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**HOT WIND FROM THE SOUTH**

a new play  
by Robert Kornfeld

Robert Kornfeld  
5286 Sycamore Avenue  
Riverdale, New York 10471  
(718) 549-6643

Seminario Multidisciplinario  
José Emilio González  
**SMJEG**  
Facultad de Humanidades  
UPR-RP

script containing Annie, dance scene, 3 video scenes, revised from 17 Jan. to 4 Feb. 98

HOT WIND FROM THE SOUTH

TIME: 1994

CAST:

- BIENVENIDO LANTUM - Maya, 47
- NOEMI DE SOLIS y LOS ANGELES - wife of Eduardo, hispanic, 53
- GERALDINA LANTUM - daughter of Bienvenido, 20
- ATLANTO DE SOLIS SALANTER - son of Noemi and Eduardo, painter, 29
- EDUARDO DE SOLIS SALANTER - husband of Noemi, 55
- EDWINA COHEN - U. S. tv journalist, 25
- COMMANDER CLAUDIO CASTRO DOMINGUIN - mestizo, rebel leader, 34
- JUAN AUGUSTIN LABRUNA - bishop of the area, 60
- SERGEANT GONZALEZ - a police officer, mestizo, 42
- DON HEBERTO PEREZ DE CAMPO - mayor of the town, cousin of Eduardo
- EDGIE HOUGH - U. S. astronomer, 29
- ANNIE MORGAN - 36, U. S. consul,
- DIONICIO DE SOLIS SALANTER - son of Noemi and Eduardo, 31

PRESENT

PRESENT

LQ 1

VQ #1 TRAVELOGUE GEP HZ

VQ 1  
GQA

→ SQ Ax

VIDEO PROPAGANDA  
bop 1+2 - V10

→ SQB  
→ VQB

TEAM ON NEWSDESK

→ House 12 ... 40!

→ House Out LQ 1.5 40!

→ Q EDGIE + EDUARDO 40!

Prologue

SETTING:

The WNTN television studio in New York. In the Up left corner of the stage is a wheel chair and television, it is EDUARDO's corner of the De Solis house in Ciudad de las Casas

AT RISE:

It is approximately five minutes from a live broadcast. The staff and crew are furiously working to put the final preparations in place. EDWINA is in the middle of the mayhem.

→ LQ 2 = GO!

STAGE MANAGER

→ 'THAN + STUDIO  
→ LQ 3

Two Minutes, ladies and gentleman

SOUND ENGINEER

GRP 1+2 → TEAM 6

I need a room check Quiet on the set.

✓ VQ 3  
SQ Bx  
→ VQ 4

(The room goes suddenly quiet but the hustle and bustle continue)

Okay, we're good.

STAGE MANAGER

STAND BY

One minute to places.

<sup>Required</sup>  
(The staff and crew **begin** to move into place to begin a live broadcast. EDWINA move to sit behind a table up center, she is handed a script from the SCRIPT GIRL)

→ SQ L to

STAGE MANAGER

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, (she finishes the count with hand gesture and points to EDWINA on "one")

EDWINA

Good evening, I am Edwina Cohen and this is WNTN Headline News. Over the next two weeks, I will be presenting an exclusive **investigative report** on the circumstances surrounding the tragic and historic rebel uprising in southern Mexico. As I speak to you tonight, the Mexican state of Chiapas is in the midst of a **political and social upheaval** over human rights issues for the indigenous Mayan culture. In this report, we will present exclusive footage of the conflict and in-depth interviews with the figures behind the disturbance and the families affected by it. Episode One and up to the minute local news when we return from these messages.

STAND BY

STAGE MANAGER

→ SQ D  
LQ 4  
VQ 5 GRP 1+2 → TEAM 6

Aaand we're clear.

(The crew rushes in on EDWINA to correct her make-up and adjust her mic The mayhem builds again. In the hustle the crew shifts the table and 5 chairs to center stage at the foot of the staircase. The lights begin to fade. Lights rise quickly and we discover EDWINA standing high on the staircase. Gunfire is heard near by. EDWINA ducks quickly.)

TEAM CAP!

→ SQ DI  
→ LQ 4.5  
VQ 6 GRP 1+2 → TEAM 6

BLACKOUT

ACT I

Scene I

**SETTING:**

The spacious interior of the Spanish colonial home of the De Solis family in Ciudad de las Casas, in the state of Chiapas, southern Mexico. The living area has a dining space mid-center with a long table and many chairs. There are ferns nearby, growing in the long unused cistern that used to collect rain water. There are chairs and a tv up left, bookcases, chairs and a library table stage right. There is a balcony over part of the upstage area with a staircase to it. There are entrances up left, up right, down left.

**AT RISE:**

BIENVENIDO and GERALDINA are preparing the table for breakfast, placing coffee things, sweet rolls, sugar, napkins, peeled oranges. NOEMI enters from up right, looks things over as the other two watch her. SHE examines the table, moves things about. SHE wears a loose housecoat. → LQ5

(E) (F) (G)

NOEMI

(H) (J)  
Las flores.

*The flowers.*

BIENVENIDO

(I)  
Estupido. Se me olvidó.

*Estupido. I forgot.*

(HE is dressed as a farmer. Turns to Geraldina, as HE starts to leave)

*The flowers.*

GERALDINA

Es culpa mía. Ya voy. (O)

*It's my fault. I'll go.*

(SHE wears an embroidered huipil, or cotton dress, of the local design. Runs up right, exits)

NOEMI

(L)  
Gracias Bienvenido, todo está perfecto. Sé que esto no es fácil para ti. Ni para Geraldina... En casa de otros. Son tiempos difíciles.

*Everything looks so nice, Bienvenido. Thank you. I know this isn't pleasant for you. Either of*

M&TV SRE 40!

X

*you. Someone else's house. Not a good time.*

### BIENVENIDO

Gracias. Así está la vida. Qué puede hacer el hombre? Ni siquiera predecir el tiempo. Desea algo más?

*Thank you. Así esta la vida. What can we humans do? Not even predict weather.*

(HE shrugs, ever the philosopher)

*Anything more?*

### NOEMI

Cuando oigas bajar a nuestra invitada, ven enseguida. Ya conoces a los americanos. Querrá cualquier cosa para el desayuno. Espero que tengamos de todo.

*When you hear the visitor come downstairs, would you come in here right away? You know Americans. She might want anything for breakfast. I just hope we have whatever it is.*

STAND BY

### BIENVENIDO

Estaré atento, senora. Y no se preocupe. Tiene usted aquí de todo. Yo la llamo "la casa de la abundancia." (E) (P)

*I'll watch, Senora. It will be fine. You have so much food here. I call this the house of plenty.*

(HE x's up right, exits)

NOEMI x's up left, exits, rolls EDUARDO onstage in a wheelchair and to the table.

### EDUARDO

Gracia querida. El plato extra. Para la chica americana? Es muy linda. La ha mandado Mefistófeles para mí? Y cuál es el precio? Mi alma? Apuesto a que ni siquiera el diablo la quiere ahora. (E) (P)

TV OUT

(HIS left arm has been weakened by his stroke. HE exercises it from time to time)

*Thank you querida. The extra place. For the American girl? She's very pretty. Did Mephistopheles bring her here for me? What was the price? My soul? I bet the devil doesn't want it now.*

### NOEMI

Pues claro que sí. Y quién no la querría?

(SHE rolls him up to the table, pours coffee for him, sugars it, gets him a roll)

*Of course he does, my darling. Anyone would.*

### EDUARDO

Eso es bueno o malo. No creo que Mefistófeles esté haciendo muchos negocios últimamente. Cambiándonos, a los muchachos, nuestras almas por lindas señoritas. Como solía hacer.

*Is that good or bad? Doesn't seem to me Mephistopheles is actually making deals anymore. Getting the souls of us muchachos in exchange for beautiful girls. The way he used to.*

NOEMI

Estoy segura que sigue haciendo los mismos negocios, sólo que con diferentes muchachos.

*I think he's dealing a smuch as ever, dear. Just with a different bunch of muchachos.*

(ATLANTO comes down the balcony stairs, tying his necktie x's to table sits.)

ATLANTO

Buenos días a todos.

*Morning, everybody.*

NOEMI and EDUARDO

Buenos días. Buenos días, querido. Que tal?

*Good morning. Good morning, dear. Muy buenos. Que tal?*

ATLANTO

No ha bajado todavía? Debe estar cansada.

*She hasn't come down yet? Must be tired.*

NOEMI

Estás segura que ha sido una buena idea haberla invitado ahorita? Los tiempos están malos.

*You're sure it was a good idea, inviting to stay with us right now? There are bad times.*

(SHE pours coffee for Atlanto)

EDUARDO

Precisamente estábamos discutiendo si ha sido Mifistófeles quien ha la mandado. Tú debes saberlo. Si es así, Yo ofrezco mi alma para salvar la tuya.

*We were just discussing if she was sent here by Mephistopheles. You ought to know.*

*If she was, I'll offer up my soul, to save yours.*

NOEMI

Temo que a tu padre se le a pasado ya la edad para estas cosas. No fue Milton, después de quedarse ciego, quien dijo "Dejadme vivir en mi casa junto a la carretera y ser..."

*I'm afraid your father is a bit overly acquainted with the passage of time to be eligible as a volunteer anymore for things like that. Wasn't it Milton, after he became blind, who said, "Let me live in my house by the side of the road and be..."*

ATLANTO

Estar sentado junto a la carretera en estos tiempos es peligroso. Un buen modo para un cuerpo...

*Sitting by the side of the road in dangerous these days. A good way for a body to become...*

NOEMI

y ser amigo del hombre.

*...and be a friend to man.*

ATLANTO

...un buen modo para un cuerpo de ser un buen blanco. No hables de ser amigo del hombre delante de Edwina. Querra saber por que quieres ser amigo del hombre y no de la mujer.

*...a good way for a body to become just a body of evidence. Don't talk about being a friend to man around Edwina. She'll want to know why you want to be friend to man and not to woman.*

NOEMI

Me refiero al hombre en el sentido general de la palabras. El ser humano.

*Man in the abstract sense of mankind.*

ATLANTO

Se acabó. Ahorita ya no piensan así en las Estados Unidos.

*They don't think that way anymore in the States.*

EDUARDO

Ser amigo del hombre, de la mujer, de las moscas, los pajaros, los gusanos... que más da?

*And be a friend to men, women, children, bugs, birds, lizards... who cares?*

NOEMI

live in my house by the side of the road and be .... Let me

ATLANTO

Sitting by the side of the road in dangerous these days. A good way for a body to become ...

NOEMI

... and be a friend to man."

ATLANTO

... a good way for a body to become just a body of evidence. Don't talk about being a friend to man around Edwina. She'll want to know why you want to be a friend to man and not to woman.

NOEMI

Man in the abstract sense of mankind.

ATLANTO

They don't think that way anymore in the States.

EDUARDO

And be a friend to men, women, children, bugs, birds, lizards ... who cares?

*EDWINA, in jeans, boots and Yankees tee shirt comes down the stairs. She brings with her a lot of camcorder equipment including a tripod and remote control, piles it down left on the floor.*

EDWINA

⑤ Morning everyone. Hope I'm not too late. I took a bath and a shower. Needed both to get clean again. After two thousand miles. From the air pollution back home to the mud down here.

NOEMI

Good morning, Miss Cohen. We are so happy you're staying with us. (SHE whispers to Atlanto, who laughs)

ATLANTO

(to Edwina)

She was wondering if you have a dress. I told her I was sure you do.

EDWINA

Don't worry. I have a dress. I'm sorry I got here a week before I was expected. I didn't realize when I wrote to you about coming a week early that you wouldn't get my letter. That you get your mail five weeks late and that I should have called, not written.

(SHE eats heartily)

→ VQ1  
Grip 1+2 on Scan  
TEAM → TABLE



EDUARDO

Good morning Miss Cohen. I hear your travel agent is Mephistopheles. Pay no attention. I had a little stroke recently. I call it the stroke of midnight. My mind wanders sometimes but it always comes home for lunch. We are so happy to have you visiting here. You will want to get down to the beach, I'm sure. Do some sensuous snorkeling over the reefs.

EDWINA

W/TIM'S OK

→ VQ8 GET 2 → TLA

I am here to shoot tape. I work for a tv station but I am not on assignment. I'm doing it on my own. Time. And money. I want to get right out there, tape the uprising. Go where no Sarah Lawrence girl ever went before. After all that gunfire last night, I suspect I'm already there.

EDUARDO

There should be a law that every beautiful young woman has to lie on the beach at least one hour every day. Why is it we males, with our exquisite appreciation of beauty, are called dirty old men? We are really connoisseurs ... sensitively appreciating that noblest of creations, crafted by the greatest of all sculptors ... a woman's body. Why disguise yourself like that? Imagine the Greeks carefully carving a marble statue of Venus dressed in a military uniform and army shoes.

EDWINA

The difference between men and women shouldn't depend on their clothing and hair styles. Our first president, George Washington, wore his hair longer than mine.

(BIENVENIDO and GERALDINA enter, go to Edwina)

ATLANTO

But he didn't wear dresses. Why is it women of any orientation whatever can wear dresses or pants, whichever they wish, and not be making a statement? It's so unfair. We men, if we don't want to make a really strong statement, can't reciprocate by having our choice of wearing pants or skirts. Oh no. Why can't men have equal rights?

EDWINA

If you want to wear a dress, go for it. Don't let anybody stop you

BIENVENIDO

Good morning, senorita. I am sorry I frightened you last night when you arrived. These are not normal times here in Ciudad de las Casas.

ATLANTO

She knocked on the door at the height of the shooting. Bienvenido saw what looked like an armed man out there in pants and boots, so he got a gun before he opened the door and ... wham!

← STAND BY

EDWINA

It was a weird, overwrought experience. "HELP. I'm a tourist. A gringo. Be nice to me. Please."

(rises, acts it out throwing her hands in the air, screaming and hacking away in raptur)  
But it seems my tripod looked like a gun. We'll have to re-enact it for my camcorder

**BIENVENIDO**

As you wish, senorita. Lo siento. I'm sorry. You had on the military pants, the boots.  
(points to her tripod)  
I thought this was a gun.

**EDWINA**

I use it for shooting ... but only with a camcorder. It's a tripod, not a gun. I want to learn all the facts about what is going on around here. Every fact I can get. → LQ 6  
(to Noemi and Eduardo)

It was so lucky I met Atlanto in New York and he said I could come stay with you and shoot footage of everything.

(to Atlanto)

I hope you meant it, because, well, here I am. I hope you don't feel you're stuck with me. I could go to a hotel.

*EDGIE descends the stairs behind her. Stops. Hears all this.*

**ATLANTO**

Of course I meant it.

**EDUARDO**

(to Atlanto)

Mephistopheles teaches you how to do that. Use any excuse at all to get the beautiful girl to come visit, at the cost of your soul, and then ...

**EDWINA**

... then, with the help of the devil, the aggressive young girl seduces the poor innocent young man and almost loses her soul to the devil.

**ATLANTO**

I'll take a chance that I can resist temptation, and thus, while perishing, ~~save my immoral soul.~~

**EDWINA**

What I want is pictures and words that tell the whole story of the uprising here. Create a documentary all my own. Prove I can do it. Show it at festivals. Get a grant. And maybe a big promotion from being script girl. A woman in my business can sleep her way to the top but I'd rather get there wide awake and standing up. I want facts, buster. You go ahead and hit on your Lolita, your passive little dream of a nymphomaniac. I am Edwina, your guest infomaniac.  
(SHE picks up a roll, bites into it)

STUD BY

**NOEMI**

What did she say she is?

**EDWINA**

I said I'm an infomaniac. Crazy for info. Facts. That's what I want to trade my soul for.

Not for my cloud-white body?

ATLANTO

EDGIE

(3) (HE steps forward, makes his presence known to Edwina, sits, sections an orange) Watch out for that. They grow sour oranges here. An interesting taste. But different. Edgie Hough. I heard you scream last night, and I was coming to your rescue but I never got down here. When I looked over the railing up there I saw that you were unharmed and in good shape. Bienvenido was leaving the room and Atlanto was at the bottom of the stairs walking toward you. And you were walking toward him. I decided what was going on down here was none of my damn business and went right back into my room. There was no more screaming after that so I cleverly deduced my help was definitely not needed. Or wanted.

Stand By

LQ 7.6

EDWINA

Hi, Edgie Hough. I am Edwina. Cohen. By daylight. I remember now. Someone yelled down the stairs, "I'll help you ... I'll help you." But noone actually appeared. That was you. Thanks, anyway. As you deduced, by then everything was okay.

