancing Doggies. I wish it were in happier circumstances. We have recently learned from the press that two confused youngsters who happen to be immigrants have been captured and are waiting for trial. In the first place, let me show my solidarity with the victims, but also let me point to

something else. These youngsters are also victims. They were born in an environment where they felt hated; where they were marginalized by everybody. Then one day some rotten apples took advantage of their vulnerability, and gave them a sense of identity, of belonging, but the wrong one and their lives, which could've been put at the service of this great nation, went to waste.

This nation has been good to me. My mother came as a pet and I, like her, have lived for years like second-class citizens, with diminished rights. But after all those years, in which only our faith kept us going forward, we could adjust our status and here I am. This great nation is a nation of compassion and values. If we have to learn something from this tragedy is precisely that we have to prevent other youngsters from going through the same wrong path of perdition. Let's open again the path of adjustment of status for pets so we, the Dancing Doggies, can rescue those lives and, by doing so, we will all make our streets safer for us all again.

To finish, just let me add that we are aware that those youngsters are underage in terms of our criminal law and that we'll see that they are not trialed as adults. We're all outraged for their acts, but they're still youngsters and we'll see that their rights are respected in the courts.

Thank you very much and now I'll be open to your questions.

REPORTER FROM THE EXAMINING POST

Are you aware that we are a nation of laws? How many innocents will have to die before you realize that immigrants are a threat to this nation?

REPORTER FROM THE NAYAK DAILY

How many innocent citizens will have to die before you are willing to change your position?

GUSTAVO (increasingly insecure)

If we really believe in compassion, this is the time to show it. They are misguided souls, victims of the system. Let's solve not the effect but the cause and give our youth a chance.

REPORTER #3

Are you for letting these criminals take our lives besides our jobs? Are you aware that illegal immigrants even bring their diseases with them to hurt the host country of which they are illegally taken advantage?

REPORTER #4

Are you aware, sir, that the neighborhoods with important immigrant populations are looking increasingly similar to the slums of the Northern Country?

GUSTAVO

Eh... Come on, sirs... We have a message of compassion... and friendship.

CUTS TO: INT.: CLOSE UP OF KIM. KIM LOOKS WORRIED AND CALLS ASSISTANT #1. THEN ASSISTANT #1 APPROACHES THE PODIUM AND GUSTAVO RETURNS TO THE TABLE.

ASSISTANT #1

Well, now it's the turn for the public to make questions.

CUTS TO: INT.: FIRST ROW, WHERE NOW THE JOURNALISTS ARE TURNING TO TAKE NOTE OF THE MANY DEMONSTRATIONS OF SOLIDARITY GUSTAVO IS RECEIVING FROM THE PUBLIC.

62. CUTS TO: INT.: ROW WHERE GATITO IS. GATITO KEEPS HIS HAND RAISED BUT ASSISTANT #2 IS ALL THE TIME IGNORING HIM AND CHOOSING SOMEBODY ELSE TO MAKE THE NEXT QUESTION. THEN RODOLFO SHOWS UP FROM BEHIND THEM.

RODOLFO (to Gatito)

I could see you at last. Come with me!

RODOLFO THEN TAKES GATITO BY THE WRIST AND PULLS HIM IN HIS WAY TOWARDS ASSISTANT #2. ASSISTANT #2 IS RIGHT THEN AT THE SIDE OF A FAT CAT, WHO IS TAKING THE FLOOR.

FAT CAT (face shows his little intelligence)

And thank you Gustavo because you're the only one who understands our suffering...

RODOLFO (to Assistant #2)

Hey! He is next!

ASSISTANT #2 (startled)

But Kim...

RODOLFO (menacing, rising his voice)

You know who I am? He is next!

ASSISTANT #2 TURNS TO LOOK AT KIM WHO, ANNOYED, NODS. (PAN TO THE JOURNALISTS IN THE FIRST ROW, WHO ARE NOW PAYING ATTENTION TO THE INCIDENT.)

GATITO

My name is Joaquin Gatito. I want to please ask you to reconsider your position. This incident with the gangs is undoubtedly going to be used by Tancruarf against us. He will be running for mayor pretty soon and showing sympathy for gang members, which is even worse because we still don't know all the facts about the crimes, will only let Tancruarf identify innocent immigrants with criminals and give him an issue for his campaign. The increasing number of immigrants coming to Nayak is creating anxieties among Nayak citizens and, far from bringing them real information to challenge Tancruarf's lies, with this pronouncement we are giving him the ammunition he is going to use against us. We need to inform the people of Nayak the truth about us before it's too late. We need to train volunteers who can bring them our message. We have to develop a legislative proposal before Tancruarf comes with one of his own, one that, in the name of the values of Nayak, ends up corrupting those values and making scapegoats of us and our loved ones. Tomorrow Chief of Police Hagel is going to give a press conference about the gang activities in which those prisoners have been involved. Can't we wait at least until tomorrow before we make a definitive statement on this issue? Can't we...

CUT TO: INT.: STAGE. KIM WHISPERS AT GUSTAVO'S EAR. GUSTAVO GOES TO THE PODIUM AND CUTS GATITO OFF.

GUSTAVO

We appreciate all opinions but we have to abide by the wish of the immigrant community of Nayak. Thanks.

RODOLFO

Gustavo, you know me well! You brought me here! Please, listen to what Joaquin is saying! We could be getting beyond a point from which we will not be able to return...

KIM (angry, approaching the podium)

Well, after listening to all opinions, Gustavo, I think it is time to adjourn this press conference. Thanks for coming.

GUSTAVO NODS AND DROPS HIS EYES TO THE FLOOR. THE REPORTERS TURN TO GUSTAVO AND KIM.

CUTS TO: INT.: SOME ROW. GATITO IS VISIBLY UPSET WHILE GROUL TRIES TO CALM HIM DOWN. MEANWHILE, A HANDFUL OF ATTENDANTS APPROACH THEM WITH QUESTIONS AND THE COMMITTEE TRIES TO ANSWER THEM AS THEY TAKE THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION.

RODOLFO (apologetic, whispering)

I'm sorry, Joaquin! I'm sorry! I don't know how they can be so...

GATITO RAISES HIS EYES FROM THE FLOOR TO RODOLFO WITH WARM EYES AND A GRIN THAT TRIES TO BE A SMILE.

GROUL (ignoring Rodolfo)

Let's go, Joaquin. There's nothing else we can do here.

(GATITO DROPS HIS EYES AGAIN.)

Joaquin, let's go...

AND ONLY THEN GATITO NODS AND LEAVES, FOLLOWING GROUL AND THE COMMITTEE TO THE EXIT DOOR, LEAVING RODOLFO BEHIND.

SEQUENCE 15

NEXT MORNING...

63. CUTS TO: INT.: SOME AUDITORIUM, A TABLE ON A STAGE. CHIEF HAGEL IS AT THE FRONT OF THE STAGE WITH HIS TWO PRISONERS: DOG BURF AND CAT MEOH (UNDERAGE). TWO MEMBERS OF THE NAYAK CITY POLICE ARE FORCING THE PRISONERS TO RAISE THEIR HEAD FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PRESS, WHICH HAS GATHERED IN FRONT OF THE STAGE FOR THE PRESS CONFERENCE. THEN CHIEF HAGEL WALKS TO THE SIDE OF THE TABLE AND BEGINS TO SPEAK.

