

UNDER FIRE

by

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SOMEWHERE IN AFRICA

1 EXT. GRASSY PLAINS - DUSK

1

BIRDS ARE FLUSHED FROM HIDING. A soldier carrying an automatic weapon rises up out of the grass and looks around. A mortar shell explodes nearby. There are no sound effects. He seems unperturbed.

Several more explosions in the field. The soldier motions with his arm and:

FIFTY MORE SOLDIERS RISE UP OUT OF THE GRASS
More small explosions.

FREEZE FRAME

With a click-click of a camera--still no fx.

THE SOLDIERS RUN THROUGH THE GRASS FOLLOWING THEIR LEADER
As they do, the platoon leader waves his arms again.

FIVE ELEPHANTS CHARGE OUT OF THE SHRUBBERY
Through a field of small mortar explosions.

FREEZE FRAME

With the click-click of a camera.

THE ELEPHANTS CHARGE OUT ACROSS THE PLAINS
Each carries an enormous load of supplies, and each is ridden by a soldier with a rifle.

A HELICOPTER GUNSHIP DIVES OUT OF THE SKY firing rockets at the soldiers and elephants. A tribal mask is painted on the nose of the chopper.

THE ELEPHANTS REAR UP IN TERROR
The soldiers on the elephants stand up and aim rifles at the chopper and begin firing.

THE CHOPPER ATTACKS THE ELEPHANTS against an African sunset.

FREEZE FRAME

DISSOLVE TO:

2 INT./EXT. LOBBY OF THE 'NEW PEOPLE'S HOTEL' - DAWN

2

A door slams o.s. and the figure of RUSSELL PRICE, 30, appears at the top of some stairs. Sleepy-eyed, he pulls on a multi-pocketed fishing vest over a baggy shirt. He carries a beat up canvas bag over his shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

A BLACK WOMAN, 40, sleeps at the lobby switchboard desk. Another OLD BLACK MAN sweeps the floor. Price mumbles a 'good morning' and goes to two vintage WW II vending machines--one for candy, one for Coca-Cola. He buys two candy bars and a coke, and begins eating his "breakfast" as he crosses the lobby.

3 EXT. THE HOTEL - DAWN

3

JIMMY, a cab driver, has been sleeping in a chair against the wall. Several street vendors have their wares laid out on the sidewalk against the hotel. Some are shaded by makeshift awnings, some are not. Jimmy rises as Price arrives; there is familiar ritual in their greeting.

They cross the street together toward Jimmy's waiting taxi, a hand-painted purple old American car with the words on the door, "New People's Taxi Company" and Jimmy's name in script above it. Price hands a candy bar to Jimmy.

PRICE

'Morning, Jimmy, think you could squeeze me in?

JIMMY

Where is you would care to go at once, Mr. Price?

PRICE

Bang-bang.

JIMMY

Twenty dollar.

Price hands him a wad of bills.

PRICE

You're a thief, Jimmy.

Jimmy smiles broadly, nodding, then points to the sky.

JIMMY

Booteeful picture, huh, snap-snap?

PRICE

I don't do skies.

The two men get into the strange cab parked in front of an open marketplace just starting to come alive; the cab drives off.

4 EXT. A REMOTE AFRICAN VILLAGE - DAY 4

The taxi arrives, and Price gets out.

Price ambles over to stand in the early morning shade against an old building. A hand-painted image of Che Guevarra--with an X painted over it--is on one wall. Price pulls a joint from his pocket and lights up, taking a hit.

The sounds of war machinery soon interrupt the stillness. Price hurries to the corner.

5 P.O.V. A JEEP LEADING AN ARMY CONVOY 5

Price pulls a handful of colored rags from his pocket and picks out a yellow kerchief, tying it to his arm. Price then steps boldly into the street in front of the approaching convoy. He exchanges shouts with an officer in a jeep, and with a motion is given permission to join.

PRICE CLIMBS INTO THE LAST OF THREE TROOP TRUCKS
Each truck is filled with perhaps 25 African soldiers in khaki, each holding an automatic rifle. Another jeep follows, towing a World War II cannon.

CUT TO:

6 INSIDE THE TROOP TRUCK - DAY 6

PRICE
(cheerily)

Hi, guys.

The soldiers look over disinterestedly. Two dozen cases of Coca-Cola are tied to a stretcher among stacks of guns.

As Price settles in for the ride, he begins pulling cameras from his bag. Quickly and automatically, rarely looking, he switches lenses, loads film, and prepares his cameras. He has done this a thousand times.

A SINGLE WHITE SOLDIER--OATES, rises from among the blacks, and shakily makes his way toward Price. A mercenary dressed in a ragged uniform of his own design, carries two machine guns and a .45. He smiles broadly, recognizing Price. HODGE slaps Price's hands as if they were teammates.

OATES:

G'damn, Price, you tuna sucking
piece of raw meat -- whatchyou
goin' to Zambeze for?

(CONTINUED)

PRICE

Thought I'd get some great shots
of your head gettin' blown to
smithereens.

OATES

Smithereens?! Be a great fuckin'
picture, eh?

PRICE

Be a prize winner.

OATES

(proudly)

Ya think so?

(beat; changing tone)

Trade ya some greenies for a
joint.

(beat)

I gotta have a joint.

PRICE

I'm on the wagon, man, sorry.

OATES

(shrugs)

Ahh. Dope-wise, this place sucks.

(looks around, leans

in confidentially)

Lotta fuckin' coons around here,
eh?

They nod. He laughs obscenely and deeply.

PRICE

I thought you were fighting for
the Government?

OATES

I am. This is the Government.

PRICE

These are the Rebels.

OATES

Fuck they are. This is a
Government convoy to Calunda.

PRICE

This is the Abou-Deian
Revolutionary Front.

Pause.

(CONTINUED)

OATES

You're shitting me.

Pause. Finally Oates starts laughing uncontrollably.

OATES

(cont'd)

These guys be pissed if they knew, eh?

(Price nods in agreement; Oates suddenly gets serious)

This is the dumbest motherfucker I ever signed up for. Don't pay shit either.

(Price nods in agreement)

Nicaragua. That's the spot. Cheap shrimp, lotta rays -- real thin in the spook department too, dig?

CUT TO:

7 EXT. THE REBEL'S AIRFIELD - DAY

7

The convoy rumbles past a check-point into a small airfield containing a motley collection of DC-3's and old planes. TWO RUSSIAN ADVISORS and THREE CUBAN ADVISORS watch.

OATES

Well hell...I wonder where the fuckin' Guvmint is?

As he speaks, the cab of the truck is rocked with a mortar shell and explodes. Soldiers scramble to safety. Some grab the guns being transported.

TWO SOLDIERS GRAB THE STRETCHER OF COKE and start running for safety. Smoke and explosions are everywhere--they abandon their cargo and run for cover.

OATES SCRAMBLES TO SAFE GROUND quickly and instinctively, looking around wildly to "read" the situation. Price dives next to him.

A SOLDIER IS HIT AND GOES DOWN NEARBY, staggering towards Price and Oates.

A DC-3 GOES UP IN FLAMES IN THE BACKGROUND

THE WOUNDED SOLDIER REACHES FOR OATES who darts out quickly and drags the injured Rebel to safety.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

PRICE HAS HIS CAMERAS OUT AT ONCE and is firing away.

TWO REBEL SOLDIERS POINT TO THE STRETCHER OF COCA-COLA and start moving toward it through the smoke. They want to rescue the soft drinks.

PRICE LEAPS FROM HIS BUNKER AND RACES TOWARD THEM dangerously, waving and shouting as he does.

PRICE
Hold it! Hold it!

They don't speak English but stop at his craziness.

PRICE STOPS AND AIMS HIS CAMERA, and as he does he motions for the soldiers to continue.

P.O.V. THE FRAMED IMAGE -- SOLDIERS, SMOKE AND COKE IN B.G. As the soldiers move toward the Coke, Price snaps picture after picture.

A MORTAR EXPLOSION BLOWS THE COCA-COLA TO A MILLION BITS. The two soldiers stop short--several more steps and they would have been killed. Price's intrusion has accidentally saved them. The two soldiers run toward safety, bewildered and scared.

8 ON THE AIRFIELD - THE SMOKE CLEARS AND ALL IS CALM. Gradually the airfield comes back to life. Several teams of medics run with stretchers from the hut and begin gathering bodies. Rebel soldiers appear from every conceivable shelter and move across the field.

8

Oates emerges and meets Price on the torn up runway amidst the rubble. They look around at the devastation.

OATES
Well, I guess we know where the Guvmint is.

PRICE
(cynically)
You can walk to work from here.

OATES
Convenient, ain't it?

Oates starts to walk away, then stops and speaks earnestly, as if trying to connect to a real world that doesn't exist.

OATES,
(cont'd)
My brother just got married.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

PRICE

I don't know your brother.

Suddenly, the distant roar of a jet. All the soldiers on the field scan the horizon; Price looks up. The air raid siren goes off.

9 A JET DIVES OUT OF THE SKY TOWARD THE AIRFIELD

9

OATES AND THE SOLDIERS DIVE TO COVER

JET STREAKS OVERHEAD and, instead of rockets and bombs, it drops something else:

THE SKY IS FILLED WITH A MILLION PIECES OF PAPER
The jet pulls out and disappears. All is quiet again as the million papers flutter in the sky above the airfield.

Out of frustration a single soldier fires a couple of shots at the paper.

Price grabs a piece of paper out of the air. It is:

A PICTURE OF A SWIMMING POOL IN FRONT OF A CALIFORNIA HOUSE

HE STARES AT THE IMAGE and turns it over. There is writing on the backside in Spanish and Russian. He looks around.

OATES WANDERS OVER with a handful of the leaflets.

PRICE

What's this?

OATES

Great shit, eh?

Price tries to read the writing on the back as Oates looks at a leaflet familiarly.

OATES

(cont'd)

U.S. Gummint offers this house to any Cuban pilot flying Migs for the Rebels who chooses to defect to America with a Russian jet. We know they ain't gonna run off with no planes -- but the Rebs don't -- They're scared. They start thinking about that swimming pool. Damn near smell that chlorine. Starts workin' on 'em, and pretty soon they don't let the Cubies near a Mig. Use their own spook pilots and destroy their own air force in a week. Guaran-fuckin-teed.

9 CONTINUED:

9

PRICE
C.I.A.?

OATES
(proudly)
Smartest guys in the world.
(afterthought)
Hey, you gotta scoop here, eh?
You'll be famous.

OATES shakes hands with Price who looks at the picture.

PRICE
(dispassionately)
Maybe.

OATES
(looking around)
I gotta run...have a good one.

Oates heads off across the runway as papers continue blowing down out of the sky; Price looks up and speaks to himself.

PRICE
I love Africa.

CUT TO:

10 INT. HOTEL ROOMS AT THE NEW PEOPLE'S HOTEL - NIGHT

10

CLAIRE STRYDER, 40, reads a report over the telephone as she times the call with a stopwatch. A photograph of Claire's high-school-aged daughter sits on her dresser.

ALEX GRAZIER, 50, struggles with his tie and a drink at a dresser in the adjoining room. Their connected rooms are littered with hand washed laundry and the paraphernalia of their trade--typewriters, tape decks, books, notes, pictures.

Their love affairs of three years is ending.

CLAIRE
(on the phone)
"...and so this strange war that features two provincial governments, three rival liberation fronts, and at least twenty-five tribal associations, grinds into its seventh year..."

Alex picks up a Melodica, a novelty wind instrument, and tries to court her with "Caravan" as she files her story. Though mildly put off, she maintains her cool throughout the call. He thinks he's Paul Desmond.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

"...The Battle for the Airfield at Abou Deia is just another chapter in this endless story. From Ndjamena, Chad, this is Claire Stryder."

(beat)

No -- you didn't hear any music -- must be the connection. Okay? So long.

She hangs up and rises more irritated than angered.

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

Alex, don't play that God damn thing when I'm filing.

(beat)

We're late.

Quickly expressed, her anger passes.

ALEX

It's my party -- we'll be late. You called it a "strange war" and an "endless story." If you filed that story for me, I'd say you were editorializing.

CLAIRE

I like to editorialize. You drunk?

Alex loves to be melo-dramatic and is quite conscious of his ability to charm. He's also aware that it's worn off with her.

ALEX

Drunk? Only with the memories of making love with you on the plains of Fianga as the first Army of Liberation marched in and opened fire.

CLAIRE

And freed the Proletariat.

Alex raises a drink.

ALEX

Right.

CLAIRE

I'm going to the party without you.

10 CONTINUED:

She leaves--he quickly puts on his coat and follows her.

CUT TO:

11 INT. ~~THE~~ ELEVATOR GOING DOWN - NIGHT

ALEX

Christ, I don't want to go to this stupid party. I'm bad at false modesty.

CLAIRE

You're great at it.

She straightens his half-tied tie in an act of familiar affection rather than motherliness. Nervousness. She speaks calmly--this is ground they have already covered.

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

Alex, you're going to make a great anchorman in New York and undoubtedly I could be a Pulitzer Prize winning hostess -- but I'm not going with you.

ALEX

You can work out of the East Coast. We'll get a place on Long Island and burn our suitcases.

CLAIRE

I still like suitcases.

ALEX

Every Saturday night we'll have a party...invite all our friends, sit out on the veranda and interview each other.

CLAIRE

I've done all that.

ALEX

I haven't.

(beat; changes tack)

Well, God dammit, I'm getting tired of memorizing who's the president of the...Republic of Maldives.

CLAIRE

Mamoon Abdul Gayoom.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

ALEX

Yeah, he succeeded Mamoon Abdul
Gayeem.

They both smile slightly as the elevator comes to a stop.
The door doesn't open, and the light flickers.

ALEX

(cont'd)

And I'm tired of Third World
elevators.

He bangs the door with his fist. It opens, and they enter
a dismal hallway. The sounds of a party come from beyond.

ALEX

(cont'd)

Don't leave me.

CLAIRE

I already have.

As they approach the door to the party, he speaks with new
toughness.

ALEX

Fuck About Deia and New York. I'm
going to Nicaragua with you.

CLAIRE

No.

ALEX

I've heard it's a neat little war
with a nice hotel.

CUT TO:

12 INT. THE ROOM WITH THE PARTY - NIGHT

12

A cheer goes up for Alex as he and Claire enter. Party
hats, booze, hand-made signs reading "Bon Voyage," etc.
Fifteen journalists of varying nationalities cover this
backwater war.

Though both upset, they act as if everything is normal.

PRICE STANDS ON A CHAIR AT THE CENTER summoning Alex who
moves through the group with ease, instantly at home.
Price holds up a bottle of champagne in toast.

PRICE

Alex, get up here!

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

Alex climbs on a chair next to Price who puts his arm around him.

PRICE

(cont'd)

To the man who gave me my first job, and fired me from my first job...and gave me my second job...

VOICE FROM CROWD

And fired you from your second job...

PRICE

Just a few words, Alex.

VOICES FROM CROWD

Impossible! Can't be done! etc.

However miserable, Alex shines in these situations. He raises his hand--silence.

ALEX

You may be asking yourself what exactly are you doing here in this "strange war, just another chapter in an endless story... that grinds into its seventh year..."

Claire slips to the side bar and pours herself a drink, watching Alex and shaking her head with some affection.

JIMMY, THE CAB DRIVER, ENTERS WITH A CAKE covered with candles. The crowd parts for the cake shaped like the country of Chad. The crowd begins singing "Caravan" in a half-drunken tribute to a man they like and respect.

PRICE MOVES AROUND THE ROOM TAKING PICTURES of the party; it is all casual, silly, fun.

THROUGH CAMERA P.O.V.'S OF ALEX IN A PARTY HAT, whip pan to CABBY WITH THE CAKE, whip pan to DRUNKEN JOURNALISTS.

THROUGH CAMERA P.O.V. OF CLAIRE - FREEZE FRAME, pan follows her as she moves through the room - FREEZE FRAME, she picks up another drink and leaves through a side door - FREEZE FRAME.

ALEX GIVES IN AND JOINS THE SINGING, enjoying his own tribute once he has managed to give in to it.

CUT TO:

13 INT. THE DARKROOM - RED LIGHTS

13

Claire's face is also covered with tears as she smokes, wandering idly among clothespinned photos. A part of her life is ending--life with Alex--but it's not ending neatly.

A ROW OF HANGING PHOTOGRAPHS catches her eye. She stops and looks closely--then laughs in spite of herself at a series of pictures: PHOTO OF A TALL AFRICAN NATIVE WITH A COCK SO LONG IT IS TIED IN A KNOT; PHOTO OF A BEAUTIFULLY BREASTED AFRICAN WOMAN; PHOTO OF SEVERAL POSING SOLDIERS; PHOTO OF A PHOTO--THE RANCH HOUSE WITH POOL; PHOTO SELF-PORTRAIT OF PRICE BLOWING SMOKE RINGS; PHOTO OF CLAIRE AND ALEX IN HAPPIER DAYS.

CLAIRE PULLS THE PHOTO OF ALEX AND HER from the clip and looks at it.

THE DOOR OPENS, AND PRICE ENTERS

PRICE

Oh. I didn't know you were here.

CLAIRE

Sure you did. You were taking pictures of me all over the room.

PRICE

Well...yeah...you looked great. Why aren't you partying?

CLAIRE

In a minute.

He notices the picture she's looking at.

PRICE

I printed that up for Alex.

CLAIRE

It wouldn't be the greatest thing you could give him right now...

(beat)

We just split up.

PRICE

Jesus, I'm sorry. Who left who this time?

CLAIRE

I'm the villain...I thought it could be a little cleaner this time -- me in Central America, him in New York.

PRICE
That's pretty clean.

CLAIRE
But he's decided to go to
Nicaragua too.

PRICE
To cover you or the war?

CLAIRE
To cover everything.

Silence. Price moves behind her and gently kisses her
on the ear. She smiles quickly and nervously.

CLAIRE
(cont'd)
No.

He kisses her on the neck.

CLAIRE
(cont'd)
For godsakes, Russell, listen.

The sounds of the party can be heard. He ignores them
and moves around her, trying to kiss her on the lips.
She puts her hand over his mouth.

Price reacts strongly, flaring slightly and withdrawing.

PRICE
I don't want to wait for you
again. We've been circling
each other since the Montreal
Olympics.

CLAIRE
You're a genius of bad timing.
(beat)
I'm going back to the party.

She heads to the door; Price stays. She stops before
getting there, hesitates, then pulls the PHOTO OF THE
ELEPHANT from the string and returns to Price, handing
him the photo.

CLAIRE
(cont'd)
This is a great shot.

PRICE
Thanks.

13 CONTINUED:

13

CLAIRE

I've heard the light in
Nicaragua's even better.

He doesn't respond. They stand for several moments--the sounds of the party get louder. She turns and heads to Alex's celebration, leaving Price alone in the darkroom.

PRICE LOOKS AT CLAIRE AS SHE LEAVES, stares aimlessly for several moments, then focuses back on his PHOTO OF THE ELEPHANTS.

DISSOLVE TO:

NICARAGUA 1979

14 EXT. THE STREETS OF MANAGUA - THE CAPITOL - AFTERNOON

14

CLOSE ON: TIME MAGAZINE WITH COVER PHOTO OF THE ELEPHANTS, gradually PULL BACK to reveal other magazines, candy, cigars, Nicaraguan toys, all in a corner shop, and finally:

A FIRE TRUCK LEADS A PROCESSION through the streets--a group of middle class Nicaraguan women carry a banner that reads "Our Revolution is in Christ" (in Spanish), followed by three Catholic PRIESTS in bright robes, followed by a sound truck with P.A. system, followed by hundreds of townspeople carrying banana leaves and religious signs. All are singing a Catholic hymn in a swaying, hypnotic rhythm. Small red and black flags are scattered throughout.

A CAB DRIVING THROUGH THE STREETS runs into the parade and stops. Price sits in the front seat--his luggage is tied precariously to the roof. The trunk of the cab has been smashed in beyond repair. Price hops out of the cab with his camera bag--he doesn't know what the parade is about but it looks great. He hands the cabbie some money to stay nearby.

PRICE

Wait here.

He runs to join the procession.

PRICE HOPS ONTO THE RUNNING BOARD OF THE FIRE TRUCK and almost simultaneously his light meter is out. HE is surrounded by images: SMALL GIRLS DRESSED AS ANGELS LINE THE STREET, TOWNSPEOPLE HANG FROM DOORWAYS AND WINDOWS, ICE CREAM CARTS AMONG RELIGIOUS ICONS, SOLDIERS WITH GUNS STAND IN SMALL GROUPS ALONG THE PARADE ROUTE.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

PRICE IS QUICKLY TAKING PICTURES OF EVERYTHING, changing cameras, occasionally taking a quick light reading; his actions are instinctive and automatic. Suddenly:

TEN YOUNG TEENAGERS BURST INTO THE PARADE

They wear red and black handkerchiefs, baseball caps, and strange masks. They are chanting:

TEENAGE BOYS

Rafael, Rafael, Rafael...libre o
muerte..Rafael...

