

BORDERLINE JUSTICE

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FADE IN:

EXT. SAN DIEGO. EVENING.

TITLE: THE GARDEN OF JUDGE MARTIN WILKINS' HOME.

BEGIN MONTAGE.

. . . Sedate wedding setting. Guests mingle in groups.  
 . . . String quartet.  
 . . . Small, tighter group of "politicos" talking.  
 . . . Waiters offer drinks, finger food on silver trays.  
 . . . Large center table holds tiered wedding cake. "Anne and David."

END MONTAGE

ANNE WILKINS, 24, attractive brunette, bridal outfit, rescues her father U.S. DISTRICT COURT JUDGE MARTIN WILKINS, late 50s, handsome, suave, from a group of adoring WOMEN.

ANNE

My father, the older, handsome,  
 widower and justice of the peace.

MARTIN

My daughter, the blushing bride.

They both look across at DAVID CUNNINGHAM, 25, slim, dressed in black suit, intently talking with a group of older MEN.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Are you sure about this? He has  
 changed.

EXT. CENTRAL MEXICO. SAME.

TITLE: THE VILLAGE OF SAN CRISTOBAL.

Dusty open area surrounds ramshackle collection of huts.

MONTAGE:

. . . Contrast. Noisy, festive air. Fiesta. Balloons, pinatas, lights. People in gaily colored shirts and dresses.

. . .MARIACHI band plays.

. . .VILLAGERS dance and sing.

. . .Table laden with food: tacos, enchiladas, salsa, carnitas, etc.

END MONTAGE.

Battered pickup truck loaded with flowers appears. ONLOOKERS cheer. Musicians hurry across to the pickup truck.

Pickup skids to a halt. WOMEN protect food on tables from dust.

CROWD  
(in Spanish subtitles)  
The bride and groom.

Doors of the pickup open. People crammed inside tumble out.

Newlyweds: CIPRIANA PLASCENTIA, 17, beautiful brunette bride in flowing dress exits. Her husband, ANTONIO BORJA, 19, gaily-colored suit. Followed by Cipriano's father, guayabera shirt, striped trousers, DEMETRIO PLASCENTIA, 45.

TERE ARELLANO, 40, attractive woman, dressed in flowery dress, waves everyone to the table.

TERE  
(in Spanish subtitles)  
Come eat! Eat!

The couple slice wedding cake. Tere passes it out to guests.

Cipriana stuffs the cake into Antonio's mouth. Laughter.

Cheers, more music, dancing.

BACK TO THE JUDGE WILKINS' GARDEN.

A drum roll.

People invited to the centre table and elaborate wedding cake.

Anne seeks her new husband, David Cunningham.

He's schmoozing with CONGRESSMAN BRENT ISHERWOOD, mid-forties, tall, black suit, and, WAYNE BEDFORD, sixties, portly, white suit, and their WIVES.

DAVID

Anne, let me introduce you to Congressman Isherwood, and his lovely wife. And this is Mr. Wayne Bedfordson. I told you about him, Anne.

Bedfordson looks Anne up and down.

BEDFORDSON

Well ain't you just a cuddly little bundle. Hope none of what your husband said offended your pretty little ears.

ANNE

Pleased to meet you.

BEDFORDSON

And I you.

Anne tries to pull David away.

ANNE

David . . .

DAVID

I'm sorry. I should now call you Dr. Bedfordson.

BEDFORDSON

You open your pocketbook wide enough and them places of so-called higher learning'll give you one of them degrees. Gotta a whole bunch of them under my belt now.

Looks Anne up and down again.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

So this is your pretty new wife, the Judge's daughter.

He hugs Anne, patting her backside. She struggles loose.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

Sweetheart, if I was forty years younger--

Anne drags David away from the group.

ANNE

David, we need to cut the wedding cake.

Return to cake. Martin captures the moment with his camcorder.

Cameras flash as the couple cuts the cake. David quickly returns to Bedfordson and Isherwood

DEIDRE and MALLE, both attractive, middle-aged women, battle for Martin's attention.

DEIDRE

(grabbing the Judge's arm)  
Let me take a selfie with the future justice of the California Supreme Court.

MARTIN

Decision's in the Governor's hands.

DEIDRE

Maybe an endorsement from my nephew, Congressman Isherwood, would help.

Malle grabs his other arm.

MALLE

I'm sure my good friend, Wayne Bedfordson, can do far more than help. Whenever he opens his pocketbook--.

Deidre grabs Martin's other arm.

DEIDRE

And you a widower. A very attractive widower.

Looks flash between the two women.

Martin excuses himself at the sound of raised voices.

Anne turns and smiles. She moves through the crowd. Her father follows.

MARTIN

No, not her!

ANNE

Yes, her. Were any of your fawning  
toadies there at the end for my  
mother? For me, for you? No! She  
was

Anne greets RITA FUENTES, an attractive Latina, late forties.  
Black pants suit. Flowing black hair.

Rita jabs her finger into Bedfordson's large belly.

RITA

Some take the highway to wealth but  
not Mr. B. He prefers sliding down  
the back alleys.

Bedfordson scowls. Takes David aside.

BEDFORDSON

Who invited this hellcat?

DAVID

Not me, Dr. Bedfordson.

ANNE

(interrupting)

It was me. The bride.

Bedfordson jumps back as Rita spills her drink over his new  
cowboy boots.

BEDFORDSON

What the hell!

Rita poses.

RITA

Rita so sorry, Señor B. Fue una  
accident! You need me clean your  
boots?

Martin grabs Rita and marches her away from the group.

MARTIN

You are leaving. Now!

RITA

Since your wife died, Judge, a  
tequila fence has grown between us.  
I miss seeing you, Martin.

MARTIN

And I you. But you must leave.

RITA  
Soon we go there together.

MARTIN  
Where?

RITA  
You know where. Llevarlo al otro  
lado de la frontera Your wife's  
dying wish.

Martin looks confused.

RITA (CONT'D)  
"Take him across the border. Open  
his eyes."

Before he can protest, she thrusts a wrapped gift at Martin.

RITA (CONT'D)  
A gift for the bride's father. The  
more you put in prison, the closer  
you get to El Gran Premio, The  
Grand Prize.

She leaves. Martin returns to the group. Bedfordson points  
to the gift.

BEDFORDSON  
If I was you, I'd have security  
check that out before you open it.

Martin gives the gift to MARIA, his housekeeper, 30, and  
gestures to the house.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)  
What a waste! Isherwood could  
use a woman like that in his  
campaign. Win over them Latino  
votes. These days gotta get some  
color in your organization. Female  
color. All she'd have to do is  
stand beside the congressman, flash  
that smile of hers, wiggle you-know-  
what and look politically correct.  
Easy money—if she could just keep  
her goddam mouth shut! Jesus!  
Once these people smell a little  
power--

Nods to Anne.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

Looks like your daughter and that Latina, or whatever the hell they call themselves these days, hit it off real good. Guess Anne's got them feisty, bleeding-heart genes from your wife. If she was my daughter . . . but she ain't. Gotta learn to keep your women in line, judge, like I do. Don't want them saying or doing the wrong things.

(and then)

Woman like that needs a man in her life, and her bed. Smooth off them rough edges, if you know what I mean.

Martin grabs his daughter and takes her aside.

MARTIN

What were you thinking?

ANNE

I invited my guest to my wedding, you invited yours. Or, should I say, you invited the businessmen and politicians beneficial for you.

MARTIN

That's not fair.

ANNE

Isn't it? Look at them! Self-absorbed. Fawning over that creep Stuart Bedfordson.

MARTIN

Bedfordson is--

ANNE

I know exactly what Bedfordson is. So do you, but you won't admit it.

MARTIN

Rumors.

ANNE

Are they? Since mother died you've become a shell, stumbling around, not rocking the boat, waiting for your big reward: California Supreme Court Justice. Big fanfare.



She jerks her head towards David.

ANNE (CONT'D)  
And now both men in my life can't  
wait to whip down their pants and  
bend over for Bedfordson.

She storms off.

BACK TO SAN CRISTOBAL.

JOAQUIN ARELLANO, Tere's husband, 45, thin, wiry, tough, very  
drunk, pours pulque into Antonio's mouth.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
It's God's law. First a man drinks  
his pulque, then he . . . his  
woman.

TERE  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Listen to him! When my husband,  
Joaquin, is full of pulque it's  
nothing but . . .

Her index finger curls. The drunken Joaquin lurches toward  
her. Collapses. His wife stands over him, curling her index  
finger. Women cheer.

Demetrio dances with his daughter. He points up.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Listen, your mother speaks.  
"Demetrio," tu madre says, "our  
daughter, Cipriana, chooses a fine  
husband. Muchos nietos for a  
grandfather to play with when he is  
old.

Cipriana slaps him playfully.

DEMETRIO (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Tonight is for you, mi hija. In  
the morning--

CIPRIANA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
No, papa. One more day.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
One more day, we miss our ride to  
the border and El Norte.

Cipriana grabs Antonio and drags him to a hut.

Curled fingers of the women meet the drunken men's obscene  
gestures.

JOSEFA, an attractive, middle-aged woman, points skyward.

JOSEFA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Your dead wife speaks to me,  
Demetrio. "Dance with my husband,  
Josefa," she says. "Dance 'til he  
falls at your feet."

She drags him to the dance.

BACK TO JUDGE'S HOUSE -LATER

Waiters clean up.

INT. JUDGE'S HOUSE -LATER

Martin climbs the stairs to his study. Shouts from Anne and  
David's bedroom.

ANNE (O.C.)  
You promised things would be  
different when we came back to San  
Diego. What happened? You wanted  
to fight for social justice and  
equality.

DAVID (O.C.)  
That doesn't bring in the money in  
the real world.

ANNE (O.C.)  
Was marrying me part of joining  
that real world? A step up? My  
father the judge?

DAVID (O.C.)  
Of course not! Anne, I'm thinking  
about us. We'll soon be settled,  
and then we can rethink our  
priorities.

ANNE (O.C.)

Until then, your priority is  
sticking your head as far as you  
can up Bedfordson's backside.

DAVID (O.C.)

I am not--.

ANNE (O.C.)

And the way that man looks me up  
and down. Stripping me naked with  
his eyes. Maybe you don't care.  
Maybe you'd like me to--. Further  
your career!

DAVID (O.C.)

That sounds like something your  
friend, that Fuentes bitch, would  
say.

A slap. Martin moves down the hallway to his study.

INT. MARTIN'S STUDY

The room is heavy, solid. Oak bookcases filled with law  
books.

Martin stares at framed photo of his dead wife.

Picks up Rita's gift. Shakes it suspiciously. Opens it.  
Photo album falls out. Martin flicks through the pages.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Mug shots of Latinos, each with a name and number beneath.

MARTIN (V.O.)

Gomez. Drugs. Fifteen years. No  
parole. Hernandez. Drugs. Fifteen  
years. No parole. Arabalo. Drugs.  
Fifteen years. No parole.

SUPER OF GAVEL POUNDING DESK. Louder as names and photos  
flash before the judge's eyes. He turns to the front of the  
album.

END MONTAGE.

Martin slams book shut. He opens the card attached to the  
front.

CU of inscription: "Paso a paso A la cima de la montaña. La frontera no está lejos si desea aprender. Todavía su amiga si desea hablar. Amor, Rita Fuentes. Step by step to the top of the mountain. The border is not that far away if you wish to learn. Still your friend. Love, Rita Fuentes."

Martin walks to the window and stares down at the empty garden.

He picks up the photograph of his dead wife. His POV as the smiling face of his dead wife in a photograph dissolves into Rita's.