CHIEF HAGEL

Thanks for coming. As you know, I'm Hagel, Chief of the Nayak City Police. Here at my side is General Attorney Fugh. (CLOSE UP of FUGH. THE CAT, WHO WEARS A DARK SUIT OF CONSERVATIVE STYLE, NODS WITHOUT STANDING UP). As you know, in March 6 we captured these two criminals who, as part of a gang of eight members, were beating on the floor a pacific member of the Nayak community, a male, and dragging his female companion to an alley. The male will suffer permanent disability as a result of the trauma. The intervention of the police resulted in two gang members dead as a result of the police officers using their guns. Those police officers also shot in the legs two of the members of that gang, a dog of name Burf and a cat of name Meoh. The cat is underage. The dog is of legal age to be trialed as an adult. The other members of the gang could run away and we're still looking for them.

As a result of our investigations and a deal made between General Attorney Fugh and the indicted, we are in conditions to inform you the following: The two criminals before you form part of a band, most of them immigrants, most of whom are illegally in Nayak. They have engaged in a long list of crimes against an undetermined number of citizens. Among the many crimes in that list we can mention robbery, aggravated battery, rape and assault with intention to kill, as well as inducement of females to prostitution and recruitment of animals to be members of an organization with criminal purposes. As part of the deal reached between the indicted and the General Attorney, we have left out of the indictment charges for murder attempt and we won't seek the death penalty, asking instead life in prison without the possibility of parole.

I also want to inform you that we have made our priority the capture of the rest of the members of this gang of predators to make them face justice as soon as possible. It's unfortunate having to admit that this cancer has been growing under our noses all this time and that we, by focusing on isolated cases, have not been able to get the whole picture until now. So, we have considered as part of that deal the procurement from part of the indicted of all the information that will help us achieve that goal.

I also have to inform you that the doctors have moved the male victim from Intensive Care to a regular bed hospital and he may be in conditions to go home in the next days. He won't be able to walk again though. Without any injury requiring medical attention, the female is at this moment at his side in the local hospital following his progress. Following their wishes of not being identified, we have decided to respect their privacy.

Now, if you have questions...

NAYAK DAILY REPORTER (raising his hand)

Yesterday the leadership of the Dancing Doggies, the representatives of the immigrant community, has declared that the prisoners are really victims of our society and that they will see that the underage prisoner, the cat, is treated as a minor. What are your impressions, sir?

CHIEF HAGEL

That those are unfortunate declarations. Anyway, our priority is to protect the citizenry of Nayak, not to please the Dancing Doggies.

64. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF NAYAK, TANCRUARF'S RALLY. A CARAVAN OF VEHICLES DISPLAYS BANNERS WITH SLOGANS LIKE *'IT'S TIME TO SAVE*

OUR CHILDREN FROM THE CRIMINAL IMMIGRANTS' AND 'WE WANT OUR COUNTRY BACK FOR THE CITIZENS OF NAYAK.'

65. CUTS TO: INT.: INSIDE ONE OF THE VEHICLES FOLLOWING THE RALLY. CHARLES AND DUKE ARE PULLING OUT ANIMALS IN SUITS AND PUTTING PAPER SHEETS IN FRONT OF THEM WHILE OFFERING THOSE ANIMALS A PEN TO SIGN. THEY SIGN RELUCTANTLY.

66. CUTS TO: EXT.: ON THE TOP OF SOME CAR. TANCRUARF, SATISFIED, WAVES AT HIS SUPPORTERS AT THE RALLY.

CUTS TO: INT. TANCRUARF'S OFFICE. CHARLES AND DUKE ARE REPORTING TO HIS BOSS.

CHARLES

April 6 has been presented to the press as Tancruarf's rally to save the citizens of Nayak. Meanwhile, Duke and I have been busy getting pledges from the rest of conservative local leaders of the Patriot Party. All of them signed, sir. Not all happy but all signed. You could show their pledges in the rally. We warned them that you would read the names of the conservative leaders of Nayak City in the rally and say whether they had signed the pledge or not.

As you know, in short, the pledge said that they recognized that immigrants were a threat with which we had to deal immediately through a series of limits and restrictions the pledge called *'enforcement by attrition.'* And *'enforcement by attrition'* meant to make their lives so unbearable that in their despair they would end up deporting themselves. To begin with, they will have no access no schools, courts or hospitals; their employers would lose their licenses if their arrest leads to their businesses. Their shelters and safe heavens will be removed from the border and a forty feet high fence will be built along the limits of Nayak bordering with the Northern Country. Additionally, the police will be required to ask identification to anybody they suspected of being in Nayak illegally and they will have to surrender them to the immigration police, which will become a special division inside the state guard. Any suspect unable to demonstrate his legal status beyond reasonable doubt will be surrendered to the immigration police for his trial and deportation and will be detained indefinitely until that happened.

DUKE

The rally of May 6 will unify the banners under one slogan: *'Choose between the criminals and our children. Elect Tancruarf for mayor.'*

67. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEWSPAPER STAND. ANIMALS GATHER TO WATCH THE COVERS OF THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY, WHICH SHOW SENSATIONALIST COVERS ABOUT GANG VIOLENCE LIKE '*INVASION!*' AND '*EPIDEMICS OF ALIEN GANGS IN NAYAK CITY*' WITH PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE VICTIMS. THE ANIMALS, FROWNED, DISCUSS THE COVERS. CUTS TO A May 20 EDITION WITH THE COVER 'LEADER TAYARIH ANNOUNCES TANCRUARF WILL BE PATRIOT PARTY CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF NAYAK.'

SEQUENCE 16

68. CUTS TO: INT.: SOME WAREHOUSE WHERE GATITO AND HIS GROUP NOW MEET. AN ANIMAL IS OPENING THE DOOR AND RODOLFO IS GETTING INSIDE, WAVING AT EVERYBODY.

GATITO (with a disapproving tone)

It's been a few weeks...

RODOLFO

I know... these assholes' disastrous press conference, the desertions... Did they come back...?

GATITO (shrugged)

With less than twenty members, we don't have too much to give to any candidate... Worse, the rabid propaganda launched by Tancruarf against immigrants has turned undesirable any contact with immigrants for liberal candidates.

RODOLFO

I want to see if there's something I can do to help.

GATITO

The Dancing Doggies...

RODOLFO

I'm not with the Dancing Doggies any more. To be honest, Kim expelled me... with Gustavo's blessing... some days after she saw me intervening to let you speak at the auditorium. So, there it went my job... or quasi-job. Fortunately, I have some savings. Tell me that there's any good news around here...

GATITO (turning his eyes away from Rodolfo and then dropping them)

Nope. Nobody wants us. Some because they believe that any association with immigrants can backfire and others because they identify us with the Dancing Doggies, no matter how many times we tell them we are different. We've been printing informative

material with the little money we can collect but it's a drop of water in an ocean.

RODOLFO

Well, then it's been a good thing that I dropped by. Let me knock some doors this week and I might get you a couple of campaigns that could let you have a spot...

GATITO (raising his eyes to RODOLFO)

Okay, but... what about the elections for mayor? That's where Tancruarf is running!

RODOLFO

Unfortunately, the pussy who is going to be nominated for our party says that he has other issues on his plate and cannot risk wearing out debating immigration with Tancruarf. It's a big mistake because Tancruarf has based his campaign on immigration and if you beat him there, if you expose him as the charlatan he is on his main issue, then you'd have a real chance to beat him, but... I don't think they are going to hear us. As far as I know, Gustavo, Kim, have even reached an agreement with him: Gustavo and Kim will keep a low profile and then the pussy, if he wins, will engage with them... in further conversations ... later.

(GATITO SHRUGS, LOOKS DISAPPOINTED)

I know, I know... What I might get for you is a spot in campaigns in peripheral cities. I know that's not what you want, but at least you can begin to build a net of contacts, keep your people busy. Otherwise you'll waste this time, elections time... Joaquin, there are things you cannot change in the short term. And two of those things are Tancruarf and the Dancing Doggies. Remember that next year we have elections for governor. And any contacts you might make now will be important by November next year, especially if Tancruarf begins to deflate by then. What do you say?