A LARGE PAINTING OF THE FACE OF RAFAEL is carried aloft on a stick, draped with red and black scarves.

PRICE PHOTOGRAPHS the boys and the painting.

NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS SHOVE INTO THE PARADE

Up and down the street they spring into action, running for position with their guns.

An ice cream vendor is knocked down, a mother clutches her "angel" daughter, another child is whisked inside a door as the Soldiers break into the procession.

THE "MUCHACHOS" WITH RAFAEL TURN TO RUN but realize that the soldiers have cut off their escape.

THREE SOLDIERS BREAK into the parade and are separated from the boys only by a group of Priests. Trapped, the boys panic, but as the SOLDIERS push towards them:

THE PRIESTS BLOCK THE SOLDIERS and intentionally scuffle with them, allowing the boys just enough time to dart into a house. One of the boys drops the picture of Rafael as he heads in the door.

THE CROWD PUSHES FORWARD, the route to the door is blocked off, and the boys escape.

SOLDIERS FIND THE PORTRAIT OF RAFAEL and shoot it full of holes with their automatic weapons.

PRICE PHOTOGRAPHS "RAFAEL" as his image is ripped to shreds with bullets.

The singing and the parade march on.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL IN MANAGUA - LATER - DAY 15

Overlooking Managua is a sub-tropical paradise that seems far removed from a brutal civil war, this one time tourist watering hole serves as home base to the international press. The cab pulls up, and Price gets out. The driver unties his luggage from the roof as TWO PRESS CORPS MEMBERS recognize Price and greet him as an old friend.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. THE HOTEL POOL AND OUTDOOR BAR - DAY (DUSK) 16

ALEX SITS WITH A BEAUTIFUL NICARAGUAN WOMAN, 35, at a table as PRESS CORPS MEMBERS mingle. A man we will come to know as HUB KITTLE, 40, dressed New York casual, table hops in the b.g.

PRICE SEES ALEX and sneaks over to drop the Time magazine over his shoulder onto the table in front of him. Without looking up, Alex knows Price has arrived. He smiles.

ALEX
Welcome to Managua.

They shake hands warmly, and Price sits down. Price points to the cover as a beer is served.

PRICE
You have something to do with this?

ALEX
Well...I thought of calling your photographs "Pictures from a Lost War"...I'm great at captions -- the New York editors loved it since none of them knew where the hell Chad was anyway -- it legitimized their ignorance, got you a cover, me a feature, and packaged a class struggle in two words. Nifty, eh?

PRICE
Nifty.

Russell acknowledges ISELA CRUZ sitting with Alex.

PRICE
(cont'd)
I'm Russell Price.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

I'm sorry...this is Isela Cruz.
She works for the hotel and
helps out as a translator.

ISELA

My pleasure.

IN THE BACKGROUND CLAIRE WALKS INTO THE POOL-BAR AREA
She carries her handbag and some papers--she stops short
seeing Price sitting with Alex. She hesitates, starts
toward them, stops, and sits down at the bar at the
opposite end of the pool.

Price sees her, and she sees Price. They pretend they
don't. Price turns to Isela and launches into a stream
of broken, chauvinistic Spanish with his usual elegance.

PRICE

(in Spanish)

Looks like you guys have a lot of
bang-bang down here, eh? Little
misunderstanding between the poets
and the government?

ISELA

"Misunderstanding?!" "Down here"
it's called a war. It started in
nineteen thirty. Before you were
born.

ALEX

My Spanish is a little out of
shape -- what'd he say?

ISELA

He said he considers it an honor
to be able to photograph our war.

Price looks at each of them and decides not to push.

ALEX

Russell's got a way with words.

ISELA

I can tell.

PRICE

You're a helluva translator.

ISELA

I know. I'm much in demand around
here. Will you excuse me? If you
have any questions, just ask.

(CONTINUED)

Alex stands to help Isela from her chair. Price presses on, instinctively and effortlessly.

PRICE
Who is Rafael?

ALEX
It depends who you ask.

Alex turns to Isela, who stops as she rises.

ISELA
Rafael? Comandante Rafael. He is either a Marxist dupe of Russia and Cuba...
(beat)
...or the most popular leader of a most popular democratic revolution.
(to Price cynically)
Take your pick.

PRICE
I don't really give a damn...but the guy's got a great face.

A beat, then Price asks his question almost sexually, as if he thinks he could seduce Isela, Rafael, the whole war.

PRICE
(cont'd)
How would he like to be photographed?

ISELA
You'd never find him.

PRICE
Wanta lay odds?

ISELA
You would lose.
(beat)
You must excuse me.

She starts to leave again, and again he stops her.

PRICE
Just one more thing -- is Rafael owned by the C.I.A. or the K.G.B.? I'll figure out the rest.

Isela seems to welcome the question. Her tone is less flip, and she focuses hard on Price.

(CONTINUED)

ISELA

Mr. Price...the world is not divided into East and West anymore. It is divided into North and South. By the time you people figure that out -- it will be too late.

(beat)

Congratulations on your cover.

She touches his Time magazine, kisses Alex on the cheek, and floats magically through the pool area.

Price frames her with his fingers as if composing a shot.

P.O.V. OF ISELA THROUGH PRICE'S FINGERS
Isela kisses another journalist, grabs someone's hand, and lands gracefully at another table.

PRICE

So far this war's got it all over Africa.

ALEX

You're gonna have a ball.

ALEX PLACES HIS HAND OVER PRICE'S "FRAME" blocking out his view of the sexy Isela. Though Alex's tone is gentle, the threat is obvious.

ALEX

(cont'd)

Hands off. I need an interpreter more than you do right now.

Price takes the hint.

PRICE

You still hanging in there with Claire?

Alex chooses his words carefully and speaks slowly.

ALEX

I'm hanging in there like an interim post-war government waiting for the palace to be overrun...by younger men.

Silence and an uneasiness that Alex intended. Price manages a smile.

PRICE

Younger men.

(CONTINUED)

Alex smiles disarmingly.

CLAIRE RISES AT THE OPPOSITE BAR, picks up her papers, and heads straight for the two men with a bounce in her step.

BOTH MEN ARE A BIT SURPRISED AT HER ENTRANCE and she hands a stack of mail to Alex.

CLAIRE

Hi, Alex...Russell! When did you get in?

PRICE

Just now.

She shakes Price's hand in a friendly manner that comes out awkwardly, then races past the moment to address and entertain both men.

CLAIRE

You're not going to believe this --
I just beat you guys and everybody
else here to a story...
(she teases them)
...exclusive...eat your heart out.

PRICE

What'd ya get?

CLAIRE

I've just been promised a private
interview with Tacho.

ALEX

(impressed)
Congratulations. The bastard won't
talk to me.

PRICE

Who's Tacho?

They turn to Price as if everyone knows who Tacho is.

CLAIRE

That's President Somoza's nickname.

PRICE

I don't know who the players are
yet.

ALEX

Want me to order you a hot dog
and a program?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

A bit of tension and awkwardness--Claire quickly takes control and changes the tone.

CLAIRE

Fellas! No fighting after six at night, all right? Curfew.

(beat)

C'mon, we've all got something to celebrate.

CUT TO:

17 INT. THE VIKING CLUB OF MANAGUA - NIGHT

17

Corrugated metal roofs, thatched hut booths, a strange combination of decorative and architectural devices. DAISY WILLIAMS, a large black woman from Nicaragua, sings "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" with a mediocre jazz group.

HUB KITTLE is present, and other journalists drop by the table to say hello.

A BOY PHOTOGRAPHER, 13, aims an ancient bellows type polaroid at a booth in which Claire sits between Alex and Price. They are holding a pose indefinitely while the boy struggles with the camera. They hold up the TIME COVER and a couple of beers in celebration, and when he finally snaps the picture--no flash.

The boy puts the camera down disappointedly.

BOY PHOTOGRAPHER

(in broken English)

Sometimes it doesn't work.

The three journalists relax their pose.

PRICE

Let me look.

ON THE BANDSTAND Daisy has just finished "San Francisco" and spots Alex, motioning to him.

DAISY

Ladeez and Gen'mun, hep me get Aaleex ov' here...

Daisy applauds lightly for Alex to join them. Alex is equally pleased and embarrassed.

ALEX

There's not many piano bars left where I'm still welcome.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED

17

CLAIRE

Go ahead.

ALEX

If she can't sing in the key of
C I'm in trouble.

Alex excuses himself and joins Daisy on the bandstand.
Price and Claire are left alone in the booth as Price
hands the repaired camera back to the boy.

ALEX ~~AT~~ THE PIANO begins a slow, easy cocktail version of
"Stardust," the song of his generation perhaps, and he
seems happy, seduced by his own chords.

PRICE ~~AND~~ CLAIRE RESUME THEIR POSE, and this time the
camera FLASHES. Price pays for the picture from the boy.

At first there is a moment of awkwardness between them.

PRICE

Well...

CLAIRE

"Well"...you finished your
assignment in Chad?

PRICE

Got Africa all wrapped up and
pouched to my editor.

She smiles and relaxes a bit at the typical Price remark.

CLAIRE

You're going to love this war,
Russell...there's good guys, bad
guys, cheap shrimp...

(an afterthought)

And Alex is still singing in the
background.

(beat)

I missed you.

PRICE

We gotta get alone somewhere to
talk.

ALEX BEGINS SINGING as he plays. He sings like a trumpet
player--no voice but great phrasing. He half smiles as
he sings, enjoying the song and enjoying making them
uncomfortable.

ALEX AT THE PIANO

Sometimes I wonder why I spend
these lonely nights,
Dreaming of a song...

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

BACK AT THE BOOTH

CLAIRE

Jesus...he's doing it on purpose.

PRICE

Alex is one of the world's leading experts on military strategy.

They don't really want to talk about Alex though his presence is unavoidable. Price changes gears, gets slightly goofy, and steers the conversation to more comfortable turf.

PRICE

(cont'd)

Well, hell, I just got off the boat...gimme the scoop on Nicaragua...

CLAIRE

Well...about sixty years ago the U.S. Marines invaded to protect American business interests and put down a peasant revolt led by a little man who wore a giant cowboy hat -- his name was Augusto Sandino... In nineteen thirty-four he was murdered at a peace conference, and the Somoza family has ruled ever since...

PRICE

No, no, no...I don't mean the stuff about the peasants -- I mean the real stuff.

She knows what he means, but she wants to tease him a bit first.

CLAIRE

The "real" stuff?...you mean a history of class struggle in agrarian societies?

PRICE

No, c'mon!

CLAIRE

Oh. Okay...well...

(beat)

Just a couple things.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

(cont'd; beat)

One -- there's only two kinds
of beer available -- Tona and
Victoria. Victoria's better.

(beat)

And two -- if you see Miss Panama
hanging around the hotel bar --
hot, hot, hot -- but don't touch.
She belongs to Tacho, and if
anybody gets caught with her then
El Presidente has promised to
personally cut off the guy's...
(unsure which word
to use)

PRICE

Pecker?

CLAIRE

Yeah...and throw it into Lake
Managua.

PRICE

Jesus.

CLAIRE

And the lake's already polluted.

Price is impressed, and yet another new face drops by the
booth--they both recognize and see him coming, a contem-
porary of Price, REGIS FLYNN, a scraggly British journalist
who heads over to their table holding three beers.

PRICE

(mutters to Claire)

Is there anybody here we don't
know?

CLAIRE

No.

Regis slides into their booth, happy to see them.

REGIS

G'damn, Price...kudos on the
African snaps.

(shakes hands, a
perfunctory kiss
on her cheek)

Jeez, Claire, I haven't seen you
since...

CLAIRE

Three Mile Island.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED

REGIS
 Yeah...shit...
 (wistfully)
 Holiday Inn, right?

He nods; they all sip beers and watch Alex sing.

CUT TO:

18 INT. THE NIGHT CLUB KITCHEN

18

A teenage DISHWASHER looks around nervously, then pulls a paper sack from off the shelf, removing a strange mask from it. He pulls the mask over his head. Then from the bag he removes a hand-made zip gun, puts a bullet in it, and darts into the shadows of a nook, waiting.

19 BACK TO THE BOOTH where Regis softly croons a few bars of "Stardust" into Claire's mike. The three of them are having a good time, mildly drunk at best, and uninhibited.

19

CUT TO:

20 EXT. THE CLUB

20

As we hear Alex's gentle rendition of the standard, a NECKING COUPLE moves back into the shadows of the club. Each pulls on a mask, as in the b.g.:

ISELA AND AN ELEGANT MAN ARRIVE AT THE CLUB
 The man, somehow out of place, dresses with casual continental style, not overdone but expensive and tasteful--clearly from another world. He wears a neat hat and moves gracefully. Isela looks stunning, dressed for the evening. The DOORMAN greets them familiarly.

Isela casually checks her watch as they enter the club.

The masked couple in the shadows check their watches.

CUT TO:

21 INT. THE VIKING CLUB

21

As Isela and the man enter, commanding attention without trying. Isela stops at the piano long enough to kiss Alex gently before sitting in the booth with the man.

22 IN PRICE'S BOOTH the new arrivals have caught their attention--Price and Alex still clown slightly, and Claire teases them.

22

CONTINUED:

22 CONTINUED:

22

CLAIRE

Jesus...Louis Jordan walks in,
and I'm sitting with the Everly
Brothers.

REGIS

Before you fall in love -- that's
Marcel Jazy...friend of wine,
women, and Somoza. They say he's
a businessman...

CLAIRE

(interrupting)

He's a businessman in search of
a business...he doesn't try very
hard to cover up his connections
to the C.I.A....

P.O.V. OF JAZY LIGHTING ISELA'S CIGARETTE

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

But look at his moves -- can the
C.I.A. light cigarettes like that?

PRICE

What's wrong with the Everly Brothers?

THE WAITER ARRIVES AT PRICE'S BOOTH and sets down three
shrimp cocktails and more champagne, as:

23 INT. THE BACK DOOR OF THE CLUB

23

It opens quickly, and three more MEN IN MASKS enter quickly.

24 BACK TO THE BOOTH as the waiter speaks with a firm coolness. 24

WAITER

Please stay at your table, and
you won't be hurt.

A FACE IN A MASK MOVES QUICKLY PAST PRICE'S TABLE

ANOTHER MASKED FACE COMES OUT OF THE KITCHEN
The dishwasher waves a gun.

TWO MASKED FACES - THE COUPLE - ENTER THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR
The woman carries an automatic rifle and guards the entrance.

THREE MASKED FACES APPEAR

Almost materialize from thin air, moving silently and without
commotion. The music winds down slowly. (Six Guerrillas
total)

(CONTINUED)

A GUERRILLA QUICKLY SPRAYS AN IMAGE ON THE WALL
With a few deftly drawn strokes, the FACE OF RAFAEL magically appears. The name "RAFAEL" is written under the face, then other names and revolutionary slogans. As this takes place:

A WOMAN GUERRILLA HAS A GUN AT THE HEAD OF A NICARAGUAN BUSINESSMAN

The middle-aged, well-dressed local sits with his wife and two other men. They freeze in fear, the nightclub freezes, as the GUERRILLAS take control of the room swiftly and smoothly.

ONE GUERRILLA FACES THE NICARAGUAN BUSINESSMAN at the table and speaks loudly but without panic. The masked Guerrillas around the room are serious but nervous.

GUERRILLA LEADER

(in Spanish)

We do not want to waste any
ammunition on a head as empty
as yours -- but we will.

BUSINESSMAN

(in Spanish)

What is this?!

GUERRILLA LEADER

(in Spanish)

Shut up! Get up!

The BUSINESSMAN refuses. The GUERRILLA LEADER takes a hand grenade from his pocket and pulls the pin without hesitation, then holds the grenade in front of him fearlessly, inches away from the Businessman's face.

The Businessman rises slowly. The LEADER motions toward the back door of the club.

GUERRILLA LEADER

(cont'd; in Spanish)

You are coming with us -- you
will not be hurt -- we will
trade you for the release of
some Nicaraguans who care about
Nicaragua.

The woman with the gun shoves it into the man's head forcing him to move toward the kitchen door.

PRICE TAKES PICTURES QUICKLY WITH A TINY CAMERA that fits into the palm of his hand. Neatly, surreptitiously, and calmly--Price is coolest in any crisis.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE PUNCHES ON HER TINY TAPE RECORDER instinctively, and a tiny red light comes on.

THE BUSINESSMAN IS SHOVED TO THE DOOR

He hesitates, afraid to leave the room. The Guerrilla shoves the grenade in his face; the woman sticks the gun into his neck even deeper.

MASKED GUERRILLA AT THE FRONT DOOR SHOUTS FOR THEM TO HURRY

THE BANDMEMBERS--INCLUDING ALEX--BACK AWAY FROM THE BANDSTAND
Alex trips over the drum set slightly--a clanging clash of cymbals startles everyone, and as the drama freezes:

THE KITCHEN DOOR SWINGS OPEN, AND THE BOY PHOTOGRAPHER EMERGES
Innocently, the young boy struts out of the kitchen to see what's going on, and as he does the DOOR STRIKES THE ARM OF THE GUERRILLA WITH THE GRENADE, and:

THE GRENADE IS KNOCKED FREE

For an instant, everything freezes, and:

THE GRENADE ROLLS ACROSS THE FLOOR

Daisy Williams, the singer, runs away screaming as the grenade comes to rest near a crowded section of the club.

A Guerrilla guarding the side door rushes for it, picks it up, and as he does:

THE GRENADE EXPLODES IN THE GUERRILLA'S HAND

A brutal explosion--the ceiling caves in partially, the musical instruments explode, and:

THE SANDINISTA GUERRILLAS DART FROM THE ROOM through various doors. The boy photographer lies bloodied. The Guerrilla who picked up the grenade is a barely recognizable corpse. The Businessman is soiled but unhurt.

ONE HALF OF THE CLUB BREAKS OUT IN FLAME

As a broken gas pipe feeds a sudden outburst of fire, the club's patrons panic--screaming and shoving towards the door as the ROOM LIGHTS UP, and:

PRICE'S LIGHT METER IS OUT AT ONCE followed quickly by a 35mm camera, quickly clicking off picture after picture of the club amid the flames and panic. The new light makes his job easier.

PRICE TAKES A LIGHT READING near the body of the boy photographer. He sees the boy's camera lying nearby. Price puts away his light meter and feels the boy's pulse, then puts his ear to the boy's heart--making sure he is not still alive.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

LA GUARDIA SOLDIERS AND FIREMEN FILL THE ROOM

CUT TO:

25 INT. THE PRESS ROOM AT THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL - LATER 25

The chaos of a busy, cramped Telex room. A switchboard-- several journalists trying to place phone calls. Press come and go--coffee, cigarettes, and half-eaten sandwiches.

CLAIRE TEARS A STORY OFF THE TELEX while Price stands to the side of the action eating a sandwich and watching.

ALEX STANDS AT THE CENTER OF IT ALL
Established as the senior figure (or one of them) to whom other, younger journalists come for information.

A YOUNG JOURNALIST, a Time stringer, is slightly distraught on the phone, and interrupts Alex's dealing with others, cupping the phone, to announce:

TIME STRINGER

...it's Charlie, from New York -- says that a terrorist bombing of a Central American restaurant isn't big enough to hold for the world section...

ALEX

Tell him we have pictures.

YOUNG JOURNALIST

He knows.

ALEX

Tell him there were pieces of body in the piano, and somebody was singing, "I Left My Heart in San Francisco."

(beat)

What's he got better than that?

TIME STRINGER

He's got the Pope visiting Egypt.

Alex grabs the phone in disgust and launches in.

ALEX

Forget the Pope, Charlie. Every week you got the Pope somewhere. This is a very big story down here because it's the first sign of fighting in Managua.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

(cont'd; beat)

Yeah, well get a map and look up
Nicaragua -- ya drive to New
Orleans and turn left.

While Charlie argues on the other end of the phone, Alex
initials papers and performs several jobs at once.

ALEX

(cont'd)

Like hell I'm editorializing, the
whole thing happened in a roomful
of C.I.A. and press. What do you
want?!

(beats)

How do I know they were C.I.A.?
They wore name tags, what do you
think? We're backing a Fascist
again -- I know that ain't news,
but see if you can find an angle!

HUB KITTLE has been floating through the room and, upon
hearing the word "fascist," takes offense and approaches
Alex.

HUB

Hey! There's fascists and then
there's fascists, right? Be
careful how you throw words like
that around.

Alex ignores Hub though he is slightly pestered by him, and
continues on the phone as he initials papers brought to him.

ALEX

We don't have any pictures of
Rafael because nobody knows where
the son of a bitch is, and anybody
crazy enough to go after him...

Alex spots Price who is standing nearby, still eating a
sandwich, still enjoying the high energy buzz of the room.
Alex directs his next line so that Price cannot fail to
get the message. Alex plays the moment coolly.

ALEX

(cont'd)

...is liable to get his nuts shot
off.

Hub nods seriously, in agreement. Price turns. Alex smiles.
Price smiles. Alex hangs up, grumbling, then turns his
attention to the persistent Hub Kittle.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

ALEX
(cont'd)
Yeah, well g'bye...
(to Hub)
Who the fuck are you?