(HE smiles proudly. GERALDINA enters, pours fresh coffee for all who want it) Did Mephistopheles bring her to this house too?

NOEMI

Geraldina, dear, this is our house guest, Edwina Cohen. She is a friend of Senor Atlanto's.

GERALDINA

(5) (sneaks a look at Atlanto, whom SHE obviously favors, pours coffee for Edwina) Mucho gusto en conocerla, senorita. Very happy to meet you.

EDWINA

Same here. Happy to know you.

(to Edgie)

Thanks for thinking of rescuing me.

EDGIE

(V) Getting credit, whether you actually did something or not, is a secret of success in science. That's why we scientists write our notes in code. My radio telescope has been cut off by the government militia. I listened for intelligent life in the universe. So hot to talk with extraterrestrials out there that I even offered to accept collect calls. The De Solis family lets me rent space here despite the fact our country has stolen half of their country. They gave me shelter. Imagine. So here I am.

EDWINA

I want to interview you too, then. Along with everybody else.

EDGIE

(A) For your documentary, you want to measure all of us here and then fit us together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle and see what kind of a picture appears?

EDWINA

Not a bad way to describe it.

EDGIE

But you can't really measure people. They're too ... uh ... amorphous ... changeable.

EDWINA

My boss back in New York says watch what people do and how they act. Trust words the least, he says. Words are usually just a metaphor for silence.

EDUARDO

How pretty. Words only a metaphor for silence. Does it mean anything?

EDWINA

In an interview people will lie, or tell you whatever they think you want to hear, or what will sound best to their friends, family or lovers. Words being used primarily to justify, rationalize or influence. Getting the whole truth out of people is pretty low on the list of possibilities.

(to Eduardo, then Atlanto)

I dare you. Tell me the first thing that comes into your mind. What are you thinking. Right now.

(silence. SHE turns to Edgie)

Tell me the very first thing that comes into your head. Quick.

EDGIE

That you have come here, actually, to measure all of us and that to me every person is like a quantum. If you attempt to measure it, in the very act of tampering with it you change it. Forever.

EDWINA

Don't make it sound so dangerous. Isn't reporting a public service?

EDGIE

I didn't say dangerous. I said that the act of studying ~~X~~ will change that which you study. I never said for better or worse. I don't deal in value judgments. And this wasn't the first thing that came into my mind. It was the last. The first thing that came into my mind, as I remember it, was resenting the fact that right as I was being born, somebody smacked me on the behind.

ATLANTO

If you want truth, the first thing that came into my mind was that I don't exactly admire your reason for being here.

EDWINA

Why?

ATLANTO

I was hoping you would show the world how horrible peoples' lives are here and how much they deserve something better and that an uprising here is absolutely justifiable.

EDWINA

Why did I say I was here?

ATLANTO

To make a great documentary and show it off at festivals, and maybe get a big promotion, go right to the top while you're wide awake, and not have to sleep your way up.

EDWINA

A documentary that might even get me in good with my conscience, for all my family's relatives in Germany who didn't make it through the big chill. I never knew any of them but I miss them. Don't you ever try to imagine what people were like that you never knew?

ATLANTO

I have enough trouble trying to imagine what the people I already know are really like

EDWINA

Now that I've said what I was thinking, maybe we can stop playing the truth game. For a while

ATLANTO

Okay. Anyway, I don't want to tell you what you want the whole truth about what I was thinking

EDWINA

What was it?

EDUARDO

Everyone with eyes in his head knows what you were thinking. Tell her. Come on, Atlanto

STAND BY

NOEMI

I'll go see if they have any fresh coffee  
(SHE rises, jealous, x's up right, exits)

EDUARDO

I have embarrassed my darling wife and it's still just breakfast time. What a wonderful day.

EDGIE

I'm not really part of what's going on here. I hope you'll interview me anyway. I'll tell you how measuring things changes them. Einstein didn't believe that tiny basic particles could be changed  
"NO," He cried out. "The basic particles of matter are solid, unchanging little rocks, not tiny squishy little water beds. God doesn't play dice with the universe." Old Nils Bohr, though, he

LA 7.5

(EDGIE continued)  
rared back and screamed at old Professor Einstein, that he must stop telling God what to do  
Einstein said he couldn't tell God what to do because God didn't even believe in his existence. And  
anyway, neither Bohr or Einstein knew what they meant by "God" or "the universe." They only  
really understood what they meant by the word dice

→ SQ F  
VQ 9 G!

*GUNFIRE is heard. All are startled, look about.*

EDWINA

What's that? God help us. As if I didn't know.  
(SHE moves toward a window)

ATLANTO

(stops her)  
Stay away from there We'll find out what's happening soon enough  
(looks into her eyes. The following is a repeated flirting game with them, not an introduction)  
What's your name again?

→ SQ G

EDWINA

(looks him in the eye challengingly yet with potential deep affection)  
Edwina Edwina Cohen. What's yours?

→ SQ H

*THEY smile intimately at each other. also react to continuing sporadic gunfire*

LR 8  
VQ 10 GUP 1 SUM ETC

(DIMOUT)

**END OF SCENE 1**

**ACT I**

**Scene 2**

**SETTING:**

Evening. The main area of the De Solis home, with Edwina's camera on its tripod. A chair is set up in which she will sit to interview herself. There is a video monitor upstage that will show footage, but not that which is now being taped.

**AT RISE:**

Lights dim up on EDWINA, leaving her in a small island of dim light and the camera in another. SHE is found bent forward in dejection, elbows on her knees, hair falling around her head. SHE gradually lifts her head, throws her hair back without touching it, then pushes it into place, rises, walks to camera, pushes a button. A red light on the camera appears, the upstage monitor lights up with a pale, ghostly grey tone, no images visible on it. There are, however, shaky lines vertically, then horizontally, then vertically. Abstract. Video art. Should remain subliminally alive but as yet non-intrusive. More a subdued, slightly shimmering picture on the wall. The following is an unsynchronized combination of video images, audio and Edwina's rambling talk

**EDWINA**

(As SHE interviews herself SHE takes on the roles of both the interviewer and interviewee) **QUESTION:** You ready to be interviewed? **ANSWER:** Sure. Ask me anything you want. **QUESTION:** O.K., then. How do you feel about yourself? Getting here? What you've accomplished so far? **ANSWER:** *LR 9 GO!*  
*VAL SEP 2 - 7*  
*TV ON!*  
*STANBY*

(tv monitor begins to show jumbled, abstract short takes of a Mexican plane landing crowds in the terminal, Mexican taxis, neon signs, tourists with tennis racquets) *CAP TEAM!*

**ANSWER:** Total disaster. **QUESTION:** Why do you say that? **ANSWER:** How can I ever expect to do a professional job of covering an event if I can't even handle myself decently getting there? Look at this crazy footage I got at the airport. Totally useless. Then there were no cabs. Why hadn't I called in advance. A limo, a rental car, a pony cart. Something. To get me from there to the bus terminal.. No planning. Nothing. *SA I*

(VIDEO art is stream of consciousness semi-abstract, semi-real)

Looking for a cab. Men pressing in around. I get confused, -- it's a feeding frenzy. At first just Mexican men who'd been on the plane. Then hombres I'd never even seen before. How am I going to cover an uprising if I can't even get out the airport? A feeding frenzy and me the raw meat.

(continued)

(SHE gets more animated, as the VIDEO segues into abstract reality)

Question. What did you do about that? Answer. One hombre put his hand on my ass. I yelled at him, "Hey, is this a temporary thing, or are you looking for a long-term relationship?" He didn't let go so I gave him a real good judo chop on the right fore arm. Thank you New York Fitness Center. He ran off crying "tio." That's the Spanish word for "uncle."

(SHE presses a control button. We sees the ground, a face, the ceiling, a car, a woman walking, a hand, shoes and legs, advertisements, a Mexican woman breast feeding a baby, lines of neon tubes)

Twenty American tourists carry their tennis racquets onto a shiny red bus that's come for them from the Cancun Beach Hotel. All aboard. Off they go. They head for their world. Me for mine. They're on vacation, I'm on vocation. I wondered. About the men. The no cab. The total stalemate. What would Madonna do under the circumstances? What would Barbara Bush do? Or Janet Reno? My three role models I finally get a cab and convince half the male population of Mexico not to get in with me. Then I convince the driver I don't want to go to an elder hostel with him. Or his brother's house. Just the bus station.

(SHE calms down, becomes more philosophical. Semi-realistic VIDEO art continue)

Question. And now what? You're here. Up in the hills. Day one on the job is over. The uprising is all around you. What have you accomplished? Answer. I told you. Nothing. Nil. Zip. Nada. I don't know how. Where to start? When you're in a combat zone where do you go to hire a guide? I really don't know what to do. I am a mess. It's so stupid, me being here. I only know I am staying on the Street of the Tiger. When the local cab driver drove me here he pointed to something on the wall. At the corner. A square drawing of a tiger. Yellow on the grey stone. The driver is a Maya Indian. Can't read a word of Spanish, he said. But he could tell it was the Street of the Tiger because it had a picture of a tiger painted on the wall. He can't speak Spanish, either. That's what I have learned so far. That everything here is crazy. The tourists in Cancun think they're in Mexico. They ~~are~~ not. ~~They're in Miami Beach. They just don't know it. Here. This is~~ Mexico. Question. Are you afraid? Answer. Sure. Even more than of getting killed I'm afraid of losing my job. Why not fire me? Total incompetence. I hear shots. Off in the forest. I see people standing beside the road wearing bandana masks. I shoot footage in every direction. What does it come out looking like? Creamed spinach. Question. How will you ever do a better job of all this? Answer. I haven't any least idea. Coming up the mountain in the bus last night sometimes we would come across half-naked men running along, wearing black ski masks and carrying machine guns. As we passed them they ran off among the trees. I am sure they were rebels. Where do I go look for them? Why did I ever think I could handle this job?

(VIDEO: we see pine trees, palmetto huts, a woman carrying a sickly child, an armed man on a wall. AUDIO: we hear engines, rifle fire, machine guns, see rifle muzzles with fiery explosions, hear ricochets. VIDEO: men with



ACT I

Scene 3

SETTING:

Interior of the De Solis home, afternoon.

AT RISE:

ATLANTO is painting at an easel set up near the dining table. HIS boxes of tubes, brushes and bottles are on newspapers on the table.

GERALDINA runs in from up right, x to him. LA 10 ft.

→ Go to table x

*Excusa me in Soeey*  
They're here to see you.

GERALDINA

ATLANTO

⊙ (busy, uninterested)  
They? What they?

GERALDINA

The bishop and Commander Claudio.

ATLANTO

That's different.

(puts down his brushes, prepares for a new condition, waves them in)  
Tell them ... come in, okay? Would you bring some coffee, please?

GERALDINA

Yes, Senor Atlanto. Your American visitor friend upstairs. She is very beautiful.

ATLANTO

Thank you.

GERALDINA

(teasing)  
You're welcome.

(sadly, jealous)  
Like you see on American television. She's from New York?

ATLANTO

That's right.

GERALDINA

Does she live in an apartment?

STAND BY

ATLANTO

I don't know.

GERALDINA

(smiles with relief)

I wonder what it's like to live in an apartment? So far up. Like on the side of a mountain? <sup>(E)</sup>  
(SHE x's up right, exits)

*BISHOP AUGUSTIN and CLAUDIO enter from up right. The bishop is in plain garb, almost like a priest. CLAUDIO wears military clothes, removes a mask as HE enters. HE carries a slightly concealed AK-47 automatic rifle.*

(3)

ATLANTO

Welcome, welcome. Hope it wasn't too dangerous getting here.

→ LQ 11 GO!

BISHOP

It was fine.

CLAUDIO

The American girl. Who's visiting you. You don't think she's C.I.A.?

→ LQ 12 GO.

ATLANTO

Of course not. We met at an art gallery in New York City, at the opening of an exhibition that included some of my pictures. All just a coincidence. I told her about what is going on down here. She got interested. Finally I invited her to come visit. That's all there is to it.

CLAUDIO

I hear she's very pretty. I hear everything, you know. I've got to. To stay alive. Congratulations. Good luck, muchacho.

(lifts HIS fist in the air, laughs)

Sorry, Bishop Augustin. I was only thinking about The Song of Songs. People intoxicated with each others's bodies being symbolic of the City of God being appreciated by an adoring believer.

Stand by

BISHOP AUGUSTIN

Love and passion have many forms and many meanings. What is more mysterious than love?

CLAUDIO

The pleasure principle. People are supposed to do that which is most pleasing to themselves, but what pleases a person can be anything from gluttony to lust to self-sacrifice. Love is mysterious but what is less than mysterious? Of course I am only speaking of the earthly realm.

→ LQ 14 GO!

BISHOP AUGUSTIN

(w) (smiles, turns to Atlanto)

You keep saying you are with us in spirit, but are you really with us?

**ATLANTO**

I am with you, but I told you I will never carry a gun or shoot anyone, so I guess that in your terms I am with you but only in spirit.

**CLAUDIO**

And .... not in practical fact?

**ATLANTO**

No. Picasso was never in the army. He just painted the Guernica. Worth ten fighter planes. Matisse never went to war. He took the sunlight out the windows; painted the outdoors black.

**BISHOP AUGUSTIN**

<sup>(b)</sup> I thought we were making a mistake coming to see you. It's my fault.

(indicates Claudio)

He didn't want to come here. Why embarrass ourselves?

**CLAUDIO**

I don't get embarrassed. It is unnatural. Like monogamy.

**BISHOP AUGUSTIN**

<sup>(F)</sup> We trust you. Absolutely. So I will leave our problem with you. If you ever have any ideas for us, you know where to find me. The cathedral is right there on the plaza. Rather large. Tall. Wide.

(acts out the dimensions)

**ATLANTO**

I think I can find it. <sup>(C)</sup>

**CLAUDIO**

You're more educated than I am.

(ATLANTO protests, CLAUDIO is sorry he said it)

At painting, I mean. I did not say a better organizer. I am a damn good organizer. Speaker, too. I get them all excited and confused. I raise money. Which is harder than capturing four towns. Also the television station last night. I hope the shooting didn't bother you. My men eat regularly. We get mentioned on tv. Especially now. We have done this and done that. People wonder what I mean when I speak. I love that. All very good, but what now what do we actually do, next?

**ATLANTO**

One reason I have never been with you, aside from trying to make a living as a painter ... won't the federal government send troops down here ... any day they want ... have you outnumbered a hundred to one ... and so ... what's to stop them from ... gurk ...

(indicates HIS throat being cut)

... and that's the end of you? All of you.

**CLAUDIO**

They wipe us out, kill us every one. And then they go home and eat a nice leisurely dinner?

ATLANTO

Frankly yes. What good would it do you, me or the Lord above if we got killed that way? None.

CLAUDIO

Then what can we do now to get the most out of what we have accomplished? We've still got the four towns we captured, and the television station. We can always disappear into the mountains and they will never find us. But I want something much bigger for all our efforts.

BISHOP AUGUSTIN

Give it permanent meaning. Results. For the peasants. That's all I care about.

CLAUDIO

I realize I can't take over the whole country. Conquer all of Mexico. With a few hundred men.

ATLANTO

Cortez did it. Why not you? What was your ultimate goal when you organized the uprising?

CLAUDIO

That maybe I'm a so-called peasant but I have a degree. From the university of Mexico. I deserve attention. Respect. Everybody does. Dignity. People should listen to us. I can discuss the moral dilemma of constructive and destructive scientific knowledge, the internal contradictions of power and superpower, nationhood versus tribalism, the need for a congregation reconciling all recognized high gods as a way to a conjoint a world lurching between peace and devastation. I understand the measurement of meaning, the duties to self versus state, the cruelty of justice versus the sensuous self-congratulationism of magnanimity, the relativity of responsibility for one's actions within the personal psychic historicity. And I know the heart's song of my fellow citizens of the jungle, the rain forest and the hills.

(intones theatrically)

"If I'll die of starvation tomorrow, let me fall down drunk instead,  
Oh yes, at my sweetheart's feet tonight, old friend, and fuck myself to death."

My men actually don't mind dying as long as they can take at least one gachupin pig bastard by the balls and drag him down that red rock road to hell with them. Sorry bishop. I am warning you. Everyone. Let the world beware of people who have nothing to lose.

BISHOP AUGUSTIN

You'll help him work out a plan?

