

OLIVER STONE'S NORIEGA

ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

by

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EXT. RURAL JUNGLE AREA IN TROPICS - DAWN

ON A FROG sitting on a rock, his slitted impassive eyes staring at an insect. A Mozart OPERA ("The Magic Flute") plays in the BG.

INTERCUT with the face of a TORTURED MAN SCREAMING, then back to the peaceful JUNGLE SOUNDS.

The frog's tongue darts out and snaps the bug out of the air.

INTERCUT with the HANDS of the TORTURERS holding the man's hair, as a machete is drawn across his throat.

IN THE JUNGLE an IGUANA moves through the underbrush.

TONY (V.O.)

I was just a poor slum kid, Father, with a face that made me believe that God hated me.

INTERCUT with a SHOT of TONY NORIEGA in a confessional box. He's disheveled, frightened and exhausted, but he has reached a stage of resignation, like a man about to face a firing squad.

TONY (CONT'D)

My own mother denied me. No one loved me. But the great mystery is that I was still able to rise so high.

In the b.g. of the confessional box, we can see the outlines of a PRIEST (Father Jorge).

IN THE JUNGLE. In front of our eyes, there is a bulky canvas bag with the words U.S.MAIL. The bag is saturated in blood. SOUNDS of CHILDREN moving through an overgrown ravine, talking excitedly. Local police follow.

The POLICEMEN now shake the bulky mail bag. Out tumbles a headless torso.

POLICEMAN

Oh Jesus!

(then)

Where's the head?

TONY (V.O.)

You see, I was always blessed with the most wonderful luck. I guess you could say that's the story of my life. I was one of God's favorites.

INT. VICKY AMADO'S APARTMENT - DAY

The MUSIC of Mozart continues from an opulent stereo in the wall as we reveal a huge CLOSE-UP of TONY NORIEGA'S pitted face. SMACK! He absorbs a blow from a pillow across his face.

He growls and stalks his opponent, full of power and menace. Suddenly he lunges forward.

He tackles the sumptuous, sexy VICKY AMADO and throws her onto the four-poster bed, in the midst of their pillow fight. The bedroom is absurdly lavish and little-girlish with immense teddy bears and a carousel pony. They flail across the bed, giggling lovers. The immediate impression is one of sumptuous decay, the colors vivid, primary, almost riotous.

TONY

You pampered white-assed bitch!

VICKY

You pimple-faced toad!

He smiles, famous of course for his acne and reptilian eyes, but there is a courtliness, a certain mildness of manner that is at once beguiling and threatening.

He takes a misstep and immediately Vicky is on top of him. Tony pretends to resist, but Vicky's breasts are hovering over his face, taking his attention.

VICKY

Surrender

TONY

What do you want?

VICKY

I want to go to Paris.

TONY

Are you crazy? Do you want Felicidad to kill us both?

Vicky is a lush and voluptuous woman in her early thirties with long blond hair and eyes that invite trouble.

VICKY

I don't give a shit about that social climbing bitch you married - I want to go to Paris and eat at Maxim's.

TONY

Okay.

Vicky sits up, surprised and pleased.

TONY (CONT'D)

But not this time.

VICKY

Bastard.

She gets up and walks to dresser, where she sits and studies her reflection.

TONY

What? Do you expect to go shopping with Felicidad? Where will you stay? What are you thinking?

VICKY

That I should go and she should stay. For once. Me, not her.

Tony gets out of bed and starts to get dressed. He does not take Vicky's pouting very seriously. As they talk, he puts on red underwear, then nonchalantly ties black ribbons around his ankles before putting on his socks.

TONY

My travel outfit?

VICKY

In the closet.

He looks in the closet and selects a yellow jumpsuit.

TONY

The shoes?

VICKY

Really, Tony, you don't need a mistress, you need a valet.

Tony LAUGHS.

TONY

You know, you are totally correct.

VICKY

Look under the bed.

Tony walks over to Vicky and smells her hair, deeply appreciating the fragrance.

TONY

I will take you. Not now, but soon. It's a promise. You can take it to the bank.

In the mirror, Vicky eyes him a bit suspiciously. Then Tony ceremoniously drapes a necklace around her. It is actually a rosary of large, black, santaria beads.

TONY

This will protect you while I'm gone.

VICKY

They don't go with diamonds, do they?

EXT. JUNGLES OF DARIEN PROVINCE DAY

A SQUADRON OF HELICOPTERS scudding above the canopy of the rain forest. INTERCUT their flight with:

A CAMOUFLAGED QUONSET HUT buried under the limbs scarcely visible. Nearby, SIX MEN are loading a truck with bricks of cocaine in shrink-wrapped bags.

A DOG sleeping on the porch of the hut. He suddenly wakes and looks into the jungle. He starts to GROWL. One of the men notices the dog's reaction and turns to look for himself. He drops his load and rushes for the hut.

QUICK CUTS: THREE JEEPS loaded with SOLDIERS burst out of the jungle, MUCH SHOUTING. OVERHEAD, the swarming helicopters begin to drop additional troops down rope ladders.

SHOTS of the drug lab, unprocessed opium, TWENTY CAPTURED MEN SHOUTING, begging for mercy, kneeling with their hands over their heads, as the soldiers take control.

INT. PENITENTIARY APARTMENT - PANAMA CITY

A fleshy, frightening COLOMBIAN DRUG LORD is on a rampage. Before him stand TWO TERRIFIED MEN, KIKI PRETELET, a tiny - almost dainty Panamanian homosexual, and CESAR RODRIGUEZ, a pilot and drug runner, who wears too much jewelry.

DRUG LORD

There seems to have been a misunderstanding. I thought I was dealing with honorable men.

KIKI and Cesar are too frightened to speak.

DRUG LORD (CONT'D)

In Colombia, when we pay a man for his cooperation, we get his cooperation. If he doesn't wish to work with us - fine! He doesn't take our money. But this! I give Noriega five million dollars. I entrust it to you. You tell me he appreciates it. He even sends me this gift

The Drug Lord picks up a handsome Chinese vase.

DRUG LORD (CONT'D)

It's Ming, you know. One of the finest pieces in my collection. Very rare, a lovely gesture. Now, the next thing I know, our new processing facility is raided. A billion dollars in product - destroyed. A billion dollars. Fucking Noriega! You tell that little wart he's going to die! Right here! I'll rip out his balls! I'll feed his goddamn liver to the housecat! Do you think he can understand that? This is fucking business!

He turns furiously and hurls the vase through the window, SHATTERING glass and porcelain.

EXT. TARMAC OF AIRPORT - DAY

CLOSE as TONY, accompanied by his wife FELICIDAD and his THREE DAUGHTERS, inspects his HONOR GUARD on a red carpet, boarding his "Panama One" G-3 JET.

Dressed in his travel outfit -- yellow jumpsuit, white ascot, yellow loafers -- he salutes and examines the uniforms of his guards to make sure they're up to snuff. PEPE VELASQUEZ trails him, his closest adviser, a little rat-faced man with thinning hair and a worried, canny demeanor; behind him a FAT DOCTOR in a guayabera with a heavy medical bag and a totally blank expression.

Felicidad, a heavyset, shrewish, middle-aged Amazon, shoos her teenaged daughters, dressed in sexy jeans and provocative blouses with designer Hermes, YSL labels, past the guard without pausing. Everyone wears expensive sunglasses.

At the end of the line, Tony pauses before NICKY BARLETTA, the titular President of Panama, a stuffy ex-banker with a deluded notion of his own importance. With him is COLONEL ROBERTO DIAZ-HERRERA, Noriega's Chief-of-Staff, a handsome man with great presence, a man of some measure and rank who could be a rival.

Tony pauses before these two.

TONY

Mr. President.

BARLETTA

General, the good wishes of the people of Panama accompany you on your well deserved trip to Geneva and Paris.

TONY

You make it sound like a vacation.

BARLETTA

No! I certainly did not mean -

TONY

(to Diaz Herrera)

Roberto, help Nicky.

DIAZ HERRERA

Absolutely

TONY

Don't let him do anything foolish.

Barletta starts to protest, but Tony's smile cuts him short.

TONY (CONT'D)

Remember, I am watching.

From the top of the steps leading to the plane, Felicidad hollers down impatiently:

FELICIDAD

Tony!

Tony climbs the steps leading to the plane, then pauses at the door and takes a white handkerchief from his pocket, which he waves overhead - a trademark gesture, bizarre and profoundly ironic - which will become a symbol of the mocking opposition.

INT. PLANE - DAY

The Noriegas sit in an absurdly luxurious presidential suite. The girls stare distractedly out the window, listening to a MADONNA TAPE playing over the p.a.

Tony smiles paternally while Felicidad reads "The Thorn Birds". A well endowed STEWARDESS, her breasts oozing over her low-cut outfit brings Tony a drink.

STEWARDESS

Your whiskey soda, General.

As he stares appreciatively, his voice NARRATES:

TONY (V.O.)

Everything was offered to me, Father. I know Jesus suffered temptations, but really I can't believe he went through the trials I had to suffer. Some were worse than others, of course.

Felicidad's eyes glance up from the book.

FELICIDAD

Where's my Campari?

TONY

Felicidad, I think I'll go up front for awhile.

INT. COCKPIT -DAY

TONY, drink in hand, makes his way into the cockpit. The pilot is the just-seen CESAR RODRIGUEZ, wearing an open shirt and abundant gold jewelry. The CO-PILOT, a young man in a PDF uniform, looks up as Tony enters.

TONY

Cesar and I have to discuss business.

CO-PILOT

Yessir, general.

He quickly takes off his headset and leaves the cockpit. Tony takes his place in the co-pilot's seat.

CESAR

(sizing Tony up)

You look like a Colombian pimp.

TONY

Cesar, why do you talk to me like this?

CESAR

Someone needs to tell you the truth.

(pauses, eyes a suitcase)

There's 20 million in the suitcase for Geneva. But you won't spend it if you don't make good with the Colombians.

TONY

The Colombians think they own Panama.

CESAR

You go too far Tony.

TONY

All my life, people tell me "you go too far",
Cesar, but each time I go, I feel my little
voice tell me "it is not far enough". Do I live
by what I feel or what others tell me?

CESAR

A monster does not know he is a monster because
his inner voice is no longer human.

TONY

(pouting)

You abuse me Cesar, and you know too much. One
day I will have to kill you.

(smiles, puts his hand on
Cesar's thigh)

Oh, I love to fly.

CESAR

General!

TONY

(an order)

Put it on auto, Cesar.

As they fly over the Panama Canal, the REAR PROCESS SHOT out the cockpit
shoots us low over the waterway, glimpsing several ships moving through the
locks.

EXT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - PANAMA CITY - DAY

A charming whitewashed, Moorish-revival building. An agitated COLONEL
HERRERA storms past the GUARDS, barely acknowledging the salutes, but as he
sweeps past the WHITE HERONS that adorn the fountain area of the interior
plaza, he is chased by an upset bird.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Dwarfed by his immense leather chair, NICKY BARLETTA stares into space,
absolutely stunned.

BARLETTA

Hugo!! Hugo Spadafora? Is it true!

HERRERA has flicked on the TV to a commentator announcing the death of Hugo
Spadafora. The news cuts to a still of the victim, a handsome,
revolutionary-looking man with gentle eyes.

HERRERA

It can't be true, it's too obvious. To have his biggest critic murdered when everyone knows that Hugo was making charges against him!

BARLETTA

Still, the way it looks-

HERRERA

Agreed.

BARLETTA

They cut off his head?

EXT. PANAMA CITY - DAY

An AERIAL SHOT of the PALACE tilts north towards the CANAL, and the large HEADQUARTERS of the U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND.

AS WE MOVE, we HEAR the previous conversation being played back ON TAPE:

BARLETTA'S VOICE

Still, the way it looks --

HERRERA'S VOICE

Agreed.

BARLETTA'S VOICE

They cut off his head?

EXT. SOUTHCOM - DAY

In stolen, espionage-type DOCUMENTARY IMAGES, we see the U.S. military presence -- SOLDIERS, JEEPS, A BASE.

A legend reads: HEADQUARTERS U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND

INT. U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The TAPE is being played for the benefit of a group of AMERICAN OFFICERS and CIA Agents.

DIAZ HERRERA'S VOICE

And stuffed his body in a U.S. mailbag. We don't have the details yet -

The 3 STAR GENERAL, a beefy, no-nonsense type, just arrived in the country, hits the pause button.

GENERAL

Spadofora?

CIA AGENT

A left-wing medical doctor, modeled himself on Che Guevera. Something of a national hero.

AIDE

He was an asshole but he worked with the Contras, so we had contact.

GENERAL

Where's the head?

Everyone shrugs.

GENERAL (CONT'D)

Dammit, Don't we have anything more on this? Don't we have sources?

CIA AGENT

General, Noriega is our source. We've been pouring gravy on his biscuits since the 60's.

AIDE

50's... But he's also a source for the Russians, Cubans, Sandinistas, Contras, Israelis, the Libyans, and the Goddamn Colombians. He's the most double-dealing son of a bitch since the Borgias!

CIA AGENT

General, when you've been here a little longer you'll understand. Panama is kind of like Cold War Berlin or Casablanca. It's - -

The General cuts him off with a cold stare.

GENERAL

It's time we got some new sources.

ECT. PANAMA CITY - DAY

ANOTHER AERIAL SHOT, this time TILTING EAST. A NEW VOICE takes over.

NEW VOICE (FATHER JORGE)

He was extensively tortured, nails torn off, ribs fractured, and the anal deformation...

A legend reads: RESIDENCE OF THE PAPAL NUNCIO, as we settle on an elegant stucco building behind a large iron fence.

INT. PAPAL NUNCIATURE - LIBRARY - DAY

In the ornate LIBRARY, FATHER JORGE, a young and passionate priest, is describing the torture in detail to his superior, MONSIGNOR JOSE SEBASTIAN LABOA, the papal NUNCIO (Vatican Ambassador). In his mid-sixties, a wily veteran of many Vatican intrigues, the Nuncio drinks his tea and listens. A spare man of Basque heritage, little surprises him.

NUNCIO

Pardon?

FATHER JORGE

He was serially raped, but only after they severed his hamstrings so he couldn't resist. Then they drove a stake up his ass.

NUNCIO

Before the drug money came, there was never such torture in Panama.

FATHER JORGE

Unfortunately, the torture didn't kill him. He was still alive until they cut off his head.

NUNCIO

The great Doctor Spadafora. You know I think this time, the little General -- if it is him -- has gone too far.

FATHER JORGE

How could it not be him!

INT. DERMATOLOGY CLINIC - GENEVA - DAY

A SWISS DOCTOR is peeling off the bandages, revealing TONY'S scabby face after a chemical peel. He uses a lighted scope.

SWISS DOCTOR

(accented)

Ah...yes it's cleaning up, very definitely. Great progress.

TONY looks in a hand mirror, horrified.

TONY

Oh? Is this Swiss humor, doctor?

A NURSE with a swab hovers nearby.

SWISS DOCTOR

Self-pity is not possible, General. Miss Heidi, yes, will apply the ointment now. Remember, keep your face relaxed, no expression, no movement -

As the Nurse applies a gooey substance to Tony's face, a RECEPTIONIST rushes in.

RECEPTIONIST

There's an emergency call for General Noriega!

TONY

(barely moving his lips)

I am busy.

RECEPTIONIST

(awed)

It's the *President of Panama!*

SWISS DOCTOR

Perhaps we can put it on the speaker.

The Receptionist punches a button on the phone.

BARLETTA'S VOICE

General?

TONY

(lips not moving)

What do you want, Nicky?

BARLETTA'S VOICE

General, I have Roberto here with me.

HERRERA'S VOICE

Hello, Tony!

BARLETTA'S VOICE

Something very serious has come up, General. Hugo Spadafora has been assassinated.

TONY

(pause, thinks about it)

Good. This is good.

BARLETTA'S VOICE

Uh, yes, but the people are not taking it very well. I don't know if you can hear the honking outside --

EXT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DAY

A crowd of DEMONSTRATORS are gathered at the gate, honking their horns from the cars. Strangely, they are too lazy to get out.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

BARLETTA and HERRERA point the phone at the sound of the HONKING CARS.

HERRERA

(worried)

The people are very upset, Tony!

BARLETTA

We think either you should come home right away, or else, uh -

TONY'S VOICE

Roberto? I understand you brought troops from Colon?

Herrera suddenly looks *stricken*. He casts a panicked look at Barletta.

HERRERA

Yes...

TONY'S VOICE

You are surprised, aren't you Roberto? I told you I was watching.

HERRERA

I had only the best...

TONY'S VOICE

Return them! Immediately! And Nicky..?

BARLETTA

Yes, General.

TONY

I'm going to Paris next week to meet with Mitterand. Call me in New York on Saturday. Do you know the Helmsley Palace?

EXT. HELMSLEY PALACE HOTEL - NEW YORK - DAY

PAN UP through the golden gates of the Palace toward the penthouses, which are bathed in a brilliant afternoon light..

INT. NORIEGA'S SUITE - DAY

The extravagant room is strewn with gaudy floral arrangements. Through the flora, we see six people seated at the foot of the king-sized bed. GABRIEL ARIAS, the distinguished elderly Panamanian ambassador to the U.S., sits in an armchair wearing sunglasses and resting his hand on a cane.

Also present: NESTOR SANCHEZ, an ex-CIA agent who is Noriega's U.S. contact; GINNY, a female CIA agent; and MARK, an American public relations specialist.

Tony lies in bed in a bathrobe. Nicky Barletta is on the speaker phone.

NESTOR

No, no -

BARLETTA'S VOICE

What are we saying? The U.S. -

NESTOR

I'm talking about the agency, President Barletta. Isn't that right, Ginny?

GINNY

The agency is behind you and General Noriega. From Casey on down.

Tony scratches himself and looks grateful.

MARK

But from a public relations point of view...

GINNY

Disaster.

TONY

Is that your view, Nestor?

NESTOR

That's why we brought Mark with us, General.

MARK

Elections.

TONY

Elections?

MARK

Press loves 'em.

BARLETTA'S VOICE

We had an election! I won!

Pause, as the others study their shoes. Tony SNAPS his finger at his doctor and points to his head, indicating that he's in pain.

MARK

Free and fair elections.

TONY

Of course! What other kind?

He laughs and looks around the room for support. In return: sick smiles.

MARK

Supervised by international monitors, like the U.N., or -

AMBASSADOR ARIAS

Jimmy Carter

MARK

Terrific idea, Mr. Ambassador. Brokered the Canal treaties, he'd be perfect.

NESTOR

Plus we have a big problem in Washington. Senator Jesse Helms is asking for an investigation.

BARLETTA'S VOICE

(defiantly)

We welcome an investigation.

More discreet SILENCE. The doctor hands Tony a pill and a glass of water.

TONY

Helms? He's a -
 (spins his finger around his
 head to indicate craziness)
 - right?