HUB
(extending a hand)
Hub Kittle. I'm with Lewitsky
and Knupp -- New York. We have
a client down here.

Alex is irritated but fascinated.

ALEX
Who?

HUB
President Somoza.

Alex is incredulous that Somoza employs a New York P.R.
firm. Hub is professionally used to this reaction--no
panic.

HUB
(cont'd)
I know, I know...
(beat)
But there's an untold story here.
I mean, the man has a point of
view too, right?

Alex turns to leave; Hub corners him.

HUB
(cont'd)
We got a national anthem contest
going on right now, and you guys
are ignoring it. Lotta human
interest.

Alex turns to other business though Hub persists.

26 ELSEWHERE IN THE ROOM a young NICARAGUAN WOMAN, 18, is 26
talking to Claire. She seems to be part of the local press.

CLAIRE
I want you to get me copies of the
Government inventory lists of all
captured Guerrilla weapons. I want
to know if the guns are Israeli,
Belgian, Russian, Cuban...

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

YOUNG WOMAN

The Guerrillas are not supplied
by anybody from the outside.

CLAIRE

Fine -- give me proof.

A TELEPHONE OPERATOR CALLS TO CLAIRE through the chaos.

OPERATOR

Su hija, su hija! Your daughter
from Los Angeles.

Claire sighs at the bad timing but seems delighted to be interrupted by her daughter, and brushes aside a Stringer forcing paperwork upon her. Claire takes the phone into a bare, adjacent hallway for some privacy.

IN A BARE HALLWAY Claire talks to her daughter.

CLAIRE

Hi, baby! How are you?

(beat)

Has Grandmother spoiled you silly
by now? She has? Good.

(beats)

Yes, I got your letter with the
picture of your new boyfriend.
He's very good looking...but he's
a bit old, isn't he? No? Just
how old is he?...

P.O.V. FROM THE TELEX ROOM TO CLAIRE

Price knows this is not his world, and he wanders outside.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. MANAGUAN STREET NEAR THE HOTEL - LATER THAT NIGHT

27

Price bounces along, whistling, "San Francisco." An occasional Guardia jeep or taxi rumbles past. He strolls up the walkway of a house from which comes a strange, blue glow.

28 INT. THE MONEYCHANGERS HOUSE - NIGHT

28

Blue walls, bare bulbs, several pictures on the wall, and an old woman lying in a hammock. Music in the b.g. Price approaches her and hands her a \$100 bill--there is a brief negotiation of the black market value.

PRICE

(in broken Spanish)

Cuanto?

(CONTINUED)

Quince. OLD WOMAN

Veinte. PRICE

Diezysiete. OLD WOMAN

She shrugs, declaring the negotiation ended, and leaves the room to change the dollar into cordobas. Price idly studies the pictures on the wall:

PICTURE OF ANASTAZIO SOMOZA IN WHITE, PICTURE OF THE VIRGIN OF GUADALUPE, PICTURE OF SANTA CLAUS, FADED NEWSPHOTO OF HANK AARON HITTING HIS 715TH HOME RUN.

PRICE SMILES AND TURNS RIGHT INTO A SHARP BAYONET mounted to a rifle held threateningly by a Guardia soldier.

THE SMALL ROOM IS FILLED WITH NATIONAL GUARDS
We haven't heard them enter over the sounds of music and our preoccupation with the pictures.

PRICE
What is this? I'm a journalist!

No answer. Price pulls a thick passport and press credentials from a pocket, handing them to the Officer in charge.

PRICE
(cont'd)
Journalista, periodista!

The officer looks at Price's passport photo, studies it briefly and takes the passport. He nods.

A rifle butt is jammed violently into Price's belly--he doubles over. The Officer nods, and Price is led away.

As the Guard hauls him outside, the OLD WOMAN appears in the doorway with a stack of local currency.

CUT TO:

29 INT. MILITARY HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

29

Price is led into a dark cell where another PRISONER, 50, lies in street clothes on the floor. The Prisoner is spat upon by the Guards and kicked awake. Price cringes.

(CONTINUED)

GUARD
Padre Puta, Padre Puta, Padre
Puta...
(in Spanish to Price)
Here is a Priest for you to
confess your sins.

The Guards laugh and leave. The Prisoner rises to his feet.
Price keeps his distance. The Prisoner looks in bad shape.

PRISONER PRIEST
Cigarillo?

Price hands him a cigarette and lights it. A long, deep
drag.

PRICE
Priest?
(the man nods)
(in broken Spanish)
What are you doing here?

PRISONER PRIEST
(in Spanish)
The government accused me of
using the church to hide Rebels
and guns.

PRICE
(in Spanish)
Governments are always wrong, eh?

PRISONER PRIEST
(in Spanish)
This time they're right. Who are
you?

PRICE
(in Spanish)
Un periodista.

PRISONER PRIEST
(in Spanish)
Whose side are you on?

PRICE
(in Spanish)
I don't take sides. I take
pictures.

PRISONER PRIEST
(in Spanish)
No sides?

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

PRICE
(in Spanish)
No.

The Prisoner Priest looks at Price with disdain.

PRISONER PRIEST
Periodista Puta, todos periodistas
son putas.
(All journalists are whores)

The Prisoner sits down in the corner ignoring Price who is surprised to be treated so despicably.

PRISONER PRIEST
(cont'd; quietly)
Go home.

CUT TO:

30 INT. A BRIGHTLY LIT ROOM

30

Price is led into a lineup of 10 people, all Nicaraguans. The room is narrow and so brightly lit that at first he covers his eyes.

FIGURES MOVE IN THE SHADOWS
A Guardia soldier moves up and down the lineup, stopping to point at a prisoner. In the line we recognize the WAITER from the Viking Club. Price speaks to the soldier in a calm, reasoned tone.

PRICE
Mi amigo -- mala interpretacion,
eh? Periodista, comprende?
Famoso. Time magazine.

The soldier whirls at Price in a rage out of all proportion to Price's tone, shouting:

SOLDIER
(in Spanish)
Shut up!

Price holds up his hands--he may be fearless, but he's not stupid. The soldier pulls a knife, then pulls his own tongue from his mouth, and makes motions with the knife as if cutting out his tongue. The message is clear--Price doesn't speak.

The soldier walks up to the Waiter and points. The Waiter is frightened.

(CONTINUED)

Through the shadows we see an officer talking with a civilian in a hat. The civilian points to a door.

THE WATER IS LED AWAY THROUGH A DOOR protesting desperately as he goes. The soldier moves to the next prisoner--he too is led away. This repeats itself until the soldier arrives at Price.

THE SOLDIER POINTS TO PRICE

PRICE'S P.O.V. THROUGH THE SHADOWS

The civilian is in a discussion with the officer--it is clear that his opinion affects the decisions. For a moment Price doesn't know where he's going to be led. The civilian points to a different door--it opens--and Price steps down off the display rack into a room.

THROUGH THE DOOR as Price steps through, the action continues with the other Nicaraguan prisoners. Price looks around quickly, but the Civilian and Officer are gone. He is quickly shown into a bare office.

31 INT. THE BARE ROOM

31

Pictures on the wall of Somoza and the FLAG RAISING AT IWO JIMA. Price's cameras and bag sit on a desk.

P.O.V. THE CIVILIAN THROUGH A DOOR - IT IS MARCEL JAZY
His rumpled elegance is at odds with the brutal surroundings.
The door closes.

A SENIOR OFFICER ENTERS THE BARE ROOM, and Price addresses him at once.

PRICE

Soy un periodista.

SENIOR GUARD OFFICER

(in excellent English)

Mr. Price...you must accept our deepest apologies for the misunderstanding. Somebody saw you taking photographs of terrorists hooligans in the parade and at the nightclub -- our young officers get carried away...they're always looking for traitors.

PRICE

That film is half way to New York by now.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

SENIOR GUARD OFFICER
I know, I know...It was all a
misunderstanding...una mala
interpretacion. Your cameras.

The Officer reaches for one of Price's cameras and hands
it to him, but as he does:

THE CAMERA DROPS TO THE GROUND AND BREAKS - SILENCE
The Officer would love for Price to get angry.

SENIOR GUARD OFFICER
(cont'd)
I'm sorry.

Price smiles barely, and refuses to pop off.

PRICE
Forget it.

Price puts his cameras in his bag, and as he is shown from
the room he notices a copy of the TIME MAGAZINE WITH
ELEPHANT sitting on the desk.

SENIOR GUARD OFFICER
This way.

Price is shown to a door, handed over to a soldier, and
led outside into the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

32 EXT. MILITARY PRISON - DAWN

32

Claire stands at the main doorway surrounded by GUARDS,
an OFFICER, and an unidentified CIVILIAN--she is arguing
with them in rapid Spanish, not allowing them to get in
a word.

CLAIRE
(in Spanish)
You throw a journalist in jail--it
gets in the papers. You walk all
over the same press credentials you
pass out. I demand to speak to some-
one in authority or I'll go to Tacho
myself...I don't understand you--you're
big and strong and handsome but you're
not so smart!
(beat)
You should be trying to seduce us!

OFFICER
Senora...

(CONTINUED)

PRICE IS SHOWN OUT A DOOR IN THE BACKGROUND and sees her.

PRICE

Claire!

They hurry toward each other and embrace briefly. The Guards watch it all curiously.

CLAIRE

You're okay?

PRICE

I'm fine--what're you doing here?
These guys are goons.

CLAIRE

They love being beaten up by a woman
(beat)

I've been looking for you all night--
why'd they lock you up?

They walk away together.

PRICE

I don't know. Taking pictures.
The usual. Jazy got me released.

CLAIRE

Jazy?! You think there's a story there?

PRICE

Ahh...C.I.A. stories are all alike.
I wanta find Rafael.

CLAIRE

You need help?

PRICE

No. You?

CLAIRE

No.

(beat)

When should we start.

PRICE

I figure you probably want to do a little
research on the history of Marcel Jazy's .
business connections in the third world
countries with C.I.A. influence...

CLAIRE

Oh. I assumed you'd just look him in
the eye and say "Gimme a break, for
crissakes, Marcel, are you a spy or
aren't you?"

CUT TO:

33 EXT. GARDEN COURTYARD OF MARCEL JAZY - DAY LATER

33

Marcel Jazy stands, drink in hand, looking slightly rumpled in the daylight, slightly older, but more charming and self-effacing than his first impression indicated. His two story Mediterranean style house is in slight disrepair; the gardens are scraggly and overgrown. The pool is empty. Jazy addresses Price and Claire.

PRICE

...are you a spy or aren't you,
eh?

JAZY

(smiling)

Spy is such an odd word, Mr.
Price...nobody is a...'spy'...
anymore.

CLAIRE

Russell prefers pictures to words...

JAZY

You don't have to apologize...
you're journalists.

CLAIRE

And you're a businessman?

JAZY

A businessman? That sounds good.
Okay, I'm a businessman.

PRICE

Why was I arrested, and why did
you get me released, and who are
you?

As he speaks, the questioning comes to a sudden halt as a SPECTACULAR LOOKING WOMAN emerges from the shadows of the house into the light of the courtyard. She is tall, Latin, and besides high heels wears only a shiny, high fashion swimsuit, cut high on the legs.

Price, Claire, and Jazy stop to watch as the woman stops to look into the empty pool.

WOMAN IN SWIMSUIT

No agua.

JAZY

(nodding)

No agua.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN IN SWIMSUIT

(in Spanish)

Oh, Marcel! You told me there would be water in the pool this week!

Jazy leans in very coolly to Price and Claire as he pours an extra glass of wine and speaks softly in English again.

JAZY

If she dove in, I assure you she wouldn't notice.

He carries the glass of wine to the woman, smiling warmly.

JAZY

(cont'd; to Miss Panama

in Spanish)

Sweetheart, the Guerrillas knocked out the pumping station on the road to Masaya, and we must ration water for the time being. Next week maybe things will be better.

WOMAN IN SWIMSUIT

(in Spanish)

Maybe I should go back to Panama.

JAZY

(in Spanish)

Maybe you should.

Jazy pushes a lounge chair over to her and hands her a glass of wine. The woman unfolds gracefully into a lounge chair in the sun. Very sexy. She reaches for and kisses Jazy's hand affectionately--he kisses her forehead. She feels better now.

Jazy motions for Claire and Price to follow him inside.

The pool is visible in b.g. His house, like the pool, is rumpled and slightly sloppy though it betrays the taste of its occupant--books everywhere, pictures on the wall, nothing cheap or tacky but everything is well worn.

JAZY

You were arrested because the Guardia are clowns who specialize in excess. You were released because I told them to release you.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE

These are not the normal duties
of a businessman.

He looks at them directly.

JAZY

But they are the normal duties of
a...spy, eh? You win, I'm a spy.

(smiles)

There, are you happy? I feel
better.

He refills their glasses.

JAZY

(cont'd)

Now we can relax. You can turn
off your little thing.

The red light of her recorder is on. She smiles slightly,
undisturbed, and turns it off.

JAZY

(cont'd)

Oh, I trust you won't say anything
to hurt me. In some ways I'm a
terrible spy. I used to be much
better at it, but now it seems
everyone knows who I am. I have
too many girlfriends. I like to
be photographed.

(beat)

I talk too much.

Price and Claire are almost afraid to speak, afraid to
interrupt this strange performance.

JAZY

(cont'd)

I always talk too much...but my
girlfriends like that...No matter.

(pointing to the
swimsuited woman)

You know who she is?

CLAIRE AND PRICE

No.

JAZY

That's Miss Panama. Do you know
who that is?

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE AND PRICE

Oh, yeah, yes, etc.

JAZY

She's in love with me. I've got to get some water in the pool.

(beat)

And once a week I have lunch with President Somoza to discuss security measures against the Sandinista insurgents, but all he wants to talk about is Miss Panama...he's worried about her.

Claire interrupts with a smile.

CLAIRE

Because he thinks she's seeing another man?

Jazy smiles slightly before confirming.

JAZY

...and he assigned me to find out who the man is.

They all smile at this complication. Price is impressed. Jazy changes the subject with fluent and disturbing ease.

JAZY

(cont'd)

We all know the Revolutionaries are going to win, don't we?

Silence. They don't know how to respond.

THEIR P.O.V. AS MISS PANAMA STRETCHES LIKE AN ENORMOUS CAT
They all are slightly entertained and glad for the relief.

Unsure what to say next, Price notices a picture on the wall:

CLOSEUP - A BLOWN-UP FRAMED PHOTO OF THE RANCH HOUSE WITH POOL

The same picture we saw on the leaflets in Africa.

PRICE

There's a rumor about this picture. Some people say you're a genius -- that you invented this scheme.

JAZY

It was lots of people's idea... Have you been to Leon?

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

We're going to Masaya...they say
the Rebels have hit the cuartel.

PRICE

It's supposed to be nasty there...
a lotta people think Rafael's in
the South. I want to find out.

JAZY

No, no, it's not "nasty" yet.
Another week maybe.

(beat)

You would love Leon. A nice
cathedral and beautiful light...
et un peu de bang-bang.

CLAIRE

We're not doing a travelogue, you
understand.

JAZY

Of course, of course...only I have
heard that Comandante Rafael has
recently had his unit in the area.

PRICE

(surprised)

Rafael is near Leon?

JAZY

Well...it's a rumor, what do I know?

The voice of Miss Panama.

MISS PANAMA

Estoy desesperado!

JAZY

She's lonely!

CLAIRE

Don't let us stand in the way.

JAZY

It's my job.

(beat)

You think I talk too much?

He doesn't wait for an answer, but excuses himself and
goes out to tend to Miss Panama.

P.O.V. OF JAZY AND MISS PANAMA BY THE EMPTY POOL as Jazy
touches her, whispers, and she waves to Claire and Price.

DISSOLVE TO:

35 INT. PRICE'S HOTEL BATHROOM - DAY

35

Early morning. Price lathers up with shaving cream for the first time, cleaning up. As he applies the lather he stops, and slowly draws a face on the mirror with shaving cream until he is staring at:

THE IMAGE OF RAFAEL IN SHAVING CREAM ON THE MIRROR

CUT TO:

36 EXT. NICARAGUAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

36

A RENTED CAR WITH WHITE FLAGS turns onto the road to Leon. Price drives, eats, and reads a map. Claire takes the map from him and reads it herself. They seem to enjoy their first moment alone without Alex looking over their shoulder. A small band-aid is on Price's clean shaven cheek.

CLAIRE

Did you dream about Miss Panama last night?

PRICE

I dreamed about you.

CLAIRE

Have a good time?

PRICE

Yeah...so'd you.

She reaches out and touches his band-aid.

CLAIRE

And old war injury flaring up?

PRICE

Is the tape on?

CLAIRE

Of course.

PRICE

I was on the deck of the U.S.S. Pueblo catching some rays when the North Koreans attacked...took a bullet right in the chest, but by luck I had an extra roll of high speed ektachrome in this pocket right here...over the heart...

CLAIRE

And the bullet ricocheted off the film, grazed your cheek, and saved your life.

(CONTINUED)

PRICE

You heard about it?! I was lucky.

PASSING SHOT OF A CLUSTER OF ROADSIDE CROSSES marking a series of graves. Immediately the tone in Claire's voice changes, sobered by the reminder of war.

CLAIRE

Did anyone ever die next to you in combat?

PRICE

Yeah.

CLAIRE

What did you do?

PRICE

F.8 at a sixtieth.

CLAIRE

That's an old joke. My question was serious.

PRICE

So was I.

(beat)

You ever dream about me?

CLAIRE

Once.

PRICE

How was I?

CLAIRE

Fast.

Again their glibness is interrupted by what they came to see. Even as they joke, they watch the landscape with concern.

37 REFUGEES ARE STREAMING OUT OF LEON, mostly women and children, 37
some old men, carrying their possessions. Soldiers stand around.

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

I'm basically a coward, Russell,
I hope you understand that. I
hope we don't get shot.

PRICE

Me too.

CUT TO:

38 A GUARDIA ROADBLOCK ON A HILL OVERLOOKING THE CITY 38
The press car pulls up to a stop. Price and Claire get out quickly, hand their credentials to a soldier, and open the trunk and the hood. As the car is searched they look down at the city.

P.O.V. LEON AS A PLANE CIRCLES FIRING ROCKETS AND SMOKE RISES from several places in the town. The sound of gunfire.

CLAIRE
(to soldier in Spanish)
I thought it was quiet here.

SOLDIER
(in Spanish)
Quiet? Are you sure you want to go down there? Not me.

The soldier laughs at the journalists and hands back the credentials.

SOLDIER
(cont'd; in Spanish)
You must leave the car here.

Price speaks in English knowing he can't be understood.

PRICE
(to soldier)
You thinking of scoring a Toyota?

CLAIRE
(in Spanish)
No problem -- we leave the car.

Price and Claire remove their things from the car, and Price takes the distributor cap as well as the keys. They walk over and look down the road leading into the city under seige.

MORE REFUGEES EVACUATE THE TOWN--it is a most uninviting sight. The plane passes over the town in the distance firing rockets.

CLAIRE
(cont'd)
Now what?

Price responds by flashing his light meter in the air, taking a quick, nervous reading.

PRICE
C'mon. Be careful.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

CLAIRE

Be careful?! Where the fuck we
going? Better light?

CUT TO:

39 EXT. STREET INTO LEON - DAY

39

PRICE AND CLAIRE WALK SLOWLY INTO LEON

Looking around warily as they go, they are the only people
entering the town. Claire speaks softly into her tape
recorder as they walk in, recording the event without
editorializing.

CLAIRE

...June tenth...the evacuation
of Leon...a woman carries a pig...
signs for the F.S.L.N. are
everywhere...a body...

THE BODY OF A YOUNG MAN lies ignored on the sidewalk. They
continue walking and soon come to:

AN INTERSECTION HELD BY LA GUARDIA TROOPS WITH A TANQUETTA
Price and Claire duck into a doorway, protected in effect
by the Government soldiers who wait silently, guns ready,
around the corner of a building. We see what they're
waiting for.

A YOUNG SANDINISTA COMES OUT OF A BUILDING a block away,
holding a handgun. Momentarily confused, he begins running
toward us, toward the soldiers waiting in ambush. The
Guerrilla races quickly to his waiting death, and as he
turns the corner right into a dozen Guardia troops:

THE GUARDIA GUNS OPEN UP ON THE YOUNG GUERRILLA, killing
him instantly.

CLAIRE TURNS HER HEAD AWAY unable to watch.

PRICE RECORDS THE EVENT WITH HIS CAMERA

THE GUARDIA FOLLOW THE TANQUETTA SLOWLY down the street
toward the Rebel youth's house. Suddenly the intersection
is empty.

PRICE AND CLAIRE MOVE DOWN A SIDESTREET SLOWLY as:

SEVERAL GUERRILLA MUCHACHOS DART OUT OF AN ALLEY with
sharpened sticks, a spear gun, and one home-made gun. The
Muchachos hesitate briefly, lost, and see Price.

