



GATTO INMEEGRANTE

ALFREDO M. BRAVO DE RUEDA E.

Gatito Inmigrante
(Second draft with some camera directions)

by
Alfredo M. Bravo de Rueda E.

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

Dedicated to Joaquin Luna

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

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

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

MEAU MICKAU, dark gray Russian Blue cat.

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

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

SMUGGLER CAT, cat with rough character

SMUGGLER DOG, dog with rough character

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

DUKE, black Mudi dog.

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

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

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

RODOLFO UFGH, yellow Labrador Retriever

SENATOR SANDERF, Golden Retriever

ATEH TAYARIH, snake

CHIEF HAGEL, old hairy apricot and cream Briard dog

DAVID, white dog

JON, gray and white Bearded Collie.

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

POLITICAL APPOINTEE, Pinfeather dog, bearded, white.

RACHY CORRY, white Labrador Retriever

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

GANG MEMBER KILLED BY GROUL, brown dog.

GANG LEADER, black and white Finnish Lapphund with apricot spots

MIAC, black cat.

GISELLE, black female cat.

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

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

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

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

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

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

FADE IN:

SEQUENCE 1

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

VOICE IN OFF

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. CUTS TO: INT.: STORAGE ROOM

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

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

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

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

RAUL

Pleeease!

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

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

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

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

FADE IN: TITLE

GATITO INMEEGRANTE

SEQUENCE 2

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

ONE OF THE ANIMALS IN THE WAREHOUSE

Sit down or try to control that limping, dog.

GROUL

It hurts!

SAME ANIMAL

Then sit down...

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

GROUL

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

GATITO IS ABOUT TO SPEAK BUT MEAU SPEAKS FIRST.

MEAU

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

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

ALFGUAU BRWAU (with moist eyes)

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

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

SEQUENCE 3

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

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

GATITO'S FATHER

What happened with the interview?

GATITO

Same thing. Why should it have been different?

GATITO'S FATHER (sighing)

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

GATITO

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

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

GATITO'S FATHER

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

GATITO

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

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

GATITO'S FATHER

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

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

GATITO'S FATHER (getting emotional)

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

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

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

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

SEQUENCE 4

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

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

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

SMUGGLER DOG

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

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

DOG WHO COMES WITH THE FAT DOG

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

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

SMUGGLER DOG (expressionless)

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

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

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

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

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

SMUGGLER DOG

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

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

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

SMUGGLED ANIMAL #4

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

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

GATITO

Have they said anything else?

SMUGGLED ANIMAL #4

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

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

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

SMUGGLER DOG

Let's go!

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

SMUGGLER DOG (CLOSE UP)

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

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

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

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

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

GATITO'S FATHER

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

(GATITO SHAKES HIS HEAD.)

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

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

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

SMUGGLER DOG

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

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

SMUGGLER DOG

You can sleep there.

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

SEQUENCE 5

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

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

SUBCONTRACTOR JORGE

And what did you say your experience was?

GATITO

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

SUBCONTRACTOR JORGE (scoffing, condescending)

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

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

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

ROGER

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

(GATITO TURNS TOWARD HIM WITH EXPECTATION.)

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

STORE OWNER (old dog)

Slow, Gatito?

GATITO

It's always slow at this time...

STORE OWNER

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

GATITO

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

STORE OWNER

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

GATITO

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

STORE OWNER

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

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

INTERVIEWER

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

TANCRUARF

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

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

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

INTERVIEWER

Hmm...

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

VIZLA DOG

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

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

GATITO

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

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

VIZLA DOG

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

GATITO

Ah?

VIZLA DOG

A job application... May I fill one?

GATITO

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

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

GATITO

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

GROUL

Groul. Groul Guff.

SEQUENCE 6

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

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

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

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

TANCRUARF

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

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

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

LOCAL LEADER

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

TANCRUARF

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

LOCAL LEADER

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

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

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

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

LOCAL LEADER

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

TANCRUARF

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

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

SEQUENCE 7

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

GUSTAVO

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

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

ACTIVIST

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

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

ASSISTANT

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

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

GATITO (thinking)

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

THEN GATITO HEARS A VOICE BEHIND HIM.

RODOLFO (frowned, inquisitive)

May I help you?

GATITO

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

RODOLFO

About...?

GATITO LOOKS UNCOMFORTABLE, HESITANT FOR A MOMENT.

GATITO

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

RODOLFO (still frowned and inquisitive)

Why?

GATITO LOOKS SOMEWHAT ANNOYED NOW.

GATITO

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

RODOLFO (now looks friendlier)

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

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

GATITO

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

RODOLFO

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

GATITO

And Gustavo?

RODOLFO

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

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

RODOLFO (behind Gatito)

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

GATITO

Okay...

GATITO FOLLOWS RODOLFO TO THE KITCHEN.

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

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

RODOLFO

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

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

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

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

GATITO

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

RODOLFO (grimacing and shrugging)

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

GATITO (frowning)

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

RODOLFO (frowning)

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

GATITO

Animals like us do.

RODOLFO (looking hesitant)

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

GATITO

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

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

RODOLFO

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

SEQUENCE 8

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

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

TANCRUARF

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

DUKE (grinning)

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

TANCRUARF

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

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

TAYARIH

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

TANCRUARF (following Tayarih with attention)

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

TAYARIH

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

TANCRUARF (looking uncomfortable now)

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

TAYARIH (smiling reluctantly)

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

TANCRUARF (sounding more defiant now)

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

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

TAYARIH

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

TANCRUARF (grinning, dropping his eyes)

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

TAYARIH

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

TANCRUARF

Okay. I can live with that.

TAYARIH

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

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

CHARLES

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

TANCRUARF

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

CHARLES

But... will they let us?

TANCRUARF (smiling)

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

CHARLES (still hesitant)

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

TANCRUARF

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

(CHARLES LOOKS REASSURED.)

TANCRUARF (smiling again)

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

SEQUENCE 9

February, 1897...

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

RODOLFO (thinking)

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

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

RODOLFO (smiling)

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

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

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

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

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

GATITO

Wait, wait, wait! Senator Sanderf was here?

THEN RODOLFO, SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED, STOPS WHISPERING.

RODOLFO

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

GATITO

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

RODOLFO

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

GATITO (frowning)

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

RODOLFO (smiling a bit nervously)

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

GATITO (looking amused with Rodolfo's challenge)

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

RODOLFO

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

GATITO (more at ease now)

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

RODOLFO (not looking as confident as before)

Yes, I believe I can.

GATITO

Good. Then give me a few days.

THEN THE GROUP CONTINUES CHATTING AND LAUGHING.

SEQUENCE 10

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

GROUL

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

GATITO

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

GROUL

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

GATITO

And the other two guys?

GROUL

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

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

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

ROGER

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

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

GATITO (a bit nervous)

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

ATTENDANT #1 (raising his hand)

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

GATITO

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

We'll need to do some political work to help Senator Sanderf help us, and that implies risks. But that also implies the hope of a change for the better, which today we don't have, or do we?

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

GROUL (raising his hand)

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

ATTENDANT #2 (raising his hand)

Are we going to meet Senator Sanderf too?

GROUL

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

GATITO NODS TO ENDORSE GROUL'S WORDS.

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

GROUL

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

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

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

GROUL

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

GATITO

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

GROUL

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

GATITO

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

SEQUENCE 11

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

GATITO

Nobody deserted after we gave them copies of the document?

GROUL (using a casual tone)

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

GATITO (smirks)

I've heard Tancruarf pays better.

GROUL (looking serious)

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

GATITO LAUGHS AND NOW GROUL LAUGHS TOO.

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

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

RODOLFO

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

GROUL

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

RODOLFO (laughing)

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

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

RODOLFO

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

ATTENDANT #1

And when are we going to see Senator Sanderf?

RODOLFO

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

ATTENDANT #1

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

RODOLFO (smiling)

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

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

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

GATITO

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

RODOLFO (frowning, shrugging)

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

GATITO (staring at Rodolfo)

About Senator Sanderf?

RODOLFO

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

GATITO

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

RODOLFO

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

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

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

RODOLFO

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

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

RODOLFO (unconvincingly)

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

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

GATITO

Guys...

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

RODOLFO

I have to talk to you, Joaquin.

GATITO

What's happening?

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

RODOLFO (dropping his eyes)

Senator Sanderf is not coming.

GATITO (looking outraged now)

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

RODOLFO

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

GATITO

What?!

RODOLFO (sighing)

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

GATITO

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

RODOLFO

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

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

(PLEADING NOW) Joaquin, this is not over. I'll fix it, somehow. Just, please, give me some time. I'll talk to Sanderf's

chief of staff. I'll find some other place. We have not come to this point to give up, not when somebody like Tancruarf is rising!

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

GATITO (grimacing in disgust)

And what else are we going to do here? Dance with flags? Look cute?

RODOLFO (trying to reassure Gatito)

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

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

GATITO

Groul...

RODOLFO

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

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

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

GATITO (raising his eyes to his group)

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

GATITO SEES THE DISAPPOINTMENT IN SOME FACES.

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

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

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

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

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

RODOLFO

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

GATITO (still looking at the building)

If you have to decide between...

RODOLFO

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

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

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

KIM (angry)

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

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

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

RODOLFO NODS AND LEAVES.

RODOLFO (thinking)

Fucking Kim!

SEQUENCE 12

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

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

RODOLFO

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

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

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

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

FEMALE CAT

The chief of staff is unavailable right now...

RODOLFO

That's fine. I can wait...

FEMALE CAT (looking uncomfortable)

He may not be available for the rest of the day.

RODOLFO (trying to smile)

He knows me...

FEMALE CAT

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

RODOLFO

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

FEMALE CAT

Where, then?

RODOLFO

Here... My address.

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

SEQUENCE 13

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

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

TANCRUARF (smiling, reading)

It has been established that they belonged to a gang formed by criminal immigrants, most of them probably illegally in the Southern Country as are the two presented last night by Chief Hagel of the Nayak City Police Department.

(CHARLES AND DUKE ENTER THE ROOM. TANCRUARF KEEPS COMMENTING THE NEWS.)

Charles, they have endorsed us. Call the editor and tell them I want an article and an interview. Then call the other paper that has endorsed us, the Nayak Daily, and ask them the same. Then call the Hanty Show, the radio show. Tell the Hanty that I want to talk in his show about this. This is our chance! Destiny has laid this chance before us. Duke, I need a rally with a banner

saying something about the lives of our children threaten by these illegal immigrants, these two... Think of something catchy for the banner and then bring it to me for approval.

SEQUENCE 14

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

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

GATITO

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

RODOLFO (pleading)

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

GATITO

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

RODOLFO (shrugging)

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

GATITO (his smile turning into a grimace)

They are letting Tancruarf pollute the media unchallenged...

RODOLFO (his eyes seemingly shrinking in his face)

I know, I know. It's stupid.

GATITO (looking at Rodolfo with friendly eyes now)

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

RODOLFO (pleading)

Let me try just a bit more, okay? Just a bit more.

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

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

GATITO (thinking)

We have to be there. Somebody has to show that we are not all stupid...

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

GATITO PASSES THE NEWSPAPER TO GROUL.

GROUL

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

GATITO

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

GROUL

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

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

GATITO

Now more than ever we have to stay united. We have to show that we are different. We have to work harder. Don't think of me. Don't think of yourselves. Think of those you love and, because of them, don't give up.

Now, we need a committee to bring our voice to the Dancing Doggies. Volunteers...?

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

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

ASSISTANT #1

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

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

KIM

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

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

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

GUSTAVO

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

marginalized by everybody. Then one day some rotten apples took advantage of their vulnerability, and gave them a sense of identity, of belonging, but the wrong one and their lives, which could've been put at the service of this great nation, went to waste.

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

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

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

REPORTER FROM THE EXAMINING POST

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

REPORTER FROM THE NAYAK DAILY

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

GUSTAVO (increasingly insecure)

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

REPORTER #3

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

REPORTER #4

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

GUSTAVO

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

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

ASSISTANT #1

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

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

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

RODOLFO (to Gatito)

I could see you at last. Come with me!

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

FAT CAT (face shows his little intelligence)

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

RODOLFO (to Assistant #2)

Hey! He is next!

ASSISTANT #2 (startled)

But Kim...

RODOLFO (menacing, rising his voice)

You know who I am? He is next!

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

GATITO

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

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

GUSTAVO

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

RODOLFO

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

KIM (angry, approaching the podium)

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

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

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

RODOLFO (apologetic, whispering)

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

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

GROUL (ignoring Rodolfo)

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

(GATITO DROPS HIS EYES AGAIN.)

Joaquin, let's go...

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

SEQUENCE 15

NEXT MORNING...

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

CHIEF HAGEL

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

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

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

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

Now, if you have questions...

NAYAK DAILY REPORTER (raising his hand)

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

CHIEF HAGEL

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

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

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

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

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

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

CHARLES

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

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

DUKE

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

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

SEQUENCE 16

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

GATITO (with a disapproving tone)

It’s been a few weeks...

RODOLFO

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

GATITO (shrugged)

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

RODOLFO

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

GATITO

The Dancing Doggies...

RODOLFO

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

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

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

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

RODOLFO

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

GATITO (raising his eyes to RODOLFO)

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

RODOLFO

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

(GATITO SHRUGS, LOOKS DISAPPOINTED)

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

(GATITO LOOKS HESITANT)

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

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

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

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

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

GATITO (frowning too)

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

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

RODOLFO

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

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

GATITO's GUY

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

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

GATITO

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

GATITO's GUY

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

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

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

GATITO's GUY

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

RODOLFO (somewhat skeptically)

Yeah!

(LEANING TO GATITO, WHISPERING)

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

(RODOLFO LOOKS AMUSED NOW)

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

SEQUENCE 17

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

GROUL

Fucking Rodolfo couldn't get us something closer?

GATITO

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

GROUL

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

GATITO

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

GROUL

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

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

GATITO NODS AND SEE GROUL LEAVE WITH HIS BAG.

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

MEAU

Can I have a word with you, Gatito?

GATITO

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

MEAU

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

GATITO

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

GATITO'S GUY

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

GATITO

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

GATITO'S GUY

But Gatito, they despise us...

GATITO

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

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

GATITO

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

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

GROUL

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

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

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

GROUL

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

GATITO

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

GROUL

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

GATITO

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

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

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

GATITO (trying to smile)

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

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

SEQUENCE 18

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

ROGER (dropping his eyes)

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

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

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

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

GATITO

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

ANOTHER ONE OF GATITO's GUYS

But, Gatito, they despise us!

GATITO

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

GROUL (addressing the group)

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

GATITO

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

ANOTHER ONE OF GATITO's GUYS

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

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

THE SAME GUY

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

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

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

ANOTHER ONE OF GATITO'S GUYS

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

GROUL

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

NOW GATITO LAUGHS TOO.

January 20, 1897...

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

TANCRUARF

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

GATITO (thinking)

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

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

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

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

DAVID

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

RODOLFO (somewhat startled)

At what time?

DAVID

Anytime. I am not getting out this Saturday.

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

RODOLFO (somewhat frowned, trying to smile)

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

DAVID

Come in.

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

DAVID

A smoke?

RODOLFO SHAKES HIS HEAD, KEEPS STARING AT DAVID.

RODOLFO

You know I don't smoke, dog.

DAVID

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

RODOLFO

Come on! We have been friends for how long?

DAVID (staring seriously at Rodolfo)

Okay?

RODOLFO (scoffing)

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

DAVID (Still staring seriously at Rodolfo)

I want your word, dog.

RODOLFO (frowning, losing his smile)

You know you have it.

DAVID (nodding)

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

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

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

RODOLFO (nodding)

You are scaring me dog...

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

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

DAVID

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

RODOLFO (his skeptical eyes reduced to slits)

Campaign contributors?

DAVID

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

RODOLFO (astonished)

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

DAVID

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

RODOLFO (grimacing)

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

DAVID

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

RODOLFO

Had...?

DAVID

Yes. Had.

RODOLFO (skeptical)

How?

DAVID

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

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

DAVID

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

RODOLFO

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

DAVID

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

RODOLFO

And Speaker Tayarih is still on their side?

DAVID

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

RODOLFO

How do you know that?

DAVID

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

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

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

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

GATITO

Are you sure about this?

RODOLFO (nodding and giving him some keys)

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

RODOLFO

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

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

I wish I had better news...

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

GROUL

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

SEQUENCE 20

Early April, 1897...

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

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

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

GROUL

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

GATITO (dropping his eyes and grimacing)

I wish I knew. You have doubts?

GROUL

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

GATITO

No. It's not.

GROUL

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

GATITO

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

GROUL

Did Rodolfo tell you something about that?

GATITO

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

GROUL (scoffing and grimacing himself)

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

SEQUENCE 21

May, 1897...

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

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

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

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

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

DUKE

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

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

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

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

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

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

CHARLES

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

cutting the help to its police department's budget. Miyaff is going to be the gangs' booty... We had to somehow reward them for their services after all, didn't we?

SEQUENCE 22

March 18, 1899...

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEMBER OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE

Hey, you, stop right there!

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

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

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

MEMBER OF GATITO'S GROUP

Are you sure nobody was following you?

MEAU (somewhat upset)

For the third time, yes!

GATITO (as the others turn to him)

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

GROUL

Do you know where to find him?

GATITO

I'm not sure but I have to try.

GROUL

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

GATITO (with an unappealable tone)

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

GROUL

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

GATITO

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

GROUL

So?

GATITO

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

GROUL (yelling)

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

GATITO

My documents are convincing. Are yours better?

GROUL SNARLS BUT GATITO STARES AT HIM FIRMLY.

GROUL (turning to the others)

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

GATITO (upset, turning to the others too)

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

GROUL (protesting)

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

GATITO

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

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

Fuck you!

GROUL LEAVES THE ROOM ANGRY.

SEQUENCE 23

Next morning...

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

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

GUARD #1 (sat at the table)

Documents?

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

GUARD #1

Joaquin Gatito...

GATITO

Migran, sir.

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

GATITO

Senator Sanderf's chief of staff, sir.

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

GATITO

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

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

GATITO

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

GUARD #1 (smirking)

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

GATITO GRINS, PRETENDS TO BE ASHAMED.

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

Call Sanderf's office.

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

GUARD #1

The chief of staff you said?

GATITO

Yes, sir.

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

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

FEMALE CAT IN OFFICE ATTIRE

Are you Joaquin Gatito... Migran?

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

Yes...

FEMALE CAT IN OFFICE ATTIRE

Come with me, please.

THE FEMALE DISAPPEARS BEHIND THE DOOR.

GATITO

Are you keeping my documents, sir?

GUARD #2

Ah? No! Here you are.

RELIEVED, GATITO FOLLOWS THE FEMALE.

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

CHIEF OF STAFF

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

GATITO

Yes, sir...

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

CHIEF OF STAFF

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

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

CHIEF OF STAFF

Please, write here their names and their description.

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

SEQUENCE 24

101. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. GATITO IS LOOSENING THE TIE AND TAKING THE JACKET OFF. AND, AS HE UNBUTTONS HIS SHIRT, HIS GUYS ARE APPROACHING HIM TO PAT HIM ON THE SHOULDER, TO OFFER HIM SOME TEA, TO ASK HIM WHAT THEY COULD DO TO HELP. THEN THEY TURN TO THE DOOR. IT'S GROUL COMING BACK. IMMEDIATELY, GROUL HUGS GATITO, HIS EYES TURNED INTO SLITS WITH RELIEF.

GATITO

How are the families taking it?

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

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

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

GROUL (apologetically)

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

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

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

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

GROUL (unconvincingly)

I've heard those stories but...

MALE

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

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

GROUL (raising his eyes to the male)

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

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

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

RODOLFO (looking somber)

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

GROUL (upset)

We have to help them come back!

RODOLFO (sighing)

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

GROUL (angry, protesting)

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

RODOLFO (shrugging first and then getting upset himself)

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

GROUL (raising his voice)

Otherwise what?

GATITO

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

GROUL (staring at Rodolfo, yelling)

Otherwise what?

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

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

RODOLFO

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

GATITO

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

RODOLFO (nodding, looking ashamed)

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

GROUL (leaving the room)

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

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

RODOLFO

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

GATITO (nodding, pleased)

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

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

RODOLFO

We just need time.

