

THE HOLE IN THE FENCE

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YELLOW PAGES

We are in a small impoverished Mexican village. Everything is very still and silent. The streets are narrow, dusty, peppered with dog excrement and lined with half built-shacks. The wind blows over some plastic bags, causing them to get stuck in trees and making the Coca-Cola signs rock back and forth noisily.

If it wasn't for the strident bass coming from a nearby ramshackle car with tinted glass windows and the sight of a couple of farmers coming back from the fields we would think this town is abandoned.

But... Wait, was that the face of someone peering through curtains bleached and worn by the sun? Are those children's feet in the gap under a door?

Moving slowly through these streets we glimpse traces of activities that seem to have stopped all of a sudden. Is it the relentless mid-day sun? Or has some sort of evacuation occurred, a collective premonition?

Suddenly, through one of the intersections of the village we see a brand new obsidian-black passenger bus glide across the frame. Aside from the noise of the wheels crushing gravel and dodging holes in the road it scarcely makes a sound.

The bus has nothing printed on it, the windows are tinted black and from a distance it seems like a gigantic killer whale exploring an unknown ocean, aggressive and imposing.

We watch the bus from different angles as it attempts to cross the labyrinthine town, until at some point, trying to turn right it gets stuck in a small alley.

From a distance we observe as the bus backs up and shifts forward, trying to change it's angle, it's movements seem clumsy. We can hear the engine crack as the driver changes the gears before the vehicle comes to a halt.

As we advance slowly towards the trapped black monster we start to hear a hum of voices coming from inside of the bus, it's the sound of a hoard of adolescents shouting at the driver like a troop of monkeys defending territory.

Suddenly, a rough movement makes the back of the bus hit the wall of an adobe house, breaking the door and visibly damaging the frame. The bus lurches forward in a knee jerk reaction, taking a big chunk out of the corner of a building as it executes a tight turn to escape the trap.

It drives on a few meters before coming to a halt, the door swishes open and a sweaty, stressed-out DRIVER emerges and climbs down to check the damage done to the previously immaculate vehicle. He walks around to check the damage at the back of the bus and clutches his head in his hands in desperation.

From the open door of the bus we can hear kids chanting in unison:

BOYS (O.S.)

He's gunna cry! He's gunna cry!
He's gunna cry! He's gunna cry!

The driver sits heavily on a rock, he tries to hold back the tears but then he quivers, buries his head in his arms and begins to sob. The chant quietens.

We watch the driver's tears falling into the silence, then all of a sudden a young teenager, JORDI, (a thin white boy dressed in smart and expensive sport clothes and with a diamond stud earring like a rapper), comes down the steps and stands by the door of the bus.

JORDI

Listen, Sir. We're so sorry for what just happened... I mean, it was idiotic! God... we're monsters! Total monsters! It won't happen again, you can count on that.

The words of the kid seem authentic, his voice is loaded with emotion. The unfortunate driver wipes away his tears and rises.

DRIVER

It's OK Kid, I'm sorry too... It's just too much pressure.

2

INT. BUS. DAY.

2

Forty-four young KIDS packed in the front of the bus look through the windows and listen with excitement to the conversation outside. These are the first grade students of "Centro Escolar Los Pinos" an elite Catholic boy's secondary school.

JOAQUINCITO, a pale blonde boy who wears big paste eyeglasses looks carefully at the driver through the window. He seems uncomfortable, sucking nervously on the collar of his shirt.

JORDI (O.S.)
 (almost inaudible)
 Every once in a while crying is
 helpful for the soul, right?... Can
 we get going now?

Jordi hops inside the bus and winks at some of the kids, who cover their mouths to hide their laughter. The defeated driver enters, closes the hydraulic door and prepares himself for driving again.

At the back, 9 smartly dressed men sit in silence, they must have been watching this chaos unfold and yet their faces remain impassive. They are veteran FATHER PELAYO, Professors MONTEROS, ROSALES and BARQUETT, polish Head of Discipline HAYDEN SZTUHR, mexican-japanese Head of mission TANAKA and his clumsy assistant EDWIN, History teacher GORDILLO and EL RUCO, the gym teacher.

DRIVER
 (through the microphone)
 Apologies, gentlemen. It was but a
 scratch. Not even worth
 mentioning.... Well, I will call it
 in of course.