(GATITO LOOKS HESITANT)

Look! Not everything is lost. We still can make a come back. Just don't let the ball drop, okay? Give me a few days. We'll be in touch. And just before I leave, you don't know who visited me yesterday, at my house?

Sanderf's chief of staff. My mother called me. '*Somebody's looking for you.*' And there he was. He looked somewhat ashamed and I actually looked somewhat upset. This asshole has been avoiding me for weeks! Anyway, he passed me the senator's apologies and told me that he still is interested in meeting with us but that we will have to wait for the right time,

that he didn't want Tancruarf to use us as a distraction. It's not that he didn't thought that we had to participate but there were many who thought in a different way and it seems they had been very adamant on their opposition and had even threatened to quit the race if we took part. If a conflict like that leaked to The Examining Post or the Nayak Daily, that would hurt his chances significantly. But he is committed to retake our case after the elections. And, well..., that's it. Actually that was the reason why I came today, today and not some other day later in the week. That's the most important news I thought I could bring to your tortured soul.

(GATITO SMILES AT RODOLFO'S JEST WITH A SAD GRIN. PART OF HIS MIND SEEMS TO BE SOMEWHERE ELSE. THEN RODOLFO FROWNS.)

I've heard those fucking gangs are expanding to your territory. What is true about that?

GATITO (frowning too)

It's true. And if they were not hardened criminals, I would ask my guys to go after them in person. Besides that, they are many more than us.

You know that if Tancruarf wins, he's not going to actually go after those fuckers, right?

RODOLFO

No. Of course he won't. He'll use them as propaganda to go after you.

(CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. ONE OF GATITO'S GUYS ENTERS THE ROOM SMILING, ACCOMPANIED BY ANOTHER ANIMAL, WHO SEEMS SHY.)

GATITO's GUY

Joaquin, I'm bringing a new member of the family.

GATITO TURNS TO THE NEWCOMER AND RODOLFO WAVES HIS HAND MEANING THAT IT'S OKAY.

GATITO

Good! We need all the help we can get now.

GATITO's GUY

Our friend here wants to do something and is really unhappy with the clowns of the Dancing Doggies. He might not have had a chance to a formal education but here my guy must've read more books than you and I combined.

(THE NEWCOMER BEGINS TO SMILE WITH SOME EMBARRASSMENT BUT THEN SOMETHING SEEMS TO WORRY HIM.)

NEWCOMER (with heavy accent, to Gatito's guy)
Joaquin? You told me we would talk to Gatito Inmeegrante?

GATITO's GUY

'Gatito Inmeegrante?' Ah! No, his name is Gatito Migran, Joaquin Gatito Migran, but hey! Gatito Inmeegrante doesn't sound bad, does it?

RODOLFO (somewhat skeptically)

Yeah!

(LEANING TO GATITO, WHISPERING)

Besides that, you don't want to be spreading around your real name with a your migratory situation...

(RODOLFO LOOKS AMUSED NOW)

Then it's set! Let's call this cat Gatito Inmeegrante from now on!

SEQUENCE 17

69. CUT TO: EXT.: STREETS OF MEWOW, AT DAY. GATITO'S GUYS ARE ENTHUSIASTICALLY DELIVERING LITERATURE, KNOCKING AT DOORS AND TALKING TO THE RESIDENTS OF NAYAK. GROUL MEETS GATITO AT SOME CORNER OF MEWOW. BOTH HAVE SHOULDER BAGS FULL OF LITERATURE AND BOTH BREATHE HEAVILY.

GROUL

Fucking Rodolfo couldn't get us something closer?

GATITO

Every candidate but this one turned him down. And the news coming from Nayak City about the gangs and the Dancing Doggies are not precisely helping. Are your fifteen guys doing well?

GROUL

Even the fucking no-body liberal from Mewow...? (PAUSE)
They guys are doing well. How are your fifteen doing?

GATITO

Well... Let's finish with this bag and call for a break. Our guys are doing twice what theirs are doing. I hope they remember that... or that Rodolfo gets something for us when he reminds them...? At least they are allowing us to deliver our own literature...

GROUL

Those delicate flowers? They get a blister and call it a day...? If they don't remember us for this, they won't remember us for

nothing, Gatito. Well, let's get back to this shit. See you here in two hours.

GATITO NODS AND SEE GROUL LEAVE WITH HIS BAG.

70. CUTS TO: INT.: CROWDED CAMPAIGN OFFICE, A BANNER REVEALS IT'S ONE OF THE CAMPAIGN OFFICES OF THE LIBERAL CANDIDATE OF MEWOW. AS A CAMPAIGN OFFICER LEAVES GATITO (FROWNED), HE'S APPROACHED BY MEAU AND ANOTHER ONE OF HIS GUYS.

MEAU

Can I have a word with you, Gatito?

GATITO

Their candidate is not doing well.... No assignment for today.

MEAU

The other day they told us we couldn't continue delivering our literature. Then they asked us not to reveal we're immigrants. Yesterday that sissy told us that our assignment had been given to others and the day before they didn't give us enough literature for us to hand. Different from them, we're the whole day on the streets and last week they started telling us that there was not enough food for us and they know we don't have the means to buy our own food...

GATITO

And now they are also excluding us from the debates and orientation sessions. They are doing all wrong and now they're looking for a patsy. I have to talk to Rodolfo.

GATITO'S GUY

Gatito, the other day that guy, the officer, told me to leave. I told him I wanted to be in the debate and he told me that was not for me. We work harder than them. We read more than them. And they treat us...

GATITO

I know what you feel and I'm with you. But remember why we are here. We're not here to make friends...

GATITO'S GUY

But Gatito, they despise us...

GATITO

I know that too. They won't help us even if we help them win the election. But we are here to make the contacts that, through Rodolfo, can help us stop Tancruarf. Is that clear?

GATITO's GUY (saddened, nodding as he drops his eyes)
You won't ask me to apologize, will you?

GATITO

No, of course not. Just don't get in their conversations. If they want to believe in whatever they want to believe, let them. What do you care if they're full of shit anyway?

THEN GATITO'S GUY RAISES HIS EYES FROM THE FLOOR AND SMILES. GROUL SHOWS UP. HIS FACE ANNOUNCES BAD NEWS.

GROUL

New reports of a crime wave in Nayak... Tancruarf's allies in the City Board of Nayak must be cooking these numbers... And that's not all. Tancruarf is attacking non-stop the liberal candidate for Nayak City, a pussy old cat afraid of his own tail, for being weak on immigration. No surprise, the liberal candidate has shied away, never challenging Tancruarf and even conceding to him that some hard measures had to be passed to stop the invasion of undesirable immigrants... How can he be so weak?!

71. CUTS TO: INT.: CAMPAIGN OFFICE, MAIN ROOM. CAMPAIGN OFFICE OF THE LIBERAL CANDIDATE OF MEWOW. BOARDS ON THE WALLS SHOW THE TALLIES BY PRECINCT. ON TOP OF THE BOARDS IT CAN BE READ '*THE POWER OF MODERATION.*' THE MOOD IS GLOOMY. A TALLY SHOWS THAT THE LIBERAL CANDIDATES OF NAYAK CITY AND MEWOW HAVE LOST. THEN A CAMPAIGN OFFICER CALLS TO A MEETING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS AND GATITO IS LEFT OUTSIDE. GATITO CALLS HIS GUYS AND THEY LEAVE DISCREETLY.

(CUTS TO: INT.: TRAIN WAGON. GATITO IS GLANCING AT HIS FRIENDS, THE DISAPPOINTMENT IN THEIR FACES.)

GROUL

After all we have done, are these assholes...? And Rodolfo..., what does he say?