GATITO

More?

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

FADE OUT...

-----END EPISODE ONE

SEQUENCE 25

FADE IN...

Next morning...

106. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. GROUL IS TALKING TO GATITO AND THE OTHER GUYS, WHO ARE SAT AT A TABLE.

GROUL

I have a name. I can talk to him today...

GATITO (his eyes still on the table)

Do your best. We can give an advance but not full... You know...

107. CUTS TO: INT.: UNTIDY HOUSE, WHERE A FAT DOG WHO LOOKS LIKE A GANG MEMBER HEARS TO GROUL WITH ATTENTION.

GROUL

In this piece of paper you have the name and description of both of them, the point from where they were expelled and the moment when they expelled them. (Thinking: *I have to show I am in control. I can't show any weakness to this piece of shit...*)

GANG MEMBER (with arrogant demeanor)

My partners control the border. We'll find your friends and bring them back. You will give me a day to find them. Then I will give

you proof of having found them. The price is five thousand dollars... each.

(CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE. GATITO AND THE GUYS ARE PUTTING MONEY ON THE KITCHEN TABLE)

(CUTS TO: INT.: GANG MEMBER'S HOUSE. THE FAT DOG TALKS TO TWO OF GATITO'S GUYS, A DOG AND A CAT)

GANG MEMBER

I have the proof we have them... But I think I told the other dog the other day that you will have to pay an advance.

GATITO's GUY (dog)

All in advance is out of discussion. We're not bargaining on the price, but no advance in full.

THE GANG MEMBER, SOMEWHAT UPSET, GIVES THEM A HANDFUL OF PIECES OF CLOTH.

GANG MEMBER

Well, you have your fucking proof here. I'll bring them here and you'll bring the money. All. Or I'll keep those two...

108. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE.

MEAU

Yes, that's what they were wearing that day.

THEN GATITO NODS AND THE DOG AND THE CAT, THE GO-BETWEENS, LEAVE THE WAREHOUSE.

Two days later...

109. CUTS TO: EXT.: BEHIND SOME BUSHES AT NIGHT. THE GO-BETWEENS ARE ESCORTED BY GROUL AND SOME OTHER GATITO'S GUYS TO SOME BUSHES FROM WHERE THEY CAN SEE THE GANG MEMBER'S HOUSE. GROUL HUGS THEM AND THEY LEAVE. CLOSE UP OF GROUL'S FACE, THAT LOOKS ANXIOUS. PAN OF THE OTHER GUYS' FACES, WHICH LOOK CONFUSED. CLOSE UP OF GROUL'S FACE, THAT LOOKS WORRIED NOW. CLOSE UP OF THE FRONT DOOR OF THE GANG MEMBER'S HOUSE. PAN OF GROUL AND THE OTHER GATITO'S GUY WAITING.

GATITO's GUY

Groul...

GROUL

I know. They're taking too long. We're going for our friends right now...

110. CUTS TO: EXT.: GANG MEMBER'S HOUSE'S FRONT DOOR. THE IMMIGRATION POLICE COME AND, SOON AFTER, THEIR TWO FRIENDS, HANDCUFFED, ARE PUSHED THROUGH THE DOOR ALL THE WAY TO THE BACK OF THE TRUCK.

111. CUTS TO: EXT.: BEHIND THE BUSHES. GROUL AND THE OTHER GATITO'S GUYS STARTLE.

GROUL (looking furious)

As soon as the police truck leaves we are going for that fat piece of shit... He's going to pay pay for this treason.

112. CUTS TO: EXT.: GANG MEMBER'S HOUSE'S FRONT DOOR. EVEN THOUGH THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ARE STILL THERE, MORE AND MORE GANG MEMBERS COME TO THE HOUSE.

GATITO's GUY (sounding afraid)

Are you sure you want to do this now, Groul?

113. CUTS TO: EXT.: GANG MEMBER'S HOUSE'S FRONT DOOR. MORE AND MORE GANG MEMBERS ARE COMING.

114. CUTS TO: EXT.: BEHIND THE BUSHES. GROUL, LOOKING BEATEN, CONFUSED, ASHAMED, ENRAGED, SHRUGS AND THEN TURNS TO THE OTHERS AND WITH HIS EYES STILL ON THE FLOOR SHAKES HIS HEAD.

115. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM. GATITO, LOOKING DEVASTATED, FALLS HEAVILY ON THE CLOSEST CHAIR. ASHAMED, GROUL, ON HIS FEET, HAS DROPPED HIS EYES TO THE FLOOR.

GATITO

Do they know where to find us?

GROUL (shaking his head, in a barely audible voice)

No. At least I made sure of that.

GATITO (nodding, pained and somewhat disengaged)

We better go to sleep now. See that we have double guard tonight.

SEQUENCE 26

Next day...

116. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM, AT NIGHT. THE THIRTY MEMBERS OF GATITO'S GROUP ARE IN ATTENDANCE. THE KITCHEN TABLE IS FACING ALL THE ATTENDANTS. GATITO IS SAT IN THE MIDDLE; GROUL IS SAT AT HIS SIDE, HIS EYES DROPPED ON THE TABLE. GROUL LOOKS AS IF HE HAD NOT SLEPT. GATITO GLANCES AT GROUL WITH CONCERN AND THEN OPENS THE SESSION.

GATITO

Before we begin, I need two volunteers to go see the families of the two friends we have lost yesterday. The volunteers will also have to visit the families of our friends we couldn't rescue yesterday and tell them that... we don't expect good news any more.

SEVERAL ANIMALS RAISE THEIR HANDS. ALFGUAU AND GROUL RAISE THEM FIRST THOUGH.

GATITO

Are you sure, Groul?

GROUL NODS, HIS EYES STILL ON THE TABLE. ONE SMALL DOG RAISES HIS HAND AT THE REAR OF THE ROOM. GROUL RAISES HIS HAND AGAIN BUT GATITO TAKES THE QUESTION.

GATITO

Okay, now we're going to discuss what we're going to do about what happened yesterday.

THEN THE SAME SMALL DOG RAISES HIS HAND AGAIN. GATITO NODS AND THE SMALL DOG TAKES THE FLOOR.

SMALL DOG

Gatito, why didn't we go over them yesterday night? We might still have been able to rescue our friends and our money! I'm not afraid to fight!

GROUL RAISES HIS HAND AGAIN. GATITO LETS HIM TAKE THE QUESTION.

GROUL

There were too many of them by the moment the police left and, even if we had fought and prevailed, by the moment we would've broken into their house, it would've been too late to at least get our money back anyway. And our friends were already gone. The immigration police took them before our eyes. And it's obvious our other friends never were there. And, as I said, our money must have been gone soon after. That must be why so many gang members came all of a sudden... They must have come to protect the piece of shit who deceived us and for their cut... Anyway, it was my idea. I assume full responsibility.

GROUL, STILL ASHAMED, DROPS HIS EYES BACK ON THE TABLE.

GATITO

They would've been expecting our attack. That's why there were so many of them. Anyway, we had already lost what was the most precious for us and we would've only put more of us at risk had we allowed ourselves to be carried away by our rage. I, like you, would have liked vengeance, but we have to keep a clear mind. That's why I decided to wait.

A CAT RAISES HIS HAND.

CAT

There must be something we can do about our friends, Gatito, and about our money!

GATITO

The only thing we can do for our friends is to help their families. We have to find alternative channels to learn if they could make it to the Northern Country or what happened to them if they didn't. Although I guess us knowing that is not going to help them very much, so... we better focus on the families. Now, with respect to the money, we'll have to swallow the fact that it's lost. It's not the first time we have had to go through some financial loss when subcontractors have not paid our friends for their work, although I must admit that this time the loss is big... And now, with Tancruarf, many subcontractors have learned that they can get away with not paying us and that we cannot go to the courts any more... We'll have to live with this as we have learned to live with that. That's precisely why we're fighting, isn't it?

(GATITO THEN DROPS HIS EYES TO THE TABLE AND SOUNDS BEATEN FOR THE FIRST TIME)

I wish there's something we can do. If at least they were not protected by the immigration police...

(THEN GATITO RAISES HIS EYES AGAIN)

If we attack them just for vengeance, we would expose ourselves, our warehouse, and soon the immigration police would be here. And I don't want to lose anybody else.

ANOTHER CAT

But it's not fair, Gatito!

GATITO

I know. If there was something we could do... But there isn't.

A DOG (raising his hand and standing up)

Gatito, what are we going to do if another one of us gets caught?

GATITO (grimacing with bitterness)

I am open to suggestions, but unless we can find a way to bring our friends back that doesn't go through the gangs, I am afraid there's nothing we can do but to help the families.

(THEN GATITO'S EYES SWEEP THE ROOM BUT NOBODY ELSE RAISES HIS HAND)

Unless we find a safe way, I don't want to risk another one of us. Groul did what he believed was right in his heart and did it for love to our friends. But unfortunately the world has changed for the worst and now we have to be more careful. And, as long as we take care of each other, we'll be better off together than if each one of us has to face this new world alone.

A FEMALE DOG (raising her hand)

We are not angry with Groul, Gatito. We all wanted to do what he did. We are angry with the gangs and the immigration police. Why do they hate us so much, Gatito?

GATITO (shrugging)

I wish I knew. I wish I knew why they have projected on us all they hate and despise and why they even blame us for everything that is wrong in the Northern Country as if we were not its victims too. My hope is that Tancruarf's power at some moment will have to decline. And we have to be ready to bring the citizens of Nayak the truth about who we really are when that happens.

(THEN GATITO SIGHS PROFOUNDLY)

We'll think of something to replace the money that has been lost and we'll call another meeting to inform you as soon as possible. Of course, we are all friends here and we welcome suggestions.

GATITO'S FRIENDS LEAVE THE ROOM IN SILENCE. GATITO SEES GROUL RUSHING OUT OF THE ROOM. GATITO FOLLOWS HIM WITH HIS EYES UNTIL HE SEES HIM DISAPPEARING INSIDE A CLOSET. WORRIED, GATITO APPROACHES THE CLOSET.

117. CUTS TO: INT.: BY THE CLOSET DOOR.

THEN GATITO LEANS HIS EAR ON THE DOOR. GATITO HEARS GROUL SOBBING AND DISCREETLY LEAVES.

SEQUENCE 27

That late afternoon...

118. CUT TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE, A SMALL ROOM. GROUL AND ALFGUAU ARE BRIEFING GATITO, WHO LEANS ON A SMALL TABLE.

ALFGUAU

The families of two of our lost friends, the ones we tried to rescue, are canvassing for us in the neighborhood. They are going to talk to their friends about what we tried to do and what had happened to our other friends for trying to help them. It seems as if that way they are trying to give some sense to their loss. But the families of the two who have just been ambushed by the gangs and arrested look still distressed, unbelieving of what has actually happened to them, uninterested in the support we offer them. They only want their loved ones back. And when I explained them the circumstances of their arrest, the reaction was hostile, to say the least. The mother of one of them even blamed Groul for the arrest of their son and tried to scratch him, being barely contained by other relatives who then asked us to leave.

THEN THEY HEAR SOMEBODY KNOCKING AT THE DOOR AND RODOLFO OPENS IT. GATITO SPEAKS TO HIM.

RODOLFO (with a sad smile)

I've been talking to my friend, the chief of staff. There's nothing we can do for your friends, but at least I can see that we make you a loan, so you can cover the basic expenses. We have saved five thousand dollars for some contingency. I'll see that we loan you that. Anything else we can do, the little we can do, count with us.

GATITO (upset now)

Why the regular police aren't protecting us? And the immigration police are protecting the gangs! They came for our friends and not even one of the gang members was arrested.

RODOLFO (closing his eyes with disappointment)

Actually the liaison between the immigration police and the regular police is Tancruarf's political appointee in the police department. Why somebody like Hagel has allowed this to happen? I don't know. I guess there's very little he can do to oppose Tancruarf anyway. He can always resign in protest, but I guess that's all he can do. With Tancruarf at the top of his power, nobody would pay attention to him. Few would miss him now. It wouldn't be a sacrifice. It would be a waste.

(RODOLFO NOTICES THAT GATITO SHRUGS)

Next year Tancruarf is going for reelection. We have to think of something to stop him, Gatito. All this has to stop!

RODOLFO NOW NOTICES SKEPTICISM, DISBELIEF ON GATITO'S FACE AND HIS EYES DROP AGAIN, BEATEN THIS TIME. SO HE JUST PUTS HIS HAND ON GATITO'S SHOULDER.

RODOLFO

Well, I have to go.

GATITO

Thanks for the loan, Rodolfo. We'll repay you as soon as we can.

RODOLFO

Don't worry about that. Besides that, it's not only my money. Now, make sure the sacrifice of your friends is not in vain and that we're going to do something to give their children a better life. We have to stop Tancruarf. [(Thinking: *And the ten thousand dollars robbed that night will have another consequence: the gangs will see the lack of retaliation as a sign of weakness and seek more money on immigrant neighborhoods. Gang activity increased in Miyaff, Rouff and other towns. But why mentioning that? It's already very screwed up as it is...*)]

RODOLFO NOTICES THE SAME SKEPTICISM AND DISBELIEF IN THE FACES OF THE OTHER GATITO'S GUYS.

119. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM, AT NIGHT. GATITO IS READING THE NEWSPAPER.

CUTS TO: INT.: INTERIOR PAGE OF NEWSPAPER: A GANG MEMBER HAD BEEN FOUND DEAD. HIS FACE HAD BEEN SMASHED BY CONTINUOUS AND RELENTLESS BLOWS. IN A FLASH, GATITO SEES GROUL'S FACE. THEN, HE REMEMBERS GROUL TRYING TO HIDE HIS SWOLLEN HANDS AND THEN HIM USING GLOVES FOR DAYS. THEN GATITO REMEMBERS GROUL WATCHING THE DESERTED STREET FROM A WINDOW, DETACHED OF EVERYTHING.

CUTS TO: INT. MEAU BRINGS A BATCH OF LETTERS AND SPREADS THEM ON THE TABLE. GATITO TAKES ONE WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION. GATITO SEEMS IN SHOCK FOR A MOMENT, THEN CAUGHT BY INFINITE SADNESS. GATITO LEAVES THE LETTER ON THE TABLE AND GOES WITH DIFFICULTY TO THE SAME CLOSET WHERE GROUL HAD GONE DAYS AGO AND CLOSES THE DOOR BEHIND HIM. MEAU, WORRIED, TAKES THE LETTER FROM THE TABLE. IT'S SIGNED 'YOUR LOVING FATHER' AND DATED TWO MONTHS AGO. ONE PARAGRAPH SAYS 'YOU MOTHER DIDN'T WANT ME TO MENTION ANYTHING UNTIL THE END. SHE WAS PROUD OF YOU, OF YOUR FIGHT, OF YOUR GUYS TO THE LAST DAY AND THAT'S WHY SHE MADE ME PROMISE NOT TO SAY ANYTHING. BUT THE DAMN CANCER FINALLY TOOK HER FROM ME. HER LAST WORDS WERE FOR YOU TO STAY FIRM, SON. IT HURTS LIKE NOTHING ELSE CAN HURT. BUT WE HAVE TO BE STRONG, FOR HER, DON'T

WE?’ MEAU SILENTLY APPROACHES THE CLOSET BUT HEARS GATITO SOBBING AND LEAVES DISCREETLY.

SEQUENCE 28

120. CUTS TO: INT.: TANCRUARF’S OFFICE, WHERE HE SMILES SATISFIED AS HE WATCHES NAYAK THROUGH HIS WINDOW. DUKE KNOCKS AND OPENS THE DOOR.

DUKE

I was about to leave, sir... Making plans?

TANCRUARF

The effects of the Big Drought, the way we managed the gang problem and the cowardice of both liberals and conservatives all helped make of 1899 the ‘*conservative wave*.’ It’s amazing to see how fragile a society can be, how can it change so fast with the right message... And yes, we need many allies and those many allies have many demands. But managing those demands is also part of the strategy. And the fact that so many changes took place in eighteen ninety nine has made the life of senators like that Sanderf very difficult. That’s why, as Sanderf tried to contain the conservative wave, Tancruarf’s wave, overflowing in so many fronts, immigration reform has come to be a forgotten issue for liberals. At the end, even if only for practical reasons, Sanderf himself had to sacrifice that issue, immigration.

And now that everybody sees the illegals as we see them, we can move to reforms that rewarded our allies and put our rivals in precarious situations. And, thanks to the Examining Post and the Nayak Daily, who is going to challenge us when we proceed to realign the political and economic forces of Nayak? Small farmers don’t like our *enforcement by attrition*? Fuck them! We have the importers on our side and donors who know how to deal with illegals discreetly and don’t forget to whom they should contribute to keep the immigration police at bay.

We are here to stay, Duke. We are here to stay.

SEQUENCE 29

July, 1900...

121. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE’S MAIN ROOM. CLOSE UP OF GROUL, VOICE OF MEAU IN THE BACKGROUND. MEAU STOPS TALKING, GATITO NODS AT HIM AND GOES TO THE TABLE, WHERE GROUL IS SAT, RESTING HIS INJURED ANKLE. HE PUTS A HAND ON HIS SHOULDER AND SITS AT HIS SIDE.

GATITO

I know what's going through your mind, Groul. We are coming from mourning our friends who were betrayed by the gangs and now this... Meau told me how you tried to help Raul to the end, that he had to pull you with all his strength... You would not have saved him. You would have only got caught... And if you don't think of yourself, think of us. Without you, I would be lost. And the group would go in disarray in a matter of weeks.

(GROUL SAID NOTHING THOUGH. HIS EYES WERE STILL FIXED ON THE TABLE. GATITO THEN CHECK HIS BANDAGES.)

You are like me. No matter what you try to do, those memories are going to keep chasing you and overwhelming you. (PAUSE). Take your time. Talk to me when you are ready. But never, never, forget that we need you here.

GATITO LEAVES HIM. GROUL TURNS AND NOW SEES GATITO TALKING TO ALFGUAU, WHO SOON AFTER, WITH MOIST EYES, LEAVES THE WAREHOUSE, FOLLOWED BY GATITO
CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE, MAIN ROOM. MEAU IS ADDRESSING THE GROUP.

MEAU

Come on, guys! Gatito has gone to see Rodolfo to see if he can help us about Raul. But right now we need a double guard and you, Rafael, go after Gatito and be his shadow!

122. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME STREET IN MIYAFF, DAY. GATITO AND RAFAEL ARE TALKING. THEY ARE ARRIVING TO THE TRAIN STATION.

GATITO

I'm supposed to be the leader here and to this day I have not been able to come with an emergency escape plan, with an alternative place in case a raid on their warehouse takes place; with nothing of the sort. It's not that only now I'm thinking about that but...

(CUTS TO: EXT.: MIYAFF TRAIN STATION)

You can go back to the warehouse, Rafael. I'll be okay.

RAFAEL

No, Gatito. I can wait for you at the station or go fill some job applications until you come back. But you are not getting back alone. At what time are you coming back, to meet you at this same spot, Gatito?

GATITO (grinning)

Wasn't I supposed to be the leader?

RAFAEL

No if you are going to say those things. At what time, Gatito?

123. CUTS TO: INT.: TRAIN WAGON. GATITO SITS DOWN AND SURRENDERS TO HIS OWN THOUGHTS. HIS FACE IS REFLECTED ON THE WINDOW'S GLASS.

GATITO (Thinking)

Theoretically we have the numbers and numbers should give us the strength each of us alone would not have to survive in these new times. But for how long? That won't be enough to hold us together. When it comes to living, to have hope, things have not improved. On the contrary. After all this time, it's amazing that we're still thirty or so. But the people of Nayak still can't see us for what they are. They only see us through the caricatures of the Dancing Doggies or through the venomous stereotypes spread by Tancruarf. And for how long I will be able to carry the heavy burden of leading those thirty animals with all their dreams if I myself can't see a way out. Is this burden what doesn't Groul to come back, to be the old Groul?

