

SEQUENCE 55

FADE IN...

June 29, 1901

185. CUTS TO: INT.: COURTROOM, DAY. MIAC IS BEING JUDGED. DEPUTY JON IN AMONG THE PUBLIC IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES.

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

Okay, let's rehearse how I'm going to report this to the boss... They are charging that cat Miac with every possible charge they can imagine. The prosecutor has even described his soul as 'an endless well of depravity.' Then the prosecutor has presented over and over the photographs of his alleged victims as if they were enough proof of that cat's culpability while the judge glances at Miac disapprovingly, severely, all the time. That can't end well for him.

Still, this doesn't seem the same cat they presented to the press days ago. Then, Miac had looked so weakened... and now he seems all what is left of his strength to look defiant again. And what else he could do? He had been assigned a lawyer who never raised his hand to object anything the prosecutor said and the cat could not be seen talking to him even once. Only at the end, tired, upset, Miac had finally raised his hand to tell the judge that he was dismissing his lawyer and that he wanted to defend himself. The judge granted him the dismissal of his lawyer but he didn't let him defend himself, so the defiant cat began to insult the judge. He told the judge to go fuck himself and was gagged.

(BLURRY. MIAC IS APPROACHED BY GUARDS AND, AFTER A BRIEF STRUGGLE, HE IS GAGGED)

That same day the jury met to reach a decision and only minutes later they returned to the courtroom to find him guilty of all charges. To nobody's surprise, the judge sentenced Miac to Infamous Hanging, which will take place on July first in the yard at the back of the court building.

Then the session is adjourned and Miac is pushed back to his cell, where the immigration police will be able to torture him for two more days before his execution to make him pay for his defiance. End of report.

July 1, 1901...

186. CUTS TO: EXT.: BACKYARD OF THE COURT BUILDING, AT DAY. MIAC IS BROUGHT TO THE PLATFORM OF EXECUTION. MANY LOCALS FILL THE YARD TO WITNESS THE EXECUTION. TANCUARF AND OTHER AUTHORITIES ARE IN ATTENDANCE. AT SOME POINT, THE PRISONER IS BROUGHT TO THE IMPROVISED PLATFORM OF EXECUTION ERECTED ON THE YARD HIGH ENOUGH SO THE ATTENDANTS CAN HAVE A BETTER VIEW OF THE EXECUTION.

MIAC LOOKS GROGGY AND EXHAUSTED. NEVERTHELESS, MIAC SOMEHOW RECOVERS HIS DEFIANCE, REFUSING TO LET THE GUARDS PUSH HIM IN HIS WAY TO THE SPOT WHERE THE CHAINS AND THE OIL ARE WAITING FOR HIM.

THE JUDGE READS (INAUDIBLE) THE SENTENCE FROM THE TABLE HE SHARES WITH TANCRUARF. THEN THE JUDGE STANDS UP AND READS THE SENTENCE AGAIN. BUT NOT EVEN THAT IS ENOUGH TO TAME THE DEFIANT MIAC, WHO IS NOW STARING AT THE ATTENDANTS AND HISSING. AND THEN, AS HIS EYES MOVE THROUGH THE PUBLIC GATHERED AT THE YARD, HE STOPS SOMEWHERE.

(PAN OF THE ATTENDANTS AND CLOSE UP OF SOMEBODY WHO IS WEARING A HOODY).

MIAC IS MOVED BY THE ANIMAL WEARING A HOODY. THE ANIMAL RAISES HIS EYES TO LOOK BACK AT HIM AND NODS. MIAC WHISPERS TO HIMSELF 'GATITO, YOU'LL TAKE CARE OF THEM...'

(CLOSE UP OF MIAC, WHOSE EYES TURN MOIST)

THEN MIAC'S EYES KEEP MOVING TO NOT BRING ATTENTION ON GATITO. AND IT IS ONLY AT THAT MOMENT THAT MIAC LET HIS DEFIANCE GO AND A TEAR ROLLS ON HIS CHEEK. HE LOOKS RELIEVED THOUGH.

JUDGE (approaching Miac)

Crying won't help you here! You should've thought better before you began your life of crime. (TURNING TO THE EXECUTIONER) Proceed!

THEN THE EXECUTIONER PUTS THE CHAIN AROUND MIAC'S NECK AND LOCKS IT.

187. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF NAYAK, APPROACHING SOME TRAIN STATION IN NAYAK. GATITO WALKS FAST. HE HIDES BEHIND THE HOOD THE FACT THAT HE'S CRYING.

SEQUENCE 56

September, 1901...

188. CUT TO: EXT.: STREETS OF ROUFF, AT DAY. TWO TRUCKS AND THREE BUSES ARE STOPPING AT THE SIDE OF THE ROAD AND BEGINNING TO UNLOAD. GUSTAVO AND KIM START GIVING DIRECTIONS TO THE DANCING DOGGIES MEMBERS. A BANNER SAYS 'ROUFF IS WITH THE DANCING DOGGIES!'

THE MARCH OF THE DANCING DOGGIES BEGINS WITH KIM AND GUSTAVO AT THE FRONT BUT SOON THEY FIND THE OLD LEADER AND MANY OTHER RESIDENTS STANDING UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET, BLOCKING THEIR PASS.

MULTITUDE

"Get out of here! Leave! We're mourning our friend here!"

KIM PUSHES GUSTAVO FORWARD.

GUSTAVO (to the old leader)

Shouldn't we leave that decision to the vote of the attendants who are watching us from both sides of the street?

MULTITUDE

Boo! Boo!

THEN SOME ATTENDANTS BEGIN TO THROW SOME VEGETABLES AT THEM, IMPACTING GUSTAVO AND KIM IN THEIR BODIES.

KIM (whispering at Gustavo)

We better begin earlier the dancing march planned for Miyaff.

189. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF MIYAFF, AT EARLY AFTERNOON. THE DANCING DOGGIES ARE GETTING READY TO MARCH. A BANNER SAYS 'MIYAFF IS WITH THE DANCING DOGGIES!'

ANGRY MULTITUDE

Gatito Inmeegrante! Gatito Inmeegrante! Gatito Inmeegrante!
Miac! Miac! Miac!

THEN A GROUP OF ANIMALS APPROACH THEM.

ANIMAL

We're the Committee of Miyaff and you are not welcomed here. How can you try to discredit Miac when we're still mourning our friend, and especially you, who just months ago were so soft with real gang members? Are you maybe on Tancruarf's payroll?

KIM (whispering at Gustavo again)

Let's better go to Mewow. These animals could turn violent.

ANGRY MULTITUDE

Gatito Inmeegrante! Gatito Inmeegrante! Gatito Inmeegrante!
Miac! Miac! Miac!

190. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF MEWOW, AT MID AFTERNOON. THE DANCING DOGGIES GET READY TO START THEIR MARCH WITH A BANNER THAT SAYS 'MEWOW IS WITH THE DANCING DOGGIES.' ALL THEY FIND IN THEIR WAY ARE SPORADIC GROUPS OF APATHETIC ANIMALS BARELY INTERESTED IN THEIR DANCING MARCH.

(CUTS TO: EXT. STREETS OF MEWOW. KIM CALLS SOME SUPPORTERS, TELLS THEM TO TAKE THEIR COSTUMES OUT, TO POSE AT THE SIDE OF

OTHER MARCHERS AND TO SMILE. THE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE TAKEN. ONCE THE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE TAKEN, THEY PACK EVERYTHING IN THE TRUCKS AND LEAVE TO NAYAK.)

SEQUENCE 57

October, 1901...

191. CUTS TO: INT.: AUDITORIUM, AT NIGHT. RODOLFO LOOKS BORED WITH THE SPEECHES MADE BY SCHOLARS.

RODOLFO

Same drill, same shit. The same stupid speeches of scholars who want to see their names on some paper but who will not move a finger to make something happen in the real world. The same shallow posers who see in these events an opportunity to get connections in that world of barren and withering vanities. Hypocrites.... But you have to be wise at selecting your battles. We have enemies already...

THEN AN OLD DOG APPROACHED HIM.

SMALL DOG (with a wide smile)

Do you remember me?

RODOLFO LOOKS AT HIM AND THEN, AFTER SOME HESITATION, SHAKES HIS HEAD.

SMALL DOG (chuckling)

My name is Francisco Aguosta. Come on, dog! You were with the Dancing Doggies some years ago, weren't you? Wasn't it you who was with them when they were still at the old office? I remember you! Kim never liked you... I left just by the time you came. Kim never liked me either.

RODOLFO (suspicious)

Hmm. Well, maybe I remember you. What can I do for you?

AGUOSTA

I have been moved by the martyrdom of Miac, by the leadership of this Gatito Inmeegrante... They are not like Gustavo and Kim. I want you to help me contact them. I am an old dog and I want to do something useful before I die, something that gives meaning to my life.

RODOLFO (pretending confusion)

But..., why me? I don't have anything to do with this Gatito Inmeegrante. I don't know if that Gatito Inmeegrante even exists

or if he's something some immigrant activists of Miyaff have just made out...

THEN RODOLFO TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO THE STAGE AND MAKES A LONG SILENCE, INVITING THE OLD, FAT DOG TO LEAVE. BUT HE IS STILL THERE.

AGUOSTA

Well, maybe some other time...

RODOLFO FROWNS.

I remember that you insisted on bringing information to the citizens of Nayak instead of believing that dancing stupidly of projecting a cute image of us, as Kim wanted... But maybe you have left all that behind you. I don't blame you.

WHEN RODOLFO, UNEASY, TURNS HE CAN SEE THAT THE VISITOR IS LEAVING AT LAST. THEN SOME ACQUAINTANCE APPROACHES HIM WITH HIS HAND EXTENDED AND A FALSE SMILE.

SEQUENCE 58

192. CUTS TO: INT.: RADIO STUDIO, AT NIGHT. REHM, THE INTERVIEWER, IS GETTING HER NOTES READY. TANCRUARF LOOKS UNCOMFORTABLE.

REHM

Well, we are coming back on national radio after the announcements of our sponsors. You were telling us about the state in which you found government after you were inaugurated as governor of Nayak.

TANCRUARF

That's correct. When we took office, we found that those three institutions were a nest of anarchy. And still, we were patient and we invited them to make the necessary reforms, but they never took this advice seriously. So, at the beginning of our second term we had to take the problems on our own hands.

REHM

For instance, in the Nayak police department you didn't reform the department. You created a new police, the immigration police, and extended its power over the police department. Now even the Chief of the Immigration Police makes announcements on behalf of the whole Nayak Police Department and enforcement of immigration-related violations now has a budget bigger than any other kind of law enforcement...

TANCRUARF (smiling)

I think there is a bit of exaggeration on that conclusion. Chief Hagel and Chief Kruorf work shoulder to shoulder. It's just that the delicate health of Chief Hagel has forced him to delegate more responsibilities on Chief Kruorf. That's why Chief Hagel has not even been able to attend some recent press conferences, sending his deputy to replace him instead. On the other issue, the fact is that in Nayak we found that most of the crimes are committed by immigrants. Nayak, before we took office, was plagued by gangs of criminal immigrants. That's why we have reinforced our immigration enforcement budget. And when you add immigration violations to crimes committed by immigrants, we have the budget you have mentioned before, but the results speak for themselves... The fact is that now Nayak is a safe city to walk, even at night, while crime is still a problem in other cities... I mean in the cities that have resisted our reforms.

REHM

So immigrants are the only source of crime in your state, governor?

TANCRUARF

In most cases, in the overwhelming majority of cases, yes, that's unfortunately true. Our statistics show...

REHM

You purged the staff that used to make those statistics in the district attorney's office. When Chief Kruorf took over, he remade those statistics for the last five years and never explained technically his reasons to change the methodology. Can we trust Chief Kruorf on that? Is he a statistician? Why did you choose him?

TANCRUARF (somewhat uncomfortable)

I chose Chief Kruorf because I trust him. Yes, I trust him and I chose him because he was an outsider who could think out of the box. The results show that I was not mistaken.

REHM

But what was his background?

TANCRUARF (more uncomfortable now)

I met him in my campaign for governor... He had no background in law enforcement if that's the point of your question, but I followed my heart and gave him a chance and I was not mistaken. As I said, the results speak for themselves.

REHM

Hmm... I've heard that you might be running for president in the next general elections. What is true about that?

TANCRUARF (scoffing, still lacking confidence)

We are studying that possibility, but that's all. We are exploring the possibility... We have been successful in Nayak and we're studying whether we can do for the whole country what we have made for Nayak. But if we see that the problems of our country are way over our heads, I'll content myself with being a good governor for Nayak. So, let's not rush to conclusions.

REHM

And what are the issues that you are studying, the ones that could incline you to run for president?

TANCRUARF

Well, we have dealt with Nayak, the most populated area at the north of the Southern Country. More, in addition to the administrative chaos we inherited, we are dealing with an unprecedented drought which has put our services to a test. And, to avoid a recession, we have dealt with the increasing flow of immigrants from the Northern Country... and we have cut taxes and regulations, so our entrepreneurs have the way cleared to deal with the challenges our economy is still facing...

REHM

I'm sorry, but I'll have to ask you to keep your answers on the issue of the question because our time is almost over. But now that you are at that point, is it true that most of the bidders who have won contracts in Nayak in the last years are your campaign contributors? It's true that some bid winners in the past have also been campaign contributors of governors and mayors in office, but in Nayak those cases seem to be the overwhelming majority...

TANCRUARF (annoyed)

I think that that's simply not true. Anyway, I'm waiting for somebody to prove that some of my campaign contributors have won some bid illegitimately.

REHM

Well, the reporter Adam Greene has covered that issue extensively for a newspaper of the capital. Then I have to come to my last question. Immigration seems to have been the issue

that has helped you win the office of mayor and then the governorship of Nayak. I think that it's 'enforcement by attrition' how you call your strategy. That means to make their lives so unbearable, so desperate, that they will end up deporting themselves, right? My question is, then, what do you feel at the possibility that some of them might end up killing themselves in their despair; that some of them may be innocent? Is that something that wakes you up at night?

TANCRUARF (grinning)

No, I have no regrets because my mission is to defend the citizens of the Southern Country. If something bad happens to an immigrant that should not have been here in the first place, I'm sorry for that, but that's not my fault. It's the immigrant who should've stayed home who brought that on himself. Now, with respect to them committing suicide, *please...*, they are not like us. If you or I were subject to the 'enforcement by attrition' strategy, and we will not because we are legitimate citizens of Nayak, I'd really be worried about the possibility of suicide or death, but if you believe these immigrants, who come here with little sense of dignity, to work in whatever job they can steal from legal residents of this country, are going to commit suicide, well that's because you don't know them.

REHM

Well, I hope that you're right. The problem is that we won't be able to reverse the result if you're wrong. And we haven't had time to talk about the deaths of immigrants at the border by exposure or due to gang activity. Unfortunately that's all the time we have. I wished we had more time. Thank you for your time and for your patience, governor. With you...

193. CUTS TO: INT.: RODOLFO'S BEDROOM at NIGHT. Rodolfo turns the radio off, smiles.

RODOLFO (Thinking)

Did you lose your confidence, fucker? (SMIRKS) Sounding more arrogant, with every new answer... Yeah, that was good... But still, that fucker has the Examining Post and the Nayak Daily in his pocket and they control the information about immigrants so tightly that not even now the citizens of Nayak know that the day Miac was captured, most of his followers were killed by the immigration police. They believe Miac was the only one capture of that day. No deaths had been reported. And nobody has raised questions about that. Do they just believe that the immigration police showed up at his door with a warrant and that they

brought him to Nayak just like that, after reading him his rights? And those are not the first rumors of extrajudicial deaths. Have these fucking papers ever shown a photograph of the countless deportees sent to die in the desert or reported about the growing number of suicides? They even hid the news about the drought for as long as that fucker told them... But the national press has other priorities.... Not us.

SEQUENCE 59

October, 1901...

194. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME STREET IN MIYAFF, AT DAY. AGUOSTA IS OPENING THE DOOR OF HIS NEW HOME, INTRODUCING HIMSELF TO HIS NEIGHBORS; THEN HE ATTENDS THE ASSEMBLIES; THEN (OTHER STREET OF MIYAFF, AT NIGHT) HE JOINS THE *RONDA* WITH A PIPE ON HIS HAND.

(CUTS TO: EXT.: FRONT OF A SMALL TWO STORY BUILDING IN MIYAFF, AT DAY.

CUTS TO INT. OFFICE. THE LEADERS OF MIYAFF AS WELL AS GATITO AND HIS FRIENDS AND THE OLD LEADER REPRESENTING ROUFF ARE THERE. A BANNER SAYS “*MIAC TONY STUDY CIRCLE. FIRST OFFICIAL STUDY CIRCLE OF MIYAFF AND ROUFF.*”)

GATITO THEN SEES THE BLACK DOG WHO HAD STAYED WITH MIAC’S WIFE AND SON THE NIGHT OF MIAC’S CAPTURE. THE BLACK DOG SMILES AT HIM AND GATITO SMILES BACK AND NODS. THEN THE OLD LEADER APPROACHES AND SHAKES BOTH HIS HANDS. GISELLE STILL LOOKS BEATEN. IN A FLASH, GATITO SEES A BEATEN RACHY IN HER PLACE.

OLD LEADER (emotional)

Good to see you here, son. He’ll always live in our hearts... He’d be proud of us gathering here in his name... and even more when we are gathering for this: the study circles. He was not precisely a library, Gatito, but he always wanted everybody... well, everybody else, to read. He believed that when everybody around here read, we would be closer to make the world better for the youngest among us, especially for his son. Oh! You know what I mean!

GATITO SMILES AND HUGS HIM. THEN HE NOTICES MEAU SCREENING THE AREA WITH ONE SCOUT.

GATITO

We will give both study circles our utmost support.

THEN ONE DOG AND ONE CAT ENTER THE SCENE AND PUT TWO BIG BOXES ON THE TABLE. THE REPRESENTATIVE FROM MIYAFF THEN APPROACHES THEM.

These are the materials we read when we began our study group. We have made a copy for Rouff and one for Miyaff. Do your

best, write your questions down and, when you are ready, we'll get you the right animal to answer them. And we know that's when you will begin making new questions. That's how we began. We used the information in these materials to make the leaflets we shared with many of you. Those leaflets are the channels through which you can help bring the truth to Nayak and, maybe later, to other states. It will take time, but if we persist as Miac persisted, then we can harbor realistic hopes of defeating Tancruarf some day.

OLD LEADER (with moist eyes)

We will, son. We will... and we will find the motherfucker who betrayed Miac too.

THEN MEAU COMES FROM BEHIND AND GRABS GATITO'S RIGHT ARM.

MEAU

Gatito, it's time to leave.

GATITO (losing his smile, turning to the old leader of Rouff)
Maybe you remember our friend Meau. Sometimes he will be the liaison between the study circles and us.

THE OLD LEADER NODS AND EXTENDS HIS HAND TO MEAU, WHO RELUCTANTLY SHAKES IT.