As the bus turns onto a bumpy rural road, Jordi jumps from his seat like some orchestra conductor, he raises his hands and all the kids begin chanting as loud as they can:

BOYS
 He's a faggot! He's gunna cry! He's
 a faggot! He's gunna cry!

The camera advances along the aisle until it reaches the windshield and the moving landscape fills the frame. The bus starts to speed up as the chants grow more aggressive.

3

EXT. ANIMAL FARM. DAY.

3

We see rabbits, hens, sheep, pigs, horses, donkeys and a bald eagle clustered in small swiss style chalets. The desperate snarls of the caged animals reverberate in the claustrophobic space.

A hand puts food in some recipients, the animals lump together to eat, with nervous glances toward the human figure.

A group of neurotic hen try to escape the hands of DANTE, a muscular maintenance man who wears a beige uniform.

4 **EXT. CAMP. DAY.**

4

As we pass round the camp we see it's high end - constructed with the most expensive materials and meticulously clean. The space is designed to look like a swiss farm, with robust wooden adornments everywhere.

We see the different spaces around the camp, where an army of workers prepares the last details. It consists of a large dormitory with stone walls, a communal dinning room next to a great terrace with a stunning view of the densely vegetated valley beyond. There's a campfire area with a large circle of benches, an open-air chapel with a great wooden cross, several zip lines, a commando style training track, a giant oak labyrinth, a mud pool, a soccer field and a small heliport.

Inside the spotless dormitory, we follow a mop as it cleans the already shinning floor. The feet of FIVE WOMEN cross the frame, we glimpse their figures as they hurriedly finish the cleaning tasks.

EL TECHNICIAN, a teenager with indigenous aspect and a bowl haircut sits in one of the beds. He wears the Los Pinos school uniform and is absorbed reading a book while the women toil away.

5 **EXT. CHRSTMAS TREE FIELD. DAY.**

5

ISRAEL, the maintenance chief (a leathery skinned old man also wearing the beige uniform) pushes a wheelbarrow trough a huge field of Christmas trees. His granddaughter SELENA, a small cheerful girl with her hair full of pine needles, sits in the wheelbarrow and holds a pair of huge gardener scissors.

ISRAEL

You are growing faster than the trees, girl. Soon you are going to be the one who's gonna have to lift your grandpa...

Israel stops next to a tree and lifts the girl by the hips, letting her reach the upper branches as she trims the tree to a perfectly conic shape. He then brings her softly back to the ground.

Israel lies down in the wheelbarrow and covers his face with his hat.

ISRAEL (CONT'D)

I'm tired... Your turn.

Selena smiles charmingly and tries to push the wheelbarrow without much success. The wheelbarrow advances a couple of meters and then capsizes. They both fall to the ground laughing. They twist around amid bursts of laughter for a while until Israel looks at his watch and quickly stands up.

ISRAEL (CONT'D)

We better go. They are about to arrive...

They both look a bit fearfully towards the camp entrance.

6

INT. OBSERVATION TOWER. DAY.

6

An observation tower rises above the dormitory. LOLO, the security guard is cleaning a SHOTGUN. When he finishes he tries the gun firing a couple of rounds to the air. The sound of the shots echo through the valley.

We see a group of women leave the dormitory and head into the Christmas tree fields in a single file, moving away from the camp at good speed.

Our perspective shifts toward the entrance of the camp, where the great black bus is parking.

7

EXT. PARKING LOT. DAY.

7

The door of the bus opens, and an uncontrollable stampede of teenagers runs towards the rooms, lugging suitcases and destroying plants, as they make their way towards the "best beds".

Bringing up the rear of the pack is Jordi (with the diamond earring), the boy drags a huge shell suitcase.

DIEGO PENA, a pale looking boy with his arm in a cast strapped at a right angle to his body, an expensive looking neck brace and a leg support, makes his way slowly using a single crutch. Edwin, Prof. Tanaka's young and clumsy assistant carries Diego's luggage as he puts on a yellow paramedic vest. He trips and drops the bags. The clothes scatter falling in a water puddle.

DIEGO PEÑA

Oh, no...

EDWIN

Ooops...

The adults head to their rooms at a more sedate pace, joking around, enjoying the country atmosphere.