The months we were more politically active, that burden had seemed more bearable. At least it seemed we were going somewhere... But since we have been reduced to inactivity, to retreat and react, that burden seemed heavier, by the day... This way, soon their morale will break and the group will disintegrate. Despite the risks, despite the immigration police, we have to do something if we're going to survived as a group. But what...?

And Rodolfo? He had promised to get us an alternative place, even if it was only for an emergency, a provisional place to be used if something happened to their warehouse. But no word about a campaign. Nobody wants us.

124. CUTS TO: INT. (BLURRY): COUNTER OF NONPROFIT WHERE RODOLFO WORKS, GATITO'S MEMORY OF THEIR PAST CONVERSATION.

GATITO (looking demoralized)

Thanks. I'll get two of my guys to meet you at the train station.

RODOLFO

That's not necessary. I'll walk.

GATITO

The gangs are everywhere. I'll send you two guys. That's another thing I wanted to talk to you about. Knowing that the immigration police don't care about us and that the regular police won't do anything the immigration police don't let them do, the gangs have been preying on immigrants only. But recently there have been at least two citizens victimized by those pieces of

garbage, two volunteers working for a private social services office in downtown Miyaff.

RODOLFO (raising his eyes to him)

Really? That's interesting... Let me see if I can find out something about that too.

THEN THEY SHAKE HANDS AND WITH SADDENED EYES, RODOLFO SEES GATITO LEAVE.

125. CUTS TO: INT.: TRAIN WAGON. GATITO NOTICES THE SIGN OF DOWNTOWN NAYAK STATION THROUGH THE WINDOW.

126. CUTS TO: INT.: COUNTER OF NONPROFIT WHERE RODOLFO WORKS. GATITO NOTICES THAT SOMEBODY ELSE IS AT THE COUNTER.

FEMALE DOG

Rodolfo? He's on the field. He won't be coming back until after lunch. Any message?

GATITO

Ah? Yes... Tell him please that Gatito was here, that I have something urgent to discuss with him when he visits me this afternoon.

SEQUENCE 30

127. CUTS TO: EXT.: MIYAFF TRAIN STATION, LATE AFTERNOON. RODOLFO RECOGNIZES TWO MEMBERS OF GATITO'S GROUP APPROACHING HIM.

RAFAEL

Rodolfo?

RODOLFO

Yes. It's me. Gatito told me...

THE TWO ANIMALS JUST NOD AND BEGIN TO WALK WITH HIM WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING ELSE.

128. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME STREET OF MIYAFF, POORLY MAINTAINED. RODOLFO NOTICES ANIMALS HE HADN'T SEEN BEFORE. THESE ANIMALS ARE IN GROUPS, LOITERING AROUND THE DOORS OF THE TRAIN STATION. AND HE SEES NO POLICE AROUND TO PROTECT INNOCENT COMMUTERS OR TO INTERVENE IN CASE OF SOME ASSAULT. IT'S THEN THAT HE SEES ONE OF THESE GROUPS FOLLOW A COUPLE DOWN THE OPPOSITE STREET. THEY TURN BY THE CROSSING WITH THE NEXT STREET AND HE LOSES SIGHT OF THE COUPLE AS WELL AS OF THE ANIMALS FOLLOWING THEM.

THEN RODOLFO NOTICES THAT HIS TWO BODYGUARDS ARE SWEEPING THE STREETS WITH THEIR EYES.

129. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM. RODOLFO IS BRIEFING GATITO.

RODOLFO

Raul was deported by the same point of entry as the other four. That's all I could learn about him. I come directly from my friend, the chief of staff. Now, with respect to the gangs, what he has heard is gossip, speculation, but it matches what you tell me is happening here. Tancruarf is preparing himself for reelection and guess on what issue he is going to run. He needs the immigrant menace victimizing citizens; he needs to show that in Nayak and the cities where he's strong that threat has disappeared but that in cities like Mewow, Miyaff and Rouff, where liberals, or what passes for liberals these days, that threat is alive and can come back to Nayak to prey on its citizens any time.

GATITO

Tancruarf doesn't need to go after us to secure his reelection. He must want something else.

RODOLFO

Whatever... It seems that immigrants are going to be again the target of his politics... and that may pass through increasing the gang activity in Miyaff. By the way, I have asked my friend, the chief of staff, to please help me find you an emergency place that is not in any of those three cities... at least until after November, when I hope Tancruarf leaves Miyaff in peace.

GATITO

Rodolfo, you know how much I thank you for all you have done and are doing for us, but we are tired of retreating and reacting. We need to do something these elections... The morale of my guys is at an all times low.

RODOLFO

You know? On my way here I was wondering why nobody has cracked down on your group yet. I reached the conclusion that that is because Tancruarf doesn't know you exist yet. If you finally succeed, he will know you exist and then Tancruarf might decide to make of your group an example and a priority. Just see how we are struggling to find an alternative place and that we have no support. Are you ready to accept the cost that that might

bring, maybe your whole group dead or deported? And what's going to be of the families of those who have families if the group is cracked down?

GATITO

I have thought many times over about that. What you say is true but here, just waiting for the tide to change by itself, with the Dancing Doggies making our situation even worse by the day, I think we gain nothing hiding. And we might have a chance to succeed, no matter how slim, if we participate in these elections. Besides that, as I said, if we keep ourselves inactive, soon the morale will break and that will mean that every animal is by itself. And I don't think their families are going to be better off if that happens.

RODOLFO (dropping his eyes)

The gangs might actually know already that you are here in this warehouse. Are you aware of that?

GATITO (nodding)

We have discussed that this afternoon, before you came. As one of my guys said, if we're going to be fall, it's better to fall under our own flag than to be taken for one of those clowns, the Dancing Doggies. How much time has passed since we first met, four years? And what has improved since then?

RODOLFO (scoffing)

Actually it has been less. We met in February ninety seven. Don't ask me how I remember that. I just do.

(RODOLFO WANTS TO SMILE NOW BUT HE ONLY GETS A SAD GRIN. THEN HE RAISED HIS EYES AGAIN)

Let me see whether I can get you something to do in Miyaff, some canvassing job like in those elections..., or in Rouff. In Mewow they are too afraid of Tancruarf to let you come back after all... Those cowardly shits!

GATITO SMILES BUT THEN PURSES HIS LIPS. THEN HE PUTS HIS HAND ON RODOLFO'S SHOULDER.

GATITO

It's very late right now. Why don't you stay here tonight and you leave tomorrow early with our guys who are employed or looking for a job? You can have breakfast with us before leaving. We wake up at five and the breakfast is at a quarter to six.

RODOLFO (smirking)

Will you give me a good breakfast?

GATITO

Yes... But we only have cold water.

RODOLFO

You are lying, aren't you?

GATITO

Yes. Not about the water. It's nothing fancy but edible. It won't kill you at least.

RODOLFO

You could never tell a good joke, Gatito.

SEQUENCE 31

130. CUTS TO: EXT. (BLURRY): GATITO'S PARENTS' HOUSE IN THE NORTHERN COUNTRY, DAY, FOGGY. IT'S A DREAM. GATITO IS HURRYING UP TO THE DOOR AND THEN IT'S OPENING IT WITH HIS OWN KEY.

131. CUTS TO: INT. (BLURRY): GATITO'S PARENTS' LIVING ROOM. HIS TWO PARENTS AND MIMI ARE THERE (EVEN THOUGH HIS MOTHER IS DEAD ALREADY). MIMI TELLS HIM SOMETHING (INAUDIBLE). GATITO SAYS SOMETHING CASUALLY (INAUDIBLE TOO).

132. CUTS TO: INT. (BLURRY): KITCHEN, HIS TWO PARENTS ARE SAT AT A COFFEE TABLE, TALKING IN A VERY LOW VOICE, WHISPERING, AND LAUGHING DISCREETLY, AS IF THEY WERE SHARING SOME FUNNY SECRET. THEN GATITO STARES AT HIS MOTHER, REALIZING THAT SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT.

133. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE'S DORM, NIGHT. GATITO WAKES UP. THE OTHERS ARE SLEEPING.

SEQUENCE 32

Mid July, 1900...

134. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEWSPAPER STAND, MORNING. PASSERSBY GATHER. THEY READ THE COVERS OF THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY: 'UNSTOPPABLE IMMIGRANT CRIMINALITY IN MEWOW, MIYAFF AND ROUFF,' 'A RAPE AND TWO MURDERS IN MEWOW. WHEN WILL THIS STOP?' 'CITIZENS OF NAYAK TARGETED BY CRIMINAL ALIENS IN ROUFF IN LIMITS WITH NAYAK CITY.'

CUTS TO: INT.: SMALL AUDITORIUM. SAT AT THE END OF A TABLE, DEPUTY JON SMILES BUT HIS EYES SHOW HOW UNCOMFORTABLE HE IS.

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

Both papers practically omitted the explanations given by the officers of those cities: With Nayak cutting funds to their police

departments and with the several restrictions to their jurisdictions imposed by Nayak state and the immigration police, their local police can do very little to protect both citizens and immigrants from these gangs, which, by the way, are not conformed only by immigrants. Worse, new state regulations are forcing them to redirect their personnel and resources to support the immigration police. Yet, at the end, both newspapers presented the crimes as committed by immigrants against citizens with the complacency of local police departments under inefficient liberal administrations. The letters repeatedly sent by the mayors of these cities asking these newspapers to rectify were ignored.

And now Tancruarf's political appointee in the Nayak Police Department has the nerve to convoke a press conference ignoring the objections made by Chief Hagel. And Hagel excused himself from the event saying that he was ill, passing me the ordeal to seat here in his name...

135. CUTS TO.: INT.: SMALL AUDITORIUM. JOURNALIST ARE GATHERING AT THE ROW IN FRONT OF THE TABLE.
CUTS BACK TO CLOSE UP OF DEPUTY JON.

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

The reason alleged by the political appointee to call the press conference was to report the results about cases that are actually still under investigation, cases on which Hagel could've made more progress had not been for the meddling of the immigration police.

CUTS TO: INT.: SAME TABLE. CHIEF KRUORF SMILES SATISFIED.
CUTS BACK TO CLOSE UP OF DEPUTY JON

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

And where could have Tancruarf found this Kruorf, Chief Kruorf now, and name him chief of the immigration police?

THEN THE POLITICAL APPOINTEE STEPS FORWARD TO THE PODIUM FACING THE JOURNALISTS.

POLITICAL APPOINTEE

Another couple has been attacked by a gang in the city of Mewow. The male has been beaten so savagely that he won't be able to move his body again below his waist. His fiancée has been brutally raped and is still under psychiatric treatment in Nayak hospital. The attackers have been identified as immigrants.

CUTS TO: INT.: SAME TABLE. DEPUTY JON DROPS HIS EYES TO THE TABLE.

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

How can he know they were immigrants, pets or citizens if they haven't been captured? Who has identified the attackers? He's letting everybody believe it was the victims. What do the local police of Mewow have to say? They must have been the first to come to the crime scene. And why they are not here? The political appointee simply omitted the point. (GLANCING AT THE JOURNALISTS) He knows the journalists won't make these questions, not these.

POLITICAL APPOINTEE

That's why we have commissioned the immigration police with the direction of the operatives. Only one thing I can promise you. We will find these criminal immigrants.

REPORTER FROM THE EXAMINING POST (raising his hand)

Do you believe the time has come to impose harder punishments on those foreigners who, far from being grateful with the legal residents of this land, come to murder them?

POLITICAL APPOINTEE

It's up to the governor to take that decision but I personally agree about the need to increase the punishment to criminal immigrants.

REPORTER FROM THE NAYAK DAILY (raising his hand)

Isn't this proof that the liberal administrations of Mewow, Miyaff and Rouff have failed and that the state government needs to find a way to take over the police departments of those cities if their voters insist on keeping their liberal administrations?

POLITICAL APPOINTEE

I trust that the citizens of those three cities will make the right decisions in the upcoming elections and that such measures won't be necessary.

SEQUENCE 33

Early August, 1900...

136. CUTS TO: EXT.: NAYAK, POLITICAL RALLY, AT NIGHT. FROM A STAGE, TANCRUARF IS GIVING A MESSAGE WITH TAYARIH. A BANNER ANNOUNCES THAT TANCRUARF IS RUNNING FOR REELECTION.

TANCRUARF

Citizens of Nayak, my friends, in these two years we have made progress, progress indeed. The economy is more prosperous because the jobs of Nayak are now for the citizens of Nayak. Our schools are now better because they don't have to bear the burden of undeserving mongrels who before had been used to steal opportunities from our children. Today Nayak streets are safe because immigrants, used to a life of crime since the very first moment they committed their first offense by trespassing, by crossing the border illegally, have been arrested and deported. Now that they have been kicked back to the Northern Country, where they belong, our streets are finally clean and safe.

Today, because we have reformed the state government from top to bottom, the citizens of Nayak can finally trust their police department and enjoy the services they pay with their taxes. Today, free from regulations and taxes, the captains of our economy have put us in an unprecedented path of progress to be enjoyed by the legitimate citizens and residents of Nayak. Today you can tell your children that you are preserving the culture of Nayak from the mongrelization sponsored in the past by liberals. And today you can tell your children that they will inherit from you the Southern Country instead of the Northern Country.

Nevertheless, not everybody in Nayak state has followed us in this path to prosperity. Mewow, Miyaff, and Rouff have stubbornly preferred to stay in the past and that's why they are still poor cities, plagued by crime and immigrants. But because we have to protect the prosperity we are achieving, because we need to make clear to the voters of those cities that if they don't follow us, we will not tolerate the effects their leniency has on our citizens, we are here to ask you for your support to reelect me as governor of Nayak state for the Patriot Party for another term this November.

(THE ATTENDANTS CHEER AND TANCRUARF MAKES A PAUSE TO LET THEM SHOW THEIR SUPPORT)

Now, there is something that has come to my attention. Those three cities have been deliberately exporting us their criminals, their immigrants, and that has to stop. For this second term, I need your support to reform the judiciary, to increase the powers of Nayak state over cities that don't rise to our standards, and to increase the punishment for criminal immigrants. This has to stop!

(MORE CHEERING ENSUES)

Now if you share my vision, vote for the whole ticket of the Patriot Party this November. You know my record as governor. Don't let anybody lie to you. Fortunately, the press has been informing thoughtfully about my administration. If you are happy with that, vote for me. If you come from one of the three

cities I have mentioned before, do something about that. Vote for the Patriot Party, so those cities can catch up with the prosperity of the rest of the state. If you are voting for Congress, let's put a conservative in the seat of Senator Sanderf, who has done nothing but fight our path to prosperity all these years and has sympathized with the same criminals that are killing and raping our children. Vote for the Patriot Party for Congress, for the whole list. Either you are with your homeland or you are with the immigrants. Either you are with your homeland or you are with the liberals who oppose prosperity. Vote for the Patriot Party! Thanks! And this November, let's vote!

MORE CHEERING FOLLOWS AND BALLOONS AND FIREWORKS TAKE OVER THE SKIES. TANCRUARF FOLLOWS FROM THE PODIUM THE EXCITEMENT OF HIS SUPPORTERS.

137. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF MIYAFF, DAY (POOR NEIGHBORHOODS SHOWING A DECLINING ECONOMY). RODOLFO IS IN HIS WAY TO MEET GATITO, FLANKED BY RAFAEL AND ANOTHER ONE OF GATITO'S GUYS.

RODOLFO (Thinking)

Neither in Mewow, nor in Miyaff or Rouff liberals want anything to do with Gatito Inmeegrante and his group. Cowardly shits! Afraid of the relentless pounding by Tancruarf's conservatives, they have limited themselves to declare that they were for 'an immigrant system that is compassionate but, above all else, based on the rule of law and the interests of the citizens of Nayak.' More, the mayors of those three cities didn't even issued a letter of protest when the declarations of the Police Department Political Appointee ignored their rectification letters. They are too afraid of Tancruarf. Fucking cowards! Just in mid September two citizens of immigrant origin have been arrested, their citizenship revoked and deported in a summary process that broke any judicial precedent. Not a peep from this cowards... Much less from the press. And the Dancing Doggies, long discredited before the citizens of the whole state, far from exposing the arbitrary process followed against the two citizens, again invoked the public pity for those citizens of immigrant origin and their families, just as they had done before for the gang members. Result: people put the two deported citizens in the same sack with the gang members... Of course, the Examining Post and the Nayak Daily answered by publishing another series of photographs of victims of gang crime, which they present as immigrant crimes. The Dancing Doggies's answer? To begin presenting 'honest immigrant families' that tell their stories to show that not all immigrants were criminals.

Next day the immigration police rounded up the so identified families and deported them in the middle of the night. How can they be so stupid?!

138. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM. RODOLFO IS TALKING TO GATITO AND HIS FRIENDS.

RODOLFO (shrugged)

I have done everything I could. I have pulled every string... But no campaign wants to risk an association with immigrants.

RAFAEL

What a bunch of cowards, Gatito! That's why Tancruarf kicks their asses! Rodolfo disagrees?

GATITO SHAKES HIS HEAD AND DROPS HIS EYES.

RODOLFO (somewhat annoyed, sarcastic)

No, Rodolfo doesn't disagree, but Rodolfo is as screwed up as you. If it were for Rodolfo, you would be in the place where those assholes and the Dancing Doggies are, but there's nothing Rodolfo can do about that.

GATITO

I understand your resentment with the Dancing Doggies. I feel the same, but remember that Rodolfo was kicked out of the Dancing Doggies with us, that he could have accommodated himself to Kim and Gustavo and still he preferred to side with us, even though that cost him a long unemployment, and that he has helped us on everything he has been able to since then. But there are things Rodolfo can't control. He's just one of us, my friend.

RAFAEL (somewhat ashamed, nodding and dropping his eyes)
Sorry, Rodolfo... It's just that this is so unfair...! We should at least be able to defend ourselves and we have to be like the tail of the Dancing Doggies. Whether we like it or not, we end up represented by those clowns. We lose our friends and on top of that we're piled on the laughingstock with them, as if we followed them.

RODOLFO NODS WITH UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDE.

GATITO

They don't want us. What do you suggest then?

RODOLFO

I'd suggest that you keep a low profile for now. With some luck, next elections might find Tancruarf in a weaker position. If you do something to call attention on you and you succeed, the immigration police will target you. And they now can do pretty much whatever they want. You yourselves have seen that now not even citizens of immigrant origin are safe from Tancruarf's arbitrariness. I don't need to tell you what that may mean for you, your group, and your families. And if you don't succeed, you all will have risked your lives and families for nothing, with the additional problem that you may not end up bringing on you the attention of the citizens of Nayak but the attention of the gangs.

GATITO

I don't see it that way. It's true that it's going to be very difficult to separate our image from the Dancing Doggies' but if we fall into inactivity that probability is not going to be very difficult but zero. I agree that there is nothing we can do to affect these elections, not even in those three cities. We don't have time to change the way they see us, but we gain nothing by going into hiding either. And it could be only worse later on because the Dancing Doggies have always had an ambiguous language with respect to the gangs.

Rodolfo, once you told me about the Study Groups of the Muslim Kitty. And I decided to read a bit more about that. You were right about us needing to make the immigrant communities learn and understand as the only way to make them engage in this fight. Without that, we'll keep retreating until we have only the cliff behind us. There will always be risks and I am aware of them, but without hope we are just waiting for the next crackdown. And only fighting can give us that hope. So, the best way we have before us to engage that community goes, elections or not, through expelling the gangs. We have to stand up to defend our communities. We have to organize the community against the gangs.

RODOLFO (scoffing, skeptical)

Do you realize that you would be fighting criminals protected by the immigration police; that just by waiting you could find in the future a more fertile ground to make the citizens of Nayak see the huge difference between you and the Dancing Doggies?

GATITO

I am just putting my idea on the floor, but I insist: Falling into inactivity will only mean to accept our uselessness or to wait for our turn to be cracked down. And we have to begin now because

now the citizens of Nayak are paying attention to politics. And even if we fail on that, the sooner the immigrants of Miyaff know us, the better.

As I said, I realize our chances of success are very low but if we retreat, that probability will be zero. After November everybody will be tired of politics and it will much more difficult to get anybody to pay attention to our message. That's why we have to try now! Besides that, what is right now on fashion is to label us as gang members, right? That's what's on the top of their minds when they think of us, right?