He drops the photograph.

EXT. BACK TO VILLAGE. DAWN, NEXT MORNING

Outside Demetrio's hut, women make tortillas. Bang of exhaust and grinding of gears in distance. Women rush to cover the food.

WOMEN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
The truck is coming! It's  
Martinez. He takes us to meet the  
coyote.

Men rush to the huts to gather their clothes.

INT. DEMETRIO'S HUT

Demetrio rushes into the hut. Cipriana lies naked alongside Antonio.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Antonio! He's here. We must  
hurry!

More O.C. bangs.

DEMETRIO (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
We must go, daughter

More O.C. Bangs getting closer. Demetrio rushes outside.

EXT. OUTSIDE DEMETRIO'S HUT

An old truck, spluttering and banging, pulls into the street and coughs to a stop. Driver, JOSE MARTINEZ, 50s, squeezes out of the truck.

He yells at his truck.

MARTINEZ  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Mother of God! This is me, El  
Jefe, Jose Martinez speaking. I  
tell you to stop, you stop!

A kick of the tire and the engine dies.

Martinez swaggers to the bushes.

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
We don't have all day! I go to the  
bushes, I piss, I am empty. I  
drink a mouthful of pulque, I am  
full. Then I leave. You're on the  
truck, you get to the border of El  
Norte. You're not, you stay here  
and starve.

Women and men, each with a change of clothing wrapped in a bandanna, climb onto the truck.

Martinez crosses to Demetrio.

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
A good wedding celebration, no?

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Yes, Jefe. Thank you!

MARTINEZ  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Still, not cheap. Mariachis,  
flowers, meal.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
I'll work twice as hard.

MARTINEZ  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
You, I trust. And your new son-in-  
law is strong.

(MORE)

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)

He works hard in the fields. Helps  
pay me back, yes?

He strolls to the bushes, unbuttoning himself.

As Demetrio climbs into the truck, Josefa thrusts a loaf of  
bread into his hand.

JOSEFA

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Freshly baked. More when you  
return.

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Gracias. Antonio!

Antonio exits the hut pursued by Cipriana. She hangs on,  
kissing him repeatedly.

Martinez returns to his truck. One of the women hands him a  
bottle of pulque. He grabs the bottle in one hand and the  
woman's buttocks in the other.

MARTINEZ

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
It's out, it's in. ¡Vamonos!

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Hurry, Antonio!

Martinez grabs a DRUNK trying to hide in the truck and drags  
him out.

MARTINEZ

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Mother of God. Never again. This  
I told you last time. No work, no  
money, just drink.

The drunk staggers away.

DRUNK

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
But my wife and family!

MARTINEZ

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
You lie. No wife, no family. Just  
drink. Stay here and dry out.

Martinez squeezes his large bulk into the driver's seat. Antonio frees himself from Cipriana. Joaquin hugs his wife, Tere.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Don't forget me.

TERE  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Forget you? Ha! I clear out your  
stench from the hut, you're back  
again, stinking it up.

Joaquin laughs, throws his arms around Tere and kisses her.

TERE (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Be safe, my husband!

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Antonio, move quickly!

All chant "¡Mueva rápidamente!"

Antonio sprints after the truck.

ALICIA, thirties, stretches out her hand dragging Antonio on top of her.

ALICIA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Alicia will take care of you,  
little newly wed--until I meet my  
rico americano in El Norte.

Antonio pushes himself off and sits next to Demetrio. He shouts to Cipriana.

ANTONIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
I'll send many American dollars  
para el bebé.

All cheer, whoop and shout, "Para el bebé."

INT. JUDGE WILKINS' COURTROOM -- SAME

An ILLEGAL, handcuffed, stands in the dock. On the table before the D.A.'s bench are packets of cocaine, pills, etc.

Martin consults the chart before him.

The doors crash open. Rita and Latino defense lawyer, JOSEPH DELGADO (40s), balding, glasses, enter.

MARTIN

Mr. Delgado. The courtroom was peaceful in your absence.

DELGADO

There are extenuating circumstances in this case, your Honor.

MARTIN

There are always extenuating circumstances in your law book, counsel. Poverty is no excuse.

DELGADO

Once again it's the small fry, Judge. You'll never catch the big fish until you act like a real judge.

MARTIN

Mr. Delgado!

DELGADO

You don't need to be a judge to read from that chart before you.

MARTIN

A federally mandated chart.

DELGADO

That's decades old and . . .

MARTIN

You're wasting the court's time yet again, Mr. Delgado. Take it up with your Congressman.

Delgado holds up a booklet.

DELGADO

An article from The Indiana Law Review written decades ago. Page fourteen. I quote, "Mandatory minimum sentencing and other acts of Congress have robbed judges of their discretionary power, the very reason why they went into the legal profession in the first place." You know the article, your Honor.



MARTIN

Yes.

DELGADO

You should. It was you who wrote it.

Martin nods to the BAILIFF who grabs Delgado and pushes him toward the exit.

MARTIN

The law is the law!

Martin returns to the chart.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

The prisoner is guilty of violating the U.S. Drug Law. Mandatory sentence: fifteen years. No possibility of parole.

Martin slams his gavel. The illegal is shuffled off.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Time for recess. Court will resume in one hour.

BAILIFF

All rise.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS

Martin eats hamburger, fries and soda. He takes Law Review Journal from shelf. CU of page. Headline: "Borderline Justice." Martin reads the article.

Rita barges into the room.

Picks at his food throwing some into the trash can.

RITA

Your wife dies and you eat crap. You have changed, Martin.

MARTIN

I can't fight the law!

RITA

Do you ever wonder why they risk getting caught?

MARTIN

They could get work permits.

RITA

Sixty different types of work permits. Pages and pages of paperwork. Small print. For a few months work. Then back to Mexico.

He digs into his food, refusing to answer.

She sits on his desk.

RITA (CONT'D)

Your daughter is in pain.

MARTIN

I didn't force her to marry David. She must have known what he was like.

RITA

Men change. One smile from Isherwood, one wave of Bedfordson's wand and the boy grovels.

She gestures to the court room.

RITA (CONT'D)

One more victory. Fifteen years to life.

MARTIN

He was caught smuggling drugs.

RITA

He's a mule who made one stupid mistake. A fly caught in the spider's web. Both images work. Mules and flies. Easy to catch. Not the cartels, the businessmen, the ones at the top. They know how to avoid your courtroom, Martin.

She taps at a large plaque on the wall.

RITA (CONT'D)

Membership in the San Diego Yacht Club. Signed by its President, Wayne Bedfordson himself.

She moves closer. Musses his hair.

RITA (CONT'D)

Have you ever fished for shark? No? Too much of a challenge for our Judge.

(MORE)

RITA (CONT'D)

He prefers swooping up sardines or minnows. Staying close to the shore. It's safer. Soon I take you to Mexico. We fish for shark.

MARTIN

I've been to Mexico.

RITA

Your Mexico. Filled with conferences, talks, scatterbrained women drooling over a handsome widower. Come to my Mexico. The Mexico your wife and I visited over and over again.

Martin about to protest when bailiff interrupts.

BAILIFF

Time, your honor.

Rita grabs the rest of Martin's food and dumps it in the wastebasket.

RITA

This make you sick, senor! I'll pick you up tonight. Be ready. Anne will join us.

MARTIN

I am not . . .

She's already leaving.

RITA

Father-daughter bonding. ¡Hasta mañana por la noche!

She leaves. Martin straightens his hair then follows.

EXT. MEXICO, ROAD NORTH TO THE BORDER -- LATER

Villagers sit around a small fire cooking tortillas and sharing a bottle of pulque.

ANTONIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Someday I'll have my own farm and horses.

ALICIA

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Sure.

(MORE)

ALICIA (CONT'D)

And I'll marry a rich gringo and  
live in Hollywood with a big house  
and a swimming pool.

JOAQUIN

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Here's how you do it, Antonio. You  
work for an hour. Make a dollar.  
Buy yourself a winning lottery  
ticket. And that's it. A  
millionaire in one day.

ANTONIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

I'll make lots of money, you'll  
see.

ALICIA

(in Spanish, subtitles)

With that face and body, the gringa  
women will pay plenty. Make movies  
for them.

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Don't listen to them, Antonio. You  
work hard. Make money for you and  
my daughter.

JOAQUIN

(in Spanish, subtitles)

And your grandson or granddaughter.

A Jeep races down the road and screeches to a halt.  
FEDERALES rush to the villagers and pat the villagers down.

ALICIA

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Hey, you touch, you pay.

Meager collection of money and jewelry piled on the ground.  
The Federales search under the truck. Nothing.

The SERGEANT crosses to Martinez.

SERGEANT

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Where's the money you pay the  
coyote? No coyote, you die alone  
in the desert.

Martinez hands him some money.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 You have more. Where is it?

Martinez gestures he has no more.

Sergeant crosses to the villagers.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 All Mexican? No Hondurans,  
 Colombians, El Salvador, Panama,  
 Guatemala, Venezuela?

The villagers shake their heads.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 Sing "Himno Nacional Mexicano."  
 Now! My men will listen and watch.  
 If you don't sing, if you get one  
 word wrong, you die.

The villages stumble through the Mexican National Anthem as  
 the Federales walk up and down listening to each singer.

VILLAGERS  
 "Mexicanos, al grito de guerra/  
 el acero aprestad y el bridón/  
 y retiemble en sus centros la  
 tierra al sonoro rugir del cañón."

Satisfied, the Sergeant gestures his men back to the Jeep.

SERGEANT  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 When . . . if you return from El  
 Norte, we'll be waiting.

The Jeep speeds off. Villagers collect their valuables.

JOAQUIN  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 You gave him all our money, Jefe?

Martinez shakes his head.

JOAQUIN (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 Where is it?

MARTINEZ  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 I tell you, you tell them.  
 (MORE)

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)  
So I don't tell you. Your money is  
safe with me. Let's go! Later  
today, the border.

The villagers jump on the truck and Martinez squeezes in the  
cabin.

EXT. DRIVEWAY OF THE WILKINS' HOUSE. EARLY MORNING.

Car lights through the darkness.

INT. MARTIN'S BEDROOM.

Martin in bed, reading. Lights of car light up his room.

He gets out of bed and stares out of the window. Looks down  
at his watch.

MARTIN  
Damn!

Martin's POV out of window.

A Jeep screeches to a halt. Rita, dressed in one-piece  
dungarees, leaps out. Driver honks horn.

INT. ANNE AND DAVID'S BEDROOM.

David and Anne, dressed, look out of window.

ANNE  
Female company for my father.

David rubs his hand over her buttocks.

DAVID  
Even judges get horny.

Anne elbows him in the ribs.

David sees Rita.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
What the hell? All those women  
hanging over him, and he chooses  
her.

ANNE  
She'll be good for him.

Anne exits.

DAVID

Where the hell are you going? Are you trying to ruin my career before it gets off the ground?

BACK TO MARTIN'S BEDROOM

B.g. Jeep horn. Anne rushes in.

ANNE

Ready?

MARTIN

For what?

ANNE

Father and daughter time.

B.g. Jeep horn again.

MARTIN

I could have that woman arrested for disturbing the peace.

ANNE

Get dressed! If not for her, do it for me.

She picks up the photo of her mother.

ANNE (CONT'D)

David's leaving for yet another photo-op.

She thrusts the photo of her mother in her father's face.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Do it for both of us. She and Rita worked so hard for immigrant services. I'll be waiting downstairs.

She exits as David enters.

Martin begins to dress.

DAVID

You're not going, are you, judge? I'd strongly advise against it.