THE MUCHACHOS QUICKLY POSE FOR A PICTURE motioning for
Price to record them. They pose instantly in "tough-guy"
posture.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

PRICE TAKES THEIR PICTURE and just as quickly they dart away through a bombed out building.

40 THREE SANDINISTAS LEAP OFF A ROOFTOP and race toward Claire and Price who freeze: 40

CLAIRE

Russell?!

For a moment they aren't sure what this means--are they in trouble? The Sandinistas shove past the two journalists, pushing open a doorway and disappearing inside. For a moment Price and Claire are alone on the street.

THE DOOR OPENS AGAIN SLOWLY and a middle-aged WOMAN appears, motioning for them to come inside.

41 INT. PEDRO'S HOUSE - DAY

41

The Three Sandinistas, dressed half in khaki, half recycled disco, are pleading with a young man, PEDRO, 15.

SANDINISTA #1

(in Spanish)

You must come and help us...one more time.

PEDRO

(in Spanish)

No, please...

One of the Sandinistas brings Pedro his rumpled baseball jersey from another room.

SANDINISTA #2

(in Spanish)

For Leon...for Nicaragua!

Pedro sees Price and Claire and is more interested in them. He speaks in broken but understandable English.

PEDRO

Americans? Journalists?

CLAIRE AND PRICE

Yes.

Pedro lights up, and runs to a shelf where he returns with a baseball he is signing.

PEDRO

Ah! I put my autograph on this ball.

(CONTINUED)

SANDINISTA #1

(in Spanish)

Pedro! There is no time to waste.

Pedro is more interested in the two Americans.

PEDRO

When you get back to the United States, I want you to give this ball to Tippy Martinez for me. He is from Nicaragua.

Pedro hands Claire the baseball as the Sandinistas plead with Pedro for his help. He is more interested in getting the baseball delivered to Tippy Martinez. Claire accepts the ball graciously, exchanges awkward glances with Price, and puts it in her shoulder bag.

SANDINISTA #1

(in Spanish)

Enrique is dead! Roberto has disappeared! The Guardia has the church, and we need you!

PEDRO

(to Claire and Price)

You come, eh?

(to the Sandinistas)

Can they come with us?

SANDINISTA #2

Come! Everybody come!

They go to the door and open it a crack to look out.

P.O.V. THE TANQUETTA PASSES as Soldiers kick open doors across the street.

The Sandinistas go to a corner of the room and push a book shelf out of the way. A large hole has been broken in the wall. They climb through the hole into the living room of the next house; the woman pushes the shelf back over the hole with great effort.

A family huddles in the corner as the MAN OF THE HOUSE pulls back a couch and a hanging blanket, revealing another hole knocked in the wall. The Sandinistas, Pedro, Claire and Price scramble through.

P.O.V. THROUGH A SERIES OF DOOR-SIZED HOLES IN THE WALLS of all the houses on the block, connecting the homes with a secret passageway. The six of them race through the houses, each hole opening and then closing magically.

43 INT. THE KITCHEN OF A TINY SIDEWALK RESTAURANT - DAY

43

The Three Sandinistas, Pedro, Claire, and Price emerge. A WOMAN, 50, runs the cafe and welcomes them. The SIX crawl so as not to be seen from the street; they stop long enough to survey the plaza.

P.O.V. THE CENTRAL PLAZA OF LEON DOMINATED BY A HUGE CATHEDRAL Half a dozen bodies are scattered across the plaza. Otherwise, it is empty.

P.O.V. SIX GUARDIA SNIPERS IN THE CHURCH TOWER control the plaza. As we watch, they fire off occasional shots in different directions--there is no way to cross the plaza.

THE WOMAN PULLS A TRAY OF "CONTACT BOMBS" from the oven, home-made grenades that look like muffins on a tray. Pedro grabs one and pretends to bite into it. The Sandinistas start to laugh and catch themselves as Pedro clowns. Claire and Price aren't sure what the "muffins" are and don't respond; mostly they are on edge. The contact bombs are put in a sack.

The woman opens a trap door in the floor, and the six of them climb down a ladder into a tunnel.

CUT TO:

44 INT. TUNNEL UNDERNEATH THE FLOOR - DAY

44

Pedro leads them with a candle through a dark passage under the street. Overhead we hear gunfire. Rats scurry, and water runs through an open sewer.

CUT TO:

45 INT. THE CATHEDRAL - DAY

45

A tapestry rug is pulled away, and Pedro's head appears. He climbs out and soon all the party is in the church. A PRIEST leads them quickly through an immense, nearly European interior of ornate altars and burning candles. The small party is led to a small corner of the sanctuary where a long, rickety ladder leads up to the roof.

THE SANDINISTAS SCRAMBLE UP THE LADDER as it sways. Pedro follows with his sack of contact bombs. Then Price goes up as the Priest holds the ladder. The American is much larger than the Nicaraguans--the ladder squeaks and sways, and when he is nearly at the top:

THE LADDER CRACKS as Price reaches the top and is helped to safety. The Priest steadies the ladder now made unsafe and clearly Claire wants to go onto the roof.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

PRIEST

(in Spanish)

No, please...it's not safe. You must come with me.

Claire looks at Price--she wants to go on the roof but the sound of close gunfire settles the dilemma. Claire hurries off to safety with the Priest.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. THE ROOFTOP OF THE CATHEDRAL OF LEON - LATE IN DAY

46

THREE SANDINISTAS, PEDRO, AND PRICE EMERGE FROM A TUNNEL onto a lower level of the cathedral rooftop where a body lies. They are exposed immediately and automatic weapons fire opens up on them--the Sandinistas flatten against a wall, quickly becoming separated from Price and Pedro.

TWO SANDINISTAS RACE FOR COVER BEHIND A CUPOLA in a move that is equally daring and foolish. The diversion draws fire from the two soldiers.

PRICE'S LIGHT METER IS INSTANTLY OUT TAKING READINGS as Pedro huddles with him, curious at this strange act.

TWO GUARDIA MOVE INTO POSITION TO FLUSH OUT THE SANDINISTAS as they hide behind the cupolas. The hidden Third Guerrilla opens fire killing a Guardia soldier, and the other soldier races for the belltower. As he does:

THE SANDINISTAS SEIZE THE MOMENT TO RUSH CLOSER, waving to Pedro who slips along a wall with his bag of bombs.

PRICE STARTS TO FOLLOW BUT IS PINNED DOWN BY FIRE and chooses to take refuge halfway in an alcove. As fire from both sides ricochets all over the rooftop, Price switches camera lenses seemingly oblivious to the action.

PEDRO MEETS ONE OF THE SANDINISTAS in a protected niche and quickly they are unfolding his bag, setting the "muffin bombs" out on the rooftop.

THE OTHER TWO SANDINISTAS OPEN HEAVY FIRE and briefly draw heavier fire from the belltower, as:

PEDRO PICKS UP A MUFFIN weighing it briefly in his hand, like a pitcher. He studies the surroundings--runners on first and third, no outs--he spits in his left (his pitching hand) and rubs it in casually.

Pedro crosses himself, goes into an abbreviated pitching motion, then rears and fires the 'muffin' toward the bell-tower window, exposing himself as he does.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

AN EXPLOSION IN THE TOWER

PEDRO THROWS ANOTHER INTO THE TOWER--another explosion.

A GUARDIA SOLDIER STAGGERS INTO THE WINDOW and a Sandinista drops him with a shot.

All is quiet.

THE THREE SANDINISTAS CAREFULLY RUSH THE TOWER, looking in and motion to Pedro and Price that all is okay, and as they do:

ANOTHER SHOT RINGS OUT--they whirl around--Pedro and Price drop again. A lone Guardia soldier fires at them from the other tower.

A THIRD SANDINISTA DROPS HIM WITH A VOLLEY OF FIRE
Again all is quiet.

PRICE FOLLOWS THE SANDINISTAS TO THE FIRST BELLTOWER and looks in.

FIVE BODIES LIE SCATTERED AND BLOODIED
One of the Guerrillas kicks a couple of them to make sure they are dead. In the corner, one body lies on top of another. Satisfied, the Sandinistas head for the other tower.

PRICE STAYS BEHIND TO TAKE A FEW PICTURES and the ever-present light meter appears, followed by several quick shots of the bodies. Then Price goes to one of the arched, stone windows. He looks out over the city.

P.O.V. OF LEON -DUSK

Late in the afternoon now, the fighting is over for the day. An occasional gunshot. Smoke rises from scattered places throughout the city. There is new rubble. The town is littered with bodies.

47 P.O.V. THE RED CROSS WAGON MOVING THROUGH THE STREET
A man walks in front of it, chanting slowly, rhythmically:

47

RED CROSS MAN

Hay heridas o muertes aqui?

Hay heridas o muertes aqui?

(Are there wounded or dead here?)

We see a woman drag a body out into the street. The Red Cross man makes small stacks of bodies. He douses the bodies with gasoline and sets the pile aflame. Then continues.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

RED CROSS MAN

(cont'd)

Hay heridas o muertes aqui?

48 Price watches. He thinks he hears something, then dismisses it. Something else. A voice, almost a whisper. 48

VOICE

Price. You motherfucker, Price,
I'm talking to you.

He turns. One of the bodies speaks.

VOICE

(cont'd)

Where are those bastards...are
they away?

Price looks out--the Sandinistas are on the other side of
the roof. This war gets stranger.

PRICE

They're away.

A body rolls out from under another body. Blood-splattered,
smiling, wiping the blood from his face. It is Oates, the
mercenary from Africa. He peeks out the window--the
Sandinistas are on the other side of the roof. He whispers.

OATES

What the fuck are you doing here?

PRICE

What the fuck are you doing here?

For a moment they understand that they are there for the
same reason--they make their livings off war. Oates peeks
out the window nervously and repeatedly.

OATES

Awright, awright -- you're
lookin' good...how ya like
Nicaragua?

OATES readies his automatic weapon in case it's needed--
routine. Price doesn't know how to answer.

PRICE

It's beautiful.

Oates laughs quickly and softly--he is tuned into the
strangeness of Price's answer.

OATES

Shitload o' greasers though, eh?

(CONTINUED)

48

CONTINUED:

48

P.O.V. THE SANDINISTAS HEADING BACK TOWARD US

OATES AND PRICE SEE THEM, and Oates crawls back under the pile of bodies.

THE SANDINISTAS LOOK INTO THE BELLTOWER, all looks quiet, and they motion to Price.

SANDINISTA #1

(in Spanish)

It's getting late -- come on.

CUT TO:

49

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL - DUSK

49

The Three Sandinistas, Pedro, and Price are hiding in the shadows of the main church entrance. The Sandinistas are carefully peeking around the corner, checking out the plaza. It seems safe. The door opens; the Priest lets Claire out. For a moment she looks around to see who's still alive--in the shadows Price looks like one of the Guerrillas. They see each other and embrace briefly.

CLAIRE

You're okay?

The Sandinistas seem to relax. The Sandinistas take pride in Pedro and pat his left arm for Price and Claire.

SANDINISTA #1

San-dee Koufax, no?

SANDINISTA #2

Si, Koufax.

SANDINISTA #3

Es mejor que Koufax, eh?!

They seem to want approval from the Americans.

CLAIRE

Much better than Koufax.

The Sandinistas slap hands, familiar with the American gesture. The Six start walking across the plaza away from the church. In the b.g. we see piles of bodies burning; the Red Cross tends to the wounded locals. Spirits are high as they walk. The tiny red light glows on Claire's recorder.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

PEDRO

Koufax is okay...but Tippy Martinez,
he is the best...he pitches for
the Baltimore Orioles, and some day
I will be the second man from
Nicaragua to play in the major
leagues...

SANDINISTA #1

(to Price and Claire)

Tippy Martinez had a good fastball,
but Pedro has a curveball and a
screwball that are better.

All five of them agree that Pedro is the best; they slap
his valued arm and relax for the first time all day.

PEDRO

You will give my autographed
baseball to Tippy and tell him in
five years I will be pitching with
him, okay? He better watch out
for me, eh?

CUT TO:

50 EXT. ROOFTOP OF THE CATHEDRAL - DUSK

50

GATES CHECKS THE CLIP ON HIS RIFLE and looks down into
the plaza.

GATES P.O.V. TO THE SIX WALKING AWAY
He doesn't smile or joke--it's all business.

He aims the rifle.

CUT TO:

51 EXT. THE PLAZA - DUSK

51

SANDINISTA #1

(in Spanish)

It's too dangerous to return to
Managua at night. You should
stay at the house of hammocks.

CLAIRE

(in Spanish)

Gracias. Can they get into
trouble for keeping us?

(CONTINUED)

PEDRO

No, no...you are not combatants.
(would rather talk
baseball)

The Baltimore team is my team...

A SHOT RINGS OUT, AND PEDRO'S CHEST EXPLODES in front of us. Sudden panic, rage, confusion--the Sandinistas whirl and scan the building.

P.O.V. OATES RACING ACROSS THE CATHEDRAL ROOFTOP into the night.

PRICE GRABS PEDRO'S GUN AND WHIRLS to face the church; his action is instinctive, angry, and electric with energy.

CLAIRE GRABS PEDRO'S ARM AND DRAGS THE BODY to safety, though there is no safety and the body is lifeless. Her actions are protective and automatic.

THE SANDINISTAS TAKE CONTROL OF THE SITUATION and move quickly. Two of them fan out to cover the escape. Price screams in the direction of Oates.

PRICE

You bastard!

Claire drags the body near a bench under a tree.

CLAIRE

What about him?!

SANDINISTA #1

(dispassionately)

He's dead.

The Sandinistas survey the cathedral and streets carefully, warily, upset at their nonchalance. They know the sniper is disappearing into the night, but they continue to look.

SANDINISTA #1

(cont'd)

I will talk to Pedro's mother.
You must go to the house of the
hammocks if you want to be safe.

The Three Sandinistas fan out toward the church as it gets dark.

PRICE AND CLAIRE STAND NEXT TO PEDRO, feeling helpless and ineffective. They both look at the body. Price realizes he's holding Pedro's gun and places it down next to the body. Price notices the tiny red light is still glowing on her tape recorder. He points it out to Claire. She turns it off.

CUT TO:

52 INT. THE HOUSE OF HAMMOCKS - NIGHT

52

IN A NEARLY DARK ROOM full of hanging hammocks, Claire sits on the floor lit by a low wattage bulb hanging from a cord. In another room through a door Price can be seen with a family in the hammock workshop. Claire talks softly into her recorder.

CLAIRE

Hello sweetheart, this is your mother. I'm in Leon and I miss you. Don't worry about me--it's not dangerous at all. I guess you can't believe what you hear on the news. I'll put this tape in the mail when I get back to Managua, but knowing what the mail service is like, I may be home before it arrives. I think about you all the time and hope I can make it back before you graduate from Jr. High

As she speaks Price bids the family farewell and comes into the room with Claire where he lies down in a hammock.

(con't)

I love you and I'll finish this letter when I get back to the hotel.

Claire lies down on a mat, exhausted, after turning out the light. Several moments pass before Price speaks.

PRICE

I know who shot Pedro. I knew somebody was in the tower.

CLAIRE

Why didn't you tell the guerrillas?

PRICE

I don't know...then they would've killed him I guess. I didn't want to interfere.

CLAIRE

It wasn't an easy choice.

PRICE

I think I made the wrong one.

Silence

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

CLAIRE

You didn't take any pictures when
it was over.

PRICE

I didn't?

(beat)

I picked up a gun. Jesus.

(beat)

Is something happening to us?

CLAIRE

Yes.

Silence. They lie for a long time in the dark. A light
in the house is turned off. Finally:

PRICE

Are you asleep?

CLAIRE

No.

Price gets out of the hammock and lies down next to her.
They don't speak. They kiss. She unbuttons his shirt.
He unbuttons her blouse. They undress just enough to
begin making love softly, quietly.

DISSOLVE TO:

53 INT. PRICE AND CLAIRE'S ROOM - DAWN

53

The first light of dawn strikes Claire's bare torso.

PRICE'S LIGHT METER APPEARS AT HER BACK

Price takes a reading, then moves the meter to her neck,
another reading. He moves it down her nude body lit
beautifully in the vague light, partially covered with a blanket.

He scurries across the room, stark naked, with a camera.
Price begins photographing her.

He moves back to her and gently removes the blanket from
the rest of her body. His actions are quiet and easy. He
stops frequently to admire her.

Claire lies sleeping nude, except for her socks. Price moves
around the room--picture, picture, picture.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE WAKES UP SLOWLY and pulls the blanket back over her. She opens her eyes and sees Price sitting in a chair several feet away with his camera.

PRICE

G'morning.

CLAIRE

What are you doing?

PRICE

You look beautiful.

She realizes what he's been doing.

CLAIRE

How long have you been doing this?

PRICE

'Bout ten frames. Wait'll you see the pictures--you look great.

Her sense of violation is balanced by this notion. For a moment we sense her attitude can go either way--outrage or some sense of being flattered, however ill conceived. She chooses the latter.

CLAIRE

I'll bet I look great--give me the film.

PRICE

After they're printed.

CLAIRE

I'll develop them myself--give it to me or I'll start taping what you say in your sleep.

Price hands her the film and climbs back under the blanket with her.

PRICE

I talk in my sleep?

CLAIRE

Girl's names and F-stops. Terrible.

They curl up together, holding onto each other. A small child crosses the courtyard, peeking at them. A rooster crows.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

PRICE

Call the office. I don't want
to go to work today.

The peacefulness is shaken by the roar of an engine close by.

A HELICOPTER GUNSHIP PASSES OVER THE COURTYARD

They look up, jolted out of the moment. The war is back.

CUT TO:

54 EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF LEON - MORNING

54

Price's rental car is a smoking wreck. He and Claire arrive
and she removes a single, feeble white flag that remains.
They study the car briefly and then turn as:

A GUARDIA TROOP CARRIER LUMBERS past with a truckload of
refugees behind. They wave the flag and catch a ride with
the refugees.

CUT TO:

55 INT. FIFTH FLOOR OF INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL - DAY

55

Alex comes out a door chatting with somebody, and passes
a mini-cam crew, old friends.

ALEX

How was Matagalpa?

MINI-CAM CREW #1

No bang-bang, Alex...none at all.

ALEX

You find anything?

MINI-CAM CREW #2

Half the press corps.

A small laugh. They continue on. Alex enters Claire's room.

56 INT. CLAIRE'S ROOM

56

Alex enters. Nobody there. As he turns to leave he sees
some pictures in a stack of papers on her desk. He picks
one up.

(CONTINUED)

CLOSE UP: A PICTURE OF CLAIRE SLEEPING IN LEON
It's all over and he knows it. He stares at, even
admires, the image. He puts it down and turns to leave as:

CLAIRE ENTERS

CLAIRE

Oh!

ALEX

Oh.

(awkwardly)
How was Leon?

CLAIRE

Bloody.

ALEX

Yeah...I'll bet...Claire...

Alex finally acknowledges that it is over with Claire,
but refuses to say it directly.

ALEX

I'm tired of Nicaragua.

CLAIRE

You haven't been here very long.

ALEX

Long enough, lets face it,
you were right...everybody was
right.

CLAIRE

About what?

ALEX

My cheekbones. What do you think
of 'em?

CLAIRE

I like your cheekbones. Alex, are
you all right?

ALEX

This is a face made for television.

CLAIRE

You decided to go with the network.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

Alex nods, then seems to hit the end of his own resilience and gets vitriolic.

ALEX

Is he a good fuck?

CLAIRE

Alex...

In a simple monologue Alex goes from outrage to acknowledgement of what he already knew.

ALEX

That's a reasonable question for a reporter to ask, isn't it?!

(beat)

I shoulda never come down here, eh?

This is the way it's going to be.

(beat)

I'll make a shitload of money in television for just sitting there.

(beat)

I'm gonna show up to work at Rockefeller Center every morning and they're gonna hand me the news with my coffee and toast.

(beat)

I shoulda never come down here, eh?

This war down here belongs to you guys, okay? I'm on tomorrow's plane.

CLAIRE

Alex...

ALEX

You want to take me to the airport?

It's okay.

(beat--resigned)

I shoulda never come down here.

CUT TO:

57 EXT. THE MANAGUA AIRPORT - NEXT DAY

57

A cab pulls up. Soldiers stand around everywhere. Price, Claire, Alex, and the Cabbie get out. The cabbie takes his bag.

ALEX

Take this to check in. I'll be right there.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

Price pulls a bottle of wine from his camera bag and sets three styrofoam cups on the cab roof. He hands the cork to Alex and shows him the label.

PRICE

Sniff this sucker, eh?

Alex does, and looks at the label.

ALEX

Jesus, where'd you get this?

CLAIRE

The C.I.A.

ALEX

Where else.

They toast and drink.

PRICE

Hey - - I'll leave you guys alone, eh?

CLAIRE

No, no, don't be ridiculous.

ALEX

We're grownups, Russell...

(non acerbically)

Most of us.

Awkward smile from Price.

PRICE

You two wanta happy snap?