RODOLFO (frowning and shrugging before scoffing)

I don't know, Gatito... Wouldn't it be an irony that you called attention to you only for Tancruarf to arrest you and present you to the public opinion as a gang leader or something like that, with what you would end up helping his reelection?

GATITO

And isn't it an irony that if we don't do something to bring attention to our message, we will definitely be packed and labeled with the clowns from the Dancing Doggies or with the gangs, no matter what we do to mark a difference between them and us?

RODOLFO (shrugging and nodding again)

Well, then you know what my opinion is and... count with me on anything I can do to help. I'm going to insist about the new place for you then.

SEQUENCE 34

139. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM, AT DAY. SOME OF GATITO'S GUYS ARE PILING PIPES; OTHER ARE TRAINING COMBAT DRILLS. GATITO SUPERVISES THE WORKS. MEAU APPROACHES HIM.

MEAU

Gatito, as you asked, we have reinforced the guard at the perimeter of the warehouse, set also guards in a second perimeter at about nine hundred feet from the warehouse, in the routes that could be used to attack us. In case of an emergency, those guards will warn the guards of the first perimeter, giving the rest enough time to escape. An escape route had also been established through a hidden entrance to an extension of the Miyaff sewage system that had been abandoned years ago. It seems that after Nayak state saw that the city was being populated increasingly by immigrants, they lost interest in the project and the city

couldn't afford the extension. And the exit door is at just four blocks from the warehouse.

Now, for training we have the collaboration of four members of his group who have been members of the Northern Country Army. And for weapons we'll use pipes. Are you sure?

GATITO (nodding)

No knives or knives attached to the pipes. We don't want another gang member killed. Remember we want to win the Miyaff community to our cause. A good beating will do [(Thinking) *like those the community gave in my grandpa's stories to the criminals of his town to make them understand that it wasn't a good business to prey on his town just because the police was corrupt. He said that they called their defense groups but the people preferred to call them 'rondas;' that every adult took part in parties that checked that everything was right in town and, if not, gave the alarm to the rest; that the ronda was the communal duty to keep the community safe.*]

MEAU

Rafael reported that he has gone to talk to the immigrant community of Miyaff to invite them to participate in these new 'rondas' the whole week... As expected, they were skeptical, uncommitted. Nobody wanted to get involved even when most of them knew of somebody who had been victim of those criminals and wanted to do something about the problem. If you let me be frank, here between us, one unintended consequence of Groul's failed attempt of rescuing our friends was that the gangs thought they could make more easy money in the immigrant community of Miyaff...

GATITO

We'll have to show them how wrong they are then.

(CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT. MIYAFF'S STREETS. GATITO'S GUYS ENTER THE NIGHT IN TWO GROUPS OF FOURTEEN, THE FIRST ONE LED BY GATITO; THE SECOND, BY MEAU)

(CUTS TO: EXT.: NIGHT. ANOTHER DARK STREET. TWO STARTLED RESIDENTS STARE AT THEM AND OFFER THEM MONEY. MEAU STEPS FORWARD AND INTRODUCES THE GROUP (INAUDIBLE). AS THEY MOVE, THEY SEE ONLY A FEW IMMIGRANTS, HURRYING UP TO THEIR HOMES. SOME OF THEM HAVE MONEY ON THEIR HANDS.

CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT. SAME STREET. THE TWO STARTLED ANIMALS SMILE, NOD AT THEM AND LEAVE.

140. CUTS TO: EXT.: ANOTHER STREET. A RESIDENT IS TALKING TO GATITO WHEN A SCOUT, RAFAEL, COMES RUNNING AND APPROACHES GATITO.

RESIDENT (asking Gatito)

Are you with the black cat too?

RAFAEL

We have spotted gang members moving suspiciously two blocks from there, Gatito.

GATITO

What do you mean '*suspiciously*'?

RAFAEL

They are moving tightly close to the walls, like us, following a female.

GATITO (looking worried now)

How many?

RAFAEL

Maybe twenty.

GATITO (turning to one of his guys)

Go for the others. We're going with the scout. Run!

GATITO NOW BREATHES MORE HEAVILY.

141. CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT. ANOTHER STREET. TWO ANIMALS, A MALE AND A FEMALE, WALK FAST, PROBABLY AFTER REALIZING ALREADY THAT THEY ARE BEING FOLLOWED. (CLOSE UP OF THE FEMALE) SHE IS A WHITE LABRADOR RETRIEVER WHO LOOKS MORE LIKE A STUDENT THAN LIKE AN IMMIGRANT FROM AROUND THERE. AND SHE LOOKS MORE WORRIED THAN FRIGHTENED. (CLOSE UP OF THE MALE) THE MALE IS A CAT WITH WORKING CLOTHES WHO LOOKS LIKE AN IMMIGRANT.

142. CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT. AN ALLEY. SIX GANG MEMBERS ARE GETTING OUT OF THE ALLEY. THEY BLOCK THE PASS OF THE MALE AND THE FEMALE. SHE THEN MOVES FROM THE SIDEWALK TO THE ROAD, TRYING TO MOVE TO THE OPPOSITE SIDEWALK, BUT SOME OF THE GANG MEMBERS ARE ALREADY MOVING TO INTERCEPT HER. BEHIND HER, THE OTHER FOURTEEN GANG MEMBERS ARE MAKING THEMSELVES VISIBLE NOW, OCCUPYING BOTH THE SIDEWALK AND THE ROAD. THE CAT THEN STEPS FORWARD AND OFFERS SOMETHING THAT LOOKS LIKE MONEY TO ONE OF THE GANG MEMBERS WHO INTERCEPTED THEM FIRST, PRESUMABLY THE LEADER. THE APPARENT LEADER TAKES THE

MONEY WITH ONE HAND AND PUNCHES THE CAT WITH THE OTHER. THE CAT FALLS TO THE GROUND AND SEEMS UNABLE TO STAND UP. THEN OTHER TWO GANG MEMBERS HURRY UP TOWARDS THE FEMALE, WHO HIT THE GANG MEMBER CLOSER TO HER WITH HER BAG AS IF IT WERE A FLAIL. THE GANG MEMBER HIT BY THE BAG FALLS TO THE FLOOR. THE OTHER ONE STEPS BACK AND MOCKS HER.

143. CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT. SAME STREET. MEAU'S GROUP HAS ALREADY TAKEN POSITIONS BEHIND THE FOURTEEN GANG MEMBERS AS GATITO'S GROUP IS COMING OUT FROM ANOTHER ALLEY BEHIND THE GROUP LED BY THE DOG WHO SEEMS TO BE THE LEADER. GATITO NOTICES THE FEMALE STEPPING BACK AS THE LEADER MOVES FORWARD TO HER WITH A LASCIVIOUS FACE AND THE OTHERS ARE FORMING A CIRCLE AROUND HER AND THE FALLEN CAT, WHO STILL SEEMS TO BE PLEADING TO THE LEADER FROM THE FLOOR. THEN ALL THE EYES TURN TO THEM. NOW THE LEADER OF THE GANG LOOKS AT THEM TOO.

GANG LEADER (with a menacing demeanor)

Who the fuck are you?

GATITO (calmly)

We are tired of your kind preying in our neighborhood. Leave her alone and don't come back.

GANG LEADER (laughing first, then staring at Gatito with eyes injected with hatred)

If you don't leave right now motherfucker, we are going to fucking kill you!

GATITO (getting really angry)

Then *you* are fucked!

GATITO MAKES A HAND SIGNAL TO THE OTHERS TO FOCUS ON THE FEMALE AND THE FALLEN CAT AND WAITS FOR THE ENRAGED DOG, THE GANG LEADER WHO NOW IS RUNNING TOWARDS HIM, GETTING READY TO TAKE HIM DOWN. BUT, AT THE MOMENT OF THE IMPACT, GATITO CONTAINS HIM BY PUTTING HIS HANDS ON HIS SHOULDERS AND JUMPING BACKWARDS TO AVOID THE TAKE DOWN. AND WHEN GATITO NOTICES THAT THE ONRUSH OF HIS ATTACKER HAS LOST POWER, HE GRABS HIS EARS AND PUSHES FORWARD, IMPACTING HIS FACE WITH HIS KNEES RELENTLESSLY UNTIL THE GANG LEADER FALLS TO THE FLOOR SEMI UNCONSCIOUS. THEN THE OTHER GANG MEMBERS RUSH TO ATTACK HIM, BUT GATITO'S GROUP REACTS IMMEDIATELY WITH FURY TO PROTECT THEIR LEADER, STRIKING THE GANG MEMBERS' HEADS INDISCRIMINATELY WITH THE PIPES. THEN A DOG FROM GATITO'S GROUP REACHES THE FEMALE, WHO, STILL CONFUSED AND AFRAID, IS THREATENING TO HIT HIM TOO WITH HER BAG. BUT AT THAT MOMENT

THE FALLEN CAT, WHO NOW IS GETTING BACK ON HIS FEET, RAISES HIS VOICE TO ASK THE FEMALE TO ACCEPT THE DOG'S HELP.

FALLEN CAT

He is with Gatito Inmeegrante! He is good!

CUTS TO: EXT.: A WALL, AGAINST WHICH SOME GANG MEMBERS HAVE BEEN CORNERED. HAVING LOST THEIR NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY, THEY ARE WAVING THEIR KNIVES, TRYING TO KEEP GATITO'S GUYS AWAY.

CUT TO: EXT.: SAME STREET. GATITO, WITH A BRUISE ON THE LEFT SIDE OF HIS FACE, IS NOW ADDRESSING THE BEATEN GANG MEMBERS.

GATITO

Take these pieces of shit with you and leave. Don't ever come back or it will be much worse next time. There won't be another warning for you.

THE GANG MEMBERS HELP THEIR FRIENDS TO STAND UP AND CLEAN THE BLOOD ON THEIR FACES AS THEY GET READY TO LEAVE. THAT'S WHEN THEY HEAR THE OTHER ANIMAL YELLING FROM THE OTHER END OF THE STREET.

BIG BLACK CAT

I'm tired of your shit in my hood! Now you are going to get busy with me, you pieces of shit!

CUTS TO: EXT.: THE OTHER END OF THE STREET, FROM WHERE A BIG BLACK CAT WITH A GROUP OF ABOUT TWENTY BLACK ANIMALS IS COMING. THE BIG BLACK CAT, WHO LOOKS ANGRY AND IS ARMED WITH A PIPE, MOVES DECIDEDLY TOWARDS GATITO. GATITO GETS ON GUARD, READY TO COUNTERATTACK. FOR A MOMENT GATITO NOTICES THAT THE FEMALE, THE CAT AND THE DOG HE HAD SENT TO HELP THEM ARE ALL LOOKING AT HIM. THEN THE BIG CAT SWIFTLY RAISES HIS CLUB AND IS READY TO STRIKE GATITO ON THE HEAD, BUT GATITO INTERCEPTS THE BIG CAT'S CLUB WITH HIS, INCLINING HIS CLUB TO THE RIGHT AT THE LAST MOMENT TO LET THE FEROCIOUS STRENGTH OF THE STRIKE PULL THE BLACK CAT FORWARD AND MAKE HIM LOSE HIS BALANCE IN THAT DIRECTION.

THE BIG CAT PUTS HIS HANDS ON THE FLOOR TO NOT FALL AND THAT'S WHEN GATITO CLUBS HIM ON THE RIBS. THE BIG BLACK CAT FALLS TO THE FLOOR AND FROM THERE HE IS USING THE CLUB AS A SPEAR TO STRIKE GATITO IN THE STOMACH AS HE APPROACHES HIM. GATITO HAS TO STEP BACK AND THE BIG BLACK CAT GETS BACK ON HIS KNEES IMMEDIATELY BUT STILL LOOKS HURT, SO HE RAISES HIS CLUB TO PROTECT HIMSELF FROM ANOTHER POSSIBLE STRIKE INSTEAD OF

GETTING BACK ON HIS FEET OR ATTACKING. BUT THE NEXT STRIKE DOESN'T COME.

SOME ANIMAL (yelling)

The police! The police!

THE FIGHT STOPS AND BOTH GATITO AND THE BIG CAT CALL THEIR FOLLOWERS TO LEAVE. AS HE LEAVES, GATITO CAN SEE ONCE MORE THE IMMIGRANT CAT AND THE FEMALE DOG, THEIR STARTLED EYES STILL ON THEM, BUT ESPECIALLY HER EYES ON HIM. (CLOSE UP OF THE FEMALE). AND THEN HE RUNS AWAY WITH HIS GROUP.

144. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM, LATE NIGHT. IT'S LATE BUT THERE'S STILL FRENETIC ACTIVITY INSIDE. AND ONLY NOW GATITO REALIZES THAT HE IS SHAKING. A MEDICINE STUDENT IS HELPING THE WOUNDED. THEN GATITO BREATHES DEEPLY AND CALMS DOWN.

SEQUENCE 35

Next morning...

145. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM, EARLY MORNING. GATITO WAKES UP AND TOUCHES THE INFLAMMATION ON THE SIDE OF HIS FACE WHERE HE HAD BEEN HIT BY THE GANG LEADER.

GATITO

Meau, send fourteen of our guys in seven groups to learn Miyaff's first reactions to the *ronda*. Send three to the train station and the other four to the houses of the immigrants we found yesterday. Just in case, keep the rest here if we have to react rapidly to something.

CUTS TO: INT. WAREHOUSE. MEAU IS BACK AND RAFAEL IS WITH HIM.

RAFAEL

Fortunately this time the answer is positive. The fourteen came back with lists of names and the times when they could participate in the *rondas*. (WHISPERING NOW) Even Groul, who had looked distant and disengaged since that day... even him looks much better now. So, as you asked, the four former soldiers will train the new volunteers too, but not in the warehouse.

GROUL GETS IN THE ROOM FOLLOWED BY RODOLFO.

GROUL

Rodolfo is here...

GATITO

Rodolfo, come in. What could you learn about the reaction to our first *ronda*?

RODOLFO (looking amused)

Yeah, it seems the police was tipped by the gangs, but that was the regular police, called at the last moment by the immigration police to assist them in a crackdown of last minute. In short, it seems that Hagel doesn't have control of the fucking police... at least, in cases like this or in cities like Miyaff. That's why they showed up.

About the big black cat, I don't know anything for sure, but the police reports are now being censored more tightly by the immigration police... Anyway, give me a few days to see if I can find out something more.

Come on, cat, show daddy that little face... Who struck you that hard?

(RODOLFO, GRINNING, MAKES A PAUSE TO GIVE HIS SANDWICH ANOTHER BITE. GATITO STARES AT HIM.)

Okay, okay... Now, about the female, I have heard of many citizens coming to Miyaff, Mewow and Rouff as volunteers... working for non profits giving legal aid... help in general to immigrants. Nevertheless, since the gangs began targeting citizens too, most of those citizens gave up and left. Now, if you ask me what a female like that could be doing there at that time of the night, I don't know. When are you going to do the *ronda* thing again?

GATITO (before swallowing the food in his mouth)

Tonight.

RODOLFO

Isn't that too soon? I don't think you will catch the gangs off guard again...

GATITO

No. Ten immigrants have pledged, volunteered to be part of the *ronda* tonight. We haven't trained them yet, but with growing numbers...

RODOLFO (nodding and after giving a sip to his cup of coffee)

Maybe I was wrong. Maybe this time you can succeed, Gatito.

(MAKING ANOTHER PAUSE TO GIVE ANOTHER BITE TO HIS SANDWICH AND THEN FROWNING AS HE LOOKS GATITO STRAIGHT TO THE EYES)

That means that this time you can get famous. I don't need to tell you what that means... Remember that they have even deported naturalized citizens...

(RODOLFO SIGHS)

I don't know why I try to put some sense in your head... I might get soon the new place you want, the one you need in case you have to run away in a rush from here... I might get new donations for you too.

GATITO (grinning, skeptical)

New donations?

RODOLFO

Yes, donations, money animals sympathizing with you send you because they like you.

GATITO

I know what a donation is, but if they are sending it to me is because they know who I am, right?

RODOLFO (scoffing but still frowned)

They don't know you. The donations are for a crazy cat who does the things you do, a stubborn pussycat I don't know what I've done to deserve... If I am warning you about the dangers of getting famous too soon, I'm not going to be the one to expose you, right?

GATITO (grinning)

Just kidding.

RODOLFO

You're kidding me? Cat, that's an improvement. You still can't tell a joke. But that's an improvement.

GATITO

Another coffee, dog? Don't worry. We'll escort you to the train station. Those bad gang members won't take advantage of your innocence... again.

RODOLFO STARES AT HIM, AMUSED AGAIN.

SEQUENCE 36

August, 1900...

146. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF MIYAFF, at NIGHT. ANOTHER CLASH BETWEEN THE RONDA AND THE GANGS. THE GANGS RUN AWAY PRECIPITOUSLY. MEAU TURNS TO GATITO.

MEAU

They are not coming that much now. I think they have realized that preying on Mewow and Rouff is going to be easier. Last numbers, Gatito? As of today, about five hundred of Miyaff animals have pledged to take part in the *rondas*.

GATITO

It's time we pay them a visit, to show them the example of Miyaff. Who do we know there, in Mewow and Rouff too, Mewow and Rouff. The *rondas* are not a solution to the main problem, but can be used as a platform from which he can offer them solutions to the main problems.... Well, let's go. We have work to do in the morning.

(CUTS TO: INT.: PLATFORM AT MIYAFF TRAIN STATION, AFTERNOON. GATITO IS EXITING THE TRAIN WAGON. RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM THERE SHE IS, THE FEMALE LABRADOR RETRIEVER HE HAD RESCUED THAT NIGHT FROM THE GANG. FOR A MOMENT HE WANTS TO SMILE, BUT THEN HE DECIDES TO PRETEND THAT HE DOESN'T KNOW THE FEMALE. NEVERTHELESS, HE STAYS FROZEN AT THE PLATFORM, IN FRONT OF THE FEMALE. SHE RECOGNIZES HIM, SMILED AND STEPS FORWARD TO HIM.)

FEMALE (with a naughty smile)

I know you! You are the cat who saved me from the gang that night, aren't you?

GATITO (nervous)

You must be taking me for somebody else...

FEMALE

Bullshit! It was you!

GATITO (clumsily)

Are you a volunteer?

FEMALE (giggling)

A volunteer? Ah! You mean if I work for a non profit?

GATITO

Well... yes.

FEMALE

Yes, I do. That's all you want to know?

GATITO (trying to calm down)

There's no non profit around there...

FEMALE (turning her eyes to the exit door)
You want to talk here?

GATITO NODS AND FOLLOWS HER.

147. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREET OUTSIDE THE TRAIN STATION.

FEMALE

No, there is not. I work for a non profit in downtown Miyaff, one working on immigrants rights... if there're still any. That night I had gone to a house ten blocks from where you found me. (THEN SHE STOPS SMILING) A couple had been deported and their children had been left alone at home with their older brother. The cat who was with me was the uncle. It was three children. We had to take the three children to his house before the immigration police could find the house. That was something we could not leave for the day after and we're now pretty shorthanded at the non profit. He, the uncle, was walking me to the train station when those thugs intercepted us.

GATITO

At least you are not with the immigration police...

FEMALE

With those fuckers?! Hell no!

GATITO

And... if you let me be curious.... How did you take down that gang member... when you hit him with your bag?

FEMALE

The bag? Ah! (SHE GIGGLES) Two bricks... Two bricks I picked up in my way to the train station.

GATITO LAUGHS DISCREETLY.

GATITO

That was a crazy night. Then we had to fight another gang led by a big black cat...

FEMALE

The big black cat? He is not a gang member. I've heard that his name is Mac, Miac or something like that. For some reason he went vigilante too, like you, just a week before, in Rouff. I don't know him. It's just that I've heard of him. Hey! You want to

have coffee with me? You saved me, after all. Inviting you coffee is the least I can do...

(GATITO LOOKS A BIT UNCOMFORTABLE AND IS ABOUT TO SAY SOMETHING)

Besides that, if you don't have coffee with me now you won't get to have a date with me. Ah! My name is Rachy Corry, and yours?