OLD LEADER (turning to Gatito)

Son, we are all angry here... because if you are not angry with the injustice made to us by Tancruarf, you don't have a soul. And we are all mourning somebody too... I just wish Miac had not been so hardheaded... but it's the memories of our loved ones what should move us to use that anger to honor them, pushing for the changes for which they died. I have cried and cried and I've got drunk to not let all this shit harden my heart... But there's only one way they win and our loved ones die in vain: if the fucking Tancruarfs of this world harden our hearts.

MEAU (somewhat annoyed)

That's why you are still trying to find the animal who betrayed Miac? That may create waves a come back to us...

GATITO STARES AT MEAU WITH DISAPPROVAL.

OLD LEADER (calmly)

I never said I was perfect, son.

SEQUENCE 60

Late December, 1901...

195. CUTS TO: INT.: MIYAFF TRAIN STATION, AT DAY. LEAFLETS ARE ON THE FLOOR. THE TITLE IS '*THE TRUTH ABOUT IMMIGRANTS AND THE TRUTH ABOUT TANCRUARF.*'

196. CUTS TO: INT.: TANCRUARF'S OFFICE. TANCRUARF LOOKS ANGRY. HE'S READING ONE OF GATITO'S LEAFLETS.

CUTS TO: INT.: TANCRUARF'S OFFICE'S DOOR OPENS AND CHIEF KRUORF ENTERS AFTER SALUTING THE GOVERNOR. KRUORF SEE THE LEAFLET ON TANCRUARF'S HAND.

CHIEF KRUORF

We have made some of our members pose as commuters to find out who is littering our metro stations with that libelous garbage... The few who have captured don't speak, no matter how much we batter them... And the gangs are complaining again against that Gatito Inmeegrante... You marked that as low priority, sir...

TANCRUARF (angry)

Aren't those fuckers the tough guys? Do we have to beat the vigilantes for them now too?

CHIEF KRUORF (apologetically)

They are too many for them.... They have tried... But they keep expelling them.

TANCRUARF HITS HIS DESKTOP. HIS ATTENTION RETURNS TO THE LEAFLETS.

TANCRUARF (raising his voice)

The gangs. The gangs. This is what you should be working on! Who the fuck cares about the gangs! And who said you can sit down? How is it possible that you haven't been able to make any progress in all this time? I'm supposed to be in control of this shit and now I can't find anyone who has not received one of these!

(TANCRUARF THROWS THE LEAFLETS ON THE DESKTOP IN FRONT OF KRUORF, WHO DROPS HIS EYES)

And where the fuck is that Gatito Inmeegrante? Do you know if that fucker even exists?

(TANCRUARF STARES AT KRUORF SEVERELY)

Do you like your job, Kruorf? Do you realize I have to win the next elections, Kruorf?

KRUORF BOWS HIS HEAD.

SEQUENCE 61

New Year Eve, 1901...

197. CUTS TO: INT.: OLD LEADER OF ROUFF'S HOME, AT NIGHT. GATITO, RACHY, THE OLD DOG, GISELLE AND HER SON ARE THERE. THE KITTEN IS ALREADY SPEAKING HIS FIRST WORDS. SOON AFTER, RACHY TAKES GISELLE AND THE KITTEN WITH HER TO THE FIRST FLOOR, LEAVING THE OLD LEADER AND GATITO ALONE.

OLD DOG

We are making progress, aren't we?

GATITO

I hope so but at what cost?

OLD DOG

Thirteen of our guys arrested in total, right? I also ask myself whether that's a price that is worth paying... but I believe it is. Different from someone caught working in a workplace raid or commuting in the train station, they went over there knowing the risks they were taking and still they loved that much what they loved that they were willing to take the risks... like that hardheaded Miac. What I mean is that they took that risk because they trusted us with taking care of their loved ones, but also for a cause... that we will make it right for all of us this time.

GATITO (nodding, somewhat distant)

But it still hurts.

OLD LEADER (slightly shaking his head)

It still hurts. Injustice is a bitch. I didn't create the world, son. I just limit myself to live in it...

GATITO (after a brief pause)

You know? You remember the night we spent at Miac's house, when he introduced me to his wife?

OLD LEADER (grinning, remembering)

Yeah! The day you came to help us with the *ronda*. Or was it the day after?

GATITO (sighing and nodding)

He asked me to take care of Giselle and his son. The moment we were alone he asked me that and I've been so busy that I have been only able to send money... and letters.

OLD LEADER

If he could see you, Miac would be happy of having trusted you, Gatito.

GATITO

I've been this long with Rachy and she hasn't gotten tired of me. You know I can't marry her. And she knows I can't marry her and still she wants to be with me.

GATITO MAKES A PAUSE AND THE OLD LEADER DROPS HIS EYES.

What if she... gets pregnant? It's a matter of time before they get me as they got Miac. And then, what about her? Have you seen Giselle? She looks like she will miss Miac forever...

OLD LEADER

She will miss Miac forever, Gatito... and still, if she had a chance to go back in time and meet somebody else instead of Miac and to have a quieter life, she would still choose to be Miac's wife. It looks to me that Rachy is like her, son. I had a wife once. She died. She was all the time complaining about me talking about politics. And you know what? When I tried to talk about something else, she always knew how to bring politics back. Politics was not that risky then, but for animals like us it has never been nice, perhaps more disappointments than risks by then but... What I mean, son, is that you would hurt her more by breaking with her than by letting her be part of your life. What can I tell you, son? That everything is going to be okay? No. At least this time I feel that we're in the right path but anything can go wrong even with the best plan... You know what? We can't control what's going to happen tomorrow with lives like ours. So why don't you try to make the best of every minute you two spend together instead?

THEN THE OLD DOG STARES AT GATITO. GATITO HAS NOTHING TO ADD. GISELLE AND RACHY BEGIN TO DESCEND THE STAIRS TALKING ANIMATEDLY, THEIR VOICES INTERMINGLED WITH THE VOICE OF MIAC'S SON.

GISELLE

The table is set.

OLD LEADER

Okay son, we have to eat.

SEQUENCE 62

January 2, 1902...

198. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE WITH WHITE WALLS. RODOLFO POPS UP HIS HEAD FROM BEHIND THE DOOR WHERE GATITO IS.

RODOLFO (waving an envelope)
Happy New Year, Gatito. Donations... to make you happy...
They put some extra in your envelope this time.

GATITO (grinning)
You look happy...

RODOLFO
I bet you won't guess who visited me today...?

GATITO (with a grimace)
Don't tell me that Senator Sanderf again?

RODOLFO (scoffing)
Well... yes, it's Senator Sanderf again. But now there's
something different. He has seen your fliers...

GATITO (skeptical)
Rodolfo..., this is not the first time we hand fliers...

RODOLFO
But now it's different.

GATITO (somewhat sarcastic, with a skeptic grin)
Now it's different...

RODOLFO
Yes, now it's different. I understand you though, cat. You feel the problem as an immigrant everyday, but many citizens have also been affected by Tancruarf's policies. Not just the poor but also business owners, public workers, unions, public schools and services in poor neighborhoods... The list is long, but the common denominator is that they're not organized or not organized enough and without the support of a friendly press, or at least an honest one... Well, to please his constituency and his campaign contributors with contracts and lower taxes, Tancruarf needed to get money from somewhere. And don't get me started with the deregulation rant, which has pushed more costs on precisely those groups Tancruarf knows are not going to vote for him... He has already pushed out of business a lot of businesses that don't support him and served their carcass to the corporations that support him financially. Did you know that he has delivered good part of our rivers and forests to his campaign

contributors as booty? Worse, they are fucking the Colorado River as if there were no tomorrow. They are polluting and depleting like never before? But, with a friendly press, he doesn't need to worry about how the nation is going to see all this because nobody is paying attention...or even learning what's happening here.

GATITO (somewhat embittered now)

And is that supposed to make us feel better? Are they also being pushed to the border to be killed, maimed and raped by the gangs?

RODOLFO (staring at GATITO, pretending surprise)

Come on, cat! Remember that I myself am only a pet! Anyway, Sanderf thinks that you might've found the formula to stop Tancruarf. If we make the rest of the nation aware of the realities of Nayak, we might not stop his reelection this year but we might still stop his bid for president. And that setback might be the beginning of his fall. Imagine the national press following the leads of your leaflets... Sanderf has asked me to tell you that he hopes you understand and forgive the many times... the meeting he promised you was... postponed.

He needs you to use your volunteers to bring information to other states, to other media that is not going to be as friendly to Tancruarf as the Examining Post and the Nayak Daily. He said that, anyway, even if you two had met, he would not have been strong enough to pass anything resembling immigration reform in Congress... If Tancruarf falls, on the other hand, that would be our chance. Besides that, Sanderf should be reelected and, if so, he will earn his prestige to push in Congress the kind of motions he still can't.

GATITO (sounding bitter again)

We have already lost thirteen immigrants in Miyaff, Rouff and Mewow handing those fucking leaflets, Rodolfo. In thirteen homes children have had to be told that they won't see their parents again. I'm tired of this shit! We are making progress, yes, maybe, but I can't take this shit anymore!

RODOLFO (dropping his eyes, his grin gone)

The only thing I can tell you, my friend is this: Think of Miac. Think of his son. Think of Rachy, all this time dreaming of the day you two can have a normal life. Don't give up now that we at last seem to be in the right path! Come on! Do you remember the days when we still had to struggle with the Dancing Doggies to

attract the attention of the immigrant community? You now even have the fucking study circles about which I was so skeptic...

GATITO

Well, enough of whining. I just had to get that off my chest. You just mentioned Rachy. Don't do it again. It's precisely thinking of what could happen to her what has me like this. She wants a child, you know? And she is right. She needs a normal life, but she's not going to get that from me.

(GATITO THEN MAKES A PAUSE BEFORE LOOKING AT RODOLFO WITH DISTRESSED EYES)

I myself would've wanted a child who could have a normal life, a chance to live a happy life. But I don't want her to end up like Giselle, a shadow of her former self...

RODOLFO (nodding, pursing his lips)

I wish there was something I could do or say to... but I can't. You deserve to be happy too, cat, and this fucking life seems to have denied you that right. On top of that, you are angry, and with good reasons, and you know you still will have to look strong for those who have followed you all this time... and all that makes you even angrier... The only thing I can promise you is my friendship, cat.

RODOLFO THEN DROPS HIS EYES AND GATITO PUTS A HAND ON HIS SHOULDER.

GATITO

Well, I said what I had to say. Now, what's Sanderf's plan?

SEQUENCE 63

199. CUTS TO: INT.: CLASSROOM IN MIYAFF, AT DAY. AGUOSTA IS TEACHING SOME CHILDREN.

200. CUTS TO: BACKROOM OF SOME MIYAFF STORE, AT NIGHT. AGUOSTA GETS IN A ROOM AND IS GREETED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE.

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

Francisco! Here you are! You are a saint. Now that public schools will not take many of our children, you are here to help us with their education... Thanks, dog. And now that you're here, we have been checking on the books and papers you brought us. They are similar to the ones Rodolfo brought us...

AGUOSTA

Actually I was at the Dancing Doggies before Rodolfo, but I quit for the same reasons Rodolfo quit later, only to return after he left... But they were not serious. Worse, they were monopolizing the immigration advocacy while pandering to the same stereotypes Tancruarf was using to make our life a living hell, just trying to make us look friendly... That was Kim's stupid idea, but Gustavo always did whatever Kim told him. I never could understand why, but that was the reality in which we lived. Actually, before I moved to Miyaff I contacted our common friend, Rodolfo, but he didn't remember me or... I don't know. I just told him that I was an old dog now and I wanted to do something good, so my life did not go to waste completely at the end; that I had learned that at last with Gatito Inmeegrante we were in the right path... But it seems he didn't believe me or just he didn't trust me... I don't blame him... especially after what I later learned happened to that Miac, the leader of the Rouff *ronda*.

SOME MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE NOD.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE

You have to be patient. You yourself have mentioned what happened to Miac and Gatito and his guys have been in this for much longer than us. You have no idea how frustrating and exhausting this can be... and they have been in this for years. Be patient.

AGUOSTA (nodding, somewhat saddened)

No problem. I understand. Actually I have been thinking... I have some ideas I'd like to share with you.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE (smiling)

Go ahead!

AGUOSTA (grinning, relieved)

Actually I know that the Dancing Doggies have mailing lists. It would be less risky to mail our leaflets than to send volunteers to the train stations...

The HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE NODS, SEEMS INTERESTED; THEN TURNS TO THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE

I don't know you, but I think that's a good idea. We thought once of that, but we couldn't get a mailing list... And Rodolfo is so

busy... But if you have it, especially now that we want to reach other states...

AGUOSTA

But the Dancing Doggies' list is only of Nayak.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE

And the mailer's address?

AGUOSTA (excited)

We can use any. We may lose some leaflets returned because the residents have moved or for whatever other reason, but still... And it's true that the list is old but... still.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE

How old?

AGUOSTA (shrugging)

1896 is the last one I knew of but... I think I can call a favor and get an updated one from the Dancing Doggies without Kim knowing it. I didn't try to get one updated before because I didn't know if you were going to like the idea.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE

Of course we like it. (TURNING TO THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE) The worse we have had to go through is learning how some of our friends have been arrested. So, losing a few leaflets as undeliverable mail...

AGUOSTA SMILES.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE

So, you knew... or met Rodolfo when he was still at the Dancing Doggies. And did you meet Gatito Inmeegrante too?

AGUOSTA (humbly, ending with a somber tone)

No... I didn't have that honor, though I would like very much to meet him. Actually is because of him that I'm here... because I believe he has put us on the right path. Maybe if I look for my old contacts I could bring them to our cause... As I said, I'm old and I want to do something important with my life before it's too late and everything goes to waste *in my grave*.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE (chuckling)

You're not that old, my friend. There's no reason to be so dramatic. I see that you still have many years in front of you.

AGUOSTA (smiling, somewhat embarrassed, and then chuckling himself)
Old dogs get a bit dramatic with the years...

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE (smiling at Aguosta)
Bring us that list updated and we could introduce you to Gatito Inmeegrante. After what happened to Miac, *they* have a tighter security... We understand them... But you'll see that he's a great guy. He began the *rondas* here in Miyaff and that's how everything started... That's how we ourselves ended up believing that change is possible... if we joined the fight. And here we are.

AGUOSTA
I won't let you down! I won't let you down, my friends! You'll see! Well, I have to leave. I have to prepare for my class and the children must be coming...

THE HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE SEE AGUOSTA LEAVE AND SMILES.

March, 1902...

201. CUTS TO: BACKROOM OF SOME MIYAFF STORE, AT NIGHT. AGUOSTA IS TALKING TO MEMBERS OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE.

AGUOSTA
The list! I still had a friend at the Dancing Doggies. He asked me not to reveal his name though. I hope you will understand.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE (nodding)
Don't worry, my friend. We understand.

THEN GROUL ENTERS THE ROOM AND THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE GREET HIM WITH A SMILE.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE
Groul... Hi! What a surprise!

THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WAVE THEIR HANDS OR NOD AT HIM. GROUL NODS BUT DOESN'T SMILE BACK. AGUOSTA, SMILING, APPROACHES GROUL.

AGUOSTA
Gatito Inmeegrante?

GROUL, INSTEAD OF ANSWERING THE QUESTION, TURNS TO THE HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE VISIBLY CONCERNED.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE

Our friend here... I don't think I have had a chance to introduce you to each other... He's bringing the list I talked Gatito about.

GROUL NODS WITHOUT LOOKING AT AGUOSTA.

AGUOSTA

I also think I could recontact some animals who may be useful to our cause. I believe Gatito has put us on the right path and I want to have the privilege of getting involved...

THEN GROUL TURNS TO AGUOSTA, STARES AT HIM WITH DISTRUST AND, SOMEWHAT ANNOYED, TURNS BACK TO THE HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE (in a conciliatory tone)

Groul...

AGUOSTA

I'm sorry... I think that I got carried away. It's just that it would be a great honor for me to work at the side of Gatito Inmeegrante...

GROUL (answering Aguosta, but his eyes still on the Head of the Committee)
I don't think that's going to be possible. We could use that list though.

AGUOSTA, SADDENED, DROPS HIS EYES TO THE FLOOR.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE

Come on, Groul! Can you at least talk to Gatito...?

GROUL (with the same hardened expression)

I'll talk to him. Changing subjects... The new leaflets are going to be ready tomorrow. We'll bring them here. Gatito has to see something in Nayak with...

(THEN GROUL GLANCES AT AGUOSTA AND CORRECTS HIMSELF)

He could not come. This week we'll be... I'll tell you tomorrow, when I bring the leaflets. And there're some things Gatito wants to talk with you... in private.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE (sighing, nodding)

Okay Groul. Tell Gatito he knows where we are going to be.

GROUL NODS AND LEAVES. AGUOSTA LOOKS DISAPPOINTED.

HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE (approaching Aguosta)
Come on, my friend! Groul is a bit surly sometimes. Something that happened some time ago, when a friend of his was deported... I don't know for sure what, but soon after that happened, Groul changed. But I know him from the time he worked in construction years ago. He's a good dog. It's just that he has received more than his fair share of pain in this life. Try to understand him, please... and after what happened to Miac....

AGUOSTA TRIES A SAD SMILE AND NODS.

SEQUENCE 64

202. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME CAFÉ AT DOWNTOWN NAYAK, AT DAY. GATITO IS WAITING WITH SOME FOLDERS AT A TABLE HE SHARES WITH RODOLFO. GATITO, WHO LOOKS IMPATIENT, CHECKS THE TIME IN HIS WATCH.

GATITO

Are you sure he's coming?

RODOLFO (somewhat embarrassed, nods)

Yes, my friend. His chief of staff personally came to the office where I work to suggest the meeting...

GATITO, UNCOMFORTABLE, SIGHS AND DROPS HIS EYES. RODOLFO TURNS AND SEEMS TO RECOGNIZE THE ANIMAL COMING. HE LOOKS DISAPPOINTED. THEN HE SEES HIM. THE CHIEF OF STAFF IS CHECKING ON THE TABLES AND THEN APPROACHING THEM.

CHIEF OF STAFF

Rodolfo... (THEN TURNING TO GATITO AND SMILING)

RODOLFO (expecting)

(TURNING TO GATITO) Gatito, this is my friend, the chief of staff. You...

CHIEF OF STAFF

Come on dog! My grandma's memory is now better than yours! Don't you remember that Gatito had to risk his ass coming to my office just because you didn't leave him your address... or because you forgot to leave him your address? Whatever... Gatito, wouldn't you prefer to work with my grandma instead of with this dog?

RODOLFO

Okay, okay, I had forgotten that... You took me by surprise. We were expecting Sanderf...