GATITO

Yes. They are going to be blamed us for the defeat. I haven't had a chance to talk to him yet. The worse is that the managers are going to use us as patsies, so there's nothing we can expect from them in the future.

GROUL

The hours, the blisters, the thirst, the hopes... All has been for nothing?

GATITO

No. But we'll have to depend on the references Rodolfo gives of us... despite the mud the Mewow liberals are going to throw on us so they don't look that bad... It will all depend on Rodolfo now....

GROUL FELL BACK ON HIS SEAT. GATITO LOOKED BEATEN TOO.

72. CUTS TO: EXT.: OUTSIDE THE TRAIN STATION.

GATITO (trying to smile)

Tomorrow we will decide what to do. Now go to your love ones. You did all you could. Now go home. It's late.

HIS GUYS LEAVE IN SILENCE. THEN GATITO DECIDES TO WALK THE TEN BLOCKS SEPARATING HIM FROM HIS ROOM. HE STILLS LOOKS GLOOMY, ASHAMED. THEN HE STARES AT THE ALMOST SILENT DARK STREETS, DIMLY LIT BY THE LIGHT POLES AND THE LIGHT COMING FROM THE WINDOWS. WHEN HE REACHES HIS HOME AT LAST, ROGER IS WAITING FOR HIM SAT ON THE STAIRS.

SEQUENCE 18

73. CUTS TO: EXT.: ROGER'S HOUSE.

ROGER (dropping his eyes)

Joaquin... after considering the results of the elections and your... reluctance to abandon politics, I've had to go through a hard decision... I will have to ask you to look for some other place to live. I can only let you stay two more weeks... And also you'll have to look for some other job. The owner of the store called us. We can't put our families at risk now that Tancuarf is going to be mayor of Nayak City. I can't. The store owner can't either.

WITH MOIST EYES, GATITO NODS, DROPS HIS EYES TOO AND GOES TO HIS ROOM.

74. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. GATITO, GROUL AND THE OTHER 30 MEET. GATITO, WHO IS SAT AT THE CORNER, PICTURES HIS PARENTS IN HIS MIND (PICTURE OF THEM) AND SEEMS ASHAMED. THEN HE SEES THE FACES OF HIS FRIENDS (PAN OF THEIR FACES) IN HIS MIND, THEIR LOYALTY, AND SIGHS BEFORE RAISING HIS EYES.

GATITO's GUY (voice with heavy accent)
Gatito, what are we going to do now?

GATITO

If somebody is going to lie to you, that one is not going to be me. Things don't look good and won't look good for some time. But maybe you saw me talking to Rodolfo yesterday. To make it short, there is still hope because next year Nayak is electing governor. Whether Tancruarf runs or not, we have to set this debate on immigration straight. We have suffered a defeat. We have to regroup, plan and get back to the fight. As I always say, guys, if you feel your strength abandoning you, think of your loved ones.

ANOTHER ONE OF GATITO's GUYS

But, Gatito, they despise us!

GATITO

I know many of them despise us, I have felt that too, but right now we can't be picky. Maybe now that we have more time and we know much better the ground we are stepping on, we can prepare something, so the next elections won't find us with an immigration debate so twisted and biased against us.

GROUL (addressing the group)

I know this hurts, guys. He worked so hard, we lost and those pieces of shit didn't even thank us. On top of that, many people blame us for the mistakes of those stupid Dancing Doggies... But we don't have another option. Tancruarf is going to make our lives a living hell if nobody stops him. Some other guys may have the excuse of saying that, had they known better, they would have done something different. But not us. If we quit, we won't have that excuse because we knew better!

GATITO

Groul is right, guys. Now we have to organize, to expand, to spread our message. For now, we have to wait and see what Tancruarf is going to do. But, in the meanwhile, we have to prepare ourselves to make the best of every chance we have to spread our message. We have to be really effective at that. We also have to wait to see what Rodolfo can bring to our table. He says he can reopen our channels to Senator Sanderf, this time without the meddling of the Dancing Doggies. This isn't over, guys!

ANOTHER ONE OF GATITO's GUYS

Gatito, is it true that you and Groul have lost your jobs and your rooms because of what you have been doing for us?

GATITO (shrugging and droppings his eyes to the floor)
In two weeks..., yes... We'll find a way to solve that...

THE SAME GUY

That is not fair, Gatito! We are like family here! You yourself have said that so many times! If you don't have money to pay your bills, if you don't have where to sleep, how do you think we are going to feel? I and the rest of the guys are going to pass you as much work as we can. It won't be like the store but you'll have some money for your bills and if we can't help you, then we'll share your bills and sleep with you...

GROUL (beginning to laugh)
'*Sleep with you*'? I think he's suggesting us to begin another line of work Gatito...

THE OTHERS BEGIN TO LAUGH TOO. ONLY GATITO IS NOT LAUGHING.

ANOTHER ONE OF GATITO'S GUYS

You will need some high heels! I can help you borrow a pair from my sister.

GROUL

You see? Cheer up, Gatito! We have found ourselves another job!

NOW GATITO LAUGHS TOO.

January 20, 1897...

75. CUTS TO: EXT.: FRONT OF CITY HALL, TANCRUARF IS GOING TO BE INAUGURATED BY TAYARIH, WHO IS BY HIS SIDE AT THE PODIUM. BOTH SMILE SATISFIED.

TANCRUARF

Citizens of Nayak City, you have spoken loud and clear. Your agenda is my agenda.

(THE CHEERING OF THE PUBLIC FORCES HIM FOR A MOMENT INTO A PAUSE)

You have elected me to protect you against criminal aliens. And that's what I am going to do. You have elected me to give you back the jobs those criminals have stolen from you. And that's what I am going to do. You have elected me to stop those criminals, who are living off your taxes. And that's what I am

going to do. You have elected me to preserve our culture and heritage from mongrelization. And that's what I am going to do. You have elected me to fight against those who want to make of our country a carbon copy of the Northern Country. And that's what I am going to do. (MORE CHEERING FOLLOWS)

As promised, the first thing I am going to do tomorrow morning is to send a package of bills to the Board of Nayak City. Number one: They won't be able to continue sending their children to our schools, the schools we pay with our taxes, so their mongrels can later steal our jobs and rape our daughters. From now on, children attending our schools will have to present a birth certificate to show that they are legitimate citizens of Nayak or a certificate saying that they are covered under the regimen of family-based adjustment of status, also known as regimen of pets. School authorities will have to deny access to children who do not meet these requirements and report within twenty four hours to the immigration police those children who so far have been attending our schools in violation of this basic principle: Nayak schools are for Nayak's children.

Second: Public officers and employees will deny services in courts, hospitals and other public facilities to those who, at their discretion and at their entire satisfaction, do not prove that they are legitimate citizens of Nayak or animals protected under the regimen of pets. They will communicate any possible violation of the law on this end to the immigration police within twenty four hours.

Three: Employers who betray the good faith of the people of Nayak by giving jobs to these criminals will lose licenses issued by this city and they won't be able to apply for new licenses in a term of two to five years, depending on the characteristics of the violation. The Board will determine the fines that will be attached to the final sanction.

Four: A forty feet high fence will be built alongside the border with the Northern Country. The funds for its construction will be appropriated in the next budget.

Five: We are creating the immigration police as a special division of the state guard. Nevertheless, their ranks and appointments will be determined by the Board of Nayak City and its mission will be to see that these and all new regulations related to immigrants and pets are fully respected and enforced. The immigration police will be able to ask anybody to produce identification and proof of legal residence in Nayak City. Those who don't comply with this requirement will be referred to the immigration tribunals. Immigration violations won't give the animal arrested the right to a lawyer.