GATITO (dropping his eyes and laughing)
Joaquin Gatito Migran.

RACHY (giggling, repeat solemnly)
Joaquin Gatito Migran.

GATITO LAUGHS TOO.

SEQUENCE 37

October 1900...

148. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF MIYAFF, PARADE OF THE DANCING DOGGIES, DAY. GUSTAVO AND KIM ARE AT THE FRONT WAVING WITH THEIR HANDS. AS PART OF THE PARADE, MEMBERS OF THE DANCING DOGGIES ARE DANCING AND OFFERING SAMPLES OF TYPICAL DISHES. THE RECEPTION IS COLD THOUGH. PASSERSBY AVOID THEM. THEN THEY FIND A GROUP OF ANIMALS BLOCKING THEIR PASS. THEY LOOK UPSET. CUTS TO: EXT.: SAME STREET. ONE OF THE DISGRUNTLED ANIMALS STEPS FORWARD IN FRONT OF GUSTAVO AND KIM.

ANIMAL

We are representatives of the Committee and Study Circles of Miyaff and you're not welcomed here. How many immigrants have you saved today with your dancing, Gustavo... or should I say Kim?

GUSTAVO (looking more confused than annoyed)
My friend, this is an authorized march and you are blocking it...

ANIMAL (turning to Kim)

I am a member of the committee of Miyaff. Okay, Kim. I'm done talking to your puppet. I'm here exercising my right to speak freely. You, on the other hand, have taken over the representation of immigrants and have played with our lives irresponsibly...

GUSTAVO (raising his voice)
Sir, I think you are out of order.

ANIMAL (ignoring Gustavo, turning to the attendants)

I call to an assembly right now. Do I have your support?
(ALMOST ALL THE ATTENDANTS CHEER UP AND RAISE THEIR HANDS.
THEN THE MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE RETAKES HIS QUESTION)

Now we have an assembly. Again, how many immigrants have
you saved with your dancing today?

KIM LOOKS WORRIED.

GUSTAVO

Sir, let us first finish with our march. Then we can have an
assembly later... And I don't know from where you get that we
have misused...

ANOTHER ANIMAL (talking to Gustavo)

Don't play with us, *Kim*. We know that the last time you spoke
effectively in favor of an immigrant, it was a gang member. We
know that you've gotten donations and connections in our name
and never been able to make a proposal to actually help us. We
know that you have never spoken against Tancruarf and his
minions, who have made of the state police the bodyguards of
the gangs and defunded our local police. We know that you have
never spoken against Tancruarf and his minions when they left
the border to gangs that rob, abuse and kill our friends and
relatives... And we know that you blocked Gatito Inmeegrante
when he wanted to help us working with you through your shitty
Dancing Doggies.

GUSTAVO (nervous)

My friend, I think you don't have complete information... We
have been making progress...

THEN KIM PULLS GUSTAVO'S ARM AND WHISPERS AT HIS EAR. AFTER
THAT, GUSTAVO TURNS HIS BACK ON THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
AND THE STUDY CIRCLES.

GUSTAVO

Dear friends, for safety reasons beyond our control, I am forced
to cancel the march. To our assistants, call the trucks to pick up
the equipment.

THEN KIM DIRECTS SOME OF THEIR ASSISTANTS AND A FENCE OF
BODYGUARDS ISOLATES GUSTAVO FROM NEW UNCOMFORTABLE
QUESTIONS. AS THE DANCING DOGGIES LEAVE, THE IMMIGRANTS OF
MIYAFF BEGIN TO CHANT "GATITO INMEEGRANTE! GATITO
INMEEGRANTE! GATITO INMEEGRANTE!"

SEQUENCE 38

November 1900...

148. CUTS TO: EXT.: TANCRUARF'S OFFICE, AT NIGHT. TANCRUARF IS LYING ON HIS TALL CHAIR, THINKING WITH DREAMY EYES. DUKE KNOCKS AND GETS IN. TANCRUARF NODS AT HIM.

DUKE

I have just summarized all the reports we've received, sir. November brought us no surprises. You were not just reelected but we're now a regional power. We've even won more seats in the House for the Patriot Party. We've won districts they had no won before in Nayak.

TANCRUARF (looking pleased)

All that will give us more leverage with Speaker Ateh Tayarih. We won't need to trust Ateh the Liar, especially now that we are working to extend our power to other states. Many members of Congress, especially the new ones, were now more loyal to us than to Tayarih. The pledges at work...

The plan for the next two years is to expand our majority in the House and to launch our own candidates for the Patriot Party Senate primaries. And, if I get reelected once more as governor of Nayak, the next step is the presidency. In four years. (SIGHS) If our model has worked in Nayak, there is no reason it should not work in the other states. And now we had four years before the next general elections to make it work.

The only thing that would have made this victory better would have been to get rid of that Senator Sanderf. The old fuck survived... I have more senators than he has. The pledges at work. But I would have felt much better without Sanderf in our way... His defeat would have given us more prestige inside the Patriot Party and would have eliminated a critical voice inside our own state. And then we have the mayors of Mewow, Rouff, and Miyaff. Those cowardly fucks have barely retained their seats by proposing an additional tax on immigrants before the elections. They are not that intelligent to come with something like that. Do you know of some new talent that is feeding them ideas, Duke?

DUKE SHAKES HIS HEAD.

(CUTS TO: INT.: BACKROOM, NIGHT. THE COMMITTEE OF MIYAFF DEBATES. RODOLFO, GATITO AND GROUL ARE THERE)

RODOLFO

Mayor, you have to hear us. Sanderf's Chief of Staff vows for me. And you see that we are moving every immigrant, especially in Miyaff, where we are more organized, to find every animal who can vote and made sure it does. We have made aware the

immigrant community see that our lives will turn to hell if the Patriot Party candidate wins. But you have to collaborate with us! We have engaged them like never before, but we fail, they will get back to apathy.

(CUT TO: INT.: MIYAFF MAYOR'S OFFICE. RODOLFO PUTS HIS HAND ON GATITO'S SHOULDER.)

The idea of the additional tax and the first draft were Gatito's. The idea of passing it in September, so by November everybody could see that the surtax worked and that the immigrants of Miyaff were at least a new source of revenue for the city was also his. We don't like the idea of the surtax but, compared to a Patriot Party mayor, the small surtax is a small price to pay indeed. And then, we only asked you that if you lost, the records of the immigrants registered to pay the additional tax would be destroyed.

And yes, aware of the image Tancruarf has painted of immigrants, we agreed to your request of us not making open demonstrations of support that could be capitalized by your rival. More, an additional tax was something not easy to sell to an immigrant community impoverished by Tancruarf policies and yet Gatito, the committee and the study groups used all their prestige to present this alternative as the lesser evil compared to that of having a Patriot Party mayor. All that allowed you to run telling the citizens of Miyaff about your plans for the city with the new revenue collected from the immigrant tax, as it came to be known. And the mayors of Mewow and Rouff followed Miyaff's example just in time to be reelected, though by razor-thin margins, what will give you allies when Tancruarf rams against the rights of Miyaff. Already, my friend, the chief of staff, told me that the state attorney announced that he's planning to challenge in court the immigrant tax as unconstitutional. And that is a threat, though probably an empty one because Tancruarf doesn't have enough power in the state supreme court to guarantee a decision in his favor... yet.

So, to keep the immigrant community on your side despite the tax, Gatito and I have brought you a list of requests for our community...

THE MAYOR, SINKS ON HIS CHAIR, SIGHS AND FINALLY NODS. HIS FACE SHOWS HE DOESN'T LIKE WHERE THE CONVERSATION IS GOING BUT ALSO SOME RESIGNATION. ONLY THEN RODOLFO CONTINUES.

SEQUENCE 39

Early December, 1900...

149. CUTS TO: INT.: NEW WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM. GATITO SHARES THE TABLE WITH GROUL AND MEAU. IN FRONT OF THE TABLE, A DOZEN OF HIS GUYS WAIT WITH EXPECTATION.

GATITO

I know we can't see yet any real change with respect to what matters the most to us, a real chance at legalization, but we have made progress. We have organized the community of Miyaff and challenged the Dancing Doggies inside the immigrant community. You know me. I have been always truthful to you. And there's still a lot we have to do in Miyaff and beyond. But we're in the right path now.

ALFGUAU (raising his hand with a smirk on his face)

I put a motion for our friend Gatito Inmeegrante to inform the assembly about the female he has been dating close to Miyaff train station.

GATITO LOOKS SURPRISED. MEAU BEGINS TO CHUCKLE AND EVEN GROUL IS SMIRKING.

GATITO (stuttering)

My friend, I-I don't think... the-the assembly should...

MEAU (a smirk on his face too)

I support the motion. This assembly should see into this important matter. This cat is in love (TURNING TO GATITO WITH A SERIOUS EXPRESSION NOW) and I believe this assembly needs a report.

GATITO (embarrassed)

Okay, guys... Enough of jokes! We have important things to discuss...

RAFAEL (smirking)

Yes, Gatito but we have to vote the motion first.

RAFAEL IS CHUCKLING NOW AND MEAU IS CALLING TO A VOTE.

MEAU

Okay, all in favor of the motion raise your hands!

MOST RAISE THEIR HANDS.

MEAU

Okay, as those who are working don't count for quorum, we have approved the motion.

GATITO'S GUYS, SMIRKING, WITH EXPECTING FACES, ARE WAITING FOR GATITO TO PRESENT HIS REPORT. SOME CAN'T HELP IT AND BEGIN CRACKING UP.

GATITO (embarrassed)
Come on, guys! Let's be serious!

RAFAEL
It's the rules, Gatito. You have to present your report.

GATITO
That's personal, guys!

RAFAEL
But Gatito, you have told us to always follow the rules. We have voted and we are waiting for your report.

GATITO
Okay, but this stays here. Damn it, Meau! (PAUSE) Well, her name is Rachy...

GATITO'S GUYS LOOK HAPPY, MORE HAPPY THAN PRANKISH, HAPPY FOR GATITO. THEN RAFAEL RAISES HIS HAND AGAIN.

RAFAEL
I have to present another motion, Gatito. We have to invite Rachy to the warehouse to address the next assembly.

GATITO
Ah? No. That can't be.

MEAU (looking serious)
I believe that motion is important. I second it. Vote?

GATITO'S GUYS, LAUGHING AGAIN, PRANKISH AGAIN, RAISE THEIR HANDS TO APPROVE THE MOTION.

MEAU
Motion approved...

GATITO (embarrassed again)
Well, I'll implement it when the security conditions make it possible. Session adjourned!

SEQUENCE 40

Mid December, 1900...

150. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME WAREHOUSE IN ROUFF, EARLY MORNING. AN OLD DOG FROM ROUFF IS GREETING THEM. THE THIRTY VOLUNTEERS FROM ROUFF ARE IN FRONT OF THEM, STANDING AT ATTENTION.

OLD DOG

At last we meet, Gatito! I wanted to thank you for your guys. They have made a great job organizing our *ronda*. It was a pretty chaotic start... Yeah, a hell of a start. But we're finding our own path I think.

GATITO

Glad to know. This should be the start for a closer collaboration between Rouff and Miyaff. But the military instructors tell me that they would like to stay another week or so, to train your guys in combat techniques a bit more...

Anyway, they tell me yesterday they had a simulacrum and that today will be having their first experience.

OLD DOG

Yeah... They're ripe enough for a first experience. One thing is training and another the real thing. They told me. And with that extra training, they'll be tough enough for next times. Let's see, Gatito. Let's see. Let's hope they don't fuck up...

151. CUTS TO: EXT.: SOME STREET IN ROUFF. GATITO IS TALKING TO AN OLD DOG.

GATITO (somewhat hesitant at first)

Have you ever heard of a big black cat of name Mac or Miac?

OLD DOG (grinning amused now)

That cat! His name is Miac and yeah, he is a very unruly cat. He got tired of us and created his own patrol weeks ago, even before you created yours, full of big cats and dogs, all black like him. Nevertheless, he wanted to be the boss. He didn't want volunteers with schedules, but a permanent unit. His unit.

(NOW THE OLD DOG IS CHUCKLING)

He is a very brave cat. I know him since he was a kitten, but he did get my attention when he alone fought five gang members with a pipe, rocks and, at the end, with his bare hands. But had not been for other immigrants who ran to help him, the gang members would've killed him probably. Why are you asking?

GATITO SPEAKS (INAUDIBLE). (CLOSE UP OF THE OLD DOG LAUGHING)

OLD DOG (still amused)

He must've been following a gang and took you for members of the gang. Miyaff gangs those days were crossing daily to victimize our community and he must've been following them... You said he got beaten? I would've liked to see his face at that moment... (CHUCKLES) What happens is that both Miac and the gangs are not used to the kind of fight your instructors have taught us here.

(THE OLD DOG LAUGHS AGAIN)

I would've liked to see that cat's face...

152. CUTS TO: ROUFF STREETS, at NIGHT. THE ROUFF *RONDA* BEGINS TO PATROL THE DARK STREETS AND TO INTRODUCE THEMSELVES TO THE PASSERSBY.

GATITO

Even even the old and the handicapped have found ways to participate. They watch through their windows with the lights off and, if they see something revealing gang presence, they use pots and whistles to bring the attention of the *ronda*. Not just that, they use a different string of sounds to reveal the presence of the police. They have become our eyes and made of the *ronda* an omnipresent entity.

OLD DOG (nodding approvingly)

You have those nerdy words, son... But I'm taking note. You have made a friend in Rouff for life, Gatito.

THEN A SCOUT, A HOUND, INTERRUPTS THEIR CONVERSATION AND WHISPERS.

HOUND

Somebody is trying to surround us, Gatito

GATITO (frowning)

Send the other scout for help. Warn the others. We have to take a defensive position and find routes of escape just in case. Remember the group is still green.

SOUNDS, STEPS AND THUDS, MAKE EVIDENT THAT SOMEBODY IS TAKING POSITIONS. GATITO REMAINS ALERT BUT CALMED. GATITO CHECKS THE TIME IN HIS WATCH. AND THEN HE SEES SOMEBODY AT THE OTHER END OF THE STREET.

CUTS TO: THE OTHER END OF THE STREET. IT WAS THE BIG BLACK CAT, WHO IS NOW WALKING TOWARDS HIM LEADING HIS GROUP.

MIAC

Gatito Inmeegrante? Are you Gatito Inmeegrante?

GROUL (stepping forward)

Who is asking?

MIAC (dismissively)

I'm not asking you, doggie.

GROUL (snarling)

But it's me who is answering, pussy.

THEN GATITO STEPS FORWARD AND PUTS A HAND ON GROUL'S SHOULDER. WHEN GROUL TURNS TO HIM, HE CAN SEE A SMIRK IN GATITO'S FACE. GROUL LOOKS CONFUSED NOW.

GATITO (whispering)

No problem, Groul. It's Miac. (TURNING TO MIAC NOW) It's me!

BEHIND GATITO, THE LOCAL LEADER CAN BARELY REFRAIN HIMSELF FROM LAUGHING OUT LOUD.

MIAC (smirking, his eyes fixed on Gatito)

So you're the pussycat who caught me by surprise the other day in Miyaff? Welcome to my hood, Gatito Inmeegrante. My name is Miac. So you're the famous Gatito Inmeegrante? Let my guys give your guys a tour while we talk.

GROUL LOOKS AT GATITO WITH ALARM BUT GATITO NODS.

GATITO

It's okay, Groul. Replace me at the front of the *ronda*.

MIAC (now closer to Gatito)

First of all, that day we were following those motherfuckers who had beaten and cut a friend of ours after robbing him his wages of the whole week. Is it true that you beat unconscious that motherfucker gang leader? Yes, you did. I know that. That makes you my friend. Miac...

MIAC EXTENDS HIS HAND TO GATITO. SOMEWHAT ASTONISHED, GATITO OFFERS HIM HIS AND BOTH SHAKE HANDS. MIAC SMILES NOW.

OLD DOG

Always cocky, Miac Tony.

MIAC (turning to the old dog)

Who invited you to this conversation, ma'am? Go prepare coffee, light a candle or inspect the pavement. Make yourself useful.

OLD DOG (laughing again, this time even louder)

I know what you... ha, ha, ha, ha... track the gang leader and... ha, ha, ha, ha... beaten by Gatito Inmeegrante.

MIAC (somewhat embarrassed)

You are so funny, you old joke! Any real animal can make a mistake! At least I have been trying. So far, you have been just making poses only.

BUT THE OLD DOG KEEPS LAUGHING AND MIAC TURNS TO GATITO WITH A SMIRK ON HIS FACE.

MIAC

Do you see what I have to deal with here? I swore that I would help the animals of my community and that no motherfucker gang would prey on them if it depended on me with just one exception... That exception is this old joke.

(MIAC POINTS WITH HIS HAND TO THE OLD DOG, WHO KEEPS LAUGHING)

If a gang preys on him, I might even help them.

(THEN MIAC SEEMED TO ADOPT A MORE SERIOUS TONE. THE LOCAL LEADER UNDERSTANDS AND STOPS LAUGHING)

You've been cracking up at my expenses old timer, but have you told him more about me?

(THE LOCAL LEADER SHAKES HIS HEAD)

Come to my house tomorrow evening, Gatito Inmeegrante. I'll invite you dinner. Bring the old timer too if you want. He knows where I live.

THEN MIAC GETS BACK TO HIS GROUP WITHOUT SAYING GOODBYE AND THEY LEAVE TOGETHER.

SEQUENCE 41

Next day...

153. CUTS TO: EXT.: A HUMBLE HOUSE, NIGHT. THE OLD DOG KNOCKS AT THE DOOR IN A PARTICULAR WAY. AFTER A FEW SECONDS, MIAC HIMSELF SHOWS UP AT THE DOOR WITH A WIDE SMILE.

MIAC (smirking)

So you didn't get lost, old timer.

OLD DOG (smirking too)

Have you made a decent meal for your guests, fatty?

MIAC

I hope you brought your false teeth, you old timer. Come on! Get in before somebody thinks I'm running a museum here illegally! Gatito, get in! Feel yourself at home!

GATITO (trying to suppress a laugh)

Thanks.

OLD DOG

Can you believe that I know him since he was a kitten, when I still thought he was going to grow to be smart?

BLACK FEMALE CAT (coming from another room)

It's been a long time... Why haven't you come before? Has it been because of this quarrelsome cat?

(THE FEMALE THEN HUGS THE OLD DOG. MIAC IS LAUGHING BEHIND HER. THEN SHE TURNS TO GATITO WITH THE SAME SPONTANEOUS SMILE)

And who is our guest here?

MIAC

Remember I told you about the cat I found that night in Miyaff...?

OLD DOG

The cat who beat him.

MIAC (pretending to be annoyed)

The cat who got me by surprise.

FEMALE (turning to Gatito)

So you beat my husband?

GATITO SEEMS SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED, TRYING TO ARTICULATE AN ANSWER. THEN A SMALL TUXEDO KITTEN SHOWS UP BY THE DOOR FROM WHERE THE FEMALE HAD COME. MIAC PRACTICALLY JUMPS IN FRONT OF THE KITTEN AND RAISES HIM OVER HIS HEAD. THE KITTEN GIGGLES. THEN MIAC TURNS TO GATITO WITH THE KITTEN ON HIS ARMS.

MIAC (proud)

This is my son Miac.

THE LOCAL LEADER APPROACHES THE KITTEN WITH HIS ARMS EXTENDED AND A SMILE ON HIS FACE. THE SMALL KITTEN SMILES BACK. MIAC THEN TURNS HIS BACK ON THE OLD DOG WITH THE KITTEN STILL ON HIS ARMS, AS IF DENYING HIS REQUESTED.

MIAC

Have you got disinfected of old germs and all?

THEN MIAC TURNS BACK TO THE OLD LEADER AND PUTS HIS SON ON HIS ARMS. THE KITTEN GIGGLES AGAIN.

FEMALE (glancing disapprovingly at her husband and extending her hand to Gatito)
And I'm Giselle. This cat has no manners

KITTEN

Daddy crazy...

THE KITTEN BEGINS TO GIGGLE AGAIN.

OLD DOG (his kind eyes on the kitten, who now is playing with his ears)
He's smart.