At the back of the group we see father Pelayo, an old scrawny priest, walking slowly assisted by two gardeners.

8 **INT. DORMITORY. DAY.**

8

El Technician, still absorbed in his book, is frightened by the violent arrival of the group, now fighting over the best beds. He watches the scene bewildered.

Among the chaos, 4 kids look disapprovingly at him. They are *The Popular Kids*: Jordi (with the diamond earring), JOSUE, MARIO and SANTI.

JORDI

(to Santi)

I told you to save a bed for me!
How the fuck did this happen?

SANTI

(to Jordi)

Dude, Why'd you bring such a big bag? You can't expect to get the best bed if you're towing *that*!

Santi and Mario exchange glances and laugh a little. Jordi spins round fiercely and slaps Santi hard on the face,

JORDI

Then why the fuck didn't you help me carry it, meat-head?

Santi hangs his head and looks at the floor. It seems he is used to this treatment.

JORDI (CONT'D)

(looking over at El Technician)

That fucking Indio, how dare he invade our territory?

SANTI

(punching one hand into the other with renewed enthusiasm)

I'll beat the shit outta him!

JORDI

(patting Santi on the head)

There-there! Cool-it boy, we'll take it back tonight.

Santi starts to pant and bark and the boys all laugh as they hunch over to make their plans

As they chatter we see the figure of PROFESSOR TANAKA approaching. The Mexican-Japanese camp councilor, smiles radiantly and is followed closely by Edwin, who still holds Diego Peña's injured arm.

Tanaka's presence causes some commotion. He speaks in a high TV-anchor voice.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

How're we doing soldiers? I don't want anyone fighting for beds! Not that you'll be getting much sleep in here!

EDWIN

(with his face very near Diego's)

No sleep for you, Soldier! No, sir!

Edwin spits while he talks. Diego recoils inexpressively.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (O.S.)

(angrily, to Edwin)

Edwin... The bags?

EDWIN (O.S.)

Ok Kids, I've got to make a little bag inspection now... You know the rules! Open them up!

KID IN THE BACKGROUND (O.S.)

Hands off, creep!

As Edwin gathers an array of smartphones, tablets and other gadgets in a box, Tanaka paces around the room. A group of 3 preppy kids, *The Teacher's Pets*, intercept him. They are: FITO SALINAS (a ginger haired freckled kid), EL PINGUINO (a pear-shaped child with a very long pointed nose) and "EL BOBO" (a chubby boy with a surprisingly deep voice).

TEACHERS PETS

Tanaka, Tanaka! Wait! Tanaka!

PROFESSOR TANAKA

(friendly)

What's up champs?

FITO

Oh, nothing, we just wanted to tell you we're almost ready to send our application video to the Vienna Choir School and we want to sing here to gage the audience's reaction... What do you think?

PROFESSOR TANAKA

Sounds like a suuuuper idea! Maybe it will even win you some points for Flag Day... We'll ask "The boss" tonight OK?

Outside, a bell rings. The kids change out of their school uniforms and hurry outside. Edwin is checking El Technician's bag. He finds a bunch of books and several sets of school uniforms.

EDWIN

Uh-oh... Where are your regular clothes? Your mommy isn't on the chat? And why do you need all this books?!

El Technician doesn't pay Edwin much attention and instead studies the popular kids with disgust, they are practicing their *Fortnite* dance moves outside.

Joaquincito (the boy with the paste eyeglasses) lies in one of the beds nearby, he wears a black Pink Floyd t-shirt.

JOAQUINCITO

Tough luck, man. They seemed quite pissed about the bed.

TECHNICIAN

I'm used to it.

El Technician lifts his shirt to show a scar in his abdomen.

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

I left my last school because of kids like them.

JOAQUINCITO

This school is just as fucked up, isn't it?

Silence.

JOAQUINCITO (CONT'D)

What's your name?

TECHNICIAN

Eduardo.

JOAQUINCITO

Ah, Eduardo de Dios Gómez. So you're the scholarship boy! Pleased to meet you, I'm Joaquín. I'm new too.

Joaquín offers his hand but El Technician rejects it with a small gesture and a tight smile.

TECHNICIAN

No offense Joaquín.

JOAQUINCITO

But...

TECHNICIAN

Really, don't bother even trying it. I'm low-status, bottom of the pile, scum of the earth... I'm poor... You get me?