CHIEF OF STAFF (frowning)

Sanderf can't come today. He can't leave the floor, the Senate's floor. These assholes from the Patriot Party... you have no idea what they want to pass... Anyway, he asked me to reassure his interest in you, Gatito. I think Rodolfo told you that after these elections he will have enough seniority to use his prestige... that's the name they give to the right to present a bill without depending on the speaker, and by the speaker I mean Ateh the Liar. He asked me to tell you that one of the first bills he's going to present on the floor when he gets his prestige is a bill for immigration reform. Nevertheless, the conditions have to be the right ones. Otherwise he presents the bill, they defeat it and that's the end of the story. I don't think you want that... I want to be completely honest with you. I liked what you did when you risked your balls visiting me at the building of Congress. Anyway... Most likely even then the bill will be defeated, but then we will be able to see the reactions and prepare a second coming for the bill. And then, knowing whose arms we have to twist, we will make sure that the bill passes. Okay?

(GATITO NODS WITH A NEUTRAL EXPRESSION)

Now, I have to bring you some news that may not be good news... at least in the short term. Look, we are working at the office with some guys in something relatively new called polls. Staticians. It's some stew of math, statistics and questionnaires of which I really know very little, but those guys know their stuff. It's to have an idea how the population is thinking. Something like that. You take a representative sample and then... well, you then do the stuff those guys do. The matter is that we polled the reaction to the leaflets. The population has read them. They even sympathize with them... But they still support that asshole Tancruarf anyway. Most probably he's going to be reelected. But these guys tell me that these reactions can change with time... In short, Senator Sanderf believes that he has to keep trying with this strategy; that we have to give it time, but to adjust if necessary, if something pops out that makes reasonable... to make an adjustment, of course.

Now, with respect to actions, Sanderf knows that Tancruarf is going to put something extra to unseat him, so he can't get the prestige thing I mentioned before. Besides that, Tancruarf knows that the other liberal senators are a bunch of sissies; that, with enough power, Sanderf is the only one who can make his life hard. That's why we believe Sanderf is going to be Tancruarf's priority target in these elections. Tancruarf has also been

building a base in the neighboring three states, but we believe he's going to put his weight on his own reelection here.

What we need from you is your help with the leaflets... and even your volunteers in those states, where they won't have the same risk of arrest and deportation as they have here. It's to distract Tancruarf. We want to work those leaflets together. They can't be only about immigration though. The good thing is that in those three states the attitude towards immigrants is not as... problematic as here; that over there Tancruarf hasn't had enough time to poison the minds and hearts of the people, like here... That's why your guys can be much more effective there than here. Don't worry about the expenses. We have a... let's call it a '*secret fund*.' What do you say Gatito? Can we count with you?

GATITO (nodding)

I have to present the idea to our assembly and committee anyway, but I think that won't be a problem.

CHIEF OF STAFF

Good. We'll be in touch.

The Chief of Staff leaves after shaking hands with Gatito and Rodolfo. A long pause follows.

RODOLFO

Well, at least we know why Sanderf didn't come.

GATITO

He never comes... But at least it seems we'll work something together this time.

RODOLFO

Yes, Gatito but, between us, don't bitch. I didn't like the thing about the polls, but we're much better than six years ago.

GATITO (sighing)

Yes, and probably we could get something done in a few more years... I'm getting old, Rodolfo!

RODOLFO

I know, I know, my friend. Life's a bitch.

SEQUENCE 65

May, 1902...

203. CUTS TO: INT. NIGHT. GATITO WAKES UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT ON HIS MATTRESS. GROUL SLEEPS AT HIS SIDE. THE IMAGE OF A

BEATEN RACHY CROSSING THE DOOR WITH THE LEADER OF NAYAK COMES IN A FLASH. HE LIES HIS HEAD BACK ON THE PILLOW AND STAYS THERE STARING AT THE CEILING.

CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM, AT DAY. GATITO IS ADDRESSING 20 OF HIS GUYS.

GATITO (exhausted, hesitant)

I will always be a part of our group, guy.... But I believe it's time somebody else takes the leadership. We can vote that today. With twenty out of thirty guys, we have quorum. I'm not leaving the group. I'm one of you. It's just the leadership.... And this Gatito Inmeegrante thing is bringing too much attention on us...

ONE AFTER THE OTHER, GATITO'S GUYS SHOOK THEIR HEADS TO OPPOSE TO MOTION.

ONE OF GATITO'S GUYS (alarmed)

Gatito, have we failed you? Give us a chance to make it right, Gatito!

ANOTHER ONE OF GATITO'S GUYS (alarmed)

No, Gatito. How are we going to believe that we are making progress if you quit?

GROUL (seconded by Meau)

Gatito, you need a vacation. At least two weeks. We'll be in charge for those two weeks. But we need you as leader. What is we lose all the ground we have gained just because you're not longer there...?

RAFAEL

I second the motion because Gatito needs to be with his girlfriend too. But we also have to assign two scouts to protect them, just in case.

NOW THE SORROWFUL MOOD YIELDS TO A MORE PLAYFUL ONE. SOME GUYS ARE EVEN CHUCKLING. EVERYBODY RAISES THEIR HANDS.

204. CUTS TO: EXT.: PLAZA IN DOWNTOWN MIYAFF, SAT AT A BENCH IN FRONT OF A SMALL PLAZA, WAITING. RACHY APPROACHES THE BENCH SMILING. GATITO SMILES BACK, WAVES AT HER.

RACHY

Show me your papers!

GATITO

Well, have you worked hard?

(RACHY NODS PRETENDING SERIOUSNESS BUT WITH MISCHIEVOUS EYES)

Then I'm buying you an ice cream cone and a balloon.

RACHY (suppressing a laugh)

I was afraid we were going to share the afternoon with a couple of your guys, the two hiding behind the trees... as if I had not seen them already.

GATITO (smirking)

Maybe some of them overact... but they do their best. They have just given me a two-week vacation *'because Gatito needs to be with his girlfriend too.'*

RACHY (laughing)

That's what they said?

GATITO NODS.

205. CUTS TO: ANOTHER BENCH OF THE SAME PLAZA. EACH ONE HAS AN ICE CREAM CONE, RACHY IS EXPLORING HER BALLOON WITH HER EYES. THEN RACHY GETS INTO A MORE SERIOUS TONE.

RACHY

You know? I have been talking to a lawyer. It's an immigration lawyer they recommended me at the office as the best. I told him about you. I didn't tell him that you were Gatito Inmeegrante of course. But all the rest, I did. He says that there's a loophole he could use to make you a pet if we marry. We can't marry in Nayak, but he says that we can still marry in Miyaff. I need to show that I can make more than fifty thousand dollars a year, but with what I'm doing here and what I can make pass as if my dad were paying me a wage at the store... What do you say?

RACHY LOOKS SOMEWHAT ANXIOUS NOW.

GATITO

You want me to be your pet?

RACHY

I want you to be my husband. I want to have a family with you. I don't want to be afraid that the fucking immigration police can arrest you one day.

(TENSE PAUSE)

GATITO

I love you, Rachy... as you can't imagine. But I fear that making a pet of me could only hurt irreparably what we have... I don't want that at some time in the future even the suspicion that I married you to solve my immigration problem emerges as a shadow. That would kill our love. And I want to love you, no matter how corny it may sound, forever. And I will still love you when your reason comes back to your head and you leave me as you realize that you're wasting your life at my side. And I will keep loving you even after that. I want to marry you, Rachy, but when we put this nasty immigration issue in our past us at last. If I solve my problem and leave my guys behind, on their own, do you think we will still be able to look at each other eyes?

GATITO DROPS HIS EYES, HIS ICE CREAM CONE STILL ON HIS HAND. RACHY PASSES HER ARM AROUND HIS WAIST AND LAYS HER HEAD ON HIS SHOULDER.

RACHY

Then this is the way we're going to live because I'm not leaving you.

GATITO (attempting a joke)

Stubborn doggy...

RACHY (reciprocating the joke)

Stubborn kitty... And I will cut your balls if you ever mention again that you want me to leave you!

THEY STAY TO WATCH THE SUNSET FROM THAT BENCH.

SEQUENCE 66

June, 1902...

206. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM.

GROUL

So, Sanderf wants us at those three states... We have to put the drivers too. Of how many volunteers are we talking about here, Gatito?

GATITO

I think that... of as many as we can get. That could be two hundred.

GROUL

Won't it be too risky to move that many guys in buses from one state to the other?

GATITO

Not that much because many citizens in Nayak are going to form groups that, one way or the other, are going to do the same, whether for Tancruarf or against him. Even the Dancing Doggies are going to do that inside Nayak. On the other hand, there won't be a significant risk of immigration police presence at the border between Nayak and those states. But if they find out that we are there, we'll have to be very careful when we bring them back to Miyaff. It'll be less risky if they're not coming back and forth... We could try monthly schedules with two hundred on the field as our goal for October. Also, Sanderf will have to provide a place for them to stay.

GROUL

Gatito, '*two hundred volunteers*'...? That means that we will have to rely on volunteers from Miyaff, Rouff and maybe Mewow...

GATITO (nodding)

'*Two hundred*' is an optimistic goal but yes, we'll have to recruit volunteers for this task. Besides that, in October we all will be more useful over there than here...

MEAU (looking uncomfortable)

The warehouse can't be left alone, Gatito, and...

GATITO

Well, yes... I mean most of us will be more useful over there...

MEAU

We will have to trust other animals. We'll have to work more tightly with them...

GATITO

I know what you mean. But we had to take that risk when we launched the *rondas* too. Had we not taken risks, we wouldn't have made the progress we've made.

MEAU

But that was before Miac, Gatito.

GATITO (nodding)

I know but... do we have any alternative?

MEAU (shrugging)

Maybe we could go first to prepare the field, while others from our group train the volunteers here. Then you can send some of us to monitor them with each group by mid October. I don't think Sanderf is going to still need two hundred volunteers after November because nobody is paying attention to politics after that. After November it could be a less numerous, more constant, more consistent effort...

GATITO (nodding)

I agree. That's a good idea.

GROUL NODS BUT LOOKS AS UNCOMFORTABLE AS MEAU.

SEQUENCE 67

July, 1902...

207. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF MIYAFF AT NIGHT. THE *RONDA* IS FIGHTING THE GANGS. AGUOSTA IS WAVING HIS CLUB FROM ONE SIDE TO THE OTHER.

CUTS TO: EXT. STREETS OF MIYAFF AT NIGHT. THE FIGHT HAS ENDED. AGUOSTA HAS BEEN CUT IN ONE ARM BY A GANG MEMBER. THE OTHERS ARE STILL BEATING THE GANG MEMBER WHO CUT HIM.

208. CUTS TO: INT.: GATITO'S OLD WAREHOUSE IN MIYAFF AT NIGHT. GATITO MEETS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMITTEES OF MIYAFF AND ROUFF AND WITH THE NEW COMMITTEE OF MEWOW.

HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

Okay, I don't think we need introductions here... at least not between the Miyaff and Rouff committees... And I don't think we'll need many introductions at the Mewow committee either... at least I hope not. Congratulations to Mewow for his new committee though... Anyway, we are here with Gatito, Groul and Meau, who don't need further introductions either. Ah? Well... and then I want to report that we have a new member in the Miyaff committee, Mister Francisco Aguosta.

OLD LEADER FROM ROUFF

We know you have never been good with words and that you have a hard head the gang members will never be able to break with their clubs. Can we move to business now?

MANY OF THE ATTENDANTS LAUGH.

HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (somewhat embarrassed)

Very funny... Gatito, please take the floor.

GATITO

Senator Sanderf contacted us through his chief of staff a few days ago. In the last year Tancruarf has been very busy building a base for himself in three neighboring states. If he wins those states, Tancruarf could be president in two years. I don't have to explain you what that means. He would have the army. And we have to do something for our friends who fled to those states after Tancruarf began his persecution against us in Nayak. But, even more important, that could give us room to expose Tancruarf for what he is, the room we don't have here because in Nayak Tancruarf's propaganda against us and against others has had more than enough time to take roots and because either the press has been at his service or has been too cowardly to challenge him. I have thought this all over and over and, even though I am as tired as you of being used and then discarded, I believe this is our best chance to stop Tancruarf. This is a two year plan. We begin now helping Sanderf and introducing ourselves while the voters are still paying attention and then we'll have a two-year uphill battle in those three neighboring states.

MEMBER OF THE MEWOW COMMITTEE (raising his hand)
So, we have no guarantee that this senator is not going to ignore us at the end, like before...

GATITO

No, we don't. Nevertheless, this time I have his promise that he'll introduce an immigration reform bill using his prestige. He will earn that right if he wins these elections, so he won't have to wait for Ateh the Liar, the speaker, to schedule his bill, or for the cowardly liberal senators to support him. He can't promise me that the bill will pass but, if we create the right conditions, we'll have good chances of getting the bill passed at the federal level. Then Tancruarf won't be able to do anything against us.

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (raising his hand)
We are talking here of how many volunteers?

GATITO

The closest we can get to two hundred and, if possible, more. The idea is to show a number that can attract their local media over there. If we succeed in that, that could echo in the rest of the Southern Country. Ah! Sanderf is paying our expenses while we are there.

OLD LEADER OF ROUFF (raising his hand)

Gatito, you know there's something I have to ask. What are the chances those volunteers can be arrested by Tancruarf? You know what that means.

GATITO (smiling at the old dog)

Certainly there is a chance, and I can't put a number on it, but we can work to make it as small as possible because the risk is worth the pain. We'll use buses, so we can choose the drivers and the routes from Nayak. Once there, the volunteers will stay one month or more. We don't see any need of going back and forth every day. That would only increase the likelihood of detection and capture by Tancruarf. The service will be set in blocks of one month each, renewable if the volunteer so decides.

OLD LEADER OF ROUFF (nodding)

Giselle and her son send regards. He's getting as hardheaded as his dad.

GATITO SMILES, TURNS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEES, WAITING FOR THE NEXT QUESTION.

HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

How are we going to work the groups of volunteers?

GATITO

That's where we want you to give us some flexibility. I'd like that Meau and Groul be in charge of forming the groups and making the schedules. I need you to support them.

HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

If you think this is the best we can do... so be it. You have my support. We wouldn't be here anyway if we had not paid attention to you before.

(TURNING TO THE MEMBERS OF THE THREE COMMITTEES.)

Raise your hands if you support Gatito's plan.

THE SUPPORT IS UNANIMOUS. THEN THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEES TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO SOCIALIZE. GATITO IS TALKING TO THE OLD LEADER OF ROUFF. THE HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE APPROACHES THEM WITH FRANCISCO AGUOSTA.

HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

Sorry to interrupt, but here is somebody who has died for months to meet you, Gatito. This is Francisco Aguosta, who has

supported us with the schools, the study groups and even has moonlighted as member of the Miyaff *ronda*, where he got this nice cut you see here on his arm.

GATITO TURNS TO AGUOSTA, WHO LOOKS VERY EMOTIONAL.

AGUOSTA

You don't know how much I have wanted to see some serious leadership... since the moment I left the Dancing Doggies, just before you and Rodolfo came to their old office... But when I learned of the things you were doing here... I told myself that I had to join you, before the years took their toll on me. You don't know what an honor this is for me...

GATITO (smiling, somewhat suspicious)

I think you're exaggerating, my friend. Here we all have brought something. This would never have worked if we all were not supporting it.

GROUL APPROACHES THE GROUP AND GIVES AGUOSTA A SOMEWHAT HOSTILE STARE.

GROUL (staring at Aguosta with suspicion)

We have to go...

SEQUENCE 68

August, 1902...

209. CUTS TO: EXT.: PARKING LOT IN MIYAFF, AT DAY. MEAU AND GROUL ARE WATCHING THREE BUSES LEAVE.

210. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE in MIYAFF, AFTERNOON. Rodolfo is visiting Gatito and his group. Groul comes in, interrupting the meeting.

GROUL

You won't believe the bad news... despite Meau's protest, Aguosta is taking over from Meau as communications liaison with the three neighboring states for Miyaff volunteers. Why is the Head of the Miyaff Committee giving so much trust to that Aguosta? And at our expenses!

RODOLFO (frowning)

Maybe he wants to show his gratitude for the list... (PAUSE) Some time ago, one dog like the one you're describing approached me when I was... I believe, at a social activity. He told me that he had met me at the Dancing Doggies; that he, like me, was disappointed with the Dancing Doggies; that he wanted

to be part of the movement led by Gatito Inmeegrante. It was then, when he mentioned your name and was trying to connect me with you, that I decided to deny everything. He then left and that's the last time I saw him.

GROUL

But what do you think of him?

RODOLFO

Well, it made me feel uneasy that he came linking me to Gatito just like that, all of a sudden, when I didn't even know him. But, on the other hand, he said he had come to the Dancing Doggies just after Gatito and I left that shithole... although he also said he had been there before I came... I can't remember him but then there were some members of the Dancing Doggies I never met... That was Kim's system... That bitch. It was possible that we had met, but then I weighed the risks..., after what happened with Miac, and so... I denied everything. And then he left. I didn't stop him... But that happened months ago. Why?

GROUL

Because now that dog is part of the Miyaff committee. And he is the communications liaison for Miyaff with the three neighboring states where our volunteers are.

RODOLFO (frowning again)

If I were you, I would not accept new members right now...

GATITO (frowning too)

It's not me. It was the Miyaff committee.

RODOLFO

But did they have to make him member of the committee and communications liaison right now? Maybe he's clean, but we have to be careful. His name is Francisco Aguosta, right? Let me see what I can find out about him. In any case, in the meanwhile, don't let him get close to here. I will find you some other place in Miyaff so you can move after the elections... And ask the Miyaff committee not to give him your address for any reason because... he hasn't come here, right?

GATITO (dropping his eyes)

No. And I have already asked them that. What do they see in that Aguosta?

Late October, 1902...

211. CUTS TO: INT.: OFFICE IN NAYAK, RODOLFO IS MAKING PHONE CALLS, HE SEEMS TO BE ARGUING WITH SOMEBODY.

212. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREET FROM A NEIGHBORING STATE, AT DAY. THE VOLUNTEERS ADDRESS PASSERSBY AND GIVE THEM LEAFLETS.
CUTS TO INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. GROUL IS REPORTING TO GATITO.

GROUL

I have just talked to Meau on a Miyaff public phone. Our friends have been able to work for a month already in the three neighboring states without harassment. But despite our efforts, the press doesn't seem interested on us.

GATITO

In Nayak the leaflets are reaching their destination, but the polls ran by Sanderf still don't seem to reveal any change in the attitudes towards Tancruarf. Nevertheless, Sanderf's strategy is working on one end: Tancruarf has had to withdraw resources from his campaign against him to defend his positions in the neighboring states. It's hard to believe, but we have put two hundred and fourteen volunteers in those three states... Let's hope Sanderf stays on his word...

GROUL

With respect to the press, at least I hope they are not like the Nayak press... Let's hope at least our leaflets make their journalists at least more skeptical about Tancruarf's statements on his home state record.

The last group of twenty volunteers is ready to leave tomorrow. Alfguau is going to see that they take the bus without problems. Anything new on the polls?

GATITO

A stalemate. Sanderf looks safe in his electoral district and it's evident that Tancruarf is going to be reelected, although without making gains or losses in the House or the Senate.