Price makes the motion of taking a picture. They look at him with affection, yet astounded again by his inappropriateness.

ALEX

No happy snaps.

PRICE

Okay, okay...

(beat)

I'll just...be over here.

(CONTINUED)

He wanders away from the car to give them a moment alone, and as he does he pulls the light meter from his pocket, flipping it on and off nervously without looking at it. He wanders idly toward a Guardia soldier. The soldier gets nervous.

ALEX
You're sure about him?

CLAIRE
For the moment.

Alex considers this--he understands (whether he wants to or not).

THE SOLDIER COMES FACE-TO-FACE with PRICE, WHO BACK OFF

PRICE
(to soldier)
I'm a personal firend of Tacho's.
(smiles disarmingly)

The soldier stops at Tacho's name. Price turns.

P.O.V. ALEX AND CLAIRE KISSING GOODBYE

PRICE TURNS AGAIN, embarrassed, faces the soldier.

PRICE
Don't look, huh?
(beat)
No mire!

The soldier, confused, turns away, and as he does:

ALEX SLAPS PRICE ON THE SHOULDER, AND THEY TOO EMBRACE

ALEX
Don't get hurt.

PRICE
Ahh, I'm a chicken, don't worry.
(beat)
Alex, listen to me...

ALEX
Yeah?

PRICE
Within a year you're gonna be one
of the "Ten Most Admired Men in
America."

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

Alex is amused, Price is serious. The cabbie comes out and Alex heads into the airport.

CUT TO:

58 EXT. SOMOZA'S COMPOUND - A PRESS LUNCHEON - DAY

58

Daisy and her combo from the Viking Club perform "The Girl From Ipanema" as ONE HUNDRED PRESS MEMBERS and V.I.P.'s sit at long tables in the garden. The pleasantness of the surroundings is countered by the presence of dozens of SOLDIERS in the background, guarding the house, etc. Visible at the head table are: TWO GENERALS AND THEIR WIVES, MRS. SOMOZA, TWO WEALTHY BUSINESSMEN, MISS PANAMA IN A FLOPPY HAT. Elsewhere mingling are: JAZY, ISELA, PRICE, REGIS. An elaborate array of food sits on the table.

59 INT. SOMOZA'S HOUSE - DAY

59

Overlooking the gathering from his private living room, Somoza grants Claire her interview. He closes the window to muffle the singing.

CLAIRE

You're late to your own luncheon, Mr. President--we can schedule this for another time.

SOMOZA

Nonsense--let them wait. We are a stunning couple, eh? My stomach is very flat--I've been working out.

CLAIRE

We are a stunning couple. Mr. President, you own one fifth of all the land in Nicaragua, you own the shipping port, the national airlines, the Mercedes dealership...

SOMOZA

I am on a salt free diet...

He takes her hand and leads her to two large portraits hanging on a wall--his parents.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

CLAIRE

Do you always hold hands with reporters?

SOMOZA

(ignores her)

This is my mother and father.
 They were very special to me.
 Every Sunday morning I drive out to
 the cemetery and put flowers on their
 grave. I think people should know that.

CLAIRE

Would you care to comment on the fall
 of Leon to the rebels?

Somoza just smiles unaffected by her questions; she knows
 the game is undaunted.

CUT TO:

60 EXT. THE LUNCHEON TABLES - DAY

60

Hub Kittle is bending Price's ear in the crowd. Price seems
 amused and watches the anthem contest as he munches food.

HUB

Listen, Russell, let's grow up.
 It's very easy to fall in love
 with the underdog, eh? But
 there's an upside and downside
 to this thing--just wanta remind
 you...this stuff about a "Revolution
 of Poets" is crap.

PRICE

But it's great P.R. So what's
 the upside?

HUB

Simple. And it could happen.
 Somoza destroys the terrorist
 insurgents, rebuilds the country,
 shitcans the purveyors of excess,
 stabilizes the cordoba, and is
 finally beloved as the savior
 of Nicaragua.

(beat)

Our pal. Got a smoke?

Price gives him a cigaret.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

PRICE
What's the downside?

HUB
The Commies take over the world.

It's simple, and Hub is pleased with his presentation. A SOLDIER moves through the crowd looking quite out of place, finds Hub and hands him a note. Hub reads it, seems delighted, and excuses himself from the table.

HUB
Excuse me, gentlemen, but the war may be over.

Price and Regis look at each other strangely--what's he talking about? They shrug, Regis bites into a papaya, and Hub hurries inside. Price and Regis watch the singer.

CUT TO:

61 INT. SECOND FLOOR OF SOMOZA'S HOUSE - DAY

61

SOMOZA
My people love me. My stomach is flat. Did I say that already? No matter. It is flat.

CLAIRE
There are reports that the Guardia operates a torture chamber at Coyotepe.

Somoza ignores the question and reopens the window, flooding the room with the Tony Bennett classic.

SOMOZA
I like this song.

CLAIRE
Since the earthquake in 1972 destroyed half of Managua, over three hundred million dollars in foreign relief aid have poured into the country, yet nothing has been re-built. It is said that the money has gone into your pocket.

SOMOZA
I love the press, I really do. Some of my best friends are journalists.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

CLAIRE

Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Brazil,
and Panama are reportedly on
the verge of breaking off diplomatic
relations with your regime. Would
you comment?

HUB KITTLE AND AN OFFICER BURST INTO THE ROOM interrupting
the interview. Something has happened. Somoza initially
lashes out at them--the first time we've seen him lose
his cool--then recovers.

SOMOZA

(in Spanish)

I am busy! Get out of here
at once or I'll put my foot
up your ass!

The OFFICER seems familiar with these tirades and grabs
Somoza by the arm, whispering into his ear. Somoza seems
delighted with the news and turns to Hub for confirmation.
Hub nods.

SOMOZA

(to Claire)

I'm sorry to have to conclude
this most pleasant encounter,
but something has happened.

As Somoza leaves the room with the Officer and Hub, Hub
turns to Claire to squeeze in one final P. R. stroke.

HUB

Did he tell you about his parents
in the graveyard, the flowers and
all that?

(she nods)

Good, good...

Claire is left alone momentarily in Somoza's room. A
soldier enters and accompanies her outside to the luncheon.

CUT TO:

62 EXT. THE LUNCHEON - DAY

62

As Claire comes outside, there is a flurry of activity at
the head table. TWO OFFICERS hastily set up an easel with
a large military-topographical map of Nicaragua. A SOLDIER
takes the microphone from the Singers--the music grinds to
an inglorious halt--and carries it to the head table.

(CONTINUED)

Price spots Claire and makes a "What's all this about?" motion. Claire holds out her palms and shrugs--she doesn't know. All attention is quickly focused on the head table, as:

PRESIDENT SOMOZA MAKES A GRAND ENTRANCE FLANKED by Hub Kittle and an Officer. He seems suddenly in unusually good spirits. Hub taps the mike--it works--he motions for Somoza to come forward.

SOMOZA

My friends...this gathering was not intended to be a press conference as much as a..."get-together"...but I have just been handed a piece of news.

Somoza plays the moment with theatrical elan.

SOMOZA

(con't)

Rafael is dead.

(beat)

He has been killed in an ambush in the Cordillera mountains of the Jinotega district.

Somoza points to a spot on the map as do his Officer.

THE PRESS TABLE IS SHAKEN FROM ITS NONCHALANCE and several journalists immediately leap to their feet to question him.

JOURNALISTS

Mr. President! Mr. President!

SOMOZA

Please my friends--no questions.
A press release is being prepared.

Somoza hands the mike to an aide who returns it to the music stand. Almost immediately the music begins again.

AT THE PRESS TABLE there is some confusion over the announcement. Some journalists hurry off to file the story, others just sit. Price seems alarmed by the announcement, confused. Slightly wired, he listens to Regis and OTHER JOURNALIST discuss it.

OTHER JOURNALIST

They got Rafael? You believe that?

(CONTINUED)

REGIS

Every six months Tacho gives this speech--maybe they finally lucked out.

CLAIRE TRIES TO CORNER HUB KITTLE who is heading back inside. Hub disappears inside, Claire pressing after him.

JAZY APPROACHES PRICE and leans in as if sharing a confidence. IN the b.g. the luncheon is breaking up.

JAZY

Russell, excuse me...but I've just been put in a rather embarrassing position.

(hesitates)

Mrs. Somoza would like her picture taken with Miss Panama. In color?

Price throws his camera bag over his shoulder, pulls out a camera, and follows Jazy. They walk toward the head table.

PRICE

How the hell could Tacho find Rafael.

JAZY

Russell, please...I have my hands full...

Mrs. Somoza and Miss Panama are waiting as Price and Jazy arrive. Price is automatically switching camera lenses, but he continues to grill Jazy.

MRS. SOMOZA.

Tacho, Tacho...venga, por favor!

Price and Jazy exchange glances as Somoza reluctantly joins the portrait.

SOMOZA POSES WITH HIS WIFE AND HIS MISTRESS ON EACH ARM as Price flashes a light meter under their noses, then backs off to take the picture.

PRICE

Is Tacho lying again? They did kill him, didn't they?

JAZY

Everybody smile.

(CONTINUED)

Price takes a picture, Somoza wants to leave and Jazy would just as soon have this awkward moment over with, but:

PRICE

One more, please! Una mas, por favor?

Reluctantly they pose again, and Price grills Jazy who is trapped.

PRICE

We help each other, right?
Could you move your girlfriend
into the sun...

Jazy moves Miss Panama slightly, returning to Price.

JAZY

What do you need?

PRICE

Is Rafael alive or dead?

JAZY

I don't know.

PRICE

(to the posers)
Just one more--thank you.
(to Jazy)
I thought you knew everything?

As Somoza holds an interminable pose, Jazy launches into a speech, keeping his voice low enough so Tacho cannot hear.

JAZY

What do I know, eh? Tacho needs
a victory very badly...he needs to
prove to Jimmy Carter that he is
still winning. He thinks Rafael's
death is the proof he needs.

PRICE

Carter don't need proof. He just
sent twenty-five million in new
arms to Tacho.

(to posers)

I'm sorry...almost got it here.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

JAZY

No, no...the arms shipment has
been delayed in New Orleans
because Jimmy is getting nervous.

PRICE

The State Department's gonna pull
the plug on Tacho?!

PRICE

Pardon my French--but whose fucking
side are you on?

Jazy and Price motion for the posers to move a step over.

JAZY

...I work for everybody. If there
is a transition of power, I facilitate
a relationship with the new people.
If there is not, I facilitate the status
quo.

(beat)

Either way, I facilitate.

PRICE

Great job.

JAZY

I send messages to Jimmy and I tell
him that the Revolution is a flood
that cannot be stopped but it can be
controlled...nobody listens...I can't
even get a little water in my pool.

PRICE

Rough ain't it. Thank you everybody,
very nice.

Price smiles to Somoza, Mrs. Somoza, and Miss Panama.
Somoza hurries off from his uncomfortable position at last.

PRICE

I don't think Rafael is dead. I'm
gonna find him.

JAZY

They say he's very handsome.

(beat)

It would make a wonderful picture, eh?

The two men share a smile.

CUT TO:

63 EXT. THE ROAD TO MATAGLAPA - EARLY MORNING

63

A rental station wagon covered with press flags races along. Inside the car are the British crew--Regis drives--and Price and Claire.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. MATAGALPA - DAY

64

A city of about 50,000 located on the side of a hill. The car pulls slowly into the base of the town into a clearing with assorted vehicles--Red Cross, La Guardia, Press. The car moves slowly as its occupants survey the town, until it pulls alongside a Red Cross truck that has broken down. Price sticks his head out the window to ask instructions of a R. C. WORKER.

PRICE

Con permiso -- who controls
what today?

RED CROSS WORKER

(in Spanish)

The Sandinistas hold the hills,
the Guardia has everything else.

CLAIRE

How do we find the guerillas?

RED CROSS WORKER

(points)

Va alli, dos o tres cuartos,
doble la esquina al francotirador.

REGIS

What'd he say?

CLAIRE

Go two or three blocks and turn
right at the sniper.

Regis and his crew don't like this at all. Price points.

P.O.V. A TOWER FULL OF GUARDIA SNIPERS

PRICE

You can drop us off.

(CONTINUED)

65 MAIN ROAD INTO MATAGALPA

65

A gradual uphill grade--the press car moves slowly. Guardia are on both sides of the street, as the car stops at the corner, directly beneath the sniper tower. They all look up.

P.O.V. THE SNIPERS LOOKING BACK DOWN AT THEM

THE CAR SLOWLY TURNS LEFT

PRICE

Wrong way!

REGIS

We're not looking for the guerillas.

CLAIRE

Then let us out.

The car stops, the door opens, and:

A WALL NEARBY IS RIDDLED WITH BULLET HOLES AS THEY CLIMB OUT, so they climb back in quickly.

P.O.V. A SOLDIER HOLDS OUT HIS ARMS AS IF TO SYA, "accident."

SOLDIER

Lo siento! (I'm sorry!)

The soldier seems sincere, but they don't want to take a chance .

PRICE

Go one more block.

THE CAR MOVES DEEPER INTO MATAGALPA, gradually moving among tanquettas patrolling the streets, coming to a barricade which they maneuver past as Guardia soldiers look at them strangely. The car turns around--it has come too far.

A GUARDIA OFFICER SIGNALS FOR THEM TO GET OUT but the idea doesn't appeal to Regis and he whirls around, panicking slightly, and heads off in the other direction.

CLAIRE

He just wanted to see credentials, for crissakes, what're doing?

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

REGIS
You want to drive?

PRICE
We want out!

THE BARRICADE OFFICER SPEAKS IN A WALKIE TALKIE to a squadron leader a couple of blocks away as the car approaches.

THE SENCOND OFFICER WHISTLES FOR THE CAR TO STOP but it speeds up.

THE OFFICER FIRES A PISTOL SHOT AT THE CAR SHATTERING THE WINDSHIELD

INSIDE THE CAR -VISION IS BADLY IMPAIRED BY THE SHATTERED GLASS and Regis panics, hitting the floorboard and the car suddenly screeches around a corner, racing through Matagalpa. The car squeals around corner after corner blindly, into:

A GUARDIA BARRICADE AS A FUSILADE OF SMALL AMRS FIRE RINGS OUT
The windshield is totally destroyed now, and:

THE OCCUPANTS OF THE CAR CROUCH LOW as the car races.
Price and Claire scream at Regis to stop, but it's too late.

THE CAR SCREECHES INTO REVERSE as Regis tries to see out the back window and Price, out of necessity operates the foot pedal with his hand. The car smokes into an intersection and sees:

AN OPEN BLOCK AHEAD--no Guardia are visible, so the car races down the open block and as it comes to an intersection:

66 A SHERMAN TANK COMES AROUND THE CORNER FACING US
Several times larger than a tanquetta--it dwarfs us and everything around it. Its giant gun faces us head on.

66

THE PRESS CAR SCREECHES TO A HALT, and everyone scrambles out.

PRICE
Periodista, periodista,
periodista!

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

The mini-cam equipment is dropped as the British crew scrambles to safety against a building. Price and Claire end up on opposite sides of the street.

Silence--the huge and silent tank is deciding what to do.

THE TURRET SWINGS SEVERAL DEGREES TO ONE SIDE and lowers as the scattered journalists freeze.

A THUNDEROUS ROAR - THE TANK DESTROYS THE CAMERA EQUIPMENT leaving a huge crater and not a trace of the expensive gear.

CLAIRE STARTS LAUGHING, FRIGHTENED, nervous and amused.

PRICE TAKES PICTURES

A WOMEN THROWS A CONTACT BOMB FROM A WINDOW AT THE TANK
The tiny bomb makes a pitiful explosion, hopelessly ineffective.

THE TANK SWINGS ITS TURRET TOWARD THE HOUSE AND OPENS FIRE and the wall of the house crumbles quickly as a family scrambles to the rooftop of a neighboring house Their house is destroyed in a second.

LA GUARDIA TROOPS APPEAR AND BEGIN FIRING TOWARDS Claire and Price, who turn to see:

SANDINISTA ARMY REGULARS FURRING DOWN THE HILL alongside the homemade local guerillas. This is the first time we've seen the F.S.L.N. regular army in their camouflaged khaki dress.

THE GUARD TAKES A POSITION TO FIGHT IT OUT and Claire and Price are caught in a cross-fire, pinned to walls on each street side.

PRICE PUSHES THROUGH A DOOR TO SAFETY and looks back:

CLAIRE IS TRAPPED OUTSIDE pounding on a door that doesn't open. She tries another--no luck. She curls up in a doorway making herself as small as possible as bullets rip the wall around her.

67 AT THE TOP OF THE HILL, AN OLD BUS MOVES SLOWLY INTO THE STREET
Several youthful guerillas are pushing it.

67

THE BUS COMES FLYING DOWN THE HILL TOWARD THE TANK
Several hundred feet away, it gathers speed toward us.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

INT. THE SPEEDING BUS

A YOUTH at the wheel props a board under the steering wheel and races to the back as ANOTHER YOUTH opens the door as the bus races past Claire toward the tank.

THE TWO YOUTHS LEAP OUT THE BACK DOOR where they tumble into the dirt just before:

68 THE BUS SMASHES INTO THE TANK AND EXPLODES

68

GUARDIA SOLDIERS SHOOT THE TWO YOUTHS before they get away, as:

GUERRILLAS APPEAR ON EVERY ROOFTOP opening heavy fire on La Guardia.

GUARDIA TROOPS RETREAT QUICKLY ON FOOT AND IN TANQUETTAS

THE SHERMAN TANK TRIES TO DISLODGE ITSELF FROM THE BUS but cannot, and drags the bus with it as it backs down the hill.

PRICE RUNS OUT TO CLAIRE and huddles with her. She is shaken but unhurt.

SANDINISTAS ARE EVERYWHERE, moving into Matagalpa as Price and Claire move past several bodies to higher ground.

69 SANDINISTA BARRICADES ARE ON EVERY CORNER where women serve food to their men. Claire and Price wander through, momentarily disoriented. A small boy runs through the street kicking a soccer ball, occasionally avoiding a body. He runs right up to them and speaks.

69

BOY

Busca triquitraques?

CLAIRE

Si.

BOY

Venga.

They follow him up a hill.

CUT TO:

70 EXT. MIDDLE-CLASS HOUSE OVERLOOKING THE CITY - DAY

70

THE NEIGHBORHOOD IS TOTALLY SANDINISTA and several guerillas are at the door. The boy speaks to one of the guards, and they are admitted.

CUT TO:

71 INT. THE HOUSE - DAY

71

THEY ARE SEARCHED IMMEDIATELY, asked to put down their gear, asked for credentials, and led down the hallway of a house that is very American middle class.

ANOTHER SOLDIER WITH RIFLE detains them momentarily before showing them into a room used as a Revolutionary Command office.

ISELA STANDS IN MILITARY FATIGUES talking to her Sandinista colleagues. Clearly she commands respect and makes decisions. She finishes and turns to Claire and Price in a very businesslike way, never acknowledging directly that they have met before.

ISELA

You are looking for Rafael?

They are somewhat taken aback at her directness and information.

PRICE

Yeah. If it's possible.

CLAIRE

Do you know why we're here... exactly?

ISELA

Mr. Price doesn't do anything before announcing it first in the bar.

(beat)

It's a good story. You'll be more famous.

72 EXT. A MOUNTAIN ROAD - LATER - DAY

72

An old truck chugs up a series of cutbacks through rough terrain. The truck has no hood, and a BOY sits on the fender pouring oil from a series of Folgers cans into a funnel stuck permanently into the engine. Underneath, dangling cans catch the oil as it flows through. Price, Claire and FOUR ARMED SANDINISTAS sit in the back. ISELA rides in front.

THE TRUCK PASSES THROUGH A FRIENDLY GUERILLA ROADBLOCK

CUT TO:

73 EXT. TOBACCO FIELDS IN REMOTE TERRAIN - DAY

73

ISELA, CLAIRE, PRICE AND THE FOUR HIKE into increasingly inaccessible terrain.

CUT TO:

74 EXT. RAFAEL'S CAMP - DUSK

74

Heavily guarded but very mobile, the camp consists of perhaps 100 Soldiers, women preparing food, several tents. Price and Claire attract attention as they enter.

PRICE STOPS AND LOOKS AROUND THE CAMP CLOSELY seeming to take it all in. He's been in many similar camps, countries, wars.

P.O.V. TWO SOLDIERS GUARDING THE ENTRANCE TO ONE TENT

CLAIRE
Rafael's tent?

Price doesn't answer but continues taking it all in, and ISELA shouts to them to continue.

ISELA
Venga, companeros. (Come, comrades.)

THEY CONTINUE INTO THE CAMP, BUT PRICE STOPS AGAIN
Something has caught him, his sixth sense, a feeling--
he refuses to walk further for the moment. No glibness, just coolness.

CLAIRE
What is it?

Price looks around, speaks quietly.

PRICE
Rafael is dead.

Claire looks around quickly. There is no evidence to her.

PRICE
(con't)
I can smell it.

CLAIRE
I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

ISELA
(slightly exasperated)
Venga por favor! Alli!