Six: The immigration tribunals will be restructured to fit these policies. Arrested immigrants will be interned in special prisons or sections of prisons to be run privately by private contractors. We are convinced private contractors will save this city money when dealing with undesirables that shouldn't have been here in the first place.

I'm sorry to have bothered you with all this legal jargon, my friends, but I had to show you that we are for real; that I am here to provide on my promises. With the illegal alien problem under control, you will soon see more jobs for our citizens, safer streets, our heritage preserved and better schools because we will not have to drag with children who aren't our responsibility to begin with. Our responsibility is for our children.

This said, thank you for coming. Thanks for your vote. Thank you. Thank you.

76. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE WHERE GATITO, GROUL AND SOME OF HIS GUYS LIVE NOW. GATITO IS DISTRACTED WITH HIS OWN THOUGHTS WHILE THE OTHERS TALK (MUFFLED).

GATITO (thinking)

My thirty guys are still here despite all the punishment and the disappointment, despite the panic created by Tancruarf's reforms and the lost jobs. No one has deserted. Maybe it's because, despite the increasing hostility they find in Nayak City, this warehouse is the only place where they can find something resembling hope and peace and breathe some air away from a city's air that has all of a sudden become suffocating for them.

They are resilient... but for how long? For now, those of us who are unemployed due to the panic created by Tancruarf are working now and then in jobs the other members help us get: A moving here, unloading a truck some other day, some crop picking sometimes. And a lot of austerity everyday. Also, for security reasons, the political activities have been limited to neighborhoods with significant immigrant population outside Nayak City. But for how long...?

77. CUTS TO: INT.: TRAIN WAGON, RODOLFO IS LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOW, WORRIED, GLOOMY.

78. CUTS TO: INT.: THE COUNTER OF RODOLFO'S NEW JOB. HIS FRIEND DAVID PASSES BY.

DAVID

Hi, so this is your new job? Rodolfo, meet me at my house this Saturday. I'd like to talk to you about something that might interest you.

RODOLFO (somewhat startled)

At what time?

DAVID

Anytime. I am not getting out this Saturday.

CUTS TO: EXT.: OUTSIDE DAVID'S HOUSE. RODOLFO IS KNOCKING AT THE DOOR.

RODOLFO (somewhat frowned, trying to smile)

Is this some '*top secret shit,*' '*for your eyes*' only? Something you could not say at the office because...

DAVID

Come in.

CUTS TO: INT.: DAVID'S LIVING ROOM. Rodolfo and David sit on two couches.

DAVID

A smoke?

RODOLFO SHAKES HIS HEAD, KEEPS STARING AT DAVID.

RODOLFO

You know I don't smoke, dog.

DAVID

First of all, what you're going to hear here stays here. I don't want anybody linking me to whatever you could say later that might have been originated in what you are going to hear here, okay?

RODOLFO

Come on! We have been friends for how long?

DAVID (staring seriously at Rodolfo)

Okay?

RODOLFO (scoffing)

Okay! Okay! It's that... you don't even have to ask that.

DAVID (Still staring seriously at Rodolfo)

I want your word, dog.

RODOLFO (frowning, losing his smile)

You know you have it.

DAVID (nodding)

As you know, Tancruarf and his pledges and, worse, the way he got elected as mayor, have made many conservatives nervous. Many just don't like his bully tactics. Maybe many might just want to get even with him and are trying to use me to leak something that is not even true. I know all that, so I've crossed my information, this information I've been receiving for the last two months.

(THEN DAVID MAKES A PAUSE. HE SEEMS TO BE CHOOSING HIS WORDS).

At first I didn't know what to do of what I was hearing. It was never a secret for me that there was a racist right wing inside the Patriot Party, one which Tancruarf didn't create but on which he ran. Tancruarf just gave them a voice and Charles and Duke have been terribly efficient, fanatical organizers. They just exploited the resentment of that racist wing to the establishment of their party that for so long has used them without giving them what they wanted. And they were good at that. With the pledges they turned the game in their favor and their base, seeing that, became even more active. What I couldn't guess at the moment was how far they could reach with those pledges and what they were doing with them. Want a coffee? You're going to need it.

RODOLFO (nodding)

You are scaring me dog...

DAVID, STILL FROWNED, STANDS UP AND WAVES AT RODOLFO TO FOLLOW HIM TO THE KITCHEN.

79. CUTS TO: INT.: DAVID'S KITCHEN. DAVID BEGINS POURING COFFEE IN TWO CUPS AND SHOWS HIM WITH HIS HAND WHERE THE SUGAR IS, INVITING HIM TO SIT AT THE KITCHEN TABLE.

DAVID

The pledges were not forced onto local leaders only. They were also forced on their campaign contributors and other local authorities. Of course, at first most of them turned him down, but as soon as he got elected mayor, Charles and Duke came back with relentless impetus.

RODOLFO (his skeptical eyes reduced to slits)

Campaign contributors?

DAVID

Many of those campaign contributors have overdue taxes with the city, regulation violations and... of course, illegal workers. With Tancruarf cleaning house in city hall, even career city officers have had to cave to Tancruarf. Tancruarf's long arm has even reached the Nayak City police department. Remember that with the Examining Post and the Nayak Daily decidedly on their side, they can turn any job creator into an evil devil with just a few articles and the other way around too. Last week even Chief Hagel signed a pledge.

RODOLFO (astonished)

Hagel? Hagel is honest, dog. That can't be true.

DAVID

Wait to hear this, dog. It seems that Tancruarf understood well that the gang of criminal immigrants was his opportunity to consolidate his nomination for mayor and, in the future, possibly, for governor. But Tancruarf understood that, when you have something like this playing in your favor, you don't just use it. You'll be better off if you control it. After Tancruarf's election you might have noticed that most of the gang activity moved to other cities. Tancruarf didn't even need to make one raid, one important arrest, and he got rid of most of the gang activity. And guess what! The gangs decided to move exactly to the cities where Tancruarf needed support for his nomination as governor. And they happen to be the same cities where Charles and Duke have been more active seeking pledges...

RODOLFO (grimacing)

Wait, wait, wait, dog! Are you trying to tell me that Tancruarf and the gangs...?

DAVID

Believe what you want. Believe it's a coincidence if you want. My sources tell me it isn't. And that's not all. You heard me when I told you that Chief Hagel had had to sign a pledge too?

RODOLFO

Had...?

DAVID

Yes. Had.

RODOLFO (skeptical)

How?

DAVID

The immigration police. Look! I'm not one hundred percent sure on this case, but it might have been many things. Tancruarf, as mayor, can cut his budget, can shake the functions and structure of his department; can even suggest the need of his resignation in public for whatever reason. Hagel has put his life on that department. Probably there is something more, but if Tancruarf has been able to twist Hagel's arm, he can twist anybody's arm. Ah! And as I was saying, Tancruarf has imposed on him a political adviser, on his department, to monitor him. I couldn't believe it at first, but then yesterday I read about the new liaison between the office of the mayor and the chief of police.

THEN DAVID STARES AT RODOLFO. RODOLFO SHAKES HIS HEAD AND DAVID CONTINUES.

DAVID

Read the name of the liaison and you will believe it.

RODOLFO

Wait! There is something that doesn't fit... Charles and Duke have been very busy restructuring city hall. They have been especially appointed full-time by Tancruarf himself to do that. At what time have they been hunting for pledges across the state?

DAVID

How do you know they have been there? The Examining Post and the Nayak Daily told you? I know they have left their minions in city hall, but they have not been seen in Nayak for weeks.

RODOLFO

And Speaker Tayarih is still on their side?

DAVID

Ateh the Liar has always played his own game. He thought he could manipulate Tancruarf with the trick of offering him the nomination for mayor but Tancruarf ended up being faster than him. Anyway, he must be signing his own pledge this week.