JOAQUINCITO

But...

TECHNICIAN

Look, the teachers won't like it if you hang with me. I would only pull you to the bottom. Believe me. I'm an exert.

Suddenly Edwin pops up behind them, giving them a fright.

EDWIN

Umm. Sorry, Joaquin... Did I check your bag already?

JOAQUINCITO

Sure, dude. All checked up.

Joaquincito winks at El Technician.

9

INT. DINNING ROOM TERRACE. DUSK.

9

The warm light of dusk illuminates the space. The teenagers and their teachers sit on an hexagonal amphitheater with a bonfire in the middle. At the side is a small stage surrounded by flags. The group is praying.

For the first time we see the boys clumped with their friends: *The Popular Kids* (Jordi, Josue, Santi and Mario), *The Teacher's Pets* (Fito, El Pinguino and El Bobo), *The Emo Kids* (ALFREDITO, CHI-CHI, EL FLACO, RAVIT and MONCARDO), and two *Religious Boys* with large wooden crucifixes hanging from their necks (JESHUA, and Diego Peña the injured boy).

Sprinkled amongst them are the new kids, (including Joaquinquito and El Technician) acting quiet and self-conscious.

The leader of the prayer is PROFESSOR BARQUETT, the Latin teacher, a fat, pink man in his sixties, dressed in an expensive shirt and holding a golden rosary.

PROF. BARQUETT

Mirror of Justice,
Throne of wisdom,
Cause of our Joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel worthy of honors,
Vessel of undying devotion,
Mystical Rose,
Tower of David,
Ivory Tower,
House of Gold,
Ark of the Alliance,
Gates of Heaven,
Morning Star,

The *Emo Kids* recite the prayer with zero enthusiasm, longing for the ritual to be over as soon as possible.

From the other side of the circle, the *Popular Kids* give El Technician hard stares as they keep "praying". The scholarship boy nervously fiddles with his bowl haircut, avoiding visual contact at all costs. He is the only one still wearing the school uniform.

EVERYONE

Now and forever, Amen.

Professor Monteros sounds a clay whistle shaped like a bird.

PROF. MONTEROS

(clapping his hands)

Shhh! Attention! Attention!

PROFESSOR MONTEROS, the headmaster of Centro Escolar Los Pinos, stands in front of the children. Monteros seems presidential, kingly in spite of his simple camp clothes. The other members of staff are lined up in order of importance.

Professor Tanaka smiles and waves at familiar faces amongst the students. They, in turn glow with happiness at being noticed by him.

The boys are seated facing the staff. Their eyes and smiles betray their emotional state: excitement and anticipation hum in the air. The silence is punctuated by the fidgeting of the expectant audience. As Monteros clears his throat and begins to speak they hang on his every word.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Looking out at you I feel the powerful enthusiasm, that comes with the energy of youth. Today is an important day, it marks the beginning of our camp! Now you are excited, nervous! Boys, don't let this energy float away into the forest, channel it! Use it! Let this enthusiasm open the door to a life-long work of love, a life long work of conscious duty that puts away childish thoughts forever. You are the chosen few, your country needs you to force order upon this chaos with strong hearts and hands! You are blossoming, ripening, maturing, this camp marks a new chapter: the transition from boy to man has truly begun.

We watch the *Popular Kids*: Santi grabs his balls and nods, Mario, next to him, makes quick grunts, like a piglet fornicating.

PROF. MONTEROS

Soon you will leave behind your childish attitudes forever.

Monteros starts to move amongst the students, he weaves a spell of attention over the group by seeming to speak directly to one boy while reaching to pat others on their head or shoulder, so that all the kids feel he is talking to them personally. His voice is hypnotic, we observe the boys entranced faces.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

On the journey to our camp, as I watched the land open out into a valley, I saw an eagle soaring high on the wind and I thought of you.

(MORE)

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (CONT'D)

Let your souls be like birds, let
the dust and grime of the city that
clings to your feathers fall away,
spread your wings, persevere, let
nothing shake you, do not waiver,
make up your mind once and for all,
for if you persevere you will
climb, soar and be free.