MIAC

Giselle, this old timer here's asking me if we have a decent meal for him.

OLD DOG

You didn't let him help, Giselle, did you?

GISELLE

Of course not. I want my guests happy and asking for second helpings.

THE OLD LEADER LAUGHS. THE KITTEN, UNINTERESTED OF THE OTHERS, KEEPS PLAYING WITH HIS EARS. AND MIAC TURNS TO GATITO.

MIAC

You see what you get when you get married, Gatito? (TURNING TO GISELLE) Hey Giselle, before I forget, take me a photograph with Gatito!

OLD DOG (serious now)

I don't think it's a good idea to have photographs of us running around...

MIAC

Come on, old timer! I'll be careful! When I want something hidden in a good place, I ask Giselle to hide it for me. Right my love?

GISELLE NODS WITH RESIGNED EXPRESSION.

MIAC

Oh, Come on, Giselle! You'll hide it for me. I won't take it with me outside... I promise! Old timer...

154. CUTS TO: INT.: MIAC'S LIVING ROOM. MIAC BRINGS GATITO TO HIS BEDROOM. THE MUFFLED SOUND OF THE OLD DOG AND GISELLE TALKING COMES FROM BEHIND THE DOOR AS MIAC CLOSSES IT BEHIND HIM.

MIAC

You are a bit stiff, but I like you, Gatito. I'd like we could do something together. Besides, those gangs have retreated from Miyaff. Though I don't think they have gone for good.

GATITO

Of course, I'd also like we could do something together. Now that we know each other...

MIAC

The problem is that I don't like taking orders. I wouldn't take orders even from you, Gatito Inmeegrante and all.

GATITO

I don't give orders. It's just that they trust me over there in Miyaff. We have assemblies and everybody speaks his mind. I just execute what everybody has already decided and... they trust me. Why don't you give the Rouff *ronda* a try?

MIAC (smirking, skeptical)

Do you think I can do a good job?

GATITO

Of course I do! The cats and dogs who follow you, they trust you...

MIAC

But you know I'm hard headed, don't you? I've argued with everybody in the Rouff immigrant committee, everybody but the old timer.

GATITO

Miac, I've fought many so-called leaders too. I'm an undesirable at the Dancing Doggies' offices...

MIAC

The Dancing Doggies are assholes! I hate those assholes! They've done nothing but making us look like fools before everybody! That's why nobody takes our suffering seriously in Nayak!

GATITO

As a leader you first have to learn to listen. You won't always like what others do and sometimes you'll have to reach compromises... and live with those compromises. It is not easy. And if you need a motivation to stay calmed when you're about to explode, think of those you love. Think of your family.

(MIAC GRINS SKEPTICALLY)

Come on! Give the *ronda* a try. If you need help, I'm close, in Miyaff...

MIAC (his expression turns from playful to a bit somber)

I don't know why but I trust you, cat. Maybe it's because of all I've heard about you... You know what my nightmare is? That someday something happens to me and my wife and my kitten are left on their own. I've heard that when your friends were deported, you took care of their families. I respect that. Can I ask you something?

(GATITO NODS)

If something happens to me, please see that my wife and kitten don't have to go hungry or homeless.

GATITO (dropping his eyes)

Miac, look...

MIAC

Promise, cat! If somebody like you promises that to me, then I know I'll feel better. More at peace.

MIAC (nodding)

Okay, I promise. You have my word. Will you...

MIAC (more confident now)

The Rouff *ronda*? Sure! Now lets' go see if the old timer needs a diaper change.

SEQUENCE 42

155. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE DORM, LATE NIGHT. Gatito is lying on his mattress.

GATITO (Thinking)

Why I can't stop thinking of Mimi and Rachy as if they were related to Miac and his fear for his family? Mimi is now just a vanishing painful memory, but what if letting the relationship with Rachy goes far enough to put her at risk?

(GATITO TURNS FROM ONE SIDE OF HIS MATTRESS TO THE OTHER, UNABLE TO SLEEP.)

Rodolfo warned me, didn't he? As soon as I got some notoriety, Tancruarf and his minions at the immigration police will put their eyes on him. Am I in borrowed time? The gangs could even target Rachy.

But everything had felt so different since the first time I kissed her... It was as if, for a moment, nothing else existed. No Tancruarf, no immigration police, no gangs. When I'm with her, it's as if I was home, like the home I had with my parents, when I was a child, but in the right country... No worries, no injustice coming to knock at the door; just them talking, laughing, telling stories ...living in peace. Was that happiness? But what could I expect from this new year with Tancruarf at the top of his power? Maybe it's for the best to renounce to this dream of her right now before I end up hurting her...

GATITO SIGHS. HE THEN NOTICES THAT A FEW FEET AT HIS RIGHT GROUL IS AWAKE ON HIS MATTRESS.

Did I wake you up?

GROUL (shaking his head)

You know? This afternoon we have been talking about your girlfriend. We are happy for you because since you are together you look better. We worried about something though. We worried about her safety, so we have decided to put two more guys checking on her security... Something discreet, of course. We don't want her to feel uncomfortable, as if we were surrounding her with bodyguards... I just wanted you to know.

GATITO (smiling, his eyes on the ceiling now)

Thanks, I guess...

SEQUENCE 43

Late December, 1900...

156. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEWSPAPER STAND, EARLY MORNING. PASSERSBY ARE WATCHING THE COVERS OF THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY: 'RESURGENCE OF GANG VIOLENCE AGAINST THE CITIZENS OF NAYAK,' 'GANG VIOLENCE IS DIRECT RESULT OF THE LIBERAL VICTORIES IN

MIYAFF, MEWOW AND ROUFF,' 'IMMIGRANTS ATTACK ANOTHER COUPLE OF CITIZENS IN NAYAK CITY, CLOSE TO THE LIMITS WITH MEWOW. THE FEMALE WAS RAPED AND THE MALE SO SAVAGELY BEATEN THAT HE IS STILL IN INTENSIVE CARE; THE DOCTORS CAN'T SAY WHETHER HE'LL SURVIVE.'

157. CUTS TO: INT.: SMALL AUDITORIUM, AT NIGHT. A BANNER ANNOUNCES: 'PRESS CONFERENCE CONVOKED BY THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ON BEHALF OF THE NAYAK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT.' DEPUTY JON IS AGAIN FILLING FOR CHIEF HAGEL.

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

Again chief Hagel sent me to this cheap show, to fill for him. And again this Chief Kruorf of the immigration police and his two nefarious deputies in the same table. Another one I have to take for the boss, though I see how all of this have been affecting him, impotent to stop the way Kruorf is corrupting his beloved police department.

And the journalists are again gathering in front of the table as vultures, ready to take notes, make the usual questions and then do their usual hit job. Even I expected that, once the elections passed, the gangs would prey exclusively on immigrants. Nobody cared when the victims were immigrants after all. Nevertheless, something must be happening at the top because here we are having another press conference about crimes committed against citizens of Nayak City.

THE POLITICAL APPOINTEE THEN JOINS THEM AT THE TABLE AND CHIEF KRUORF STANDS UP.

CHIEF KRUORF

Well, we are beginning with the press conference programmed for today. As I think you know, two citizens of Nayak have recently been beastly attacked by gang members in Nayak City, close to where the jurisdiction of the Nayak police ends and the jurisdiction of the Mewow police should've begun. Governor Tancruarf has made clear in the last months the state of disarray in which the police departments of those three cities, Miyaff, Mewow and Rouff, are and the way they have resisted our help. Our first priority is the victims though. We have decided not to reveal their names to respect their privacy. The male is still in Intensive Care in Nayak Main Hospital. The doctors don't know whether he'll survive or, if he survives, whether he will have to deal with some permanent disability. The female was savagely raped. She remains in the psychiatric unit of Nayak Main Hospital. The doctors don't know whether she'll be able to make

a full recovery. We'll bring you updates on their condition as soon as we have news.

Coming back to our relationship with those three cities, Governor Tancruarf has informed me that he will be addressing the citizens of Nayak tonight about the package of measures he has prepared to deal with the epidemic of immigrant violence in our neighboring cities.

REPORTER FROM THE EXAMINING POST (raising his hand)
Do you have anything on which you could give us an advance, sir?

KRUORF (shaking his head)
You'll have to wait for Governor Tancruarf's press conference tonight.

REPORTER FROM THE NAYAK DAILY (raising his hand)
Why Chief Hagel is not here? Are you receiving enough collaboration from his department?

DEPUTY JON CAN SEE THE SMIRK ON THE FACE OF ONE OF KRUORF'S DEPUTIES.

KRUORF
We are all together in our mission to protect the citizens of Nayak. As the last wave of immigrant violence against the citizens of Nayak has proved our warnings right, time has also proved wise our governor's decision to restructure the police department of Nayak. Now, I'll let Deputy Jon, who is here representing Chief Hagel, give you his impressions about your question.

DEPUTY JON (uncomfortable, shaking his head, worried)
I have nothing to add.

158. CUTS TO: INT.: AUDITORIUM, AT NIGHT, BEHIND A PODIUM.

TANCRUARF (giving a furtive glance to the journalists)
My friends, when I first ran for office I wanted to bring the weight of our values over those who had betrayed their constituents and their party, over those who had let illegal aliens run over our citizens, rob our citizens, rape our citizens, kill our children. And we also brought sanity to our finances, eliminated suffocating regulations, cut taxes and heard the voice of the people. But that's not the reason I've called this press conference.

Anyway, the people of Nayak spoke in November and we made a series of reforms, which the people of Nayak have endorsed through their vote because they have worked. Nevertheless, some cities in our state have stubbornly refused to hear the voice of the people and now they are trying to reverse our achievements for petty political ends. I won't repeat again the name of those three cities but you know of whom I'm talking about. How could you not? One of our sisters has just been brutally raped and she might never recover from the trauma. As far as to our brother, who was brutally attacked by these immigrant gangs as he tried to defend his female, he's still in Intensive Care and, if he survives, he might have to spend the rest of his life with a paralysis from the neck down.

I say that enough is enough! I say that we have been patient enough but there's a limit for everything. That's why I have decided to bring to the state legislature a piece of legislation that, one, will create the Immigration Tribunal, with jurisdiction over all criminal matters relating immigrants, what will imply a deep reform in the internal structures of the judiciary and of the offices of the district attorneys. As deep as necessary to protect the citizens of Nayak.

And, two, we are creating a new punishment for atrocious cases like the tragedy that has unfortunately convoked us today. The new punishment will be named *Infamous Hanging* and we hope will deter many of these cowards from preying again on our citizens. I've heard that Senator Sanderf has said that all I want is to frighten innocent immigrants and political enemies. So, here you can see who is with you and who with the criminals! Senator Sanderf, so you can't make excuses, I here accept your amendment to also subject to *Infamous Hanging* those whose abuse of authority ends up in an innocent's death. Now I dare you to vote for the bill! My conscience is clean. And if I have some regret is that the criminals who committed the crime that has motivated this bill will not be punished by it because their crime preceded the law. These are some of the frustrations my administration will have to bear to respect the sanctity of law, so nobody accuses us later of arbitrariness.

Well, that's all I can say for now. We'll bring you details during the week. And thanks for coming, my friends.

159. CUTS TO: INT.: DEPUTY JON'S LIVING ROOM. Deputy Jon (IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES, FROWN) turns the radio off.

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

With the police submitted and now, with the judiciary and the district attorneys following the same path, there is no way to say

where the power of Tancred will stop. Unsympathetic judges, no surprise, will see their budgets cut and then, later, will be defeated in the next elections for being incompetent. Unsympathetic district attorneys will be reassigned to places where they will literally rot to make room for more sympathetic ones. Actually, only the federal government will be able to challenge Tancred after this but, afraid of the growing influence Tancred is gaining nationwide inside the Patriot Party, it is very unlikely they will move a finger. I will have to think of a nice way to brief the boss about the news.

SEQUENCE 44

New Year eve...

160. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE MAIN ROOM, AT MORNING. GATITO AND SOME OF HIS GUYS ARE TALKING. GATITO LOOKS UNCOMFORTABLE, AS IF TRYING TO FIND THE WORDS TO SAY SOMETHING. FINALLY ALFGUAU SPEAKS.

ALFGUAU (solemnly)

Aren't we bored having Gatito here every New Year eve, guys. We have to decide something about that issue.

GATITO

Are you starting again...?

ALFGUAU (solemnly)

Okay, okay... But just let us know something. Has your father in law invited for New Year eve?

GATITO

Don't we have something more important to talk about, guys?

ALFGUAU

So, that is a yes...

GATITO

Guys...

ALFGUAU, SOLEMNLY AGAIN THOUGH OTHERS ARE ALREADY BEGINNING TO CRACK UP IN LAUGHTER, RAISES HIS HANDS TO MEAN HE WANTS PUT A MOTION TO VOTE.

ALFGUAU

My motion is that Gatito should be allowed to spend New Year eve with his father in law if he brings us something for breakfast tomorrow morning.

LAUGHING, EVERYBODY RAISES THEIR HANDS.

GATITO

Okay, guy, whatever. You think this is funny?

ALFGUAU

In that case, you'll bring ravioli. Vote?

LAUGHING, EVERYBODY RAISES THEIR HANDS AGAIN.

GATITO

Guys, I don't have a father in... Guys, please, you know I can't afford ravioli...

RAFAEL (smirking)

In that case, you'll bring us a photograph of you with your bride Rachy.

GATITO (Thinking)

If they knew that I had decided to end with Rachy, that after having dinner with Miac and his wife in Rouff, I didn't want her to end up as collateral damage in an attack against me, that I realized that anybody, Tancruarf, the gangs could end up targeting Rachy just to hurt me. And if they knew that once I had her in front of me..., I just couldn't.

161. CUTS TO: EXT.: NAYAK, NIGHT OF NEW YEAR EVE, AT THE SIDE OF RACHY'S FRONT DOOR.

GATITO

Does he approve of me...?

RACHY

Yeah, he trusts my judgment.

GATITO (somewhat afraid)

What I mean is... does he know that I am...?

RACHY

Illegal? Yes, I told him. He looked worried, but I told him more about you and he understood. He supported me. What? Are you afraid of him? (SMILING NAUGHTILY NOW) He's going to be waiting for you with *Tancruarf* at the table for messing up with his daughter.

162. CUTS TO: INT.: RACHY'S HOUSE. RACHY INTRODUCES GATITO TO HER FATHER AND BOTH SHAKE HANDS.

SEQUENCE 45

January 6, 1901...

163. CUTS TO: INT.: SMALL AUDITORIUM, at NIGHT. A BANNER SAYS: 'NAYAK POLICE PRESS CONFERENCE.' CHIEF KRUORF IS PRESENTING THE FIVE SUSPECTS OF THE ATTACK OF LATE DECEMBER 1900. THE FIVE LOOK BADLY BRUISED. KRUORF'S DEPUTIES FORCE THE FIVE PRISONERS TO RAISE THEIR HEADS FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHS THE JOURNALISTS ARE WAITING TO TAKE. DEPUTY JON IS THERE TO FILL FOR CHIEF HAGEL. CHIEF KRUORF STANDS UP AND EVERYBODY KEEPS SILENCE.

CHIEF KRUORF

It's obvious that we don't convoke a press conference for every arrest we make but this case has moved so deeply every nerve of our society that I thought we owed you this update. On the night of December thirty first, we arrested these criminals as they were hiding, ready to prey on another couple in the vicinity of Nayak train station. With the description provided by the victims of their previous attack, we launched a patient but relentless investigation that led us to these individuals. And on the night of December thirty first we followed them to their gathering point, close to Nayak train station, where they were getting ready to commit another infamous crime. We are currently investigating other crimes that might be related to this gang and we'll be bringing you updates soon... as we see that those releases won't hurt our work...

THEN ONE OF THE FIVE PRISONERS, THE YOUNGEST, INTERRUPTS CHIEF KRUORF.

PRISONER

That's not true! That's not true! We are innocent! They arrested us in the morning, in a parking lot while we were...

IMMEDIATELY, ONE MEMBER OF THE POLICE GAGS THE PRISONER.

CHIEF KRUORF (scoffing)

Can you see the audacity of these criminals? The prisoners have been presented to both victims and both victims have recognized the five prisoners as the gang that attacked them. We could fortunately get the notarized testimony of the male just before his death at Intensive Care. As you already know, despite the good efforts of our doctors the male died two days ago due to the traumas inflicted on him by these beasts. We are now putting

these criminals and our investigation at the consideration of the district attorney and the judiciary. Once these criminals meet justice for their heinous acts, we'll be able to say that the people of Nayak have restored their trust on the authorities... on which it trusted its safety.

CUTS TO: INT.: AT THE TABLE. DEPUTY JON, WHO FROWNS, TURNS TO SEE (PAN OF THE POLICE REMOVING THE PRISONERS) THE POLICE PUSHING THE FIVE PRISONERS OUT OF THE CONFERENCE ROOM.

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

That poor guy.... Could he have really thought that interrupting Chief Kruorf could get him anything but a beating after they closed those doors and there were no witnesses? Could he really have thought somebody was going to hear him? Would the Examining Post or the Nayak Daily report on the words of that young, expendable immigrant, much less investigate his plea? Not in this lifetime. They will just take the version of the police reports and add the photographs.

Nobody would investigate anything despite the brutal flaws of this case... The time of departure of the interrogators and the notary don't match the time of death of the victim. Actually, Kruorf had rushed to send them when he learned that the male had entered in coma and that the male would not survive to deny the testimony the notary stated he had given. The female, on the other hand, with her mental health maybe beyond repair, would have testified anything her interrogators would have led her to believe. Why only the youngest prisoner had dared to challenge Chief Kruorf's version? Was it that they had not only been battered but also threatened by their captors, that they would accept their fate in silence to avoid retaliation against their loved ones? On top of that, the file was sent to the offices of the immigration police, in whose growing and unclear jurisdiction we have no part...

JON SIGHS.

SEQUENCE 46

Early February, 1901...

164. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEW WAREHOUSE'S MAIN ROOM, EARLY MORNING. RODOLFO IS OPENING THE DOOR WITH HIS KEY. HIS FACE IS GLOOMY. GATITO AND HIS GUYS WAIT FOR THE REPORT.

RODOLFO

What we expected.... The dog who officiated as judge humiliated and yelled at the five prisoners before sentencing them to death by hanging. The youngest one still wanted to say

something but the guards didn't need to gag him this time because his own sobbing was drowning every word he uselessly was trying to get out of his mouth.

(CUTS TO: EXT.: GALLOWS, NOON, THE PRISONERS ARE PLACED IN FRONT OF THE NOOSES)

That same afternoon the five prisoners were brought to a platform and they put the nooses around their necks...

CUTS TO: EXT.: BACKYARD, FIRST ROW. IN A LINE OF TALL BACK CHAIRS TANCRUARF, KRUORF, HIS DEPUTIES, JON AND OTHER ANIMALS SIT IN FRONT OF THE PLATFORM. FROM THERE THEY CAN HEAR AN OFFICER READING THE DEATH WARRANT (MUFFLED).

165. CUTS TO: EXT.: PLATFORM OF EXECUTION. THE PLATFORM IS OPENED AND THE FIVE PRISONERS FALL TO THEIR DEATHS.

CUTS TO: EXT.: BACKYARD. AMONG THE PUBLIC, RODOLFO IS WATCHING THE EXECUTION.

CUTS TO: EXT.: BACKYARD, FIRST ROW. DEPUTY JON TURNS TO TANCRUARF.

CUTS TO: EXT.: BACKYARD, FIRST ROW. TANCRUARF WATCHES THE EXECUTION WITH FRANTIC EYES.

166. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE MAIN ROOM. THEN GATITO FROWNS AND DROPS HIS EYES DROPPED TO THE FLOOR.

There was nothing anybody could've done for them, Gatito.

GATITO (with some bitterness)

Anything any of us could've done? Of course not, but what about those like Senator Sanderf, who could've actually done something?

RODOLFO (shrugging)

What can I say, my friend? Sanderf can't control the courts, anyway... But Tancruarf can...

RODOLFO PUTS HIS HAND ON GATITO'S SHOULDER. GATITO NODS.