MARTIN

Are you telling me to choose between you and my daughter?

David leaves.

EXT. DRIVEWAY

Martin exits the house and stands by Jeep.

The hand of the burly Latino driver, FLORENZIO, pulls him in.

INT. JEEP

Rita and Anne sit in the back seat. Rita ruffles Martin's hair.

RITA  
Meet my little brother, hermanito,  
Florenzio.

Florenzio's jams the seatbelt on Martin. Rita tosses a baggy, checkered shirt at Martin.

RITA (CONT'D)  
It's Florenzio's. Make you look  
like a tough guy.

Laughter.

EXT. MEXICAN BORDER TOWN.

Martinez's truck winds through the crowded, narrow streets. Blast of horn as Martinez sees RAMON. Stops truck.

The villagers get out of the truck.

Joaquin shakes Ramon's hand.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Bienvenido, mi amigo. When I  
return this time, Ramon, I'm a  
wealthy man.

RAMON  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
You say that every time, Joaquin.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Ramon, this is my new son-in-law,  
Antonio.



RAMON  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Plenty muscle. Good for hard work.  
Not first time at the border, eh?

ANTONIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Before alone. Through the desert.

Ramon shakes his head.

RAMON  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Dangerous! Many deaths.

He turns to Alicia.

RAMON (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Alicia, you find your rich gringo  
this time, right? You're not  
getting any younger.

ALICIA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
They say, good wine gets better  
with age.

Ramon laughs. He signals to a saloon.

RAMON  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Inside. A drink for everyone.

Demetrio takes Antonio's arm.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
One drink. And you don't talk to  
anyone.

The doors of the bar fling open. A man is hurled out.  
Cursing.

INT. BAR

Crowded.

A line of men and women leads to a table in a corner where  
three men sit.

JESUS, center, cowboy hat over his eyes. A man steps  
forward. He mumbles to Jesus who listens and nods.

The MAN-TAKING-NAMES, writes notes, takes money from the man and counts it. Money passed to third man, the BODYGUARD. He deposits it in a large sack.

Ramon signals to the barman who sets up glasses of beer for the villagers.

Demetrio raises glass to Antonio.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Like the Americanos say, it's safer  
than the water.

Another man steps up to the table. He gestures to his wife and baby. Jesus signals. The Bodyguard grabs the man.

MAN-WITH-WIFE  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Pay you later. Brother in LA.  
Rich man.

He's thrown out of the bar. The wife, cursing, follows. Others slide out of the line.

Ramon whispers in Jesus' ear and points at Martinez and villagers. Jesus nods.

The Man-taking-names counts the villagers. He writes price on a piece of paper. Martinez reads the note, shakes Jesus' hand and deposits the money.

The villagers sit at tables.

The Bodyguard whistles and points to the clock on the wall. People in line scatter.

The barman places two glasses of Tequilas on the bar. The clock strikes. TWO FEDERALES enter. They lay their hats on the bar and swallow back the Tequilas. Glasses refilled.

Bodyguard drops money into hats. Federales finish their drinks, put on their hats on and exit.

The line before Jesus forms again.

EXT. STREET. SAME

Jeep with Florenzio, Rita, Anne and Martin stops outside bar. Rita and Anne jump out. Men on sidewalk whistle.

PROSTITUTES scowl at Anne and Rita, sizing up the competition.

INT. JEEP

Rita holds out her hand to Martin.

MARTIN  
Why this place? Take me home  
immediately!

ANNE  
One beer.

MARTIN  
We'll have a serious talk when we  
get home, young lady.

Florenzio pushes Martin out of the Jeep before it screeches away. Wolf whistles as Martin, Anne and Rita approach bar.

EXT. STREET

Martin pushes men aside who try to grab the ladies.

MARTIN  
This is kidnapping!

RITA  
When we get back to San Diego, you  
charge me. Throw me in prison.

MARTIN  
I will. As soon as we return.

RITA  
If we return.

MARTIN  
That's not funny.

RITA  
It wasn't meant to be.

They enter bar.

BACK TO BAR.

Wolf whistles and calls of "gringos," as Anne, Rita and Martin enter and cross to bar.

RITA  
Cuarto cervezas, por favor.

The barman gives them the beer and takes money.

Rita raises her bottle.

RITA (CONT'D)

Salud!

A group of men surrounding the three echo "Salud."

Martin stares at table in the corner. Jesus returns the stare.

Rita jerks Martin's head.

RITA (CONT'D)

Did't your mother tell you? It's  
rude to stare. His name's Jesus.  
He helps people cross the border.  
No drugs.

Rita leans in to Martin.

RITA (CONT'D)

Smell getting to you? Los chivos.  
Goats. That's what they call  
themselves. Without them and their  
cheap labor, you'd pay six to ten  
dollars a head for lettuce in your  
supermercado americano. Same with  
other vegetables, fruit, etc.  
Working for pennies. And what if  
someone offers them extra money?

MARTIN

They don't have to take it.

RITA

Most don't. A few do.

The men in the bar edge closer to Rita and Anne.

ANNE

Ready to protect us, father?

Florenzio enters and walks to the trio. Growls at men. They scatter. Florenzio downs a beer.

FLORENZIO

Dos Cervezas

Florenzio gestures "Salud" to Jesus who returns the greeting.

The villagers cluster together. Demetrio grabs Antonio's arm as he moves away.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Where are you going?

Antonio gestures to the bathroom.

DEMETRIO (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
You talk to nobody. Nobody,  
Understand?

Antonio slides through the crowd.

A small thin man, CARLOS, watches Antonio enter the bathroom.  
He follows him.

RITA  
A quick visit to the ladies' room,  
then we leave. You should go too,  
judge. Long journey back. Anne is  
safe with Florenzio.

Rita stands. Men wolf whistle.

RITA (CONT'D)  
You going to help me part the macho  
sea, judge?

Martin leads her to the bathrooms.

INT. MEN'S BATHROOM.

Antonio peers into a broken mirror. Splashes water on his  
hair. Combs with his fingers. Carlos offers him a comb.

CARLOS  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Keep it!

Stares at Antonio.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Just married?

Antonio nods.

INT. OUTSIDE BATHROOM.

Martin waits.

BACK TO INT. MEN'S BATHROOM.

Carlos offers Antonio a cigarette. He refuses.

CARLOS  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Work in the fields of El Norte.  
Dawn to dusk. Sun up, sun down.  
Little money. The farmer gives  
your money to the foreman,  
Contractista. He says you don't  
work as many hours as you say. You  
argue but who listens?

Carlos takes a belt with packets of cocaine attached from  
around his waist.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Three dollars an hour. Contractista  
takes dollar fifty cents for  
"Social Security" and "Workers'  
Compensation." ¡Gran broma! Big  
joke! Meanwhile your wife waits  
for Western Union. No guarantee  
south of the border. Federales  
open your letters. Keep money.

Carlos dangles the belt before Antonio's eyes.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Little bags. Two, three thousand  
dollars each. No Contractista. No  
Western Union. No Federales.  
Personal delivery to your wife.  
Guaranteed.

Suddenly the belt disappears inside his shirt. He throws  
open door, drags Martin inside, and slams him against the  
wall, a knife at his throat.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
¿Habla Español, hijo de puta?

MARTIN  
English.

CARLOS  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Your mother is a whore.  
Understand?

MARTIN

English.

Carlos hurls Martin into a stall.

CARLOS

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Piss in there, gringo.

Carlos takes a wad of money from his trouser pocket. Shows it to Antonio.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Twenty, forty, sixty, eighty, one hundred. American dollars.

Carlos pretends to give money to Antonio, but keeps it.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Later, amigo. The name's Carlos.  
We meet again, soon.

Carlos drags Martin out of the stall, knife at his throat.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Now I slit your gringo throat.

Demetrio crashes through the bathroom door. His arm circles Carlos's neck. He removes the knife from Martin's throat and hurls Carlos out of the door.

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Why so much time? Who is this man?

ANTONIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Crazy gringo. Only speaks English.  
I spoke with nobody.

Demetrio takes his bandana and holds it against Martin's bloody neck.

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

You keep it.

He and Antonio exit. Martin stares into mirror. Ties bandanna around his neck.

INT. BAR

Martin stumbles out of the men's room.

RITA  
Lots of comings and goings in  
there, judge. What was going on--  
beside the obvious?

Martin glares at her.

RITA (CONT'D)  
Like they say, A veces usted  
necesita caminar en los zapatos de  
otra persona. Need a translation?

ANNE  
Sometimes you need to walk in  
someone else's . . .

MARTIN  
I know what she said!

RITA  
What happened to your neck?

Martin pushes her aside and staggers out of the bar. Rita,  
Anne and Florenzio chase after him.

EXT. FREEWAY NORTH.

The Jeep speeds north.

INT. JEEP.

No one speaks.

EXT. BORDER-PATROL HEADQUARTERS

Brent Isherwood, David Cunningham and a PHOTOGRAPHER exit a  
car and cross to headquarters.

OFFICER HENDRICKS, border patrol, 50s, crew cut and vicious  
scar on his cheek, joins them.

HENDRICKS  
Congressman Isherwood. Great  
timing. Got something inside be of  
interest to you.



Isherwood grasps Hendricks' hand and spins toward the Photographer. Camera flashes.

INT. INVESTIGATION ROOM

A male ILLEGAL squats in a corner. SHORT BORDER-PATROL OFFICER, seeing men approaching, drags Illegal to his feet and dumps him in a chair.

SHORT OFFICER  
Are you deaf? ¿Estás sordo?

Illegal cowers.

INT. OUTSIDE ROOM

Isherwood and David stare through the two-way window.

SHORT OFFICER  
Drugs! Jail! Understand? ¡Las  
drogas! ¡Cárcel! ¿Entender?

Isherwood turns to David.

ISHERWOOD  
Get that photographer in here ASAP.

David leaves.

ISHERWOOD (CONT'D)  
Let's join the investigation,  
Officer Hendricks.

They enter investigation room.

BACK TO INVESTIGATION ROOM

David and photographer join the others in the room.

Camera flashes continually.

HENDRICKS  
Picked him up on a farm east of  
here, Congressman. Local  
Contractista turned him in.

CUNNINGHAM  
Drugs?

HENDRICKS  
Cocaine, heroin, opioid pills,  
sexual trafficking--you name it.  
Long criminal record.

SHORT OFFICER  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
You got more, ain't you, Pancho?  
Más. Where are you hiding the  
drugs? ¿Dónde escondes las drogas?

HENDRICKS  
You get us more agents, complete  
that goddamned wall you promised,  
and we'll shut this crap down.

ISHERWOOD  
If I'm reelected, you'll get what  
you want, Officer Hendricks. Wall,  
razor wire, officers, everything.

HENDRICKS  
You've got my vote, Congressman.

ISHERWOOD  
Brent.

SHORT OFFICER  
Mine too.

HENDRICKS  
You won't get his vote, but he  
ain't got one.

ISHERWOOD  
Unless we vote in one of those  
bleeding heart liberals.

Short Officer turns back to the prisoner.

SHORT OFFICER  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Your choice, Pancho. Easy or  
difficult. Fácil o difícil?

HENDRICKS  
Officer Mendez will get his  
answers.

DAVID  
Promise to tighten the noose around  
these illegals and their drug  
smuggling operation. That'll send  
you back to Washington, Brent.

Hendricks, Isherwood, David and Photographer leave.

Short Officer makes sure they've left.