213. CUTS TO: INT.: OFFICES. Sanderf is frowning in his office and Tancruarf in his.

214. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM, EARLY IN THE MORNING. ALFGUAU AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS ARE WAITING FOR NEWS OF THE BUS THAT IS GOING TO TAKE THEM TO ONE OF THE NEIGHBORING STATES. GATITO, GROUL AND MEAU ARE WITH THEM.

ALFGUAU

Okay ladies, I've put cake and treats in your backpacks. Try not to make me look bad. It's not tourism what we're going to do over there.

CAT VOLUNTEER (smirking)

You need a girlfriend, Alfguau, like Gatito's girlfriend, so you don't spend the whole day calling us ladies as if you really wanted to be our boyfriend.

ALFGUAU (with pride)

I'm married, you pussy.

THE CAT VOLUNTEER LAUGHS.

DOG VOLUNTEER

What he needs is a boyfriend like Gatito. You see? He's been married for years and still he's courting other males.

ALFGUAU

It seems I got me a volunteer to clean the bathrooms for when we get over there, eh, dog?

DOG VOLUNTEER (smirk)

Guess with whose towel I'm going to clean the bathrooms...

SOMEBODY IS KNOCKING AT THE DOOR. GROUL RAISES HIS HAND IN SIGNAL OF ALARM AND WHISPERS.

GROUL (frowning)

That's not the way Rodolfo knocks at the door.

MEAU RUNS TO THE SECOND FLOOR AND AFTER A FEW SECONDS HE COMES BACK TO THE FIRST FLOOR.

MEAU (startled)

It's that fucker Aguosta from Miyaff. Who told him where we are?

ALFGUAU FROWNS, TURNS AT MEAU.

GROUL

And the scouts at the perimeter?

GROUL (upset, embarrassed)

Take positions to evacuate. I'm going to see what that fucker wants.

GATITO (nodding)

I'm going to have to talk to the head of the Miyaff committee.
Nobody else could've given him our address.

GATITO LEAVES WITH THE REST TO THE EVACUATION EXIT.

GROUL (angry)

They trust that fucker too much!

WHEN THE REST IS ALREADY IN THEIR WAY OUT, GROUL GOES TO THE DOOR, DETERMINED TO FACE AGUOSTA. THEN GROUL OPENS THE DOOR AND SEES AGUOSTA IN FRONT OF HIM WITH A WIDE, FRIENDLY SMILE.

GROUL

What the fuck are you doing here?

AGUOSTA (looking afraid, stepping back, suddenly frowning)
I... the Miyaff committee sent me with the list of our volunteers... to see Gatito...

GROUL (snarling)

Gatito doesn't live here. I live here. I'll give that to him later, when I see him. (SNATCHING THE LIST FROM AGUOSTA'S HANDS) Now leave and don't ever come back to my house again. Do you understand?

(AGUOSTA, afraid, steps back again)

Ah! One last thing... If something like what happened to Miac happens to any of us, you have my word. I will kill you.

AGUOSTA

Groul, please..., I'm loyal. Give me a chance, just one chance..., and I'll prove it to you.

GROUL (yelling)

Leave!

AGUOSTA STEPS BACK ONCE MORE, AFRAID, TURNS AND BEGINS WALKING BRISKLY, ALMOST JOGGING.

215. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. GROUL GOES STRAIGHT TO THE GUARDS OF THE FIRST PERIMETER YELLING. AGUOSTA DOESN'T TURN THOUGH. HE KEEPS WALKING.

216. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. RODOLFO IS VISITING GATITO AND HIS GUYS.

GATITO

We're going to need that place as soon as possible

GROUL (protesting)

Not as soon as possible. Now! I don't trust that fucker...

RODOLFO (overwhelmed)

Nobody is going to move a finger for me right now! We are less than three weeks from the election. Those guys over there are sleeping three hours a day!

GATITO (Turning to Groul)

Rodolfo is right, Groul. I don't like this either but we'll have to take the risk... But immediately after the elections we'll have to move. (TURNING TO RODOLFO) Rodolfo, tell the chief of staff about this.

RODOLFO (frowned, nodding)

Does anybody in Miyaff know about the evacuation exit in your warehouse?

GATITO SHAKES HIS HEAD.

RODOLFO

I am finally going to meet Senator Sanderf this afternoon and I am personally going to give him the document with guidelines for immigration reform you prepared for him in 1896... unless you want to make some correction before, of course.

GATITO (shaking his head again)

At least he didn't mention your name.

RODOLFO

The federal Congress is meeting in Nayak the days after the day of the elections in a joint session with the presence of the governors of the seven states of the union. I'll ask Sanderf to put a word in our defense that day...

GATITO NODS WITHOUT MUCH ENTHUSIASM.

SEQUENCE 70

217. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM, AT AFTERNOON. GATITO, GROUL, MEAU AND RODOLFO ARE SAT AT A TABLE, TALKING.

GROUL

As we had foreseen, elections day brought no surprises. The positions seemed to have frozen in the stalemate of the previous weeks... At least that's what the guys making exit polls the day of the elections had said. Tancruarf kept the governorship as well as his allies in Congress, as did Sanderf. But now, as senior senator, Sanderf could invoke his prestige to move around Tayarih's tactics.

(PAUSE)

I can't wait to leave this place though. I can't take that fucker Aguosta out of my mind... Did Rodolfo say specifically when?

GATITO

After the joint session of Congress. He will have the keys by then. We can move the same day.

UNEASY, GROUL SHRUGS.

(218. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. DORM, AT LATE NIGHT. GATITO IS HAVING A NIGHTMARE.

219. CUT TO: INT. (BLURRY): SWEATSHOP, THE IMMIGRATION POLICE IS MAKING ARRESTS. RACHY IS BEING ARRESTED IN AN IMMIGRATION CRACKDOWN AND HANDCUFFED. RACHY IS BEGGING NOT TO BE DEPORTED, CRYING. GATITO IS AN IMPOTENT SPECTATOR. THEN THE MEMBER OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE BEGINS PUSHING HER TO THE TRUCK. GATITO REALIZES THAT HE CAN'T EVEN FOLLOW HER OUT OF HIS RANGE OF VISION. GATITO LOOKS DESPERATE. GATITO WAKES UP.

220. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. DORM, AT LATE NIGHT. GATITO WAKES UP. THE OTHERS ARE SLEEPING BUT GROUL'S BED IS EMPTY AGAIN. GATITO STARES AT THE CEILING.

GATITO (before closing his eyes)

What are you doing at this moment? (PAUSE) Good night, Rachy.

SEQUENCE 71

221. CUTS TO: NEW WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM. EVERYBODY IS BUSY PACKING THE GROUP'S BELONGINGS. GATITO LOOKS WORRIED BUT CONTINUES HELPING PACKING THE GROUP'S BELONGINGS. THEN HE'S APPROACHED BY GROUL.

GROUL

Gatito, we are almost finished packing. The buses are bringing back to Nayak our twenty guys and we all will move this same night. The sooner we leave this place, the better...

GATITO

Did I tell you what the Head of the Miyaff Committee told me when I talked to him about Aguosta? We was friendly, but he told me that we have to learn when the time to trust has come, that Aguosta had even suffered a cut inflicted on him by one gang member during a *ronda* and that that proved his loyalty. (SIGHS) Obviously, Aguosta had done a good job at gaining their trust. Although reluctantly, he accepted not to send him again to our warehouse.

GROUL

The first time I met him, I could not imagine he could be that stupid. Doesn't he know that his gullible ass and his whole committee can fall with us?

222. CUTS TO: EXT.: BACKROOM OF A STORE IN MIYAFF, EARLY MORNING. AN OLD DOG, MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE, IS WALKING AS FAST AS HE CAN.

CUTS TO: INT.: BACKROOM. THE OLD DOG ENTERS THE OFFICE AND SEES AGUOSTA PUTTING THE HANDSET ON ITS BASE.

AGUOSTA (looking hopeful)

At last Rodolfo recognized me. I always knew Rodolfo was a good dog, since I met him at the Dancing Doggies. I don't know why Gatito is against me. It must be that Groul. He hated me since the very first time he met me. That hurts because Gatito is my hero, you know? You know that... And you have just seen me at the phone, right? I wish I had not taken that damn call. (PAUSE) Maybe now even you're going to begin mistrusting me too.

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (somewhat confused)
No, Francisco, I don't' mistrust you. It's just that the head of the committee...

AGUOSTA

I'm a stupid fool! I swear I'm never going to pick up that telephone again!

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE
But how Rodolfo knew that you were going to be here?

AGUOSTA

I told you, my friend. He recognized me the last day he was around here.

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (still undecided)
I still think that we must wait for the head of the committee to come back...

AGUOSTA (anxious and then pleading)
But by then the interview with Sanderf, for which Gatito has been waiting for six years, will be lost! (PAUSE) Okay, I guess it is my bad luck... Leave it like that...

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE
Oh, damn it! Okay, I'll do it! Joaquin has to understand!

AGUOSTA
Thank you! Thank you, my friend! I should've told Rodolfo to contact somebody else because of Groul's attitude towards me... but I was so ashamed of admitting that, that despite being the communications liaison and everything they don't trust me... Thanks, my friend. You won't regret it...

THEN AGUOSTA SHRUGS. HE SEEMS GETTING DEPRESSED NOW.

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (trying to comfort Aguosta)
Let me trust you a secret, Francisco, my friend. Gatito Inmeegrante's real name is Joaquin Gatito Migran. You see. I trust you, my friend... I will have a word with Joaquin. It's not fair that he allows Groul to treat you like this...

AGUOSTA (begging, with a wide smile showing his gratitude)
No, no, no! That would ruin everything. Gatito would retreat because of Groul. You have to do it like I told you, as if you had taken Rodolfo's call instead of me! Let me write for you when Gatito is supposed to meet the senator.

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (smiling back after one last hesitation)
Okay, but I'll see that you get the credit after all this is over.

AGUOSTA
Thank you, my friend! You won't regret it!

SEQUENCE 72

223. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. FRONT, AT DAY. GATITO'S GUYS MAKING GUARD LET THE MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE PASS. GROUL AND MEAU GREET HIM AS HE GETS CLOSER TO THE FRONT DOOR. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM. GATITO IS SAT AT THE TABLE READING REPORTS. THE MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

ENTERS THE ROOM. GATITO STANDS UP AND SMILES AT THE OLD DOG. RACHY IS AT HIS SIDE, HER ELBOWS RESTING ON THE TABLE, WITH AN EXPRESSION BOTH FUNNY AND BORED.

GATITO

Hey! What's up?

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

I was at the telephone and I got a message from Rodolfo. He said that he went to see Sanderf and that Sanderf said that he would meet you both at the tower in Freedom Plaza today at noon; that it was urgent.

GATITO (somewhat surprised)

At Freedom Plaza? But he's supposed to be at a joint session of Congress at that time...

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

He said that that's part of his plan to present a bill for immigration reform; that he's going to be there at noon because they're going to make a recess at about that time. He said that you have to be there at twelve o'clock sharp; that Sanderf has questions about your document and that he is basing his bill based on that...

GROUL

I don't like this...

MEAU

I don't either.

GATITO (hesitant for a moment)

But we've been waiting for this moment for years. If he's there and I'm not... we might lose our chance... after all the hard work and pain we all have put on this.

GROUL

We're going with you then.

MEAU NODS TO SECOND HIM.

GATITO

No. We have to move tonight and you have to be here to organize our friends when they arrive. Remember that the buses are going to leave them in Nayak and that from there they'll have to come to Miyaff by train.

MEAU

But Gatito, we...

GATITO

No. We have to move tonight.

RACHY (somewhat worried now)

I'm going with you.

GATITO

No, Rachy. I need you to help me here. We have to move tonight.

RACHY SAYS NOTHING, ACCEPTS GATITO'S DECISION RELUCTANTLY.

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

Sanderf will meet Rodolfo and you inside the tower. There should not be visitors at that time. That's what Rodolfo said.

GATITO

Okay, that means I have to leave right now. I want to arrive with enough time to check the area. I'm going to the bathroom to make sure I look presentable.

GATITO LEAVES THE ROOM. GROUL, MEAU AND RACHY LOOK WORRIED.

224. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM, SOON AFTER. The member of the Miyaff Committee is sat at the table and Rachy offers him some refreshment. Gatito, who is getting ready to leave, gives Groul final instructions as they cross the frame of the door. Then Rachy pulls Gatito by the jacket.

RACHY (somewhat afraid, kissing Gatito)

Good luck, troublemaker...

GATITO

I'll bring you an ice cream cone and a balloon in my way back.

SEQUENCE 73

225. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM, ONE HOUR LATER. RACHY IS BRINGING REFRESHMENTS TO GROUL, MEAU AND OTHERS, WHO ARE SWEATING DUE TO ALL THE WORK INVOLVED IN THE PACKING OF THEIR BELONGINGS. SOMEBODY KNOCKS AT THE DOOR.

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE

I'll open the door. Let me do at least that.

THE OLD DOG OPENS THE DOOR AND SEES RODOLFO IN FRONT OF HIM,
SMILES.

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE
I gave Gatito your message.

RODOLFO (with a confused grin on his face)
What message?

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (sharing now Rodolfo's confusion)
Your message, the one you left when you called this morning to
Miyaff...

RODOLFO (alarmed now)
I have not called anybody this morning, dog.

GROUL AND MEAU SURROUND THE OLD DOG, WHO IS BEGINNING TO
LOOK NERVOUS AND IS NOW GRABBING A CHAIR AS HIS LEGS LOOK
WEAK.

GROUL (excited, yelling)
Did you receive that message?

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (broken, stuttering)
N-N-No... It was Francisco... but he swore that he had talked to
you, that you had recognized him from the days you were at the
Dancing Doggies...

RACHY (with moist eyes, panicking)
No! It can't be...! Rodolfo, please get him. Please, Rodolfo.
I'm... with his child.

GROUL (yelling at the old dog)
What Francisco?

MEMBER OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (sobbing now)
Francisco Aguosta. Francisco Aguosta...

GROUL
I'll kill that fucker...

RODOLFO (alarmed)
Groul, I'll go for him. Meau, we have to warn the others, those
who are coming from the neighboring states. Groul, please,
evacuate everybody right now.

MEAU (pleading)

I'll go with you, Rodolfo

RODOLFO

No, Meau. I might have to get inside some public buildings. I can move faster alone. Go see that the volunteers don't get a surprise at the train station.

MEAU (reluctantly nodding)

Then I'll help here a few minutes more with the evacuation before going to the train station.

RODOLFO (nodding)

And Rachy... Where is she?

CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM. The door is open.

SEQUENCE 74

226. CUTS TO: EXT.: MIYAFF TRAIN STATION. RODOLFO IS ARRIVING. HE'S PANTING. RODOLFO IS PANTING AND SWEATING WHEN HE REACHES THE MIYAFF TRAIN STATION.

RODOLFO (Thinking)

The guards saw Rachy running in direction to the train station.

She should be in her way to Freedom Plaza.

(A TRAIN JUST LEAVES IN FRONT OF HIM..)

Most probably Rachy is inside.

CUTS TO: INT.: MIYAFF TRAIN STATION, PLATFORM. RODOLFO, IMPATIENT, SNARLS AND MOVES FROM ONE SIDE TO THE OTHER OF THE TRAIN PLATFORM. THEN HE SEES THE LIGHT SHOWING UP AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL. A TRAIN IS COMING.

227. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM. GATITO'S GUYS REPACK WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT IN EIGHT BACKPACKS. THEN ALFGUAU TURNS TO THE DOOR TO CALL THE GUARDS POSITIONED AT THE PERIMETERS WHEN HE HEARS SOMEBODY BANGING AT THE DOOR.

VOICE OF GUARD (desperate)

It's me! It's me! Run! They're here!

THAT'S WHEN THEY HEAR THE SHOTS. THEN THEY HEAR THE YELLING OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE.

MEAU (to Alfguau)

There's nothing we can do for him! Run!

A SMALL EXPLOSION FOLLOWS AND THE DOOR FALLS. THE FIVE OF THEM RUN THROUGH A CORRIDOR TOWARDS THE BACK ROOM. THEN GROUL CLOSES BEHIND HIM ONE OF THE DOORS CONNECTING THE CORRIDOR WITH THE BACKROOM. ALFGUAU IS SLOWING DOWN.

GROUL (pointing with his hand to Alfguau as he speaks to Meau)

Meau, help him. I'll stop them here.

MEAU DOESN'T PAY ATTENTION AND STOPS RUNNING. ALFGUAU OPENS THE LAST DOOR CONNECTING THE CORRIDOR TO THE BACKROOM AND GROUL PICKS UP A SLEDGEHAMMER.

GROUL (yelling at Meau)

Fuck! Do as I say!

MEAU (alarmed)

Don't be stupid! No!

GROUL

We don't have time, Meau. Help him!

MEAU (WITH MOIST EYES) NODS AND GRABS ALFGUAU'S WRIST. THEN MEAU CLOSES AND LOCKS THE DOOR BEHIND HIM. GROUL RETURNS TO THE CORRIDOR WITH THE SLEDGEHAMMER ON HIS HANDS AND HITS THE WALL FRENETICALLY. THE BLOCKS OF BRICKS AND CEMENT BEGIN TO PILE AT HIS FEET. SOON AFTER, ANOTHER SHORT EXPLOSION ENSUES, BRINGING TO THE FLOOR THE DOOR OF THE CORRIDOR IN FRONT OF HIM IN THE MIDDLE OF A CLOUD OF DUST. THEN TIRED, PANTING AND DUSTY GROUL SEES BEFORE HIM MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE TURNING INTO THE NARROW CORRIDOR.

GROUL PICKS UP THE BIGGEST BLOCKS OF THE DEBRIS PILED AT HIS FEET AND BEGINS THROWING THEM AT THE IMMIGRATION POLICE AS HARD AND AS FAST AS HE CAN, IMPACTING THOSE WHO ARE CLOSER TO HIM. NOW HE DOESN'T SEEM TIRED ANYMORE. THEN GROUL HEARS AND SIMULTANEOUSLY FEELS THE SHOTS, THREE OF WHICH IMPACT HIM IN THE CHEST. GROUL FALLS ON HIS KNEES AND THEN ON HIS BACK AS HE LOOKS AT THE DOOR HE HAD MADE HIS MISSION TO DEFEND. NOW HE CAN'T SEE ANY LONGER THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE RUNNING AROUND HIM. AND WHEN THAT HAPPENS HE CAN ONLY SEE RAUL AARF SMILING AT HIM, EXTENDING HIM HIS HAND. RAUL HOLDS HIS HAND AND PULLS HIM AS EVERYTHING DISAPPEARS BEFORE GROUL'S EYES.

SEQUENCE 75

228. CUTS TO: EXT.: FRONT OF A STORE IN MIYAFF. ONE OF GATITO'S GUYS, PANTING, FALLS BEFORE THE HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE.

HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE (alarmed)
What happens? (TURNING TO HIS ASSISTANTS) Bring him water! (TURNING BACK TO GATITO'S GUY) Come on, you come from Gatito's, don't you? Come on! Breathe! Breathe!