MARK

Look, it's not just Helms. You got Kerry on the left saying the same stuff. They're worried about the drug business. And this is in a town where the left and the right agree on nothing!

NESTOR

Mark is right, General. Listen to him.

TONY

Drugs! Drugs! Don't they read the newspapers? We just raided a major processing plant in Darien province. Everybody in Central America says Noriega is the leader in the war on drugs. A rock!

MARK

We know that, General.

TONY

A fucking rock!

MARK

We know you're a good guy, an anticommunist democrat, but you've got to realize that the American public perceives you as...something other than that. The Spadofora thing hasn't helped.

TONY

How do they see me, Mr. Mark?

MARK

They see you as a little tinpot fascist, which, Lord knows how they got that impression, but -

AMBASSADOR ARIAS

You've got to make a gesture, General.

TONY

A gesture.

MARK

It sure would help in Washington if you could demonstrate what a valuable ally you are, have always been -

TONY

Nicky, let me speak to Roberto.

Pause.

DIAZ HERRERA'S VOICE

Hey, Tony!

TONY

Roberto, I asked you to take care of Nicky.

DIAZ HERRERA'S VOICE

I am!

TONY

(playing to the room)

There is a cloud over Panama, Roberto. You know it, I know it, the whole world knows it.

DIAZ HERRERA'S VOICE

(cautiously)

Ah, uh-huh...

TONY

We must remove this cloud.

DIAZ HERRERA'S VOICE

Agreed. Of course.

TONY

Break the news to Nicky. Perhaps if he is one-hundred per cent cooperative, we will not have to proceed with an investigation.

He hangs up.

TONY

You see for yourself. I am totally committed to democratic reform.

A telephone RINGS. Tony answers it.

TONY

(pleasantly)

Hello? Yes, it is. Oh, Leona!

(making kissing sounds)

Oh, my dear, the room is full of beautiful flowers and champagne! You are so thoughtful. Now all I lack is someone beautiful named Leona to share it with me.

From the phone, NERVOUS LAUGHTER.

TONY (CONT'D)

(deeply serious)

You know, I love you very much.

For emphasis, he holds his crotch.

EXT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - MOVING CAR - DAY

PASSING the statue of a seated John Harvard, from the interior of Tony's LIMOUSINE, we see STUDENTS with backpacks, bicycling, playing touch football.

INT. TONY LIMOUSINE - DAY

TONY and PEPE watch a NEWSCAST on the small television deck of the limousine, played against a PHOTOGRAPH of a beaming Nicky Barletta.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

The President of Panama, Nicholas Barletta, stunned his tiny nation when he announced his resignation after a little more than a year in office...

(photo of Noriega)

General Manuel Noriega, in the United States for meetings, accepted the resignation of the President. Elections under the supervision of...

Tony glances over at Pepe, pleased.

INT. AUDITORIUM - KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT - DAY

A towering gaunt figure, who resembles John Kenneth GALERAITH, introduces TONY to a curious and overflowing CROWD OF STUDENTS and FACULTY.

Tony sits proudly on the rostrum in a suit and tie and manages to look slick, unmindful of the insinuations in the introduction.

GALERAITH

He was the illegitimate child of a father's maid who died or disappeared right after his birth. He grew up as an orphan in the slums of Panama City, but through native wit and his brother's influence, he attended a military school in Peru where some say he first cooperated with American military authorities.

The camera moving in on Tony's eyes.

GALERAITH (CONT'D)

...Some see him as our best hope for stability in an always volatile region, others as a puppet dancing to the tune of his American spymasters, and yet others as a latter-day double-dealing Borgia who rules through deception and cruelty. But what everyone agrees upon is that Manuel Noriega is a survivor...General Noriega.

Polite but hesitant APPLAUSE as TONY takes the podium.

TONY

(shyly and soberly)

Thank you. I am speaking today on the subject, "The Role of the Military in the Contadora Peace Process." As that great observer of human affairs, Niccolo Machiavelli, observed, "one can make peace with the military, one can make peace without the military, but no one can make peace against the military."

RADCLIFFE GIRL

General Noriega, may I ask you a question?

Tony looks at her in disbelief.

TONY

I am speaking. Speech first. Questions later.

RADCLIFFE GIRL

I've got a class.

She stands there unintimidated by authority, totally self-absorbed. The audience TITTERS at her gall. Tony, both insulted and attracted, makes an ironic gesture of bowing his head and rolling his hand.

RADCLIFFE GIRL

You've been accused of like, blackmail, murder, rape, pedophilia, assassination, drug dealing, money laundering, selling arms, torturing your political opponents and destroying the democratic process in Central America.

TONY

Who is saying these terrible things?

RADCLIFFE GIRL

The "Crimson."

LAUGHTER. Tony grins, energized by the exchange.

TONY

But you do not believe them, I hope.

RADCLIFFE GIRL

I bet you did some of that.

Tony feigns being wounded by her suspicions.

TONY

Sometimes you know, a leader does things for a higher cause. You think Mother Teresa would make a good President? No. Her soul is too pure. And neither does Tony Noriega make a good saint. God knows this. I only wish you were as understanding.

RADCLIFFE GIRL

But you're evil!

Tony starts to flare, but he catches himself and becomes thoughtful.

TONY

The road to heaven must be very easy for you, young woman. You are rich, you are beautiful. You live in a powerful country. Your parents take care of you. All you ask of yourself is to do no harm. Me, also, I want to do no harm. But for me it is not so easy a path. I was born in hell -- you understand? Every step I take, I am saying goodbye to hell. So how can this be evil?

(smiles)

When I only want to be like you.

There is a silence in the room. Tony smiles at the girl. Against her will, she is charmed. She sits back down.

LATER

After the speech, TWO DRUG DEALERS approach Tony. One wears an Armani jacket, the other is clad in black leather. They're a little nervous, despite their cool demeanor.

FIRST DEALER

General, may we have a word with you privately?

Tony nods graciously and motions them into the stairwell. They are followed by the doctor.

TONY

Did you want a copy of the speech?

FIRST DEALER

Actually, no...

TONY

I worried it went a little, what do you say, "above their heads?"

SECOND DEALER

We're interested in doing business in Panama.

TONY

They are supposed to be so smart, these Harvard people. What's your business?

SECOND DEALER

We have some unusual sources of income and we'd like a safe place to invest.

TONY

Nothing illegal.

BOTH DEALERS

(off-guard and blank-faced)

Oh, no. Of course not!

TONY

(toying with them)

Panama welcomes entrepreneurs. But one must always be careful to attract the right kind of business, you know what I mean?

SECOND DEALER

Yeah...

Tony grins, then hands each man a business card.

TONY

Here is my card. Anything you want in Panama, come and see me.

SECOND DEALER

Thanks, General, we'll do that.

Tony waits expectantly.

TONY

You don't have a card?

The dealer shrugs.

TONY

You can't do business without a card. What do you learn in this place?

INT. LIMOUSINE (MOVING) - WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

PEPE is reading "The New York Times" in the backseat of their block-long LIMOUSINE. A MOTORCYCLE ESCORT accompanies them to the White House, American and Panamanian flags flying. Pepe is livid with emotions.

PEPE

The New York fuckin Times! First fuckin page, Tony -- you, they are accusing you of drug trafficking, the murder of Spadafora, and being a fucking double agent for Cuba and the CIA! Shit, man, this is bad, this is fuckin bad.

Tony takes the newspaper, looks at it, looks at the date.

TONY

Who put this in? Did they really print this paper?

PEPE

Today!

TONY

This is bad timing. Tomorrow would've been better. It must be someone in the State Department. Relax Pepe, George Bush is a friend. He remembers well. Tomorrow, everyone wipes their ass with this and forgets.

INT. VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY

GEORGE BUSH is listening to a tape recording of:

TONY'S VOICE

The weather in Madrid's nice Colonel.

COLONEL'S VOICE

The weather here is stormy General. But the dogcatcher is successful.

Bush looks up at his SENIOR AIDE, puzzled. With them is a stern CIA type with thick glasses, FRANK McBRIDE, late sixties.

MCBRIDE

They're talking about Spadafora. This is a satellite transmission of a phone conversation between Noriega and one of his Colonels in the provinces.

COLONEL'S VOICE

We have the rabid dog in our hands.

TONY'S VOICE

And what does one do with a dog that has rabies?

A pause. The Colonel's VOICE trails off.

BUSH
 (looking up)
 What do you do?

SENIOR AIDE
 Well sir they usually cut off its head and send
 it to a lab.

A SECRETARY opens the door.

SECRETARY
 He's here, Sir.

INT. WHITE HOUSE MEETING ROOM - DAY

As BUSH pins a medal on TONY'S chest, surrounding them are a BEVY of
 somber-suited OFFICIALS from the Drug Enforcement Agency and Bush's office.

BUSH
 ..And in recognition of your ceaseless efforts
 to rid the Americas of the plague of narcotics,
 the Drug Enforcement Agency presents General...

They maintain their handshake in a prolonged tableaux for the
 photographers.

BUSH
 ...Manuel Antonio Noriega with this award.

Tony receives the plaque. The SENIOR AIDE cuts off the Press a little
 curtly.

SENIOR AIDE
 All right all right, that's it boys...

THE INNER OFFICE

Bush graciously seats his guests.

BUSH
 General, I invited you here for two reasons. One
 to thank you personally for your assistance in
 closing down the cocaine plant in Darien
 province.

TONY
 This was a victory for both our peoples.

BUSH

The other reason is to discuss some developments that might negatively affect the relations between our countries. Regrettably, as you may know, there's talk of a Senate inquiry into certain, uh, practices in Panama.

TONY

There is really only one interest your country has in mine, that's the canal. Nothing, nothing in all of Latin America is more important to you than the canal. But if you want a friend in Panama, you must treat him with respect. I don't come to you and tell you how to run your country.

BUSH

You make a good point, Manuel. Our only concern is that our friends don't destroy themselves through some -

(waves his hands)

- mistaken belief that we're not on their side. Do you understand my meaning?

Tony smiles.

BUSH (CONT'D)

Past mistakes we can forgive. Let's just make sure that there aren't any new ones.

CUT TO:

LATER as Tony and Arias are leaving. Bush and Frank McBride shake hands with them and wave goodbye. As Tony and Arias exit:

BUSH

Whattaya think, Frank?

MCBRIDE

He's a real wormball, sir.

BUSH

(an old chestnut)

Yeah, but he's our wormball.

(a beat)

Partly ours, anyway. But perhaps we should be thinking of moving on.

EXT. HAVANA AIRPORT - NIGHT

A squalid spot, half-lit by yellowed lamps and guarded by desultory SOLDIERS. It feels like a penal colony. As the Noriega party makes its way through the stained airport lobby, Felicidad is appalled. She and the girls are wearing extremely plain clothes for a change. They are greeted by a GRAY-HAIRED SOLDIER (Raul Castro).

TONY

(under his breath, to
Felicidad)

Welcome to the workers' paradise.

INT. PROTOCOL HOUSE - NIGHT

Felicidad watches nervously as Tony tosses back a frozen daiquiri - obviously not his first. He's wearing his full dress uniform and all his fancy medals.

FELICIDAD

Tony, you are drinking too much.

Tony ignores her and signals a WAITER for another.

FELICIDAD

Do you want Fidel to see you like
this?

TONY

You know, you shouldn't concern yourself with matters of state, Fela. Fidel will not be here until midnight - he always keeps people waiting, that's his style. In the meantime, let's enjoy the hospitality.

(to the waiters)

!Viva Cuba!

The waiters smile obligingly.

WAITERS

! Viva !

TONY

! Viva Fidel !

WAITERS

(less enthusiastically)

!Viva!

TONY

(to Felicidad)

It's a very simple country.

LATER

Tony is clearly in his cups as Felicidad SNORES in her chair. The waiters are also dozing. Suddenly the door bursts open and in walks FIDEL, followed by HALF A DOZEN REVOLUTIONARY BUREAUCRATS.

FIDEL

Comrade!

Felicidad snaps awake, and Tony stands groggily and tries to straighten his uniform before Fidel buries him in a bear hug.

FIDEL

(to Felicidad)

Senora Noriega, will you excuse us for a few moments before dinner? The General and I have a matter to discuss.

As quickly as they came in, Castro and his functionaries depart, with Tony practically carried out of the room under Fidel's giant arm. He casts a nervous glance over his shoulder just before the door SLAMS SHUT.

CUT TO:

A DISMAL CONFERENCE ROOM with a peeling poster of Mao on one wall and a N.Y. Yankees pennant on the other. The room is blue with cigar smoke. Tony's face is pale with fear.

FIDEL

It is okay to give offense, if you offend the right persons. Correct?

The functionaries nod and MURMUR agreement. Tony doesn't respond.

FIDEL

You offend me, but it is fine, because I forgive you. I know you. You are a little stupid and I take this into account.

Tony is choking on the smoke, but he attempts to smother his COUGH.

FIDEL

You offend the Americans. It is a good policy to offend the Americans. Up to a point. But Tony, you never offend the Colombians. These are serious people. You make a big problem, for Panama, for Colombia, for everybody. And for me. Because the Colombians are very helpful.

TONY

Fidel, the Americans knew about the lab. There was nothing I could do -

FIDEL

You made a deal. You took the money.

TONY

I'm getting out of that business.

Fidel looks at him incredulously. One of the functionaries SNICKERS.

FIDEL

You are on a one-way street, my friend. You cannot turn around now.

TONY

(helplessly)

What should I do?

FIDEL

I recommend a change of identity.

Tony grins sickly. The smoke is making him nauseous.

FIDEL

Perhaps I can speak to someone. Make certain assurances.

TONY

Yes! But what. . . ?

FIDEL

The return of his investment.

TONY

Five million dollars.

FIDEL

That he gave to you for protection. It was the premium on his insurance, as the capitalists would say. But his loss was one billion dollars. Return this loss, free his men, his helicopters, his airplanes, rebuild his plant.

(shrugs)

Perhaps he will forgive you?

Tony takes this in. A billion dollars?

INT. COPACABANA NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

A STAGE SHOW is underway, in the old can-can style, with barebreasted SHOWGIRLS in feathers. The club is practically empty except for Fidel's party, which consists of Tony and Felicidad, along with the functionaries and several OTHERS. Fidel is across the table from Tony with his arm around Felicidad's chair. It quickly becomes apparent that Felicidad is smitten.

They've already finished eating an immense meal. There is a lot of drinking. Fidel puts on quite a display. He radiates confidence - in contrast to Tony, who looks shrunken and miserable.

FIDEL

(explaining the club, but not apologetic)

It's the only way we bring in hard currency.

A SHOWGIRL comes and puts her arm on Fidel's shoulder. Without looking at her, Fidel removes the woman's hand and turns his attention to Felicidad. This is a very powerful gesture in her eyes. She's practically swooning.

FIDEL

Your husband should bring you to Cuba more often. Next time, I will take you to the mountains.

FELICIDAD

(a bit breathless)

I love the mountains.

Fidel looks at Tony, to make sure that Tony knows that his woman belongs to the old guerrilla, should he want her.

FIDEL

I will show you where the revolution began.

Just then, the check comes - to Tony, who stares at it in disbelief, then looks at Fidel.

FIDEL

The advice is free.

EXT. PROTOCOL HOUSE - NIGHT

Tony and Felicidad walk back to their cabana.

FELICIDAD

He is so much - *man!* Tony, you must listen to Fidel. He is very profound.

TONY

Fela, this man is a communist.

FELICIDAD

I think he cares about you.

The absurdity of this statement stops Tony in his tracks. They are standing in front of their cabana.

TONY

This is the worst day of my life.

FELICIDAD

(invitingly, but still
thinking of Fidel)

Maybe I can make you feel better little froggy.

This thought cheers him. It's been years since she used her pet name for him. In response, he makes a weird gesture with his tongue, as if he's snapping a fly out of the air. This has sexual meaning for them. Felicidad laughs throatily. Then she takes the key and starts to open the door. There's a note taped to the door, however, which she takes down and reads.

FELICIDAD (CONT'D)

"Call Senora Vicky."

(exploding, at the top of her
lungs)

Senora Vicky! How does your whore know where you
are? You pig! Cockroach!

Lights come on in other cabanas.

TONY

Please, Fela! You're going to wake Fidel.

Felicidad marches in to the cabana. Tony follows meekly behind. As he closes the door we hear a CRASH, followed by the sound of Tony GROANING and Felicidad SCREAMING.

EXT. PANAMA CITY AIRPORT - DAY

A MILITARY BAND strikes up a MARCH as TONY steps down from the JET, waving a white handkerchief, greeted by his PDF DIGNITARIES and COLONEL DIAZ HERRERA.

TROOPS line the carpet all the way back to the TERMINAL. For a good reason. Tony can't believe what he sees.

DEMONSTRATORS on all sides, BOOING him, held back by the troops. Whistles, shouts, a siren distort the 'welcome home' music.

FELICIDAD and her DAUGHTERS are shocked, scared. Felicidad looks coldly at Tony.

The DEMONSTRATORS are waving white handkerchiefs back at Tony in derision. They carry placards bearing the symbol of a "PINEAPPLE" with a slash through it. Others have placards with pictures of "HUGO SPADAFORA" and signs saying: "WHERE'S THE HEAD?" or simply, "HUGO!"...

Tony stares intently at DIAZ HERRERA who salutes him.

HERRERA

Welcome home, General!

Tony hugs him. Into his ear:

TONY

I won't forget this, Roberto.

EXT. PANAMA CITY SLOMS - DAY

A JEEP rolls up and TONY, in tough-looking paratrooper fatigues, surrounded by an ENTOURAGE of muscled "DOBERMAN" TROOPS, jumps out.

ANOTHER BAND strikes a chord, flags wave, a P.A. SYSTEM ANNOUNCES his arrival. Waiting for him are PEPE and HERRERA and other CRONIES.

A loosely organized MOB of STREET PEOPLE, many of them KIDS and neighborhood TOUGHS in purple Noriega T-shirts, have been organized by bullhorn.

On the way to the podium, Tony is mobbed by SUPPLICANTS, one of them a half-naked INDIAN CHIEF, almost a hundred years old with a bone through his nose, positioned in front of a PHOTOGRAPHER by PEPE.

INDIAN CHIEF

(Indian dialect)

General Noriega, the Yatsumbuli tribe is very honored by your support.

As the words are TRANSLATED to Tony, a VIDEO NEWS CREW rolls.

PEPE

Very important tribe, Tony -- big mineral deposits, gas...

TONY

(eyeing Pepe who nods)

Yes -- and you have a favor to ask Uncle?

INDIAN CHIEF

(translated)

Our children need schools. Many times the government promises but...

Tony raises his hand to silence him, then addresses an order to MAJOR GIROLDI, one of his security people. This thoughtful, strikingly intense young soldier will come to play a significant role in Tony's life.

TONY

Take a note, Major Girolodi. A school for this village. All Panamanian people should be educated. This is Tony Noriega's dream. What else?