SHORT OFFICER

(in Spanish, subtitles)

You don't know what the hell's  
happening, do you, Pancho? It's  
called American politics, and you  
just played a trump card. You  
cross, we catch you. Needed  
somebody, anybody, to convince the  
congressman. And you were it.

Laughs.

EXT. BORDER - SAME

Jeep in line of cars waiting to cross into California.

INT. JEEP

Rita turns to Martin.

RITA

Say something. Tell me this was a  
stupid idea. Tell me you're going  
to arrest me when we get back to  
San Diego.

The Jeep slides forward in line.

A low growl from Florenzio. Rita follows his stare.

EXT. BORDER STATION

Television cameras surround Brent Isherwood. Hendricks and David stand alongside him.

INT. JEEP

Rita looks at her brother.

RITA

Officer Hendricks, I see he still  
has the scar you gave him. There's  
Isherwood. Never refuses a photo  
op.

She looks to Martin.

RITA (CONT'D)  
Some poor illegal inside will be  
before you soon, Judge.

MARTIN  
If he's guilty . . .

RITA  
Upcoming election, Judge. Guilty is  
guilty. Innocent is guilty.  
Political hunting season.

Martin is about to respond, but Rita turns to comfort Anne.

ANNE  
And there's David at Isherwood's  
side.

Rita reaches out to touch Martin's neck wound. Her mouth  
shapes "Forgive me."

Cars file slowly forward.

EXT. BORDER TOWN.

Dirt street. Dogs rummage through trash.

Martinez's truck rocks, splashing in deep ruts. Stops.  
Villagers jump off.

MARTINEZ  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Antonio! You make lots of money,  
you buy me a new truck.

He points to a darkened house.

MARTINEZ (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
You go there. Sleep in backyard.  
Wait for one of Jesus' men to take  
you to the border. ¡Dios vaya  
contigo!

Villagers approach house.

Martinez climbs into his truck. It bumps off down the  
street.

EXT. SAN DIEGO, INTERSTATE 5.

Florenzio's Jeep speeds along the freeway.

INT. JEEP

Rita pulls at Martin's shirt.

RITA  
Style suits you. Judge tough guy.

MARTIN  
It's not funny! I could have been  
killed.

RITA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Please don't arrest me, your honor.

Silence broken by Florenzio's deep guffaws.

FLORENZIO  
Judge tough guy!

Laughter as they all repeat the words.

EXT. BACKYARD OF SAFE HOUSE.

Bare earth, a few weeds, pools of dirty water. Water drips  
from a small hose dangling from a faucet.

House drapes closed. Glare and noise of television inside  
the house.

Sleeping forms outside grumble as intruders step over them.  
Alicia kicks sleeping form.

ALICIA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Move, stupid!

The figure grumbles and shifts a fraction.

Antonio lies down next to Joaquin.

ANTONIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
How long?

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
An hour, a day, a week.

ANTONIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
A week?!

Joaquin shrugs his shoulder.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Contact Contractista in El Norte.  
Find out when it's safe to take us  
to the border.

He turns over and sleeps.

BACK TO VILLAGE OF SAN CRISTOBAL--SAME.

The women gather around a fire cooking tortillas.

Vomiting from bushes. Josefa supports Cipriana as they head back to the fire.

JOSEFA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Your baby was not made two days  
ago, Cipriana. Maybe you and  
Antonio--.  
(she gestures)  
Eat this bread. We don't have  
much, but what I have I give to  
you--and the baby. We sell trinkets  
to tourists in town tomorrow.

They sit near the fire.

EXT. PATIO - SAME

Antonio stretches a leg. Bumps SLEEPING MAN. Knife at Antonio's throat.

SLEEPING MAN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Touch me again, I kill you.

Demetrio grabs the man's hand forcing him to drop the knife.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
This boy married my daughter. You  
touch him again, I kill you.

Man stumbles off.

DEMETRIO (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Try and sleep.

ALICIA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
He's missing your daughter.

ANTONIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
I need to find a place to piss.

He walks out to the street.

EXT. STREET

A car, no lights, slides along the street, deserted except for stray dogs.

The car stops periodically. Shadowy form runs to the backyards of houses.

They stop at the car, takes something and return to the backyards.

Car stops alongside Antonio. Carlos gets out. Meets Antonio.

CARLOS  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Moon shining on your village, on  
your wife.

Opens the car's trunk.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
This year, next year, back and  
forth to El Norte. Three months  
with your wife. Nine in El Norte.  
Hard work, little money. It's not  
a life, amigo.

Pulls out belts with packets of drugs attached.

He opens his baggy pants. Tightens belt around his waist. Pulls up his baggy pants back up and slides his shirt over his pants.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
No one see. In El Norte someone  
contacts you. You give him the  
bags, he gives you money. Easy  
money.

Offers Antonio the belt. He takes it.

CARLOS (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 You leave tomorrow. Antonio Borja,  
 right? Someone waiting on the  
 other side.

He closes the trunk and gets back in the car. It continues  
 down the road.

Antonio wraps the belt around his waist and returns to  
 backyard of the safe house.

EXT. SAN DIEGO YACHT CLUB - NEXT DAY.

Martin relaxes in a deck chair on his yacht.

Locked wire gates rattle.

RITA  
 Señor, don't forget your promise to  
 the señorita.

OLDER COUPLE (70s) on the yacht next to Martin's stare.

Martin unlocks the gate.

RITA (CONT'D)  
 Gracias, Señor. You like talking  
 to Rita, yes? She have beauty and  
 brains. Not like others.

Older Couple strain to see. Rita waves to them.

RITA (CONT'D)  
 Don't forget suntan lotion on your  
 white skin. When Rita rich, she  
 invite you both come visit on her  
 boat.

Older man pushes his wife below deck.

Rita joins Martin on his boat.

Older couple peek as the two of them board Martin's boat.

EXT. MARTIN'S BOAT.

Martin drops into his deck chair. Rita grabs another and  
 sits next to him.



RITA

Remember, Señor: plenty of sun  
block. Otherwise, you look like  
me. Then those people not like  
you.

MARTIN

I come here for peace and quiet.

Rita stares out to sea. She shifts uncomfortably.

RITA

It's the quiet I remember most.  
Our wedding anniversary. Fifteen  
years. Vacation at Mazatlan.  
Playa Las Brujas. Sun, beach,  
ocean.

She breathes deeply.

RITA (CONT'D)

I can still see my husband's arm  
waving to me. Way out at sea. I  
watched his strong arms plough  
through the waves.

A pause.

RITA (CONT'D)

I looked away for a second. A  
distraction. When I looked back--.  
(Pause.)

It was so quiet. Vendors selling  
trinkets and sunglasses. People  
lying around, reading. Children  
playing in the waves. And me,  
staring, staring.

She stifles a sob.

RITA (CONT'D)

They say I screamed for hours. My  
voice stopped. My mouth was open,  
but no sound.

Martin searches his pocket for a tissue. She takes it  
Comparing the brown and white of their arms.

She grabs the suntan lotion and rubs it into his arms.

RITA (CONT'D)

One death from cancer is enough in  
your family.

(MORE)

RITA (CONT'D)  
I looked after your wife, and now  
I'm looking after you.

She settles back in the deck chair.

He takes his hand. Mouths thank you.

INT. JUDGE WILKINS' HOUSE, DINING ROOM - SAME

Anne picks at a pack of cigarettes.

Maria enters with coffee.

MARIA  
Not good for you, Miss Anne.

Anne gives Maria the pack of cigarettes.

ANNE  
Hide them.

Maria puts them behind the television.

ANNE (CONT'D)  
Were you ever married, Maria?

Maria shakes her head. Dusts vigorously.

ANNE (CONT'D)  
Engaged? In love?

Maria nods. Dusts even harder.

ANNE (CONT'D)  
What happened?

MARIA  
He try come to El Norte across  
desert. Alone, no coyote.

A car roars up the driveway and stops. Anne looks out.

EXT.

David exits car and rushes indoors.

BACK TO DINING ROOM.

David enters. He searches for something.

DAVID

Coffee.

Clicks fingers at Maria.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Did you see the local news this morning? Isherwood's speech on gangs, drugs, illegals? Classic.

Continues searching.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Where did that fucking woman put my briefcase? Shit! If she was my servant--.

ANNE

But she's not. And she has a name.

Anne points to the briefcase.

ANNE (CONT'D)

On the floor next to sofa. Where you left it.

David rips it open and sorts through the papers inside.

ANNE (CONT'D)

I want to go back to Berkeley. See our old friends from graduate school.

DAVID

A couple more days, the election's over and things will be different.

ANNE

Will they?

David pulls a paper from his briefcase.

DAVID

Look at this! Got it from Bedfordson. Motel bill. Seems Isherwood's opponent spent the night alone with a certain married lady. When this gets into the press' greedy little hands--.

He exits, briefcase and letter in hand.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
 Don't forget tonight. Bedfordson's'  
 fund raiser for Brent's campaign.  
 Look beautiful.

He exits.

Anne grabs the pack of cigarettes and hurls it after him.

BACK TO MARTIN'S BOAT.

Rita and Martin prepare to leave the boat.

Older Couple watch through the portholes.

Martin walks to the gate.

As she exits, Rita leans on the rail of the older couple's boat.

RITA  
 Rita going now. Wave bye. You  
 come back up on deck.

She walks up the walkway to the gate.

Immediately she and Martin leave, the woman emerges with elbow-length rubber gloves and a spray bottle. Sprays and cleans all the areas Rita touched.

BACK TO BACKYARD OF SAFE HOUSE.

Farm workers talk. Voices yell from street.

VOICE (O.C.)  
 ¡Vamonos! ¡Vamonos!

DEMETRIO  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 It's time.

The villagers stuff items into their bandannas. Antonio tightens his belt around his waist.

Jesus and two friends accompanied by SALVATORE (40s).

JESUS  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 This is Salvatore. Listen  
 carefully to him. You don't  
 listen, you die.

SALVATORE

!Vamonos!

The villagers climb on the back of a truck.

Man-taking-names checks . Signals OK.

JESUS

(in Spanish, subtitles)

God go with you!

Truck bumps off down road.

EXT. OUTSIDE WAYNE BEDFORDSON'S HOME.

Gates protected by two armed police. Check occupants of cars.

David and Anne drive forward.

INT. CAR

David dangles over steering wheel, taking in the sight.

DAVID

Would you look at this. We are  
talking big-time. Big, big time.

A knock on the window. David pulls out his invitation to the event for FIRST POLICEMAN.

DAVID (CONT'D)

David Cunningham.

ANNE

. . . and his wife, Anne.

The policeman checks his list.

FIRST POLICEMAN

Welcome to the home of Mr. and Mrs.  
Bedfordson.

The policeman waves them through the gates and up driveway.

EXT. DRIVEWAY OUTSIDE THE BEDFORDSON HOME.

David gets out of car.

A Latino attendant holds out his hands for David's keys.

David stands awestruck. Attendant lets Anne out.

David rushes inside house. Anne stands alone. Looks between her and attendant.

David realizes he's forgotten Anne. Rushes back out of the house and takes her hand.

EXT. U.S.-MEXICAN BORDER

Mexican side of border.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

--Noise. Festive air.

--A group plays music and sings.

--Couples dancing.

--Singing.

--Men play soccer with rolled-up rags.

--Vendors selling tortillas, etc.

--Jeeps patrol on the American side of the border.

--Drones fly overhead.

END MONTAGE.

Salvatore's truck stops.

SALVATORE  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Last chance to buy food before we  
cross.

He points to a nearby open area.

SALVATORE (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
We meet again over there. Hurry!

The villagers pile off the truck and head for the food trucks.

ANTONIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Cross here?