A CAT AND A DOG BREAK INTO THE ROOM AS THEY JUMP THE STAIRS FROM THE SECOND FLOOR.

GATITO'S GUY
Aguosta... Where is... Aguosta?

HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE
He's not here. I assumed he and the old dog had gone to take a break, to have something to eat. Has something happened to them?

GATITO'S GUY
Aguosta... Where is... Aguosta?

THE CAT BRINGS HIM A PILLOW FOR HIS HEAD BUT GATITO'S GUY REFUSES THE PILLOW.

HEAD OF THE MIYAFF COMMITTEE
Please, answer. Has something happened to them?

GATITO'S GUY (with rage, bitterness, and moist eyes)
Aguosta has betrayed us... They're going to ambush Gatito...

SEQUENCE 76

229. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. BACKROOM. MEAU PULLS THE BOX HIDING THE SECRET ESCAPE EXIT JUST WHEN THE IMMIGRATION POLICE BREAK INTO THE ROOM.

MEAU (with pained eyes, thinking)
Groul, my friend, rest in peace; at last, rest.

230. CUTS TO: INT.: DARK SEWERS. MEAU GUIDES THE REST, MAKING AS LITTLE NOISE AS POSSIBLE. AND FINALLY HE IS OUTSIDE THE TUNNEL AND CAN SEE THE FOREST. HE WATCHES AT HIS RIGHT FIRST AND THEN AT HIS LEFT AND SEES NOBODY.

MEAU (whispering to the rest)
Run to the forest!

THEY BEGIN TO RUN WHEN THEY HEAR VOICES FROM BEHIND THEM AND VOICES FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE WHO ARE NOW EMERGING FROM BEHIND THE DARKNESS AND FROM BEHIND THE TREES, POINTING AT THEM WITH THEIR RIFLES.

IMMIGRATION POLICE

Freeze!

ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP TRIES TO GET BACK TO THE SEWAGE SYSTEM BUT TWO SHOTS STOP HIM. NOW MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ARE HANDCUFFING THEM. FROM THE GROUND, MEAU CAN SEE THE TRUCK COMING FOR THEM AND HIS FALLEN FRIEND DRAGGING HIS BODY TO THE ENTRANCE OF THE SEWAGE ONLY TO RECEIVE A THIRD SHOT ON THE BACK OF THE HEAD.

SEQUENCE 77

231. CUTS TO: INT. DAY: BUS BRINGING GATITO'S VOLUNTEERS TO SOME TRAIN STATION IN NAYAK. THEY ARE CHATTING. THEY SEE THAT ONE OF THE THREE BUSES HAS STOPPED CLOSE TO THE TRAIN STATION GATES AND THAT THE VOLUNTEERS ARE IN THEIR WAY TO THE TRAINS.

CUTS TO: INT. DAY: LOBBY OF TRAIN STATION. ONE OF GATITO'S GUYS (FEMALE) NOTICES THAT THE TRAIN STATION IS ALMOST DESERTED AND FROWNS. THEN, AS THE THIRD OF THE THREE BUSES IS ARRIVING TO THE STATION, SHE NOTICES TRUCKS COMING FROM DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS, SURROUNDING THE OTHER BUS THAT IS WAITING IN LINE TO GET IN FRONT OF THE TRAIN STATION MAIN GATE. SUDDENLY, MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ARE YELLING AT THE BUSES, POINTING THEIR RIFLES TO THE DRIVERS THROUGH THE WINDSHIELDS AND ORDERING THE OCCUPANTS TO DESCEND WITH THEIR ARMS OVER THEIR HEADS. THE FEW WHO TRY TO BREAK THE POLICE CORDON ARE BEATEN BY THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE WITH THE BUTTS OF THEIR RIFLES.

232. CUTS TO: INSIDE A TRAIN WAGON. DAY. THOSE WHO CAME IN THE FIRST BUS ARE TRAPPED INSIDE THE TRAIN CARS. AND, AS SOON AS THE CARS OF THE TRAIN STOP AND THEIR DOORS ARE OPENED, A CLOUD OF MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE STORM OVER THEM, PUSHING THEM INSIDE THE CARS, FROM WHICH THE VOLUNTEERS ONLY LEAVE AFTER BEING HANDCUFFED AND LEASHED.

CUT TO: EXT., DAY: TRAIN STATION. THE GATITO'S GUYS AND THE VOLUNTEERS ARE PUSHED TO THE TRUCKS THAT ARE WAITING FOR THEM OUTSIDE THE STATION.

233. CUTS TO: INT., DAY: INSIDE IMMIGRATION POLICE'S TRUCKS. THE IMMIGRANTS SEEM DISHEARTENED OR IN SHOCK.

SEQUENCE 78

234. CUTS TO: INT.: MIYAFF TRAIN STATION. DAY. RODOLFO IS IMPATIENT IN HIS CAR AT MIYAFF STATION, CURSING EVERYTHING CROSSING HIS MIND. THE CAR BARELY MOVES. THEN HE OPENS THE WINDOW TRYING TO SEE WHAT IS STOPPING HIS CAR. HE EXTENDS HIS NECK AND PART OF HIS BODY, AS MUCH AS HE CAN, BUT HE CAN'T SEE ANYTHING. HE STANDS UP AND ASKS THE OTHER PASSENGERS (INAUDIBLE) AND THEN RETURNS TO HIS SEAT.

SOME PASSENGER'S VOICE (in Rodolfo's mind, BLURRY)
There must have been an accident.

RODOLFO SHRUGS. AT LAST THE WAGON BEGINS TO MOVE AGAIN.

SEQUENCE 79

235. CUTS TO: EXT.: FREEDOM PLAZA. DAY. SOME RESIDENTS OF NAYAK ARE WALKING THEIR CHILDREN, TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS, TALKING. BEFORE GATITO'S EYES, THE TOWER RAISES IMPOSING ABOVE EVERYBODY AND EVERYTHING ELSE. THE SPECTATOR AREA SEEMS EQUALLY INNOCUOUS. THEN GATITO NOTICES THAT SOME WORKERS ARE TESTING THE MICROPHONES AT THE LUXURY BOX, AT THE OPPOSITE END OF THE TOWER, AND AT OTHER MINOR BOXES SET IN THE SPECTATORS AREA. THE WORKERS SEEM INDIFFERENT TO HIM. OUTSIDE THE PLAZA, THE TREES SEEM EQUALLY INDIFFERENT TO HIM AS WELL AS TO THE REST OF THE PASSERSBY.

THE TOWER HAS A BIG CLOCK. GATITO SEES THAT IT'S TEN MINUTES BEFORE NOON. HE THEN TURNS TO THE TOWER.

236. CUTS TO: INT.: TOWER. DAY. GATITO NOTICES THAT THERE'S NOBODY ELSE. HE APPROACHES THE CLOSEST WINDOW AND ONLY THEN CAN SEE THE IMMIGRATION POLICE COMING TOWARDS THE TOWER. GATITO PANICS, THEN RUSHES TO THE MAIN DOOR, A THICK METALLIC DOOR, AND LOCKS HIMSELF INSIDE USING THE DOOR BARRICADE BAR. SOON AFTER, HE CAN HEAR THE BANGING ON THE DOOR.

VOICE BEHIND THE DOOR
Joaquin Gatito Migran, Gatito Inmeegrante, open the door!

THE BANGING ON THE DOOR RESUMES. GATITO SCREENS THE AREA. THERE ISN'T A WAY TO THE BASEMENT FROM THAT SIDE OF THE TOWER. THEN HE RUNS UPSTAIRS TO THE TOP OF THE BUILDING, LEAVING BEHIND THE YELLING OF HIS PERSECUTORS. A FEW SECONDS LATER HE'S AT THE TENTH AND LAST FLOOR OF THE TOWER. HE IS PANTING NOW. HE LEANS OUT OF THE WINDOW AND SEES THAT THE POLICE CORDON IS DISSOLVING. NOW THERE ARE DOZENS OF MEMBERS OF THE

IMMIGRATION POLICE AT THE DOOR OF THE TOWER OR SURROUNDING IT AT CLOSE DISTANCE.

MANY RESIDENTS OF NAYAK ARE NOW CONGREGATING AT THE SPECTATORS AREAS. GATITO THEN NOTICES A MICROPHONE AT HIS SIDE AND THE SPEAKERS SET UNDER THE WINDOW. THE BANGING AND YELLING AT THE MAIN DOOR CONTINUES. GATITO NOTICES THAT THE DOOR OF THE SMALL ROOM OF THE TENTH FLOOR ALSO HAS A BARRICADE BAR AND LOCKS THE DOOR.

GATITO LOOKS EVERYWHERE TRYING TO FIND ANYTHING HE CAN USE. AND THEN HE NOTICES THE MOVEMENT AT THE LUXURY BOX IN FRONT OF HIM, AT THE OTHER END OF FREEDOM PLAZA.

SEQUENCE 80

237. CUTS TO: EXT.: NAYAK TRAIN STATION. DAY. RACHY, SHAKING, DESPERATE, EXITS THE STATION, LOOKS AROUND FOR A SECOND AND BEGINS TO RUN ON HER FOUR LIMBS. SEEING HER DESPAIR, THE PASSERSBY MOVE AT THE SIDES OF THE STREET TO NOT BLOCK HER PASS. SHE CAN'T SEE THEIR FACES. SOON AFTER, SHE LOOKS EXHAUSTED.

SEQUENCE 81

238. CUTS TO: INT.: TENTH FLOOR OF THE TOWER. DAY. GATITO HEARS SOMEBODY TESTING THE MICROPHONES AT THE LUXURY BOX. HE LOOKS DISHEARTENED WHEN HE HEARS THE VOICES OF TANCRUARF AND KRUORF.

239. CUTS TO: INT.: LUXURY BOX. DAY.

KRUORF (with his two assistants)

Bringing Migran was always part of the plan. More, the trucks of the immigration police will be here in Freedom Plaza in a matter of minutes with Gatito's followers caged in boxes. We'll force the doors of the tower as soon as the boxes with the prisoners arrive and everybody will have to see that your victory is now complete, sir, before you leave for the joint session of Congress with the news of your triumph.

TANCRUARF (smirking)

So, he is over there, at the tower...

EVERYBODY AT FREEDOM PLAZA NOW CAN HEAR THE NOISE OF THE ENGINES OF SEVERAL TRUCKS COMING.

SEQUENCE 82

240. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME STREET OF DOWNTOWN MIYAFF. DAY. RACHY, EXHAUSTED, FALLS ON HER KNEES AND CRIES WITHOUT TEARS. IMMEDIATELY SHE GETS UP AGAIN AND BEGINS TO RUN AGAIN. SHE

FALLS AGAIN SOON AFTER. HER TORN PANTS SHOW HER SCRATCHED KNEES. HER VISION TURNS BLURRY FOR MOMENTS (RACHY POV). SHE IS BREATHING HEAVILY NOW, BUT STARTS RUNNING AGAIN ON HER FOUR LEGS.

SEQUENCE 83

241. CUTS TO: EXT.: FREEDOM PLAZA. DAY. TANCRUARF'S VOICE BEGINS TO FILL FREEDOM PLAZA THROUGH THE SPEAKERS. HIS ASSISTANTS START RECORDING THE EVENT.

TANCRUARF (solemn)

Dear friends of Nayak, our long war against the criminal immigrant gangs has finally come to an end in Nayak as we are, at this moment, surrounding the leader of those criminal organizations, the so-called Gatito Inmeegrante. With the arrest of Gatito Inmeegrante, the citizens of Nayak will at last be able to sleep in peace.

CUTS TO: EXT.: TOWER. DAY. THE IMMIGRATION POLICE BREAK THE LOCK OF THE MAIN DOOR AND STORM INSIDE THE BUILDING.

242. CUTS TO: INT.: TENTH FLOOR OF THE TOWER. GATITO CAN FEEL THE SOUNDS OF HIS PERSECUTORS RUSHING UPSTAIRS IN THEIR WAY TO THE TENTH FLOOR. AND, A FEW SECONDS LATER, HE CAN HEAR THE VOICE OF ONE OF CHIEF KRUORF'S ASSISTANTS AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR (MUFFLED). THAT'S WHEN GATITO CAN SEE FROM THE WINDOW SIX TRUCKS ENTERING FREEDOM PLAZA WITH SEVERAL CAGES ON THEIR BEDS. SOON AFTER, HE CAN SEE THE PRISONERS IN THE CAGES.

TANCRUARF

This time we have hit this organization thoroughly. People of Nayak, in those cages you can see the lieutenants of this criminal, whose names are Groul, Meau, and Alfguau, just to mention a few, and the animals who followed them in their hideous activities. And from that tower, in front of us, soon our immigration police will be extracting Joaquin Gatito Migran, Gatito Inmeegrante, who then will join his accomplices and finally face justice.

GATITO (Thinking)

They even knew our names.... Are they all there? Could anybody escape...? And Rachy...? Where was she?

TANCRUARF LOOKS ECSTATIC AS HE ADDRESS THE PUBLIC (MUFFLED). NOW GATITO CAN HEAR ONCE AGAIN THE VOICE OF THE DEPUTY AT THE

OTHER SIDE OF HIS DOOR, CALLING HIM BY NAME FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR.

KRUORF'S DEPUTY

Migran, this is over! Open the door! I'm Chief Kruorf's deputy. We have already broken into the warehouse. All your accomplices are on our hands. Look through the window! We even have the female of name Rachy and we're going to trial her as your accomplice. By the moment she gets out of prison, she will be as old as Chief Hagel... unless we decide to trial her for treason, of course. That's Infamous Hanging. We know about the *rondas* too. We know about the committee of Miyaff. We even know about your exit tunnel from the warehouse to the sewage system! Joaquin Gatito, accept it! You lost. You brought this on yourself.

GATITO, STARTLED, WITH SHAKY LEGS, HAS TO LEAN ON THE FRAME OF THE WINDOW TO STAY ON HIS FEET. THEN GATITO TURNS TO THE DOOR. THE POLICE ARE TRYING TO BREAK THE LOCK. THE FACES OF RACHY AND HIS FRIENDS CAME TO HIS MIND IN CONSECUTIVE FLASHES. HE IMAGINES THE CHILDREN ASKING IN VAIN FOR THEIR FATHERS TO CALLOUS MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE (MUFFLED) AND THE PARENTS BEING TOLD BY THOSE SAME MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE (MUFFLED) THAT THEIR SONS WILL NEVER COME BACK EVER AGAIN

GATITO (Thinking)

And all because one day they had made the terrible mistake of trusting some Gatito Inmeegrante, the same one who had once made them believe that everything could be different...

(HE IMAGINED RACHY IN ONE OF THOSE CAGES, CRYING. THEN THE DOOR DISTRACTS HIS ATTENTION. THAT DOOR IS ABOUT TO FALL ANY MOMENT.)

It may be too late for me and my guys, but maybe not for Rachy...

GATITO TESTS A MICROPHONE AND FINDS THAT IT'S WORKING. HE SEES THAT THE SPECTATORS AREAS OF FREEDOM PLAZA ARE FULL.

GATITO (at the microphone)

Tancruarf, you know I'm not a criminal; that those animals you have caged on those trucks are not criminals; that their only fault is to have been born in the wrong country, in the wrong family, in the wrong caste... But I know that nothing I say will change our fate. At least leave the female, Rachy, out of this. I deceived her about who I am. She's guilty of nothing, not even of what

you consider a crime. And she's a citizen by birth. You don't need her...

AT THAT MOMENT THE DOOR FINALLY YIELDS TO THE PRESSURE AND FALLS. GATITO SITS ON THE FRAME OF THE WINDOW FACING THE DOOR AS MANY MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ENTER THE ROOM. CHIEF KRUFORF'S DEPUTY, HIS EYES FIXED ON GATITO, RAISES AN ARM TO MAKE ALL HIS ANIMALS STOP.

GATITO (still with the microphone on his hands)
You took my homeland, my family and my friends. I have nothing left...

THEN GATITO CLOSES HIS EYES, OPENS HIS ARMS AND LETS HIS BODY FALL BEHIND HIM.

VOICE IN OFF

A moment of horror ensued. He felt his feet abandoning the ironic safety of the window. He felt the wind mocking him and the air oppressing his body, pulling it down.

In an instant Rachy and his dreams of her were no more.

In an instant the frowned and hopeful faces of his parents saying goodbye from a train platform in the Northern Country were no more.

In an instant the committed, filled-with-dreams faces of his friends, those who had trusted him so much for so long, were no more.

In an instant the afternoon he met Rodolfo years ago, the day they talked about Senator Sanderf for the first time, was no more.

In an instant that afternoon he saw Rachy holding her ice cream cone and her balloon, her naughty smile, was no more.

Then suddenly he felt the most unbearable pain, the worst he had ever felt.

And then even that pain was no more; just darkness.

Then everything went away.

And, as a small pool of blood began to surround Gatito's body in front of the tower, a female rushed inside Freedom Plaza, desperately running in her four legs.

SEQUENCE 84

243. CUTS TO: INT.: DOWNTOWN NAYAK TRAIN STATION, PLATFORM. DAY RODOLFO EXITS THE WAGON AND WATCHES THE CLOCK. IT'S 12:35 PM. HE BEGINS MAKING QUESTIONS TO OTHERS ANIMALS IN THE PLATFORM (INAUDIBLE).

RODOLFO (Thinking)

Whatever has happened at Freedom Plaza, it has already happened. There's nothing I can do to change anything there, but Congress is close from there and, if I still have any chance to help, it will have to be there... The security at Congress is much tighter than at the offices of Senator Sanderf, where my friend worked, but there's no other alternative. I have to go to Congress and get Sanderf. Sanderf knows Gatito is not a criminal. My friend must be there now, as his chief of staff. He better be... Senator Sanderf has to be in the joint session. No matter what, I have to do something to get him out of there. This time Sanderf has to do something or everything will be lost!

244. CUTS TO: EXT.: DOWNTOWN NAYAK TRAIN STATION. RODOLFO EXITS THE STATION AND BEGINS TO RUN THE TWENTY BLOCKS THAT SEPARATE HIM FROM THE BUILDING OF CONGRESS. HE CAN SEE AS FLASHES THE FACES OF THE RESIDENTS MOVING OUT OF HIS WAY, SOME OF THEM SOMEWHAT STARTLED, SOME OF THEM LAUGHING, ALL OF THEM IGNORING THE ANGUISH IN HIS HEART.

245. CUTS TO: EXT.: CONGRESS. PANTING, RODOLFO FINALLY REACHES ONE OF THE SIDE DOORS OF CONGRESS, WHERE THE GUARDS, ALARMED BY THE WAY HE LOOKS, POINT THEIR RIFLES AT HIM.

RODOLFO (raising his hands)

I'm... friend of Sanderf's... chief of staff. Please... it's an emergency.

GUARD #1 (yelling)

Documents!

RODOLFO (carefully taking them out of his pocket and handing them to the guard)

I'm a friend of Senator Sanderf's Chief of Staff... This is an emergency, please... Give me with him.