They continue into the camp--now Claire looks around nervously. Price mutters a half laugh, softly and strangely, as they are led to a makeshift table and offered food. In the b.g. Isela enters one of the tents.

PRICE AND CLAIRE SIT DOWN TO EAT and Price continues scanning the camp as they talk.

CLAIRE
What're you talking about?

PRICE
He's dead. I know it.

CLAIRE
Then why did they bring us
all the way here to see him?

He doesn't know.

P.O.V. FOUR FIGURES/CONFERRING IN FRONT OF A TENT
Isela emerges and joins them. The others are: THE PRIEST FROM LEON, A BUSINESSMAN WHOM WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE FROM EARLIER SCENES, AND COMMANDANTE CINCO, dressed in camouflaged khaki.

ISELA WALKS OVER TO CLAIRE AND PRICE after talking with the others. She brings COMMANDANTE CINCO with her. They sit down.

ISELA
This is Commandante Cinco.

They all shake hands.

Isela begins at once.

ISELA
(con't)
Today we took Matagalpa. Leon is about to fall, and Masaya. And next week we could be in Managua but it is still possible to lose.

(beat)
In the last days of our final offensive the people of Nicaragua must know that Rafael is alive and well.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

COMMANDANTE CINCO
Queremos un fotografia.

ISELA
We need a photograph.
(beat)
Come with us.

THEY ALL RISE AND HEAD TOWARDS RAFAEL'S TENT

75 INT. RAFAEL'S TENT

75

The tent is filled with Sandinista officers and soldiers standing and sitting around.

RAFAEL'S BODY LIES ON A TABLE
The shirtless upper torso propped slightly upright, still wearing glasses, the figure of Rafael is distinctly non-heroic. He is slightly overweight, slightly balding, but as he lies there surrounded by his men, the glow of lanterns, he looks almost alive.

Price and Claire look at each other.

COMMANDANTE CINCO
Usted es un fotografo magnifico.
(beat)
Queremos que vive.
(You are a great photographer.
Make him alive.)

Price laughs--the request is ridiculous.

ISELA
(to Claire)
Why is he laughing?

PRICE
You're crazy.

Cinco steps forward--his presence commands attention. His delivery is forceful but not emotional. As he begins to speak, Price stops laughing.

CINCO
(in Spanish)
We have momentum, but many more lives will be lost. Even Washington is starting to admit that the butcher Somoza is not loved by his people. (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

CINCO

(cont'd)

They have detained twenty-five million dollars in new arms shipments for Somoza at an airfield in Florida until they find out if Rafael is alive or dead. We know about these things.

He pauses briefly.

CLAIRE

If Washington thinks Rafael is dead, they will ship the arms to Somoza. Do you understand.

PRICE

Yeah.

(without enthusiasm)

Commandante...Soy un periodista.

CINCO attacks that defense with new vigor.

CINCO

This has nothing to do with journalism -- there is more to the world than journalism. We are going to end this war with you or without you.

(beat)

People don't really believe in Rafael -- they believe in the idea of Rafael, no? Because for now the idea of Rafael is enough for the people of Nicaragua. When the war is over -- none of this matters.

PRICE hesitates, his manner devoid of its usual cockiness.

PRICE

I don't do things...like this.

CINCO

Enough lives have been lost already.

(beat of empathy)

It's difficult, I know -- but you must do it.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

COMMANDANTE CINCO PLACES AN ARM ON PRICE'S SHOULDER and speaks in broken English.

CINCO

(cont'd)

In the morning, eh? When there's better light!

CUT TO:

76 INT. PRICE AND CLAIRE'S TENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

76

Price lies on his back on a table. Claire sits in a chair, a lantern is on the table. His reclining body is not unlike Rafael's. He plays with a camera without looking at it, turning it slowly, removing and replacing a lens. He's never been this calm, this unmoving.

Claire, however, moves around the tent like a caged animal--like Pirce normally is. She smokes. She's nervous and wired.

CLAIRE

I spend my whole life separating how I feel from how I think and what I see from what I say--that's called journalism, isn't it?

He nods slightly.

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

It's diciplined. It civilized. It involves distinctions. I'm great at distinctions. I wish I wasn't so good at them. Sometimes I envy you--you don't make any--it's very convenient.

(beat)

The only time I don't worry about all those things is when I'm with my daughter.

PRICE

Or when you're in bed.

CLAIRE

Yes!

(beat--changes direction)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

My job is to find a story, then
tell a story - whatever it is -
because I believe that if enough
people hear enough stories then
somehow, through information alone,
we all have a better chance to
survive.

(beat)

I believe in information.

(beat)

That's a very romantic streak I
have running through me--maybe
it's a weakness. Information
is good--lack of information is
bad. Simple, eh?

PRICE

Not so simple.

CLAIRE

You're God damn right it's not.

(beat)

You take that picture you'll take
it for all the right reasons--I
understand.

PRICE

I'm not gonna take it.

He fiddles with the cameras.

CLAIRE

That's find for you. But do
I go back and say I interviewed
Rafael? Do I go back and say
I missed the biggest story of
the war? Or do I say Rafael
was stone cold dead--that's the
information, isn't it? Or do
I say he entertained us all in
his inimitably charismatic manner
around the ol' revolutionary campfire?

(beat)

Can we throw up our arms and say
we fell in love with the guerillas
because their cause was...sympathetic?

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

Journalists don't fall in love.

(beat)

Which story do you want me to tell?

Silence.

PRICE

Do what you want to do.

CLAIRE

Christ, what the fuck are we doing here?

PRICE

I want to be here.

(beat)

With you.

(beat)

What do you want.

Silence.

CLAIRE

I want this war to end.

(beat)

I'm not going to tell the world that Rafael is dead.

Silence. Claire lies down on the cot. Exhausted but high. Price gets off the table and goes to her.

PRICE

I love you.

CLAIRE

I think I love you.

PRICE

Don't think so much.

He gets on the cot with her. They kiss deeply, passionately, and begin making love.

77 EXT. THE CAMP - FIRST LIGHT OF DAWN

77

THE CAMP IS COMING TO LIFE as the flap opens on Price's tent and he looks out. He raises his camera and starts taking pictures of:

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

A ~~WOMAN~~ COOKING OVER A FIRE AS A BUSINESSMAN LOOKS ON, a face we recognize from earlier in Managua - FREEZE FRAME

THREE YOUNG GUERRILLAS PLAYING WITH A DOG - FREEZE FRAME

THE PRIEST FROM LEON DRINKING FROM A GOURD - FREEZE FRAME

TWO CHILDREN PLAYING WITH HANDMADE TOYS - FREEZE FRAME

ISELA COMING OUT OF ANOTHER TENT - FREEZE FRAME

PRICE RISES AND LOOKS AROUND THE CAMP, wandering over to a large can where he drinks some water.

CLAIRE EMERGES FROM THE TENT and watches Price head over to a shaded area with his cameras.

CLAIRE'S P.O.V. OF PRICE AS HE MOVES THROUGH A GROUP OF SANDINISTAS GATHERED AROUND A TABLE

Their backs are toward us as he adjusts seating positions and rearranges items that have been provided for the table.

He takes a light reading and moves quickly into position. Price raises his camera.

CUT TO:

PRICE'S P.O.V. OF A TABLEAU OF RAFAEL, CINCO, AND SOLDIERS

They sit at a table studying a map, a copy of La Prensa is displayed--the headlines declare that RAFAEL IS DEAD and featuring a photo of Somoza at the luncheon as he points to a map of the country. For an instant Rafael looks alive--FREEZE FRAME.

CUT TO:

78 EXT. THE ROAD BLOCK TO MANAGUA - LATER

78

Price and Claire are sitting on top of a Red Cross truck as it heads through Sebaco. Soldiers from La Guardia are everywhere. As the truck moves through the village, something catches Price's eyes:

OATES STANDS AGAINST A WALL IN COMMAND OF A SQUADRON

Two whores and several troops sit against a wall. As the truck passes, Oates waves casually, with emotion.

DISSOLVE TO:

79 INT. PRICE'S HOTEL BATHROOM IN MANAGUA - DAY

79

Red light in the bathroom as Price pulls several photo prints from the bath and plasters them wet against the mirror.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

PHOTO OF RAFAEL IN THE CAMP, and he looks very much alive. He pulls more shots from the bath: THE PRIEST FROM LEON, THE BUSINESSMAN, COMMANDANTE CINCO AND ISELA. He dries them off and hides them with their negatives under a pile of equipment.

He picks up the shot of Rafael and leaves.

CUT TO:

80 EXT. SOMEWHERE IN MANAGUA

80

A group of muchachos in masks, baseball caps, and bandanas race through the streets carrying a photo blow-up of Rafael.

CUT TO:

81 INT. JAZY'S HOUSE

81

The newspaper headline sits on Jazy's desk as Jazy studies it unemotionally. We hear Miss Panama's voice:

MISS PANAMA

Marcel!

He spins on his chair as she glides in modeling a new dress. She spins magically for him--he blows her a kiss.

CUT TO:

82 EXT. LUSH RIVER VALLEY OF NICARAGUA - DAY

82

A small private plane flies through a canyon, dwarfed by the spectacular landscape. Hub Kittle works the room.

83 INT. THE PLANE - DAY

83

Two MASKED GUERILLAS hold a gun to the head of a pilot. A large sack is crammed into the tiny compartment with them.

84 EXT. A SMALL MOUNTAIN TOWN IN NICARAGUA - DAY

84

The plane flies in low over the town and suddenly:

THE SKY IS FILLED WITH LEAFLETS that flutter to the ground. Townspeople, bewildered at first, pick up the papers to see:

CLOSE UP -- PRICE'S PHOTOGRAPH OF RAFAEL ALIVE

LOCAL RESIDENTS RAISE THEIR FISTS IN SALUTE to the plane as it disappears into the mountains.

CUT TO:

85 EXT. THE ROOFTOP GARDEN OF THE INTERCONTINENTAL - DAY

85

Journalists are gathered to watch the fighting which is now on the outskirts of Managua. Price stands to the side casually taking pictures of Journalists taking pictures of the war. Hub Kittle floats around providing drinks and P.R.

P.O.V. A PUSH-PULL AIRPLANE MAKES BOMBING PASSES on the capitol. Columns of smoke rise throughout the city.

REGIS MOVES HIS MINI-CAM CREW INTO POSITION AT THE RAIL

REGIS

We got the smoke in frame?

CREWMEMBER

(moves the camera slightly)
We got the smoke.

REGIS

Roll it...

CLAIRE STANDS TO THE OTHER SIDE with binoculars watching. She accepts a drink from Hub and speaks into her tape deck.

CLAIRE

Under a steel gray July sky...
start again...under a gray steel
Managuan sky...scratch it...In an
extraordinary development in Managua,
President Anastasio Somoza has ordered
the Air Force to begin bombing his own
capitol, under a sky...fuck it...

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

She fires down the drink and puts down the mike. She picks up the binoculars again and, glancing below, is shocked:

86 P.O.V. BELOW - ALEX GETS OUT OF A CAB WITH HIS SUITCASES 86
He starts into the hotel, glances up, and they see each other.

CLAIRE

Oh my God...

Price sees Alex at the same time. Alex waves to both of as he heads into the hotel. Price and Claire look at each other.

Claire sits down at a table, stunned to see Alex. Price commandeers a waiter and joins her with a fresh tray of drinks.

CLAIRE

A Scotch, please...
(he nods)

Double.

Price joins her as other journalists jockey for position at the railing. He is equally upset and confused.

PRICE

What's he doing here?

CLAIRE

I have no idea.

ALEX COMES THROUGH THE DOOR with a couple journalists, sees Price and Claire and comes over to join them. A polite kiss on Claire's cheek, a handshake for Price. A moment of awkwardness.

ALEX

Congratulations.

PRICE

On what?

ALEX

On what?! The Washington Post, the Times, networks, wire services-- everybody's picked up the picture. It's fabulous.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

86

CLAIRE
(nervously)
Well, yes...it's fabulous.

PRICE
Fabulous.

Unsure silence.

CLAIRE
Why are you back?

ALEX
I came back because of Russell.

PRICE
Because of me?

ALEX
Yeah...the whole fucking East Coast is falling in love with Rafael--they were sure he was dead this time. Somebody wants to do a musical about him and his mug's on every T-shirt in Central Park.

Alex enjoys the lunatic mixture of politics and popular culture.

ALEX
I think he's bigger than Farrah Fawcett.

Claire and Price struggle to enjoy this supremely uncomfortable moment. It's not easy to enter the game. Claire attempts to change the subject.

CLAIRE
You look good. Things're okay?

ALEX
I'm happier in New York, sure, things are great. You guys?

PRICE
Terrific...now...I'm a little slow here, Alex...what exactly did you come back for?

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

86

No more games. Alex addresses Price with conviction.

ALEX

It's a great story.

(beat)

I want to talk to Rafael...and
you're the only man in the world
that can take me to him.

Price's and Claire's hearts sink. They look at each other. Alex, despite his reluctance to return to Nicaragua, seems genuinely enthused about the possible story. Before Price or Claire respond, Hub Kittle notices Alex and comes over with a tray of drinks, extending genuine greetings to the Senior Correspondent.

HUB

Alex! Couldn't stay away, eh?

The fresh round of drinks are put on the table. The sound of bombs ripping the capitol are the only thing we hear.

CUT TO:

87 INT. CLAIRE'S ROOM - NIGHT

87

Claire and Price now have adjoining rooms. She is staring out the window as he comes in. The mood is strained.

CLAIRE

We've got to tell Alex what happened.

PRICE

No way.

CLAIRE

I'll tell him. He deserves to know.

PRICE

We don't owe him anything!

CLAIRE

We owe him that!

(beat)

He got you started in this business...
he covered for your missed
deadlines and made excuses for
your unprofessional attitude
before the world fell in love with
your pictures...

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

Before kids fresh out of journalism school were rushing off to any war they could to interview bullets and take pictures of bodies--like Price!

(beat)

He took care of you before you were hot!

Silence. She's hitting home but he doesn't want to acknowledge it.

PRICE

He wouldn't understand.

CLAIRE

Before Nicaragua you wouldn't understand. I'm not sure I exactly understand.

(beat)

What are we going to do?

There is something calculating in Price's tone, this is not the fearless, boyish innocent anymore.

PRICE

I'll take Alex to find Rafael--we'll go to Sebaco on the road to Matagalpa--the Guardia heavily control the area and they're scared right now--they'll never let us through. We won't be able to get near Rafael. Alex will understand--and we'll turn around and drive back without a story.

Claire is disturbed at this compounding of the lie.

CLAIRE

That's a lie!

PRICE

Tell me about lies!

Silence. They are co-conspirators and they know it.

CLAIRE

I don't want to tell him either.

CUT TO:

88 EXT. ROAD TO MATAGALPA - NEXT DAY

88

Price's white flagged newly rented press car streaks along, overtaking an ox cart. A guardia convoy is going the opposite direction, back toward Managua. Alex looks out of the car with interest--he hasn't been to the front line for several wars.

PRICE

We may not be able to find him,
y'know...

ALEX

I've got supreme confidence in you.

A car is on fire by the side of the road. Price flies past; Alex watches curiously. Several people stand around the car.

ALEX

Claire looks good, eh?

PRICE

Everybody looks good in the tropics.

Alex isn't sure how to respond to this curious reply.

ALEX

Since I haven't been able to find
Isela since coming back, you're
going to have to translate for me
---what the hell does that mean?

Price is nervous, wired, on edge.

PRICE

Alex...I love her.

Alex takes this calmly--it's not exactly new information.

ALEX

And she 'thinks' she loves you.

PRICE

It's past the thinking stage.

Alex looks at the passing scenery--he's in no hurry.

ALEX

I'd like to know something--it probably
doesn't matter in the great final
scheme of things...but I'm interested...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

ALEX
(cont'd; beat)
Did you ever lay a hand on her
before she left me?

PRICE
No!

ALEX
That's the truth?

PRICE
Yes!
(beat)
Alex -- we're friends!

There is something desperate in his voice.

CUT TO:

89 EXT. A ROADBLOCK ON THE EDGE OF SEBACO - DAY

89

Price and Alex are ordered out of their car by a very unfriendly Guardia soldier. He is ordered to put down his camera bag. The hood and trunk are opened.

SOLDIER
Venga.

They are led to a shed by the roadside, A TIRE REPAIR SHOP, where they sit down in an oily, dusty shack. They watch the soldiers:

P.O.V. THE SOLDIERS TEARING UP THE RENTAL CAR, pulling off door panels, looking for weapons.

ALEX
I bet you go through a few
rental cars..

PRICE
Don't worry. I put this in
your name.

PRICE AND ALEX JERK TO LIFE at the sound of screaming in the distance. A volley of gunfire follows. Price moves quickly into an adjoining shed and looks through a crack in the wall:

P.O.V. AN EXECUTION SQUAD IN A FIELD as several bodies are being hauled away. Two soldiers reload their guns. PAN to a figure moving behind a wall--OATES

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

PRICE HURRIES THROUGH THE SHACKS TOWARD THE EXECUTION WALL as Alex calls to him and hurries after--Price is single-minded. As he moves through the shacks we hear another volley of fire, and Price bursts into a clearing to see:

TWO TRUCKS BEING LOADED WITH BODIES AS OATES SUPERVISES

PRICE STEPS INTO THE CLEARING - FACE-TO-FACE WITH OATES.

They look at each other for several beats before anyone speaks. Oates is slightly embarrassed.

OATES

No pictures, eh? Might look bad.

Oates smiles half-way; Price looks around at the bodies.

PRICE

You get paid by the body or by the hour?

OATES

I get paid the same way you do. What the fuck you doin' in Sebaco -- this place's about to blow...ain't it?

PRICE

You didn't have to nail Pedro.

OATES

Who's Pedro?

Alex arrives and tries to pull Price back--at the same time he sees the bodies and is sickened at the sight.

ALEX

Oh my God...

A body is carried through and loaded on a truck. Oates's tone is one of explanation rather than defense, very matter-of-fact.

OATES

There's a motherfucking war goin' on, pal...lotta sad stories.

Price mumbles and wanders to the next truck a few feet away, and as he sees it he stops short, speechless. He points:

(CONTINUED)

THE BODIES OF THE PRIEST FROM LEON AND THE BUSINESSMAN, figures we saw at Rafael's camp, sit in the back of the truck. They are splattered with blood and lifeless. Price is shaken.

PRICE

Why them? Why them?!

Oates has to look to see who he's talking about, and Price loses his cool.

PRICE

(cont'd)

You're a cocksucker!

OATES

I don't suck no dick, man...

PRICE GRABS OATES AND PUSHES HIM BACKWARDS but Oates responds like an animal. The two men go down in a heap and lash out at each other in the dust. Their fighting is largely ineffective, though very physical, until Oates asserts himself and knocks Price against a wall, breaking free to pick up his automatic rifle that he handles with one hand and shoves it into Price's face.

OATES

(cont'd)

I'd prefer not splattering your brains in a dump like this -- I got priorities.

(to Alex)

Guy wants to be a hero, pops, get him outta here before he's a number.

(beat)

Be a shitty little town to buy it in.

(beat)

Who are you?

ALEX

Russell, let's get outta here.

PRICE

(to Oates)

Fuck you.

OATES

Guy's got a sense of humor, old man.

(beat)

Got any dope? Tough place to find decent dope?

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

PRICE

Why them?

OATES

Them? C'mere. You too.

He leads them under an awning nearby where a couple soldiers sit. A small table, some weapons, two shallow boxes, food, beer. Oates rummages around to find what he wants, and pulls out:

A HANDFUL OF PHOTOGRAPHS, mostly snapshots, odd sizes, with names written on them. He sifts through them quickly and we see an assortment of photographs of Nicaraguans. He finds what he's looking for and holds up:

PRICE'S PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PRIEST AND THE BUSINESSMAN, the picture taken in Rafael's camp, blown up, cropped, and identified. The faces are circled.

OATES

(cont'd)

If your mug shows up in this box...and ya try to make it through Sebaco...I owe yer ass.

This information hits Price in the gut, and he is seized with fear.

ALEX

Who gives you the pictures?

OATES

What's this, an interview? I ain't that dumb.

Price turns, he doesn't want to face it.

ALEX

Off the record.

OATES

Off the record...some pachuco gives 'em to me. Ain't none of my business, but I heard he gets 'em from a Frog.

Oates pulls another picture from a different box and holds it up:

A PHOTOGRAPH OF ISELA

OATES

(cont'd)

Nice, eh?

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

PRICE
She dead?

OATES
Not yet.

Alex grabs Price and heads back toward the roadblock.

OATES
(cont'd)
Whatya' expect? We're the ones
gettin' our butts kicked.

CUT TO:

90 INT. THE CAR - DAY

90

Price hangs a U-turn at the roadblock and heads back to Managua. He drives crazily.

PRICE
Some-motherfucker-took-my-
fucking-pictures-I-don't-
fucking-know-what-happened!
(beat)
Fuck me!

Silence.