INDIAN CHIEF

This is all.

TONY

You ask for too little, Chief. Your tribe will never go hungry again! My government will franchise you a McDonalds. We will build motels, restaurants, casinos. People will come. They will pay. I hear you have healing water. Maybe we will build a spa. Have you heard of Disneyland? Major Girolodi, write this down. We will talk later.

He congratulates the puzzled Chief and walks to the makeshift podium.

TONY speaks to the ASSEMBLED:

TONY

People of the streets -- you know me! I am one of you. We are the heart and soul of Panama! Now you see the white asses that own this country, they want to get rid of Tony because they really work for the North Americans that run this country! They want to divide Panama between the rich and the poor, the dark skin and the light skin. They forget there are more blacks than whites, more poor than rich. Eighty percent of us are sons of unwed mothers. Seventeen times, seventeen times! the Americans have intervened in Panama. And now they threaten to come again. Our dignity! Our dignity is threatened. We must get our Panamanian dignity back! For that reason, today we will make a new "Dignity Battalion!" You are my dignity battalion

The CROWD, not knowing what he's talking about, cheers at his vehemence.

TONY (CONT.)

And I say this to the white asses in their fancy clubs, "If anything happens to General Noriega, the Dignity Battalion will come to your homes! They will drag your wife into the street! They will eat the food in your kitchen! Your house will be their house! So don't you white asses go fucking with Tony Noriega, because the people of

TONY (CONT)

"the streets will not let this happen!" Am I right!

The crowd CHEERS once again, as Herrera and Girolodi watch, separate thoughts.

INT. VICKY'S APARTMENT - DAY

VICKY responds to the KNOCK at the door -- opening it to reveal TONY with a gigantic PARROT on his shoulder.

TONY

(big smile)

Hello Vicky.

PARROT

(mimicking)

Hello Icky, Icky!!!

Vicky is in a bad mood.

VICKY

Do you think this bird will make everything different?

TONY

I trained him myself. Listen, he has a song for you. Sing a song, Pepe.

The bird is silent. He sets the bird down on an armchair.

VICKY

He better not dirty the fabric.

Tony hungrily reaches for Vicky but she evades him.

TONY

Just be glad you missed Paris. Rain, all week.

VICKY

Is that what you think I want? Paris! I don't give a parrot's ass about Paris!

TONY

What can I give you my sweet?

VICKY

Not some stupid bird!

VICKY (CONT)

(tearing up)

At least Felicidad can hold her head up in public! Without people pointing at her and laughing as she goes by, "there goes Noriega's whore!"

TONY

Believe me Vicky, I have talked to many priests about this. Annulment is out of the question, even for a man in my position. Too many children.

VICKY

You hypocrite You are the worst Christian in Panama!

TONY

I am not a Christian. But Catholic, it is like a race. If I move to Miami, does my skin turn pale and my hair become blonde No! I am mestizo! You look at me and you know! Inside, I am Catholic. Belief, faith -- they mean nothing, but Catholic is a condition of life.

VICKY

And this condition means I am supposed to be your mistress forever? I do not accept this Tony.

TONY

Vicky, Vicky, Vicky -

PARROT

Icky, Icky, Icky, .

TONY

Come, Vicky, let's --

VICKY

No!

PARROT

(sings)

I love you, Icky!
I love you, Icky!
Will you love me too,
Like I love you!

VICKY

My name is not Icky.

TONY

You don't know what I feel.

VICKY

I know what you want when you have nobody else to screw! Go! Go to Felicidad, go to the other girls!

(cruelly)

Go to Cesar!

TONY

Don't treat me this way!

VICKY

I have my own life to worry about General!

TONY

(sincerely)

All my life, I only want one thing. You know? I just want one person to, to -

(fighting back tears)

-love me. Just the way I am.

VICKY

Don't try to trick me.

TONY

You think I am tricking you? I open my heart to you -- and you spit in my face!

VICKY

I have to protect myself.

Tony puts his hands on her shoulder. The parrot watches with a cocked head.

TONY

Let me stay tonight?

VICKY

I'm occupied.

TONY

How can you do this to me?

VICKY

Enough! Enough! I am not interested! Does that sink into your bird brain?

The parrot LAUGHS and WHISTLES. Tony, deeply affected, walks over to the parrot and speaks to it very directly.

TONY

(menacingly)

You should learn some more respect.

The parrot looks at him nervously as he walks out of the apartment without looking back.

EXT. NORIEGA HOUSE - NIGHT

On the stone gate, a decorative tile reads "Noriega" in fancy script. A LIMOUSINE pulls up to the GUARDED GATE, waits. One of the GUARDS with a slung machine gun, warily edges over to the WINDOW which purrs down. The DRUGLORD, seen smashing the Ming vase earlier, scowls and sticks a small package out the window.

VOICE

Give this to the General. Tell him it is from
Medellin.

INT. TONY HOUSE - NIGHT

FELICIDAD moves across the LIVING ROOM, yelling something at the GIRLS, as the GIFT is carried past by MAJOR GIROLDI.

FELICIDAD

Melinda, no! The napkins not in the cabinet, but
in the wall cabinet with the dessert napkins,
how many times have I told you. Where is
Mariana!

INT. TONY STUDY - NIGHT

ROBERTO DIAZ HERRERA stands before TONY'S massive desk.

TONY

Sit down Roberto.

Herrera sinks into a chair. To his chagrin, the chair has such soft low bottom that he sinks almost to the floor. He stares up at Tony, who is in a bad mood from Vicky, deep into a bottle of Old Parr whiskey. There is a "Thank You For Not Smoking" sign prominently displayed. PEPE sits to one side of the desk, and a corrupt-looking Israeli friend of Tony's, IRWIN, a businessman, is on the other.

TONY

We have been friends a long time Robert, but now
...now you have a problem. What I want you to
know... is that I am here to help you

HERRERA

I'm sure of that, Tony. But, uh, what exactly is my problem?

TONY

This Spadafora business. Many people suggest you are responsible.

HERRERA

But Tony! This! Me? You of all people...

TONY

(waves him to stop)

I said I was here to help.

HERRERA

Yes.

TONY

So let me help you. I am thinking you should go to another country.

HERRERA

(stunned)

But I want to stay in Government service.

TONY

Of course. Perhaps a post in a consular office.

HERRERA

Ambassador rank! Tony, if you want me to take the gringos off your back, I insist on this..

A silence. Eyes move around the room. We dwell on the portraits of world leaders with Tony -- Castro, Ghaddafi, Amin, Shamir, Bush, Mother Teresa, the Pope, and his hero Moshe Dayan. MAJOR GIROLDI enters, puts the GIFT on Tony's desk.

GIROLDI

From a man in Medellin, General.

TONY

(nods)

You ask for too much, Roberto. But I think from the goodness of my heart -- the Dominican Republic.

HERRERA

Japan.

TONY

Japan!

HERRERA

How can any ambassador make money in the Dominican Republic?

Major Girolodi silently exits.

IRWIN

(Israeli accent)

There are ways. Money can be made.

TONY

You should listen to Irwin, Colonel. I have already offered Japan to Vicky's cousin.

HERRERA

Then Taiwan.

TONY

Impossible! I have given that to Shu Xing.

HERRERA

Your judo instructor? You gave him Taiwan!

TONY

How about China. It is very big.

HERRERA

And no money! Taiwan or nothing!

Pauses. Tony and his cohorts share a look.

TONY

Roberto, I do not like ultimatums, but I will think more about where to send you. Maybe Irwin can find something for you in Israel.

Irwin makes a small gesture of commitment.

HERRERA

(rising to leave, a warning tone)

I have been with you a long time, Tony. I know too much.

He exits. Tony has opened the present absently.

TONY

(to his cohorts)

I will give him shit. Shit is what he gets! How much has this pig already made off Cuban visas! Millions I have made for him. And now he blackmails me.

IRWIN

Anyway he's a joke, nobody believes him.

Petulantlly, Tony gulps down a glass of scotch as he examines the gift a little more closely. He now sees he is holding a MINIATURE CASKET. Inside is a "Day of the Dead" SKELETON with a video tape.

TONY

What the fuck is this?

Handing the video tape to Pepe who inserts it in the VCR.

We cut to an ANGLE on TONY, seen from behind a small glinting glass bookend, buried in a bookcase.

Tony walks over to the TV with Irwin. He watches as:

VIDEO SHOTS of his FAMILY -- FELICIDAD and the DAUGHTERS -- appear on the CITY STREETS.

ANOTHER shot reveals TONY on the grounds of his HOUSE, feeding the parrots with a DAUGHTER. He caresses her, smiles.

Lastly, Tony is utterly chilled to see:

HIMSELF on the VIDEO -- in this SAME ROOM -- watching TV from the chair he is now sitting in.

He turns abruptly and stares at the BOOKCASE from which we saw him earlier.

He walks TOWARDS OUR CAMERA. He comes very close, his eyes searching for the secret device, filled with concern and terror. The "Tony" on the VCR screen stays seated, laughing at some comedy show, but:

Our Tony now looks DIRECTLY INTO THE LENS. His hand shoots up to cover it and the SCREEN GOES ALMOST DARK.

As Tony takes the glass bookend in his hand and with a SCREAM of paranoid rage, smashes the bookend on the floor.

TONY

WHO? HOW? WHEN? HOW LONG?

INT. WITCHDOCTOR'S STUDIO - NIGHT

CLOSE on a WITCHDOCTOR, Ivan, whose eyes are rolled back in his head. He is an obvious homosexual whose dark skin, peroxide blond hair and mincing voice exudes an eerie effect.

WITCHDOCTOR

There are many clouds, black clouds...are you wearing your ribbons?

Tony sits across the table, sweating, wearing Santeria beads across his neck, another bottle of Old Parr.

TONY

Of course! You must protect me, Ivan...Ivan?

Ivan's head, rolling further back looks as if he might not make it back across the divide.

WITCHDOCTOR

You have new rivals, new enemies

Tony casting a glance at the ALTAR lined with VOODOO DOLLS --with the names of the people they represent at their feet on tiny wooden placecards. We PAN them. They're dressed in business suits, military uniforms, priestly robes. Their names are BARLETTA, SPADAFORA, SENATOR HELMS, the PAPAL NUNCIO (LABOA), etc.

TONY

(impatient)

Which one?

WITCHDOCTOR

A slave to women.

TONY

(puzzled, dismisses it)

Who's that? Roberto? He's weak...

WITCHDOCTOR

There is also a large man...from Columbia.

TONY

(terrified)

I'll pay him back.

WITCHDOCTOR

You must be careful.

TONY

Oh my head is killing me! Make me a potion. Ivan wake up, for Christsake! Why does everyone want me to suffer?

The Witchdoctor comes out of his trance, rolling his eyes.

WITCHDOCTOR

Tony you overdo the potions.

TONY

Just do it, please Ivan!

WITCHDOCTOR

(pats Tony on the head)

It's not a gin and tonic you know. I will make you a special. You'll feel like a king.

He moves to his bench, stuffed with powders, potions in dusty bottles, a terrarium with a coiled viper, masks, etc.

TONY

...And...and what if a person is having difficulty with, uh, sexual difficulty?

WITCHDOCTOR

Tony, not you?

TONY

What if? A friend...

WITCHDOCTOR

I can give you love powder. I can make you hard like a lion! But love, you know, is the best cure.

INT. CONFSSIONAL

TONY

It's true, Father, I did worship the Devil occasionally...it was done in the spirit of scaring followers into believing I had special powers...but the funny thing is, Father, after so many years of pretending, I found I *did* have supernatural powers.

INT. ASHRAM - DAY

DIAZ HERRERA sits in meditating pose in a bright, airy room on a clean white carpet, with an exotic CALIFORNIAN WOMAN in a sari. A YOGI.

HERERRA

(almost under his breath)

I don't know where he gets his power, guru, but...

BIRDS chatter in the distance. On one wall, there is a Photo of an ecstatic, gap-toothed GURU.

YOGI

...let your mind go Roberto. You're allowing knots to form...there is anger in you, rage...transform it...

HERRERA

(eyes closed)

Let me put it this way. A long time ago in a far off land there was an evil king who drew his power from witchcraft.

YOGI

Ummmm.....

HERRERA

He did many bad things, but the people were afraid of him because he had so much, uh, juju or...

YOGI

Go on Roberto, you are transforming...what is ahead of you?

HERRERA

(struggling)

...but there was this...young prince who deeply believed in doing good and helping his fellow man. In order to do that, he has to find his spiritual armor -- do you see what I mean?

YOGI

I can help this prince...

INT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - DAY

Roberto Diaz Herrera causes a small sensation among the guards and secretaries as he walks down the corridor with his hands outstretched and his palms upraised.

FIRST SECRETARY

Has Roberto gone loco?

SECOND SECRETARY

He says he's drawing positive energy from the universe.

They watch for a moment.

FIRST SECRETARY

Do you think we should call a doctor?

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - DAY

The two drug dealers that Tony met at Harvard have come to pay a call. One of them carries a heavy briefcase. Tony's sexy SECRETARY escorts them into the inner sanctum, where Tony waits with his cronies, Kiki and Cesar.

FIRST DEALER

General? Thanks for letting us meet with you.

This time he hands Tony a business card, as does the Second Dealer.

TONY

It is my pleasure. Please -
(indicating they should sit)
Coffee? Whiskey?

SECOND DEALER

I'll have a little of whatever you're having,
General.

TONY

(to secretary)
A double shot of Old Parr.

FIRST DEALER

Sounds great.

As the secretary fixes the drinks, everyone sits and gets comfortable.
Tony waves at his cronies.

TONY

These are my friends.
(pointedly)
Cesar is one of the finest pilots in Central
America. Kiki - Kiki is my business advisor.
He is a specialist in banking.

The drug dealers eye Kiki a little suspiciously: he looks more like an off-duty drug queen than a banker. Kiki smiles brilliantly.

TONY

How may we be of service?

FIRST DEALER

We're looking to relocate our base of
operations.

TONY

What is your business, then? You may speak
frankly.

SECOND DEALER

You could say we're in pharmaceuticals.

TONY

(to his cronies)

This is a Harvard word for drugs. These North Americans, they come to Panama believing they can do anything they want. They think we are all crooks down here, that we let them use our country, fuck our women corrupt our government,

TONY (CONT)

as long as they leave a few million dollars on the table for Tony Noriega.

(to dealers)

Is this right? Is this your -

(searches)

- hypothesis?

SECOND DEALER

No! General, really -

FIRST DEALER

Actually, that's exactly our hypothesis.

Pause. Then Tony throws back his head and LAUGHS uproariously - as do the others, a bit tentatively.

TONY

(sobering, to First Dealer)

Tell me, you must be an expert on this matter, so I have a question for you. Your country has four per cent of the world's population, but you consume 64 per cent of the drugs. Why is this?

FIRST DEALER

Gosh, General, I never thought about that.

TONY

You don't do market research?

FIRST DEALER

We've got more demand than we can supply already.

TONY

You know what I think? The problem isn't in Columbia. The problem isn't in Panama. It's in your soul. Something is wrong in the gringo soul that he needs all these - cocaine! heroin! marijuana! crack! LSD! You are so sick inside. What do you think? Am I right?

FIRST DEALER

I'm a businessman, General, not a philosopher.
I came to do business.

He slides the briefcase onto Tony's desk. Tony looks at it.

TONY

Panama welcomes you.

EXT. DIAZ HERRERA HOUSE - DAY

A palatial home in golf heights, the most expensive neighborhood in Panama City. Expensive cars are arriving, discharging GUESTS.

INT. DIAZ HERRERA HOUSE - DAY

In his upstairs bedroom, Roberto Diaz Herreras prays with his beautiful yogi at a small shrine. The picture of his Indian Guru is prominently displayed. Like his yogi, Diaz Herrera wears a saffron robe.

DIAZ HERRERA

(his mantra)

Rama, rama, rama...

EXT. POOL AREA, DIAZ HERRERA HOUSE - DAY

In his lavish backyard, the guests are drinking champagne and talking seriously amongst themselves. They seem confused about why they have been invited. OVERHEARD:

MALE GUEST #1

Is it true the Americans have turned against Tony?

FEMALE GUEST #2

Do you notice who's here? Everybody in the opposition!

MALE GUEST #1

Shit, you don't think we're being set up?

FEMALE GUEST #1

Roberto? No, he's too crazy -

MALE GUEST #2

He has lost weight. Is he ill?

MALE GUEST #3

He's been eating tofu. I hear he's become faithful to his wife.

MALE GUEST #2

He must be crazy.

Just then Roberto Diaz Herrera and his yogi make an appearance on the steps of the patio. His robes cause the guests to cast amazed glances at each other. Roberto waits for the murmuring to subside.

DIAZ HERRERA

A few minutes ago I made a prayer to my higher self, in the presence of my guru and invoking the divine spirit of the fourth incarnation of God on earth, whereupon I solemnly declared war on General Manuel Antonio Noriega.

The guests are SPEECHLESS. HUH?

INT. VICKY AMADO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tony and Vicky are staring at a giant TV.

ON TELEVISION --

DIAZ HERRERA, now in uniform, is interviewed by a NEWSMAN.

HERRERA

I myself made a fortune selling Panamanian passports to Cubans and Chinese, but General Noriega makes millions every month from narcotraffickers allowing drugs to pass through Panama. He authorizes fake end-user certificates for U.S. weapons being shipped to other destinations..

In the apartment, TONY is worried, and gets on the phone with Pepe.

TONY

Pepe! How the hell did he get on the news? Get him off! Fast!

At the dining table, VICKY is more concerned about other matters, arguing with her MOTHER, a wealthy and corrupt society matron, who splits her looks with Herrera on the TV set across the table.

VICKY

I can't believe you are saying this Mama!

MAMA

Believe me, baby, I am only acting in your interest.

VICKY

My interest is to have an ordinary life--
husband, children -- to be respected in society!
As long as I am Tony's woman, I'm radioactive,
I'm --

MAMA

What we are talking about is more important than
social respect.

VICKY

Mama, you don't believe that!

TONY

(sitting back down to supper
distracted)

Listen to your Mama, Vicky, she is wise.

MAMA

(to Tony, upset at the TV)

Did you know this little asshole was going to do
this?

TONY

No! He lose his mind. This guru he
fuck...excuse me. Roberto is insane, he make
anything up.

NEWSMAN (ON TV)

Many Panamanians wonder was General Noriega
involved in the murder of Hugo Spadafora?

HERRERA (ON TV)

Not only Hugo, but our beloved leader, General
Omar Torrijos. Noriega was plotting with the CIA
to have his plane crash in the mountains and
Ronald Reagan knew this and Bush also...

Tony jumps up, agitated, rushes back to the phone.

TONY

Imbecile! You lie! You lie! I did not touch a
hair of Torrijos' head!

HERRERA (ON TV)

...another time he pushed a priest out of a
helicopter because Father Gallegos objected to
the way he rigged the election of '84.