GUARD #1

We heard you the first time.

GUARD #1 TURNS TO THE GUARD POST WITH HIS DOCUMENTS. THE OTHER KEEPS POINTING HIS RIFLE AT HIM. GUARD #2, WHO IS STILL POINTING HIS RIFLE AT HIM, SEEMS ALMOST AMUSED. THEN GUARD #3 COMES TO THE GUARD POST FROM INSIDE THE BUILDING. GUARD #1 COMES BACK AND MAKES A SIGNAL WITH HIS HAND TO GUARD #2, WHO IS STILL POINTING HIS RIFLE AT RODOLFO.

GUARD #1

He's good!

GUARD #2 BRINGS THE SLING OF THE RIFLE BACK TO HIS SHOULDER.

GUARD #3 (handing Rodolfo his documents back with a severe expression)
He's coming... And next time, use the front door.

RODOLFO NODS. THEN HIS FRIEND APPEARS BY THE DOOR. HE LOOKS STARTLED.

CHIEF OF STAFF

What happens dog?

Rodolfo grabs his arm and pulls him a few feet away from the door and the guards and tells him what has happened (inaudible). The Chief of Staff looks incredulous at first but then frowns.

CHIEF OF STAFF (trying to collect himself)
Okay Rodolfo, calm down! I think we can still fix this. Sanderf can always open an investigation about what's happening at Freedom Plaza and now that he has his prestige, Ateh the Liar cannot block the vote for an investigative commission. At least that would guarantee the lives of Gatito and his friends. He would have to move the session over there, but... he knows that if he fails, if everything happens to Gatito, everything for what we have worked so hard will be lost. Wait here!

THE CHIEF OF STAFF IS GOING TO RETURN TO THE BUILDING WHEN RODOLFO GRABS HIS ARM.

RODOLFO

Dog, I have to go to Freedom Plaza! Anyway, there's nothing else I can do to help here. And Gatito's girlfriend might be already there. It's all now on your hands. I'll see you there.

CHIEF OF STAFF (dropping his eyes)
Be careful, dog...

RODOLFO THEN LETS HIS ARM GO AND SEES HIS FRIEND RUSHING INSIDE THE BUILDING. RODOLFO TURNS HIS BACK ON THE GUARDS AND BEGINS RUNNING TOWARDS FREEDOM PLAZA.

SEQUENCE 85

246. CUTS TO: EXT.: FREEDOM PLAZA. RACHY STOPS ON HER HEELS. THEN, WITH DESPERATE EYES, TAKES SOME CONFUSED STEPS BEFORE STARTING TO RUN TO THE BODY SURROUNDED BY A POOL OF BLOOD.

SEQUENCE 86

247. CUTS TO: INT.: CONGRESS. THE CHIEF OF STAFF APPROACHES SANDERF AND SPEAKS TO HIS EAR. SANDERF FROWNS, HESITATES FOR A FEW SECONDS AND STANDS UP TO REQUEST THE RIGHT TO SPEAK. TAYARIH IGNORES HIM.

SANDERF (standing up)

Speaker Tayarih, I request permission to take the floor.

TAYARIH IGNORES HIM AGAIN. YET, THE EYES OF SANDERF'S COLLEAGUES BEGIN TO TURN TO HIM BECAUSE SANDERF REFUSES TO SEAT.

Speaker Tayarih, I request permission to take the floor.

TAYARIH OFFERS THE RIGHT TO SPEAK TO SOME OTHER SENATOR.

(RAISING HIS VOICE) I invoke my prestige! I want to address Congress! It's my right!

TAYARIH RELUCTANTLY NODS.

Dear colleagues, hereby I salute the Congress of our beloved country and use my prestige for the first time. Right now there are events evolving in Freedom Plaza that are going to be fundamentally important for the future of our country. I invoke my prestige to put a motion to vote to move this joint session of Congress to Freedom Plaza and to extend that invitation to the governors here in attendance.

SANDERF STARES AT HIS COLLEAGUES.

TAYARIH (with an astonished face)

Is this serious, senator? We can't move a joint session of Congress to Freedom Plaza just like that, especially when you are not giving any plausible reason for us to do that!

SANDERF

Then I invoke my whole prestige here. If Congress passes a motion to censor me after this, I will lose my prestige. But this is a matter of such importance that I am willing to take that risk. I want a vote on my motion to move the joint session to Freedom Plaza now. I'll explain myself in more detail once we're there. There's no time to lose, dear colleagues, please!

TAYARIH (after some hesitation)

Senator Sanderf, I don't want you to make excuses later, to say that you feel persecuted or excluded because we rejected your motion, so I myself am going to vote for it. But I don't need to tell you that if you're disturbing this session of Congress for no good reason, especially when we have among us the governors of all the states of the union, there'll be consequences.

SANDERF (nodding)

I do understand.

THEN CONGRESS VOTES FOR SANDERF'S MOTION. TAYARIH SPEAKS TO HIS ASSISTANTS, YET HE IS STARING AT SANDERF WITH A SMIRK. THE VOTE ON SANDER'S MOTION STARTS.

SANDERF (Thinking)

I will have to choose very carefully my words from now on, especially because I will have to convince enough senators and members of the house that an investigative commission on the abuses of Tancruarf has merits and that the prisoners require special protection outside the jurisdiction of the immigration police... I will have to turn Gatito into a witness, into the archetypal case of the immigrant who is the exact opposite of the perverse stereotypes Tancruarf has sold to everybody all this time to justify his gross manipulation of the justice system and of the government of Nayak in general. Then I will have to call Chief Hagel to give testimony about the inexistent criminal record of Joaquin Gatito Migran and about the anarchy sponsored by Tancruarf at the border to allow the gangs to do as they wish. And who can I call on this last point...? And no, immigrants are not a priority for anybody in this building... It's a suicide mission. But we have no other alternative. We have to buy time for Gatito... And I owe him... I just have to find the words...

SEQUENCE 87

248. CUTS TO: EXT.: FREEDOM PLAZA. NOW THAT SHE IS A FEW FEET FROM HIM, RACHY APPROACHES GATITO'S BODY WITH SLOW STEPS AND INCREDULOUS EYES. SHE FALLS ON HER KNEES AND HUGS HIS BODY. THEN SHE BEGINS TO CRY AND HER CONTINUOUS, SUSTAINED WHIMPER SOMEHOW REACHES EVERY ATTENDANT (PAN TO THE CONTRITE FACES OF THE ATTENDANTS AS THEIR HEAR RACHY'S CRY) AT FREEDOM PLAZA. COUPLES HOLD HANDS. PARENTS HUG THEIR CHILDREN. PASSERSBY TURN TO THE SPOT WHERE RACHY IS WITH MOIST EYES.

THE ANIMALS IN THE CAGES OVER THE BEDS OF THE TRUCKS START TO CRY TOO.

THE ATTENDANTS BEGIN TO SHOW UNEASINESS AND THEN THEY START PROTESTING, SHOUTING AGAINST TANCRUARF.

SEQUENCE 88

249. CUTS TO: EXT.: ONE OF THE ENTRANCES TO FREEDOM PLAZA. RODOLFO REACHES FREEDOM PLAZA AT LAST AND HIS EYES TURN MOIST WHEN HE REALIZES THE TWO ANIMALS OVER THE POOL OF BLOOD ARE

GATITO AND RACHY. HE STOPS ON HIS HEELS. THEN HE NOTICES THE TRUCKS WHERE GATITO'S FRIENDS ARE. NOW HE LOOKS ANGRY. RODOLFO STEPS FORWARD WITH FURIOUS DETERMINATION TO ONE OF THE OPEN MICROPHONES. RODOLFO TAKES THE MICROPHONE.

RODOLFO

Everything is lost! Everything is lost! Gatito Inmeegrante... Gatito Inmeegrante was no gang leader. He was a nice, intelligent cat who only wanted to live like you, love like you... His only sin was to have been born in the wrong country, in the wrong family. (PAN TO SPECTATOR AREAS, WHERE MANY ATTENDANTS ARE NOW TURNING TO HIM. RODOLFO SEEMS INCREASINGLY ANGRY NOW AND HIS VOICE BREAKS) What the fuck did he do to you...? I know he would've given you all his best if you had given him a chance to be happy... at least once in this life that always showed him its worst face... And... instead you elected that monster because that monster seduced you, told you what you wanted to hear, lured you into believing that all your problems would somehow be solved if only you denied that cat the right to be happy, the right to at least live in peace... (RODOLFO IS CRYING NOW AND HAS TO MAKE A PAUSE) You have now destroyed his life and the live of the female who loved him. I always loved this country and now... that I see your real faces, I damn you! I hope you are happy with what your monster has reaped for you! (THEN RODOLFO TAKES HIS FAKE DOCUMENTS, TORN THEM BEFORE EVERYBODY AND THROW THEM TO THE PLAZA, WHICH NOW STAYS SILENT) I risked my life everyday with those fake papers to give you my best despite your rejection. I don't want them anymore with me. I'm tired of you... Keep your monster...

THEN RODOLFO LEANS ON THE BASE OF THE MICROPHONE AND SOBS. RODOLFO STAYS THERE MUMBLING. THREE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE RUN TOWARDS HIM AND, ONCE THERE, ONE OF THEM PICKS UP FROM THE FLOOR THE PIECES OF HIS TORN DOCUMENTS WHILE THE OTHER TWO HANDCUFF HIM. THE PUBLIC BEGINS TO PROTEST MORE LOUDLY AGAINST THE IMMIGRATION POLICE, BUT KRUORF'S ANIMALS PAY NO ATTENTION AND DRAG RODOLFO TO ONE OF THE CAGES PLACED ON THE BEDS OF THE TRUCKS AND PUSH HIM INSIDE. STILL SOBBING, HIS EYES LOST, RODOLFO OFFERS NO RESISTANCE. THE PROTEST OF THE ATTENDANTS INCREASES ITS VOLUME AND TANCRUARF HAS TO MAKE REPEATED CALLS TO THE ATTENDEES.

TANCRUARF

Dear friends, the police reports back my statement, Gatito Inmeegrante was actually a gang leader responsible of multiple crimes against the citizens of Nayak.

THE PROTEST GROWS ONLY LOUDER THOUGH.

SEQUENCE 89

250. CUTS TO: EXT.: SPOT WHERE GATITO AND RACHY ARE. RACHY'S EYES ARE FIXED ON GATITO'S. THEN SHE CLOSES HER EYES AND WHIMPERS AGAIN, PENETRATING EVERY CORNER OF THE PLAZA WITH THE SAME CONTINUOUS PAINFUL NOTE.

CUTS TO: INT.: LUXURY BOX.

KRUORF (pulling Tancruarf by an arm)

Sir, adjourn this assembly or whatever you were expecting this to be. They are expecting you at the joint session of Congress anyway...

TANCRUARF LOOKS AFRAID, HESITANT, BUT FINALLY NODS. THAT'S WHEN THEY NOTICE THAT THE FEDERAL ARMY IS TAKING POSITIONS INSIDE FREEDOM PLAZA AND SOME SOLDIERS ARE CLEARING PART OF THE SPECTATORS AREA FOR THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND GOVERNORS WHO ARE COMING TO FREEDOM PLAZA AT SANDERF'S REQUEST.

CUTS TO: EXT. DAY. THE SPECTATORS AREA OCCUPIED BY CONGRESS. SANDERF NOTICES RACHY LEANING ON GATITO'S BODY. HIS FACE SHOWS DEEP SADNESS. THEN HE IS APPROACHED BY HIS CHIEF OF STAFF.

CHIEF OF STAFF (disheartened, dropping his eyes)

Rodolfo has been arrested. He's in one of those cages. They found out that his documents were forgeries. Gatito... Gatito is that body at the side of the tower, the one over which the female is crying.

SANDERF (his eyes still fixed on Rachy)

I know...

TAYARIH SPEAKS, WHAT BRINGS SANDERF'S ATTENTION BACK TO THE SESSION OF CONGRESS.

TAYARIH

Well, now that we are installed, Senator Sanderf can take the floor. But, as we have Governor Tancruarf with us and as he, as governor of Nayak, is our host, I yield to him the conduction of this joint session. Senator Sanderf, please go ahead. Explain yourself.

SANDERF, SADDENED, TURNS AGAIN TO THE FEMALE WHIMPERING OVER HER DEAD LOVER. THEN HE TURNS TO TAYARIH WITH DETERMINATION. TAYARIH IS STARING AT HIM WITH THE SAME SMIRK.

SANDERF (sighing)

Citizens of Nayak, I'm Senator Sanderf. I represent the second electoral district of Nayak. I must confess that I was not expecting this... In my way here I was hoping I could introduce Joaquin Gatito Migran to you. Actually, I have with me the document he prepared for us all. If you could read it, you could see how much he wanted to give his best to you, to live with you, maybe to share an afternoon with you at the park while watching your children playing with his.

Still, all these years immigrants like him have been defamed by governor Tancruarf, forced into a mock trial before the public opinion without a chance to defend themselves, stripped of a chance to share with you all they are, all he was... Did you know that, no matter what Tancruarf has told you all this time, Gatito encouraged his immigrant friends to study to become better neighbors... for you; that he organized his immigrant friends to fight the gangs that preyed on them... and on you; that he taught them to love you no matter how many times you supported the governor who hated them?

Well, that governor, Michelle Tancruarf, in his sick obsession with immigrants like Joaquin Gatito Migran, didn't mind deceiving you, corrupting your institutions and even using the same criminal gangs that preyed both on you and on them. He stripped the Nayak police of its powers and created the immigration police on top of the legitimate Nayak police with a crony of his as its head. He purged the judiciary and the district attorney's office of all those who could oppose him. And, guess what, put more of his cronies in their place. He also created a black list for those business owners who didn't give money for his campaign and looked at the other side when his financial supporters violated every possible regulation in the books. And he ruined the political careers of those who didn't sign his pledges without regard for dignity or justice.

Worst of all, he poisoned your minds. He lured you into believing that if you put all the blame of everything that is wrong in your lives on those immigrants, you could quit on your personal responsibility because now you would have a scapegoat to blame instead. He bet that if he went after defenseless immigrants, you wouldn't mind because you had already paid for that delusion with your souls. And you know what? If you don't look right now at that female crying over the dead body of the

male she loved and break with that evil spell, you'll live for the rest of your lives knowing that you preferred to live with a lie, pretending that the lie was true because that was easier, and the memory of her tears will never let you come to terms with yourselves.

That's why in this moment I'm invoking my whole prestige to bring a vote for the motion to create an investigative commission on the crimes committed by Governor Michelle Tancruarf, the crimes that I have mentioned in my accusation, and to surrender jurisdiction on the crimes that may result from this investigation to a special prosecutor.

SANDERF THEN TURNS TO TAYARIH, WHO IS SCOFFING.

TAYARIH

Well, Senator Tancruarf, you have here made a case for... I'd say instead that you have just shared with us your *opinion* of why you think that Governor Tancruarf's policies are polemic... in your opinion. But inquiring about policy based on a difference of opinion is not what investigative commissions are for. You have presented no specific charges or proof against Governor Tancruarf to merit a criminal investigation, a criminal investigation that is the only thing that could trigger an investigative commission. You have presented no proof leading in that direction. As a senator who has spent enough years in the Senate to earn your prestige, you should know this very well. I'm afraid I'm going to have to ask you to apologize to this Congress and to the governors who are our guests here for your inexcusable behavior.

SANDERF (defiant)

I have made a list of specific charges: corruption, favoritism, cronyism, manipulation of our justice system... and I want a vote on my motion. And I can tell you already that I plan to summon Chief Hagel as a witness to the hearings.

TAYARIH (shaking his head condescendingly)

Investigative Commissions can only be formed to investigate, that's where their name comes from, real specific crimes and you have not given enough details of the crimes you want to investigate. You have just made a list of generic accusations. I'm waiting for your apology, Senator Sanderf!

SEQUENCE 90

251. CUTS TO: INT.: LUXURY BOX. TANCRUARF SEEMS PARALYZED. HIS EYES SHOW ALARM.

CHIEF KRUORF (talking to one of his deputies)
Remove that female and the body of that cat from the premises
of Freedom Plaza. Now!

252. CUTS TO: EXT.: SPECTATORS AREA. DEPUTY JON CAN SEE THE GROWING ANGUISH ON HIS BOSS'S FACE, HIS MOIST EYES, AS HE HEARS THE DEBATE AND THE WAILING OF THE FEMALE. BUT THEN HAGEL RAISES HIS OLD EYES WITH SOME RENEWED DETERMINATION AND WALKS TO THE NEAREST MICROPHONE, GRABS IT WITH FURY AND TAKES IT CLOSE TO HIS LIPS. AND, FOR A MOMENT, NO WORDS COME OUT OF HIS MOUTH.

CHIEF HAGEL (closing his eyes, issuing a heartrending scream)
Enooooough!

ALL THE EYES AT FREEDOM PLAZA COME TO REST ON HIM. DEPUTY JON, AS HE SEES THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ARE APPROACHING THE FEMALE FROM BOTH ENDS OF THE PLAZA, CALLS THE MEMBERS OF THE NAYAK POLICE DEPARTMENT AT HIS DISPOSAL.

DEPUTY JON (yelling)
Protect the female! Don't let the immigration police take her!
Now!

THE MEMBERS OF THE NAYAK POLICE DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATELY RUN THROUGH THE PLAZA AND MAKE A CORDON AROUND RACHY, WHO KEEPS WHIMPERING AND HUGGING, KISSING GATITO, PAYING NO ATTENTION TO ANYTHING ELSE. WHEN THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ARRIVES, AN ARGUMENT BREAKS BETWEEN THE TWO FORCES, BOTH UNYIELDING, BOTH POINTING THEIR RIFLES AT EACH OTHER.

CHIEF HAGEL (finally speaking)
I've been a conservative all my life and I've been proud of it... until now. Now there's no bottom for my pain... and for my shame. And the worst of all is that I cannot forget the first day I allowed all this to happen, the first day I caved in to this monster, hoping to make things right later... And now I am an empty shell..., a shadow of my former self...
I still can hear at night the gagged screams of those innocent young cats who were strangled and burned alive just to please the sadism of this monster... his frantic eyes before a spectacle that could only give pleasure to somebody like him... And I helped him with my silence.

(NOW HAGEL IS STRUGGLING WITH HIS SOBBING AS HE TRIES TO RESUME HIS TESTIMONY)

I worked so hard to make of the Nayak Police Department something I could look at with pride in my old years... only to one day let this monster corrupt it and push aside all those who did not abide by his whims; only to look at the other side as he tortured for days that big black cat..., Miac was his name, and then executed him with that Infamous Hanging, an aberration only a sick mind like his could have created. He was executed with no evidence; with nothing to justify it. In his case, as in the case of those poor cats, the police reports were fabrications! They were murdered... and I took part of it. I let him do this to them... and to me... and now there's no end for my shame...