RODOLFO

How do you know that?

DAVID

Because this fucking monster, Tancruarf I mean, really seems to be guided by some supernatural force, a twisted one in any case. A piece of news that has been not downplayed but simply

eliminated by the Examining Post and the Nayak Daily and downplayed by the other minor newspapers is that since early February the pattern of a drought, a big one, seems to have been established from the northern end of the Southern Country to most of the Northern Country. Many could have guessed the effects something like that could have on immigration and, while they still can, try to do something to prevent Tancruarf from using it next year in his advantage. So Tancruarf got the news suppressed until he could tame all the animals he needs, before they realized that his chances are much better than they believe. A drought means more immigrants desperate trying to find a way to feed their families. With Ateh the Liar signing this week his pledge, I am sure you will see finally the news on the papers and that will mean that Tancruarf has the way open to the governorship. And, to do that, he just has to do what he likes the most: scapegoat immigrants.

CLOSE UP OF RODOLFO, WHO STAYS PUT FOR A FEW MORE SECONDS LOOKING AT HIS COFFEE, SUGARED BUT STILL UNTOUCHED.

80. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE, SMALL ROOM USED TO READ. THERE ARE BOOKS ON THE TABLE. RODOLFO, FROWNED, IS SPEAKING AND GATITO, FROWNED TOO, IS LISTENING, HIS EYES DROPPED TO THE FLOOR. THEN GATITO SIGHS AND RAISES HIS EYES TO RODOLFO.

GATITO

Are you sure about this?

RODOLFO (nodding and giving him some keys)

These are your keys, for the new warehouse... Do you think I would joke about something like this?

RODOLFO

I think we should take a break to think what we are going to do. I've learned of all this shit just yesterday. Give me a week and we'll meet at the new place. You have the keys now. We'll find a way and, please, be careful with the way you tell this to your guys. Better if you don't. I don't want anybody connecting dots and compromising this friend that has tried to help me, okay?

(GATITO, STILL FROWNED, NODS, HIS EYES LOST SOMEWHERE ON THE WALL IN FRONT OF HIM)

I wish I had better news...

AT THAT MOMENT GROUL AND MEAU SHOW UP SMILING BY THE MAIN DOOR.

GROUL

I don't bring great news, but at least they are not bad news. They hired the two of us, Raul and me, at some textile sweatshop, the one where Meau is working. Isn't that great?

SEQUENCE 20

Early April, 1897...

81. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME STREET IN NAYAK AT DAY. THE DANCING DOGGIES MARCH. THEY GO THROUGH THE STREETS WITH SASSY SMILES, DANCING WITH FLAGS OF DIFFERENT COLORS. SOME OF THEM HAVE TRAYS WITH TYPICAL DISHES, SAMPLES THEY SHARE WITH THE PUBLIC ON THE SIDEWALKS. ONE BANNER SAYS '*THE DANCING DOGGIES.*' ANOTHER ONE SAYS '*GIVE US A CHANCE AND WE'LL PROVE WE'RE YOUR FRIENDS.*'

82. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEWSPAPER STAND, MORNING, WHERE THE PASSERSBY WATCH THE COVERS OF THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY, WHICH ONLY NOW REPORT ON THE SO-CALLED BIG DROUGHT: '*THE BIG DROUGHT MAY CAUSE ALIEN INVASION*' '*UNPRECEDENTED DROUGHT IN THE NORTHERN COUNTRY, HUGE INFLOW OF IMMIGRANTS EXPECTED, THREAT TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY UNDER CONSIDERATION. IN THIS EDITION, ESPECIAL REPORTAGE ABOUT OVERDUE CRACKDOWNS ON WORKING PLACES AND THE NEWLY CREATED IMMIGRATION POLICE,*' '*SPEAKER ATEH TAYARIH SAYS MICHELLE TANCRUARF IS*' '*GOVERNOR MATERIAL.*'

83. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE WITH BROWN WALLS IN MIYAFF. GATITO AND GROUL ARE SAT AT ONE TABLE READING REPORTS.

GROUL

Why are they so stupid and still have hundreds of immigrants on their side and why we are right and we are not more than thirty? Their stupidity is a shadow on everything we try to do. No matter what we do, we'll always share their stain. They are validating every fucking stereotype about us. They're just saying that we are not that bad, that we are cute... How's that fair, Gatito?

GATITO (dropping his eyes and grimacing)

I wish I knew. You have doubts?

GROUL

About us? No. It's just that it's not fair.

GATITO

No. It's not.

GROUL

There's something more. Now Tancruarf is mayor. Have you wondered why Tancruarf has never cracked down on the Dancing Doggies if he really wants to get rid of all immigrants? There he would have a lot...

GATITO

Because they are supposed to be pets, legal...? But it's a good question. No, I don't know.

GROUL

Did Rodolfo tell you something about that?

GATITO

No. We didn't talk about the Dancing Doggies. You think they might have signed a pledge too?

GROUL (scoffing and grimacing himself)

At this point nothing could hit me as a surprise, cat.

SEQUENCE 21

May, 1897...

84. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEWSPAPER STAND, MORNING. ANIMALS GATHER AROUND TO WATCH THE COVERS OF THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY. *'MICHELLE TANCRUARF NOMINATED FOR GOVERNOR BY THE PATRIOT PARTY, CHARLES KING NOMINATED FOR MAYOR OF NAYAK CITY.'* IN A PHOTOGRAPH ATEH TAYARIH APPEARS RAISING TANCRUARF'S HAND, WITH TANCRUARF AT HIS RIGHT, AND CHARLES'S, WITH CHARLES AT HIS LEFT.

85. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE, GATITO IS WATCHING THE PHOTOGRAPH IN THE COVER OF A NEWSPAPER HE HAS OPENED ON HIS TABLE.

86. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEWSPAPER STAND, MORNING. ANIMALS GATHER AROUND IT. THIS TIME THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY DEDICATE THEIR COVERS TO THE *'INCREASE IN GANG ACTIVITY IN MIYAFF, MEWOW, ROUFF AND OTHERS CITIES.'*

87. CUTS TO: INT.: SOME OFFICE, NIGHT. AN OVERWHELMED ANIMAL IS SIGNING A PAPER SHEET TITLED 'PLEDGE,' THEN A SMILING DUKE IS PICKING UP THE PAPER FROM THE TABLE.

CUTS TO: EXT. DUKES GOES TO A PUBLIC PHONE WHILE HIS DRIVER WAITS AT THE SIDE OF HIS CAR.

DUKE

He signed, boss. All sign. Mayors, politicians, business owners, and newspapers. All sign. Let your rivals try to raise funds now... Let them try to find somebody willing to say something about you.... Aha! That's true. The gangs are taking over the crossing points. Tough guys. If these illegals try to cross to Nayak, they're going to be in a world of fun. They are even making business out of those fools who are legal but don't know yet that times have changed, boss.... But yes, the Examining Post and the Nayak Daily are always on our side. They'll say what we want them to say. No matter what, they'll be the bad guys.... Yes, boss. Yes.

88. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEWSPAPER STAND, MORNING. PASSERSBY GATHER AROUND. THIS TIME THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY HAVE ANOTHER COVER: '*REPRESENTATIVE WEBB QUESTIONS THAT WE ARE UNDER ALIEN INVASION. TO WHOM IS REPRESENTATIVE WEBB REALLY LOYAL?*'

CUTS TO: EXT. NEWSPAPER STAND. MORNING. NOVEMBER 5. 'TANCRUARF WINS IN A LANDSLIDE. NEW GOVERNOR. INAUGURATION SET FOR ANUARY 20.'

89. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME STREET IN NAYAK. THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ARE PUSHING HANDCUFFED IMMIGRANTS TO THE BACK OF A TRUCK.