ATLANTO

You could start a new political party. It would take time, but ... it might scare the big shots in Mexico City, make them afraid that if they tried to wipe you out they might start an uprising all over the country. So that it's safer for them to come here and talk with you than to shoot you. A political party could really be the way. Start getting what you want. Peacefully.

CLAUDIO

You don't get anything peacefully. You get something by doing what you have to do. And making them like it. You get something by demanding the seemingly impossible, by giving orders, by hearing the sound of guns shooting. Talk peacefully? Ha. I want to scream, make my voice run through the hills like a hot wind, like a stream of boiling water, like a plague, like a dream, like a wall of fire. I want to be a rampaging one-mile-long alligator, have the scaffolding of the hills collapse under my weight, my heat, my power. I want everything. Have the earth to melt as I pass. Turn into a raging black sea. I want it all. Or I want nothing. Just darkness. The abyss. Whatever the hell they mean by the word hell. Let it all come down. Rain. Rot. Ruin. (E)(4)

(HE suddenly stops raging, smiles, amused by his own oratory)

Do I make myself clear?

*GERALDINA brings coffee for the, puts tray on table. THEY gather around it.*

ATLANTO

I'd say so.

(to Geraldina)

Thank you. (3)

(THEY take coffee, GERALDINA exits)

If words could win wars, you'd conquer the world. I still won't join up.

CLAUDIO

The least you can do is make me a transcript of what I just said. I can never remember afterwards.

BISHOP AUGUSTIN

The Latin word for bishop is pontifex. A pontus is a bridge. A pontifex is a builder of bridges. I lie <sup>STAND E</sup> awake in bed at night sweating, wondering how I can best build a bridge for all of you, my beloved people of Ciudad de Las Casas, a bridge to full faith and an eternity of happiness in God's high heaven. I am willing to risk my own place in paradise to ease the sad lives of those here on earth. Even if they go to their pagan shaman Saturday and then come to my holy church on Sunday. Far better to believe in two things than none. I hope and pray what I am doing is right. <sup>LQF 60!</sup>  
All of you who believe on Him and follow Him will enter heaven's gate amidst much singing. I may not, for I am advocating this uprising, which has caused men to die. Am I doing the right thing? I do it anyway and pray for a sign from Him. <sup>Grand By</sup>

ATLANTO

I feel like I want to say "Bless you, father." Isn't that stupid?. I'll say it anyway. Bless you. A blessing from your most devout unbeliever.)

(holds out HIS hand awkwardly, pointlessly, ends up shaking the bishop's hand, a little ceremony THEY BOTH know is incorrect. THEY smile)

(DIMOUT)

END OF SCENE 3

**ACT I**

**Scene 4**

**SETTING:**

The De Solis home. All of Edwina's equipment is down left, mounted and ready to roll, set up so the interviewee faces out at the fourth wall.

**AT RISE:**

EDWINA adjusts her equipment, looks upstairs nervously. Finally ATLANTO descends, joins her. She waves him to a chair she has arranged. He sits. He is so attracted to her it makes him evasive. She is now wearing a local peasant dress like Geraldina's.

ATLANTO

That thing. Is it taping now?

EDWINA

Don't worry about a machine. <sup>my brain</sup> We're recording this in our minds. The machine can only record it on tape. No sense of innuendo. Or dimension. Or impending nostalgia. Are you sorry I'm here?

ATLANTO

EN ESPAÑOL

No.

EDWINA

Are you glad I'm here?

ATLANTO

Yes. Before all these witnesses. Yes.

(HE waves at the recording equipment)

I hope my interview is going to get beyond where I answer yes or no. Or you'll get fired and blame it on me.

EDWINA

If you don't stop trying to take this over, I'll hit you with something.

ATLANTO

And if this film doesn't jump-start your career, you'll have to sleep with every single one of your bosses to make it to the top. Oh oh. Did I just wreck the tape?

ENGLISH

EDWINA

Why are you so worried about me sleeping with all my bosses?

→ LQ 17

→ VR3 SC 1+2 SC 1

→ SQ Kx

+Mic Up

→ LQ 18

W/TIM CLEAR → VR4 SC 2 → TEAM

X

~~EN ESPAÑOL~~

ATLANTO

Some of them could be gross, ugly, smelly, dirty, hairy, scabby, diseased, violent. Even badly dressed. Especially the women. Or maybe you'd prefer them that way. I'm unhappy because you said what you're doing here is a chance to make a great little documentary and help your career.

EDWINA

~~I told you about Germany and...~~

ATLANTO

I remember ... the dead ancestors and all. Gotten. Recorded. But when you said you might come down here and do some taping, what I wanted was something to help the people here. Show that they have so little in life that they don't really give a very big damn whether they live or die.

EDWINA

That just defined what I want to dig out of you. The exact concept that gives you the courage, that mysterious, mystical determination to fight to the death for whatever it is ...

ATLANTO

Land and liberty. That's the slogan. Land and liberty. They have fought for those two things here in every revolution. You Americans only needed one revolution. We keep on having them. Over and over. Like a venereal disease people keep catching from getting "chingados y mal pagados," screwed and badly paid, by whoever is ruling them at the moment, first this thief, then that thief.

IN ENGLISH

EN ESPAÑOL

EDWINA

I have it. Finish this sentence for me. "I am willing to die for this revolution because ....."

(silence)

"I am willing to risk my life in the rebellion here because ..."

(silence)

ATLANTO

I never said I was willing to die. For anything. You did. You volunteered me to be a suicide squad of one. Thanks a lot. That dress you are wearing. Don't ever wear it around here again.

ENGLISH  
EDWINA

(looks at the dress, confused)

Your mother got all upset when I wore pants. So I bought this in the market yesterday. To make her happy. Made right here in town. I thought she'd like it on me. What did I do wrong?

ATLANTO

Take it back to New York, that's all. Wear it there. Not here.

ENGLISH

EDWINA

What are you talking about?

→ EN ESPAÑA

ATLANTO

The peasant women here make those dresses for themselves. All alike. Every town has its own pattern. When you wear it, you're saying to people here, "I am one of you." But you're not one of them. So it's like pretending to be a member of a club or a sorority. People will get mad at you. Just now Bienvenido wanted to know why the hell you were wearing the dress of this town when you don't live here. People like him don't trust foreigners much to start with, so ...

Frank B.

→ MIC OUT

EDWINA

Okay, boss. I'm sorry. I won't wear it again, here. Now what's wrong?

IN ENGLISH

ATLANTO

It still bothers me. You are doing this interview for your career, to make money, trying to drag some secret out of me like a surgeon probing into me with a knife to find some little gem to boast about. I guess I see tv journalists as people who see a little kid drowning, but instead of rushing to save him they grab the old camera and try to get some great footage of him drowning.

→ R 19

✓ R 15

EDWINA

Bastard.

TEAM - "Kiss S..."

ATLANTO

Didn't think you could tell, just by looking.

EDWINA

You finished with the insults?

ATLANTO

Give me a minute. I'll think of more.

EDWINA

(checks the recording apparatus, ready to bore in. Makes notes on a pad)  
Okay. My turn. First. Where is your brother? You say you, your brother and your father run the family newspaper now. Your father is sick. Needs your brother and you. So where's your brother?

ATLANTO

True, I had to move back here to help papa. Dionicio did too. I do the layouts, Dionicio is the editor. I can only paint nights and weekends. You go where you want. I go where I'm kicked.

EDWINA

I'm sorry about that. I didn't ask you about your problem. You said your father can still keep the books. You do the layouts and Dinicio is the editor. So where is he?

5p>

ATLANTO

True. Papa has this stroke problem. At least for now. He can hardly do anything. Our editor was killed on the coast highway last year and nobody is rushing to take the job. Too dangerous. So Dionicio does it. He is really very good at it.



EDWINA

He's the editor. Fine. But, for example, there is never a place set for him at the table.

ATLANTO

Good observation.

EDWINA

So where is he?

ATLANTO

Let's talk about it later.

EDWINA

How about now? Is he on vacation? Assignment? Asssignment? Assignation? Digging up Maya antiquities?

STAND BY

ATLANTO

To answer, in full. No.No. No. And no.

(HE counts the no's out on his fingers, to be sure he has the right number)

Next subject?

EDWINA

Don't we come up with colorful and informative responses though? Great stuff.

(SHE reflects)

→ LQ20

I guess I deserve it. Your friend Edge. Says that studying something is like measuring a quantum of matter. It changes the very thing you are studying. There is one difference though. A big one. I believe matter is, by definition, inanimate. So that, as he said, the process by which a scientist is studying something inanimate changes that which it is studying.

ATLANTO

And?

EDWINA

When people study other people, it's different than when you study an inanimate object. Two things happen, not one. The study changes the individual studied. As he said. But, I realize, it also changes the person perpetrating the study. Making the process a two-way street.

STAND BY

ATLANTO

I'm not sure I'm up to calling the quantum theory a two-way street. Doesn't sound right, somehow. You do have a good thought there, though.

W/TM LAM

→ V/216 GRP 112 → TEAM

EDWINA

Am I changing you?

ATLANTO

Am I changing? And am I changing you?

EDWINA

You're impossible.

ATLANTO

Because you want to be in charge. Have control.

EDWINA

Of course. This is my project.

ATLANTO

You want to be in control because you're American. It's a very American thing to want to do.

EDWINA

And it is very un-Mexican for a woman to want to do that, isn't it? Control a man.

ATLANTO

And even more un-Mexican for a man to accept it. I do not want to be controlled by anyone. Especially a woman. There. I submit to nothing but the laws of nature. Grudgingly. STAND BY

EDWINA

At least you're not wanting to take control of me by trying to seduce me. Men do that, you know. I thought maybe you ... Am I? ... Are you? ... Is this interview over?

(wanting to take control, also angry, upset, frustrated, momentarily destructive)

I'd say yes. It sure is. (6:57)

ATLANTO

I don't believe it. You giving up so easily?

EDWINA

(taken by surprise)

What?

ATLANTO

Just when you're onto something.

EDWINA

I've lost track ... onto what? Just a minute. Let's see ...

(SHE shuffles through her notes)

ATLANTO

Point one. You can't make me finish your magic sentence about what I am willing to die for because I have always and will always insist on only thinking about what I am willing to live for.

Okay?

**EDWINA**

Okay. Then complete this sentence for me. "The most important thing I want to live for is ..."  
No, that definitely doesn't do it. I can't put it that way. You'd make a horrible journalist.

**ATLANTO**

I hope you just mean tv. I am at the moment trying to edit a newspaper. Even badly. Small, but ...

**EDWINA**

I'm sorry. Complete this sentence for me. "I would think of myself as a complete success if ..."

**ATLANTO**

I would think of myself as a complete success if all my dreams came true.

**EDWINA**

(rises)  
You're just trying to make a fool out of me. <sup>(H)</sup>

**ATLANTO**

→ Your being here is a bit mysterious. Are you with the Company? Are you C.I.A.?

**EDWINA**

In the C. I. A.? Are you crazy or what? Of course not. LQZ1

**ATLANTO**

What difference does it make what you say? You'd have to deny it. Why'd I bother asking? Maybe to judge your response. The style. See if it's fresh and original. The way I look at a painting. Your answer was very good. Full of antagonism, anger, bitterness, all the finer things in life.

**EDWINA**

I can't believe ...

**ATLANTO** <sup>(S)</sup>

<sup>(D)</sup> <sup>(N)</sup> Here's some real truth ... is there an unreal truth? ... there must be ... the real truth is ... my brother Dionicio ... you said you noticed that he doesn't seem to be around. For instance there's no place set for him at the table ... he's not present. Unaccounted for. Dionicio has disappeared.

**EDWINA**

He has what?

**ATLANTO**

We have absolutely no idea where he is. Have not seen or heard from him for sixteen days, two hours and assorted minutes. And remember. His predecessor was killed in an accident that was no accident. Now you have your hit. Have stuck in the knife and revealed a bloody little gem. I hope your machine is catching this. [Dionicio is ... who knows where? I'm covering his job. Very badly. I'm doing my best.] We are desperate. My dream, right now .... get him back. Safe.

EDWINA

I've been here all this time and noone ever mentioned it?

ATLANTO

I encouraged him to publish provocative stories Making me at least partly responsible for whatever has happend to him It's all I can think about. What should I be doing? Right now. [I've asked everyone. When did you last see him? Where? I should be doing much more.] Feel so useless [Stupid Makes the world seem so huge. Mysterious. Cruel] I don't know how to act as the brother of a missing person [It's too unreal. Someone else could do it much better]

EDWINA

How about the police. I haven't they found out anything yet?

ATLANTO

They say they've tried everything. But no clues yet. Who knows? Maybe they did it.

EDWINA

What? Really? I'll try to help you find him. That's the least I can do

ATLANTO

What's the most you can do? One thing you mentioned, that I didn't try to get control of this interview by trying to seduce you. You didn't say whether you were glad or sorry I hadn't done that. I mean you brought it up, not me. The truth is ... I must confess this thing ... publicly ...

(HE turns to the camcorders)

In my entire life I have never tried to seduce anybody.

EDWINA

Implying, I presume, you have never had to

ATLANTO

Whatever you say. But I might give it a whirl sometime. If I only knew what people do first.

EDWINA

(HE holds out a hand awkwardly. SHE takes it, shakes it in a businesslike way. HE laughs)  
The important thing is knowing what to do last.

THEY eye each other with amusement

(DIMOUT)

END OF SCENE 4

STAN BY

SRN  
LQZZ

VR17 GET 1-2 OUT

**ACT I**

**Scene 5**

**SETTING:**

The De Solis home. Morning.

**AT RISE:**

EDWINA has her apparatus set up. SHE sips coffee, tinkers with the camcorder. Upstage EDUARDO, in a wheelchair, watches television. On the balcony EDGIE ruffles through long computer printouts. NOEMI brings Eduardo fresh coffee. There is a loud knock at the door. BIENVENIDO opens the door. GONZALEZ enters with DON HEBERTO close behind. NOEMI exits up r. → LQ 23-40

**GONZALEZ**

(HE has a rifle, looks around as though a secret service man looking for enemies, then waves to Don Heberto that it's safe to enter all the way. DON HEBERTO enters. GONZALEZ addresses Bienvenido who never speaks to him or looks at him) Hello, Bienvenido. You can at least say hello.

*BIENVENIDO turns away angrily, stands there silently. DON HEBERTO enters, looks, is surprised by and taken with Edwina.*

**GONZALEZ**

Don Heberto would like to speak with Senor Eduardo, if you please.

**DON HEBERTO**

Just a minute.

(HE turns to Edwina as BIENVENIDO exits up r.)  
I heard that Cousin Eduardo has an American visitor but I didn't realize that she ...  
(takes her hand, kisses it too long)  
... so pleased to meet you. I am Don Heberto Perez de Campo.

**GONZALEZ**

The mayor of our town, Ciudad de las Casas.

**EDWINA**

I am [Edwina. Edwina Cohen] Just here for a little while. How do you do?

**DON HEBERTO**

Enchanted, mademoiselle. You must come dine with us one night very soon. Your visit here won't be complete without dining in our house. Very historic. Built by the first Spanish governor here. The conqueror full of antiques from the days of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. → LQ 24

EDWINA

(SHE hesitates)  
Interesting people, Ferdinand and Isabella. Christopher Columbus. The Inquisition. Mass emigration. Always something going on. I have never seen antiques from that period. I appreciate the invitation. Can I let you know about it?

DON HEBERTO

My wife will be quite crushed if you don't come, Miss Cohen.

TEAM -> EDGIE SHOT

EDUARDO

(nobody thought HE was listening)  
I thought your wife was away in Mexico City.

DON HEBERTO

I assure you that Miss Cohen will be very well chaperoned. I have a large household. As you know, I am planning to give the whole villa to the city one day, for a museum. With all the original furniture and books. Isn't that so, sergeant?

GONZALEZ

Don Heberto is very generous. Always donating to the poor, to the town. Oh yes.

DON HEBERTO

(hands HIS card playfully to Edwina)  
Here. My card. Please call when you decide. Or I shall call you, mademoiselle. this is Sergeant Gonzalez, my trusted bodyguard and friend. Miss Edwina Cohen.

GONZALEZ

Pleased to meet you, miss.

EDWINA

How do you do. So nice meeting both of you. I know you came here for a more important reason than talking to me, so I'll go p and finish unpacking. So nice meeting you.  
(SHE smiles, heads for the stairs)

STAND BY

DON HEBERTO

(stops her long enough to kiss her hand, a bit too long again)  
Until soon, I trust. Hasta luego. Au revoir.