GATITO (somewhat discouraged)

We are alone, Rodolfo...

RODOLFO (sighing)

We are, indeed.

SEQUENCE 47

March 1901...

167. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE IN SHAMBLES NEAR A PIER IN NAYAK, LATE NIGHT.

GANG LEADER

Sir, we have supported you on everything you have asked us, sir. We have waited a long time. But we need your support here, sir...

KRUORF'S DEPUTY

Don't bother me trying to sound articulate, you fuck shit. Just tell me what you want.

GANG LEADER

Sir, there is some Gatito Inmeegrante that is screwing up our business. He has organized the immigrants against us and even killed one of our leaders. If it were just this Gatito Inmeegrante, we would not ask your help, but they have organized the immigrants of Miyaff. And with that black cat Miac from Rouff and now the immigrants of Rouff are doing the same. Even the immigrants of Mewow say they are going to do the same. That's too many against us, sir, and we have served you well, sir.

DEPUTY (staring at the gangster impatiently, annoyed)
Gatito Inmeegrante? Miac? Are those the leaders? Are those their real names? Are they immigrants? Do you know where we can find them?

GANG LEADER

Sir... I'm sure we were close to find out, but then the immigrants organized... *rondas* they call them, and now we are not allowed to get close to Miyaff or Rouff. They are armed with pipes and stones. They have even killed one of our leaders...

DEPUTY

Yeah! Yeah! I heard you the first time. You already told me. So you don't know shit.

GANG LEADER

Miac is the leader of the Rouff *ronda* and Gatito Inmeegrante is the leader of the Miyaff *ronda*. Well, not exactly, there is a committee, but it was that Gatito Inmeegrante who gave them the idea.

DEPUTY (annoyed, raising his voice)

That Gatito Inmeegrante *is or is not* the leader of the Miyaff *ronda*. And what the fuck is a *ronda*? No, no! Wait! I have no patience for your stupidity. I'm sending you tomorrow one of my assistants to make sense of all that fucking shit you've spilled here tonight, okay? He'll try to make sense of all this, so we know who this Gatito Inmeegrante is and who this Miac is and

why are they fucking with us... if they are not the same animal after all because I can't get anything clear from your bullshit tonight. You'll wait for him here tomorrow night, at this same time. Do you understand?

GANG LEADER (ashamed, dropping his eyes)

Yes, sir.

Then the DEPUTY stands up and leaves without saying goodbye. CLOSE UP of the GANG LEADER, who sees the deputy leave with resentment.

May, 1901...

168. CUT TO: INT.: TANCRUARF'S OFFICES, AT NIGHT. CHIEF KRUORF APPROACHES TANCRUARF'S OFFICE THROUGH A CORRIDOR.

CHIEF KRUORF

We have a pretty good idea who Miac is and where he can find him although we still can't find out whether Gatito Inmeegrante is a name or an alias, where in Miyaff is his center of operations and whether there is a connection between the two. In the case of Miac, that hasn't been that difficult because the immigrant community is less organized and much easier to infiltrate, not to say that that Miac is much careless than that Gatito Inmeegrante. Besides that, Miac has insisted on personally commanding the *rondas* in the field. And it seems he himself has beaten many gang members to the point that some of them have actually ended up in the local hospital. We've had to erase from our books the hospital reports as it is now a hospital obligation to report immigrants seeking their services. So, those assets are still safe...

TANCRUARF (increasingly annoyed)

So, I have to understand that there is some rival gang which is trying to take the streets from them and that they're trying to get us involved in his gang war? Are you aware of how busy I am right now in other states? Who the fuck do they think we are, their impact force?

KRUORF

No, no, sir. It's not another gang. It's a vigilante group. It began in Miyaff and then it spread to Rouff. And now it seems to be spreading to Mewow. The leader seems to be some cat named Gatito Inmeegrante, but we are not sure about whether that is his real name.

TANCRUARF (disdainful)

Really? Gatito Inmeegrante a real name...?

CHIEF KRUORF

We have to cover all ends, sir... But we have made no progress on that, no matter how much pressure we have put in our interrogatories. It seems they have a committee in charge, but nobody has been willing to talk, no matter the pressure we put on them... Well, I said that already.

We have broken some of them under pressure, but then the stories given by some seem to contradict the stories given by others... It's like they have in them some new motivation we have not seen before. We have not even been able to identify the members of the committee. In Rouff, on the other hand, we have been luckier. We have identified some Miac, who is the leader of the vigilante group of Rouff, and we believe he's the Miac we're looking for. We have not cracked down on him yet because we want to see whether he can lead us to this Gatito Inmeegrante... And the gangs have been there for us every time we have asked them to do something, sir...

TANCRUARF (looking hesitant)

How long do you think you need to see whether there is a relationship between the two, an active relationship?

KRUORF (stuttering)

I don't know. You never know in these situations...

TANCRUARF (raising his voice)

Two weeks, three weeks?

KRUORF

Possibly...

TANCRUARF (sighing and then with an arrogant tone)

Make your best in the next three weeks. If you can't get this Gatito Inmeegrante too, get at least that Miac and make him talk. Make this a priority for you. Is that clear?

KRUORF (nodding)

Yes, sir.

TANCRUARF (hesitant again)

Now, this is what I want the gangs to do for us in a week...

CLOSE UP OF KRUORF'S FACE AS HE HEARS TANCRUARF SPEAKING. HE LOOKS SHOCKED.

SEQUENCE 48

Mid May, 1901...

169. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEWSPAPER STAND, MORNING. PASSERSBY GATHER AROUND TO READ THE COVERS OF THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY: *'TWO SMALL CHILDREN RAPED AND MURDERED; THEIR BODIES LEFT IN AN ALLEY. ALIEN CRIMINALS MUST BE STOPPED! GOVERNOR, SWIFT ACTION AGAINST IMMIGRANT GANGS IS NEEDED! A CRIME LIKE THIS IS BEYOND THE GOOD NATURE OF ANY LEGAL RESIDENT OF THE SOUTHERN COUNTRY.'*

170. CUTS TO: INT.: SMALL AUDITORIUM. CHIEF KRUORF IS GIVING A PRESS CONFERENCE.

CHIEF KRUORF

It is the top priority for the Nayak police to find the criminals responsible for this terrible act...

171. CUTS TO: INT.: GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, at NIGHT. TANCRUARF IS GIVING A PRESS CONFERENCE TOO.

TANCRUARF

I trust the Nayak state police can deal with the situation...

172. CUTS TO: INT.: SMALL AUDITORIUM. CHIEF KRUORF IS GIVING AN UPDATE ON THE CASE. DEPUTY JON IS AGAIN FILLING FOR CHIEF HAGEL.

CHIEF KRUORF

We are following the leads brought to us by a witness who, attracted by the cries of the small children, approached the crime scene only to see two cats over the bodies of the children. The two cats were presumably immigrants because when they looked at the witness, afraid, as they realized that he was a citizen, ran and jumped over a fence.

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

'Afraid, as they realized that he was a citizen, ran and jumped over a fence....' Have we come to this? Can somebody in office make a statement so stupid and get away unchallenged? And, of course, nobody in the press questioned the obvious holes in the story. Besides the widespread caricature of immigrants living in fear of the citizens of good race, how the citizen could know the two cats looking at him and subsequently jumping the fence were immigrants? Why had he not yelled for the police to come at that same moment if the immigrants were already on the run? Then there were the contradictions. At some moment the witness had

said he had come to the alley when the cats were killing the children and, when asked why he had not cried for help, as that might have still saved the children' lives, he rectified his testimony to say that the children were already dead when he showed up at the crime scene even though he had been supposedly attracted by their cries; only to rectify his story later by saying that he didn't scream because he was at first frozen by panic even when he had said before that, instead of calling for help, he had decided to step forward in the alley alone to face the criminal immigrants.

On the other hand, the crime must have taken place over several minutes, minutes during which the children must have been crying for help, cry he seemed to have noticed only at the last minute despite it having been a quiet night. And he could not give a good reason for him being there since he did not live in the area. And, of course, nobody asked about his relationship with the office of the governor, where he worked, or about his long time support for the political career of Michelle Tanbruarf.

(CUTS TO: INT.: SAME SMALL AUDITORIUM, THE PRISONERS ARE BROUGHT AND PRESENTED TO THE PRESS. NOW FLANKED BY HIS TWO DEPUTIES, KRUORF RESUMES HIS REPORT. THE REPORTERS KEEP TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PRISONERS.)

Will some of those assholes notice that they have applied make up to their faces to make the inflammation less visible...?

CHIEF KRUORF (behind a podium)

The two prisoners were captured precisely when they were on the tracks of another child. They have been positively identified by the witness of their alleged previous crime...

CLOSE UP OF DEPUTY JON, WHO FROWNS

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)

Should I give the boss all the details when I brief him? It affects him, I know, but he will have to come up with something at some point. He can't solve the problem by sending me all the time they make a political point at our expenses. For now, they have reduced us to decoration in their press conferences. But it won't stop there...

DEPUTY JON TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO SOME POINT IN THE BACKGROUND AND DISCONNECTS FROM THE CONFERENCE FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

SEQUENCE 49

173. CUTS TO: INT.: TANCRUARF'S OFFICE. TANCRUARF IS INVITING CHIEF HAGEL TO SIT.

TANCRUARF (smiling)
Some time I have not seen you, Chief Hagel...

HAGEL (dropping his eyes)
My health, sir...

TANCRUARF (smirking)
Your health? Hmm... Is it not a nuisance that your health seems to weaken every time we have a press conference or an execution?

CHIEF HAGEL
Sir... I have really...

TANCRUARF (with an accusatory expression)
Are you really with your governor, Hagel?

CHIEF HAGEL
Yes sir, you know I am.

TANCRUARF (staring at him with distrust)
Then I want you to be there representing your department next time we have a press conference or execution, or whenever I need you to be there. I don't want to learn you have sent your deputy again. Is that clear? It looks bad!

CHIEF HAGEL (nodding with his eyes still dropped)
Yes, sir.

TANCRUARF (smiling, satisfied)
You're a good conservative, at least you have the reputation of being a good one, but if you don't have the strength to do this job anymore, I hope you are honest with me, so I can appoint a successor. (HAGEL NODS IN SILENCE, HIS EYES DROPPED IN SHAME) Fine! Then we are good again, Hagel. And raise those eyes! Cheer up! (PAUSE) You can leave...

SEQUENCE 50

Late May, 1901...

174. CUTS TO: COURTROOM, AT NOON. THE JUDGE IS YELLING FROM HIS COUNTER. DEPUTY JON IS AMONG THE PUBLIC IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES.

DEPUTY JON (Thinking)
It came to nobody's surprise when by late May the two cats were found guilty and sentenced to the new Infamous Hanging. The

two cats had no lawyers to assist them and their request to interrogate the prosecution witness themselves was denied. The two cats swore that they had been at home with their relatives when the crime was committed, but that they were afraid of calling their relatives to testify as they did not want their loved ones to be subject to retaliation. So, they asked for some guarantees for their witnesses, but these were denied too. At the end, the judge made a long rant about the depravity of those cats who had come from a foreign country only to prey on the innocence of the children of Nayak, about an immigrant race that had lost its moral compass, about the need to show these criminals that the people of Nayak was tired to their abuse.

(CUTS TO: INT. COURTROOM. THE TWO PRISONERS HOLD HANDS)

And, no surprise, they were sentenced to die in the new Infamous Hanging in two days. Their bodies would be dumped in an undisclosed location, as garbage. And nobody said they could not be tortured during those two days, so I'm afraid they won't let them have even those two days in peace. I have no doubt the next two days will confirm those fears.

(CUTS TO: EXT.: BACKYARD, EARLY AFTERNOON. THE GALLOWES HAVE BEEN ERECTED. THE TWO PRISONERS, SHOWING BRUISES ON THEIR FACES, ARE LED TO THE PLATFORM OF EXECUTION. THEY ARE LIMPING TOO. THE PRISONERS SEE THE POLES, PULLEYS, CANS AND CHAINS WAITING FOR THEM AND LOOK AFRAID. THEN, ONE OF THEM, THE ONE LAGGING THE OTHER CONDEMNED, IS PUSHED BY THE GUARDS ESCORTING THEM, TRIPS AND FALLS. NOBODY IS MOVED WHEN ONE OF THE GUARDS KICKS HIM AS HE ORDERS HIM TO STAND UP. BUT AS HE CAN'T GET UP, THE OTHERS LOSE PATIENCE AND DRAG HIM TO THE PLATFORM, ONLY TO DROP HIM AT THE SIDE OF THE OTHER CAT. FOR A BRIEF MOMENT THE CATS TURN THEIR HEADS TO LOOK AT EACH OTHER, AFRAID, SEEKING STRENGTH. THE GUARDS THEN PUSH THEM, MAKING THEM FACE THE TABLE, WHERE TANCRUARF HAS THE MAIN PLACE AT THE CENTER, SURROUNDED BY THE SENTENCING JUDGE, CHIEF KRUORF AND HIS DEPUTIES AND CHIEF HAGEL. AT THAT MOMENT THE JUDGE STANDS UP AND READS THE SENTENCE AGAIN WITH A SOLEMN TONE (INAUDIBLE). TEARS BEGIN TO ROLL FROM THE CATS' EYES. THEN THE EXECUTIONER TIGHTS A CHAIN AROUND THEIR NECKS AND THE CHAINS ARE PULLED UPWARDS. HAGEL CLOSES HIS EYES WHEN HE HEARS THEIR VAIN ATTEMPTS, CUT BY THE CHAINS THAT ARE STRANGLING THEM, AT SAYING SOMETHING, AT BREATHING; AND THEN THE TRUNCATED WORDS THAT WERE NOW TRYING TO ESCAPE THROUGH THEIR DESPERATE EYES. THE CHAINS ARE PULLED UP ENOUGH TO START ASPHYXIATION, UP TO THE POINT WHERE THE PRISONER'S FEET COULD BARELY TOUCH THE FLOOR FOR A MINUTE OR SO. THEN THE EXECUTIONER BEGINS TO POUR THE LIQUID FROM ONE CAN, OIL OR GASOLINE, ON BOTH PRISONERS AFTER WHAT HE PROCEEDS TO SET THEM ON FIRE AND THEIR BODIES ARE

PULLED UP HIGHER. AS THE CHAINS PULL THEM UP, HAGEL CLOSES HIS EYES EVEN TIGHTER. WHEN HAGEL OPENS HIS EYES AND TURNS TO TANCRUARF, HE CAN SEE HIM FOLLOWING THE EXECUTION WITH FRANTIC EYES. TANCRUARF SEEMED TO BE HAVING AN IMMENSE PLEASURE WITH THE SPECTACLE. HAGEL FINALLY DROPS HIS EYES AGAIN AND MAKES AN EFFORT TO NOT CRY.)

SEQUENCE 51

175. CUTS TO: EXT.: GATITO'S WAREHOUSE, LATE NIGHT. A DOG, ONE OF THE GUYS MAKING GUARD AT THE OUTER PERIMETER COMES RUNNING TO THE WAREHOUSE FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER DOG, AN OLD DOG, OPENS THE DOOR AND ASKS FOR GATITO. GROUL IMMEDIATELY COMES TO THE DOOR.

GROUL (frowned)

What happens?

THE GUARD SHOWS HIM THE OLD DOG COMING WITH HIM.

GUARD

We found him approaching the warehouse. We stopped him and he said he had something important to say.

GROUL (turning to the old dog)

You are...?

OLD DOG (still panting)

I'm the old leader from Rouff. Don't you remember me? Gatito knows me. We were together at Miac Tony's home last year.

GROUL (nodding)

Wait here...

SOON AFTER, GATITO SHOWS UP AT THE DOOR WITH A SLEEPY FACE.

GATITO

Ah! It's you! Everything is okay?

OLD DOG (struggling at first to find the words)

They have Miac, Gatito. They have him!

THEN THE OLD DOG BEGINS TO SOB.

SEQUENCE 52

176. CUTS TO: EXT.: ROUFF, LATE NIGHT. THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ARE CORDONING MIAC'S NEIGHBORHOOD.

177. CUTS TO: EXT.: ROUFF. SOUND OF SOME BANGING ON THE DOOR AND A SLEEPY MIAC APPROACHING THE DOOR.

MIAC (whispering, grabbing a club and asking through the door)
Giselle, take our son to the back. Hurry up!
(YELLING NOW) Who the fuck is there at this hour?

ANIMAL (desperate voice)
Miac, it's me! The immigration police is rounding the neighborhood! They're sweeping in this direction!

MIAC OPENS THE DOOR. THERE ARE A BLACK DOG AND A BLACK CAT IN FRONT OF HIM, BOTH WITH ANGUISHED FACES.

MIAC (turning to the black dog)
Take my wife and my son to where you know. You answer to me for them with your life.

BLACK DOG (with moist eyes, nodding)
With my life, Miac.

MIAC (turning to the black cat and beginning to run with the black cat)
Where are the others?

BLACK CAT (panting)
They have killed and captured many of us already, I don't know how many. They're setting on fire the shacks they leave behind as they tighten the circle around your house. The others are trying to defend the neighborhood with stones, with whatever they can, to hold a bit longer... There's panic in the whole hood, Miac.

MIAC (panting)
Is the way through the sewage still free?

BLACK CAT (panting)
I think so.

MIAC (somewhat irritated, raising his voice)
You think so?

BLACK CAT
Everything is happening too fast, Miac. It was, the last time I checked...

MIAC

Then we have to move fast.

(CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT. MIAC CAN NOW SEE THE SPOT WHERE THE REST OF HIS GROUP IS TRYING TO SLOW DOWN THE IMMIGRATION POLICE. THREE MEMBERS OF THEIR GROUP NOTICE THEIR PRESENCE AND APPROACH THEM.)

BLACK CAT

And the others?

BLACK DOG (panting)

Dead. There's nothing we can do...

MIAC

To the sewers! Now!

THE FIVE OF THEM RAN AS FAST AS THEY CAN. SOUND OF PANTING.
CUTS TO: EXT. NIGHT. ENTRANCE TO THE SEWERS. THE FIVE REACH THE ENTRANCE AND PUSH OUT THE BOXES THEY HAD USED TO DISGUISE THE GATE.

CUTS TO: INT. NIGHT. SEWERS. THE FIVE KEEP RUNNING THROUGH THE DIRTY WATERS. THE SOUND OF THE DIRTY WATER, SPLASHING AT THE CONTACT OF THEIR FEET, SPLASHING OVER THEIR OPEN WOUNDS, IS GETTING ON THEIR NERVES BUT THEY KEEP RUNNING.

CUTS TO: INT. NIGHT. SEWERS. MIAC CAN SEE THE END OF THE SEWER.
178. CUTS TO: EXT.: EXIT OF THE SEWERS. AS SOON AFTER THE FIVE LEAVE THE SEWERS THEY FIND THEMSELVES IN THE MIDDLE OF A CIRCLE OF LIGHT.

VOICE (Yelling)

Freeze!

FROM THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, ANOTHER LIGHT CAME TO DRAW A SMALLER CIRCLE OVER THEM.

MIAC

Break!

THE OTHER FOUR BLACK ANIMALS GET READY TO RUN IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS, TWO AROUND THE LIGHTS AND THE OTHER TWO, IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, BACK TO THE SEWER. MIAC STAYS THERE AND GRABS HIS CLUB WITH THE LEFT HAND AND A STONE WITH THE RIGHT, READY TO COVER THE ESCAPE OF HIS FRIENDS. SOON AFTER, THE TWO WHO HAD TRIED TO ESCAPE GOING AROUND THE LIGHTS ARE BEING PUSHED BACK TO THE CIRCLE OF LIGHT. MIAC THROWS THE STONE TO

ONE MEMBER OF THE POLICE WHO IS TRYING TO GRAB ONE OF HIS FALLEN FRIENDS, BUT MANY MORE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE RUN TOWARDS HIM. MIAC STILL HAS TIME TO CLUB ANOTHER ONE IN THE HEAD, WHO FALLS AT HIS FEET, BEFORE THE OTHERS MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE GRAB HIM BY THE ARMS, DISARM HIM AND PUSH HIM TO THE GROUND, WHERE THEY ARE ALREADY HANDCUFFING HIS OTHER TWO FRIENDS. THEN SOME OTHER MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE COME OUT OF THE SEWERS WITH THE OTHER TWO, ALREADY HANDCUFFED. ONE OF THEM IS BLEEDING FROM THE FOREHEAD. THE TWO PRISONERS ARE ALSO PUSHED TO THE GROUND, AT THE SIDE OF THE OTHER THREE.