Demetrio shakes his head. He points to the Jeeps patrolling the American side of the border.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
They watch from over there and from  
up there.

A drone hovers overhead.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Eat. You'll need all your  
strength, for next part of the  
journey. The crossing.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Do you swim, Antonio?

Antonio shakes his head.

JOAQUIN (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Then you'll drown if you let go of  
the boat.

ANTONIO  
What boat?

Joaquin laughs.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
No boats in the desert, right?

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
We cross at All-American Canal.

ANTONIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
More dangerous than the desert?

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
More dangerous yes. Guards no.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
You die in water, or you die in  
sun. Or you live Last time  
Demetrio make this journey.  
(MORE)

JOAQUIN (CONT'D)  
He return to his young wife in  
Mexico, pockets filled with  
dollars. No more crossings.

He laughs.

JOAQUIN (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Only two ways to make money that  
quick, Antonio. One, you win the  
lottery ticket. Two you--.

Gestures sniffing drugs. Demetrio grabs him.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
No jokes about that. Fifteen  
years to life in jail. No  
questions asked.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Out in time to crawl home and die.

SALVATORE  
Everyone on the truck.

He stands guard, counting villagers and stopping anyone else  
from boarding. Truck drives off.

INT. SAN DIEGO.

Crowded home of Wayne Bedfordson. Groups of men and women.

Bedfordson crosses to greet David and Anne.

BEDFORDSON  
My protégé and his charming wife.

Gestures to Mrs. Bedfordson.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)  
Why don't we let the wives do some  
gossiping, my boy. That way you  
and me can do some serious talking.  
Over here, honey.

Mrs. Bedfordson, drunk, weaves towards them.

Bedfordson puts his arm around Anne's waist.



BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

We're gonna have to invite the pair of you to my new restaurant some time. Get some flesh on these bones. Nothing a man likes more than a little something to hang on to. Ain't I right, son?

Anne struggles to release herself from Bedfordson. David waves to people in crowd.

Mrs. Bedfordson cuddles into David.

MRS. BEDFORDSON

You must work out at the gym.

BEDFORDSON

I was just sayin', honey, we four gonna need to have an evening out together. A little tête-à-tête.

DAVID

It would be an honor, Mr. Bedfordson.

BEDFORDSON

In the meantime, I need David here to look over the accounts for my restaurants and use that degree he's got to get Uncle Sam off my back.

Looking Anne up and down.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

Always looking out for a man who's good with figures. I'll make it worth your while.

Mrs. Bedfordson pulls Anne away.

MRS. BEDFORDSON

Money, taxes, man talk.

Bedfordson grabs drinks from a passing waiter.

BEDFORDSON

Swallow it down, boy. Got some important folk I want you to meet.

DAVID

Better say "Hi" to Brent.

BEDFORDSON

Hell, Isherwood's just a  
politician. They come, they go.  
If you wanna get ahead, you gotta  
meet the real movers and shakers  
'round here.

He takes David's arm and moves off.

EXT. ALL-AMERICAN CANAL.

Salvatore's truck stops alongside a muddy field alongside  
Canal.

Villagers get out.

SALVATORE

(in Spanish, subtitles)

This way.

The group passes through the field marked with bricks.

Antonio looks to Demetrio.

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Each brick is the grave of some  
unknown. Drown in the canal.  
Murdered by coyotes.

ALICIA

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Young women who refused or fought  
back or--.

The group walk through the field to steep edge of canal

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Antonio, don't touch anything in  
the river. If it's not garbage,  
it's a rat.

JOAQUIN

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Or another dead body.

Strained laughter.

JOAQUIN (CONT'D)

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Remember, Antonio.

(MORE)

JOAQUIN (CONT'D)

When we are on the other side, one  
eye on La Migra, one on  
rattlesnakes, and last eye on my  
fat backside—so you don't get lost.

People strip and put their clothes on top of their heads.

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Take off your shirt, Antonio. You  
need dry clothes on the other side.  
Wet clothes, wetback. Change!

Antonio goes behind the truck.

JOAQUIN

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Hey, Alicia, need help changing  
your clothes?

She gestures and disappears behind the truck.

ALICIA (O.C.)

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Don't worry, Antonio. Nothing I  
haven't seen before.

Members of the group hug each other and whisper "¡Dios vaya contigo!" Prayers and crossing themselves.

Salvatore inflates a rubber raft. He places it in the canal  
and signals women to get in.

Before he gets in himself, he ties a rope securely to a tree.

He sits inside with the women and grabs a paddle. As he  
crosses he lets out a length of rope.

Men cling to the sides of the raft.

Raft edges into the canal. Catches in the current and moves  
downstream.

SALVATORE

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Kick! Kick! We don't want to  
float too far downstream.

Dead bodies bump against the raft. Salvatore pushes them  
aside.

Antonio stares at the body of young boy.

DEMETRIO  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 Don't look, Antonio! Keep kicking!

Raft reaches the far side. Villagers struggle up the concrete bank.

JOAQUIN  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 Welcome to America.

Salvatore points at a small track through the brush.

SALVATORE  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 I'm leaving you now! The road is  
 one mile that way! Another truck  
 waits for you. Watch for La Migra!

Salvatore gets into the raft, grasps the rope and pulls himself back to the other bank.

The group sets off into the brush.

BACK TO WAYNE BEDFORDSON'S HOME.

Martin drives forward to large gates. Rita sits in the passenger seat.

MARTIN  
 Try to behave.

She giggles and crosses herself.

First policeman knocks on window.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 Judge Martin Wilkins.

First policeman checks his list.

FIRST POLICEMAN  
 I just have one name, Judge.

RITA  
 I'm his date, Rita Fuentes.

She cuddles into Martin and kisses him on the cheek.

FIRST POLICEMAN  
 Welcome to the home of Mr. and Mrs.  
 Bedfordson.

The First Policeman waves them forward.

He signals to a SECOND POLICEMAN. Indicates he should look inside the car. Thumbs up.

EXT. FRONT OF HOME.

The Latino attendant opens Martin's door. Martin opens Rita's.

Rita addresses the Latino attendant in Spanish.

They walk to house.

RITA  
I asked if they were paying him  
enough.

MARTIN  
And his answer?

She gestures so-so.

She cuddles into Martin's arm.

INT. BEDFORDSON HOME.

Notable hush as Martin and Rita enter.

YOUNG MAN leans into a group of women.

YOUNG MAN  
Seems our Judge has found himself  
one hot-blooded Latin lover.

Deidre and Malle glower at the couple.

People stand aside to let Martin and Rita through. They walk to Bedfordson.

RITA  
This we call the parting of the  
Redneck Sea.

She shakes Bedfordson's hand.

RITA (CONT'D)  
My people thank you for inviting  
me, Mr. B.

Bedfordson looks to Martin.

MARTIN

Her car broke down. She told me  
you'd invited her.

BEDFORDSON

Is that so? Well any friend of the  
Judge is a friend of mine.

RITA

And I am a good friend of the  
Judge.

BEDFORDSON

Got yourself one high-spirited  
filly here, Judge. Best keep a  
tight rein on her.

Rita giggles.

RITA

Tight reins are fun.

BEDFORDSON

Reminds me of your wife, Judge.  
Whatever she's thinking comes right  
out.

Rita pats Bedfordson's girth.

RITA

I see your restaurant business is  
flourishing.

BEDFORDSON

That it is.

RITA

You remember my brother, Florenzio,  
Mr. B? He is—how do you  
say?—tenacious. When someone does  
something he doesn't like--

The two stare at each other. Martin lost.

RITA (CONT'D)

Wine, judge? Red, right?

The crowd parts as she heads for the bar.

BEDFORDSON

Got a phone call from an aide to  
the governor, judge.

(MORE)

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

State supreme court judgeship is  
yours provided you keep doin' what  
you're doin' and don't get swayed.

(looks to Rita)

No matter who's doin' the swayin'.

As Rita joins Martin, Bedfordson leaves.

MARTIN

You lied. He did not invite you.

RITA

Perdóneme, su honor. Anyway, I'm  
here now.

MARTIN

And what the hell was all that  
about Bedfordson's restaurants?

RITA

No fun playing the game, judge, if  
you don't know the rules. When  
you're ready to learn--

Anne intrudes, dragging Mrs. Bedfordson.

ANNE

Rita, Mrs. Bedfordson.

Mrs. Bedfordson tries to leave, but Rita grabs her.

RITA

Mrs. B, I was reminding your  
husband about my brother,  
Florenzio.

Mrs. Bedfordson very uncomfortable.

RITA (CONT'D)

You remember him, don't you?

Mrs. Bedfordson rushes away seeking her husband.

MARTIN

What does that mean?

RITA

Like I say, when you're ready,  
Judge.

She gestures away.

RITA (CONT'D)

Looks like Bedfordson is about to speak.

Bedfordson stands on a chair and taps his glass with a spoon.

BEDFORDSON

We got us a politician here, folks, and you know how they like the sound of their own voices. So here he is. Brent Isherwood.

ISHERWOOD

Thanks, Wayne. I'll try to keep this short.

BEDFORDSON

That's what they all say.

Laughter from crowd.

ISHERWOOD

Friends, we are a generous people, but that generosity has its limits. At least four million illegal aliens crossed into the U.S. last year. Gangs, MS13. Rapists. Sex traffickers. Thirty percent of our prison population are illegals. They're sucking our economy dry. We feed them, educate their children, provide public housing, health care and food stamps. And, if their children are born here, they're automatically U.S. citizens. And what do we get in return? Drugs, cocaine, heroin, opioid pills, sexual trafficking--you name it. Long criminal record, that's what's needed. These illegals are ruining this great state of California and this country.

Clapping.

Rita leans closer to Martin.

RITA

He's good. You should vote for him, Señor.



ISHERWOOD

So I say, Let's stop it--now! I propose we build a twelve-foot high fence, with razor wire on top, the length of the border. Three thousand new agents. Death penalty for drug-runners. Deportation for all illegals--men women and children--and, no citizenship for their offspring born in this country.

Cheers. Bedfordson waves a check.

BEDFORDSON

Five hundred thousand dollars.  
Half a million.

More checks waved.

Bedfordson sidles up to David and Martin.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

I was tellin' your new son-in-law here he could earn himself a coupla thousand dollars checkin' the books at one of my restaurants. IRS wantin' more and more paperwork. Figure I can either hand over a wad of greenbacks to the government so they can invite more these illegals into the country, or slip a coupla thousand in your boy's back pocket for him and your daughter to vacation. Two grand for a couple of hours work. Easy money.

Rita leans closer.

RITA

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
With money the dog dances.

BEDFORDSON

When you figure out what your little lady-friend is saying, judge, you let me know.

He leaves.

MARTIN

We need to talk--now!

He grabs Rita's arm and marches her to the patio.

EXT. BORDER.

The villagers hide in the Manzanita scrub as a lone Border Patrol Jeep passes on the dirt path.

Antonio leans against a rock. Hissing sound. Alicia strikes the snake.

ALICIA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Snake bites you, you're left for La Migra.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Ready? The road is just ahead. We wait there.

The villagers walk through the brush to the road.

A large truck pulls to the side of the road.

The DRIVER, a CONTRACTISTA (50s), drunk, exits cab.

Drops tailgate and shifts some crates around inside. False front. Villagers run from bushes and climb into back of truck.

Contractista grabs Alicia.

CONTRACTISTA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Plenty of room up front, honey.  
Radio, air-conditioning, beer.

Alicia moves to the front of the truck.

The others squash into the false box. Contractista locks it.