ALEX
Didn't you ship the film to
New York?

PRICE
I developed it in my room.
(pleads)
Jesus Christ, Alex?!

Silence. The car races.

ALEX
Slow down.
(compassionately)
It wasn't your fault if
somebody stole your stuff...

PRICE
It was.

Alex doesn't force the issue, nor does he understand it entirely.

ALEX
What about Rafael?

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

No answer--the car races back to Managua. Alex stares at Price trying to figure out what is wrong.

CUT TO:

91 INT. PRICE'S ROOM AT THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL - LATER 91

A MAID IS CLEANING HIS ROOM which is the usual disaster. Price enters, just returned, and quickly looks for his negatives under the equipment where he had hidden them.

PRICE

Algo no esta aqui. Fotografias.
(Something is not here.
Photographs.)

MAID

(in Spanish)

Everything's always a mess here.
You should be neater.

PRICE

Negativos, negativos!

The maid shrugs--Price is crazy anyway, and:

CLAIRE WALKS INTO THE ROOM

She too looks shaken. He looks up.

CLAIRE

Commandante Cinco's body was
just found on the road to
Matagalpa.

The maid starts crying. They look at her helplessly as she sobs, 'Cinco, Cinco...'

CUT TO:

92 EXT. STREETS OF MANAGUA - DAY 92

A cab takes them through the increasingly nervous city. La Guardia troop trucks are everywhere--things seem more hurried. A hunting rifle sits in the cabbie's lap. They get out and knock on Jazy's door.

GUARDIA SOLDIERS WATCH THEM FROM A DISTANCE, a development that Price and Claire are aware of.

CLAIRE

I don't think it's Jazy.

Still no answer.

(CONTINUED)

PRICE

Oates said it was a Frog. How many Frenchmen you know around here? Jazy ain't 'facilitating' shit.

Price is impatient. He looks around nervously--the Guards are out of view--and he slides a knife into the latch, jimmying the lock. The door opens slowly--an alarm goes off.

Price and Claire duck inside quickly.

CLAIRE

Christ!

Price, momentarily comfortable with the danger, responds quickly and finds the alarm wire running along the door jamb.

LA GUARDIA TROOPS NEARBY HEAR THE ALARM and head toward Jazy's.

INSIDE THE HOUSE PRICE FINDS THE ALARM BOX which he pries open and expertly pulls two wires. The alarm stops.

Immediately they begin going through drawers and cupboards. She pulls out some harmless snapshots of Miss Panama, replaces them.

CLAIRE

(cont'd)

Are we looking for negs or prints?

PRICE

Anything.

They find nothing downstairs. They look up at the sound of distant gunfire.

Suddenly: Loud banging at the front door--La Guardia.

93 EXT. TWO GUARDIA SOLDIERS AND A THIRD ARRIVING - DAY

93

They look around warily, hungrily--they know something is wrong.

BACK INSIDE THE HOUSE we hear the shouting soldiers, banging. Price and Claire look at each other, and the camera bag. Claire points upstairs to Price, to the door for herself. Russell grabs the bag and bounds quickly upstairs. Claire goes to the front door, shaking nervously.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIRE OPENS THE DOOR AND FACES THE SOLDIERS

CLAIRE
Que quiere?
(What do you want?)

SOLDIER
Donde esta senor Jazy?

CLAIRE
No esta aqui.

SOLDIER
Que quienes?
(Who are you?)

CLAIRE
(smiles)
Una novia suya.
(A girlfriend of his.)

The soldiers look at each other curiously and push open the door to look in the house without entering--respectful of Jazy.

SOLDIER #2
El hombre tiene muchas novias,
eh?
(The man has many girlfriends,
no?)

The soldiers laugh and peer into the room. Claire forces the door closed on them, teasing slightly.

CLAIRE
No, no, no...

Afraid to make a mistake with one of Jazy's sweethearts, they don't press the issue. The door closes shut.

94 INT. THE HOUSE - CLAIRE sighs with frightened relief and hurries upstairs to join Price.

94

JAZY'S BEDROOM as she enters. A rumpled bed, a spilled wine glass--a pleasant mess.

CLAIRE
Russell?
(no answer)
Russell?

A door off the bedroom is open--light spills out. Claire stops cold at what she sees:

94 CONTINUED:

94

PRICE STANDS IN A ROOM FULL OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Hundreds of pictures of all sizes, photographic equipment, an enlarger, cameras and lenses, etc. Pictures of Sandino, newspaper photos, snapshots.

P.O.V. OF RUSSELL'S PHOTOGRAPHS FROM RAFAEL'S CAMP cropped and blown up--Commandante Cinco, the Priest of Leon, the Businessman, Isela. Photographs of other slain rebel leaders. The pictures include faces that have been circled with names written in--exactly as in the pictures Oates possessed.

They are both stunned.

PRICE

Let's get out of here.

THEY HURRY DOWNSTAIRS and as they get to the front door--the sound of somebody opening it. They freeze.

THE DOOR OPENS AND MISS PANAMA ENTERS

She smiles and greets them in a friendly, aloof manner, and continues toward the waterless pool.

MISS PANAMA

Hola.

Price and Claire return the greeting and continue out the door.

CUT TO:

95 EXT. JAZY'S HOUSE - THE SOUND OF MORTAR IN THE DISTANCE

95

As they emerge, Claire tears a white cloth in half and ties it to a stick, handing half to Price who does likewise.

An earth mover goes past, a Guardia soldier at the wheel. More soldiers cling to the machine, their guns at the ready.

PRICE

We've got to talk to Alex.

They start walking.

CLAIRE

You think our flags are big enough?

Flags held high, they move nervously down the street into the ominous silence of the city.

CUT TO:

96 EXT. STREETS OF MANAGUA - NIGHT

96

Alex, Price, and Claire get out of a cab and approach a large statue of Somoza on horseback, surreally lit by floodlights in the center of a traffic circle. Four Guardia Soldiers are visible on the sidewalk in the b.g. drinking with two women.

PRICE

This is what I want to show you.

ALEX

We drove through three roadblocks a half hour before curfew so you could show me a statue of Tacho.

PRICE

It's not Tacho. It's Mussolini. Tacho went to Italy to commission a statue of himself, he found a warehouse full of Il Duces on horseback, got a great deal on one of 'em -- brought it back and switched heads.

(beat)

Ya can't tell, can ya?

Silence. Alex knows Price too well--it's a great story but that's not why they're here.

ALEX

What the hell are you talking about?

CLAIRE

I think what he's trying to say -- what we're trying to say -- is that things aren't exactly what they seem to be.

ALEX

Well, they don't "seem" to be that great so I can't wait for this one...

(mocks silliness)

Hey, here we are! Two guys in the tropics in love with the same dame...bullets flying!

CLAIRE

Alex! That's not why we're here.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

ALEX

Oh yeah? I left the country
because of him...

(points to Price)

...and I came back because of
him...

(beat)

And now the cutest couple in
town has me looking up a horse's
ass on a midnight tour of Managua.

(points up the

statue's ass)

What are we doing here?

Silence. Claire addresses Alex calmly.

CLAIRE

Rafael is dead.

Silence. Alex isn't quite sure he understood.

ALEX

In the picture he's dead?

PRICE

(shouts)

Dead!

ALEX

How the hell...

CLAIRE

(interrupts quickly)

Who cares how?!

Silence. A bit of gallows laughter from Alex as he
circles the statue. Price calms and tries to explain.

PRICE

Alex...I think I finally saw
one too many bodies.

(beat)

Somoza is a killer.

(beat)

I thought the war would end
sooner.

(beat)

How many reasons do you want?

ALEX

You saw too many bodies? That's
a lot of bodies.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

(cont'd; beat; to
Price)

You stupid son of a bitch.

(to Claire)

Did he talk you into it?

CLAIRE

No! I wanted Rafael to be alive.

ALEX

In some way I understand him
doing it, I don't like it but
I understand...but you?

CLAIRE

I'd do it again.

Alex lets it all sink in. These two people about whom he
has such passionate feelings have totally exposed them-
selves to him.

ALEX

You two have, of course, just
served me up your balls -- if
that's what they're called --
on a platter.

(several beats)

I can bury you both. You're
handing me your careers.

They don't respond--he's right.

ALEX

(cont'd)

Well, Jesus Christ...this is a
motherfucking story, Russell...

(long silence)

What am I supposed to do with
it?

CLAIRE

Anything you want.

Small, tired gallows laughter from Alex. There is a long
silence before Alex speaks, aware of the irony.

ALEX

They're holding the lead in
the World section for Rafael.

PRICE

It's great stuff, isn't it?
We'd go down in a blaze of glory.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

ALEX

Oh yeah...

(distracted)

I don't know what to do.

(beat)

I've gotta take some kind of a
story back with me. Maybe Jazy,
eh?

CLAIRE

Oh Jesus.

PRICE

It's a little dangerous looking
for Jazy at the moment.

ALEX

(mock heroic)

Ah, danger -- I love it. You
could ask the pointy-shoed little
bastard about your pictures...
and I could ask him whatever
happened to Isela.

CLAIRE

She's an officer in the Rafael
army -- we saw her in Matagalpa.

Alex is surprised slightly, but takes pleasure in revealing it.

ALEX

You mean I slept with a Sandinista?

Price and Claire exchange glances. Alex is dead serious.

ALEX

(cont'd)

I guess Rafael is alive, eh?

CUT TO:

97 INT. CLAIRE'S ROOM - NIGHT

97

PRICE AND CLAIRE LIE IN BED sweating. A siren and distant
mortar can be heard outside. Price goes to the window
and shuts it--the room is quieter and hotter. He pounds
a broken air conditioning duct.

PRICE

Damn air conditioning.

He looks out the window--it never used to be this complicated.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

CLAIRE
I wish I was home.

Silence.

PRICE
C'mere.

She goes to him, lies down, and they embrace.

CLAIRE
Do you think it's almost over?

A loud, long burst of automatic weapons fire is heard somewhere outside. Their eyes are open as they hold onto each other.

CUT TO:

98 EXT. THE STREETS OF MANAGUA - NEXT MORNING

98

A sense of foreboding. Heavy road equipment prowls the street looking for Rebel barricades to destroy. Tanquetas and Guardia everywhere.

The flag draped press car of Price and Alex drives slowly.

P.O.V. OUT OF THE CAR AS THEY LOOK CAREFULLY
Things feel wrong. Guardia barricades are everywhere, forcing them to follow a route they might not choose. The Guardia soldiers at the barricades seem on edge. When Jazy's house is visible in the distance, barricades force them another direction.

GUARDIA SOLDIERS RACE DOWN A STREET TOWARD GUNFIRE and the car stops. When the road is clear it creeps into an intersection. They check their position.

THE CAR CREEPS TO A STOP and they look around further.

A PIG CROSSES THE STREET 100 YARDS AWAY AND IS SHOT BY A SOLDIER.
Everything is wrong. Price looks around restlessly.

PRICE
Alex...let's go back.

ALEX
Jazy's probably sitting in the bar laughing at us. Which way's the hotel?

(CONTINUED)

PRICE

I don't know.

A WOMAN PEEKS OUT OF A DOORWAY WATCHING

ALEX

I'll ask her...be right back.

PRICE

Just a sec'...take a flag.

But Alex is out of the car at once, approaching the woman.

Alex motions that "it's not necessary" and talks to the woman. We can't hear, but she points down the block.

INSIDE THE CAR Price cranks film into place, his actions are automatic and nervous. When he looks up:

P.O.V. ALEX FIFTY YARDS AWAY

Walking in the direction she pointed, he motions to Price as if to say, "Just checking this out."

PRICE LOOKS AROUND NERVOUSLY FOR A SENSE OF DIRECTION
And as he does, looks through the camera.

THROUGH CAMERA P.O.V. OF THE DEAD PIG followed by quick blurred pans to other images--TANK, HOUSE, WOMAN, SOLDIER--until it settles on ALEX IN THE INTERSECTION. Two Guardia soldiers come up to him and he holds out his hands as if to say, "I'm lost."

ALEX TALKS TO THE SOLDIERS--FREEZE FRAME click, click--and the whirring sound of a motor drive, another FREEZE FRAME click, click, more whirring--Price is on automatic pilot. Another soldier orders Alex up against a wall.

Nobody sees Price taking pictures--it happens too quickly.

THROUGH CAMERA P.O.V. ALEX IS SHOT IN THE CHEST FROM POINT BLANK RANGE--FREEZE FRAMES click, click, whirring as the images blur and the camera is dropped.

PRICE STARES WITHOUT THE CAMERA

P.O.V. ALEX LIES DEAD AS THE SOLDIERS LOOK AROUND
The act was random, almost nonchalant.

PRICE STARTS TO RUN TOWARD ALEX shouting madly.

PRICE

You fucks! You fucks!

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

He stops quickly as they see him, realizing how exposed he is.

THE GUARDIA START FIRING AT HIM, realizing the murder was recorded.

GUARDIA SOLDIER
Fotografia!

CUT TO:

PRICE LEAPS IN HIS CAR and starts it up, racing around the corner as bullets rip into the car.

THE WINDOW SHATTERS, AND PRICE IS HIT IN THE SHOULDER. He clutches his bleeding arm as he races on.

99 EXT. SHANTYTOWN BARRIO - DAY

99

THE CAR GRINDS TO A HALT and Price leaps from it, racing into a maze of ramshackle huts.

CUT TO:

100 INT. SOMOZA'S BUNKER

100

A hastily called press conference. Tacho takes a quick drag on a cigarette and makes the announcement.

SOMOZA
It is with grave concern that we announce that Alexander Grazier, senior American correspondent, has been murdered at the hands of terrorists...

A shock wave goes through the room--hands raised, questions.

SOMOZA
(cont'd)
Mr. Kittle has prepared statements for you.

Somoza turns and leaves as Kittle passes out press statements.

CUT TO:

101 INT. CLAIRE'S HOTEL ROOM

101

TV is on. She's at the typewriter working on a story.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

A PHOTOGRAPH OF ALEX COMES ON THE TELEVISION NEWS, with Spanish language commentary over the image.

CLAIRE KEEPS WORKING AND GRADUALLY TYPES LESS AS SHE HEARS the story, finally rising and moving in front of the television as a local newsman reads of Alex's death and we see the Somoza press announcement.

The phone rings: Claire picks up the phone and listens silently before hanging up. She sits down shakily on the bed and starts crying.

CUT TO:

102 EXT. THE SHANTYTOWN BARRIO - DAY

102

PRICE HURRIES THROUGH the passageways between tin shacks, through tiny yards of goats and chickens, through houses as poor that the war has nearly passed them by. Price is hurting, and looks around with fear to see:

THE GUARDIA SOLDIERS MOVE DOWN INTO THE SHANTYTOWN, fanning out to quickly engulf the barrio. They move quickly.

A HELICOPTER GUNSHIP MOVES IN LOW over the barrio and opens up sporadic outbursts of fire to insure nobody will try to flee.

PRICE RUNS DOWN AN ALLEY and nearly runs right into the Guardia. He hides behind a paper thin wall of flattened beer cans--the Guardia move past him only inches away. Price starts off in another direction, but Guardia appear--he is trapped in the barrio.

CUT TO:

103 INT. HOTEL LOBBY

103

Journalists are everywhere--suitcases packed--trying to get out of the country. The registration desk is chaos. Regis tries to get the attention of the clerk--so does everyone else.

REGIS

Get my bill and get me a cab,
hey, amigo!

The clerk is under attack.

CLERK

No cabs.

REGIS

Cabs!

(CONTINUED)

CLERK

No cabs!

CLAIRE GETS OFF THE ELEVATOR AND MOVES THROUGH THIS CHAOS
Regis sees her and tries to give her comfort--she's
beyond that. She wears a jacket and carries her bag--
she's going somewhere.

REGIS

I'm sorry, Claire...

She pushes him away politely; she is single-minded now.

CLAIRE

Heard from Russell?

REGIS

Nobody has.

CLAIRE

Wanta help me find him?

Regis looks at her like she's crazy.

REGIS

Claire...it's on the weird
side out there...

Hub Kittle enters the lobby, sees Claire and volunteers:

HUB

Jesus Christ, Claire, a human
tragedy, what can I say?

Claire is nearly in tears, but resists.

CLAIRE

Fuck off, Hub, get outta my
way.

CLAIRE EXITS THE HOTEL AND GETS INTO HER PRESS CAR

CUT TO:

104 EXT. STREETS OF MANAGUA - LONG SHOT OF JAZY'S HOUSE - DAY

104

Claire stays in her car and watches the house--no way to
get close--and she continues driving, her route dictated
by the same barricades that directed Alex and Price.

She passes the dead pig in the street, and TWO RED CROSS
WORKERS make their way slowly around a corner, frightened.
Claire gets out of her car and approaches them.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

104

CLAIRE
(in Spanish)
Do you know where the American
journalist was killed?

They all point down a street. She shows them the polaroid
of Price and her.

CLAIRE
(cont'd; in Spanish)
Have you seen him?

They haven't and continue on their way. Claire walks in
the direction they pointed--no street fighting but many
Guardia.

P.O.V. PRICE'S CAR FAR DOWN THE STREET SURROUNDED BY GUARDIA

CUT TO:

105 EXT. SHANTYTOWN - DAY

105

PRICE HUNCHES DOWN AND CRAWLS BEHIND THE STALLS as soldiers
move through the yards looking for him.

A WOMAN IN A DOORWAY WATCHES PRICE HIDE

THE WOMAN APPEARS IN A DOORWAY AND MOTIONS WITH HER HEAD
for Price to dart inside.

CUT TO:

106 INT. THE HOUSE - DAY

106

Nothing is said. Price is led into a room, one of many--
but this room is boarded over. There is no escape. Price
is in pain, his arm bleeds, he's tiring.

WOMAN
(in Spanish)
This is the best I can offer.

PRICE
Gracias.

PRICE STANDS IN THE TINY ROOM WAITING
He leans against the wall behind the door. He shuts his
eyes--a noise at the door. When he opens them:

THE WOMAN IS STANDING THERE WITH A GUN
She hands it to him and leaves, bolting the door.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

PRICE LEANS AGAINST THE WALL HOLDING A REVOLVER and he waits--cameras around his neck, gun in hand, bloody, slightly ridiculous, and scared.

CUT TO:

107 EXT. THE STREETS OF MANAGUA - DAY

107

Price's shot up car is not far away, but she's afraid to approach it. She shows the picture of Price to a small boy who doesn't recognize it.

GUARDIA SOLDIER SPOTS CLAIRE and walks toward her. She cannot tell if the act is routine or threatening. He calls out to her.

SOLDIER

Venga aqui.

She hesitates--Alex is dead, everything is crazy. She starts toward him, then changes her mind, turns, and walks quickly away from him.

THE SOLDIER RUNS TOWARD HER

CLAIRE RUNS FASTER and darts into a narrow passageway behind a house, where she looks back. He calls for support--several join him and hurry after her. Panicky, she runs between houses.

OVERHEAD PLANES BUZZ THE NEIGHBORHOOD as Claire emerges from the 'maze' to see:

P.O.V. PRICE'S CAR ABANDONED and full of holes near the shanty town. Guardia are everywhere. The helicopter gunship is overhead.

CUT TO:

108 INT. THE HOUSE WHERE PRICE HIDES - DAY

108

He hears the Guard breaking in, and he cocks his gun.

109 INT. SAME HOUSE

109

as the Squadron Leader and three soldiers burst in--the woman stands in the middle of the room and lies.

WOMAN

(in Spanish)

Nobody is here. Get out.

CONTINUED:

109 CONTINUED:

109

The Squadron Leader points to different rooms for each soldier, and they proceed to kick in each door, automatic rifles ready.

PRICE'S ROOM AS HE HEARS A SOLDIER AT THIS DOOR.

THE DOOR IS KICKED OPEN, AND A SOLDIER STEPS INTO THE ROOM For a moment he doesn't see Price--then he whirls and faces the photographer who's so scared he's forgotten to raise his gun.

PRICE AND THE SOLDIER ARE FACE-TO-FACE
The soldier is a fourteen-year-old boy fighting back tears. He, too, is scared to death. Neither is quite sure why he is there--they just want it to end.

PRICE AND THE BOY AIM THEIR GUNS AT EACH OTHER as they hear the voice of the Squadron Leader in the other room.

LEADER

Esta alli?!
(Is he there?)

No answer.

LEADER

(cont'd)
Esta alli?!

SQUADRON LEADER HEADS TOWARD THE ROOM but as he does, the boy soldier appears in the doorway.

BOY SOLDIER

No esta aqui.

The Leader grunts an order, and the squadron quickly heads to the next house.

PRICE'S BODY SLUMPS AGAINST THE WALL EXHAUSTED, and the woman enters as soon as the last soldier has gone.

Price's brief moment of peace is shattered by the screaming of Guardia troops and the explosions of rocket fire from the gunship. He looks outside.

110 THE GUNSHIP FIRES INTO THE SHANTYTOWN killing several of its own Guardia troops. A GUARDIA OFFICER screams at the gunship and fires a hand gun at the giant chopper.