And so I have a word for you today,
and I want you to hold it in your
hearts throughout this camp and on
into the coming school year and
then into your adult life, and that
word is perseverance. Persevere
even as you suffer injustice;
remember it was the destiny of
Christ to be reviled and
misunderstood, remember what our
Lord said: "Blessed are you when
they persecute you. Rejoice and be
glad for your reward is great in
heaven".

Boys and staff are visibly moved by the speech, they punch
the air and cheer; they call out, "PERSEVERANCE," exchanging
excited glances. Monteros raises his hands and the room
quietens down.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (head of discipline), a cold man with Slavic
features and a strong Polish accent, steps forward. His tone
is like that of a prison warden speaking to a group of
inmates. The boys listen to him with nervous faces.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Boys, you may have observed from
the windows of the coach that the
living conditions of the local
populace are desperate. The
district surrounding us is not
without danger and there have been
some incidents. For your own safety
stay within the confines of the
camp.

We see Jordi, now nervous and lacking self esteem. Around
him, kids joke around and chatter, not taking Sztuhr's words
very seriously.

KID IN THE BACKGROUND (O.S.)

What incidents?

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Nothing worth mentioning. Just keep your eyes open, stay away from the natives and remember we are under constant surveillance.

Jordi turns his gaze towards the dusty town, faintly lit in the distance, and then towards the gardeners who sit on grain sacks nearby.

PROF. SZTUHR

I suppose I don't even have to mention that any kind of imprudence will be punished. We don't want more broken bones...

All eyes turn to the unfortunate Diego Peña , who blushes and awkwardly twists his head, encased in its neck brace, to the rest of the kids, trying to smile.

PROF. SZTUHR (CONT'D)

For the next four days your nannies will not be combing your hair or wiping your dirty faces, in their absence please maintain your personal hygiene, be disciplined. I'll be making random checks, make your bed, brush your teeth, clean up after yourselves, say your Rosary, make your confession with Father Pelayo. And remember: posture, punctuality, penance!

After barking out these final words Sztuhr stares hard at the boys for some time, scanning with his reptilian eyes for any trace of disobedience before stepping back into the line.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

(smiling)

And finally, I think Tanaka has something to say?

Tanaka steps forward cheerily, he presses a button on a portable speaker and loud pop-music starts to play. It's Tanaka's "Theme Tune" a song with actions in English called "God is Watching Over You". Tanaka and all the kids make an enthusiastic choreography of dance moves to the music. The *new kids*, who don't know the routine, sway about anxiously.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

Hey everyone! Now, I'm sure you haven't forgotten that the last day of camp is the big rally, the world famous Los Pinos Flag Day!

The boys cheer.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
And who's gunna win Flag Day?

The boys shout and punch the air.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
I can't hear you!

They shout even louder. We see *The Popular Kids*, they are whooping and yelling with scarlet faces - obviously this is a big deal to them.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
(laughing at the
enthusiasm)
Ok! Shhhhh-Shhhh! Now, who likes
Pizza?

BOYS
We do!!!!

PROFESSOR TANAKA
Who likes French Fries? Who likes
jelly? Chocolate cake?

BOYS
WE DO! WE DO! WE DO! WE DO!

Tanaka Moon Walks across the space as the boys cheer and shout:

BOYS (CONT'D)
Tan-a-ka! Tan-a-ka! Tan-a-ka! Tan-a-
ka!

10

INT. DINING HALL. NIGHT.

10

In the dinning room, a spread of every forbidden fruit imaginable weighs down the tables. Staff and boys intermingle. The kids eat their food in unconventional fashions, mixing pizza with strawberry jello, or filling quesadillas with chicken nuggets. The scene reminds us of a medieval feast, plates are piled in mountains, food rolls off the tables onto the floor.

We observe various group dynamics amongst the kids. The *Teacher's Pets* gravitate to Monteros, Tanaka, Barquett and the other adults.

Fito Salinas, the ginger freckled boy, sits in the prime position between his teachers.

FITO

I saw ton of eagles from the coach too, Professor Monteros, and it's funny because I was thinking about the idea of perseverance as well!

Sitting on the other side of Tanaka is "El Bobo", the boy chips in, in his surprisingly deep voice:

EL BOBO

Eagles are my best animal!

Professor Barquett looks irritated:

PROFESSOR BARQUETT

Eagles are my FAVORITE birds...