MAMA

(annoyed)

Oh this man! I can't stand him! Why do you let his ugly face on television! No real dictator takes this shit from a number two man. He is either fucking loyal or he's fucking dead!

Tony banging on the phone as the TELEVISION suddenly goes staticky, then TO BLACK, as the transmission is cut off. The room in fact goes DARK as generators are cut off through the city. Out the window, the surrounding SQUARE is black.

TONY

(relieved, sits back down)

Finally! Lack of ratings.

SERVANTS light candelabra on the sideboards.

MAMA

(pleased, her attention back to Vicky)

You see darling, love with the right man, a strong man, a man who cares for you is too rare a thing to be traded away for social convention.

(off Vicky's forlorn look)

This may be your one great chance for happiness, cherie. I tell you this from the bottom of my heart--don't throw away true love.

Tony is very moved. He looks up at his Mother-in-Law, taking her hand, genuine.

TONY

Pardon Senora Amado, but I wish sometimes...I'd had a mother, and she would be like you. I would've been...

He can't finish, he's too choked up. Senora Amado looks at her daughter significantly. Pause.

MAMA

Perhaps the General would like some chives in his vichyssoise.

It seems Tony's look to Senora Amado turns to sexual suggestion. She pretends not to notice. But Vicky takes the hint. She picks up a potted container of fresh chives from the table and walks over to Tony. With a small pair of scissors, she trims the chives into his soup. Tony transfers his attention back to Vicky, gratefully.

TONY (VOICE OVER)

I didn't touch a hair...a hair! of Omar Torrijos' head. I worshipped him! I adored him!

INT. THE CONFESSIONAL

TONY

...the priest on the other hand -- that business is a little overblown. I did order him pushed out. I learned that from the Americans in Vietnam, but he lived...you know he fell 3000 feet -- some damage, yes, but he too was blessed...

EXT. HERRERA HOUSE - PANAMA STREETS - DAY

A DEMONSTRATION against the General is flowing from outside Herrera's house, which has become the center of resistance.

UPPER CLASS YOUTHS and BUSINESS PEOPLE in jeeps and BMWs, wave white handkerchiefs (a symbol of protest) and honk their horns.

HERRERA himself stands on a street corner, handing out brochures to passing DRIVERS.

HERRERA

Here, read about the sins of the General. The universe is on your side. Bless you.

INT. PAPAL NUNCIO'S TOYOTA - DEMONSTRATION - DAY

The NUNCIO rolls down his rear tinted window to look gravely out at the DEMONSTRATORS, commenting to FATHER JORGE, the younger priest.

NUNCIO

This is a most peculiar revolution. They come out for half an hour at lunch and again at cocktail hour.

FATHER JORGE

Still, it is a beginning.

NUNCIO

I suppose. But you know, Father, the dirty little secret of Panama is the General never had to apply much pressure to stay in power. A little violence and a lot of fear go a long way with these people.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

As the NUNCIO rolls up his window, waving his white handkerchief, we begin to hear the strain of "Vestita Giubba" from "Pagliacchi"

OPERA

(over)

Recitar! Mentre preso dal delirio non so piu
quel che dico Eppur, e dupop - sfozati!

The "DIGNITY BATTALION" rounds the street, brandishing automatic weapons and waving pictures of TONY. A hand-lettered SIGN identifies them as the "DIGNITY BATTALION" as they advance on the CROWD.

OPERA (OVER)

Bah, sei tu for un uom? Ah! Ah! Tu sei
Pagliaccio!

The Youths and Businessmen in the anti-Noriega CROWD waver.

An ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER with the menacing face of a Doberman Pincher rolls up.

The "Digbats" wade in with their sticks and fists.

As MAJOR MOISES GIROLDI watches from a JEEP on the sidelines, he looks troubled.

The Upper Class cuts and runs.

EXT. HERRERA HOUSE - DAY

The "DIGBATS" and the APC attack HERRERA'S HOUSE, firing TEAR GAS into the windows and machine gun fire into the air.

A ELAZE starts in the downstairs.

The NEIGHBORS, on an adjacent lawn, stop their croquet game and look as:

HERRERA is hauled out of his house, shirt torn, under arrest, yelling. His YOGI follows, screeching as the OPERA swells to the:

EXT. A YACHT IN THE GULF OF MEXICO - DAY

Two beautiful GIRLS sunbathe topless on the foredeck. Aft, Tony sits at a sumptuous meal with his companion, COL. OLIVER NORTH, who wears his Marine Corps uniform. Tony wears a swim suit and an open tropical shirt.

TONY

Ollie, your glass is empty.

(to a PRETTY STEWARDESS in a bikini)

Another carrot juice for Colonel North, Chaquita.

CHAQUITA

Yes, sir, General.

NORTH

These ribs are terrific, General. Aren't you having any?

TONY

Thank you. I don't eat meat, actually.

NORTH

I'm surprised.

TONY

I think it's a sin to eat the flesh of other animals. Of course, you should enjoy your meal, don't think of the moral consequences.

NORTH

No, this interests me. I mean all through history, man has eaten meat. In First Timothy, the Apostle Paul warns us against vegetarians.

TONY

Because of such foolishness I turned to the Buddhist faith.

NORTH

Gosh, I don't know much about that.

Tony smiles, changing the subject.

TONY

But I know you came with other fish to fry, as you Christians say. How can I help you? It is always a thought uppermost in my mind, how can I help my American friends?

North wipes the barbecue sauce from his mouth.

NORTH

First of all, thanks for all the things you've done. No, I mean that sincerely. Especially, with the Contras.

TONY

I tell you, Ollie, we're going to win that war.

NORTH

You don't need to tell me!

TONY

I have enough trouble, believe me, with the commies in my own government.

NORTH

I know.

TONY

They need a firm hand. I think they need to be a little afraid, you know. Otherwise... another Cuba.

North nods, but he's obviously got something on his mind.

NORTH

This is a very hard thing to tell a friend. There's a secret Senate investigation going on that concerns you.

TONY

Ah.

NORTH

Also, there's this renegade prosecutor down in Florida who's trying to make a name for himself. They say he's got your name on a drug indictment.

Tony LAUGHS.

TONY

And what are my American friends going to do about this?

NORTH

Gosh, General, there's not much we can do. They went to a grand jury. I don't know how much you know about our country, but -

TONY

After all the favors you ask of me, this is how you repay me?

NORTH

I just feel awful about it.

TONY

And what about my friend, George Bush?

I'm sure he feels awful, too.

TONY

We have an arrangement, Colonel. You came to me. "General, we need your help in Nicaragua". And I gave you what you wanted.

NORTH

Yes, you did.

TONY

This is what you offer in return?

NORTH

The truth is, I've got problems, too.

TONY

I have a proposition, a goodwill gesture. You take it to my friend, George Bush. We can get rid of these Sandinistas in one - what do you say? One Sweep? Swoop?

NORTH

One fell swoop.

TONY

One fell swoop. I have men there, as you know, waiting for my command. Good men, in Managua and in the countryside. They will do what I say. You know this to be true.

NORTH

I've seen it.

TONY

Give me a little money for these men, and they will kill the comandantes. A dozen heads will roll. Tomas Borge, the Ortegas - the whole bunch! One fell swoop .

North HALF-LAUGHS as he considers it.

TONY

You take care of my problems, I take care of yours.

NORTH

I mean, it's such a, a neat idea.

Tony smiles.

NORTH

Gosh, I just. Can't. It's against the law.

TONY

Are you being -

(searches for the word)

- amusing? Your whole fucking war is "against the law." So why is it the only one to get indicted is Tony Noriega?

NORTH

I wish I had a good answer for you .

TONY

You will wish it very much before this all comes to an end.

EXT. AMERICAN EMBASSY - DAY

SEVERAL HUNDRED DEMONSTRATORS, most of them civil service workers, have gathered outside the U.S. Embassy to demonstrate. There is a microphone set up where a NORIEGA LACKEY harangues the U.S. The crowd listens without much interest. Many of them are munching on sandwiches that are being passed around and drinking free beer.

Two truckloads of SOLDIERS, dressed in civilian clothes, park near the embassy. AN AMERICAN MARINE hurriedly closes the gate to the compound. The toughs rush towards the guardstation. The demonstration quickly turns ugly. Urged on by the soldiers, the demonstrators hurl rocks at the windows and spray paint slogans on the embassy walls: "FUCK THE GRINGOS", "YANQUIS EAT SHIT" etc.

INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY - DAY

The AMERICAN AMBASSADOR, a tough-talking Western type, looks out through the broken glass at the mob below. He turns furiously to his CHIEF OF STAFF, a 30 year-old Princeton grad.

AMBASSADOR

This has gone too far! Noriega is responsible for this. Get Bush on the phone.

CHIEF OF STAFF

Sir, with all due respect, they're mostly civil service workers who are getting paid for this -

AMBASSADOR

I know who they are and I know who to blame. We've been putting up with that little tinpot pirate for too long. If he thinks he can insult the majesty of the U.S. State Department, he's got another think coming. I want that little toad to come crawling in here on his hands and feet and lick my ass.

INT. MIAMI FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - DAY

A U.S. ATTORNEY reads from an indictment to a crowd of PRESS who are jamming microphones into his face.

U.S. ATTORNEY

"At all times relevant to this Indictment, there existed an Enterprise. . . which utilized the official positions of the defendant Manuel Antonio Noriega in the Republic of Panama to facilitate the manufacture and transportation of large quantities of cocaine destined for the United States and to launder narcotics proceeds."

INT. U.S. SOUTHCOM - DAY

Lieutenant Dooley carries a tray of coffee into a briefing room where the American General and his aides are gathered.

AMERICAN GENERAL

If you had paratroops landing here -

He taps a pointer on a map labeled PANAMA CITY.

AIDE

What about an amphibious approach?

Dooley steals a look at the map. The General becomes quiet until Dooley leaves the room.

AMERICAN GENERAL

That'll be all, Lieutenant.

EXT. NEW HAMPSHIRE-CAMPAIGN RALLY - DAY

Candidate George Bush stands on a platform in a snowy village in New Hampshire, speaking to a CROWD of skeptical voters.

BUSH

A leader has to be tough. Look down there in Panama. America has a sacred interest in Panama. I'm not saying that the canal belongs to us, but we do have a legitimate interest in seeing that the canal stays open and is never used to blackmail American foreign policy. So, would I use force if American interests are threatened? You bet I would.

EXT. - DAWN

The military h.q. of the Panamanian Defense Force.

INT. BEDROOM OF MAJOR GIROLDI

MAJOR MOISES GIROLDI VEGA, a handsome man of 38 with a chiseled face, is sleeping. He is one of Tony's most loyal officers. He is a pious man, and he thinks of himself as a patriot. He suddenly starts awake at the CLICK of an AR-47 being locked and placed against his head.

MAN'S VOICE

Major Giroldi? Time to wake up. Very slowly.

GIROLDI

What do you want?

MAN'S VOICE

Change, Major. We want change. There are many of us, but now we need your help. Surrender your troops.

GIROLDI

Of course, but they will not surrender unless they see me.

MAN'S VOICE

Very well, let's go. Up.

EXT. COURTYARD OF COMANDANCIA - DAWN

TWO PLATOONS of men are assembled in the courtyard, sleepy and confused.

Major Giroldi, in his underwear, is escorted into the courtyard by an armed ABDUCTOR wearing a mask, who holds him at gun point.

GIROLDI

Men - seize him!

Pause, then guns are raised at the abductor.

AEDUCTOR

Idiot!

GIROLDI

It's your choice. Kill me if you will .

The abductor drops his rifle and holds up his hands. Girolldi takes the man's pistol from his belt and FIRES it TWICE in the air. Then he strips the mask from the man's face.

AEDUCTOR

Now, Major, General Noriega is your responsibility.

EXT. COMANDANCIA - DAY

The sun is fully up now, and Tony's armor-plated Mercedes arrives with his BODYGUARDS. He steps out wearing a garish tropical shirt and a paisano's straw hat. He waves victoriously to the TROOPS standing outside and on the rooftop.

INT. COMANDANCIA - DAY

Tony meets Major Girolldi in an office. The major salutes; instead of returning the salute, Tony grabs him in a heart-felt embrace.

TONY

From now on, I want you always at my side.

THE COURTYARD

CUT TO:

Where the TROOPS are gathered in formation. Tony comes out on the balcony with Major Girolldi. The troops CHEER. Tony acknowledges them with upraised arms, then takes Major Girolldi's hand and raises it with his. MORE CHEERING. Tony motions for QUIET.

TONY

The hero, Major Moises Girolldi!

CHEERS.

TONY

Loyalty! Loyalty brings honor! Honor brings rewards! Every one of you will receive twenty thousand dollars!

FANATICAL CHEERING. Major Girolldi smiles.

TONY

My hands are open to you. But for traitors -
 (makes fists)
 Bring them out! Bring out the traitors!

The troops begin to CHANT:

TROOPS

Traitors! Traitors! Traitors!

A DOZEN MEN, already bearing marks of a beating, are paraded into the courtyard. They are naked and draped in American flags. Major Girolodi's abductor is at the front of the line. The humiliated rebels pass between the lines of the troops. They are CURSED and spat upon. The abductor casts a glance upward at Major Girolodi. Something passes between them.

TONY

Teach them a lesson, men. Show them the price of
 betraying their country.

Pause, then one of the soldiers steps in front of Major Girolodi's abductor and hits him in the head with his rifle butt. The abductor crumples to the ground. Now the carnage is on: it's a brutal attack on the defenseless rebels. From the balcony, Tony savors this scene. Major Girolodi, however, has second thoughts.

TONY

The next time there will be no wives bringing
 food to the jail; there will be widows bringing
 flowers to the grave!

INT. MAJOR GIROLDI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Girolodi is in bed with his wife, ADELA, an intelligent and attractive woman.

GIROLDI

He's placing me in charge of his personal
 security.

ADELA

Face it, you are a hero. And he's going to make
 you a very rich man. You see what has happened
 to the others. They all live in mansions in Golf
 Heights.

GIROLDI

Is that what you want?

ADELA

It's not what I want, but if it happens, okay.

Giroldi rolls over, troubled.

ADELA

If it doesn't happen, that's okay too.

INT. PAPAL NONCIATURE - NIGHT

Tony is having tea with the nuncio in the library. There is a large portrait of Pope John Paul II on the wall.

NUNCIO

I understand that the Americans have made you an offer.

TONY

I expect you can tell me every detail. You have even better intelligence than I.

NUNCIO

In the Vatican one learns to keep one's ears open.

TONY

Tell me what you did in the Vatican.

NUNCIO

Of course, you already know, but I'm flattered to be asked. I was in the office of the Congregation of the Faith.

TONY

Isn't that what used to be called the Inquisition?

NUNCIO

These days, we only investigate candidates for sainthood. I had the job of prosecuting the opposing point of view.

TONY

So, you were the Devil's Advocate.

NUNCIO

As it is popularly known, yes.

TONY

All those years, you must have developed sympathy for the Devil's point of view.

NUNCIO

You could say it enlarged my moral compass.

TONY

And I think you must have done something very bad or very stupid to be sent off to a small tropical republic.

Frosty SILENCE. Finally:

NUNCIO

So the Americans agree to drop the indictments if you step down from power.

TONY

It is not the deal I would have chosen.

NUNCIO

You name your successor, you keep your money - this seems to me too good to turn down.

TONY

All the same, I am conflicted.
Here.

(taps his breast pocket)

- I have my resignation speech. Reason tells me this is the correct path, to resign.

NUNCIO

Why not?

TONY

Somoza. He stepped down, and the bastards tracked him down in Paraguay and blew him into microscopic pieces. They did not even find the hairs of his mustache. Torrijos used to say, "The first duty of a man in power is to stay in power."

NUNCIO

And what happened to him?

TONY

Ah. I know what's -

NUNCIO

If he had left when the time was right, perhaps his plane would never have crashed so...

(delicately, but with a barb)

...mysteriously.

TONY

Your point is accurate, Monsignor. One rides the tiger. Do you read the Tao?

NUNCIO

Eastern philosophy doesn't call to me.

TONY

There is great wisdom there. Laotzu says that the Master acts best by not doing anything. "The Master leads by emptying people's minds and filling their cores, by weakening their ambition and toughening their resolve. He helps people lose everything they know, everything they desire, and creates confusion in those who think they know. Practice not-doing, and everything will fall into place."

Tony LAUGHS appreciatively at this paradox. The nuncio takes another sip of tea. In his opinion, nothing good can come of this philosophy.

EXT. TONY'S HOUSE - DAY

Tony's mansion is behind a high wall. The grounds are exquisitely groomed. There is even a private aviary, which is where Tony is, feeding his parrots. He is completely absorbed and doesn't notice Felicidad storming across the lawn, brandishing a newspaper.

FELICIDAD

Monster!

Tony looks up, frightened. Felicidad picks up a silver dish he has been using for bird feed and proceeds to club him unmercifully. He weakly fends off her blows.

FELICIDAD

Moron! Imbecile! Toad!

TONY

Sweetness! Love! Felicidad-

WHAP!

FELICIDAD

You think I don't know? You think all of Panama does not know?

TONY

Please, please! For the sake of our children -

This really pisses her off.

FELICIDAD

How dare you invoke our children, you frog-face!

The blows redouble, making a BONGING noise, until Tony lies WHIMPERING on the ground. The PARROTS are raising a hell of a fuss.

FELICIDAD

You disgrace your own children! Even in the newspaper they write about your "Senorita Vicky."

TONY

Forgive me, I'll have the paper closed down.

FELICIDAD

If I see her in public I'll scratch out her eyes
- and yours too!

She stalks off, leaving Tony cowering. Multi-colored parrot feathers settle around him like autumn leaves.

TELEVISION SCREEN

The ANNOUNCER'S VOICE forecasts the coming election (real footage). Carter, wearing a guayabera, waves to crowds. He is a hero here. Another shot has him sitting with Tony, squirming and looking wary.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter arrived in Panama City today to supervise an international team of election monitors. Carter said that his mission was to ensure that Panama's presidential choice was free and fair.

SHOT of voters lined up to vote in front of a school. A couple of ARMED SOLDIERS idly stand by.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Turnout has already proved to be surprisingly high in the race between President Solis Palma and his main challenger, Ambassador Gabriel Arias.

INT. VICKY AMADO'S APT. - NIGHT

As the Announcer READS THE NEWS, gradually WIDEN SHOT to find Tony in bed with Vicky. He MOVES the sound, but the television continues to show pictures of protests in the streets.

VICKY

Why do you keep making such silly men President?
You should be President.

TONY

(bitterly)

I will never be. It is not my destiny. The people who own this country would not permit it. To be behind the scenes, okay. To pull the strings. But when they look on the stage they want to see one of their own. I am the poor ugly alley cat, "Pineapple Face," the bastard son of his father's domestic, the kid nobody wanted, an orphan, a piece of trash blowing through the streets. They could never see me, in their fancy homes and big cars, but I saw them! How weak they are. How stupid and what cowards! In my heart, I knew that little Tony in the streets was smarter, he had more balls - So! I don't care that they don't love Tony. Nobody loves Tony!