CUTS TO: EXT.: OTHER STREET IN NAYAK. SOME GANG MEMBERS ARE ASSAULTING AND ROBBING TWO IMMIGRANTS

CUTS TO: CHARLES IS USING A PUBLIC PHONE TO REPORT TO HIS BOSS.

CHARLES

Boss, the campaign for mayor has taken a lot of my time, but you know you're my first priority. So, here I am to bring you a report.... Public phone. Safe line. My people are making sure city hall has a safe one too but I'm out of the office anyway... Good news and bad news... Opportunity... Yes. It's like this: Not even the abuse by the gangs or the raids by the immigration police have been able to stop the flow of illegals and the Big Drought will only bring more. So, as you said, we could use Miyaff as an exhaust valve. Miyaff is a declining shitty city where you have not even campaigned, with no fundraising potential. We left it to the establishment... Yes, that could be sort of a short term solution. In that short term, we can push immigrants to Miyaff and pretend that we're solving the immigration problem, that the *enforcement by attrition* strategy is working... Yes, it's sweeping the trash under the carpet, but we have the press on our side. And they'll make a bad guy of whoever dares to open his mouth against us. And, in time, in the future we can always campaign against the city of Miyaff, which has been plagued by illegals for not following the example of

Nayak City. (SCOFFS) Yes, we have to do austerity, so we're cutting the help to its police department's budget. Miyaff is going to be the gangs' booty... We had to somehow reward them for their services after all, didn't we?

SEQUENCE 22

March 18, 1899...

90. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE, BIG ROOM, USED TO MEET, COOK AND EAT. MEAU IS SAT, PANTING, SPEAKING. GATITO AND THE OTHERS FOLLOW HIM WITH ATTENTION.

91. CUTS TO: EXT. (BLURRY): SOME BUILDING, MORNING. MEAU AND TWO GUYS, AS WELL AS OTHER ANIMALS, ARE DISCREETLY GETTING INSIDE.

92. CUTS TO: INT. (BLURRY): SWEATSHOP. MEAU IS WORKING FOLDING FINISHED PIECES OF CLOTHING. THE TWO GUYS, BEHIND SERGERS, WAVE DISCREETLY AT HIM.

93. CUTS TO: EXT. (BLURRY): BACKYARD. MEAU IS PULLING TWO BIG TRASH CANS TO A DUMPSTER. THEN MEAU HEARS THE SOUNDS OF BOOTS SURROUNDING THE BUILDING. MEAU, STARTLED, LEAVES THE TRASH CANS AND CLIMBS A WIDE PIPE.

94. CUTS TO: TOP OF THE PIPE (BLURRY), CLOSE UP OF MEAU, AFRAID, WITH ALARMED EYES.

95. CUTS TO: EXT (BLURRY):. BUILDING. THE IMMIGRATION POLICE, WHICH HAVE SURROUNDED THE BUILDING, ARE NOW BANGING ON THE DOOR OF THEIR WORKING SITE. MEAU DESCENDS THE PIPE BACK TO THE PATIO JUMPING ON THE TRASH CANS.

MEMBER OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE

Hey, you, stop right there!

MEAU DOESN'T TURN. HE JUST RUNS AND HEARS THEM RUNNING AFTER HIM. HE THEN HEARS TWO SHOTS.

96. CUTS TO: EXT. (BLURRY): SOME STREETS. MEAU, PANTING, JUMPS THE WALL AND RUNS EVEN LONG AFTER HE COULD NOT HEAR ANYBODY ELSE RUNNING AFTER HIM. FINALLY MEAU STOPS IN AN ALLEY AND BEGINS TO SHAKE UNCONTROLLABLY.

97. CUTS TO: EXT. (BLURRY): NEW WAREHOUSE, LATE AFTERNOON. MEAU, STILL PANTING, APPROACHES THE NEW WAREHOUSE.

MEMBER OF GATITO'S GROUP

Are you sure nobody was following you?

MEAU (somewhat upset)

For the third time, yes!

GATITO (as the others turn to him)

I have to see Rodolfo. He is the only one who can help us now.

GROUL

Do you know where to find him?

GATITO

I'm not sure but I have to try.

GROUL

Nayak is not a friendly city for us anymore...

GATITO (with an unappealable tone)

Our friends who work go to Nayak City everyday, so we can eat...

GROUL

Gatito, if something happens to you, it's over. Let it be me who goes for Rodolfo...

GATITO

No. I remember that Senator Sanderf's chief of staff got him a job in some public works or something like that on which he was not really interested but that he needed the money.

GROUL

So?

GATITO

So I have to see Sanderf's chief of staff...

GROUL (yelling)

Are you crazy? You are illegal and you are going to go to the offices of Congress with fake documents? If somebody has to go it'll have to be me.

GATITO

My documents are convincing. Are yours better?

GROUL SNARLS BUT GATITO STARES AT HIM FIRMLY.

GROUL (turning to the others)

Then I put to a vote that decision. The group must decide who should go to the offices of Senator Sanderf.

GATITO (upset, turning to the others too)

I'm aware of the risks. I'm aware also of Groul's qualities to take my place if something happens to me. If you don't let me do this, though, I give you my word that I'll step down as a member of this group. Groul has the best intentions, but he doesn't know how to address this people and he could only end up getting caught and surrendered to the immigration police. Don't take me wrong, Groul is very smart and brave. He is my friend. But this is something I have to do myself. On top of that, I should've foreseen this could happen. If we have been caught with our guard down, it's my fault more than anyone else's. I haven't had to beg you anything before. Please...

GROUL (protesting)

You know that if something happens to you this group is over.

GATITO

And you know that if something happens to you, this group and I are over. I know the risks. Now, can you tell me that you are better prepared to do this than me?

GROUL (hesitant, hurt, turning his back on Gatito)

Fuck you!

GROUL LEAVES THE ROOM ANGRY.

SEQUENCE 23

Next morning...

98. CUTS TO: EXT.: CONGRESS, MORNING. GATITO IS MAKING LINE BY THE STAIRS OUTSIDE A HUGE BUILDING WHERE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HAVE THEIR OFFICES. GATITO WEARS A SUIT AND LOOKS STIFF. HE TRIES NOT TO LOOK NERVOUS.

99. CUTS TO: INT.: BUILDING. SMALL ROOM WHERE TWO SECURITY GUARDS ARE SAT BEHIND A TABLE, ANOTHER GUARD STANDS BEHIND THEM AND ONE MORE IS CLOSING THE DOOR BEHIND HIM. THE GUARDS LOOK BORED. GATITO NOW NOTICES THE DOOR BEHIND THE GUARDS.

GUARD #1 (sat at the table)

Documents?

GATITO GIVES HIM HIS FAKE DOCUMENTS AS JAUNTILY AS HE CAN.

GUARD #1

Joaquin Gatito...

GATITO

Migran, sir.

GUARD #1 (still sat at the table, nodding, his eyes fixed on the documents)
Who are you coming to see?

GATITO

Senator Sanderf's chief of staff, sir.

GUARD #1 (passing the documents to the guard at his side)
Do you have an appointment?

GATITO

No, sir, but you can tell him that I'm coming on behalf of
Rodolfo...

GATITO NOTICES THAT GUARD #2, SAT AT THE TABLE, IS GETTING A
CLOSER LOOK AT HIS DOCUMENTS, HIS EYES ALMOST REDUCED TO SLITS.

GATITO

It's about a job for which he's recommending me.

GUARD #1 (smirking)

At least this one is honest about his reasons...

GATITO GRINS, PRETENDS TO BE ASHAMED.

GUARD #2 (raising his eyes from the documents to Gatito)

Call Sanderf's office.