*EDWINA goes upstairs, disappears. DON HEBERTO crosses to Eduardo, who is watching tv. Or is HE? GONZALEZ stays on guard.*

DON HEBERTO

I'm really surprised, Eduardo. An educated man like you, used to be a distinguished <sup>Doctor</sup> professor of archeology in Merida. Wrote all those books about the caves you discovered there ... full of Olmec pots and statues from thousands of years ago. And with a newspaper to run. How can you stand to sit around all day and watch television?

→ LA 25

**EDUARDO**

I like wasting time. Otherwise I wouldn't have anything to do.

**DON HEBERTO**

I don't understand. Are you all right?

*NOEMI enters up right, crosses to Don Heberto.*

**NOEMI**

May I get something for you?

**DON HEBERTO**

No thank you. Tell me. Is Eduardo ... you know ... all right?

**NOEMI**

Of course. Why?

(DON HEBERTO shrugs, confused. SHE exits up right)

**DON HEBERTO**

There is something, Eduardo ... I mean besides being cousins we've always been friends. We have about everything in common, don't we? Class. Caste. Whatever you call it. Family. Background. Mutual interests. Things important in life.

TV LEVEL

**EDUARDO**

(points to tv screen)

Look at that. You're my cousin Heberto, aren't you? Nice to see you. This should interest you. See? They've captured a deer and it has escaped. It's running away from them into the forest. Run! Run for your life! Hooray. Look. He made it. They can't find him anywhere. There goes their dinner. Are you for the hunter or the deer?

**DON HEBERTO**

Eduardo, I've always considered you one of my closest friends. People like us, with so much in common, we ought to be helping each other. That's pretty obvious, isn't it?

**EDUARDO**

Shhh. Look at that? Isn't this a miracle? Think about it. I can sit here watching that black box that's like a little black house with five solid walls and one glass wall that I can peek through and see the whole universe? It's my idea of a miracle, anyway.

**DON HEBERTO**

Like I said, we're such old friends and relatives and ...

**EDUARDO**

We've been over all that.

**DON HEBERTO**

I can't stand around here watching television all day.

**EDUARDO**

Then let me. They've gone to a lot of trouble to create all that stuff. It's impolite not to look. See how we can observe, just sitting here? What the deer does? Run away? Like being a god, on Mount Olympus. All without words? Let the pictures give you ideas without using any words? Maybe pretty soon words will entirely disappear. Farewell my obsolete vocabulary. Anyway, it's better to have ideas without words than words without ideas. What do you think?

**DON HEBERTO**

This is impossible. I can't ... I'll come back again sometime, Eduardo. <sup>(u)</sup>

(HE x's up r. to doors, calls out)

Noemi? Hello? You in there?

**NOEMI**

(enters)

Are you leaving? It was so nice of you to stop by to see him.

**DON HEBERTO**

Hope he's well again soon. How does he get the paper out every day if he's like this?

**NOEMI**

Atlanto is living here for now, helping. Doing evrything until Dionicio is .... comes home.

**DON HEBERTO**

I see. You know, I've always liked you so much, Noemi. You're very special. If it gets to be too much of a burden for you, taking care of Eduardo, and you'd like to relax for a few minutes, let me know. We could always have a little lunch together. Somewhere. Be a nice change for you. <sup>STAND BY</sup>

**NOEMI**

That's so kind of you. It really takes all my time, Eduardo needing so much attention.

**DON HEBERTO**

It was just a passing thought. I like to help out wherever I can. <sup>(R)</sup>

**EDUARDO**

(did he overhear? HE points to the tv)

Hooray! Look. The deer has eluded the hunter. Isn't this a wonderful day?

(DIMOUT)

END OF SCENE 5

→ SR R  
LR 2960!



**ACT I**

**Scene 6**

**SETTING**

The De Solis home. Morning. EDGIE is at a table on the balcony with a dictating machine and piles of computer printouts. EDUARDO is up left watching tv.

AT RISE: (C) (E) EDGIE begins to dictate. LIGHTS on him.

EDGIE

Marie, what with the uprising and all, I won't be mailing reports to you anymore. My friend Annie Morgan, the American consul in these parts, has offered to put my correspondence in the diplomatic pouch, which he takes in person on his pouch run every week to Mexico City. Having no information from the telescope for you to type up this week, I am asking you to get the attached letter off to my wife, that is my future ex-wife, agreeing to everything she asks for in the divorce. And I do mean everything. The only personal property of mine remaining in my possession being a file of my intimate correspondence with the Internal Revenue Service.

My report. The militia still hold our antennas in protective custody. And I still hope they'll give them back any day now. Ha. All of which makes me question my role in human history. Should I cheer on the rebels, who are pathetically poor, and desperate to enter the twentieth century, just as it is ending, or for getting our telescope back and the hell with everything? Meanwhile I am writing fiction. Yes. Don't laugh. Have to keep busy. Please type up the following as the beginning of my science fiction novel of the same name, whatever that is. How about "The Space Pilgrim." Not bad. Here we go. "The Space Pilgrim." Chapter one, paragraph one.

(HIS voice changes)

Dressed in his spacesuit, a shimmering beetle-like carapace covered with silver foil topped by the clear plastic bowl which was his helmet, Richard Hakluyt unhooked the hatch of his space craft, The Martin Frobisher Two, and climbed up the ladder for his first look at the endless gray dusty surface of his home for the rest of his life, the asteroid Capernaum Three Ought Six One. His heart pounded. After all the detail of the preparations, the tests, the planning, suddenly he was really and truly here. He felt an unexpected thrill of excitement. Was it the thrill of still existing or of a sort of pleasure in self-destruction? If self-destruction it was. In this bleak wilderness, away from the disturbances of the earth's atmosphere with its ever-busier air traffic, interfering artificial lights and radio wave transmissions, he would be able to collect the data needed to complete his life's work. Actually detect signs of intelligent life from space, by pulsar or morse code or some medium of communication. Holding carefully to the Martin Frobisher Two's handrail, he let a toe of his fat gleaming silver boot touch the surface of the asteroid. Grey dust clouded up at once and enveloped him greedily. A sudden symbol of his fate. Was he sure he had made the right decision? Allowing circumstances and professional ambition to motivate him to venture out here where he would be alone forever and ever, in the soft, sad and silent furthest reaches of space?

EDWINA descends the stairs, loads HER camcorders, adjusts her equipment.

(EDGIE continued)

Marie, I have another literary masterpiece I have been thinking about. The story of Danecya, the most beautiful woman in Paris. Despite her sophistication, she is capable of great and true love. For her a loving relationship with another human being is the greatest and truest experience open to the social side of the human psyche, just as the search for truth is the greatest and truest experience of the intellectual component. Let's see. How can I describe her?

→ LA 3/40!  
→ Re 1-40  
→ VQ 2st  
ON HAVEL REC  
SLAM

The sound and lights change focus from Edgie to Edwina. HE remains on the balcony but we no longer hear his voice. Perhaps HE is now thinking.

EDWINA

(goes to the door, calls out to Noemi)

Ready when you are, senora.

NOEMI

(enters)

Here I am. Oh dear. I know, you don't want me. I have nothing to say. Let me get Eduardo.

EDWINA

No. I really want to talk with you. If you could change your life here in any way you wanted, what would you change?

NOEMI

My life is perfect, really. We are very lucky.

EDWINA

I mean about the uprising, the Maya taking over those four towns. And the television station.

*Scanned By*

NOEMI

I think people should be happy to stay with what they've got. All the revolutions, they just end up with lots of people getting killed and nothing changed. When I grew up it was peaceful. People had such a lovely life.

EDWINA

You think things should always be the same way they were when you were little?

NOEMI

Oh yes.

EDWINA

And everybody knew their place?

NOEMI

Yes. How did you realize that? Nowadays nobody seems to know their place. It's such a crazy world. I am so frightened. The cause of it all, you know. Drugs.

EDWINA

I didn't know that.

*\* END OF EDWINA SCENE*

NOEMI

People think that tourism is the biggest business around here, with the hotels on the coast and all the tourists, but that's not so. It's drugs. I mean the money. The people. They will do anything. It's awful. the corruption.

*→ \* LG 32*

EDWINA

Tell me about the corruption.

NOEMI

I can't ... how do I know? Just a woman. You know what I'd change? If I could change anything *→ P VQ 22 LPP 2 → SCAM*  
(SHE looks at Eduardo, who can't hear, but whispers anyway) *HE MISSED SOMETHING IMPORTANT THERE. YOU KNOW. NO. YOU DON'T. YES.*  
To have had Eduardo home more. Evenings. With the boys and me. He's a good man, Eduardo. But a man. Always loved me. Even with those barrooms. Bordellos. Women. Not easy. *TEAM Focus on EDWINA*

EDWINA

Well, now he's sick you have what you want. Control.

NOEMI

That's not what I want. What I want is for him to be happy. I want him to be himself, to fly. *Control.*  
*I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT THAT.*

EDWINA

*Just attended my first class in consciousness lowering. I asked about corruption.* This is a lot of corruption in the government?

NOEMI

What Eduardo always says. It's not there's corruption in the system. Corruption IS the system. He says that with corruption being the system, the bigger the politician, the bigger the corruption.

EDWINA

Who is the biggest politician around?

NOEMI

Our mayor. Don Heberto. You just met him. He is also a cousin. A double cousin.

EDWINA

Then by your own logic he has to be the most corrupt person around here, isn't that true?

STANIS

NOEMI

No. I didn't say that.

EDWINA

What could Don Heberto do that is corrupt? How would he do corruption here?

NOEMI

I can't imagine.

EDWINA

Your son, Dionicio, has disappeared.

NOEMI

(SHE weeps)

I thought that was a secret. We never talk about it. But it's all we think about. Mi hijto. Mi corazon. My child. My heart. My love. My boy. ~~You're heart is broken~~ Every day it gets bigger and bigger. His absence fills the house. The minute I wake up in the morning, there it is. It fills the room. It suffocates me. I can't stand it. It is too much to bear. How can it be, this horror? Almighty God, in your infinite power, make this nightmare end. Soon. I would give my life to have him back, my boy, my Dionicio, my heart. Look what it's done to him.

LR 33

→ VQ236 → TLAN

(SHE points to Eduardo. HE realizes HE has been noticed, waves)

Do you think you could possibly help us?

I only wish I could.

NOEMI

Talk to someone in your government. Everyone listens to Americans. Please. Oh please. Help us.

→ SU U.

(DIMOUT)

LR 34  
VQ236 → AT

**END OF SCENE 6**

**ACT I**

**SCENE 7**

**SETTING:**

The De Solis home. Afternoon.

**AT RISE:**

EDUARDO sits at the table in the wheelchair correcting newspaper pages proofs. ATLANTO enters from up left with more pages.

LR 35  
5/12 Ux  
x

EDUARDO

I hate working here instead of at the office. Oh well. At least I'm still at it.

ATLANTO

I wish I was better at editing. I prefer pictures to words. Can I get something for you?

TEAM BY SILVER FOR TOS

EDUARDO

Yes. Find Dionicio.

(THEY both pause)

You're doing all you can. I know. If you hadn't come here and helped I would have closed down the paper. I know it's a sacrifice for you. Back to the jungle. Your life is up there in Mexico City.

SPANISH IMPERIAL "WHERE IS DIONICIO"

ATLANTO

(puts a single page proof in front of his father, sits)

Here it is. The major effort of a lousy editor. My attempt to write the story of the century. Including a reprint of the sworn affidavit from Madame X.

(points at pages, reads)

Don Heberto not legally mayor of city. Tally of the votes in last election tampered with. Don Heberto issued false election returns. Everything he has done since therefore illegal. Too bad we can't put the headline in bright red ink. Symbolic of a bloody mess. What do you think?

EDUARDO

Looks great. Now. Just take it, exactly as it is, carry it outside, very carefully ... and bury it.

ATLANTO

What?

EDUARDO

Don't you dare run that. Burn it. Bomb it. Don't let anyone in the press room see it. They'll have the story all over town. Kill it. Drown it. Club it to death.

ATLANTO

What? Why?

EDUARDO

We only have this one witness. Who works in the elections bureau. And she might change her mind. It's too dangerous. Could explode in our faces. Or hers.

ATLANTO

What else do I need?

EDUARDO

At least one more witness. That's decent journalistic practice. Dionicio would tell you. If he were here. Two is the minimum. This is a very big story. The biggest I have ever had set in type and sitting on the stone. Which is where it is going to stay.

ATLANTO

I can't believe ... we have that sworn affidavit in the office safe ...

EDUARDO

... and how safe is our safe? Or our one poor witness? Anything can disappear, burn or bleed.

ATLANTO

Then I have to go out and find at least one more witness? Who?

EDUARDO

Ask Don Heberto. Maybe he would oblige us with a suggestion.  
(HE picks up a dumbbell, uses it to strengthen his left arm)

ATLANTO

I guess I must be stupid, but ... I don't understand ... why is it so important to him to be mayor? I don't remember anyone ever caring about it.

EDUARDO

One word. Land. The mayor can legally seize land by the law of public domain. If he says it is essential for the community for him to take it over. Years ago land here was important for growing sisal to make rope. Then nylon replaced sisal, so nobody needed land anymore. People let it go for taxes. Now we're in a whole new era. Land is big again. Land is gold. Some of it.

ATLANTO

Why?

EDUARDO

If you have a nice farm down on the ocean, like Bienvenido and his family did, smugglers can come in by boat. Unload drugs. Or drop them by parachute. A small plane can land there. Unload and take off again. You make ten times more that way than by farming. A hundred times more.

ATLANTO

That's what happened to their farm?

**EDUARDO**

People offered Bienvenido decent money for it. He wouldn't sell. So they took it away from him. People like Bienvenido should know when they own something too valuable for their own good.

**ATLANTO**

So you're blaming the victim for the crime instead of blaming the criminal?

**EDUARDO**

He had land that was too valuable and we have a story that's too dangerous.

**ATLANTO**

You'll never use it?

**EDUARDO**

The editor of this newspaper was killed last year after he published a story criticizing the governor. The next week he was driving on the coast highway, came around a curve and was hit by a huge red overloaded logging truck. The police said it was a traffic accident

**ATLANTO**

What did the driver of the truck say?

**EDUARDO**

There was no driver of the truck. He ran off and disappeared. Noone dared say they saw him.

**ATLANTO**

And we are too frightened to use the story?

**EDUARDO**

Don't look at me like that. I had a bath this morning. We don't have enough evidence. Yes. I want to run the story. No. I don't want to get myself killed. And especially not you. \_\_\_\_\_

**ATLANTO**

~~After they took over poor Bienvenido's farm for the public good, pro bono publico, who ended up owning it?~~

**EDUARDO**

~~Cousin Don Heberto. Pro bono publico.~~

**ATLANTO**

~~Took it over by public domain. As mayor he had the right to do that.~~

**EDUARDO**

~~Correct.~~

ATLANTO

Son of a bitch. And not even legally mayor. By what right did he end up owning it?

EDUARDO

Who are you going to complain to? The chief of police? The governor? All three of them live in each others' pockets. They all even have the same mistress in Merida.

ATLANTO

Sounds indecent.

EDUARDO

It's virtually incest. It's a way of life. One night a smuggler's plane landed on what had been Bienvendio's farm and its right wheel broke. It couldn't take off again. So they unloaded the drugs, took the plane apart and buried it piece by piece. Not a shred of evidence left.

ATLANTO

What are we going to do about it?

EDUARDO

You have that beautiful girl staying here. Think about that for a while. You're such a stupid romantic. You don't have to marry every girl you do it with.

ATLANTO

(picks up the page proofs, rises)  
I'll burn them.

EDUARDO

And don't drive too fast around blind curves. You're a journalist now.

ATLANTO

That's right. When you're a <sup>ARTIST</sup> painter, only the critics will kill you. There's got to be a way to get at 50 x  
~~our beloved cousin Don Heberto. In painting class they always say, "Make it new. Make it~~ LA 40  
~~original. Make it your own." I'll think of something.~~

EDUARDO

(raises HIS right fist lustily as ATLANTO x's up right.)  
Exactly the technique to use on that girl, Atlanto. Go get her. Make it new. Make it original.  
Make it your own. But just make it.

*ATLANTO looks as Eduardo, smiles, exits with the unwanted pages.*

(DIMOUT)

END OF SCENE 7



**ACT I****Scene 8****SETTING:**

Evening. An outdoor field among mountains. In a ritual scene, a small black stone statue of the god Itzamna stands up center. In front of it is a dark stone bowl filled with fermented honey wine called "baalche." Encircling the statue and bowl are two circles of hollow gourds, the inner black, the outer white. In the white gourds are candles, which are the apparent lighting for the scene. The inner gourds are empty. Small plants stand behind the statue. The action is down center. Elsewhere there is darkness.