CONTRACTISTA (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Anyone dies of heat in there,  
doesn't get paid.

Pulls down tailgate and moves back to the cab. Pats Alicia's backside before entering the cab.

Truck drives off.

EXT. WAYNE BEDFORDSON'S HOUSE.

Martin and Rita are alone on the patio.

MARTIN

What the hell was that Spanish you said to Bedfordson?

RITA

Even the dog dances for money? You see one world, I see another. Same characters, different roles.

She pats his cheek.

RITA (CONT'D)

You're a good man, Martin, just a little lost. Every cat learns how to catch mice.

MARTIN

No more riddles. And definitely no more jaunts to the border towns.

Rita kisses him.

RITA

Rita promise she be good girl.

She takes his hand and leads him inside.

INT. CAB OF TRUCK.

The Contractista finishes his beer, tosses the can over his shoulder, and sings along with the radio.

He ignores the pounding on the back wall of cab. Slides his hand over Alicia's thigh.

CONTRACTISTA

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Be nice to contractista, he get you extra money.

Unbuttons the front of his pants. Alicia opens beer and tips it on his crotch.

CONTRACTISTA (CONT'D)

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Bitch!

He throws the steering wheel to the side.

EXT.

Truck swerves. Finally comes to a stop.

The Contractista gets out of the cab, dragging Alicia.  
Marches her to the back of the truck and opens the tailgate.

He opens the false box.

CONTRACTISTA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Everyone piss! Hurry! Time is  
money!

Farm workers stagger out of box. Wipe sweat from faces.  
Scatter to relieve themselves.

Return to truck.

Alicia is thrown inside the false box with the other  
villagers.

It is locked. Tailgate closed.

Truck moves off.

EXT. YACHT CLUB - MORNING, NEXT DAY.

David drives into the empty parking lot. Gets out of his car  
and walks to the entrance. Locked.

He wanders to the back. TWO MEXICAN NATIONALS, middle-aged,  
lie on sleeping bags alongside a large truck.

Seeing David, one man grabs a length of pipe.

MAN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Who are you?

DAVID  
I'm looking for Mr. Bedfordson.

Young man, RANDY, exits restaurant and waves off the men.

RANDY  
David Cunningham? Follow me.

DAVID  
I came early.

RANDY  
Never do that.

He nods at the two men.

RANDY (CONT'D)  
Worse than a pair of pit bulls.

DAVID  
Why are they needed?

Randy smiles. Puts finger to lips.

INT. RESTAURANT

Upscale interior. Large windows overlook San Diego Bay.

David follows Randy.

They climb stairs to the office.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE. LATER.

Plush, comfortable. Large desk chair. On the desk three wooden monkeys. Photos of Bedfordson with distinguished figures.

Randy gestures for David to sit at the desk. Leans over David's shoulder and boots up the computer.

RANDY  
Close you eyes. Secret password.

Computer boots up.

RANDY (CONT'D)  
Voila! Financial charts. Cash flow in, cash flow out, overheads, etc. Calculator. Printer for computer read-outs. Pad, pencil. I'll be downstairs. Wedding reception this afternoon.

DAVID  
Big operation like this why not a large accountancy firm?

Randy points to the three wooden monkeys on the desk. Gestures hear, see, speak no evil.

He exits.

David checks the items on the desk before crossing to the window.

He looks down at Randy who talks with men below. All three stare up at David who quickly returns to the desk.

BACK TO EXT. ROADWAY. SAN DIEGO COUNTY. THAT AFTERNOON.

Truck turns off the main road and bumps down a dusty track through fields of cabbage. Heads toward a large home.

Truck turns before reaching the home and heads toward some small shacks hidden among the fields. Contractista gets out. Opens tailgate and unlocks the false box.

The villagers stagger out, sweating and blinded by the sun.

CONTRACTISTA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Men there, women there. Leave your  
stuff in the huts. Quickly. Time  
to work.

The villagers stagger toward the shacks.

EXT. SAN DIEGO YACHT CLUB.

Martin's Mercedes stops before the Clubhouse. Rita is in the passenger seat.

INT. LOBBY

Older Couple grab JOE TREVIS (30s), the Manager, and point to Rita.

Joes picks up the phone.

JOE  
Joe Trevis here. Let me talk to  
Mr. Bedfordson.

He waits.

JOE (CONT'D)  
You asked me to tell you if they  
came here together, Mr. Bedfordson.

He puts down the phone. All three stare out of the window. Martin and Rita walk to his yacht.

OLDER MAN  
Do something!

JOE  
Nothing I can do. Keep an eye on  
them.

Three return to staring out of the window at Rita and Martin.

EXT. SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Sun beats down on the backs of the farm workers in the cabbage field.

Pickup horn blares. Workers collapse in the shade of the truck.

The Contractista throws empty milk cartons at the workers. He points to a hose lying on the ground.

He grabs a beer from an ice container and watches the group.

Demetrio approaches him. Contractista grabs the tire iron.

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)

We stay in the sun too long, we get sick. Clean water, rest and shade. Law says.

CONTRACTISTA

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Law also says, you're not supposed to be this side of the border. One phone call and we get a visit from ICE. Way we deal with troublemakers.

He grabs Alicia. She pulls loose.

CONTRACTISTA (CONT'D)

(in Spanish, subtitles)

This Latino not good enough for you?

ALICIA

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Stinky breath. Fat belly. When was the last time you saw your penis? Maybe it shriveled up.

Contractista lifts his tire iron. Demetrio stands between the two.

CONTRACTISTA

Back to work. Plenty of sunshine. Plenty of cabbages.

The workers return to the fields.

INT. MARTIN'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Martin asleep. Blare of the Jeep's horn outside

Martin sits up in bed, switches on the light and stares at his watch. Two a.m. Voices downstairs then someone running up the stairs. Rita bursts into the room.

RITA  
Out of bed.

She throws back the blankets.

RITA (CONT'D)  
You're not paying the maid, Maria,  
enough, Plus she needs time off to  
visit her family.

She throws a bundle of clothes at him.

RITA (CONT'D)  
Last night, the gathering. Your  
world. Early morning, my world.  
First rule of the game: Be  
prepared. Your opponent never tell  
you when he moves.

MARTIN  
This is ridiculous. I have no  
interest in your world, as you call  
it.

Anne appears, fully clothed.

ANNE  
I'm going, even if you're not!

The two women exit.

EXT. DRIVEWAY

Maria and Florenzio laugh and talk. Rita and Anne jump into Jeep. Martin slouches out. Maria runs back to house.

INT. JEEP.

Martin gets in the front seat. Rita throws him a black hoodie.

RITA  
Now you gansta! Remember: it's not  
bulletproof.



Before he can comment, the Jeep lurches forward.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS - SAME

Farmworkers sleep on dirty mattresses. Contractista enters. Shakes Antonio awake.

CONTRACTISTA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
You have something for me.

Antonio digs under mattress and hands over the belt.

ANTONIO  
Dinero?

CONTRACTISTA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Later. When my contact comes. If  
he comes, you get paid. If not--.

As Contractista leaves, he pauses over the sleeping Alicia.

EXT. SAN DIEGO - SAME

Florenzio backs Jeep into darkened alley in the warehouse district.

INT. JEEP

Rita takes Martin's hands.

RITA  
When my brother speaks, you listen.  
We don't want to lose you.

A kiss before Florenzio rubs dirt over Martin's face and hands.

FLORENZIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Too white.

RITA  
Who knows? Maybe a new TV series.  
By day a distinguished judge. By  
night--.

All laugh, except Martin.

Florenzio grabs Martin and leads him away.

Rita wraps a blanket around herself and Anne.

ANNE

Tell me about my mother.

RITA

I was helping a young female farm worker. Raped, beaten. No one cared. "Forget it. No justice for illegals," everyone said. Your mother phoned. She took the case. But the girl was scared. Threatened. She crossed back into Mexico. Case after case, your mother was always there. Always pro bono. Any money given, she gave to my immigrant rights organization.

ANNE

So different from my father.

RITA

Not really. Kansas boy. More cautious. He misses her.

ANNE

You remind him of her. He wouldn't tell you that, but you do.

Anne rests her head against Rita.

EXT. OUTSIDE WAREHOUSE.

Signs: "ATTACK DOGS," "ABSOLUTELY NO ADMITTANCE."

Florenzio pulls Martin behind large dumpster as a truck rumbles up. The two nationals from restaurant slide out.

Main door of the warehouse grinds open. Dogs bark. Martin and Florenzio duck as flashlights check out the area.

INT. JEEP

Anne's head rests on Rita's knees.

ANNE

The end came so quickly for mother. No time to say goodbye.

RITA

I was there. And Maria.

ANNE

Did Maria ever marry?

RITA

Fiancée working here. Legally. A death in his family. He returned to Mexico. Federales stole his papers. Crossed the border alone at night. Trying to cross the freeway. Devil's Highway. The truck carried him half a mile before his body slid off.

(and then)

So many stories.

EXT. WAREHOUSE.

Martin and Florentino slide behind dumpster as Mercedes drives up. Bedfordson steps out. Opens gates.

Back doors of truck open. Tailgate lowered. Palette of boxes marked "perishable" are loaded onto forklift.

MARTIN

Perishable. Food for his restaurant.

Florenzio

Truck not refrigerated. Armed guard Attack dogs Bedfordson out of bed early in the morning. Add it up, Judge.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Drugs?

Florenzio nods. Points to Hendricks.

FLORENZIO

Son of a whore! Hendricks. Border patrol.

MARTIN

He was at the border with Isherwood. He's often in my court testifying on drug busts. Friend of Bedfordson?

FLORENZIO

No friends in this game.

He points to a fork truck.

FLORENZIO (CONT'D)  
Vegetables heavy. Too heavy.

He sifts position.

FLORENZIO (CONT'D)  
Wait here.

He slides away. Martin cups his hands, trying to read the time. He takes off his watch to hold it up to the light.

Glint of metal. Gun jabs into Martin's face.

ARMED GUARD  
Gringo. How you say, curiosity  
kill cat.

Drags Martin to his feet. Martin's watch falls to the ground. As Martin bends to retrieve it, gun whips across his face.

An arm circles the guard's neck. His gun drops to the floor. Guard's body hangs limp.

VOICE (O.C.)  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Pedro. Where are you?

Florenzio grabs Martin and drags him away.

INT. JEEP

Florenzio dumps Martin in the passenger seat and straps him in. Blood on Martin's face.

RITA  
What happened? ¡Pendejo!

As Jeep rushes off, they hear a gunshot.

FLORENZIO  
You escape. Guard dies. No  
friends in this game.

EXT. FIELD-- LATER THAT MORNING.

Villagers picking cabbages.

JOAQUIN  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Don't bend over, Alicia. The rich  
gringo want to see your face.

ALICIA  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 "So sorry I didn't make much money,  
 wife! I was too busy looking at  
 Alicia's backside."

A piercing whistle. Group moves into shade. Line up for water.

Contractista grabs Alicia.

DEMETRIO  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 Leave her alone!

The Contractista turns to Antonio.

CONTRACTISTA(  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 Keep him away from me, boy.

Demetrio stares at Antonio.

Alice knees the Contractista in the groin.

CONTRACTISTA (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 Bitch!

Demetrio grabs Antonio.

DEMETRIO  
 (in Spanish, subtitles)  
 Why does he tell you to keep me  
 away from him. What have you done?

Antonio stumbles away.

INT. MARTIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Martin and Anne sit at the dining table. Bandage on Martin's cheek. His eye is puffy.

MARIA  
 You go to the hospital.

MARTIN  
 I have to be in court.