THEN CHIEF HAGEL HUGS THE POLE WITH THE MICROPHONE AND BEGINS TO CRY. THE EYES OF THE ATTENDANTS TURN BACK TO RACHY, STILL LEANING OVER GATITO'S BODY, WHOSE PAIN SEEMS TO KNOW NO END, SURROUNDED BY THE ANIMALS OF THE NAYAK POLICE AND THE IMMIGRATION POLICE STILL ARGUING AROUND HER. AND THAT'S WHEN THE ATTENDANTS RENEW BOOING THE IMMIGRATION POLICE AND TANCRUARF.

253. CUTS TO: EXT.: SPECTATOR AREA.

SANDERF

I demand the right to take the floor, Speaker Tayarih!

TAYARIH

You had your chance, senator, and I'm still waiting for your apology.

SANDERF (yelling)

I'm not finished!

TAYARIH

Oh, yes! You are finished, senator! And now you are in contempt of this Congress! And now the officer in charge of the soldiers of our federal army will remove you from that microphone!

BUT THE OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE FEDERAL ARMY REFUSES TO OBEY TAYARIH'S ORDERS.

OFFICER

I'm afraid a vote is required to use force against a senator, Speaker.

SANDERF (without waiting for Tayarih to let him take the floor)

I accuse Governor Tanruarf of using his powers to manipulate the administration of justice in the state of Nayak for personal purposes, as a result of what three deaths were caused, as we have just learned from Chief Hagel's testimony. This is a serious offense punishable by Infamous Hanging because as a result of this manipulation not just one but three deaths have been caused. So I'm putting to a vote a motion to form an investigative commission on the participation of Governor Tanruarf in these crimes.

TAYARIH (furious, yelling)

You're out of order, senator!

SANDERF (yelling)

You have to remember that you yourself accepted my amendment to the bill that created the Infamous Hanging. If the abuse of power results in an innocent death, the public functionary who committed the abuse, appointed or elected, will be subject to trial for aggravated abuse of power, which carries a punishment of Infamous Hanging, a paragraph you didn't mind to accept at that time because you might've thought you could use it one day only against your enemies, like the mayors of Miyaff, Rouff and Mewow... But now it's the tears of that female what holds you accountable! I put all my prestige on this! And I want a vote!

ATTENDANTS AT THE SPECTATOR AREAS (chanting)

Vote! Vote! Vote!

TAYARIH

The death of an immigrant is not a valid condition for the application of that paragraph, senator!

SANDERF (yelling)

The paragraph makes no distinction between immigrants and legal residents or citizens, Speaker. Stop making excuses!

TAYARIH

As this session has degenerated into a riot that might put at risk the integrity of the members of this Congress, I feel compelled to adjourn this session...

SANDERF

You yielded the conduction of this session to the same animal I am accusing of terrible crimes, Tayarih. Have some decency! If you don't call the vote, I'll do it myself!

TAYARIH (afraid)

This session is adjourned!

BUT NOBODY MOVES. THEN A GOVERNOR RAISES HIS VOICE.

LIBERAL GOVERNOR #1

As you know, I'm governor of one of the two liberal states that are left in our nation, but we all share the same constitution and our constitution says that in a case like this, when the suitability of a governor is questioned and Congress can't reach a decision for any reason, a majority vote of the other governors can settle the difference so, as we the seven governors are here, I'm calling to that vote and I'm casting the first vote. I vote for the investigative commission.

THE GOVERNORS OF THE TWO MOST CONSERVATIVE STATES STEP FORWARD TO CAST THEIR VOTES. THEY OPPOSED THE COMMISSION. AND, AS THE TWO CONSERVATIVE GOVERNORS WERE RETURNING TO THEIR SEATS, THE OTHER LIBERAL GOVERNOR STEPS FORWARD TO CAST HIS VOTE.

LIBERAL GOVERNOR #2

I support the commission!

CHARLES AND DUKE COME RUNNING TO TAYARIH AND WHISPER AT HIS EAR.

TAYARIH

Governor Tancruarf's deputies have come to me with his vote. There is no rule in the constitution preventing him from voting, even if the charges are against him, so I cast the vote that has been brought to my desk by his assistants. He opposes the commission.

SANDERF (Thinking)

That is a lie... But I can't protest before the vote ends. If Tayarih wants something right now, it's an excuse to disrupt the vote.

THE SMIRK RETURNS TO TAYARIH'S FACE. ANOTHER GOVERNOR IS ABOUT TO CAST HIS VOTE.

That's a moderate conservative. Please... Please...

MODERATE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNOR

I vote for the commission.

TAYARIH (Thinking)

The last governor is die-hard conservative. And he will never risk the wrath of his constituents by voting for the commission... Your prestige is gone, Sanderf...

THE LAST GOVERNOR STEPS FORWARD SLOWLY TO CAST THE LAST VOTE, TAYARIH KEPT STARING AT SANDERF WITH THE SAME CONFIDENCE. BUT WHEN THE GOVERNOR PASSED BY TAYARIH'S DESK, THE GOVERNOR TURNS INSTEAD TO LOOK AT THE SPOT WHERE CHIEF HAGEL IS STILL LEANING ON THE POLE SUSTAINING THE MICROPHONE WITH HIS EYES CLOSED.

LAST CONSERVATIVE GOVERNOR

I am looking at my old friend, Chief Hagel, and it's heartbreaking to me. We were both born in Nayak and we used to hang out together a lot before I moved to the state of which I am now governor. I remember him as a proud conservative who took pride on his hard work, on his discipline and on his values. And I remember how even after life sent us through different paths, he used to write to me about his achievements in the Nayak Police Department. Even more than he used to write me about his family. And I have never known an animal more loyal to family values than Chief Hagel. I remember telling my friends that for me the word of Chief Hagel was a guarantee of truth because I've never known a more honest animal in my life. I've never known a tougher and more no-nonsense animal than him either.

That's why it pains me to see him like that now. Maybe this vote is going to end my political career, but I don't want someday to wake up feeling like him. Knowing him I know that that pain must be unbearable. And I need nothing else but looking at him to convince myself that there are merits for an investigative commission. So my vote is for the commission, Speaker. I yield the floor.

TAYARIH SEEMS NOW PARALYZED, IN SHOCK.

LIBERAL GOVERNOR #1

As there are not precedents for a case like this, right now I'm going to invite my other five colleagues to meet in private with Senator Sanderf, the senator who brought the accusation to our attention, to decide the steps we're going to take...

SEQUENCE 91

254. CUTS TO: INT.: LUXURY BOX. TANCRUARF SEEMS IN SHOCK, PARALYZED AS HE SEES THE EVENTS UNFOLDING ON THE IMPROVISED SESSION OF CONGRESS.

KRUORF (yelling at Tancruarf)
Tancruarf! (PAUSE) Tancruarf!
(TANCRUARF IS STILL UNABLE TO REACT.)
Adjourn, imbecile! Adjourn! Adjourn!

THEN KRUORF TAKES TANCRUARF BY THE LAPELS OF HIS SUIT, SHAKES HIM AND PUSHES HIM TO THE MICROPHONE. FINALLY TANCRUARF SEEMS TO REACT.

TANCRUARF
As I am still conducting this joint session of Congress, and considering the inappropriate circumstances that are preventing it from functioning normally, I adjourn this session and convoke a new session for tomorrow morning, when we will be able to address the interests of our nation with a clearer head and a better attitude. Also, as Governor of Nayak, I inform you that for security reasons we're closing Freedom Plaza for the day, reason for which any animal present at Freedom Plaza will start leaving the premises at this very moment.

255. CUTS TO: EXT.: SPECTATOR AREA.

TAYARIH
I endorse the governor's decision...

SANDERF
You are in violation of our Constitution, Governor Tancruarf, and, as Speaker Tayarih has disavowed himself by endorsing your position, I put a motion before the commission of governors for your immediate arrest and the arrest of Speaker Tayarih.

256. CUTS TO: LUXURY BOX. INT.:

KRUORF (to his deputy)
Send the immigration police to escort the governors and members of Congress out of Freedom Plaza. Now! Oh... fuck you! I'll do it myself!

THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ARRIVE TO THE PART OF THE SPECTATOR AREA WHERE THE COMMISSION OF GOVERNORS HAS MET, SANDERF STEPS FORWARD DEFIANTLY.

SANDERF (defiantly)
The governors have arrived already to a decision, four to two, to suspend Tancruarf, Tayarih and Kruorf from their powers and to

arrest them for several violations to the constitution and our criminal law for as long as the investigation lasts.

MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICES APPROACH THE AREA WHERE CONGRESS IS IN SESSION WAVING THEIR BILLY CLUBS WITH ARROGANT EXPRESSIONS. THE OFFICERS OF THE FEDERAL ARMY START GIVING INSTRUCTIONS TO THE SOLDIERS. THE ARMY THEN FORMS A WALL BETWEEN THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ON ONE SIDE AND THE COMMISSION OF GOVERNORS AND SENATOR SANDERF ON THE OTHER. AND ARMY CAPTAIN STEPS FORWARD WITH HIS SABLE UNSHEATHED AND A FURIOUS EXPRESSION. THE SOLDIERS POINT THEIR RIFLES TO THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE.

ARMY CAPTAIN (yelling)

Yield! One more step and my soldiers will hold you as hostiles and shoot! Drop your weapons! Now!

THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE SEEM PARALYZED, THEIR ARROGANT EXPRESSIONS ARE GONE. THE CAPTAIN PROCEEDS TO ARREST KRUORF'S TWO DEPUTIES AS HIS SOLDIERS START TO DISARM AND ARREST THE IMMIGRATION POLICE. ANOTHER CAPTAIN IS PUTTING TAYARIH UNDER ARREST. TAYARIH SEEMS STILL IN SHOCK. THEN A COLONEL MOVES TO THE LUXURY BOX TO ARREST KRUORF, TANCRUARF, DUKE AND MAYOR CHARLES.

TANCRUARF (desperate, crying at Kruorf)

Do something! Do something!

BUT KRUORF DROPS HIS EYES AND SHOWS A BITTER GRIN BEFORE CLOSING HIS EYES. TANCRUARF IS SHAKING. NOW THE COLONEL BANGS AT THE DOOR.

COLONEL

Governor Tancruarf, open the door!

THEN KRUORF OPENS HIS EYES, SHRUGS AND CALMLY OPENS THE DOOR. HE SEES THE COLONEL SPEAKING TO HIM (INAUDIBLE) AS A BLURRY VISION WHILE A SOLDIER HANDCUFFS HIM, TANCRUARF AND HIS ASSISTANTS.

OUTSIDE, THE ATTENDANTS TURN AGAIN TO SEE RACHY, WHOSE WAILING HAS BECOME WEAKER. THE ATTENDANTS HOLD HANDS OR LEANED THEIR HEADS ON THE SHOULDERS OF THEIR LOVED ONES. MANY BEGIN TO CRY.

AT THE OTHER SIDE OF FREEDOM PLAZA, SANDERF IS TALKING TO A LOCAL JUDGE.

SANDERF

The least I can do is to ask you something for their friends now... that it's too late for Gatito and Rachy. Can you take jurisdiction on the immigration issues?

JUDGE (nodding)

I'll allow them to go home after they identify themselves and sign a bond instead of bail.

SANDERF

Please defer their trial dates for as long as you can.

JUDGE

What difference is going to make at the end?

SANDERF (with determination)

That this time I intend to have immigration reform passed.

ONE BY ONE, EACH ONE OF GATITO'S GUY IS FREED. AS SOON AS RODOLFO, MEAU AND ALFGUAU ARE FREED, FOLLOWED BY THE OTHER MEMBERS OF GATITO'S GROUP, THEY RESPECTFULLY APPROACH THE SPOT WHERE RACHY IS STILL LEANING ON THE BODY OF THEIR LEADER AND FRIEND. THEN RACHY STOPS WHIMPERING AND TURNS TO THEM WITH A BEATEN, CONFUSED EXPRESSION. THEY ARE CRYING TOO, THOUGH SILENTLY. MEANWHILE, OTHER MEMBERS OF GATITO'S GROUP, MAKE AN IMPROVISED STRETCHER WHERE THEY PUT GATITO'S BODY. AT FIRST RACHY RESISTS, BUT FINALLY HER POWERLESS ARMS LET GATITO'S BODY GO AND RODOLFO, MEAU AND ALFGUAU PUT IT TO REST ON THE STRETCHER. THEN GATITO'S GROUP LEAVES FREEDOM PLAZA IN SILENCE, TAKING WITH THEM THE BODY OF THEIR LEADER.

SEQUENCE 92

257. CUTS TO: INT.: RACHY'S FATHER'S HOUSE, AT MID-AFTERNOON.
CUTS TO: INT.: RACHY'S HOUSE. RODOLFO AND MEAU PLEA TO RACHY BUT SHE ONLY SHAKES HER HEAD. GATITO'S BODY LIES ON HER BED. RODOLFO AND MEAU SHRUG AND LEAVE. RODOLFO ADDRESS THE GROUP, WHICH IS GATHERED OUTSIDE.

RODOLFO

Guys, Gatito's guy, Rachy has decided to keep Gatito's body. We have to be understanding, guys. He was the love of her life... We still have the empty stretcher with stains of his blood. And we still have to go to Miyaff to tell them about their hero.

(258. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF MIYAFF. LATE AFTERNOON. A MULTITUDE GATHERS AT BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD WHILE GATITO'S

FRIENDS DESCEND FROM THE BACK OF SOME TRUCKS WITH AN EMPTY STRETCHER STAINED WITH BLOOD. BANNERS SAY ‘MIYAFF WITH GATITO,’ ‘ROUFF WITH GATITO’ AND ‘MEWOW WITH GATITO.’ HUNDREDS OF MOURNERS BEGIN TO OCCUPY THE SIDES OF THE STREETS THROUGH WHICH THE PROCESSION MOVES FORWARD AS THE AFTERNOON IS ENDING AND DUSK APPROACHES. THEN A TUXEDO CAT APPROACHES THE ANIMALS MARCHING WITH THE STRETCHER AND PLEAS TO THEM. HE OFFERS AN AMPLIFIED COPY OF THE PHOTOGRAPH GISELLE TOOK OF MIAC AND GATITO AND GIVES IT TO THE OLD LEADER OF ROUFF AND GISELLE. THEY PLACE THE PHOTOGRAPH ON THE STRETCHER AND THE FUNERAL MARCH CONTINUES. AND THEN A GROUP OF FEMALE MOURNERS KNOWN AS *PLAÑIDERAS* ALSO ARRIVES TO PRESENT THEIR RESPECTS WITH THEIR SINGING. THAT’S WHEN THE FEMALE MOURNERS MOVE AT THE FRONT OF THE PROCESSION SINGING NOT WORDS BUT A CONSTANT, PAINFUL THAT IS BEYOND ANY ACCENT OR LANGUAGE.

PLAÑIDERAS

♪A aaaaa a aaaa♪

♪A aaaaa a aaaa♪

♪A aaaaa a aaaa♪

VOICE IN OFF

And even when the dusk was already over them, the *plañideras* kept singing. Nobody seemed tired. Their hearts were too heavy for that. And some animals brought other animals; and sons brought their parents; and parents brought their smaller children to tell them the story of Gatito Inmeegrante, the illegal cat whose strength seemed to rely only on his love for his female and on his dream that one day he could have a fair chance to be legal in the Southern Country. Thus, one father was telling his son how, despite Gatito never having been in the military or trained to fight, he had one day grabbed a pipe and fought the gangs that were coming to destroy the lives of his loved ones. And other told his son that despite the Dancing Doggies having turned him down, he never gave up. And a mother was telling her son that even though he had to make a living doing odd jobs, he never stopped studying because he knew that only by understanding the facts he could bring hope to those he loved. And in the different conversations at both sides of the street different stories of study circles, of love, of politics, of friendship, of battles against gangs, of dignity, of hopes fighting against all odds began to shape the legend of Gatito Inmeegrante. For a moment neither the immigration police nor Tanquarf mattered and immigrants and no immigrants of every origin let their long suppressed pain show on their faces. For a moment there were no more differences between them and everybody held hands. For a

moment there were no divisions and the only thing that counted was to have a heart and to have true feelings in it.

SEQUENCE 93

Three days later...

259. CUTS TO: INT.: RODOLFO'S ROOM. AFTERNOON. IT'S DARK. RODOLFO LIES ON HIS BED, STARING AT THE CEILING WITH MOIST EYES. HE LOOKS DEPRESSED, DETACHED OF EVERYTHING.

CUTS TO. INT. (BLURRY): FRONT DESK AT WHICH RODOLFO WORKS. HE'S GETTING READY TO LEAVE. HIS FRIEND, SANDERF'S CHIEF OF STAFF, HAS COME TO VISIT HIM.

CHIEF OF STAFF

Hey, Rodolfo! Dog! Good news about the progress made by Sanderf with immigration reform. The boss says he would like to have a meeting with you before bringing the bill to the floor...

RODOLFO

Not interested any more.

SANDERF LEAVES WITH AN OVERWHELMED EXPRESSION WITHOUT EVEN LOOKING AT HIS FRIEND.

CUTS BACK TO HIS ROOM. HE'S STILL LYING ON HIS BED WITH THE SAME EMPTY EXPRESSION.

260. CUTS TO: EXT.: BUILDING IN NAYAK. RODOLFO IS LEAVING AND IS INTERCEPTED BY TWO BIG DOGS). RODOLFO STOPS AND STARES DEFIANTLY, LOOKING AT THEM IN THE EYE.

BIG DOG #1

Sir... Mister Gustavo, from the Dancing Doggies, would like to have a word with you. He says that it's a matter of the utmost importance.

RODOLFO

Tell him to go fuck himself.

THE TWO BIG DOGS DON'T MOVE THOUGH.

BIG DOG #1

Sir... It will be only a minute... Please...

RODOLFO LOOKS HESITANT FOR A SECOND.

RODOLFO

You know what? I am going to tell that myself, on his fucking face!

RODOLFO, ANGRY NOW, FOLLOWS THE TWO BIG DOGS TO THEIR CAR.

261. CUTS TO: INT.: OFFICE OF THE DANCING DOGGIES. RODOLFO STARES AT GUSTAVO WITH THE SAME DEFIANCE AND RESENTMENT.

RODOLFO

Do you still think you can use goons? Times are changing, Gustavo... And this is my answer: Go fuck yourself.

GUSTAVO

Give me only a couple of minutes and then you'll be able to tell me whatever you want.

THEN RODOLFO NOTICES THE EMPTY SHELVES, THE BOXES ON THE FLOOR.

RODOLFO (yelling)

Gatito was the leader you will never be! He wanted to give so much..., we could have stopped the suffering of so many innocent immigrants... but you always had to do whatever that bitch Kim told you to do. Are you happy now? His blood is on you! Fuck you and fuck that bitch Kim!

RODOLFO TURNS TO THE DOOR READY TO LEAVE.

GUSTAVO (dropping his eyes)

Kim is not with us anymore... We had a conversation. And she decided... to move forward, to move to some other opportunities...