**AT RISE:**

Bienvenido, the shaman, or "hmen," enters from upstage darkness in drab clothing, but puts on a red turban, then atop this a tall, very wide leather and feather headdress, next a red cloth band around his forehead, then a vest of leather and leopard skin with parts of it hanging down over his stomach and loins. Geraldina enters from upstage darkness with a golden spoon, sits by the baalche pot, stirs it. Cast and crew members wearing hats and masks enter from upstage, sit downstage with backs to house, play or appear to play small drums covered with deer hide and crude pipes carved from branches. As the music rises Geraldina takes the bowl of baalche, ladles some out into each of the black gourds, hands them around to the seated people. Bienvenido drinks a lot of baalche very quickly and begins to sway to the simple rhythm of the music. Geraldina, moving to the music, has to refill his gourd often.

**BIENVENIDO**

(HE moves to the music, facing the others and the house. HE has an odd, touching dignity. ((There is a stress mark over the last letter of Itzamna, also of Quitze)))

O Itzamna, hear us. O great Itzamna, love us. God of all, you who made our Maya ancestor Balam Quitze and the other three, who made Balam Acab, who made Mahucutah, who made Iquil Balam, and led them, the four, here, to this promised land. [Across fierce rivers and wide oceans, across high mountains, which brought them up to rocky peaks, up close toward thee, where they almost killed by the twin devils, by snow and by the endless and cruel lashing of the icy wind.]

(Music rises. HE gets drunk quickly, moves more unsteadily but still with dignity. He is in an enchanted world in which HE lives his dream of change, of mythic victory)

You made these, our ancestors, wise in all thy secrets, in things great and small, in all that is within us and around us, in first things and last things. But you became jealous, great lord of all. You feared they, your handiwork, would be as wise as you. Also that in our human madness and folly men would use this divine knowledge of all things to destroy each other and the world. So you scratched our minds. You robbed us of the great art of understanding all, of comprehending that which is above and that which is below. To compensate for this loss you gave us women.

(MEN and WOMEN pair off, move toward each other. THEY begin to hum softly)

While each man lay in sleep you placed beside him a woman, as smooth as wood, as soft as summer wind, as sweet to smell as wild flowers. And when the ancestors awoke they found, each one beside him, such a lovely creature, and they were pleased and greatly satisfied. And each reached out his arms and embraced the woman beside him and named her in an image of rain.

(the MEN and WOMEN become couples, dance, hum more audibly)

Today we ask you, great lord, to restore our understanding of all. Save us from those who have come across wide oceans to steal our lands and our temples, our houses and our lives. Teach us how to come out from beneath the wide stones under which we crawl by day and by night, in protective hiding, like helpless little ants, while they stride about the world like kings and crush us without even knowing it.

(dancing becomes wilder. Everyone is getting drunk, especially the men. BIENVENIDO staggers, remains oddly dignified. HE indicates GERALDINA should dance. SHE shakes head. "No." Her work done, SHE unhappily watches the dancers. SHE is one of the group, yet not one of them, the only person not in costume)

The time of the Maya people is not over, Itzamna. No. It is not complete. Teach us how to restore the glory of our race. Of thy creation. Help us tear the rough skin of jungle from our ancient world and live again in elegance, in perfect peace and purity, in ancient dignity. Teach us to restore you to the center of the universe and let us worship you again on the towers our ancestors have built, where we can climb up high, high, high, like great birds, free of the earth, and taste for a few intoxicating moments the honey sweet air of your heaven, just as here below we drink our honey wine, Itzamna, to thee.

(HUMMING rises in intensity. THEY ALL lift their cups on high. EDWINA enters upstage with her camera at climactic moment, surprised, wants to shoot footage)

EDWINA

Oh, I'm sorry. I ... this is so fascinating. Please. I'm sorry to ... please ...

STAND IN  
LQ 4

When TAM  
GERALDINA S

→ SQX out  
Say GO!

→ VQ26 Corp 1+2 vid w/N

LQ 43  
GO

(continued)

(THE DANCERS stop, turn to look at her. BIENVENIDO is upset)  
... may I just take some footage for a minute? ... this is so ...

BIENVENIDO

(angry, HE rises to authoritative dignity, waves EVERYBODY off, upstage)  
Ximbal, Aalkab, Ko'ox, Chika'an, Xi'ik.  
(Mayan for go, run, go, go, run)

(EDWTNA lifts the camera, points it. ALL THE MAYA head upstage, carrying the gourds, the little statue, the bowl and spoon. BIENVENIDO exits first, grandly leading the others. The humming ceases)

EDWTNA

I'm so sorry. I'll go. Stay here ... I didn't mean to ...

(SHE starts to go, hesitates, because it would mean joining those who are fleeing her. Which way should she go? The others run off left and right. Nobody listens to her)

Wait I'm so sorry.

(GERALDINA stops a minute, the SHE too leaves. Tradition is too strong. As the gourds are carried offstage the lights quickly dim. Soon the set is virtually dark. EDWTNA stands alone in almost total darkness, looking about, trying to deal with what is happening)

Please ... don't ...

(DIMOUT)

END OF SCENE 8

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~  
LR 44 go!  
LR 50 go!

## ACT I

## Scene 9

SETTING:

The DeSolis house, morning. GERALDINA clears the table. EDGIE is at work with HIS calculations on the balcony.

AT RISE:

GERALDINA looks up, sees him.

GERALDINA

Professor Edgie. What you were doing here is so important. I am sorry for what has happened to you.

EDGIE

(HE runs down the stairs. stands near her. SHE comforts him)

Oh. thank you. Ahhh ...

GERALDINA

(THEY stay close together. SHE doesn't want to leave)

There is so much I don't know. I've been thinking, Professor Edgie. You say there are intelligent creatures out there somewhere in space, but you have told me you don't believe in the Catholic heaven, and you say we Maya people are superstitions if we believe in the same kind of things the Catholics do. that our ancestors exist after death up there in the pink clouds of the sunrise. If you believe in unseen things, it seems to me that science is a lot like religion.

EDGIE

Let's discuss all this sometime, Geraldina. Really. I'd like that.

(THEIR interest in each other increases)

GERALDINA

(adoringly)

I'd appreciate that. I wish you would help me learn more. And you know everything.

EDGIE

I have two books for you. Read one and you'll think you know everything. Read the other, you'll think you know nothing. The first is about the tiniest particles in the universe. You get to know more and more about less and less until finally you know nothing about everything. The other book is about the universe. You get to know less and less about more and more until finally you know nothing about everything.

STAND BY

GERALDINA

I'd like to read them both. The first book last, so I'll end up knowing everything. Like you. Don't forget.

(THEY kiss)

EDGIE

I assure you I won't.

EDWINA

(EDWINA comes down the stairs, watches GERALDINA slowly exit. EDWINA turns to Edgie)

Come on. Sit with me for a minute. I could use a friend right now. Let me do a little interview. You said you'd like to.

→ LQ 51  
→ Y. GO!  
VQ 27.5

→ LQ 52

GERALDINA

(SHE enters, gives Edwina some breakfast, turns to Edgie)

~~Can I get you anything? Fresh coffee? From Jamaica. Blue Mountain tea? Lapsang Souchong?~~

EDGIE

No thank you.

(GERALDINA exits)

When I first got here, Geraldina's father asked if he could look through my telescope. I asked why. He said he wanted to see what God looks like. And if God turned to listen to him when he prays.

→ VQ 28 GC

EDWINA

How ~~did~~ you answer that?

EDGIE

I said he couldn't possibly see God with my telescope. He looked at me in disgust and he said, bitterly, "Get a better telescope." He's hardly spoken to me since then.

Ed 51 → LQ 53 GC!

(GERALDINA enters, takes things from table, exits)

Poor Geraldina. You know, when they forced her and her family off their farm, she was raped? Really. So nobody here will marry her. It's really awful. Double victimization. Every man here is out to deflower everything in sight but the rosebushes, but every man here also insists on marrying a virgin. Not being a virgin is bad enough. Maybe carrying someone else's baby is much worse.

EDWINA

That's such a dark ages idea that ... I can't really believe ... this is awful.

EDGIE

These are very old-fashioned people around here. Make American conservatives look like wild and crazy kids. She is really sort of doomed. What does a girl do if noone will marry her?

EDWINA

(ATLANTO enters, x's to table)

Edgie was just saying Geraldina was raped so nobody here will marry her. Is that really possible?

ATLANTO

That's sort of the way it is around here.

EDWINA

But ... I don't believe ... you don't feel that way. Do you?

(he is silent a long moment, angering her)

Tell us about it.

ATLANTO

Punishing a rape victim for being violated is as vicious and insane as punishing a baby for being born illegitimate. But don't ask too many people around here about it all. You might get upset at the answers.

STAND BY

EDGIE

(GERALDINA returns, pours coffee. THE OTHERS watch her. SHE exits)

Edwina and I were just renaming the planets for Jewish heroes and prophets. *Edg*

→ VQ 29 GC!

ATLANTO

Are we recording now?

EDWINA

Sure. We were all along, for better or worse.

ATLANTO

Some of my ancestors, the De Solis, you know, they had Jewish blood. Really. Nobody likes to talk much about it. In the old records it says some partly Jewish conquistadors came to the new world to keep from being persecuted by the Inquisition. The De solis family were like that. I'm sure. an aunt of mine found out about it. There's Jewish blood in there somewhere. Really.

(HE points to HIS arm)

EDGIE

They must have been marranos.

ATLANTO

What's a marrano?

EDWINA

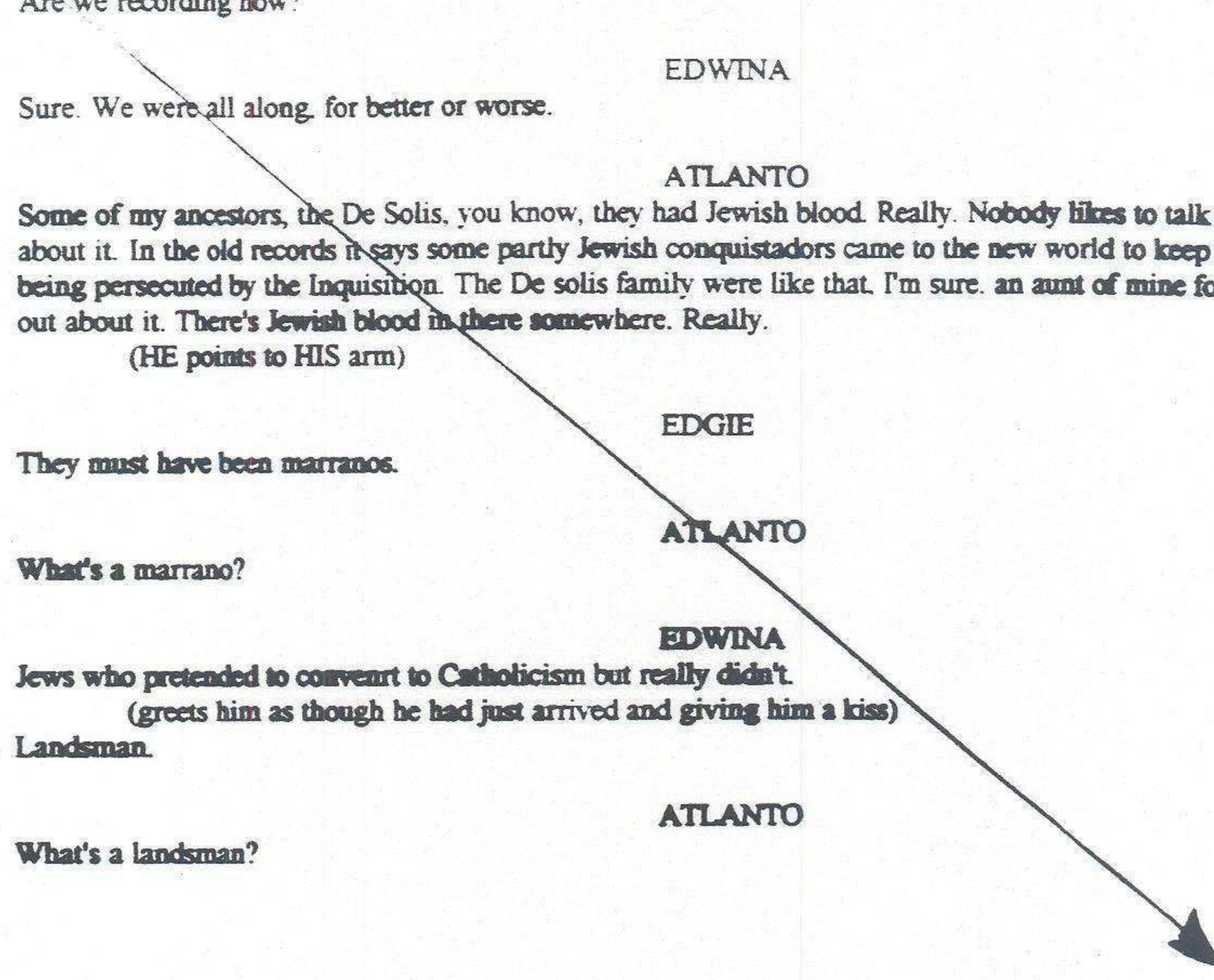
Jews who pretended to convert to Catholicism but really didn't.

(greeted him as though he had just arrived and giving him a kiss)

Landsman.

ATLANTO

What's a landsman?



EDGIE

(obviously feeling left out, gives up hope of attracting Edwina)  
A fellow countryman. I guess I'll go up and get back to work. See you landsmen later.

HE exits up the balcony stairs. GERALDINA returns from up r.

EDWINA

TEAM

(to Geraldina)  
I think I might have something for you. You like these?  
(SHE indicates HER pants and tee shirt. GERALDINA nods eagerly)  
Like to have some? I think you'd look great in them. How about it?

GERALDINA

(over joyed)  
Really? Just like on tv? That would be so wonderful.

EDWINA

Come on. Why should you wear the same damn thing your whole life?

GERALDINA

My huipil?

EDWINA

That's what it's called?

GERALDINA

Yes. My huipil. I embroidered it myself.

EDWINA <sup>JEANS</sup>

It's about time you had a pair of good old faded denims.  
(SHE turns off her equipment, leads Geraldina up the stairs)  
And a tee shirt. I bet you'd look great in a New York Yankee tee shirt. ✓  
(THEY disappear upstage from the balcony)

BISHOP AUGUSTIN and CLAUDIO appear in the up right door. ATLANTO waves them ~~out~~ <sup>5</sup> ~~out~~ <sup>out</sup>

ATLANTO

✓ Come on in. Come on. Morning

→ LA-55

CLAUDIO and BISHOP AUGUSTIN

x

Good morning.

CLAUDIO

I want to see you again because I've had a great idea. To start a new political party and frighten the government into negotiating instead of killing us off? I bet seventy-five per cent of the people

(CLAUDIO continued)

here would join it. From all over the country. It came to me that if the government is afraid it might start a much bigger uprising by marching in here and attacking us, they might decide it's safer to talk with us than kill us. What do you think?

STAND BY

ATLANTO

I gave you that idea right here in this room, not long ago, and ...

BISHOP AUGUSTIN

Remember, Atlanto. Ideas don't care who had them.

CL x → BLK BOARD  
→ LR 55.5  
x

CLAUDIO

Of course, the problem is that it can't work. People here figure that the incumbents are fat and satisfied by now. They have already stolen all they need. So why elect new people, me or anybody else? What I am here to ask you to do. Help me try to get world opinion on our side. Create a dream hall for me in the jungle where I can sit with people from Mexico City and visitors from countries all over the world.

ATLANTO

I will design a hall for you. Out of wood. I will paint the inside with pictures of all the things the people need. With everything the foreigners should see.

CLAUDIO

Show how Europeans were living in primitive wooden huts, like country shepherds, when my ancestors dwelt in vast stone palaces, had observatories where they counted the stars and mapped the dignified wandering of the planets.

ATLANTO

They will see castillos and ball courts and towering pyramids.

STAND BY

CLAUDIO

The glory that was our people shall be visible again. It will amaze visitors. It will inspire the world. The needs of our people ... at long last attended to.

VO 31.5

BISHOP AUGUSTIN

They need everything.