GUARD #1 SUPPRESSES A LAUGH AND DIALS A NUMBER ON THE PHONE IN
FRONT OF HIM.

GUARD #1

The chief of staff you said?

GATITO

Yes, sir.

GUARD #1 TALKS TO SOMEBODY ON THE PHONE AND, AS SOON AS HE
HANGS UP, TURNS TO GATITO AND TELLS HIM SOMEBODY IS COMING TO
ESCORT HIM. BUT THEN GUARD #2 APPARENTLY REMEMBERS SOMETHING

AND AGAIN BRINGS GATITO'S DOCUMENTS CLOSER TO HIS EYES WHEN A FEMALE OPENS THE DOOR BEHIND HIM.

FEMALE CAT IN OFFICE ATTIRE

Are you Joaquin Gatito... Migran?

GATITO (his eyes still on the guard who wants to reexamine his documents)

Yes...

FEMALE CAT IN OFFICE ATTIRE

Come with me, please.

THE FEMALE DISAPPEARS BEHIND THE DOOR.

GATITO

Are you keeping my documents, sir?

GUARD #2

Ah? No! Here you are.

RELIEVED, GATITO FOLLOWS THE FEMALE.

100. CUTS TO: INT.: CHIEF OF STAFF'S OFFICE. A DOG IN OFFICE ATTIRE, SMILING, STANDS UP AND INVITES GATITO IN.

CHIEF OF STAFF

So, you are the Gatito Inmeegrante Rodolfo has talked to me about so many times?

GATITO

Yes, sir...

GATITO (INAUDIBLE) TALKS TO THE CHIEF OF STAFF WHO, CONCERNED, LISTENS TO HIM WITH ATTENTION.

CHIEF OF STAFF

I'm calling him immediately. You know Senator Sanderf is not very popular in the current administration, but... count me in to do anything I can do to help. He knows where to find you, right? Ah! Yeah! I was forgetting. Of course he does.

THEN THE CHIEF OF STAFF PUTS IN FRONT OF GATITO A PIECE OF PAPER.

CHIEF OF STAFF

Please, write here their names and their description.

THEN GATITO HANDS THE PIECE OF PAPER BACK TO THE CHIEF OF STAFF AND THEY SHAKE HANDS. AFTER THAT, THE CHIEF OF STAFF ESCORTS HIM TO THE DOOR.

SEQUENCE 24

101. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. GATITO IS LOOSENING THE TIE AND TAKING THE JACKET OFF. AND, AS HE UNBUTTONS HIS SHIRT, HIS GUYS ARE APPROACHING HIM TO PAT HIM ON THE SHOULDER, TO OFFER HIM SOME TEA, TO ASK HIM WHAT THEY COULD DO TO HELP.

THEN THEY TURN TO THE DOOR. IT'S GROUL COMING BACK. IMMEDIATELY, GROUL HUGS GATITO, HIS EYES TURNED INTO SLITS WITH RELIEF.

GATITO

How are the families taking it?

GROUL DROPS HIS EYES TO THE FLOOR AND SIGHS. GATITO IMMEDIATELY CONVOKES TO A MEETING IN THE MAIN ROOM.

102. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM. GROUL IS GOING TO REPORT ON HIS MISSION.

103. CUTS TO: INT. (BLURRY): SMALL LIVING ROOM OF AN APARTMENT. TWO FEMALES, ONE YOUNGER THAN THE OTHER, BREAK INTO TEARS. A MALE APPROACHES GROUL.

GROUL (apologetically)

We are doing everything we can to bring them back. We have a friend in...

MALE (holding Groul's forearm and taking him to another room)

We really appreciate what you are doing and we don't blame you. But you can't be one hundred percent sure about that, about bringing them back. It's that... things have changed a lot at the border. It's not like before when, if you had savings, you could pay a good smuggler to bring somebody back. Now the gangs have taken over the crossing. They have pushed the old smugglers out of the business. They now kidnap, kill, rob, rape and maim at will. They can take your money and kill you or sell you to other gangs instead of helping you cross. They sometimes just leave you in the middle of the desert with no water or food. Only if they are sure they can make some extra money with you, they will help you cross, like when they force you to bring drugs or arms for them. But if they don't need you, they'll just swindle you. I still remember that day when an old dog hired them to cross his two daughters and they were never seen again. That's

why they cry. Let them mourn. Don't give them a hope you can't guarantee.

GROUL (unconvincingly)

I've heard those stories but...

MALE

But they are true... now. Tancruarf has made smuggling a very lucrative business and the gangs were not happy with just a slice. They took over the whole thing. We had cousins living close to the border and they have decided to sell their property and come to live with us. They are legal. They came under the regimen of pets. But those gangs respect nothing, especially if you are or look like an immigrant. That's how it is now.

GROUL SHAKES THE MALE'S HAND IN HIS WAY OUT AND DROPS HIS EYES.

GROUL (raising his eyes to the male)

We have some contacts though. Their cases will be different. You'll see.

104. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE, NIGHT. RODOLFO ENTERS THE WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM AND HUGS GATITO AND SHAKES GROUL'S HAND.

105. CUTS TO: INT.: KITCHEN. THE THREE OF THEM ARE SAT AT A TABLE.

RODOLFO (looking somber)

The two prisoners were taken to the border and expelled the next morning, precisely as you were talking to the Chief of Staff. There's nothing anybody can do at this moment.

GROUL (upset)

We have to help them come back!

RODOLFO (sighing)

That's not going to be easy. Besides that, they could be anywhere at this moment. Many of those who are expelled at the border are denied food and water and left at the mercy of the gangs and the desert...

GROUL (angry, protesting)

They may be nothing to you but they are our friends!

RODOLFO (shrugging first and then getting upset himself)

Look! I am here trying to help. If you have an idea, I'll be glad to hear it. Otherwise...

GROUL (raising his voice)

Otherwise what?

GATITO

Groul, calm down! You are not helping that way.

GROUL (staring at Rodolfo, yelling)

Otherwise what?

GATITO (standing up and hitting the table with his fist)

Groul! I need you to calm down! And Rodolfo, I need something more specific here. From what point of entry they were expelled?

RODOLFO

From the closest one: Nayak number six. I can mark it for you in a map if you want...

GATITO

I know where it is. We need to know where to find you. No more secret bullshit, please. Today I could've been arrested for using fake documents.

RODOLFO (nodding, looking ashamed)

Sure, sure... But, with respect to bringing them back, I just don't know what to say. It's just that all the smugglers you could trust have been pushed out of business by the gangs. And you can't trust the gangs... Anyway, whatever you decide, I'll do my best to help you.

GROUL (leaving the room)

I will get the name of a smuggler, the best name I can get in these circumstances.

RODOLFO IGNORES GROUL AND WRITES IN A PIECE OF PAPER BEFORE PUSHING IT OVER THE TABLE TOWARDS GATITO.

RODOLFO

My address... My phone number. Don't share them with everybody... You know? (RODOLFO DROPS HIS EYES AND MAKES A PAUSE) I envy your friends. I'd like I had friends like that...

GATITO (nodding, pleased)

You're our friend too... I don't know... but it's as if there was always a wall between us... but that wall is not important for me. You're my friend. That wall... is not your fault. It's, in any case, mine. (RAISING HIS EYES TO MEET RODOLFO'S) We just have to work on that.

GATITO SMILES WITH A TENUOUS GRIN. THEN RODOLFO STANDS UP, PUTS HIS HAND ON GATITO'S SHOULDER AND SMILES AS HE'S GETTING READY TO LEAVE.

RODOLFO

We just need time.

GATITO

More?

RODOLFO (turning to Gatito and seeing him smiling)
I think so...

FADE OUT...

-----END EPISODE ONE