OFFICER OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE (seemingly an officer, yelling)
Who of you is Miac?

BLACK DOG WITH MIAC (with arrogance)
I'm Miac! Who the fuck wants to know?

THEN THE OFFICER WHO HAS MADE THE QUESTION RETURNS TO THE DARKNESS BEHIND THE LIGHT PROJECTED BY HIS FLASHLIGHT AND WHISPERS A QUESTION TO SOME OTHER ANIMAL, ONE WHO HAD JUST ARRIVED, AS HE BLINDS MIAC AND HIS FRIENDS WITH THE LIGHT OF HIS FLASHLIGHT. THEN THE OFFICER APPROACHES THE FALLEN BLACK DOG, THE ONE WHO HAD JUST SPOKEN, AND KICKS HIM FEROCIOUSLY IN THE MOUTH.

BLACK DOG WITH MIAC (still defiant)
Sissy!

OFFICER OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE
Who of you is Miac Tony?

THE OTHER FRIENDS OF MIAC (shouting)
I am!

OFFICER OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE (annoyed, yelling)
Fuck this! (TURNING TO THE ANIMAL WHO HAD JUST ARRIVED) Hey, you! Come here!

A CAT STEPS FORWARD SHYLY, EITHER FRIGHTENED OR ASHAMED.

OFFICER OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE (yelling)
Who is Miac?

MIAC STARES AT THE CAT. NOW HE SEEMS TO REMEMBER.

CAT (pointing at Miac)

That one.

OFFICER OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE

Okay, we don't need the rest.

THEN TWO MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE PULL MIAC UP WHILE A THIRD ONE PUNCHES HIM IN THE JAW REPEATEDLY. DEFIANTLY, MIAC SPITS AT HIM BLOOD AND SALIVA. BUT NOW MIAC, IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS STRUGGLE, CAN SEE HOW FOUR OTHER MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE ARE PUTTING THEIR FEET BEHIND THE NECKS OF HIS FALLEN FRIENDS AS OTHER FOUR ARE RAISING THEIR RIFLES ONLY TO VIOLENTLY STRIKE THEM ON THE BACK OF THEIR HEADS WITH THE BUTTS OF THEIR WEAPONS. MIAC BEGINS TO SCREAM AND, AS HE FEELS THE TEARS ON HIS EYES AND STARTS TO FIGHT AGAIN, HE SEES THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE REPEATING THE PROCEDURE. A POOL OF BLOOD IS FORMING AROUND THE IMMOBILE BODIES OF HIS FRIENDS AND THE MEMBERS OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICE WHO HAD STEPPED BEFORE ON THEIR NECKS ARE NOW RETIRING THE HANDCUFFS FROM THEM. A SEMI UNCONSCIOUS, BEATEN MIAC IS DRAGGED TO A TRUCK.

SEQUENCE 53

179. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM. GATITO IS TALKING TO THE OLD DOG.

GATITO

His family?

OLD DOG (raising his eyes from the floor)

They're safe. A black dog from his group brought them to my house. That same dog updated me just when I was getting ready to come here, Gatito

GROUL (turning to the rest of Gatito's guys)

Wake up! Wake up, everybody! We have an emergency. Rafael, go warn the guards at the perimeter.

GATITO

We'll provide for them.

OLD DOG

We all will do.

GATITO

Groul, ask those who have to leave in the morning to work to use an alternative route and to leave earlier. Also send two scouts to the house of one of the members of the committee of Miyaff to see whether he knows something else. And send somebody to Rodolfo's house to ask him to find out anything he can about Miac.

(MIAC'S FACE AND RACHY'S KEEP COMING TO GATITO'S MIND)

MEAU (coming back from checking on the perimeter guards)
How can we be sure that nobody in Miac's group is going to talk?

OLD DOG (outraged, stand up, raising his voice)
Because they are all dead, because they're fucking dead and Miac would never talk. That cat may be a bit stupid, but he would never betray anybody. Never!

MEAU TURNS AT GATITO AS IF ASKING HIM TO CALM THE OLD DOG DOWN.

GATITO

(TO THE OLD DOG) We need to keep our heads cool or we're lost.

(TURNING TO MEAU) I know Miac would die before betraying anybody. He is that kind of cat, Meau. We have nothing to worry from him.

(GROUL ENTERS THE ROOM AND GATITO TURNS TO THE REST AS IF READY TO ADDRESS THE GROUP)

Nevertheless, the immigration police knew where to find him. For what you say, they didn't lose time and at every moment they seemed to know where to go...

OLD DOG (with bitterness)

There has to be a fucking traitor! I'll do everything in my power to know who he or she is!

GATITO

It has to be somebody who has recently joined your *ronda* or has been making activism for you in Rouff only in the last weeks; somebody no one of you knew enough...

OLD DOG (hesitant, trying to remember and then standing up abruptly)
Three faces come to my mind... Some of them could've died or been captured in the fight though. I need to come back!

MEAU

Do they know where you live?

GATITO

That's important. Do they know where you live?

OLD DOG (paying attention, hesitating now)

I don't know... but Miac's wife and son are there. I have to come back.

GATITO

It's okay. We'll come back. (TURNING TO MEAU) I need four scouts, four smart and fast ones. Our friend from Rouff is going to make you a map right now, while you select the scouts. They will take them from his house and bring them to our old warehouse for tonight. If nobody tries to stop or follow them, we are good.

MEAU NODS AND LEAVES THE ROOM IMMEDIATELY. THEN GATITO TURNS TO THE OLD LEADER, WHO STILL SEEMS CONFUSED.

GATITO (turning to the old dog)

We need that map!

THE OLD DOG NODS AND BEGINS TO DRAW ON A PIECE OF PAPER AS FAST AS HE CAN. THEN MEAU COMES BACK WITH GROUL AND THE FOUR SCOUTS.

GATITO

Good, I'm going with the first two scouts.

GROUL (protesting)

No! I was with you in Rouff and I remember the city. I'll go with the first two scouts!

GATITO (annoyed)

I've said that I will go with the first two scouts!

MEAU

No! We have decided that we can't afford to lose you. Groul will go with the first scouts and I'll stay here.

GATITO (irritated, yelling)

What's the meaning of this? This is not the moment for this kind of shit!

GROUL

If you insist, we'll bring this to a vote. You want to lose another vote? If this is an ambush, we can't afford to lose you, Gatito. That would be the end!

GATITO (frustrated, mumbling)

Fuck!"

GATITO DROPS HIS EYES TO THE FLOOR AND NODS. THEN GATITO TURNS TO THE OLD DOG AND NOTICES THAT HE IS LOOKING AT THEM WITH MOIST EYES.

180. CUTS TO: EXT.: STREETS OF ROUFF, AT NIGHT. GROUL AND TWO SCOUTS ARE WALKING FAST THE ALMOST DESERTED STREETS, SCREENING THE STREETS AS THEY MOVE FORWARD. GROUL IS PANTING. THEN THEY APPROACH A HOUSE. ONE OF THE SCOUTS KNOCKS AT THE DOOR.

SCOUT

We come on behalf of the old dog who is a leader of the Rouff Committee.

VOICE BEHIND THE DOOR (afraid, somewhat nervous)

What old leader? There's nobody here with that description...

SCOUT

Cut the crap! He came to Miyaff and told us that you are with Miac's wife and son. We don't have time to lose!

AFTER A FEW SECONDS A BLACK DOG, MIAC'S FRIEND, OPENS THE DOOR. THE SCOUT CAN SEE THE LONG KNIFE ON HIS HAND, BUT IGNORES IT. THE SCOUT STEPS FORWARD AND THE BLACK DOG LET HIM IN, AFTER THAT, HE CLOSSES THE DOOR BEHIND THE SCOUT. THEN THE SCOUT LOOKS AT GISELLE, WHO HAS HER SON ON HER ARMS. SHE LOOKS ALARMED.

SCOUT

Don't worry Giselle. I'm with Gatito Inmeegrante. The old leader reached us at Miyaff. We are taking you out of here because it might not be safe for you.

(THE SCOUT TURNS TO THE BLACK DOG, GIVING HIM THE PIECE OF PAPER ON WHICH THE OLD DOG WROTE NAMES)

We need you to get us information about these three names. We need that already! Urgent!"

BLACK DOG (nodding, more relieved now)
When is the rest coming?

SCOUT (losing patience)
I'll stay with them. You leave now! We need that information by the time we leave from here!

AGAIN A BIT HESITANT, THE BLACK DOG LOOKS AT GISELLE, WHO NODS AT HIM. THEN THE BLACK DOG TURNS BACK AT THE SCOUT.

BLACK DOG (anguished)
If something happens to them, I'll find you and I'll kill you before I die, no matter where you hide.

THE SCOUT SEEMS NOT INTERESTED IN THE THREAT THOUGH. HESITANT STILL, THE BLACK DOG LOOKS AT THE SCOUT ONCE MORE AND THEN LOOKS AT THE DOOR BEFORE LOOKING AT GISELLE ONE LAST TIME AND AT LAST LEAVING RELUCTANTLY.

A FEW MINUTES LATER GROUL IS KNOCKING AT THE DOOR AND THE SCOUT LET HIM IN. GISELLE LOOKS NERVOUS, HESITANT. SHE HUGS HER SON MORE TIGHTLY. THE KITTEN LOOKS CONFUSED.

THEY STAY IN SILENCE UNTIL THEY HEAR ANOTHER KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

OLD DOG (voice)
It's me!

GROUL, RELIEVED, OPENS THE DOOR IMMEDIATELY TO LET HIM, GATITO AND THE TWO SCOUTS IN. NOW GROUL IS LOOKING FURIOUS AT THE SCOUTS.

GATITO (turning to Groul)
Don't blame them. I insisted.

GISELLE APPROACHES GATITO WITH HER SON ON HER ARMS, CRYING AT LAST. GATITO HUGS HER IN SILENCE.

OLD LEADER
And the black dog who was here?

GROUL
We sent him with the names you gave us. I'll wait for him here with one of the scouts while you leave...

THEN THEY HEAR SOMEBODY KNOCKING AT THE DOOR. THEY STARTLE AT FIRST.

BLACK DOG (voice, panting)

It's me!

(ONCE HE'S INSIDE THE HOUSE) Of the list you gave me, two died defending the line. The other one, nobody has seen him since.

GATITO (hesitant at first)

We have to get back to Miyaff tonight. The gangs might be aware of what has happened. Groul, you take the first group with Miac's friend and two scouts.

GROUL ACCEPTS RELUCTANTLY.

OLD DOG (angry)

So we have a name... Don't worry. That piece of shit never came to my house...

GATITO (nodding, turning to the rest)

We have to be very cautious now.

OLD DOG (with moist eyes)

He said he admired Miac and that he had come from Mewow, from fucking Mewow, to learn and open a branch in that fucking place. We were rushing to train the *ronda* and could never check his story. We were careless. We never checked it. That's the fucking traitor. I want him dead!

GATITO TURNS TO GISELLE AND SEES THE ANGUISH RETURNING TO HER FACE.

GATITO (turning to the old dog)

He must have come from Mewow. The immigration police must have covered that end even if you never checked it, but I don't think he's in Mewow now. Right now he must be in Nayak, getting ready to leave to some other state. But now we have to worry about Giselle and her son. We also need news about Miac.

THEN THE FIRST GROUP LEAVES. GATITO TURNS TO THE OLD LEADER AND SEES HIM CRYING.

OLD LEADER (crying, mumbling)

That stupid cat! That stupid cat!

SEQUENCE 54

181. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM. GATITO IS SAT AT THE TABLE, THINKING. ONE OF HIS GUYS ANNOUNCES THAT RODOLFO HAS JUST COME. RODOLFO GETS IN.

RODOLFO (sighing)

Still no news or public announcement about the crackdown in Rouff. That can only mean that they are interrogating Miac. And is likely they are interrogating him about your whereabouts.

GATITO (calling one of the scouts and pulling him apart)

I need you to make me a favor. One moment, please, Rodolfo.

(THEN GATITO WRITES IN A PIECE OF PAPER AND SHOWS HIM THE PHOTOGRAPH OF RACHY)

(TO THE SCOUT) Please, escort her to the train station. She must be leaving her office at five. Explain her that I can't meet her today.

GATITO SIGHS. THE SCOUT NODS, PUTS THE PIECE OF PAPER IN HIS POCKET AND LEAVES.

RODOLFO

I was fearing the worst, Gatito.

GROUL (leaving the room)

I'll bring some coffee.

GATITO (anxious)

Something else...?

RODOLFO (nodding)

With Tancruarf's last reforms, the friends on whom I relied for information have been purged from the judiciary, the district attorney's office and from the Nayak Police Department. Anyway, I have brought you the best I've been able to get. It seems they, inside the immigration police, had been planning that crackdown without giving notice to justices, prosecutors or even to the Nayak or Rouff local police. In the state police, they just learned about it when the immigration police returned to headquarters with one prisoner, a big black cat, who, I guess, is your friend Miac. Neither the Nayak Daily nor the Examining Post has reported on the crackdown because they have been asked by Tancruarf to hold the news. And I'm sorry for your friend, but that means that they are going to try to make him talk as hard as they can before they decide what to do with him. That also means that he wasn't the real target or they would have cracked down earlier. I assume they were expecting him to lead

them to their real target and I'm afraid tht real target is you. They haven't been able to find you, otherwise they would've already been here. But the real target must be you. Today I have brought you the keys and the address of a new place here in Miyaff. This place isn't safe anymore...

MIAC

Miac is not going to talk.

RODOLFO

Gatito, right now they must be torturing him and they will keep torturing him for days, until he breaks. All these animals depend on you. It's the warehouse I talked to you about the other day. It's a bit farther from the train station but is safer.

GATITO, WITH PAINED EYES, NODS.

RODOLFO

Another rumor I've heard was that one of Tancruarf's assistants, though most probably it must've been somebody from the immigration police, has had a meeting with some gang leaders some time ago. It seems they were complaining about vigilante groups that had expelled them from Miyaff. Some agreement must've come from that because, just after that, gang activity began to spread in three states on which Tancruarf is interested for his expansion... possibly a presidential bid.

GATITO (a bit skeptic)

Do you mean that Tancruarf planned this crackdown in secret, far from even the judiciary and the district attorney, just to reward the gangs?

RODOLFO (shaking his head)

Tancruarf doesn't give a shit for the gangs. He despises them. He has gone through all this planning because he wants to motivate the gangs while keeping them in line... to direct them to where he wants to expand politically. He's planning ahead.

GATITO (still unconvinced)

That could explain the crackdown but that doesn't explain the Infamous Hanging. I don't know... Why didn't he just hang them and that's it? If he knows about me, he must also know that the Miyaff community is organized now and that Rouff and Mewow are making progress.

RODOLFO

So Tancruarf is a sadist... What's new? So he hates immigrants and has given years of his life to create a stereotype of them that makes his '*enforcement by attrition*' strategy more palatable to the citizens of Nayak... Nothing new on that either. What is more important for him, his presidential ambitions or making your lives a living hell? I honestly don't know, but the result is the same. He wants both things and seems determined to get them.

GATITO (dropping his eyes and making a pause)
What do you think of his possibilities... as a presidential candidate, I mean?

RODOLFO

I don't know... I guess he's going to try in other three states what has worked well for him here. Maybe that's why he's exporting gangs to other states, to then *save* them from those same gangs by, you guess, targeting the immigrants over there. Nevertheless, over there he doesn't have a friendly press, immigrants are not that numerous and the establishment of the Patriot Party is not going to be happy to see his advances, but he has time to solve that problem. It could work.

GATITO SIGHS. MOMENTS LATER THE SCOUT RETURNS WITH RACHY.

SCOUT (upset)

I couldn't convince her, Gatito. She is too stubborn. She threatened to begin to scream if I left her at the train station. She don't listen, Gatito. I don't want you to send me to escort her again, Gatito. She don't listen. She made me stop to call her father too.

RACHY, WORRIED BUT DEFIANT, STARES AT GATITO WITH UNFORGIVING EYES.

GATITO (dropping his eyes)

That's okay, my friend. I'll take it from here.

THE REST LEAVE THE ROOM. GATITO SIGHS ONCE AGAIN.

RACHY (with hurt eyes)

I've learned of a crackdown in Rouff; that they might be after you. And you wanted me to go home? I want to know what's happening, Gatito?

HER MOIST EYES KEEP LOOKING AT HIM. GATITO DROPS HIS EYES.

GATITO

Rachy, you knew from the beginning that something like this could happen; that some day I could bring my problems to your life. They have been trying to track me and, on their way, they have arrested a good friend of mine and I think that...

RACHY (protesting, raising her voice)

You know that that's not what I mean! Don't make it look as if I were blaming you for '*bringing your problems to my life.*' What hurts me is that you're in trouble and you seem to think that that is a reason to expel me from your life! I am your female or not? How could you believe that I could go to Nayak without worries knowing that they are after you?

GATITO (pleading)

Rachy...

RACHY (raising her voice even louder)

No *Rachy* this time! Listen! I am an adult and I decided to be part of your life. If you are in trouble there's no other place in the world where I want to be but at your side and I want to be with you no matter what you go through. You understand? I love you!

RACHY BEGINS TO CRY.

GATITO

I could never forgive me if something happens to you, Rachy!

RACHY

And I could never forgive me if I'm not there with you if something happens to you.

GATITO HUGS HER TIGHTLY, THEN KISSES HER EYES AND LET HER HEAD REST ON HIS SHOULDER.

Early June, 1901...

182. CUTS TO: EXT.: NEWSPAPER STAND, EARLY MORNING, PASSERSBY ARE READING THE COVERS OF THE EXAMINING POST AND THE NAYAK DAILY: '*IMPORTANT GANG LEADER CAPTURED, HAS THE BLOOD OF MANY NAYAK CITIZENS, CHILDREN INCLUDED, ON HIS HANDS,*' '*TRIAL IS EXPECTED BY THE END OF JUNE, WHEN THE POLICE WAS EXPECTED TO HAND THE PROSECUTOR A FINAL DRAFT OF THEIR REPORT.*' MIAC LOOKS WEAKENED THOUGH STILL DEFIANT IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS.

183. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. MAIN ROOM. GATITO ENTERS THE ROOM AND SEES GISELLE TEARING THE PAGES AND WRINKLING THE PIECES ON HER HANDS OF A NEWSPAPER AS TEARS ROLL OVER HER CHEEKS. THEN SHE, FURIOUS, HER LIPS PURSED, BEGINS TO PRONOUNCE CONFUSING WORDS.

GISELLE

How...? How can they throw mud on my husband on top of all they had done already, disgracing him *even more* before the innocent eyes of his son? How?

OLD LEADER

I think it's safe for us to return to Rouff, Gatito...

GATITO

You know you can stay here for as long as you...

OLD LEADER

I have to reorganize the *ronda* of Rouff. I can't let it die. Besides that, I still have to find the coward who betrayed us. Some day his head will pop out somewhere and we will find him.

184. CUTS TO: INT.: WAREHOUSE. MAIN DOOR. THE DOOR OPENS AND THE OLD DOG AND GISELLE WITH HER SON ON HER ARMS ARE GETTING READY TO LEAVE FOLLOWED BY TWO SCOUTS. GISELLE LOOKS BROKEN, EMPTY. GATITO SEES THEM CROSSING THE FRAME OF THE DOOR AND FOR AN INSTANT HE SEES RODOLFO CROSSING THAT SAME FRAME WITH AN EMPTY, BROKEN RACHY.

FADE OUT....

-----END EPISODE TWO

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. TANCRUARF 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 (skeptic)

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 sane 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?

SEQUENCE 69

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 KRUORF'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 life 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 Tancruarf 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 Tancruarf 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 Tancruarf 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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