ATLANTO

And that is what I will paint. Green hills, white roads through the jungle, blue houses, pink hospitals, yellow post offices, pairs of blue striped pants floating out of the sky, red tee shirts, shoes, sandals, purses full of pesos, clouds of coins falling like golden snow ... food, automobiles, doctors, books ...

CL x F → 2nd  
→ LA 56.60!

CLAUDIO

For five hundred years we have been silent. So long that our voices crack like dry oaks in the wind whenever we try to speak. So long that we have almost lost the precious instrument of speech, the voice of the soul. Our voices will finally, suddenly loosen and float free. Our ancestors, standing alert in their ranks in the rosy sunset clouds. They will look down on earth and, seeing this, weep their happiness. Or we will be shot and all will be silence again. You don't get anything without a fight. There are two kinds of peace - in prison, which is the human version, or paradise. God's version.



BISHOP AUGUSTIN

Souls received with trumpets and processions into His heaven.

VQ 31.7

ATLANTO

You noticed how I've changed my mind about helping you? Since they kidnapped Dionicio. I feel so different. It hits me. Right here. Why him and not me?

CLAUDIO

You realize there's no salary, no perquisites, no benefits. And you might, as you say, gurk, get wiped out.

ATLANTO

No money, no benefits, and I might get killed. How can I resist?

(The bishop, Claudio and Atlanto shake hands and exit. NOEMI appears, calls out)

NOEMI

Geraldina, would you please go get me ... get me

→ LQ 59

(GERALDINA in a Yankee tee shirt and fitted jeans appears with Edwina. EDGIE watches Geraldina)

... Geraldina. Dear. Where are your clothes?

EDWINA

[These are her new clothes. You don't like them?

NOEMI

Enough joking. Please, dear. Now. Go put on your dress.

EDWINA

She can't. We burned it.

GERALDINA

(with new assurance)

I burned it.

→ SQM 60

(DIMOUT)

→ LQ 60 60

END OF ACT I

→ Love Up  
LQ 61 61

→ AA,

→ BB.

→ House out: LA 69

**ACT II**

**Scene 1**

→ LA 70

**SETTING:**

The De Solis home. Morning

→ 7a CC

**AT RISE:**

There is a knock. EDWINA admits ANNIE MORGAN, the American consul. w/ MANTLE

→ VA 33 G

→ LA 71 G

MISS COHEN

MISS COHEN

Annie Morgan?

EDWINA

WEC ↑ → LA 72 G

ANNIE

→ VQ 34 GRP 1+2  
→ STRCL x GC

(SHE takes Edwina's dossier from her attache case)

Guilty. And you, I take it, are Miss Cohen? Edwina Cohen. [American citizen? Domiciled New York] One of thirty thousand Americans visiting today in my area of Mexico? How do you do.

EDWINA

(SHE leads her to a chair, THEY sit)  
How do you do. I didn't realize we were so many.

ANNIE

And I so few. For better or worse not a high percentage of you enter my field of peripheral vision. I am happy you are one of them. You mentioned something on the phone about Dionicio De Solis?

(look at the recording equipment)

And I presume our little private conversation was clandestinely photographed, taped and engraved on copper.

EDWINA

I certainly did ask if you can't help us find him. You are supposed to be a family friend. I did not tape the conversation. I don't know if that's legal here or not. And I don't care. It certainly is not legal in New York.

→ LA 73

ANNIE

(holds up HER notes to be sure of names. SHE wears career girl black, a gold pendant)  
Uh Miss Cohen, Miss Edwina Cohen, television script person and or journalist, domiciled New York, New York. Yes, I am a De Solis family friend. But no, I can't help you. I work for, and represent, the American government, and taxpayers, including you. Now, what specifically can I do for you, Miss Cohen?

EDWINA

Help find Dionicio De Solis.

Is he an American citizen?

ANNIE

You know he's not.

EDWINA

That's why I asked what I could do for <sup>you</sup> him. I can't do anything for him. Are you C.I.A. Miss Cohen? They never tell us lowly ones.

ANNIE

Of course not. That's the second time I've been asked. Why? I'm only here to do a documentary. Nothing glamorous. This is not the Mata Hari Production Company.

EDWINA

Probably all the recording equipment. Better watch what I say, anyhow. Too bad you're not a spy. And I could catch you in flagrante. Maybe get a promotion. Ah well. Dream on.

ANNIE

(SHE waves at the camera)

Why can't you exert yourself even one little bit for someone who's supposed to be a friend and seems to have just disappeared off the face of the earth?

EDWINA

The U. S. diplomatic service is not a private detective agency. Here's what I do. Last night an American gentleman wrecked his hotel room. He refuses to pay damages. So I am going over there right away and settle this international incident. Try not to get in trouble while you're here, Miss Cohen. But if you do I'll try my best to help. Because you're an American citizen.

ANNIE

Just between us, take a guess. What could have happened to Dionicio?

EDWINA

(points to camcorder)  
Just between you, me and that thing, I have no idea. With an uprising under way, he could have been kidnapped by either side. Are the peasants around here getting their orders locally or from Castro and the Cuban communists?

ANNIE

This is about the life of a friend of yours. It has nothing to do with politics.

EDWINA

It has everything to do with politics. What if the rebels turn out to be Communist friends of Castro and take over Mexico. Suddenly the U. S. has a three thousand mile unarmed border with a Communist country called Mexico.

ANNIE

This is ridiculous. Talking about Communists? And won't help an innocent human being who's been snatched away from his family? The U. S. is the world's only super now, right? And absolute power corrupts absolutely? To me, walking away from a human rights matter like this makes us seem absolutely corrupt.

EDWINA

ANNIE

At the present time we are playing policeman to the entire world. A very expensive hobby. It seems to me that absolute power isn't making us absolutely corrupt, it's making us absolutely broke. [Sorry. I have to go now]

EDWNA

I am sure you hear things. Can do things you don't want to discuss. Will you let me know if you do ?  
About Dionicio?

ANNIE

(looks at camcorders, grimaces)

Just between us? Of course. Pass along all the secrets of a sovereign nation, which I happen to represent here. How about also sending in the marines. To help a friend you've never even met.

**EDWINA**

We send sharply worded messages to China and other countries on behalf of people who have disappeared. Especially writers and journalists.

**ANNIE**

Can you think of one <sup>(h)</sup> little difference between China and Mexico? Besides location and language?

**EDWINA**

What I see is that we Americans have a duty to protect the rights of individuals in any country at all.

**ANNIE**

The difference between China and Mexico, China is a communist country and Mexico is struggling to keep from becoming one.

**EDWINA**

So, if we help an uprising in China, we're helping overthrow a communist nation but if we help anyone who might want to overthrow the Mexican government we're helping a trusty democratic country to be overthrown by communists.

**ANNIE**

Congratulations. You are now a knowledgeable diplomat, ready to go to work driving for the State Department. But please remember to drive only in the middle of the road.

**EDWINA**

Driving in the middle of the road is what gets you killed. There is really nothing you can do?

**ANNIE**

Get in trouble, Miss Cohen. Wreck a hotel room. Drive the wrong way down a one way street. Then I can do something for you. Meanwhile, remember my tourist friend with the wrecked hotel room? I have work on easing him out of Cozumel, without paying his hotel bill, and get him quietly shipped to Florida somehow. Maybe on a shrimp boat. You can go too if you want.

(turns to the camcorders dramatically)

Enjoy yourself, Edwina Cohen. Snorkel, go scuba diving. Sail. Fish. Enjoy the natural beauty here. Disport yourself with raffish abandon. Maybe Atlanto will help you do that ... or whatever. LQ 74

(SHE bows to the camcorders then puts HER hand over the microphone)

I hope I have passed my screen test, Miss Cohen. Without roiling the waters of international diplomacy. And, by the way, you seem to think of diplomacy as taking place in full sunshine.

From what I have seen, the most important diplomacy takes place in the dark. → SQ DD GO!  
VQ 35  
→ LA 75 GO!

(DIMOUT)

END OF SCENE 1

**ACT II**

**Scene 2**

**SETTING:**

The De Solis home. EDWINA is set up to interview. SHE waits for someone. EDGIE sits on the balcony going over long sheets. EDUARDO, up left, is unpacking a carton and watching tv.

**AT RISE:**

EDUARDO removes a Choc Mool from the carton, places it on the table next to him. HE studies it, makes notes.

→ SQ DDX

EDWINA

(SHE looks at HER watch, looks up right at kitchen door, nervously, then rises, x's up to Eduardo, who is having trouble working with one arm)  
Have you see Bienvenido? He was going to let me tape him. He should have been here half an hour ago.

EDUARDO

Sorry. I haven't seen him. Why not come over here and tape the tv? Who cares what they're showing? TV is like a river. Only better. It's fun to watch it flow by. And you can't drown in it.

EDWINA

Thanks. I think not. Guess I'll have to go look for him. (m)  
(SHE x's up right, exits through door)

⊙ EDGIE watches, sees his chance, descends, x's to Eduardo.

EDGIE

Senor De Solis, sir?

EDUARDO

Don't call me sir. I'm not a professor anymore. I run a newspaper now. When I can concentrate on it.

(EDGIE helps him get the statue unwrapped)

EDGIE

I want to ask you something .... and ...

EDUARDO

I thought we discussed all that this morning.

EDGIE

Discussed all what?

**EDUARDO**

You ought to know. You brought it up.

**EDGIE**

I didn't get to bring up anything. You had to eat. And then rest.

(N) (points to statue)  
That thing is from thirty thousand years ago, isn't it?

**EDUARDO**

No.

**EDGIE**

You told us some of the things in that new cave you discovered before ... before you ... got sick ... had been made by human beings at least thirty thousand years ago.

**EDUARDO**

This isn't one of them. It's made by the Maya. Can't be more than a couple of thousand years old.

**EDGIE**

Then who lived in the cave all those thousands of years before them?

**EDUARDO**

Do you really care?

**EDGIE**

Well ... sure.

**EDUARDO**

I don't know. Does that answer your question?

**EDGIE**

What I really wanted to ask. You know everything about this part of the world. What can I do to get the militia to let me use my antennas again? I can't do anything without them.

**EDUARDO**

Ask Atlanto. Those people are his friends.

**EDGIE**

They're not your friends?

**EDUARDO**

I don't have friends.

**EDGIE**

I hope you think of me as a friend.

EDUARDO

I'll let you know when I do.

EDGIE

You can't think of anything I can do to get my antennas back?

EDUARDO

Of course. Bribery.

EDGIE

Who do I bribe?

EDUARDO

Play it safe. Bribe everybody. Would you like some coffee before you go back upstairs?

EDGIE

So many people write books nowadays about the end of the world coming soon. From heat, cold, starvation, or that we'll just kill each other off. What do you think of the ancient Maya myth which says the world will end in the year two thousand and twelve?

EDUARDO

You have that myth all wrong. Everybody does. The ancient ones thought the Maya period would end in two thousand twelve, not the whole world. Maybe the Maya period will end then. Maybe the whole world will. If it does, I hope they show it on tv. If you're worried that the world is going to end and you don't want it to, I certainly suggest taking appropriate action.

EDGIE

I'd like to. When the Spanish came to Yucatan five hundred years ago the Maya civilization was already crumbling. The cities were abandoned. People had gone back to living in huts in the jungle. You've studied so many things. I only know science. What can we do to stop civilizations from rising and falling?

EDUARDO

They all seem to have a life cycle, like people. About eight hundred years. They rise, they fall. Up down. Up down. Bang. Bang. A slap and a tickle. Here and gone. That's my story. Hope you like the ending.

EDGIE

Oh no. We must stop all that. In science we're so near discovering such fantastic things. The origin of the universe. The beginning of time and space and matter. Mysteries men have always longed to understand. We must do everything we can ... keep this era from ending. What can I do to prevent it?



EDUARDO

Turn into somebody else. There is someone I'd like to be. I just can't remember who. But something inside me keeps wanting to be that other person. It's so dangerous. I could end up being anyone at all. Or nobody. A speck of dung on the scrapheap of history.

EDGIE

You know perfectly well what I'm asking. Anything you know that could help me write an article about how to keep our civilization from self-destructing. Please. Whatever you think of.

EDUARDO

(points to Choc Mool statuette, especially bowl atop its stomach. LIGHTS: red dims up) Look at him. Choc Mool. Used during a human sacrifice, when they wanted him to bring rain for the crops. Performed by a priest king on top of a fantastic pyramid, grand as any in Egypt. The victim is a lovely, naked young girl. Usually the priest's own daughter. Laid out helplessly up there on her back, embarrassed and terrified, all her beauty exposed to the world. The priest poses up there in this theatrical costume, jade, leather, gold, acting the role of god and king, with his adoring audience down below. Slowly he lifts the great jade knife and then whamo, down into his pretty little victim's chest, cuts her open like a pig, like this, then reaches in and rips out her heart. LQ 76 40, VQ 36 60, VQ 77 60

(HE becomes a priest, drags himself erect, his arms spread out. LIGHTS: red up more, others dim. HE leans on his chair, acts out the following, using the figurine)

He holds her heart over Choc Mool's dish. The heart is still beating. Of course. Shuddering. Squirting blood. Blood drips everywhere. Down into the bowl. All over the priests hands. Makes them sticky. When the blood finally stops dripping, at long last, the priest puts the heart aside, kneels and prays across the little, holy pool of blood. "O Choc Mool, bring us rain." VQ 200

EDGIE

It was the only thing to do, all right.

(HE shrugs hopelessly, nervously gives up, retreats toward the stairs)

EDUARDO

(still carried away with Choc Mool, falling into chair, HE intones in a priestly voice) "Help us, great Choc Mool. Water. Ohhhhhh water. The earth is parched. It shrinks. The oak tree cracks. The corn shrivels. Thy help Choc Mool. Here is blood for thee. Water. Water. Do not let us die. Make the tree run with sap, the corn flourish. Make it burst forth in great golden kernels!" LQ 78.5, SQ FFx, VQ 37

EDGIE

Strange. They were so sophisticated and so brutal.

EDUARDO

Just like us. Do something about it.

EDGIE

Of course, sir. Thank you, sir.

→ LQ 79 60!

**LIGHTS: restored, red out. HE exits up stairs, sits and examines printouts. EDUARDO watches tv. EDWINA enters up right followed by BIENVENIDO, who is drunk, disheveled. THEY sit.**

(B)

**EDWINA**

I thought I could at least trust you to be on time.

**BIENVENIDO**

I'm sorry. Time is ... I don't have a wrist watch. Like you people do. Life is so different for us.

**EDWINA**

Are you able to talk with me for a minute.

**BIENVENIDO**

Nothing to say.

**EDWINA**

You never say much but you are thinking all the time. Tell me anything you think. What are you thinking now.

**BIENVENIDO**

What about?

**EDWINA**

The uprising, for instance. What do you think of the government? What do you think of Commander Claudio? VQ 38 GC. →  
w/ec x ↗ 96 → LG 80 GC

**BIENVENIDO**

The government? Makes me think of my wife. She had the swollen appendix ... you know. Sick with it. The doctor said get her to the hospital. She died on the bus, getting there.

**EDWINA**

Where was the hospital?

**BIENVENIDO**

In Mexico City. Too far away. She never got to it.

**EDWINA**

How about Commander Claudio? Can he improve things?

**BIENVENIDO**

He uses such big words. I can't listen. All I want is a hospital. Here! Nobody is building one. Geraldina should have gone to a hospital too. After what happened to her. Still no hospital.

**EDWINA**

Does drinking help you cope with your life? Is that why you drink?

**BIENVENIDO**

There is another world. The other world. You know that. The bishop wants people to be good Catholics and wait until they die and then God will take them to His other world. I can get to my other world alive. Just drink for a while and wait. Pretty soon you're there. For a nice visit.

**EDWINA**

Would you like to have schools that have books in your own language? Maya?

**BIENVENIDO**

Maybe. They don't let poor kids go to school anyway. My two brothers and I. Out in the fields every morning. Early. Working. Watch the rich kids go by on their way to school. Such nice clothes. Those beautiful books under their arms. In Spanish. We couldn't read it anyway, if we had them. All I know is to work on a farm and I now I don't have a farm.

(HE looks at HIS hands)

That's what these are good for. Farm work. Three crops a year, I had. Corn. Okra. Beans. Always burning, planting, picking. What do these hands do now? Wash dishes. Sweep. What my wife did. My daughter Geraldina. She. Well ... why talk about that? Or anything?

**EDWINA**

Do you think Commander Claudio can change things?

**BIENVENIDO**

Anyone might do anything. Who knows? What difference can it make? Who cares? You will permit me, please, senorita? I am going ... with your permission?