(pause; he looks at Vicky)

Even you don't love me. I know this. But respect. And fear. This is my language. Without power, I do not exist, even for you.

Vicky studies him and does not respond.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE, NIGHT

Tony's bare ass stares us in the face.

DOCTOR'S VOICE

Here comes the mosquito.

A needle plunges into Tony's right cheek as the DOCTOR administers an injection.

TONY

Agh!

DOCTOR'S VOICE

In a minute, you'll be on top of the world again.

ANGLE

Tony pulls up his pants while the doctor puts away his implements. Major Giroldi looks on, both puzzled and repelled.

TONY

Major, do we have any results yet?

MAJOR GIROLDI

They say the vote is running three to one
against our President.

TONY

This is not true.

The drugs are already beginning to circulate in his system.

TONY

The vote is in favor of our president.
Understand?

Giroldi doesn't quite get it.

TONY

In Panama, the civilians have a responsibility
and the military has its responsibility. The
civilians must choose the right man to lead
them. Apparently, they have failed. Now, it is
up to the military to correct the mistake the
people have made.

MAJOR GIROLDI

But Carter is here and -

TONY

Carter! Carter! Fuck Jeemy Carter! If he knew
how to run his own country, he would still be in
office!

INT. A HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA - NIGHT

The POLL WORKERS - mostly middle class women - are sitting at tables
counting the ballots, which are in large cardboard boxes. Suddenly, ARMED
SOLDIERS burst into the room and FIRE WARNING SHOTS into the ceiling. The
terrified poll workers flee, many of them running right out of their high-
heel shoes. When the room is clear, one of the soldiers picks up a tally
sheet and reads it, which he then crumples and sets it on fire. Another
takes aim at a ballot box with his AR-47 and FIRES. Ballots fly as the box
is reduced to lacy tatters.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL PALACE - NIGHT

Champagne corks POP like gunfire as the GOVERNMENT CANDIDATES and their
CRONIES celebrate their fraudulent victory.

INT. LOBBY OF THE MARRIOTT - DAY

Jimmy Carter holds a press conference before a CROWD OF INTERNATIONAL PRESS
(use real footage).

CARTER

(approximate)

Apparently General Noriega's military dictatorship believes it can simply rewrite the election by prefiguring the tally sheets. We've had reports of massive fraud... the whole election is a farce, an international joke...

EXT. STREETS OF PANAMA CITY -

The OPPOSITION parades through the city in a flatbed truck (this is REAL FOOTAGE). The CROWD is NOISY AND DEFIANT. In the b.g., an AFRO-CARIBBEAN SONG with a BONGO DRUM adds a festive, carnival-like atmosphere. People are waving white handkerchiefs, the tepid symbol of Panama's rebellion.

INSERT: HAND-HELD SHOT of a CHILD holding a picture of Tony with a red slash through it. Someone CRIES OUT:

VOICE

They're going to the presidential palace!

REAL FOOTAGE: At the Plaza Santa Ana, the parade is halted by TWO DOZEN TROOPS. MUSIC BUILDS. The presidential candidate, Endara, tries to negotiate with them. Meanwhile, a band of thugs arrives wearing purple and white shirts. This is the Dignity Battalion. A few of its members are women, most are young boys. Some are carrying two-by-fours with nails in them; others have rubber hoses or steel rods, which they SLAP against their palms. Suddenly, the Dignity Battalion attacks. People SCREAM in fright. DRUMS intensify. Endara's glasses fly off, and as he reaches down to pick them up, a boot crushes the lenses. When he tries to stand up, he is hit across the head with a steel pipe.

Another group of Dignity Battalion thugs runs through the streets, attacking people indiscriminately with rubber hoses even diners at the outdoor tables at McDonald's are clubbed.

SHOTS RING OUT. Billy Ford, a white-haired man in his sixties staggers out of a car where he has taken refuge. His shirt is covered with the blood. Ford is set up by the thugs. They punch him and hit him with steel rods. He swings back wildly, blinded by his own blood, which is streaming from his head wounds. He wobbles down the sidewalk, past a video store, as the Dignity Battalion pursues him, punching, landing vicious blows with their pipes. The man's head bobs violently. It's utter savagery, chaos, the man is nearly beaten to death before our eyes.

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

A PRIEST is saying Mass. The church is full of WORSHIPPERS; among them are Major Giroldi and Adela, who hold hands. The faces of the worshippers are full of sorrow and fear. When the priest turns around, we see it is Father Jorge.

FATHER JORGE

The Mass is ended. Go in peace.

EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

The worshippers stream out of the church into the tropical sunshine, shaking hands with Father Jorge. Major Girolodi hangs back. He motions for Adela to go on. At last the last worshipper disappears and Father Jorge turns to go back into the church. He looks at Major Girolodi in surprise - and a stab of fear, seeing the Major's uniform. This he quickly suppresses.

MAJOR GIROLDI

Father? I would like a word with you. Will you come with me?

FATHER JORGE

Of course. I've been expecting this.

MAJOR GIROLDI

You have? Oh, no - it's not what you think. I just want to chat.

FATHER JORGE

Chat?

CUT TO:

The two men walk on a sidewalk through Panama City.

MAJOR GIROLDI

I know your reputation, Father. You are the most anti-Noriega priest in the country. Perhaps you are surprised I would be talking to you.

FATHER JORGE

It depends on what you say.

MAJOR GIROLDI

I have your confidence.

FATHER JORGE

Is this a confession?

MAJOR GIROLDI

No. At least, not yet.

(pause)

I am considering a desperate action. Can you imagine what I might mean by this? Pardon me for being mysterious.

JORGE

Let's say I can make a guess.

MAJOR GIROLDI

I am a Christian and a patriot, Father. Now I find these two sides of myself in a dangerous struggle. I wish to do something for my country that may place my soul in jeopardy.

FATHER JORGE

Sometimes men of faith must take great chances. But if they are true to their principles, God will help them. I believe this!

MAJOR GIROLDI

(he stops and looks at Father Jorge)

Do you think about the story of Abraham and Isaac? I have often wondered why God would place a man in such a position that he would have to sacrifice his own son.

FATHER JORGE

He did not have to make the sacrifice, only to be willing. God stayed his hand.

MAJOR GIROLDI

The question I ask myself is: What if God had demanded the blood of Isaac? Can it ever be right to kill in cold blood?

FATHER JORGE

I don't believe God would ask this.

Major Giroldi looks at him intently, then they begin to walk again .

MAJOR-GIROLDI

This is a burden off of me. Thank you, Father.

INT. WITCHDOCTOR'S STUDIO - NIGHT

PAN the lineup of Voodoo dolls. Roberto is gone, but in addition to Helms and the nuncio there are ARIAS, REAGAN, BUSH, SEYMOUR HERSH, THE DRUG LORD, FIDEL CASTRO, the SHAH, and a huge, menacing FELICIDAD.

The witch doctor is in a trance. Tony is drinking from a bottle of Old Parr whisky.

WITCHDOCTOR

You are having marital difficulties?

TONY

(defensively)

She is a very powerful woman.

WITCHDOCTOR

She beats you?

TONY

She...

(he trails off, helplessly)

I need something. I put it in her coffee and she becomes pleasant and, and thin. Something like that.

WITCHDOCTOR

Bad signs, very bad. Many people turning against you, people close to you.

TONY

Who are they?

WITCHDOCTOR

I feel a larger force against you. Clouds in the sky. Storm coming. Very strong. Too strong.

TONY

Too strong?

WITCHDOCTOR

(forbiddingly)

Bad signs -

Tony abruptly stands up and throws a pail of chicken blood on the witch doctor, who snaps to in a spasm.

TONY

Bad signs - enough! Enough!

WITCHDOCTOR

Look what you've done! This is very wrong.

TONY

Go! Get out of here! Get out of Panama!

WITCHDOCTOR

(ominously)

You need me.

TONY

I need you? I'm the one with the power! I'm the spiritual mastermind here! You're just a fag with a towel on his head!

(imitating)

"Vibrations!" (laughs)

WITCHDOCTOR

Let me collect my herbs.

TONY

Here -

He pours a bowl of dried leaves over the WITCHDOCTOR'S head, which stick to the blood. The witch doctor suffers this indignity without resisting.

WITCHDOCTOR

(standing)

You already had too many enemies.

LATER

The Old Parr bottle lies empty on the table. Tony, now stumbling drunk, is clearing away some cardboard boxes in the back of the room.

TONY

Too many enemies! But I am rich! Rich man! Rich with power! Rich with money! Rich with women!

(pauses here, a bit guiltily,
thinking of Felicidad)

Rich with - enemies!

He flings open a door that was hidden by the cardboard boxes. It is a large closet.

TONY

Now, where did you go? Ah -

He brings out a heavy container with a drape over it, and sets it down on a table near a lamp. He sits down. Pause. Then he pulls the drape off.

There is a large jar filled with liquid, and a human head floating inside. It is well preserved. The man's hair floats in the liquid.

TONY

Hello, beautiful. You miss me?

(kisses the jar)

Here's an interesting question. You are a handsome man. No, no, I mean it. And a doctor. Did you know I wanted to be a doctor? But, you know, poor kid like me... I was a pharmacist's assistant. Big deal, right? Handsome doctor. Nice family, very nice, respected. And you such a hero. Fighting with the guerrillas. I respect this. Everybody loved Hugo.

EXT. OUTDOOR NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

ON THE SMILING FACE OF HUGO SPADAFORA. At this moment he is surrounded by ADMIRERS at his table, they are LAUGHING and the women are flirting with him. One of the admirers is a younger Cesar Rodriguez. In the shadows, we see a younger Colonel Tony Noriega studying the great man and solemnly drinking alone.

TONY (V.O.)

You were so. . . beautiful

A WAITER brings over a bottle of champagne to the Spadafora table. There is an exchange between them and the waiter nods in Tony's direction. Hugo turns to look at him. Tony raises his glass in salute.

Hugo returns the gesture, but quizzically, then turns back to his comrades and makes a comment under his breath. They all LAUGH.

TONY (V.O.)

But Hugo, the universe is so mysterious. You can be up so high and I down so low. Now look at us.

INT. WITCHDOCTOR'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Back to the scene with Hugo's head.

TONY

Somewhat reversed, right? surprise even myself.
I guess somebody up there is watching out for me, eh? What do you think, doctor? It's funny, isn't it? I don't see you laughing.

CLOSE ON THE HEAD, which poses its own silent questions.

INT. TONY'S HOUSE - DAY

The lavish mansion is filled with WEALTHY PANAMANIANs who have come to the christening of Tony's granddaughter. A PRIEST holds up the infant GRANDDADGHTER who is wearing a lacy christening dress.

PRIEST

Do you renounce Satan and all his works and
pomp?

On either side of the priest stand the godparents, who in this case are Tony and the Drug Lord. Tony is wearing a shimmering silk tuxedo.

TONY AND DRUG LORD

We do renounce it.

The priest pours the baptismal water over the little girl's head, who BAWLS. Tony puts his finger to his lips, then grins sheepishly at the audience.

LATER

There is an expensive, festive party underway. Major Girolodi is head of security for the affair, and he keeps a watchful eye on things - although it's hard to keep from watching Tony, who is putting on a disgraceful display. He is loud and coarse, LAUGHING, staggering a bit when he moves.

ANGLE

Major Girolodi is talking to a young officer, LIEUTENANT LUIS CONTRERAS.

MAJOR GIROLDI

(indicating the guests)

Look at them - he's made them all rich, but he's also made them cowards.

Tony approaches Girolodi with an odd look on his face.

TONY

(loudly, so the others hear)

Major! If you see any American helicopters fly over, I want you to shoot them down.

MAJOR GIROLDI

Sir?

TONY

That's a goddamn order, Major! No American aircraft flying over my party.

Tony moves off.

LT. CONTRERAS

What are you going to do?

MAJOR GIROLDI

What can I do? I can pray the Americans don't wish to fly today.

LT. CONTRERAS

This craziness has gone on too long.

Girolodi regards him seriously.

MAJOR GIROLDI

Do you really believe that?

The two men exchange a charged and worried look.

ANGLE

While Tony is standing in a circle of fawning admirers, a MAN approaches with a BEAUTIFUL TEENAGED GIRL.

TONY

(eyeing the girl)

Enrique, you filthy dog, she is young enough to be your daughter.

ENRIQUE

She is my daughter, General. Carmen, this is the famous Tony Noriega.

Carmen, an innocent, but well endowed girl in a chaste white dress with a scoop neck, offers her hand. Tony takes it, then impulsively buries his head in her ample bosom. Flustered LAUGHTER from the other guests. The girl's face goes pale. Her father stands there with a frozen expression.

ANGLE

TWO FEMALE GUESTS are muttering under their breaths:

GUEST #1

It's a disgrace, a religious ceremony -

GUEST #2

The priest is actually on Noriega's payroll. The church wouldn't sanction this.

ANGLE

Tony is walking around the room with his granddaughter in his arms. Even Felicidad is a little afraid of him in this mood. He approaches the two female guests. Tony holds the child up in front of his face and moves her limbs like a ventriloquist's puppet while he imitates a little child's voice.

TONY

Bless you, my children. May you all live long happy lives. May you shit money. May your enemies grow sick with fear and die unnatural deaths. Then will you know that you are truly, truly blessed.

When Tony finishes this benediction, he lowers the child and stares out at the appalled faces of the guests.

TONY

(indicating the child)

Isn't she sweet? Tony's first granddaughter.

INT. PLAIN WHITE CHEVROLET - DAY

TWO AMERICAN CIA AGENTS are driving through the countryside. In the back seat sits a very nervous Major Girolodi, wearing sunglasses. He is smoking and fidgeting, not at all sure what to make of Pat and Mike.

MAJOR GIROLDI

This is a Panamanian solution. Isn't this what your president has been calling for?

FIRST CIA AGENT

We need to make one thing very clear, Major. The U.S. cannot be part of any plot that might result in the death of a foreign leader.

MAJOR GIROLDI

We have no intention of harming anyone. If everyone plays his part -

SECOND CIA AGENT

What is our part, Major?

MAJOR GIROLDI

Very simple. You block off the roads to the presidential palace. You don't have to do more. Just stand in the way of possible reinforcements. And fly over the airports, that will keep the planes on the ground.

FIRST CIA AGENT

We don't fire a shot in anger?

MAJOR GIROLDI

You can say it was all a routine maneuver. It's no more than you do all the time.

FIRST CIA AGENT

Uh huh.

MAJOR GIROLDI

One other thing, very personal. I want you to protect my family. In the morning, at dawn, they will come to Howard Air Force Base. You understand? This is most important.

SECOND CIA AGENT

Sure.

The car comes to a stop beside the road. The First CIA Agent writes out a number on the back of a newspaper, then tears it off and hands it to Girolodi.

FIRST CIA AGENT

Here's our number. All I can say is, good luck.

Giroldi solemnly shakes their hands.

SECOND CIA AGENT

We're on your side, pal.

INT. FANCY FRENCH RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Tony escorts Vicky into the most exclusive restaurant in town. Here the WEALTHY ELITE hang out, listening to AFRO-CARIBBEAN JAZZ and dining on lobster.

For the occasion, Tony is decked out in an extremely suave dinner jacket, grinning widely as he moves through the restaurant with apparent confidence. Vicky, on the other hand, is as rigid as an icicle. This is her native territory, and she can easily read the amused or disgusted looks on the faces of the other diners.

The MAITRE D' seats them in the center of the room, which heightens Vicky's feeling of exposure. She looks straight ahead, while Tony scans the room, beaming.

VICKY

Tony, we could have eaten in my apartment.

TONY

I am sure the food is better here.

Vicky is quiet. She studies the menu, distractedly.

TONY

(apropos of menu prices)

Whew - it's a good thing I'm so goddamn rich!
But how do these other bastards afford this
place? They must not be paying their taxes.

This last bit is said just loudly enough that some of the chastened diners quit staring at the couple and return to their own meals with renewed interest.

VICKY

You don't understand these people. They will
never accept this - Tony and his mistress.

TONY

Is that how they see it?

VICKY

That is how it is.

Tony pulls out a small, gift-wrapped box.

TONY

I see it differently. I see Tony and his fiancée.

Shocked, Vicky stares at the box with a mixture of longing and apprehension.

VICKY

Have you told Felicidad?

TONY

Not yet. It's very difficult, you know...

VICKY

I'm glad you haven't told her, because I can't do this. It would be wrong for everyone.

TONY

I thought this is what you wanted.

VICKY

I thought it was what I wanted, too. But I finally realized something. All my life I belonged to someone else - my mother, you - I never did anything for myself. Now I'm going to do something I want to do.

TONY

What?

VICKY

I'm going to become a fashion designer in Miami.

Stunned SILENCE from Tony.

VICKY

I know what you're thinking. It sounds vain and shallow, doesn't it? But, Tony, I am vain and shallow! I'm not the kind of woman who can be the first lady of Panama. In my heart, I feel this is what I was born for.

TONY

If you like fashion, I will give you a fashion business! I will appoint you minister of fashion! Everyone in Panama will wear what you tell them to!

VICKY

God, Tony, you really miss the point. It's not just fashion I need another life!

TONY

You know how much I want you?

VICKY

Want! Want! You know what it's like to be wanted by Tony Noriega? It's like a prison

TONY

You, you give me what I want, I give you what you want, okay? What is it that I can't give you? Money? Love? Power?

VICKY

Respectability.

(pause)

I just don't want people hating me all the time. It takes a toll, Tony.

TONY

(completely sincere)

I love you.

Vicky hadn't expected this. Pause.

VICKY

If you love me, quit this crazy job, become a regular person again, then maybe I'll consider your offer.

TONY

What kind of thinking is this? Are you loco?

VICKY

Maybe.

INT. NORIEGA HOME - NIGHT

Tony enters the posh living room through the front door, staggering a bit, obviously drunk.

TONY

(Ricky Ricardo)

Hi, honey, I'm home!

(pause)

No-fucking-body here? Hey! the leader of your country speaking! Somebody?

CUT TO:

THE BEDROOM as Tony opens the door to the immense, walk-in closet. One side is full of Tony's suits and uniforms; the other is empty, with a few hangers. Tony stares at this for a moment, then looks at his collection of fancy Italian clothes. Furiously, he rips them off their hangers and hurls them into a pile in the bedroom.

TONY

Fucking Armani, fucking Ceruti, fucking Italian
bullshit!

When the closet is empty of everything but uniforms, Tony strips off his dinner jacket and adds it to the pile on the bedroom floor. Suddenly, he starts to sob.

TONY

Why would God do this to me? He gives me
everything in the world but one thing. Love.

AS he says this, he urinates on the pile

INT. GIROLDI HOUSE - NIGHT

In the darkened bedroom, Major Giroldi and Adela are quietly making love. When he comes, she suddenly BURSTS INTO TEARS.