MARIA  
 No watch. Did you leave in  
 bathroom again? I get it for you.

MARTIN

No. I'll get it later.

A car roars up the driveway.

David rushes in and turns on the television.

INSERT: EXT. BEDFORDSON'S WAREHOUSE

Over NEWSANCHOR's shoulder, Bedfordson's warehouse.

NEWS ANCHOR

In the early hours of the morning,  
a body was found in this dumpster.  
For details, we go live to our  
correspondent Clive Roberts.

The place swarms with police. CLIVE ROBERTS (30s),  
newscaster, stands before the dumpster.

ROBERTS

Police, acting on an anonymous  
phone call, found the body of an  
unidentified Mexican male who had  
been shot execution style.

The camera closes in on Bedfordson. His arm is wrapped  
around his sobbing wife.

ROBERTS (CONT'D)

With me is Wayne Bedfordson,  
prominent philanthropist,  
restaurateur and owner of this  
warehouse.

DAVID (O.C.)

Look at those campaign buttons:  
"Isherwood for Congress," and "Stop  
Illegal Invasion." My ideas.

BEDFORDSON

What sort of city do we live in  
when decent businessmen cannot  
conduct their affairs without  
homicide, and drug addicts on their  
doorstep? Let's slap all these  
illegals in jail and toss away the  
key. That's what I say. And the  
sooner we build that damned fence  
the better.

END INSERT.

David switches off the television.

DAVID

Is God on our side or what? Fence, illegals, drugs. Sound bites galore from a prominent business man. And on the day of the election.

MARTIN

We already have laws on the books.

DAVID

And Isherwood says we should have even more.

MARTIN

Damn politicians!

David looks around.

DAVID

Hey, where's breakfast? I've got things to do and places to be.

ANNE

Don't you talk to Maria like that!

David jumps to his feet.

DAVID

I'll grab a bite at McDonald's.

He storms out, slamming the door behind him.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS - THAT EVENING.

Farmworkers asleep. Sounds of struggle outside. Antonio wakes.

EXT.

Antonio exits hut.

Alicia, mouth gagged, is face down over a rain barrel. She is held in place by two men. Contractista, pants down, stands over her.

CONTRACTISTA

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Woman like this asks for it.

(MORE)

CONTRACTISTA (CONT'D)

Then you squeals like a happy pig  
when you get it.

He looks at Antonio.

He throws Alicia's dress up.

CONTRACTISTA (CONT'D)

(in Spanish, subtitles)

Get back inside, boy. You hear me?

The door bursts open. Demetrio exits. He hurls Antonio  
aside and punches the Contractista.

The two men release Alicia and run.

The Contractista runs, pulling up his pants. Demetrio stares  
at Antonio before helping Alicia back to the hut.

INT. HOTEL CONFERENCE CENTER. SAME.

Supporters cheer Isherwood's victory. Bedfordson, his wife  
and David watch.

BEDFORDSON

Judge not here? Should be. A  
man's gotta knows his friends.  
Hope he ain't getting' blindsided  
by his sexy Señorita. That woman's  
trouble, just like that cousin of  
hers, Florenzio, and that lawyer,  
Delgado.

He drapes his wife over David's arm.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

You keep the boy entertained,  
honey. I got some folks I need to  
talk to.

To David as he exits.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

Don't do anything I wouldn't do.

MRS. BEDFORDSON

My husband said you did a great job  
sorting out those books at the  
restaurant. Interested in more  
work?

DAVID

Yes.



MRS. BEDFORDSON

I knew you would. Wayne wants to meet with you tonight. Oceanview Motel. Room 7. Private celebration of Brent's victory.

DAVID

In a motel?

MRS. BEDFORDSON

Very private.

She squeezes David's arm.

EXT. OUTSIDE FARM WORKERS' SLEEPING QUARTERS.

TWO BORDER AGENTS (30a) hold Contractista.

Officer Hendricks leans against car, his rifle dangling before him.

The TALLER AGENTS holds Contractista.

TALLER AGENT

My friends don't need to keep cleaning up your shit, Pancho. You learn to keep your fly shut 'less you want it sealed up permanently. Last time you got in this fix, we had to send a good officer downriver.

CONTRACTISTA

I'll get you girls. Virgins, like last time.

The Agent grabs him by the throat.

TALLER MAN

You're a small cog, Pancho, but a mighty squeaky one.

They move to the sleeping quarters.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS

Door explodes open. Flashlights pierce the darkness. Shouts of "!Levantense!" and "!Todos de pie!"

BACK OUTSIDE.

The workers stagger out and huddle together.

Hendricks trains his rifle at the group.

HENDRICKS

Straight line! Hands on your head!  
Eyes front!

Contractista and two agents exit the hut holding a belt with packets of cocaine. Contractista points to Demetrio.

TALLER AGENT

What we got here, Pancho?

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
It's not mine!

The Taller Agency grabs Demetrio.

HENDRICKS

Easy way to get rid of  
troublemakers.

DEMETRIO

(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Not mine! No drugs! Not mine!

TALLER MAN

Like we ain't heard that before.  
If it ain't yours, whose is it?  
Name names.

He hurls Demetrio toward Hendricks.

TALLER MAN (CONT'D)

Rest of you back inside!

Demetrio stares at Antonio.

Contractista leers at Alicia. She spits at him.

INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT, SAN DIEGO. SAME.

Mariachis play. Martin and Rita sit at a table.

MARTIN

No surprises tonight?

RITA

None. Promise. Just two lonely  
middle-aged friends eating dinner.

She grasps his arm.

RITA (CONT'D)

Where's your watch?

MARTIN

I dropped it. At the warehouse.

RITA

¡Mierda! Let's hope Florenzio finds  
it. If not--.

She shakes her head.

EXT. FARM WORKERS' SLEEPING QUARTERS -- LATER

Alicia slips quietly out of the hut and stumbles off into the  
darkness.

BACK TO RESTAURANT.

A GUITARIST sings a love song.

RITA

My husband's favorite song. Need a  
translator?

The guitarist stands at their table, singing to them.

EXT. ROADWAY.

Alicia stumbles along the side of the road in the darkness.

A carload of YOUNG BOYS yell obscenities at her.

Pickup truck slows behind Alicia. Lights off. Truck keeps  
pace closing in on her slowly.

Another car approaches. Pickup truck stops. Spotlight picks  
up Alicia.

Patrol car pulls up ahead of Alicia. Two PATROL OFFICERS,  
one MALE, one FEMALE, exit their vehicle.

The female approaches Alicia; the male moves towards the  
stopped pickup. He leaps back as the unlit truck roars off  
into the night.

INT. RESTAURANT

Rita raises her glass and gestures to the room.

RITA  
Black, white, brown, red,  
yellow—all together. California.

Martin takes a small box from his pocket and places it on the table. He takes her hands in his.

MARTIN  
This past week was good for both of  
us.

RITA  
Even with the bumps and bruises?

MARTIN  
Even with the . . . mishaps. I  
have missed you. Maybe--.

He pushes the small box across the table toward her.

Her cellphone rings. She listens, then stands and kisses Martin on the cheek.

RITA  
Must go. I'll get a taxi.

She exits.

He pockets the unopened gift.

MARTIN  
Wait! I'll come with you!

She waves him off. The waiter stops Martin.

WAITER  
The check, Señor.

Martin fumbles to pay the waiter.

EXT. PARKING LOT

Martin exits the restaurant. No sign of Rita. Returns to his car.

EXT. OCEANVIEW MOTEL. SAME.

David moves along the darkened motel, looking for Number 7.

EXT. ROOM NUMBER 7.

David knocks. Unlocked door opens. David enters.

DAVID  
Mr. Bedfordson? Wayne?  
Congressman Isherwood?

A young woman, naked, drags David inside, pushes him on the bed and leaps on top of him.

Flash bulbs. Room lights up.

Smiling face of Wayne Bedfordson. He gestures to the naked woman.

BEDFORDSON  
It's on the table, honey.

She drags on a dressing gown and rushes to lines of cocaine on the table.

Bedfordson opens the mini refrigerator and pulls out two small bottles of whiskey. Hands one to David.

DAVID  
Who is she?

BEDFORDSON  
Someone. Anyone. Question is,  
where did she get them drugs?

DAVID  
Drugs? Wayne, what's going on?

Bedfordson pulls Martin's watch from his pocket.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
That's the Judge's watch.

BEDFORDSON  
Is that right?

He stuffs the watch into David's pocket.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)  
Tell the judge I found this. Tell  
him not to be so careless. He'll  
know where he left it.

He turns to the girl.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)  
Slow down, honey. We don't need  
any accidents 'round here, do we?

He opens the mini-refrigerator and swallows down another  
bottle of whiskey.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)  
You wanna play in the big leagues,  
boy, you gotta do what your coach  
tells you.

Bedfordson picks the phone with a handkerchief.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)  
Give me Pierce in narcotics.  
(and then)  
Seems Officer Hendricks got his  
hand stuck in the cookie jar--  
again. Patrol picked up an  
illegal. She's talking. Drop by  
Hendricks's house tonight before he  
talks to the press.

EXT. OUTSIDE A BORDER-PATROL STATION.

Florenzio pulls into parking lot. Rita and Delgado exit  
truck. Met by female officer.

FEMALE OFFICER  
She's inside. Trying to get back  
across the border. Started  
talking. Illegals, drugs, farm in  
the valley, rape, corrupt agents,  
officer with a scar.

Rita turns to her brother.

RITA  
Same as last time. Only this time  
it's your turn.

They walk into the border patrol station.

INT. JAIL CELL IN BORDER PATROL STATION

Alicia sits, shawl pulled tightly around her as Rita,  
Florenzio and Female Office enter.

INT. LIVING ROOM, MARTIN'S HOME

Martin dials.

RITA'S VOICE (O.C.)  
No puedo venir al teléfono ahora.  
Por favor, deje su número y lo  
llamaré cuando regrese. And, for  
my gringo friends. I cannot come to  
the phone now. Please leave your  
number and I'll call when I return.

The answering machine bleeps. Martin puts down the phone as Anne enters.

MARTIN  
David not home?

ANNE  
Celebrating. I gave Maria the  
night off.

She sobs. Martin unsure what to do. Finally slides his arm around her. She nestles into him.

A car screeches up the driveway. O.C. car door slams, keys drop and David curses.

He staggers into the room, drunk. Martin prepares to leave.

DAVID  
Stick around, Judge. Wayne  
Bedfordson offered me work, a  
salary, and an expense account.  
Time to celebrate!

Anne tries to stop David from pouring another drink.

MARTIN  
Don't take the job!

David giggles.

DAVID  
Try again.

MARTIN  
Don't work for Bedfordson.

David clicks his fingers. Castanets.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Wayne was right. That chiquita's  
got you right here.

Anne slaps him across the face and runs from the room, crying.

David fumbles for his car keys. He collapses as he tries to pick them up.

MARTIN

You're in no state to drive.

DAVID

Why don't you ask your Señorita about her brother? Border patrol, bribes, drugs. Up to his eyeballs in it.

David pulls Martin's watch out of his pocket.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Catch! Wayne told me you'd know where you dropped it.

He staggers to his feet. Collapses on couch.

MARTIN

Sleep it off. Then ask Bedfordson if you can check out his what he keeps in his warehouse.

Puts blanket over David.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS FOR FARM WORKERS.

Antonio looks at Demetrio's empty bed.

Joaquin joins him.

JOAQUIN

I was young once. Stupid too. But not as stupid as you.

INT. CAR

Contractista and two men drive out of the farm.

The headlights of a Jeep block their way.