→ LQ 81  
VQ 39 GC

**EDWINA**

Of course. I'm sorry.  
(HE gets up, exits up right. GERALDINA enters from up r.)

→ LQ 82 GC  
→ TEAM CAP GC

**GERALDINA**

Please. I am sorry. My father ... he gets like this once in a while. He'll be all right tomorrow.

**EDWINA**

I really want to know what he thinks. It's not your fault. That looks nice on you.

**GERALDINA**

(admires HER new clothes)  
Thank you.

→ LQ 83

EDWINA exits up left. EDGIE waves shyly from the balcony, calls down to Geraldina.

**EDGIE**

(comes to the edge of the balcony)  
Hi. Hello. I've got those books for you. Over here. In my room. Wait. I'll bring them down.

GERALDINA

I don't want it to be a bother for you.

EDGIE

No bother. I'll go get them and ...

GERALDINA

(SHE makes a big decision, having given up on Atlanto)

No, no. Wait. I'm not busy. I'll go up with you and get them. Ge for stairs

→ LR 81

ⓐ

EDGIE

Okay. If you'd rather.

*GERALDINA mounts <sup>EDGIE</sup> the stairs. SHE and EDGIE look at each other meaningfully, then cross up right and disappear with HER in the lead. There is a loud knocking. EDUARDO rolls HIS chair toward the down right door. ATLANTO hurries in ahead of him in a painter's smock. ATLANTO opens the door. GONZALEZ enters with machine gun, looks around, waves. DON HEBERTO enters.*

TEAM LAP OFF  
"EDGIE BOX"

→ VQ 40

→ LR 90

ATLANTO

Hello.

DON HEBERTO

Hello. I'm here to talk to your father. If I may.

EDUARDO

Come on over.

*ATLANTO starts to exit up right.*

DON HEBERTO

It might be better if you stay.

ATLANTO

Okay.

*DON HEBERTO and ATLANTO x up to Eduardo, sit. GONZALEZ stays on guard.*

DON HEBERTO

Could I have some tequila, please?

ATLANTO

Sure.

*(ATLANTO x's up right, exits)*

EDUARDO

You know something about Dionicio.

DON HEBERTO

Let's wait a minute.

EDUARDO

How long have you known?

DON HEBERTO

I didn't say I knew anything.

EDUARDO

He's alive?

*ATLANTO comes in with a glass of tequila and a bottle, puts them near Don Heberto*

ATLANTO

There we go.

DON HEBERTO

Your father just asked me if Dionicio is alive. He is. In Mexico City. I just found out. Maybe you think it's a secret that you have that affidavit about my election. That we played around with the numbers. It's not a secret at all. I know about it. The governor knows about it in the state house, and they know about it in the national palace in Mexico City. Everybody knows about it. LO = 0 =

ATLANTO

Except the public.

DON HEBERTO

You keep out of this. I know you were ready to run a story about it on your front page.

ATLANTO

How did you know that?

EDUARDO

We didn't run it.

DON HEBERTO

Of course not. You wouldn't let him. I am just back from Mexico City. I went there to help you out. After all, we're family. The people up there are very upset about that affidavit you have. They want to have good public relations with America. They need a big loan and new trade agreements. They do not want to be embarrassed by little things that make it look as though they have unrest over things like little local elections. I am talking about very big names. Who know all about you.

EDUARDO

I certainly believe you. They want us to destroy the affidavit and then they'll let Dionico go. Yes?

DON HEBERTO

Good guess. Only it's a bit more complicated.

EDUARDO

One thing. We will never give anyone the name of the person who made the affidavit.

DON HEBERTO

I told them in Mexico City I thought you'd protect whoever it is. They agreed. You could get Dionicio back for a promise never to use the affidavit and for a donation of a little money.

ATLANTO

How will you know we have really destroyed the affidavit?

DON HEBERTO

We'll know.

ATLANATO

How much do they want?

DON HEBERTO

My friends want a hundred thousand and eighty-five pesos. I am so very sorry. What can I do?

ATLANTO

Interesting. The exact amount I got for my paintings in Mexico City last year.

DON HEBERTO

Your painting of a horse dropping labeled "Oval Portrait of the Mexicican government." It was noticed. Comparing the administration to manure. What an insult to your government.

ATLANTO

I'd say it's an insult to the horse.

DON HEBERTO

I did my best for you. Spent my own money. For the train. The hotel.

Stand By

ATLANTO

(takes out a checkbook and pen)

My folks are having a little problem right now. Doctors and everything. I'll pay it.

DON HEBERTO

(HE toasts Atlanto with a mocking smile)

I admire that. A good son. Very caballero. Worthy of our ancestors. Honorable. Bravo.

ATLANTO

Let's do an exchange. You give us Dionicio. I'll give you my check at the exact same moment.

EDUARDO

(sharply, unusual for him)

Give him the check.

DON HEBERTO

Don't you trust me?

ATLANTO

Who do I make it out to?

DON HEBERTO

Me.

(DIMOUT)

→ SQ II  
VQ 41  
LR 100

END OF SCENE 2

1/0 EDWINA COHEN

→ VQ 41.5  
TAPE SWITCH

→ SQ II

UNIQUE VIDEO L.P.

SHIFT GO!

**ACT II**

**Scene 4**

**SETTING:**

In the rain forest. Trees, a tent off left, downstage boxes which, when put together, are Atlanto's vision of a heavenly world. It is early afternoon.

**AT RISE:**

ATLANTO paints boxes. EDWINA sets up camera.

EDWINA

(in her military garb)

Too bad there's no building so you can't paint on actual walls. These are too fragile. Perishable.

→ VQ 42

→ SQ TL  
S J LA 101 GC

ATLANTO

The boxes are numbered. When we stack them in the right order they'll look great.

→ S KK

(distant sporadic firing is heard. HE puts some boxes together, creates part of the wall)

What's that all about? I hope it doesn't spread up here. I wonder who's shooting at who?

(the firing suddenly stops)

EDWINA

(SHE shoots some footage of Atlanto and the boxes)

Don't look at the camera. I'm not recording any sound. This is for voice over.

(SHE says the next casually but it means a lot to her. Now SHE starts to record)  
Now. How can you keep saying you're not really involved? Look how hard you're working.

ATLANTO

What am I so involved in?

EDWINA

Trying to create an inspiring place for them to use if Claudio can get the federal officials to hold a meeting instead of surrounding the rebels and killing them off. And maybe us with them.

Stands By  
VV

ATLANTO

That's why I am wondering. Is all that shooting down there just the usual skirmishing around or is it finally the federal troops, come to kill everybody off and end the rebellion for good. Or for bad.

EDWINA

Tell me, to do what you're doing out here you must believe in it heart and soul. Don't you?

ATLANTO

Why else would I be doing it?

EDWINA

Now I have a question, a big question for you!

JJ\*  
→ SQ KK

x



ATLANTO

Fire away.

EDWINA

Very amusing. If the <sup>especial</sup> federals decide to talk and not shoot, what happens next?  
(the shooting diminishes, fades out)

ATLANTO

We talk.

EDWINA

You ask the government people to do what you want like build roads and hospitals and start building schools and starting a mail delivery service?

ATLANTO

For openers. Sounds good.

EDWINA

Maybe it will just be all talk. If the uprising ends how can you be sure they'll keep their word?

ATLANTO

If they had a reason for giving their word they'll have a reason for keeping it.

EDWINA

The American consul here. Your friend Annie Morgan ...

ATLANTO

... who wouldn't even help us find my brother Dionicio ...

EDWINA

... says the best way to be sure you're going to get results is to create a new political party and have someone run for office. Get all the people who've been supporting your uprising to come here from all over the country. Form a party. Scare the government into reforming.

ATLANTO

Let's dream on. Wouldn't Annie be happy? She could send a cable to Washington that she had quieted us all down, that there won't be any red brigades running around the hills here creating a danger for you Americans.

EDWINA

It would accomplish what you want, too, wouldn't it? And make the whole western world want to help you?

*Renewed shooting is heard.*

Stand by

→ seek  
Jk

Are we going to get killed?

EDWINA

I'm sorry I got you into this.

ATLANTO

I got myself into it.

EDWINA

What I mean, I wish I hadn't told you what's going on down here, so you'd get yourself into it.

ATLANTO

Stand By

That's a bit better. ~~If we're going to get killed we might as well ... before it's too late ...~~

(SHE holds out her arms)

~~... I admit I really think you are ... I have a secret. You don't have to seduce me. Maybe we could come to some kind of mutual understanding about it all. Right now. In that tent.~~

REMEMBER WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT SEDUCING ME YOU DON'T HAVE TO

THEY embrace

EDWINA

What a shame. I had been hoping, at long last, to find out about the fine art of seduction.

ATLANTO

You think of me as a teacher?

EDWINA

My father says every man should have three lovers. The first teaches him. The second one he teaches. And the third one should be a nurse

ATLANTO

→ see KK 3

I've been reading the Maya holy book Geraldina lent me. I like what it says. ~~The ancient Maya gods created men but then felt sorry for them because the men were, each one, alone. So while the men slept one night, the gods created women, to be soft and sweet and smooth. They placed a woman beside each man as a gift and when the men awoke they found, each one, a woman by his side. And each was dazzled by her softness and beauty. And they called the women by names in an image of rain. Am I a gift? Are you going to give me a name in an image of rain?~~

EDWINA

KK 3.5

KK 3.5x

You're a gift from heaven. Rain or shine. But you've left out one little thing. The men and the women loved each other so well that they joined together in holy love and populated the world.

ATLANTO

Except that this isn't my year for populating the world. It's my year to make a documentary that nobody knows about yet. But they will soon.

EDWINA

*THEY are very loving but this comes between them. THEY react.*

ATLANTO

What's the point of getting married if you're not going to populate the world?

EDWINA

If you don't know, don't even think of trying it.

ATLANTO

In the Bible Abraham wanted children so even though he loved Rebecca and she loved him, she sent him in to her handmaiden Hagar and he had a child by her. Is that what you want?

EDWINA

You're talking about making babies by handmaidens? And we're not even married yet? The wedding's off.

ATLANTO

It can't be. I haven't asked you yet.

EDWINA

And I haven't asked you. One good thing. Here in Mexico women keep their maiden names and just add on the other one. Much better than us American women, losing our identity.

ATLANTO

Those swarms of men you work with. At least fifty have to be blazing hot after you. Maybe a hundred. When you go back. Promise me. Never look at any of them. Not ever again.

EDWINA

Okay. Not even look where I'm going. Take my chances. Crash. Makes things equal out, anyway.

ATLANTO

What things?

EDWINA

That painters have dozens of nude models lolling around all day. Never look at one again, ever.

ATLANTO

Okay. Sort of defeats the purpose at bit, but ... you'd rather we had nude men?

EDWINA

Take Picasso, for example. Why did he need a nude woman sitting there when he painted all those circles and squares?

ATLANTO

Obviously ... for inspiration.

STAND BY

EDWINA

That explains everything. Or nothing.

ATLANTO

Doesn't every explanation?

EDWINA

I'll have to live in New York, you know. The whole thing is really impossible, isn't it? Lucky we didn't go into the tent.

ATLANTO

No it's not. Too bad about New York. I can't get away from here. We can't even bribe anyone else to work on the paper right now. But you could get down here from time to time, couldn't you?

EDWINA

You're right. Of course I could. I love it here. Make it my second home. It will be wonderful. (THEY embrace, hear a loud cracking noise, separate. A tall figure appears upstage in a raincoat and floppy man's hat. ATLANTO pushes Edwina behind some boxes.)

→ SQ KK  
LQ 10B

ATLANTO

Who the hell is that?

ANNIE

Me. Annie Morgan. Don't shoot.  
(SHE removes the hat)

→ VQ 42.5

ATLANTO

I'll put my trusty paint brush down. What are you doing here?

ANNIE

Nothing, as far as you're concerned. I am in Mexico to help American citizens. If there were one around here I would advise her that Don Heberto is on his way here, as we speak, with an armed guard, to arrest her and her putative companion for giving aid and comfort to the enemy, and that she should get out of here at once. But since there is no such person present ...

EDWINA

(steps into view)  
What would you advise her to do?

ANNIE

To let me drive her to Progreso and put her aboard the next shrimp boat headed for Florida.

ATLANTO

She can't go. We're getting married.

EDWINA

Scene By

I haven't even asked you yet.

ANNIE

Are you going to get married in the U. S. or in Mexico? That will make a big difference.

ATLANTO

We haven't even decided yet about needing handmaidens for making babies.

ANNIE

That would be high priority, wouldn't it?

EDWINA

It has to do with who's going to populate the world.

ANNIE

Quite a decision to have to make. I mean along with everything else.

(to Edwina)

Have you two discussed whether or not Claudio is going to operate inside the existing system? Form a new party?

EDWINA

(THEY look at each other, the tent)

We've covered a lot of ground. But there are still things we haven't gotten to. Unfortunately.

ATLANTO

Edwina is going to be renamed ... in an image of rain.

ANNIE

Great idea. Why do it any other way? What are you talking about? In an image of rain?

ATLANTO

It's a fine old custom. Goes back to the beginning of something. Everything.

→ SOUNDS

*The firing sounds closer.*

ANNIE

Sounds good. Well. Guess I better take steps. In fact a lot of them. Right now.

→ SR NN

(SHE puts on the drooping hat disguise, slides out of sight. THE FIRING rises in intensity, then ceases abruptly. EDWINA and ATLANTO look at each other. What is going to happen to them? THEY look around for a sound or a clue)

VR 42.7

ATLANTO

Why did they stop shooting?

→ SQ 00 40!

LONG

→ LA 104 60!  
VR 43 60!

Page 73

**TWO MASKED REBELS enter from up right carrying a body. THEY place it on the ground, kneel beside it, light small votive candles, form a little shrine in front of the segment of Atlanto's wall. THEY pray, intone.**

ATLANTO

The prayer for the dead. Who is it?

MOURNER #1

The bishop. Bishop Augustin.

BA +

→ SQ 00 x

MOURNER #2

They were looking for him. The federals. They wanted to shoot the bishop. And they did. They stood over him. When they saw he was really dead they smiled and turned and walked away.

ATLANTO

I can't believe they did it. Goodbye. The greatest man I ever knew.  
(HE kisses the corpse on the forehead)

MOURNER #1

They always do what they want to do.

*DON HEBERTO is led onstage from up left by TWO MASKED REBELS. THEY are heavily armed with machineguns and side arms. GONZALEZ follows carrying a machinegun.*

DON HEBERTO

(outraged)

Let go of me. I am the mayor here. You are in defiance of the law. I order you!

(HE sees Edwina and Atlanto)

So, you are truly here, ma'amselle. I am sure it is his fault.

W/ CANDLES → Cue DHEAT

*A GROUP OF MASKED REBELS forms. CLAUDIO arrives, kneels at corpse, weeps, rises.*

CLAUDIO

The saddest day of my life. Robbed of my mentor. Father. Friend. Goodbye. Go on to glory. God and His angels wait to greet thee. Please. Take him home. The cathedral.

(HE kisses the corpse. REBELS cross selves. The TWO MOURNERS carry the body off)

Silence, please. The Autonomous Peoples' court of Ciudad de Las Casas, State of Chiapas, is hereby called to order. On trial today on two separate charges is one Heberto Perez de Campo, otherwise known as Don Heberto.

U x U S M A S

LD 106

DON HEBERTO

This is a totally illegal proceeding. It has no official validity. Stop this foolishness at once.

*ATLANTO motions to Edwina to tape the proceedings. SHE is doing so from all angles.*

**DON HEBERTO**

**This illegal proceeding is interfering me as mayor from carrying out an important official duty. The arrest of that person. For trying to aid and abet the enemies of the state. Gonzalez!**  
(HE turns to Gonzalez, points out Atlanto. GONZALEZ ignores him)

**CLAUDIO**

Silence in court. Order. Order. Charge one. By changing the legal tally of votes in the last mayoral election the prisoner here on trial did deviously and fraudulently cause himself to be elected mayor and that he is thus claiming to hold an office, title and powers which are not legally his. How do you plead?

**DON HEBERTO**

I plead only for a restoration of reason and obedience to the rule of law. This is a totally illegal court, so there is no necessity for me to enter any other plea. Or in any other way participate in these outlaw procedures. You will all suffer for this.

**CLAUDIO**

As the court's first witness I call Sergeant <sup>Pedro Arango</sup> Gonzalez of the Ciudad de Las Casas police force. Sergeant, do you swear you are testifying here truly and without coercion so help you God? TCAM - G

**GONZALEZ**

I so swear, your honor. During my term of duty as personal bodyguard to Don Heberto I have done many things against Maya friends and my own relatives, for which I duly apologize, including some persons here present and many others ...