MAJOR GIROLDI

Oh, no -

ADELA

It's not you, I'm just scared.

MAJOR GIROLDI

Tomorrow night, we'll have a celebration, just
the two of us. We'll get a room in the
Continental. Our first night in a free Panama.

ADELA

Moises, if you do this, you're going to have to
kill him.

MAJOR GIROLDI

No.

ADELA

You know he won't just step aside.

MAJOR GIROLDI

He'll have no other option.

ADELA

Oh, Moises - why does it have to be you?

MAJOR GIROLDI

I think God wants this.

(making light)

With God and the gringos on our side, how can we go wrong?

EXT. NORIEGA HOME - DAWN

Tony, looking spic-and-span in his uniform, exits his house and gets into a waiting Mercedes.

INT. COMANDANCIA - DAWN

In the WEAPONS ROOM, Major Giroldi opens a cabinet and passes out M-16 machine guns to his co-conspirators.

EXT. HOWARD AIR FORCE BASE - DAWN

Adela, her three children, and Major Giroldi's FATHER, an elderly, white-haired man in a wheelchair, approach the GUARD at the gate.

GUARD

May I help you, ma'am?

ADELA

We are the Giroldis.

GUARD

Yes, ma'am?

ADELA

(ominously)

Aren't you expecting us?

The guard looks at his clipboard.

GUARD

Giroldi?

ADELA

Oh, my God, is there a phone I can use?

GUARD

Why don't you wait inside. I'll see if there's someone awake in Administration.

INT. U. S. SOUTHERN COMMAND HEADQUARTERS - DAWN

The American General, his aide, and the two CIA agents are sitting in the General's office.

AMERICAN GENERAL

It's a goddamn trap, you ought to spot it from here to Timbuktu.

FIRST CIA AGENT

I don't know, General, he seemed pretty sincere.

AMERICAN GENERAL

Noriega sends one of his most trusted men over here to provoke us into making some stupid maneuver, then he can point at us and say we're playing gunboat diplomacy.

(to his aide)

Aren't we negotiating to get him to resign?

FIRST CIA AGENT

We heard State Department was talking to him.

AMERICAN GENERAL

But "we" don't know?

SECOND CIA AGENT

We hear he's just playing along. He doesn't seem to be very serious. If it's real, this Giroldi guy may be our best chance to get rid of Noriega.

AMERICAN GENERAL

What do you think, Chuck?

CHUCK

Well, it's cheaper than the invasion route. The main thing is to keep our hands clean.

AMERICAN GENERAL

How do we know Giroldi isn't another Noriega? He's PDPI. That whole institution is rotten!

SECOND CIA AGENT

Still, this could be a golden opportunity, if it's real -

AMERICAN GENERAL

"If!" Suppose this is just a show? Noriega is completely capable of staging this whole thing. How many people do you think might get killed in this little drama?

The agents look at each other. They've got no idea.

AMERICAN GENERAL

Fuck it.

EXT. COMANDANCIA - EARLY MORNING

Tony's Mercedes arrives and parks in his slot marked "GEN. NORIEGA."
Plotter #1, very nervously, is standing guard, watching Noriega and his two bodyguards arrive.

PLOTTER #1

(to himself)

He's early!

As Tony gets out of the car, Plotter #1 locks his gun. The CLICK alerts the bodyguards, who wheel around and point their Uzis at him. Plotter #1's indecisiveness is plain. He lowers his muzzle.

TONY

Something going on, Corporal?

PLOTTER #1

(snapping to attention)

No, General! I was only checking the cartridge.

Tony looks at him suspiciously.

TONY

Checking the cartridge?

He backs up to one of his bodyguards, while another keeps a pistol pointed at Plotter #1. Tony and his guards cautiously make their way up the stairs toward his office.

As soon as they turn the corner, Plotter #1 FIRES into the air to alert the conspirators inside.

INT. COMANDANCIA - CORRIDOR

The bodyguards enter the corridor with Tony cowering behind them.

BODYGUARD #1

We're coming in!

He is answered by a BURST OF MACHINE GUN FIRE. The bodyguard FIRES BACK down the corridor.

BODYGUARD #1

Let's go! Quick!

They run down the hall, the bodyguard FIRING to clear the way. The other bodyguard pushes Tony ahead of him. They reach the door to Tony's office. The lead bodyguard tries the door. It's locked.

BODYGUARD #1

R. Quick!

Tony fumbles for his keys. He tries to put it in the lock, but his hands are shaking too violently. The bodyguard snatches the key out of his hand and opens the door. The other bodyguard provides cover.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - DAY

Just as another BURST OF MACHINE GUN FIRE erupts, Tony and his two bodyguards take refuge in his office. One of the guards stands at the crack in the door, RETURNING FIRE.

Pause. SILENCE. Then:

MAJOR GIROLDI (O.S.)

General? General Noriega?

TONY

It's Moises!

Major Giroldi, with a DOZEN TROOPS on either side of the entrance to the corridor.

MAJOR GIROLDI

General, it's no use. Look out your window.

A VIEW THROUGH A CONCRETE-SLATTED SECURITY WINDOW

The battlements of the COMANDANCIA are lined with SOLDIERS pointing their weapons at Tony's office.

MAJOR GIROLDI (O.S.)

Please, no one should die for this!

ANGLE

Tony draws back from the window. Desperation is written all over his face.

ANGLE

The bodyguard at the door has run out of ammo.

BODYGUARD #2

Have you got any weapons? Ammunition?

Tony looks sick. No response.

Major Giroldi in the corridor.

MAJOR GIROLDI

Give up, General, or we'll have to kill you.
Throw your weapons into the hall.

Pause, then a CLATTER as two Uzis are flung into the corridor and go SKITTERING down the hallway.

MAJOR GIROLDI

Your pistol, General.

Tony, shivering with fear, under his desk. Bodyguard #1 kneels down and takes Tony's 9mm automatic out of his holster.

BODYGUARD #1

Sorry, General, there's no other choice.

Major Girolodi enters the room, holding his M-16, followed by HALF A DOZEN OTHER OFFICERS, including Lt. Contreras. Tony now is sitting at his desk, flanked by his bodyguards, although he is still white-faced and trembling.

MAJOR GIROLDI

You have done the wise and honorable thing, General. Now, I'll have to ask you to stand and move over here.

Girolodi indicates a place against the wall, next to the Hitler poster. The bodyguards do as he says.

TONY

What are you going to do?

MAJOR GIROLDI

Please, just -

Lt. Contreras physically pulls Tony out of his chair and shoves him toward the wall.

LT. CONTRERAS

Don't you understand orders, General?

AN OFFICER

Kill the bastard.

Several others echo the idea.

OTHER OFFICERS

Kill him! Kill the dog!

Tony, weakly, half faints to the floor.

TONY

No, no! Please!

The rebel officers LAUGH.

OTHER OFFICERS

Look at him! The great monster!

BODYGUARD #1

(pleading)

Get up, General. Be a man.

Tony bursts into uncontrolled SOBING.

MAJOR GIROLDI

(gently)

No one is going to die here, General. But you must resign.

TONY

(gasping)

Just, Just, give me a moment, please, alone... I need to pray.

Giroldi looks around at the other men.

MAJOR GIROLDI

If that's what you need, then, very well.

LT. CONTRERAS

Don't trust him, Major.

MAJOR GIROLDI

He must be treated with respect. We will leave him alone to make peace with himself and with God.

CLOSE ON TONY as the others leave the room. When the DOOR CLOSES and the LAST FOOTSTEP FADES, Tony looks up, then crawls over to the desk for the telephone. Hiding behind the desk, he makes a call. Surprisingly, there is a line.

TONY

Vicky! The son-of-a-bitch Giroldi is throwing me out! No! No! I don't know who else! Maybe everybody! They're going to kill me, I know it!

The call is interrupted by GUNFIRE.

TONY (CONT'D)

Call, quick! Call somebody! Maybe there's somebody loyal, the Mountain Men, the Ghermen, the Dignity Battalion - as long as the Americans aren't in on it. Get the chief of police, tell him to round up the families of the headquarters staff - Contreras and the others.

TONY (CONT)

(pause)

If you don't save me, I'm lost. This is your chance to be free of me. So think.

GUNFIRE again as Tony hangs up.

He hangs up. Pause. Then he opens the drawer of his desk and gets out a bottle of Old Parr. He takes a long swallow, then sits in his chair with his face in his hands. Long pause. There is a KNOCK on the door.

MAJOR GIROLDI

General?

Tony doesn't move or respond.

MAJOR GIROLDI

General?

He KNOCKS again. Tony takes another swallow then hides the bottle in the drawer.

TONY

Come in!

Girolodi enters, along with Lt. Contreras.

MAJOR GIROLDI

General, we have a statement we'd like you to sign.

He hands Tony a sheet of paper. Tony studies it with elaborate caution. Finally:

TONY

This is a resignation.

MAJOR GIROLDI

Yes.

TONY

I can't sign this.

MAJOR GIROLDI

(puzzled)

General, you realize the terms are... extremely generous. You may stay in Panama, no charges will be filed -

TONY

(affects to study it again)

There are several items for discussion. I would need to get a legal reading before I made such a commitment.

LT. CONRERAS

We are not negotiating, General. These are the final terms.

TONY

(ignoring this)

Really, there are only a few things to clarify. For instance, there is nothing here about my pension

LT. CONRERAS

Pension!?

TONY

Perhaps it seems a small thing to you, Lieutenant, but I must consider my family. save the Americans examined this document?

MAJOR GIROLDI

This is not an American action. This is a Panamanian action.

TONY

Surely they know about it. I think you should fax it over and get a reaction.

(pause)

Major, if you are going to be running Panama, you may as well know that the Americans want to have their thumb in every pie. It will set a good precedent, show that you will be cooperative. Flexible. They like that.

LT. CONRERAS

This is a ruse! Send it to the Americans and we will be here in the next century waiting for a reply from the State Department.

TONY

Really, it is a gesture, a simple courtesy.

MAJOR GIROLDI

I don't see what harm it would do.

LT. CONRERAS

Major!

TONY

Your first executive decision. I must admit: I'm impressed.

INT. U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The American General is studying the fax, along with members of his staff and the CIA agents.

AMERICAN GENERAL

What in the hell am I supposed to do with this?

FIRST CIA AGENT

It appears that there really is a coup in progress, General.

SECOND CIA AGENT

Maybe we should provide the backup Giroldi asked for.

Chuck enters the room.

CHUCK

General? It seems that there is a counter-coup underway.

AMERICAN GENERAL

Coup? Counter-coup? How the hell do we know what's real? What are we doing in this goddamn third-world puzzle box in the first place? Guarding a goddamn ditch!

INT. COMANDANCIA - DAY

Lt. Contreras has finally heard the sound of DISTANT BATTLE. He rushes to the window.

LT. CONTRERAS

It's the Mountain Man division!

MAJOR GIROLDI

What? No, the Americans have blocked the roads -

LT. CONTRERAS

Do you see them? There's no gringos out there.

Major Giroldi fishes in his pocket for the torn piece of newspaper with the CIA agents' number on it. When he starts to dial, a moment of realization comes over him. He looks at Tony, then hangs up.

MAJOR GIROLDI

There's no answer.

LT. CONTRERAS

Major, let's kill him now.

Girolodi considers it. He looks directly into Tony's eyes.

MAJOR GIROLDI

No.

LT. CONTRERAS

Then what do you propose?

MAJOR GIROLDI

(to Tony)

Do you absolutely refuse to sign this?

The BATTLE is closer now.

TONY

I cannot sign it.

MAJOR GIROLDI

Then we will have to deliver him to the Americans.

LT. CONTRERAS

It may already be too late for that.

A YOUNG REBEL OFFICER bursts into the office.

YOUNG REBEL OFFICER

The Mountain Men are surrounding us! Many have already surrendered!

MAJOR GIROLDI

We still have the General. Let's be calm.

The PHONE RINGS. AGAIN. There is a question of protocol about who should answer.

TONY

Hello?

(pause, then a smile)

It's for you.

He hands the phone to Lt. Contreras.

LT. CONTRERAS

Lucia?

Contreras listens, then his face goes ashen. He hangs up the phone and looks at Girolodi.

LT. CONTRERAS

The police have my family. Even my mother. There are other families as well.

TONY

What happens to me, happens to them.

An EXPLOSION heralds the main attack on the COMANDANCIA. The rebel officers jump at the sound. Tony sits unperturbed at his desk.

TONY

If you value your family, put your weapon on my desk.

Pause, then Lt. Contreras surrenders his weapon.

TONY

It's over for you, Girolodi.

MACHINE-GUN FIRE rakes the windows. The officers hit the floor, but Tony still doesn't move. He feels invulnerable now. Girolodi grabs the phone to call again.

TONY

You want some friendly advice?

Girolodi is listening to the phone go unanswered.

MAJOR GIROLADI

(slamming down the phone)

To hell with them!

TONY

This is your moment of decision, Major. Personally, I propose that you kill yourself.

MAJOR GIROLADI

It is against my religion.

TONY

I respect that. In that case, give me your weapon, and place your fate in God's hands.

GUNFIRE now in the corridor. VOICES yelling:

VOICES

We're coming in, General? We're coming in.

Tony gets up and starts walking toward Girolodi, who is pointing his M-16 at him.

TONY

Of course, you could still kill me, but you can't do that either, can you, Major?

TONY

You don't have the balls for that! What are you going to do, Major? Kill me? Kill yourself? Act, Act now!

Pause. Then Major Girolodi hands his M-16 to Noriega. The other officers drop their weapons.

TONY

Thank you, gentlemen.

The door bursts open and HALF A DOZEN SOLDIERS pour in, wearing beards and black t-shirts (sign of the Mountain Men), with guns ready to fire. Tony grins as they come in, and leans back in his chair.

LOYALIST OFFICER

Are you all right, General?

TONY

(to Girolodi)

You should have taken my advice.

(standing, then to the

loyalist officer)

Is the compound secure?

LOYALIST OFFICER

Yes, Sir.

TONY

I'm tired of this shit!

He suddenly turns and FIRES the machine gun into the face of the young rebel officer. Blood and brains spew against the wall. GIROLADI BS helplessly. Feeling a surge of power, Tony struts around the room.

TONY

Can you believe this? Is it luck? I should be dead. I should be lying there with my head blown off like this poor stupid whore's son!

(to Lt. Contreras, almost in passing)

Kneel down.

Contreras drops to his knees.

TONY

It's a miracle. Do you believe in miracles, Girolldi?

Girolldi is too shaken to respond. Tony sets the M-16 on his couch.

TONY

You're a religious man. I assume you do.

On the wall is a bright machete, which Tony takes down

TONY

Love is a miracle. You know, I'm just as puzzled as you, Girolldi. I don't know where I get this power. Somebody up there is taking care of me.

(to Contreras)

Stretch your hands out on the desk.

Contreras looks at Tony, pleadingly. Then he does so, with his head down, afraid to look.

TONY

You pushed me, remember? That was rude.

Suddenly, savagely, Tony slashes the machete across Contreras's wrists. Contreras SCREAMS. Arterial blood flies out of the stumps. Contreras slumps back and studies the fountains of his blood. His severed hands twitch eerily on the desk. Even the Mountain Men are appalled and turn away.

TONY (CONT'D)

I want a little more respect around here!

MAJOR GIROLDDI

Oh, God! Why? Kill me, kill me, please, somebody kill me now.

TONY

Oh, Major, that would be disappointing.

(to the loyalist officer)

He says he wants to die, but I don't think he wants it enough.

(approaching Girolldi)

Besides, we have a few questions to ask you. Then we'll consider your request.

Tony's face is now in front of Girolldi's. Unexpectedly, Tony kisses Girolldi on the mouth. Girolldi recoils in astonishment.

TONY (CONT'D)

(to loyalist officer)

Just don't kill him. everything else.

EXT. PANAMA STREETS - DAY

Symbolic red blood splashed across his face and a torn uniform riding his shoulders, TONY calls for "war" on the United States. He is vibrating with the power of his last escape. A large lower-class CROWD from the slums is out in force, with him. For whatever reason, Tony is at his best.

TONY

My father, my mother I never knew. But my country I love My Panama! I've always fought for you! I am only guided by you, my people. They have cut off our trade, our banks, our lives. Why? Because the Canal, because Panama is what they want. We are the golden land. Through us -- they control the South. Laws they respect in their own country. But here? They deal in drugs to support the contras. Nicaragua they attack. In Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, they kill thousands with their death squads. They lie to Congress and violate their Constitution. And they accuse me of being a drug-dealing murderer Who is the real criminal -- President Bush or General Noriega.. No, I will not go. Because this is the country I was born in. And it is the country I will die in. (the crowd roars) So from this day, "a state of war" exists between the peace-loving Republic of Panama and the monster of the North. A "war" of freedom again against tyranny. A "war" with the United States!

The crowd is quiet, murmuring.

INT. PAPAL NUNCIATURE - NIGHT

Tony is visiting with the nuncio once again. It's clear he enjoys these exchanges. For his part, the nuncio regards Tony with a sort of appalled curiosity.

NUNCIO

I assume that you are not so crazy that you actually want to go to war.

TONY

Want it? No. But always ready. You know what Machiavelli says about the prince - war should be his only profession.

NUNCIO

Machiavelli. I used to read him in seminary. Under the bedsheets. The pornographer of power.

TONY

He taught me many things. Above all, imitate the great ones of the past.

NUNCIO

That's interesting, yes. And who, General, do you model your own life after?

TONY

Omar Torrijos and Jesus of Nazareth.

The nuncio arches his brow.

NUNCIO

Once again, we seem to have something in common.

TONY

You priests don't understand that Jesus wasn't just a religious figure. He was profoundly political.

NUNCIO

The brown skinned Third Worlder standing against the imperial power sort-of-thing?

TONY

Exactly! Tell me, father, there is something I've always wondered. Do you really believe that Jesus was so handsome?

NUNCIO

Well, we don't really know how Jesus looked. Isaiah, of course, prophesied that the Christ would be despised by all men, he would be without comeliness, his complexion marred -

TONY

I knew it!

The nuncio pauses as he realizes how significant these words are to Tony.

NUNCIO

Of course, we can only speculate.

EXT. OCEAN OFF KENNEBUNKPORT, ME. - DAY

President-elect George Bush is piloting his cigarette boat like a banshee through the frigid, choppy waters. TWO SECRET SERVICE MEN, white-faced and freezing, hold on to the gunwales through the teeth-crunching bumps. Next to Bush is General Colin Powell, who regards Bush with a certain amused placidity, although he can hardly hear over the ROAR. Bush says something he can't make out.

POWELL

What was that, sir?

BUSH

I want to nab that little bastard! He's caused enough trouble!

POWELL

There are certain legal impediments to kidnapping foreign leaders, sir.

BUSH

Shit, I know that! We've tried being "nice" about it! We've been trying to negotiate his resignation for months! Now he's stepped over the line.