EXT. CAR

Contractista, baseball bat in hand, gets out of the pickup and moves toward jeep. A huge hand grabs him and drags him in.



INT. JEEP

Contractista's head cracks on the steering wheel.

FLORENZIO  
Take me to him—now.

EXT.

The two men watch the Jeep screech away.

INT. MARTIN'S BEDROOM

Martin picks up the phone and dials. Outside car screeches away from the house.

MARTIN  
David! Damn fool!

EXT. STREET IN SUBURBIA

Police cars and ambulances. Florenzio leaps out of the Jeep, dragging the Contractista after him.

Clive Roberts before the television camera.

ROBERTS  
A quiet, suburban street turns into a battlefield as police, acting on an anonymous tip, surround the house of three of their own: border patrol agents gone bad. When the shooting was over, one man was dead, two injured. Police officers found kilos of cocaine, with a street value in the hundreds of thousands, in the house.

A body is brought from the house.

Female patrol officer joins Florenzio. She holds back the cloth covering one body. Hendricks.

FEMALE OFFICER  
A kilo missing here, another there.  
Too many roosters. Time to clean out the chicken house.

Contractista pants in fear.

CONTRACTISTA

Arrest me!

FLORENZIO

Get him out of here.

CONTRACTISTA

I can tell all. You! Honest cop  
getting too close. I can name  
names.

The Female Officer handcuffs the Contractista.

FEMALE OFFICER

(saluting Florenzio)

Go brush off your uniform, Officer.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS, COURTHOUSE -- NEXT MORNING

Martin picks up the phone and dials.

RITA'S VOICE (O.C.)

No puedo venir al teléfono ahora.  
Por favor, deje su número y lo  
llamaré cuando regrese.

He puts down the phone. Court Officer enters.

COURT OFFICER

Five minutes, your honor.

Martin puts on his robe.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Anne and Maria rush into room. David is on life-support  
system.

ANNE

What happened?

NURSE

He was found this morning in the  
warehouse area. Woman called it  
in. She saved his life.

INT. COURT

Demetrio, handcuffed, stands in the dock.

BAILIFF  
All rise for the Honorable Judge  
Martin Wilkins.

Martin enters. Gestures for everyone to sit.

Martin reviews the documents before glancing at the prisoner.  
His eyes fix on Demetrio.

BEGIN FLASHBACK.

INT. BORDERTOWN BAR.

Bathroom. Carlos drags Martin out of the stall, knife at his throat.

CARLOS  
Now I slit your gringo throat.

Demetrio crashes through the bathroom door. His arm circles Carlos's neck. He removes the knife from Martin's throat before hurling Carlos out of the door.

DEMETRIO  
(to Antonio; in Spanish,  
subtitles)  
Why so much time? Who is this man?

ANTONIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Crazy gringo. I spoke with nobody.

Demetrio takes his bandana and holds it against Martin's bloody neck.

DEMETRIO  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
You keep it.

He and Antonio exit. Martin stares into mirror. Ties bandanna around his neck.

END FLASHBACK.

BACK TO COURT

Martin reads the indictment.

MARTIN  
The case of the State of California  
versus Demetrio Plascentia.

INTERPRETER  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Your name Demetrio Plascentia,  
Raise your hand

Demetrio raises his hand.

Policeman hands Bailiff a note. Reads and passes to Martin.  
Martin reads it and beats his gavel.

He stands.

MARTIN  
I apologize. I have an emergency I  
must attend to immediately. Court  
stands in recess until this  
afternoon.

He exits.

EXT.

Rita waits outside in her car. Martin jumps in.

RITA  
Anne phoned. Bedfordson will be at  
the Yacht Club.

EXT. YACHT CLUB - LATER

Rita's car skids to a halt. Martin leaps out.

RITA  
I'll wait.

INT. YACHT CLUB

Martin brushes aside Joe Trevis and marches into the main  
office.

INT. MAIN OFFICE

Bedfordson stares out of the window at the bay as Martin  
rushes in. Mrs. Bedfordson nurses a drink.

BEDFORDSON

Get your watch back, judge? Good.  
I told you it was his, honey.  
Shouldn't be so careless next time.  
Course there won't be next time.

MARTIN

What happened?

BEDFORDSON

See, honey, didn't I say the  
judge'd be thankful? Lucky my wife  
was down at the warehouse. Phoned  
it in immediately she found the  
boy. If she hadn't--

He continues looking out of the window.

BEDORDSON

Clear blue ocean. Who'd guess that  
underneath that beauty there's all  
them rip tides and currents? Even  
sharks. Best sail along on the  
surface and don't think about  
what's underneath.

MARTIN

One phone call from me to narcotics  
and . . .

Bedfordson holds out a card. Martin takes it. Oceanview  
Motel.

BEDFORDSON

Police picked up a young girl in  
room seven. Overdose. Manager  
says he saw a young boy go in. Took  
down the license plate of the car.  
Wrote it on the back of the card.

Martin turns the card over.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)

Looks like that son-in-law of yours  
has some explaining to do if that  
motel manager talks.

MARTIN

You won't get away with this.

BEDFORDSON

I thought people only said things  
like that in movies.

He turns to face Martin.

BEDFORDSON (CONT'D)  
Forgot to tell you. My friend, the  
aide to the Governor, phoned.  
Governor's planning to announce  
who'll be the new Supreme Court  
Justice tomorrow. Could be you'll  
be on the high court within the  
month.

He faces the ocean again.

Martin leaves.

BACK TO CAR.

Rita waits as Martin marches back.

RITA  
What did you expect? The honest  
judge versus the bad guys? Mano a  
mano? That's only in the movies.  
Maybe Anne's next, or Maria, or me.  
That's how this game is played.

MARTIN  
Governor announcing position on the  
Supreme Court is soon.

RITA  
Congratulations. Plain sailing.  
Just don't muddy the waters.  
That's the way of this world.

She pats the passenger's seat.

RITA (CONT'D)  
Need a ride back to the courthouse?

MARTIN  
I need time to think. I'll take a  
taxi.

Rita drives off.

INT. JUSTICE BUILDING. MARTIN'S CHAMBERS.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY, bailiff, staff, other justices, lawyers,  
newspaper reporters and photographers mill around.

Martin enters. Cheers. Cameras flash.

Large cake on Martin's desk. Depiction of courthouse in Sacramento. On top: "California's Next Supreme Court Justice."

MARTIN

Governor hasn't made the decision yet.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

We all know who's top of his list.

All clap.

MARTIN

Let's keep this short. I have a case pending.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Illegal caught red-handed. No contest, Judge. I'm sorry. Chief Justice Wilkins.

Crowd applauds again.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

Five minutes tops.

BAILIFF

Delgado's out there.

The District Attorney groans.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Okay, ten minutes.

MARTIN

Everybody out. I have to prepare.

Everyone leaves.

Rita enters as Martin puts on the robe. She stares at the photograph of his late wife.

RITA

Maybe last case before this court. Bigger, better things wait. Easy case. Illegal. Drugs. 15 years to life. Uno, dos, tres. No problem. Man in his mid-forties. Life sentence. No hay problema.

She moves toward the door.

RITA (CONT'D)

This case is not that simple. Not that tidy. No uno, dos, tres. Related to another case. What other case? She asks. Our judge doesn't know.

MARTIN

Are you finished?

RITA

Three corrupt border agents. One dead, two talking. Contractista who brought charges against your defendant now begging to be arrested. Strange happenings. Still. No need to worry. Judge doesn't accept, doesn't believe in extenuating circumstances. For him it's just uno, dos, tres. Wipe his hands.

She exits.

Martin continues dressing. He picks up the photo of his dead wife. Pause before exiting.

INT. COURT

Delgado confers with Demetrio. Rita joins Florenzio at the back of the court.

Reporters, photographers and television cameras line the back of the court.

BAILIFF

Silence!

(and then)

All rise for the Honorable Judge  
Martin Wilkins.

Applause and cheers as Martin enters. The Bailiff waves his arms for silence. Martin gestures for everyone to sit. Cameras flash.

MARTIN

The State of California versus  
Demetrio Plascentia.

Delgado mumbles in Spanish to Demetrio throughout. District Attorney gestures ten minutes to the Bailiff.



DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
The prisoner is charged with  
importing an illegal substance into  
the United States.

Delgado leaps to his feet.

DELGADO  
Permission to approach the bench,  
your Honor.

MARTIN  
Permission denied.

DELGADO  
But your Honor, this case relates  
directly to . . .

DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
We are here to judge this case,  
your Honor. Anything else is  
irrelevant. The law says . . .

DELGADO  
We all know what that law says,  
your Honor.

He indicates Demetrio.

DELGADO (CONT'D)  
One bang of your gavel and this man  
will spend 15 years to life in  
prison.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
Do we have to hear all this again,  
your honor? The law is the law,  
Mr. Delgado.

DELGADO  
Until some judge is brave enough to  
challenge it.

Martin gestures the two to sit. The D.A. taps his watch and  
winks at the Bailiff.

MARTIN  
This may be the last case I judge  
in this courtroom. Maybe not. My  
job is not difficult. You don't  
even need a law degree.

He holds up the chart.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
It's all here, on this chart,  
mandated by Washington politicians.  
Fifteen years to life. No  
possibility of parole.

Delgado translates. Demetrio's body shakes.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
For a man of the defendant's age,  
fifteen years could well be a life  
sentence. Still that's the law. A  
judge like myself, despite his or  
her degrees and legal experience is  
mandated how to penalize. No need  
to hear the defendant's testimony.  
No need to explore the motivation  
behind the charges. No need for a  
judge's reasoned assessment of  
individual cases. No need even, as  
the defense attorney informs us, to  
consider relevant cases or  
exculpatory evidence. All I do is  
follow orders, follow this chart.

Holds up the chart.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
Professionally I have much to gain  
by just following orders. However,  
if I am not allowed to judge this  
case by and of and for itself in  
its entirety, including any  
exculpatory evidence, then I refuse  
to pass judgment.

Hushed crowd.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
Mr. Delgado, the defendant will  
remain in your custody until all  
evidence, all relevant details and  
facts are known. Case dismissed.

Martin abruptly stands and exits.

A stunned silence then a melee breaks out as television  
cameramen and reporters clamber to exit with the story.

Courtroom left empty except for Rita, sitting alone, staring  
at the judge's empty chair.

EXT. PIER OF YACHT CLUB -- NEXT MORNING

Martin prepares to cast off. Wire fence rattles.

RITA  
(in Spanish, subtitles)  
Señor. Don't forget me!

Older Couple watch as Martin opens the gate.

RITA (CONT'D)  
Any word?

MARTIN  
The Governor's reconsidering. It  
won't be easy to go back on his  
decision but--.

RITA  
You've opened a door. That's all  
we wanted.

She walks to his yacht with him.

RITA (CONT'D)  
And Anne and David?

MARTIN  
The boy tasted the forbidden fruit.  
It's their decision. They're both  
young.

She takes his hand as he helps her into the boat.

RITA  
Rita have gift for the Señor.

She hands him another photo album.

MARTIN  
Not again!

She opens the first page. Photo of the two of them dancing  
together in the restaurant.

RITA  
You were going to give me  
something.

Martin gives her the small box. Diamond earrings.

Rita puts them on.

Martin pushes boat from jetty. Starts motor and takes the wheel. Rita cuddles into him.

They leave the dock.

Rita waves to the older couple and flashes her earrings.

RITA (CONT'D)

You like? Present for Rita.

She grabs Martin's arm and poses.

The husband pushes his wife below deck.

FADE OUT.

THE END