**CLAUDIO**

Would the witness please confine his remarks to the matter at hand?

**GONZALEZ**

I am here to testify about what I saw and heard in the office of the department of elections in the municipal palace of Ciudad de Las Casas the day of the last election of mayor. I hereby swear that after the closing of the polls and the presentation of the final vote count to the officials of the city it was said that Don Heberto had lost by two thousand one hundred and ten votes. Someone laughed. I don't know who. Don Heberto laughed too and said that there was surely an error and that they should go back downstairs and return with a new, more satisfactory count.

**CLAUDIO**

And did this come to pass?

**GONZALEZ**

It did, your honor. In about fifteen minutes the clerks returned and said that they now had a better tally of the votes and the proceeded to congratulate Don Heberto on his great victory and everybody laughed and said what a wonderful evening it had been.

CLAUDIO

I ask you, for the record, to repeat that you are here of your own free will and are under no coercion or pressure from anybody in this matter

GONZALEZ

I do repeat that this is so and that I am also testifying in fear of my life because I do not know what will become of me in the future after I finish my testimony about the election

DON HEBERTO

For the love of God, Gonzalez. Why are you doing this to me?

GONZALEZ

I have been unhappy for years. Doing things against the good of my own people. Friends, even close relatives, don't speak to me. Why should they? I have no idea what my future will be. I will certainly lose my job. But there comes a time. At long last, I have to do what I am doing. <sup>MAYBE EVEN MORE</sup>

CLAUDIO

The other charge, that not being legally mayor the defendant took possession of a certain area of farmland down beside the seashore illegally, causing hardship and the rape of an innocent girl, and that said property should revert at once to the Lantum family. How does the defendant plead?

DON HEBERTO

I was miles away when the unfortunate rape occurred. Being honestly elected, therefore acted within my power of eminent domain in re said property, taking it for the good of the community.

STAND BY

CLAUDIO

Even if you had been mayor and taken the property legally for the city of Ciudad de Las Casas, how did it benefit the city for you to so quickly become owner of said property, sir?

DON HEBERTO

There is no need for me to answer such a stupid and insulting question.

CLAUDIO

As much as this court has no place set aside for the detention of the guilty, and since his guilt is soon to be public knowledge, because this television tape will be seen everywhere, and the defendant be investigated as a result and quickly barred from office, there is no need for this court to do anything more, since such further action might interfere with future official activities on this case by the State of Chiapas and the United States of Mexico. Therefore I now proclaim this court to be adjourned and Don Heberto to go home and await official action from other bodies.

SAYS BY

HE pounds on a table. PEOPLE clap, cheer, walk away slowly. DON HEBERTO glares, decides to do nothing, exits. CLAUDIO joins Edwina and Atlanto. SHE is still taping busily, getting footage of Don Heberto's raging, wrathful departure.

LR 107



CLAUDIO

I have amazing news. Notice the shooting has stopped? A general and two colonels from Mexico City are here. We just declared a joint cease fire. Imagine. They want to sit and tal with me. Reach some kind of compromise. The conference will be right here, in front of Atlanto's wall.

(HE shakes hands with Atlanto, turns to Edwina, SHE examines camcorder)

Your tape is making history, senorita. I thank you. You sure it will come out? My only real evidence?

EDWINA

Of course. don't worry.

CLAUDIO

Give it to me.

(SHE looks at Atlanto, surprised, steps back. For HER, the film is HER property)

Give it to me. And all your other tapes. Everything. You don't want to? Do you have special military training in evasive tactics? Does your bodyguard Atlanto carry an AK 47?

ATLANTO

He's right. Don Heberto's whole future depends on your tapes. And he'll assume you've still got them.

CLAUDIO

Don't worry. I'll have them make copies for you. You will have them in two hours.

ATLANTO

It's obvious. He's right.

EDWINA

(begins to understand all too well)

Okay. Just one little thing. A final tag. Let me get the camera on you for just one minute. A nice tight shot.

(HE poses for her mock heroically)

Tell me, Commander Claudio. Will you just beg now for help from the federal government or will you take the dare, really start a new political party? Get elected and have the power to do things, not beg for them any more. I came here thinking the situation would be interesting. Now I realize it is pitiful. The world is wondering. Are you a true public benefactor or just off on a one-way ego trip to make yourself a radical chic celebrity?

CLAUDIO

I'm surprised. You and that camcorder of yours are now part of our history. You are a big person around here, and suddenly you sound like a snotty little high school liberal.

EDWINA

And that response makes you sound like a little Marxist with a personal agenda, not a hero with a thrilling public purpose.

C LAUDIO

(to Atlanto)

Where did you ever find this loca muchacha?

(to Edwina, as He accepts Edwina's other tapes from her camera case)

As your friend Annie Morgan begs, in her bourgeois madness, I herewith and hereby guarantee to negotiate with the federal government people who have come here, and work within the existing Mexican

→ VQ 44

→ VQ 103

→ VQ 45

SQ 002

political system. Maybe someday even get the stink washed off it. Create a political party representing all of us, who are the majority here but who have been saddled and bridled and ridden like mules for the past four hundred years. So we, the unconquered, won't have to beg our conquerors anymore for basic necessities that even animals get. And not get them. We'll legislate them into existence. Hasta luego. amigos. You want to find me? Come on back to the rain forest any time. Look at the altar on top of the tallest pyramid our ancestors ever built. I'll be up there at the front door of heaven, demanding that the gods finally give us the two things no one has ever given us, not then, not now, not ever, not our ancestors, not the so-called conquistadors, not anybody. And you gods up there, what are those two things? Tierra y libertad. Land and liberty. There is so much of both. Why do we have so little?

→ VQ 46 GO!  
x  
Stand By  
→ 50 II  
LR 110 40

(DIMOUT)

END OF SCENE 4

ACT II

Scene 4

SETTING:

Chairs are placed on the middle level of the set, which allow it to served as a limbo part of the house.

AT RISE:

NOEMI sits on a riser, acting as though the middle level of the set were the central room of the house. ATLANTO and EDWINA are with her, also seated on risers.

I don't understand.

NOEMI

→ SQ PR 60!  
→ LQ 111 GO!

ATLANTO

They have sent us a video of Dionicio and they promise he'll be back in two or three days. This is to prove to us that he's alive and well. It's perfectly simple.

NOEMI

Ed + G = BURBONO

→ 111.5 GO!

(very upset)

It's not perfectly simple at all. Do you trust them?

Ed + G →

ATLANTO

I don't even know who THEY are. But we have to go along with whoever it is. Not much choice.

→ VQ 47 GO!

(HE turns a switch. THE VIDEO tape runs, showing Dionicio)

There he is. Alive and well.

→ LQ 116

NOEMI

That's Dionicio, but ... has your father seen this? Maybe he's too sick to bother him with it.

ATLANTO

I showed it to him. Out in his room.

NOEMI

What did he say?

ATLANTO

I won't tell you.

(GERALDINA and EDGIE enter at the lower level. The tape is still running. THEY stand and wait.)

NOEMI

(as the tape ends, to Geraldina)

You saw him. That's my Dionicio. But where is he?

Ed + G @ To → 112. GO!

GERALDINA

Who knows?

W/ VIDEO OUT → VQ 48 GO!

Ed @ 2ND → LQ 114 GO!

NOEMI

I realize that, dear. I just don't know what I'm doing or saying. Did you want something?

EDGIE

Maybe this isn't the right time to ... I have to go back to California. There's nothing for me to do here anymore.

NOEMI

I know that is very disappointing for you.

EDGIE

Professionally it's a tragedy, really. But there's a good side to it. Geraldina is going with me. I've asked her to marry me.

GERALDINA

It's all so wonderful. I am so happy. I'm sorry. I know this isn't a good time for you, and ...

EDWINA

Congratulations. That's wonderful news.

NOEMI

Come over here, dear. Let me kiss you. I am so happy for you. At least something good is happening.

(GERALDINA goes to her, kisses her. NOEMI turns to Edgie)

This is so nice. For both of you. It's been pretty obvious for quite a while ... that something was going on.

ATLANTO

It certainly has been. Congratulations.

(HE shakes hands with Edgie, Geraldina)

Stands By

EDGIE

I'm a lucky man. Very. Don't tell her what a mistake she's making. Spoil my good luck.

(puts HIS arm around Geraldina, who gazes up at him adoringly)

You seem so busy. We'll go along. A lot of planning to do.

→ SARRI  
LQ119 GO!

*HE and GERALDINA go up to the top level and disappear as EDUARDO rolls himself onto the lowest stage level. EDWINA and ATLANTO descend to join him. THEY sit on lower levels of the set. NOEMI up a level. EDWINA gets HER suitcase camcorder, starts to shoot the scene, hiding the suitcase.*

EDUARDO

That tape of Dionicio. An absolute insult. It could have been made last month. Last year. We should never have trusted them. If that's the way they're going to act, how much worse could it get if we just let loose and publish everything we know about them?

ATLANTO

It could get worse.

EDUARDO

I know. I don't even care about myself, anymore. I really don't. It's just the rest of you ... I want to protect.

ACT II

Scene 5

SETTING:

In an outdoor limbo space with no furniture.

AT RISE:

EDWINA and ATLANTO enter from lower left. SHE carries HER camcorder, HE her suitcase.

→ SQ R2  
LR 120

ATLANTO

Is this really happening. I just can't believe it.

EDWINA

I can't either.

ATLANTO

I want your face to be the last thing I see every night and the first thing I see when I wake up. I want to see you standing at the window in the morning looking out and blessing whatever you look at.

EDWINA

What are we going to do about everything. I only want to live with you. Will you marry me?

ATLANTO

It's got to be, my darling. It just has to be.

EDWINA

Somewhere. Soon. Somehow. Your wall. It will really help things happen.

ATLANTO

But I'll never be a legend here, the way you are. I'll be painting you from memory. Again and again.

EDWINA

Are you going to make it very sexy?

ATLANTO

Do you want me to?

EDWINA

Of course.

BRAND BY

ATLANTO

When you get back to New York you'll get to be rich and famous and you'll forget all about me.

EDWINA

If I should be lucky enough to get them to use one of my tapes it could help here. a lot.

ANNIE arrives with CLAUDIO cautiously, from the upper levels of the set.

→ LR 121 GI

ANNIE

Go snorkeling, I said. Enjoy. Nobody ever takes my advice.

ATLANTO

I'm glad you got here. We weren't sure. About anything. We still aren't.

CLAUDIO

One thing is for certain. You can't stay here another hour. I told you I have to know everything that's going on around here. And I do.

EDWINA

I wish I knew as much as you do about what's happening to me.

*THEY ALL look around to see if anyone is around.*

ANNIE

I'm sorry to drag you out at this hour and not even let you say goodbye to anyone.

EDWINA

Except Atlanto. What's happening? Where are we going?

ATLANTO

To the airport?

CLAUDIO

I understand Don Heberto. He will have a long, elegant dinner tonight, in his historic villa, with all his political friends.

(to Edwina)

In a few hours from now they will have decided what to do. About you. Nothing you'd like to know about.

EDWINA

And just think. He's the first man who ever kissed my hand.

ANNIE

(to Atlanto)

You are to go home. Act as though nothing has happened.

ATLANTO

And what will have happened?

ANNIE

You must tell nobody this. The dentist in town loves antique jade as much as teeth. He has a hobby of taking hunks of jade and using his drill to carve them into instant antiques. After all, the jade is really old. He has his own plane and flies his handiwork to Miami and sells it for a fortune.

STAND BY

CLAUDIO

He is waiting for you at the airport and I am driving you there. Myself.

ANNIE

To be sure you get there safely.

VARIANOVY

✓OUNT

→ SQ SS

→ LR123

QUICK

Scene 6

SETTING

A video scene

→ So SSx  
LA 124  
VQ 49

AT RISE:

EDWINA interviews herself

Question: Welcome back from Mexico. How do you feel about your visit there?

Answer Like it never happened. ~~And that it's the most important thing that ever happened to me~~

SQT

Question You went where no other Sarah Lawrence girl ever went before How about that?

Answer I guess I'm not a Sarah Lawrence girl anymore. I don't know what I am. Sitting here in Miami like an illiterate girl from the rain forest. Seeing my first airport. ~~Everything looks so weird and scary to me~~ I'm sitting here like a world-weary diplomat. Seen it all. Don't have to look around at anything anymore. I have acquired millennial multiple vision. ~~Like Edgie, the scientist, seeing the universe as poetry. Eduardo, forging a Hamletic madness, to make his presentation of himself to the world, the equivalent of the world's presentation of itself to him. Personification is not bestowed. It is seized. Like a life preserver. Or you drown in muck and madness.~~

Question You assigned yourself to go to Chiapas. Did you prove yourself by showing you knew how to handle yourself under all circumstances? Under any circumstances?

Answer ~~Under virtually no circumstances. Never particularly knew what the hell I was doing. Had to be led around by the hand, like a little girl. Great journalists go after the story. With me, the story has to come after me, track me down. Knock me over, to get my attention. But then, what I am thinking of as stories are the big things. Murders. Plane crashes. How the hell do you know where to go to be present at the right place and at the right time for those things? Maybe that kind of journalist just sits around waiting for an assignment editor to find out about the big things and then he rushes you out there like a robot. What's so damn brilliant about that? Edgie said if you take a lot of little pictures you get a big picture. And if you study someone, you change him. Or her. And there's more. I realize that when you study someone, you not only change that person, you are changed too. The big word is impingement. I thought of people as impervious units. They are not. They impinge. Revise each other. The present is billions of people impinging on each other, and they carry the weight of history with them. If anyone is noticing~~

STAND BY

Question: If you were interviewing yourself to be a commentator, would you hire yourself?

Answer: ~~Only because I am family~~

→ LA 126 TT7

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 6

→ Q...  
VQ 50

**ACT II**

**Scene 7**

The WNTN television studio in New York.

**SETTING:**

**AT RISE:**

It is approximately five minutes from a live broadcast. The staff and crew are furiously working to put the final preparations in place. EDWINA is in the middle of mayhem

*FFx*  
*Q R 03 + 60!*  
*→ Q R 03*

Two minutes, ladies and gentlemen.

STAGE MANAGER

→ 127

I need a room check. Quiet on the set.

SOUND ENGINEER

One minute to places.

STAGE MANAGER

→ VQ 51

*The staff and crew begin to move into place to begin the broadcast. EDWINA moves to sit behind a table up center. SHE is handed a script from the SCRIPT GIRL.*

→ TV ON  
→ VQ 52  
→ SGW

*Roll Intro*

STAGE MANAGER

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4 (SHE finishes the count with hand gestures and points to Edwina on "one")

EDWINA

Good evening. I am Edwina Cohen and this is WNTN Headline News. Over the past two weeks we have been presenting our exclusive investigative report on the circumstances surrounding the tragic and historic rebel uprising in southern Mexico. Tonight we present the last episode in the lives of the people we have been showing you who are caught up in the current political and social upheaval over human rights and freedom of the press in the Mexican State of Chiapas. This last episode and up to the minute local news when we return from these messages.

STAGE MANAGER

Aaand we're clear.

*(the crew rushes in on EDWINA to correct her make-up and adjust her mic. The mayhem builds again. In the hustle the crew shifts the table and 5 chairs to center stage at the foot of the staircase. The lights begin to face. Lights rise quickly and we discover EDWINA standing in the midst of the DeSolis family argument about the newspaper. that was left unfinished at the end of Act II, Scene 4, with Noemi, Eduardo, Atlanto, Edwina onstage)*

NOEMI

I don't want to fight anybody. I just want to win.

ATLANTO

That's all I need to hear. Let's just do it. Write whatever we damn please, and the hell with it.



EDWINA

Since the uprising began negotiations have failed to change conditions in Chiapas. The Zapatistas have demanded free and fair elections, the return of private property seized by the government, and public hospitals, schools, and social services. The Mexican government has responded with the forceful removal of foreigners and press from the state of Chiapas and death squads have killed over 80 persons. The Zapatista's cry tierra y libertad, a plea for land and liberty. There is so much of both why do they have so little. Please stay tuned for the local news after these messages. Goodnight Atlanto, where ever you are.

→ Pull Pw.

128

→ VR 53

→ LR 131

→ GW

→ LR 133

→ House Up

Seminario Multidisciplinario  
José Emilio González  
**SMJEG**  
Facultad de Humanidades  
UPR-RP