POWELL

What do we do with him, when we get him?

BUSH

Hey, the man is under indictment in Florida! War on drugs! Turn him over to the prosecutor. I don't care. I want a plan on my desk the morning I get inaugurated. Otherwise we go the invasion route. Got it?

POWELL

Got it.

WIDEN as Bush's boat ZOOMS off, trailed by TWO OTHER BOATS with AGENTS piled inside.

INT. U.S. SENATE CHAMBER - DAY

The door BURSTS OPEN on the Senate committee room where Kerry and the rest of the committee are in session. Follow AN AIDE into the room as he walks over to Kerry and hands him a note. Kerry looks up and smiles, and passes the note to Senator D'Amato next to him.

NOTICE a chart in front of the senators, outline the "Noriega Criminal Enterprise." It's a flow chart, with boxes designated "Drugs," "Money Laundering" "Assassinations", " "Weapons Smuggling," etc. It's clear that the noose is tightening.

LATER

THE SENATE CHAMBER

The full U.S. SENATE is meeting to vote on Resolution 239. Kerry stands in the well to read the bill.

KERRY

Mister President, I am here today, with my colleague Senator Helms, to introduce a resolution calling for the removal of General Manuel Antonio Noriega from power as the dictator of the beleaguered republic of Panama.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

A FLOTILLA of Navy ships cruises toward Panama under a full moon.

INT. TONY'S OFFICE - DAY

The Israeli agent is briefing Tony, using a map of Panama.

ISRAELI AGENT

Cuban intelligence has spotted RC135 transports and U.S. fighter wings out of Florida. They thought *they* were being invaded. All landing here -

(points to map)

- at Howard Air Force Base. It all points to a massive strike at virtually any moment.

TONY

But it's bullshit! The Americans can't touch me! I've got George Bush by the balls!

ISRAELI AGENT

Well, Tony, apparently he doesn't think so.

INT. TACKY TOURIST RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A young NAVY LIEUTENANT and his WIFE are eating dinner in an overpriced tourist joint, where he's trying to impress her. She just got off the plane.

WIFE

Mom didn't want me to come, but really! I had the tickets!

NAVY LIEUTENANT

It *is* a little tense here.

Just then, FOUR U.S. MARINES (blacks and whites) walk by, a bit drunkenly.

MARINE #1

Hey, lieutenant, is that your old lady?

MARINE #2

Man, she picked a hell of a time for a holiday!

NAVY LIEUTENANT

(good humoredly)

Don't you men have someplace you need to be?
Like in (checks watch) - seventeen minutes?

MARINE #1

Shit, man! He's right! We gotta haul ass if
we're gonna make curfew!

INT. CHEVROLET - NIGHT

The four Marines are rushing through Panama City traffic in an old, rusted, cream-colored Impala. The RUMBLE of the engine suggests it has been beefed up.

MARINE #2

Hey, Dave, take a right on Fourth of July - it's
quicker.

EXT. PANAMA CITY STREET - NIGHT

The Impala, with a blue Michigan plate, SQUEALS around a corner. Ahead, however, there is a roadblock, manned by a HALF DOZEN MOUNTAIN MEN, with their beards and black t-shirts and AK47s slung across their shoulders. Some of them have bandoleers of ammo across their chests. They are drunk and ROWDY and they are harassing people in the cars ahead.

INT. CHEVROLET - NIGHT

The Marines size up the situation.

MARINE #1

What the hell is this?

DAVE

Man, I ain't stoppin' for this shit. They got no
right to bother American servicemen.

MARINE #2

Hey, be cool, bud.

INT. NAVY LIEUTENANT'S CAR - NIGHT

Further back in the roadblock, the Navy lieutenant and his wife watch what's happening ahead.

NAVY LIEUTENANT

I don't know, hon'. I'm beginning to wish you
had listened to your mother.

His wife LAUGHS nervously. The Navy lieutenant notices one of the Mountain Men gesturing furiously at the Marines' car.

NAVY LIEUTENANT

C'mon, Dave, behave yourself.

INT. CHEVROLET - NIGHT

One of the cars ahead moves on. The Marines move up in line, approaching a Mountain Man, who indicates with the barrel of his AR-47 that he wants the window rolled down. The driver initially ignores him.

MARINE #2

Dave, man - put the window down or he'll break it out.

Dave reluctantly lowers the window but refuses to look at the guard. The guard sticks his face down and peers into the car, grinning .

The car ahead moves on, and Dave starts to move forward slowly, as the guard walks along beside him, still looking in the window.

DAVE

Fuck this!

EXT. PANAMA CITY STREETS - NIGHT

The Impala SCREECHES through the roadblock. The Marines inside CRY OUT:

MARINES O.S.

Dave! What - Shit, man!

The surprised Mountain Men FIRE at the fleeing Chevy. Glass flies as the car swerves and SQUEALS around a corner.

INT. CHEVROLET - NIGHT

The rear window has been shot out. Dave looks in the rear-view mirror.

DAVE

(panicky)

Anybody hurt?

The two Marines in the back seat sit up.

MARINE #3

(laughing)

Dave, you crazy mother-

Then Dave notices Marine #2 beside him in the front seat, who suddenly slumps against his shoulder.

DAVE

Oh, shit! Bob! Bob! They shot
Bobby!

EXT. ROADELOCK - NIGHT

The furious Mountain Men roughly pull the Navy lieutenant and his wife out of the car. She SCREAMS as one of them shoves her against a lamppost.

NAVY LIEUTENANT

Hey, there's no reason -

But his comment is cut short by a knee to his groin. He drops to his knees. One of the Mountain Men has a hammer in his hand, which he taps against his palm.

MOUNTAIN MAN

You're wife has nice tits. Too
bad you won't get to enjoy them.

He brings the hammer down on the lieutenant's head. His wife SCREAMS:

WIFE

Jerry Oh, God - no! no!

EXT. PANAMA SLIMS - DAY

A MOSQUITO TRUCK passes down the street, trailed by a MOB OF SHIRTLESS CHILDREN playing in the cloud of insecticide. The stores along the street advertise Christmas gifts.

INT. VICKY ' S APARIMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is full of packing crates. Vicky has her hair up and is wearing jeans. She looks like a student, and she obviously feels excited. Tony, on the other hand, sits dejectedly on a box and watches as Vicky packs her clothes.

VICKY

And my cousin has an apartment in the nice part
of Miami Beach it'll be like school We'll be
roommates!

Pause.

VICKY

You're not going to stop me?

TONY

(shrugs)

I can tell you not to go, but I can't make you want to stay. And if I did, you would hate me even more.

VICKY

I never hated you.

TONY

But you never loved me.

She pauses, perplexed.

VICKY

Tony, love is a mystery. I don't know sometimes if such a thing really exists between people.

TONY

In front of love, we are all humble. Go quick, before my other nature comes out.

Vicky walks over to him and kneels, putting her hand on his knee.

VICKY

Thank you.

Tony is very sad.

INT. WHOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Tony is in his red underwear, in a red-velvet room, with absurdly plush couches and a statue-fountain of a Greek goddess. The Israeli agent is there, as are TWO OTHER MEN and Tony's doctor. They are surrounded by BARE-BREADED WOMEN. The men are all very drunk.

Tony takes a drink from one of the women, who is the only blonde in the room. He puts his hand on her breast. She starts in alarm, which makes him grab her breast fiercely. He's hurting her.

TONY

What's the matter - you don't like me?

WHORE

Your hand was cold.

TONY

You can warm it.

She is obviously repelled by him. She pulls his hand away and walks off. The Israeli agent LAUGHS.

ISRAELI AGENT

Tony, you can't get laid in a whorehouse. This is not your day!

In the b.g., the RUMBLE of low-flying aircraft. Tony looks up, quizzically. Suddenly, an EXPLOSION causes the blackened windows to BLOW OPEN and some of the mirrors to SHATTER. The lights go out.

WHORE

The gringos are coming!

ANOTHER EXPLOSION. Mass confusion. Tony starts to put on his clothes.

ISRAELI AGENT

Not your uniform! Take his -

He takes the clothes out of the hands of one of the men - it's just shorts and a t-shirt and a baseball cap. The man stands there, stunned.

TONY

You got to get me out of here, Mike!

ISRAELI AGENT

Where?

TONY

I don't know!

ISRAELI AGENT

(stunned)

You don't have a plan?

EXT. PANAMA CITY STREET - NIGHT

FROM ABOVE: A tiny white Hyundai wheels through the dark streets, the headlights cutting a swath in the darkness.

CAMERA DRIFTS DOWN

INT. HYUNDAI - NIGHT

The Israeli agent is driving. In the backseat, Tony is wearing a v-neck t-shirt and a N.Y. Yankees' hat pulled down over his eyes.

ISRAELI AGENT

Holy mother of God!

Outside, hundreds of PARATROOPERS drop into view all around them.

TONY

Turn! Turn!

Just then two HUGE BOOTS strike the hood of the car as a PARATROOPER lands on the Hyundai. The car SCREECHES to a stop as the frightened paratrooper stares into the car.

PARATROOPER

Sorry.

He slides off the hood and starts to pull in his chute. The Israeli agent throws the car into reverse.

EXT. PANAMA CITY STREETS - NIGHT - VARIOUS SCENES

American TANKS RUMBLE through the streets. There is scattered GUNFIRE. The PDF TROOPS wage a half-hearted resistance as A130 SPECTER GUNSHIPS fly menacingly close over the rooftops, FIRING tracers. It's a massive display of force.

A BASEBALL STADIUM, where an AUDIENCE of Panamanians has gathered in the stands to watch the show. From the bleachers, they CHEER as aircraft swoop over the city, and bulbing flashes of distant EXPLOSIONS illuminate the night sky.

THE COMANDANCIA, which is reduced to rubble as U.S. TANKS and HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS assault the building.

THE GATE OF THE CUBAN EMBASSY, where Felicidad and her daughters take refuge, each of them wearing a mink coat and dragging enormous suitcases.

THE NUNCIATURE, where Father Jorge and the nuns are accepting REFUGEES, who are lined up in the circular drive. They hit the dirt when another EXPLOSION shakes the palm trees.

VICKY AMADO'S BARE APARTMENT, where Vicky stands at the window, alone and crying, as flares illuminate her tears.

EXT. PANAMA CITY - DAY - VARIOUS SCENES

Interspersed with REAL FOOTAGE of the aftermath of the invasion, is the voice of GEORGE BUSH:

BUSH

Fellow citizens, last night I ordered U.S. military forces to Panama. No president takes such action lightly. This morning, I want to tell you what I did and why I did it.

FLYOVER SHOT of the ruins of the COMANDANCIA.

BUSH

For nearly two years, the United States, nations of Latin America and the Caribbean have worked together to resolve the crisis in Panama...

SHOTS of burned-out buildings, dazed PEOPLE ON THE STREETS, U.S. SOLDIERS, with camouflage-painted faces, patrolling neighborhoods. Plumes of smoke rise from the destruction. GANGS loot the shops under the indifferent gaze of the Americans. HUNDREDS of HOMELESS PEOPLE sit in a soccer field, staring blankly.

BUSH

Last Friday, Noriega declared his military dictatorship to be in a state of war with the United States and publicly threatened the lives of Americans in Panama. The very next day forces under his command shot and killed an unarmed American serviceman, wounded another, arrested and brutally beat a third American serviceman and then brutally interrogated his wife, threatening her with sexual abuse. That was enough.

SHOT of CIVILIAN BODIES lying on the floor of the morgue. LINGER on this - the true cost of the whole Noriega misadventure.

EXT. ANDREWS AFB - NIGHT

CASKETS are being unloaded by a MARINE HONOR GUARD as THE RELATIVES grieve behind a cordon of TROOPS. The air transport is spookily lit by floodlights.

INT. PAPAL NUNCIATURE - NIGHT

Following the beam of her flashlight, Sister Sarita picks her way through the darkened chambers of the NUNCIATURE. Slumped in chairs and on the floors are the sleeping forms of SEVERAL DOZEN REFUGEES.

SISTER SARITA

Coming, coming! Oh, my -

Finally she reaches the front door and shoves aside the heavy slide lock. She opens the door to find a visibly exhausted nuncio wearing a bullet-proof vest, in the company of the Ambassador Davis.

SISTER SARITA

Oh, senor Ambassador! Welcome! and monsignor!
You are so tired! Let me take your bag.

NUNCIO

(testily)

I wish I had a bag, Sister Sarita.
Unfortunately, it was lost.

DAVIS

We'll find it, I'm sure.

(to Sister Sarita)

We had to put the nuncio on an Air Force
transport from Miami to get him here, and
somehow in all the confusion...

In the b.g., desultory sound of MACHINE GUN FIRE.

NUNCIO

Invading small countries is such a lot of
trouble, it's no wonder luggage gets lost.

(removing the vest)

Here, Arthur, your bullet-proof vest. You've
gotten me safely home.

DAVIS

Remember, if you hear any news about that
rascal's whereabouts, give me a call.

NUNCIO

I'm flattered to think that the United States of
America, with its listening dishes and satellite
reconnaissance and its army of paid spies would
have any need for the intelligence of a simple
man of God.

DAVIS

Well, if you actually were a simple man of God,
you're right, but the fact is you're the most
complicated and devious cleric I've ever had the
pleasure of meeting.

NUNCIO

Thank you.

Davis leaves. The nuncio and Sister Sarita move out of the foyer into the
reception hall, where the nuncio fiddles with the light switch.

NUNCIO

I see the power is out as well.

SISTER SARITA

Shh! Lower your voice, if you please.

It is only then that the nuncio notices the sleeping bodies wrapped in
blankets and splayed out in the reception area.

NUNCIO

(sotto voce)

Lord above! What have we here?

SISTER SARITA

Narcotraffickers, police torturers, members of Noriega's death squad, foreign terrorists - a cross-section of Panamanian society. Oh, and the minister of immigration. Apparently the gringos found a cocaine laboratory in his office.

They enter the library. Sister Sarita lights the lantern on the nuncio's desk.

NUNCIO

I suppose we can put them in the convent school across the street until the new government has established itself.

Father Jorge enters the library wearing a bathrobe and rubbing his eyes. Sister Sarita exits.

FATHER JORGE

Welcome back, Monsignor.

They embrace.

NUNCIO

So, do we have any idea where the little general is?

FATHER JORGE

People say he's in the jungles calling for armed resistance.

NUNCIO

This I don't believe. More likely he's in a Colombian whorehouse calling for a whiskey soda.

FATHER JORGE

The borders are sealed. His army has collapsed, even his closest aides are making deals, he has no one to turn to - I hear the Americans have offered a million dollar bounty on his head. He is a cornered rat.

NUNCIO

And where do you think this cornered rat will turn?

FATHER JORGE

His wife and daughters have taken sanctuary in the Cuban Embassy.

NONCIO

Too obvious. The Americans will be waiting - with their rat traps. No, there's a more likely alternative. He will come here.

FATHER JORGE

Here! what if he does?

NONCIO

Its a diplomatic disaster. We must tell the Americans to put a cordon around our embassy. Under no circumstances is Noriega to believe this sanctuary is available to him.

FATHER JORGE

Good. If he were here, I don't know how I might behave. I have never hated a man so completely.

NONCIO

Be careful, Father Jorge. In my experience, it's is exactly the questions we don't wish to face about ourselves that God likes to pose.

EXT. STREETS OF PANAMA CITY - DAY

Scenes of JUBILATION as the city reacts to the end of the Noriega regime. YOUNG MEN in flatbed trucks waving victory signs. BANDS playing Afro-Caribbean songs. Banners hand outside windows. And dangling from street lights and telephone poles: hundreds of pineapples.

In the b.g. comes TONY'S VOICE over a RADIO:

TONY (V.O.)

Citizens of Panama! Join me in resisting the Yanqui invader! Rise up and kill the enemy! Citizens! A vast army of resistance is forming!

EXT. A LUXURIOUS HOUSE IN PANAMA CITY - DAY

Tony is sitting in a swim suit beside a beautiful pool with the Drug Lord and his gorgeous wife. He is talking into the telephone. His two bodyguards, dressed and armed, are with him. The Drug Lord is lying on his back on an air mattress in the pool, his immense gut poking into the air like a volcanic island. The landscaping of the place is fanciful, with sculpted rocks and miniature waterfalls - extravagant and childlike at the same time a bit like the "Pirates of the Caribbean" ride at Disneyland.

TONY

(loudly and with apparent
passion)

Together we will drive the gringos back into the canal and reclaim our country. Follow me! We will be free! Free Panama! I salute you!

He hangs up the phone and leans back in his chaise. He stares moodily into the pool. The gorgeous wife brings a tray his way.

GORGEOUS WIFE

Tony, do you want another California roll?

TONY

Thank you.

He takes a roll from the tray and eyes the woman's legs as she passes. Bodyguard #1 sits down next to Tony with an excited look in his eyes.

BODYGUARD #1

Is that what we're going to do, General? Go to the jungles and fight the gringos? All my life, this has been my dream.

(claps his hand over his
heart)

Say the word, General! I am at your side!

In a weary response, Tony sips his rum punch through a straw in a coconut. In the b.g. ELVIS SINGS "Blue Christmas" over the outdoor stereo.

EXT. PANAMA CITY STREETS - DAY

A PLATOON of American soldiers, faces painted, unloads from an armored personnel carrier and races up the street through a fancy neighborhood. There are GARDENERS and DOORMEN who watch the commotion. The soldiers stop in front of the biggest mansion on the block. They are carrying a ram, which they use on the front gate. With a single LOUD BLOW the gate fly off its hinges, setting off an ALARM.

INT. DRUG LORD'S HOUSE - DAY

The soldiers race through the luxurious house, fanning out, YELLING at the top of their lungs, as the ALARM continues to sound. They sweep the area with their automatic weapons. Several of them burst through the patio door into the pool area, where the Drug Lord and his wife are still sitting. They look up insouciantly. Elvis continues to SING.

EXT. PANAMA CITY STREETS - DAY

As the wheels of the armored personnel carrier rumble past, NOTICE the gutter of the sewer across the road. CLOSER. Tony's eyes stare out.

INT. PAPAL NUNCIATURE - DAY

Father Jorge is standing on a stool decorating a Christmas tree in the reception hall as the nuncio looks on. The room is already quite festive. Sister Sarita enters the room with an amazed look on her face.

SISTER SARITA

It's him.

Father Jorge and the nuncio look at her, not understanding.

SISTER SARITA

On the phone. The little general. Pineapple face.

CUT TO:

THE LIBRARY, where the nuncio is speaking into the phone. Sister Sarita and Father Jorge stand to one side, listening.

NUNCIO

How kind of you to call.

(pause)

Well, as a matter of protocol, I would have to submit such a request to the Vatican... Perhaps three days if it's expedited... I see your point, yes... That doesn't seem quite fair, General... Happy Christmas to you, too.