110

GUARDIA OFFICER

(in Spanish)
We are you! We are you! What are you doing?!

- 111 GUARDIA TROOPS EVACUATE THE SHANTYTOWN in a panicky scramble to escape their own gunship. 111
- 112 PRICE RACES THROUGH THE BACK OF THE SHANTYTOWN, taking advantage of the chaos, and without slowing down, breaks free of the maze of the barrio. 112
- 113 CLAIRE'S P.O.V. OF PRICE RACING ACROSS THE STREET, past a body and an overturned, smoking car, back into the rubble strewn blocks of the edge of the city. A tan-quetta comes around a corner and sees Price a block away. 113

CLAIRE

Russell!

PRICE SEES HER, and races along a wall until they meet, grabbing her on the run--each is panicky and frightened--and they duck into very shallow cover, barely safe.

PRICE

What're you doing here?!

They embrace quickly and tightly, but look around nervously as they do. Price isn't sure if anybody knows about Alex.

CLAIRE

Alex!

PRICE

The Guardia did it -- I got pictures.

P.O.V. A TANQUETTA PASSES ON THE NEXT STREET, visible through shattered holes in the buildings. A Guardia squadron passes.

PRICE AND CLAIRE RUN DOWN THE STREET in the opposite direction, their path guided somewhat by an overturned bus in an intersection, abandoned barricades and roadblocks, and the rubble of street fighting.

CUT TO:

- 114 EXT. THE STREET OF JAZY'S HOUSE - DAY 114
- PRICE AND CLAIRE hesitate at the corner and move slowly along, seeing two Sandinistas, dressed half in camouflaged gear, half disco. The TWO GUERRILLAS seem to control the street. Price and Claire approach warily.

PRICE

Hola.

(the Guerrillas nod;
in Spanish)

Do you control this area?

114 CONTINUED:

114

The Sandinista looks at his comrade, then looks around nervously, frightened, then shrugs.

DISCO SANDINISTA

(in Spanish)

I don't know.

Price and Claire continue on down the street and simultaneously notice something strange:

THE DOOR TO JAZY'S HOUSE IS WIDE OPEN

They approach carefully and look in a view to the courtyard. Claire sticks her head in the door slowly, and as she does:

A GIANT HAND GUN IS STUCK IN HER TEMPLE as TWO MUCHACHOS quickly seize her and Price, dragging them inside.

CUT TO:

115 INT. JAZY'S COURTYARD - LATE IN DAY

115

JAZY STANDS WITH A THIRD GUN AT HIS HEAD, being held by the most forceful and crazed of three young Muchachos. With guns on Jazy, Price, and Claire, there is much confusion as to who's in charge and what exactly they're doing.

MUCHACHO #1

(in Spanish)

Who are you?

JAZY

They are my friends.

MUCHACHO #2

(in Spanish)

Shut up. We kill them all.

MUCHACHO #3

(in Spanish)

No. Only him.

The guns are aimed back and forth in confusion--Price and Claire don't have a chance to respond, and they're not sure what to say.

MUCHACHO #1

(in Spanish)

Him or him or her?

115 CONTINUED:

115

The Muchachos begin arguing rapidly among themselves;
and as they do, Jazy addresses Price and Claire coolly.

JAZY

Well, here we are, eh?

MUCHACHO #1

(in Spanish)

Assassin! Shut up!

JAZY

The boys are confused -- they
think I had their family killed.

PRICE

You murder people.

JAZY

"Murder" is a word for criminals.
I have a job to protect the
stability of a continent.

MUCHACHO #3

Pig! Hijo de puta!

JAZY

Please...

He is not begging for his life as much as for them to calm
down.

CLAIRE

You got caught by some boys?

JAZY

Yes. Poets too, I imagine.

(beat)

Is your recorder on?

CLAIRE

(hesitates)

Yes.

JAZY

Good. I have a speech to make.

The Muchachos don't understand what he's saying, but they
stop to listen to his style. The guns remained trained
on all three.

115 CONTINUED:

115

JAZY

I like you people, but you are sentimental shits. You fall in love with the poets, the poets fall in love with the Marxists, the Marxists fall in love with themselves. The country is destroyed with rhetoric, and in the end we are stuck with tyrants.

MUCHACHO #1

(in Spanish)

Shut up!

Jazy turns to the boy who jams the gun into his head and speaks with tired authority.

JAZY

Un minuto, por favor.

MUCHACHO #2

(to Price and Claire,
more calmly)

Who are you?

JAZY

(in Spanish)

They are journalists.

The Muchachos are immediately surprised and delighted, and one of them speaks in excited, broken English.

MUCHACHO #1

Periodistas! Take this picture!
I'm going to blow his head off.

The Muchachos quickly withdraw their guns from Price and Claire and aim them all at Jazy's head.

JAZY

Somoza? He is a tyrant too, of course. A butcher.

(beat)

But finally that is not the point, you see. If we wish to survive -- we have a choice of tyrants, and for all the right reasons, your poets choose the wrong side.

115 CONTINUED:

115

MUCHACHO #1
(impatiently)
Fotografia!

PRICE
No.

JAZY
Yes.

(beat)
Your picture of Rafael was
brilliant...but I am alive,
and better looking. A good
looking Frenchman with a
sympathetic face is murdered
in cold blood while fighting
for the survival of Europe
and America.

(cont'd; beat)
You will have another magazine
cover!
(smiles)
Muy complicado, no?

MUCHACHO #1
(in Spanish)
Ready! Now!

CLAIRE
You picked the wrong side.

JAZY
In fifty years we will know
who's right.
(beat)
Are you going to take the picture
as the bullet enters the skull
or as it comes out? This wall's
a nice color, eh? I can move
into the sunlight.

CLAIRE TURNS AND WALKS AWAY, her back to the scene.

JAZY
(cont'd; to Claire)
It's just a story!

PRICE REMAINS AND STARES AT JAZY as the Muchachos grow
increasingly impatient. Some part of him wants to take
the picture.

115 CONTINUED:

115

MUCHACHO #1

(in Spanish)

Shut up!

JAZY

They say that if somebody's
holding a gun on you, you
should never stop talking...
that's the theory -- who knows?...

PRICE TURNS AND WALKS AWAY toward Claire. Still--Jazy talks.

JAZY

(cont'd)

Maybe it's a good thing that I
talk too much...

A GUNSHOT RINGS OUT.

Price grimaces. Claire shuts her eyes. They turn to look
at the fallen Jazy as the Three Muchachos, frightened by
their own act, race back into the street. For several
moments Price and Claire stand, frozen, until the rumbling
sound of a helicopter gunship nearby forces them to hurry
outside. .

116 PRICE AND CLAIRE GO TO THE DOORWAY and look out as a jeep 116
full of Guardia screams past.

P.O.V. SEVERAL GUERRILLAS RETREATING FROM AN ADVANCING
TANQUETTA a block away. The neighborhood seems to be
changing hands again.

Price and Claire slump in the darkness near the doorway;
she touches near his wounded arm.

CLAIRE

You okay?

(he nods)

Russell...what did Alex do?

PRICE

Nothing. He asked for directions.

She shakes her head and leans it against Price's shoulder
but the distant popping of guns does not even allow her
a moment of mourning. Their heads pop up nervously.

PRICE

(cont'd)

We gotta get outta sight -- half
the fucking army's looking for
me...

116 CONTINUED:

116

CLAIRE
They're not looking for me.

Silence.

CLAIRE
(cont'd)
Let me have the film...
(beat; unsure)
...if I can't get to the hotel
I'll come back here...

Price doesn't want her to go alone, but he's not that excited about hiding out in the middle of the city either.

PRICE
Aw, Christ...
(frustrated)
I've wrecked everything else,
at least let me take care of you
here.

CLAIRE
Russell...it's more dangerous
being with you than being alone.

He knows she's right. He loves her, and he's made enough disastrous decisions lately. He hesitates, then pops open his camera and removes the film. Price ties the film into the white flag that hangs from a stick stuck into her belt.

PRICE AND CLAIRE EMBRACE AND KISS BRIEFLY

PRICE
Don't get hurt.

CLAIRE
(affectionately)
That's great advice.

They kiss, and Claire runs out after a Red Cross truck. Price watches nervously until they turn a corner, out of sight, then goes back inside Jazy's courtyard. PRICE NEARLY STUMBLES OVER JAZY'S BODY, stops, stares--he'd forgotten already. The body makes him uneasy, and after several moments he finds a sheet and covers Jazy. Price then sits down and waits nervously, sharing the courtyard with Jazy.

CUT TO:

117 EXT. STREETS OF MANAGUA - DUSK

117

CLAIRE WALKS ALONGSIDE THE RED CROSS TRUCK as it comes around a corner. The truck turns one direction, she wants to go the other way toward the hotel.

P.O.V. - THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL ON THE HILL IN DISTANCE - DUSK

Guardia troops heavily patrol the ground between Claire and the hotel--a jeep, a troop carrier, a tanquetta, and fifty foot soldiers.

CLAIRE TAKES TEMPORARY COVER offered by a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN who sees that she is afraid of La Guardia. Claire steps behind a walled yard. Moments later:

A BOY ON A BIKE RIDES SLOWLY OUT OF THE YARD and turns up the hill toward the Guardia and the hotel. Claire's white flag is tied to his handlebars.

CLAIRE WATCHES FEARFULLY as the boy pedals into the military zone. The woman offers Claire some food; she declines.

CUT TO:

118 EXT. THE ROAD TO THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL - DUSK

118

THE BOY PEDALS slowly, in no hurry, past La Guardia troops. Some of them watch him curiously, some ignore him. The white flag flutters as he rides.

CUT TO:

119 EXT. STREETS OF MANAGUA - DUSK

119

CLAIRE RETRACES HER STEPS to the block where Price is hiding in Jazy's house.

THE TWO DISCO SANDINISTAS LIE DEAD IN THE STREET, a dog sniffs at the bodies. Claire looks around--there is little sign of life. She enters Jazy's house.

CUT TO:

120 INT. JAZY'S HOUSE - DUSK

120

CLAIRE ENTERS and stops. She calls out his name, no answer. Price is gone. She hurries back outside.

CUT TO:

121 EXT. JAZY'S HOUSE - DUSK

121

TWO GUARDIA TROOP CARRIERS RACE PAST, sirens screaming, loaded with Guardia soldiers. Claire steps into the street unsurely, looking every direction.

PEOPLE BEGIN COMING OUT OF THEIR HOMES and what remains of their small homes. They come one at a time at first, then in small groups, carrying belongings, pets, chickens, etc.

CLAIRE SHOWS A PICTURE OF PRICE AND HER to a woman who comes out of the house next to Jazy's, but the woman shakes her head, not recognizing Price.

A PUSH-PULL PLANE DIVES IN LOW FIRING ROCKETS at the homes.

THE CROWD GROWS and chaotically flees the destruction, gradually finding a direction out of the city. Claire is swept along in the crowds, at first without choice, then finally fleeing for her life with the rest of Managua. As she moves with the crowd, she looks for Price everywhere, without success.

CUT TO:

122 EXT. A TEMPORARY REFUGEE CAMP - NIGHT

122

SEVERAL CAMPFIREs burn near the edge of the city where dozens have taken temporary refuge. Claire arrives to see: A BODY ON A STRETCHER BEING CARRIED up outside stairs to a rooftop from which glow several bare bulbs. She goes up the stairs to the rooftop.

CUT TO:

123 EXT. A ROOFTOP HOSPITAL - NIGHT

123

A MAKESHIFT MOBILE HOSPITAL under awnings and palm fronds, capable of moving location in minutes. A WOMAN DOCTOR and two temporary orderlies tend to wounded. A small black and white television sits on a table and those who are able watch the seige of Managua on television while it goes on around them. Claire looks for Price among the dead or wounded.

124 P.O.V. - THE CITY UNDER ATTACK

124

Claire watches for several moments--smoke, flame, the buzzing sound of planes swooping low, fleeing crowds. She then notices the television.

125 PRICE'S FOOTAGE OF ALEX'S DEATH comes on the TV screen, and she pushes closer to see the grim sequence. The NEWS COMMENTATOR explains in Spanish what we see.

125

125 CONTINUED:

125

CLAIRE IS SO DISTURBED AT THE IMAGES that she turns away, sickened, hurt, guilty, outraged, but unable to break down. She closes her eyes--her face is covered with tears. The Doctor notices this and speaks softly to her.

DOCTOR

Journalist?

(Claire nods)

You knew the man who was killed?

(she nods again)

Fifty thousand Nicaraguans have died...and now one Yankee.

(beat)

Perhaps now Americans will be outraged at what is happening here, eh?

It takes a while for Claire to respond.

CLAIRE

Yes...perhaps they will.

Noise in the distance from mortars. The Doctor speaks calmly, without bitterness in the voice, but with total conviction.

DOCTOR

Maybe we should have killed an American journalist fifty years ago.

Claire acknowledges the grim truth of the observation with a slight nod, and walks to the railing as:

ALEX'S DEATH IS REPEATED IN FREEZE FRAME SEQUENCE over and over again as the Orderlies, Doctor, and patients gather to watch with fascination.

CLAIRE STARES OUT AT THE CITY ON FIRE, when her eye catches something--a light in the sky. She watches:

P.O.V. - A HELICOPTER WITH SEARCHLIGHT PASSES OVERHEAD, momentarily illuminating the hospital, but it continues on, curiously uninterested in the Guerrilla activity. The chopper sweeps above a nearby hill and hovers, then slowly lowers to earth.

CLAIRE WATCHES with interest then descends the stairs.

CUT TO:

126 EXT. ~~THE~~ CEMETERY - NIGHT

126

SOMOZA WATCHES AS A BACK HOE DIGS UP THE COFFINS of his parents. An Army helicopter lands, lighting the scene, and Miss Panama rushes from the chopper into his arms as the turbulence from the blades raises her dress and musses his hair. Soldiers place the dirt-covered caskets on the roofs of Somoza's two Mercedes, hastily tie them down, and the strange motorcade, flanked by two heavily armed jeeps, drives off into the dark.

CLAIRE WATCHES IT ALL from a safe distance, not far from the refugee camp. She turns and walks slowly back to the camp.

CUT TO:

127 EXT. THE REFUGEE CAMP - LATE AT NIGHT

127

Claire sits down against the remains of a wall. The war has overtaken her--she doesn't know if Price is alive--and though totally involved, she is at last an observer once again. Claire notices the tiny red light of her recorder is still on. She turns it off, and as the sounds of battle gradually die down, Claire falls asleep--exhausted.

DISSOLVE TO:

128 EXT. THE REFUGEE CAMP - DAWN

128

CLAIRE SLEEPS AGAINST THE WALL as a dog sniffs and licks her face. She awakens with a start--the dog scurries away. Claire rises and looks around.

A LOCAL WOMAN PUSHES A CART carrying the wrapped body of her husband through the otherwise quiet streets of Managua.

CLAIRE MOVES THROUGH THE CAMP just coming to life, and looks around trying to interpret the eerie silence. A WOMAN tends to her TWO SMALL CHILDREN.

CLAIRE.

(in Spanish)

Have you seen La Guardia?

WOMAN WITH CHILDREN

(in Spanish)

No. Is the war over?

CLAIRE

(in Spanish)

I don't know.

128 CONTINUED:

128

A DISTANT, DRONING NOISE GETS STEADILY LOUDER. Claire looks around nervously.

A CHILD RUNS DOWN THE STREET SHOUTING

CHILD
Tanquettas! Tanquettas!

P.O.V. - SEVERAL TANQUETTAS AND EARTH MOVERS coming over the hill in the distance. The Refugees look up fearfully and some hide. As the war machinery gets closer, we see that:

SANDINISTAS ARE DRIVING THE MACHINES draped with red and black (F.S.L.N.), blue and white (Nicaraguan), and yellow and white (the Vatican) flags. Graffiti of victory covers the tanquettas.

PEOPLE COME INTO THE STREET CHEERING, embracing, only gradually realizing what has happened.

WOMAN WITH CHILDREN
(in Spanish)
Is the war over?

CLAIRE
Yes.

WOMAN WITH CHILDREN
Es bueno.
(It is good.)

The woman continues with her children, her comment unemotional, and Claire smiles slightly and walks away, through a city awakening slowly to its victory.

CLAIRE STOPS A RED CROSS TRUCK and shows the driver her picture of Price. The picture means nothing to the driver. Claire continues through the city, looking for Price.

CUT TO:

129 EXT. THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL - MORNING

129

CLAIRE WALKS INTO THE POOL AREA where chairs and tables float in the pool, the bar is overturned, and the once sumptuous press oasis is a disaster.

CUT TO:

130 INT. THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL - MORNING

130

CLAIRE ENTERS A DESERTED LOBBY, also a mess, and hesitates before climbing the circular stairs.

CLAIRE LOOKS INTO PRICE'S ROOM, and finds it empty, and typically messy.

CLAIRE WALKS INTO HER OWN ROOM--PRICE STANDS AT THE BALCONY looking out at the jubilant city from which smoke still rises.

CLAIRE AND PRICE EMBRACE DEEPLY, holding onto each other without the slightest intention of letting go.

DISSOLVE TO:

131 INT. THE INTERCONTINENTAL LOBBY - LATER - DAY

131

PRICE AND CLAIRE COME DOWNSTAIRS to the lobby. They are cleaned up in fresh clothes; they have survived and the war is over.

THE LOBBY IS COMING TO LIFE AGAIN with Regis' camera crew, who look like they've had a long night, a BUS BOY, A MAID, AN OLD COUPLE, and A WHITE WOMAN, 38, with TWO SMALL DAUGHTERS--all either sit or mill in the b.g.

PRICE AND CLAIRE STOP SHORT at what they see.

PRICE

Alex.

P.O.V. - A HANDMADE CASKET SITTING IN THE LOBBY with the name, "A. Grazier" scrawled in felt pen.

Price and Claire stand next to the box silently--there is nothing to say--but the silence is interrupted by a familiar voice that is polite, unforced, and sincere.

VOICE OF HUB KITTLE

It was the best I would do under the circumstances. The casket, I mean.

Awkward silence until they realize that he's sincere.

CLAIRE

Can you help us ship it home?

HUB

I've already taken care of it.

(beat)

(MORE)

131 CONTINUED:

131

HUB

(cont'd)

I always liked the guy. I can't even get tickets for my own family, but I could get you two on the plane if you want.

We see the woman and little girls as Hub's family.

PRICE

Yes, please...

HUB

Tacho's in Miami.

A shared silence at the lunacy of the moment, interrupted by the tired voice of one of Hub's daughters.

HUB'S DAUGHTER

Daddy!

HUB

(to Price and Claire)

I am sorry. I had a job to do -- that's all -- it put me in some unhappy situations.

Hub goes over to take care of his family.

CUT TO:

132 EXT. PLAZA OF MANAGUA'S LARGEST CATHEDRAL - LATER - DAY 132

Thousands of people have gathered to celebrate in loud and joyous singing, led by a group on the highest cathedral steps, surrounded by Revolutionary leaders waving to the crowds. A SINGING GROUP sings a song to Nicaragua, and a song to Rafael.

RAFAEL'S BODY IN A FANCY CASKET is carried in through the crowd to wild cheering and singing. High over the pallbearers' heads it moves through the crowds.

PRICE AND CLAIRE STAND TO THE SIDE watching it all. The celebration is joyously infectious, and for the moment we can forget the bloodshed, forget the problems that lay ahead, forget even the death of Alex.

PRICE PULLS OUT A CAMERA and begins taking pictures of the celebration.

132 CONTINUED:

132

ISELA IS AT THE MICROPHONE with other Guerrilla leaders.

CLAIRE WORKS THROUGH THE CROWD with her mike held high, recording the singing of the crowd.

PRICE BACKS UNDER THE AWNING of a stand selling refreshments, and especially Rum and Coke mixtures known suddenly and triumphantly as "Nicalibres." As Price snaps off pictures--a voice from an American in casual street clothes drinking at the temporary bar.

OATES

Hey, Pricey...

Price looks over to see the smiling Oates.

OATES

(cont'd)

It's all over, eh? We made it.
I like the singing.

PRICE

What're you doing here?

OATES

Free country. Now it's free,
anyway.

(raises his drink)

Nicalibre!

Oates holds up his Kodak Instamatic camera.

OATES

(cont'd)

How 'bout a quickie?

(no response)

No? Things are heating up in
Thailand...thought I'd check
it out.

(beat)

You ain't gonna turn me in, are
ya?

PRICE TURNS AND WALKS AWAY

OATES

(cont'd)

Am I gonna see ya in Thailand?
We could be friends!

REVISED 7/30

131.

132 CONTINUED:

132

Price keeps walking, into the crowd, where he finds Claire. Oates orders another Nicalibre, and beats his foot to the music.

PRICE AND CLAIRE IN THE CROWD

PRICE

We've got a plane to catch.

CLAIRE

Did you get enough pictures?

No answer--a final complicated question from Claire--they smile. Price waves for a cab which pulls over. They get in the cab and drive away.

HOLD ON THE VICTORY CELEBRATION

THE END