RODOLFO (staying by the door, giving Gustavo his back)
I don't give a shit anymore.

GUSTAVO

I am leaving too. I think it's time for somebody who can do things... different around here. Aren't you curious about whom the new president of the Dancing Doggies is going to be?

RODOLFO (putting his hand on the doorknob)

I couldn't care less about who leads your shitty organization or organizes your choreographies. It's to tell me this that you called me here?

GUSTAVO

You are.

RODOLFO (scoffing)

Do you think I am going to be the new clown of your circus?

THEN SOMEBODY KNOCKS AT THE DOOR. GUSTAVO TELLS THE ANIMAL KNOCKING TO GET IN. IT IS THE MOVING CREW.

GUSTAVO

It's not just Kim and me who are leaving. On my desk... your desk... you'll find the signed resignations of the members of the board. You can appoint a provisional board with whoever you want to appoint. My staff is also at your disposal, but you can replace whoever you want. For some time you will be free to assemble the team that fits the best whatever you want to do. You can change even the name of the organization if you want. I know you never liked it. It's an idiotic name anyway.

RODOLFO (defiant)

And what makes you think that I'm interested in succeeding you in this ass clown circus?

GUSTAVO

What makes me think that is that you won't want Gatito's sacrifice to be in vain, will you? Tancruarf was the worst of them all, but you know that he's not the only one enemy immigrants have. Also, Sanderf is pushing for immigration reform based on the paper prepared by Gatito himself, the paper you yourself handed to him through his chief of staff. And that'll make a good immigration reform. But still, Sanderf will need grassroots support.

Besides that, after some time, when they don't feel that guilty any more, the same cowards who supported Tancruarf will try to sabotage the immigration reform based on Gatito's dreams. You won't want that, will you?

And you are the best I can think of who can prevent that from happening.

RODOLFO IS NOW LOOKING AT THE DOOR IN SILENCE.

GUSTAVO

Well, it's all set then. Good luck!

GUSTAVO LEAVES. RODOLFO IS NOW ALONE IN THE OFFICE.

SEQUENCE 94

262. CUTS TO: INT.: SMALL, DARK CELL, ANYTIME. TANCRUARF IS IN HIS CELL, SAT AT THE BED.

TANCRUARF (Thinking)

Another one turning me down! Fuck! I have to contact our allies, the loyal officers of the immigration police... any of the gutless animals who signed the pledges, anybody I can get by the balls... And I know the toughest lawyers in Nayak! Why are they turning me down one after the other? Why? Why can't I get one who passes a fucking message to one of the players I need to contact...

TANCRUARF HEARS SOMEBODY KNOCKING AT THE DOOR. THEN HE HEARS THE GUARD UNLOCKING THE DOOR, OPENING IT. TANCRUARF JUMPS FROM HIS BED. THE DOOR IS OPENED AND SIX WELL DRESSED ANIMALS ENTER THE CELL.

I'm saved! Five of them are top leaders of his party. If they have come here, it's for a reason. The pledges at work? The pledges at work! But who the fuck is the other one, the one to which the others make so much reverence...? And those stares...?

THE SIX ANIMALS STARE AT TANCRUARF WITH SEVERITY.

TANCRUARF (frowned but trying to keep smiling)

Dear friends, I knew you would come for me; that you would not leave a fellow conservative behind...

THEN TWO ARISTOCRATS, TWO COLLIES, STEP FORWARD.

ARISTOCRAT #1

Are you aware of what you have done to our party?

(TANCRUARF'S ATTENTION MOVES TO THE SIXTH, THE ONE WHO SEEMS TO BE THE LEADER AND IS NOW STARING AT HIM WITH INDESCRIBABLE HATRED. THE OTHER FIVE KEEP TREATING HIM WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT AND DEFERENCE.)

(RAISING HIS VOICE)Tancruarf, are you listening to me?

TANCRUARF

Y-Yes

ARISTOCRAT #1

Good, because we have no time to lose. We need you to sign a confession for the irregularities that led to the execution of that cat..., Miac, and of the other two. And you're going to declare that the Patriot Party was not responsible for or in any other way backed your actions.

TANCRUARF (smiling with sassy complicity)
Don't worry. I know how to work my way around words...

ARISTOCRAT #1 (upset, raising his voice)
Don't interrupt me! Listen! Sanderf is opening investigation after investigation. To save our party we'll have to support Sanderf on immigration reform and still we won't be able to save many of our leaders...

TANCRUARF STEPS BACK. HIS EXPRESSION CHANGES, LOOKS AT THE COLLIE IN DISBELIEF.

TANCRUARF
That's impossible! Give me a chance to reconnect with the people of Nayak! I can reverse what happened at Freedom Plaza if you give me a chance!

ARISTOCRAT #2
You don't get it, do you? The people have been revolting during these three days asking for your stupid head! As all the crap of your government is being revealed...

TANCRUARF (desperate)
I still have the Examining Post and the Nayak Daily!

ARISTOCRAT #1 (yelling)
The Examining Post and the Nayak Daily have lost all credibility. Today in Nayak they don't use them even to clean bathrooms! A national newspaper has extended his edition to Nayak and is kicking those two out of the market! You want to know how? They're reporting Sanderf's investigations in special editions. Your stupid pledges are leaked everyday to that newspaper! Your cronies' contracts are being audited! So, you have also buried those two pieces of toilette paper that praised you day and night! Now, pay attention! We've reached a deal with Sanderf. He will limit the range of his investigations in exchange of us supporting his bill for immigration reform and of you signing that confession. If you sign the confession, you'll go into exile. If you don't, we'll disassociate from you and vote with Sanderf to send your case to the prosecutor recommending that you be executed by Infamous Hanging. You'll be executed in a week!

TANCRUARF (his voice now turned into a broken whisper)
Kruorf... Tayarih.

ARISTOCRAT #2 (scoffing)

Kruorf and his assistants have already signed confessions assuming responsibility, but stating that they were taking orders from you. And Tayarih... he'll probably die in prison. Now you're going to write what I'm going to dictate you. We don't want you to screw this up too!

TANCRUARF (looking beaten, confused, in shock)

I-I can't.... my work...

THE MAIN ARISTOCRAT BEGINS TO GROWL, OUTRAGED AS HE KEEPS STARING AT TANCRUARF WITH INFINITE HATRED AND IS ABOUT TO SPEAK WHEN AN ARISTOCRAT CAT HOLDS HIS HANDS AND LOOKS AT HIM PLEADINGLY, AS IF BEGGING HIM TO STAY CALMED.

ARISTOCRAT #1

This is business, Tancruarf! You're going to ruin many of our campaign contributors, of our future clients and employers! Fucking Sanderf is going to kill us with the same ammunition you have put at his reach! For your stupid crusade against immigrants you're going to make us pay a huge price! (THEN THE ARISTOCRAT #1 TURNS TO THE OTHERS ANNOYED BEFORE TURNING BACK AT TANCRUARF) You know what? It's useless... Well... Then we have no more options. We'll try to placate Sanderf voting for immigration reform and... with your execution by Infamous Hanging even though he hasn't asked for your death. But we need to disassociate from you. Many of our leaders will be indicted because they let you drag them into your insanity and we may lose any upcoming election for a generation. Here we're trying to save our party for the next generation...

ARISTOCRAT #1 THEN TURNS HIS BACK ON TANCRUARF AND THE ARISTOCRAT CAT BANGS THE DOOR TO CALL THE GUARD. THEN THE GUARD OPENS THE DOOR AND THE ARISTOCRAT CAT CLEARS THE WAY OUT FOR THE MAIN ARISTOCRAT.

TANCRUARF (desperate)

Nooooo! Please! I'll do as you say! I'll do it! I'll do it!

THEN THE GROUP OF ARISTOCRATS STAYS PUT BY THE DOOR AND ARISTOCRAT #1 TURNS TO HIM ONLY AFTER THE MAIN ARISTOCRAT NODS DISMISSIVELY.

ARISTOCRAT #1

Okay, Tancruarf. You're going to write this exactly as I am going to dictate it to you. One more trick, any trick, and I'll ask to be the one who sets you on fire while you hang with your own sadistic invention.

THEN THE ARISTOCRAT #1 TOSSES A PEN AND A PAPER SHEET ON THE TABLE AT TANCRUARF'S SIDE.

ARISTOCRAT #1

Now, seat! And write! 'Citizens of Nayak...'

SEQUENCE 95

Three days later...

263. CUTS TO: BACKYARD OF SOME MILITARY BASE, EARLY MORNING. TANCRUARF IS LED BY THE GUARDS TO THE BACK YARD. FOR A MOMENT HE LOOKS AFRAID AND TRIES TO RUN, BUT THE GUARDS DRAG HIM BACK AND SOON HE SEES CHARLES, DUKE, KRUORF AND HIS TWO ASSISTANTS JOINING HIM. THE SUN REDUCES HIS EYES TO SLITS FOR A MOMENT. THEN THE JUDGE COMES OUT OF SOMEWHERE BEHIND THE LIGHT THAT IS BLINDING HIM WITH A PIECE OF PAPER ON HIS HAND. MEMBERS OF THE NAYAK POLICE DEPARTMENT APPROACH HIM. THEN THE POLICE PUSH HIM INSIDE A BUS.

264. CUTS TO: DESERT WASTELAND. TANCRUARF LOOKS AFRAID.

OFFICER OF THE NAYAK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Get off of the bus!

NOW TANCRUARF CAN SEE IN FRONT OF HIM THE FORTY-FEET-HIGH FENCE HE PROMISED TO BUILD IN APRIL 6, 1987. SOON AFTER, HE CAN SEE THE JUDGE COMING IN FRONT OF THEM.

JUDGE

You all, I don't think I need to repeat the sentence or the charges. Do I? The doors will open right now. You'll have five minutes to be out of the reach of the guards at the top of the towers. If they still see you around after those five minutes, they have orders to shoot you dead. If you ever try to come back, the guards have orders to kill you on the spot. We have prepared some bags for you with food and water, which is much more than what you did for the many immigrants you sent to their deaths from this door.

THEN THE JUDGE TURNS HIS BACK ON THE CONDEMNED AND DISAPPEARS IN THE BUILDING BEHIND THE CUSTOMS POST. THE SIX CROSS THE DOOR. THEN HE FEELS THE HEAVY DOORS CLOSING BEHIND HIM.

265. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME OTHER PART OF THE DESERT.

TANCRUARF (more confident now)

Chief Kruorf, I think we should find a safe way north. With the help of the gangs we should be able to find a place to rest while we think our next move.

KRUORF (smirking as his two former deputies begin to chuckle)
You don't get it, do you? We're going south. We're going to make a detour and then make our way to the two states at the south of the Southern Country.

TANCRUARF (more humble now)

But that route may take two... three weeks. If we go north, we can find a safe place to rest in less than three days...

NOW KRUORF AND HIS ASSISTANTS LAUGH AT HIM. CHARLES AND DUKE, AFRAID, DROP THEIR EYES TO THE FLOOR.

KRUORF (sarcastic)

It's three weeks and, yeah, I'm sure the gangs are going to be happy to see you now that you've fallen in disgrace, especially after all those times you humiliated their leaders and abandoned them when they asked you for support against the Miyaff vigilantes. (SCOFFS) We're going south because I have friends there!

TANCRUARF JUST WALKS IN SILENCE BEHIND THE GROUP, ACCEPTING THE HUMILIATION WHILE TRYING TO THINK. BUT SOON THE GROUP IS GOING UPHILL AND TANCRUARF DEMANDS A BREAK. KRUORF AND HIS FORMER DEPUTIES LAUGH AT HIM AGAIN.

ONE OF KRUORF'S ASSISTANTS

Boss, why don't we just take their bags with food and water and leave them here? They are slowing us down anyway.

KRUORF (still smirking)

No. We may need food on our way south; some meat for once...

Tancruarf stares at Kruorf with horror. He sees the same horror on Charles's and Duke's faces. Tancruarf steps back; his voice dies in his mouth. Then Kruorf and his assistants see that Tancruarf, Charles and Duke have stopped following them.

KRUORF (turning to one of his former deputies)

Relieve the governor from his bag with food and water!

THE FORMER DEPUTIES STRIP TANCRUARF OF HIS BACKPACK AND CHARLES AND DUKE, RESIGNED TO THEIR FATE, TURN THEIR EYES AWAY FROM THEIR FORMER BOSS AND FOLLOW KRUORF AND HIS ASSISTANTS UPHILL.

TANCRUARF STAYS STILL ON HIS SPOT, PETRIFIED, LOOKING AT THEM IN SILENCE. THEY DON'T TURN TO LOOK AT HIM THOUGH. THEN HE SEES THEM DISAPPEARING IN THE DISTANCE, AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HILL.

TANCRUARF (Thinking)

No! I'm not going to die of exposure like an illegal immigrant! I'll confess anything Sanderf or the Patriot Party want me to confess? I'll beg for forgiveness.

I need only one chance to work my way out of this. And I'm good with words... I'll spend the rest of my life in prison, like Tayarih, if there's no other alternative... But I will not die there! They have to let me in!

TANCRUARF TAKES THE ROAD BACK TO NAYAK. HE STARTS TO RUN.
266. CUTS TO: EXT.: WALL OF NAYAK. TANCRUARF APPROACHES THE WALL PLEADING WITH EXPECTING EYES (INAUDIBLE), BUT THE GUARDS AT THE TOP OF THE WALL AND THE TOWERS POINT AT HIM WITH THEIR RIFLES. TANCRUARF BEGS LOUDER AND LOUDER AS HE WALKS FORWARD WITH HIS ARMS RAISED IN SIGNAL OF RENDITION. AND THAT'S WHEN TANCRUARF FEELS THE BULLETS IMPACTING THE GROUND AROUND HIM, GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER TO HIM. SO, AFRAID, TANCRUARF STEPS BACK. A BULLET CHAFES HIM, TEARING HIS JACKET AND LEAVING A THIN STREAM OF BLOOD RUNNING OVER HIS ARM. TANCRUARF LOOKS TERRIFIED NOW. THEN HE RUNS AWAY AS FAST AS HE CAN.

267. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME OTHER PART OF THE DESERT. ALMOST NOON.
TANCRUARF KEEPS RUNNING UNTIL HE FINALLY STOPS, PANTING, THIRSTY. THEN TANCRUARF SCREENS THE LANDSCAPE LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO SHELTER HIMSELF, BUT FINDS NONE. THAT'S WHEN HE SEES THE FLIES. WHEN HE APPROACHES THE OBJECT OVER WHICH THE FLIES ARE GATHERING SO FRANTICALLY, HE SEES THAT IT WAS THE BODY OF AN UNFORTUNATE IMMIGRANT, AN OLD ONE. HIS OPEN MOUTH REVEALS THE AGONY OF HIS LAST MOMENTS. TERRIFIED AGAIN, HE WALKS AWAY UNTIL HE SEES A BIG ROCK AND SEEKS THE SHELTER OF ITS SHADOW. HE IS PANTING AGAIN. HIS EYES ARE MOIST. TANCRUARF SEEKS THE PROTECTIVE SHADE NOW. AND, AFTER A WHILE, WITH HORROR HE CAN SEE THE SHADOW SLOWLY DISAPPEARING UNDER HIS FEET. HE LOOKS CONFUSED, CLUELESS AND AFTER A FEW SECONDS HE BEGINS TO CRY.

SEQUENCE 96

March, 1903...

268. CUTS TO: INT.: BACKROOM AT RACHY'S FATHER'S STORE. RACHY WORKS WITH THE BOOKS LIT BY A DIM LIGHT. SHE LOOKS EMBITTERED. RACHY'S FATHER COMES TO THE BACKROOM FOR SOME BOXES AND STAYS ON THE SPOT, LOOKING AT HER.

RACHY'S FATHER (pained expression, thinking)

Rachy... Rachy.... How can I bring you back? You are getting embittered, my puppy... And my grandson needs you so much... You reject visitors, no matter where they came from. You just stay there allowing your pain do what those monsters could not. You've even turned down Rodolfo and Meau, who came to see Gatito's son. For your son, Rachy, you have to heal... or pretend at least... You won't allow him to have friends or any contact with the animals of Nayak... No, my puppy.

RACHY

Do you need something?

RACHY'S FATHER SHRUGS, SHAKES HIS HEAD AND GOES BACK TO THE STORE.

SEQUENCE 97

269. CUTS TO: EXT.: PLAZA IN NAYAK, WHERE A STATUE HAS BEEN ERECTED TO HONOR GATITO INMEEGRANTE. SHE'S BOUGHT THE YOUNG JOAQUIN GATITO, A KITTEN, TO PLAY. FOR A MOMENT, SHE LETS HERSELF BE DISTRACTED WITH THE FLOWERS SOMEBODY HAS LEFT OVER THE SNOW PILED IN FRONT OF GATITO'S STATUE. HER FACE SHOWS NO EMOTION THOUGH. TO HER SURPRISE, WHEN SHE RAISED HER EYES, SHE CAN SEE HER KITTEN RUNNING AWAY.

RACHY RUNS AFTER HER SON, WHO KEEPS RUNNING DESPITE ALL HER CALLS AND WARNINGS. AND THEN SHE CAN SEE THAT HE IS HELPING A SMALL KITTEN WHO IS CRYING AND SEEMS TO BE WOUNDED. THERE ARE SCRATCHES ON HER KNEES AND ELBOWS. FINALLY, RACHY CATCHES UP WITH HER SON.

RACHY

Gatito, I've told you many times not to run away! And haven't I also told you not to get close to the animals of this city?

YOUNG GATITO (looking distressed, dropping his eyes)

But Mom... I just want to be like my dad.

THEN THE YOUNG GATITO TURNS TO CONTINUE HELPING THE WOUNDED KITTEN. RACHY, MOVED BY HER SON'S WORDS, WALKS SLOWLY THE SHORT DISTANCE SEPARATING HER FROM HER SON AND THEN SHE GETS

ON HER KNEES. NOW SHE HUGS HER SON AND THE KITTEN. AND THAT'S
WHEN RACHY AT LAST CAN CRY. THE YOUNG GATITO HUGS HER MOTHER.

VOICE IN OFF

And then something magic happened, something that had not happened anywhere since that day at Freedom Plaza. A passerby recognized her and put his hand on her shoulder. And the passerby felt her pain and cried with her. But this time Rachy let the hand stay on her shoulder. Then another passerby also recognized her and joined them, putting her hand on her shoulder to share her pain. And her pain was still overwhelming, but the tears of the newcomer helped her another little bit. And soon a couple crossing the park stopped and joined them too, putting their hands on the shoulders of the passersby. So they also shared her pain and made it a little less heavy. And soon other passersby, attracted by the powerful feeling that seemed to be coming from that spot, also joined them and put their hands on the shoulders of those who were already there. And that's how, connected by that same growing feeling, the group got larger and larger all over the park and their hearts could see what their eyes had not been able to see all that time.

That day Rachy felt Gatito was helping her reconcile with life. And that's the day Rachy's heart began to heal.

FADE OUT

-----END EPISODE THREE

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