(hangs up)

He said I've got ten minutes to decide. He wants sanctuary. If I don't accept him, he says he will wage years of guerrilla warfare. "The blood will be on your hands, Monsignor."

FATHER JORGE

What are you going to do?

NUNCIO

(dialing)

I'm calling the Americans. I told them he would be coming here! Where are they?

(hangs up furiously)

Busy? Do you know the number the CIA?

FATHER .

(appalled)

Monsignor!

NUNCIO

Yes or no without the moral commentary.

FATHER JORGE

No!

NUNCIO

Our obligation is to keep the pope from inheriting this - time bomb. In any case, the end result will have to be the same. We must deliver him to the Americans.

FATHER JORGE

Why not give him to the Panamanians?

NUNCIO

Excellent idea. Either they put his head on a sharp stake or else they let him run the country again. Which of these outcomes do you favor?

The phone RINGS. The nuncio answers it.

NUNCIO

Hello, General. I don't believe it has been ten minutes... umm... well, you place me in a difficult situation. No, I can't do that!

(pause, then a deep s sigh)

All right, I agree. Where? Really? Yes, I'm leaving right now... Thank you, and Happy Christmas to you, too.

He hangs up.

JORGE

So, you agreed.

NUNCIO

He's waiting at the Dairy Queen.

FATHER JORGE

Shall I have your car brought round?

NUNCIO

Yes, but I'm not going. You are.

JORGE

I distinctly heard you say that you were meeting him.

NUNCIO

It is far more important that I reach the Ambassador and get the Americans to intercept him. You put on my vestments and skullcap, no one will guess you're not me.

JORGE

Noriega will. He knows us both quite well. he'll suspect a trick and... I don't like to think what he might do.

NUNCIO

Don't worry, he has no choice. He'll come along. Here -

(takes off skullcap and gives
it to Father Jorge)

I promote you. Go, get my robe and take the papal Toyota. I'll call the Americans. They'll ride to your rescue like the cavalry.

Father Jorge departs. The nuncio dials the number again. He listens, then slams the phone down.

EXT. PANAMA CITY STREETS - DAY

The light blue Toyota Crown is cruising past burnt-out shops with LOOTERS casually selecting merchandise. The yellow-and white embassy flag is flying.

INT. PAPAL TOYOTA - DAY

Father Jorge, dressed in formal robes and wearing the skullcap, stares nervously out the tinted window. The elderly driver is in the front.

Suddenly, a BING BING BING! noise comes from the dashboard.

FATHER JORGE

What's the problem?

The driver looks casually over his shoulder.

DRIVER

It's about to run out of gas.

FATHER JORGE

(looking heavenward)

Am I supposed to find this funny?

EXT. PANAMA CITY STREETS - DAY

The papal Toyota enters a gas station and pauses before a sign on the pumps that says "NO GAS."

FATHER JORGE

Can we make it to St. Joseph's church?

CUT TO:

The Toyota runs out of gas on a narrow back street. It COUGHS to a stop. Father Jorge gets out and looks at it disgustedly. Then he hurries over to the church nearby.

CUT TO:

Father Jorge POUNDS on the door of the church rectory, which is opened by a MIDDLE-AGED MAN.

CUT TO:

Father Jorge is carrying a half-filled, sloshing bucket of gas down the cobblestone street to the papal Toyota, where the elderly driver has his head back and is LOUDLY SNORING. The monk pads along behind Father Jorge, pestering him for contributions.

MONK

And we really do need a proper window. These strange explosions have caused considerable damage to the stain glass.

FATHER JORGE

It's a war.

He KICKS the Toyota loudly, waking the driver, as he pours the gas in.

MONK

Really? There's a war on?

FATHER JORGE

Was a war. I guess you missed

MONK

You hear so little news in this place...

CUT TO:

The Toyota slowly cruising down the street as other cars pass.

FATHER JORGE (O.S.)

It's on the right, I think.

ANGLE

The Toyota pulls into the Dairy Queen. There are ten other cars there, most of them with trays on the window. CHILDREN are playing on the Dairy Queen playground.

INT. PAPAL TOYOTA - DAY

Inside, father Jorge looks anxiously at his watch and stares around at the other cars in the lot. There is a KNOCKING on the window, which startles him.

HIS POV as the front window lowers: a TEENAGED WAITRESS sticks her head in the window.

WAITRESS

What would you like?

Father Jorge, completely off guard, tries to recover with a smile, which practically falls off his face.

FATHER JORGE

Uhhhhh, Coke. Please.

WAITRESS

Just a Coke?

(to driver)

What about you?

DRIVER

I'll have the Belt buster and a large fries and medium Pepsi.

Father Jorge stares at the back of the driver's neck in disbelief.

CUT TO:

Father Jorge is using a pay phone outside the Dairy Queen. He mops his brow in the tropical heat. In the b.g. the driver is casually enjoying his hamburger.

FATHER JORGE

(into phone)

I think it's hopeless. We're too late,
everything just -

He suddenly pauses and looks up.

HIS POV

A dark Land Rover with heavily tinted windows pulls up next to the papal Toyota.

FATHER JORGE (O.S.)

I'm afraid he's here.

ANGLE

Tony's two armed bodyguards get out of the Land Rover, eyeing Father Jorge. They open the back door of the Land Rover and the back door of the papal Toyota. We can just see two scrawny legs in tennis shoes slip from one vehicle to another. Father Jorge gets in the other side. Both bodyguards get in the Toyota.

INT. PAPAL TOYOTA - DAY

Father Jorge sits down and closes the door and turns to confront Tony Noriega, his longtime nemesis. Despite the Uzi poking out from under his shirt, Tony looks pathetic in his Bermuda shorts and Yankees hat, which is pulled down so that his eyes are scarcely visible. Tony is taken aback when he recognizes Father Jorge.

TONY

Is this some priestly trick?

FATHER JORGE

Yes.

TONY

Where is the nuncio?

FATHER JORGE

He was occupied. He sent me instead.

(pause)

If you want to go to the nunciature, you can come with me. Otherwise...

Tony gestures helplessly. The driver eases into gear. Tony notices that Father Jorge is studying him.

TONY

What are you looking at?

FATHER JORGE

You're such a small man!

Tony turns away in disgust.

TONY

I know you. You're the pig who was preaching against me.

FATHER JORGE

I was only saying masses for Hugo.

Tony looks at him.

TONY

You look like him, you know.

FATHER JORGE

People often tell me that. Thank you .

TONY

I could have gotten rid of you. Easily.

FATHER JORGE

Why didn't you?

Tony shrugs.

INT. PAPAL NUNCIATURE - DAY

The nuncio welcomes Tony and his bodyguards as they enter the reception area.

NUNCIO

General!

He and Tony embrace. As they do so, the nuncio feels the press of the Uzi.

NUNCIO

(sotto voce)

You'll have to leave your weapons in the safe.

CUT TO:

Tony follows the nuncio down the upstairs hallway, past a series of small bedrooms.

NUNCIO

My room is at the end. You'll be staying in our presidential suite. Many of your opponents have taken advantage of our hospitality.

He opens the door onto a small, Spartan cubicle.

NUNCIO

Voila.

Tony examines the slumping cot, a filthy window, and a crucifix above the bed. The nuncio indicates the window air conditioner and the television set.

NUNCIO

I'm afraid the appliances don't work very well, the air conditioner not at all and the television almost not at all. Well. Dinner is at seven and there is a Christmas Eve mass at midnight.

TONY

Thank you.

CUT TO:

THE LIBRARY

Where Father Jorge is placing the weaponry into the safe. He treats them very gingerly, as if they might go off in his hands.

As he's about to put away Tony's Uzi, he takes a more considered look at it, weighs it in his hand - and in his mind, perhaps.

CUT TO:

THE KITCHEN

Where the nuncio is talking to the staff, who are THREE NUNS (including Sister Sarita), the elderly driver, and Father Jorge. The preparations for a huge dinner are all around.

NUNCIO

Under no circumstances is he to use the phone or receive any outside communications. Sister, will you hide the fax machine?

CUT TO:

THE DINING ROOM

Tony's bodyguards have joined the nuncio and his staff at the banquet table. The nuns serve. There's a huge goose with sausage stuffing.

FATHER JORGE

(to bodyguard #2)

Isn't the general going to join us?

BODYGUARD #2

Oh, he would never eat this!

He says as he enthusiastically helps himself to a large portion of goose.

NUNCIO

Indeed?

BODYGUARD #2

He's, you know, a strict vegetarian. Two things you can never do around the general.

BODYGUARD #1

Eat meat and smoke.

The nuncio takes this in. Suddenly, Sister Sarita rushes in.

SISTER SARITA

Monsignor! the building is surrounded by Yanquis!

NUNCIO

Now they come.

EXT. NUNCIATURE - NIGHT

The nuncio steps into the glare of headlights from an ABRAMS M-1 TANK at the front gate. All along the periphery, there are AMERICAN TROOPS. The tank makes a menacing GRUMBLING sound. It nudges against the chained gate, apparently about to pop it. open and run right over the NUNCIATURE.

The nuncio walks directly up to the gate and stands in front of the tank. Pause. A HOLLERED COMMAND in the b.g. The tank backs up. The American General comes to the gate.

AMERICAN GENERAL

Father, I understand you're harboring an international criminal.

NUNCIO

Apparently, we've been chosen for this purpose.

AMERICAN GENERAL

I want you to get your people out of there. Either you hand him over or we're coming in.

NUNCIO

Of course, I'm delighted that you are taking this problem off my hands, General. But this is not the way to go about this.

AMERICAN GENERAL

We've got 25,000 troops who've been looking for this turkey. I don't see how you're going to stop us.

NUNCIO

No, obviously I can't. On the other side of this gate, however, you will be standing on the soil of the Vatican. It would be like invading St. Peter's Cathedral. I suppose I could mention that to the press.

The General blinks at this.

NUNCIO

In the meantime, we're at dinner.

INT. NUNCIATURE - NIGHT

Tony, in his darkened room, is peeking out his window through a clear spot in the smudge. His face is full of terror. Outside, the sound of HELICOPTERS making threatening passes. A KNOCK on the door.

CUT TO:

A headless man stands in the doorway. Tony GASPS. Then we realize it is actually the nuncio, who is holding up a mirror in front of his face. He lowers it and smiles.

NUNCIO

I thought you might need a mirror.

He sets the object on the dresser, then sits in a chair. Tony is huddled in his bed, back against the wall.

NUNCIO

I would never consider asking you to leave. You can stay here as long as you wish.

At this point, the nuncio pulls out a pipe, which he lights with great ceremony, sending out immense clouds of smoke.

TONY

I prefer to go to Mexico or Spain.

A huge cloud of smoke envelopes him. He COUGHS miserably.

NUNCIO

Yes, but Panama will never allow that, and I doubt the Yanquis will, either. No, there are only three alternatives. Stay here -

(puff)

- turn yourself over to Panamanian authorities, or trust the American legal system. Who knows what a good lawyer might do for you?

NUNCIO

(pause, puff)

You want to know my real concern? I'm afraid the Americans will let the mobs break through. Why should they stop them? I would hate to see you wind up like Mussolini, hanging by your heels like a butchered hog. It's so - undignified.

Tony considers this.

CUT TO:

CHAPEL IN THE NUNCIATURE

The nuncio and Father JORGE are celebrating mass in the small, attractive chapel, which is full of refugees, including the bodyguards.

CLOSE ON THE NUNCIO as he RECITES the liturgy. He looks up. What he sees surprises him.

Tony, in his t-shirt and Bermuda shorts, slips in the back of the chapel and crosses himself before taking a seat.

CUT TO:

The priests are offering communion. The nuns are at the altar rail receiving the host. When Sister Sarita stands, she is replaced by Tony, who kneels in her spot.

Father Jorge looks panicked. Under his breath to the nuncio:

FATHER JORGE

He can't receive communion! His soul must be pure!

NUNCIO

How do you know it's not?

Father Jorge passes by Tony, refusing to offer him the host. Tony lingers at the altar rail.

CUT TO:

THE VESTRY

Father Jorge and the nuncio are changing out of their vestments.

FATHER JORGE

He must make confessional! He has to make an act of contrition! Otherwise, he'll be committing another mortal sin by accepting communion.

NUNCIO

It's his sin, not yours, Father. You are not the judge, only the priest.

FATHER JORGE

(frustrated)

Really, Monsignor? Do you truly believe God loves this man?

NUNCIO

Isn't it obvious?

EXT. NUNCIATURE - DAWN

In the dim light, we can just see the American tanks and Armored Personnel Carriers, which have completely surrounded the building. In the b.g., a ROOSTER CROWS.

INT. NUNCIATURE - DAWN

ON A SLEEPING NUNCIO, who is suddenly startled awake by the earsplitting sound of a DISK-JOCKEY'S VOICE on a P.A.

DISK-JOCKEY (O.S.)

Good morning, Panama!

The nuncio bolts up and grabs his heart.

DISK-JOCKEY (O.S., CONT'D)

Hey, in there! Rise and shine! (imitates "Reveille") Doot do doodle doodle do! Doot do doodle doodle do! Say, have we got a day planned for you!

The nuncio claps his ears.

EXT. NUNCIATURE - DAWN

SHOT of the loudspeakers pointed at the building.

DISK-JOCKEY (O.S.)

Sounds of the great lawbreakers of the past!
You're gonna love it! This one goes out to Tony from Uncle Sam!

Linda Ronstadt's "You're No Good" begins to play.

INT. NUNCIATURE - DAWN

Father Jorge opens the door of his room and looks down the hall. At the other end the nuncio opens his door. They exchange an exhausted look.

CUT TO:

TONY'S BEDROOM

He is sound asleep, despite the racket.

LATER - THE KITCHEN

CUT TO:

The nuns are washing last night's dishes and jiving to the LOUD SOUNDS of "I Fought The Law (And The Law Won)."

CUT TO:

THE LAUNDRY ROOM

Where the nuns are washing socks and underwear by hand. The MUSIC continues. The nuns have bits of Kleenex sticking out of their ears.

THE LIBRARY

The nuncio and Father Jorge are in conference, having to SHOUT at each other over the MUSIC.

NUNCIO

Is he still asleep?

FATHER JORGE

Apparently.

NUNCIO

This is too much to believe. We have to put a stop to this.

CUT TO:

THE HALLWAY

Sister Sarita KNOCKS LOUDLY on Tony's door, but she is still barely heard over the SOUNDS of "Somebody's Watchin' You" Finally a bleary-eyed Tony opens the door. Sister Sarita hands him his socks and underwear in a little pile, then blows a small cloud of smoke in his face from the cigarette she is very inexpertly smoking.

EXT. NUNCIATURE - DAY

The nuncio HOLLERS at the American General through the gates of the nunciature, as the MUSIC ELARES even louder.

ANGLE

The nunciature in the b.g., with a tiny face staring out of a corner of a smudged window.

THE LIBRARY

Father Jorge and the nuncio are working at the desk, answering correspondence. The nuncio is reading a fax.

NUNCIO

The Vatican is pretty upset with us.

FATHER JORGE

What did they expect us to do?
We can't just -

The nuncio notices Tony standing in the doorway.

TONY

Excuse me, Monsignor, I heard something disturbing on the television.

NUNCIO

Come in, General! I didn't see you there!

CUT TO:

Father Jorge and Tony sit on the couch, while the nuncio sits in his regal chair. He lights his pipe with a great flourish. Father Jorge takes a box from the table and opens it, offering it to Tony.

FATHER JORGE

Cigar?

TONY

(repulsed)
No, thank you.

Father Jorge sets the box down and takes out a cigar. He bites off the end and lights it.

TONY (CONT'D)

I would like you to hear my confession, Monsignor.

At last, the nuncio is caught off guard.

NUNCIO

Well! I am in a bit of a bind! My role is to mediate the interests of all parties and bring this - affair - to a peaceful conclusion. I don't know that I would be able to serve those ends if I were your priest.

TONY

I thought a priest was obligated to hear all confessions.

NUNCIO

Absolutely. And I will if you wish me to. But I must caution you that such an action might diminish my effectiveness as your representative to the other interested parties.

(pause)

Father Jorge, on the other hand, suffers from no such conflict.

Father Jorge looks stunned. Tony sizes him up, disparagingly.

EXT. NONCIATURE - DAY

Vicky Amado walks through the tanks and troops laying siege to the NONCIATURE. She is carrying a picnic basket and a dry-cleaning bag with Tony's uniforms inside. The troops WHISTLE and HOOT at her. When she comes to the gate, the nuncio opens it for her, then locks it behind her.

INT. NONCIATURE - DAY

Vicky sits distractedly, chewing gum and rocking her leg over her knee, as she waits under the giant portrait of the Pope. Finally she looks up.

HER POV

Tony walks into the room in his uniform. He's showered and shaved and regained a bit of his dignity.

ANGLE

Vicky looks at Tony. Her face is full of sympathy and love.

VICKY

At last, you're mine.

They embrace.

TONY (V.O.)

I know it is not sanctioned by the church, father. But true love, isn't it divine, no matter what people say?

CUT TO:

CONFESSIONAL BOX

Where Father Jorge has been receiving Tony's lengthy confession.

FATHER JORGE

Love is always precious.

TONY

It is the only thing God denied me. I always thought He was jealous.

FATHER JORGE

Jealous?

TONY

My life was a lighted path. I had nothing, but every step I took led me toward greatness. Wouldn't you say this was God's will ?

FATHER JORGE

I don't presume to know what is God's will.

TONY

And now I see what he wants of me.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAPEL - NIGHT.

Where the nunzio and Father Jorge are celebrating communion. Vicky and Tony are at the rail, holding hands. This time Father Jorge gives him the host. In the b.g., the sound of a HELICOPTER LANDING.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHAPEL - NIGHT

The nunzio opens the front door. Outside there is a cleared area and a waiting helicopter surrounded by lights. Tony turns to look at the faces of the nunziature's staff. He kisses Vicky's hand. There are tears in her eyes. Tony turns and walks outside with a Bible tucked under his arm. The nunzio opens the gate and he and Father Jorge accompany Tony outside. He is quickly seized by a HUGE AMERICAN SOLDIER who frisks and cuffs him. With ANOTHER HUGE SOLDIER they pick him up under his armpits and lead him into

the helicopter, his feet barely touching the ground and his arms outstretched (as if crucified). A LIGHT from an circling helicopter shines down on him from above.

Tony casts one last look back at the nuncio and Father Jorge. The helicopter blades begin to turn. Over all of this, TONY'S VOICE:

TONY (V.O.)

The truth is, Father, my life has been a mystery, even to me. I have thought about this many times.

The helicopter lifts off the ground. The nuncio grabs at his skullcap.

TONY (V.O., CONT'D)

Why me? Why does God love Tony Noriega? Why does he forgive him?

INT. TONY'S PRISON CELL IN MIAMI - NIGHT

It's a rather sumptuous spot, but still a jail cell. Tony sits in his prison garb, and says INTO CAMERA:

TONY

How did I get to be His favorite?

THE END