Seated next to Barquett is "El Pinguino" (the kid with a very pronounced nose and a pear shaped body).

EL PINGUINO

Professor Monteros, as you might already know, we're preparing our application to join the Singing Choir Boys of Vienna, we believe...

In another table the timid ones hang back. Joaquincito, who is new and shy, sits next to Diego (the boy with the broken bones), and Jeshua, (a kid with an odd seriousness about him), both with a wooden cross hanging from their necks. Diego holds a small sugar covered doughnut.

DIEGO PEÑA

(to Joaquincito)

Wow! Your parents are the owners? So you must have a lifetime stash of donuts and snacks?!

JOAQUINCITO

(uncomfortably)

Ehmmm kind of, we don't eat them at home. We sell them, but my mum only buys gluten free bread.

(pointing to Diego's cast)

So what happened?

DIEGO

(struggling to eat a slice of pizza)

Oh nothing. I fell down some stairs at home. It was an accident...

JOAQUINCITO

Why'd your parents send you to camp
with all those broken bones?

DIEGO

(whispering)

They think I did it on purpose...

Diego turns to another table where Edwin smiles at him while he eats a hot dog in a single bite.

DIEGO (CONT'D)

Besides, they didn't want me to
stay home alone or missing out on
the preparations for the seminary.
Jeshua and I are joining at the end
of the year.

Diego gestures towards Jeshua who nods seriously.

JOAQUINCITO

What preparations? What's a
seminary?

Diego lowers his gaze ashamed. Meanwhile, at another table
The Emo Kids surround El Technican.

CHI-CHI

51,231 x 3

TECHNICIAN

Ahhh... 153,693

CHI-CHI

Moncardo, check that!

MONCARDO

(scribbling on a napkin)

One second... Whoa! He nailed it!

ALFREDITO

Ok, what about... 31,616 x 12?

From another table, Jordi watches the Technician being the center of attention. Around him, the other Popular kids play with their food.

Edwin wears an idiotic grin as he moves amongst the tables offering the boys jelly from a trolley. As he leans in towards the *Popular kids*, Josue presses hard on a bottle of ketchup. A splurge of sauce splats across Edwin's face. The amiable assistant doesn't stop smiling for a moment, he offers Jordi dessert as though nothing has happened.

EDWIN
Jelly? Anyone?

JORDI
(laughing)
Hey Edwin, there's something on
your face!

SANTI
(sniggering)
Have you got a nosebleed?

EDWIN
(edging away while still
smiling)
Good shot! Uhh, what was your name
again?

JOSUE
You can call me My Lord!

Jordi takes a slice of cake and hurls it at the Emo Kid's table, it hits El Technician's face and the boy bows his head in shame. The other boys snigger nervously.

EDWIN
Ha! Good shot indeed!

Meanwhile Father Pelayo maintains a slow steady rhythm as he chews mechanically through slice after slice of pizza. The boys around him look bored and fidgety.

Professor Sztuhr has left his seat, his mind is on other things; he's occupied with surveilling the room and has not eaten a morsel. He frowns disapprovingly at Professor Tanaka as he pulls out a big sack and a lighter and smiles excitedly.

The feast is reaching it's climax and Tanaka has a surprise, he lights a firework and throws it amongst the tables, creating a loud explosion that scares the children. Some cower under tables. Tanaka's theme tune plays.

TANAKA
Ok guys, the Grand Finale!

He throws another rocket out of the dinning room, the kids run out to the garden. Tanaka hands fireworks out to the boys who line up eagerly. Everyone crowds around him with fizzing sparklers and explosives, high on Coca-Cola and sweets.

The two *Religious boys* remain seated, Diego looks longingly at the scene, Jeshua observes the decadence with a critical eye.

The gigantic half-eaten strawberry jelly stands on the trolley nearby. With a look of resolve in his eye Jeshua starts towards it murmuring something about "Greed" and "Mortal pleasures", he flips the trolley sending the jelly splattering across the floor.

11 **EXT. CHRISTMAS TREE FIELD. NIGHT.**

11

An euphoric and dangerous battle between students and teachers starts in the Christmas tree field. Everyone is running, laughing and lighting up more fireworks. One of the oak trees catches fire.

An excited, out of control Jordi runs between the trees followed by his gang. They see Joaquincito and El Technician hiding behind a tree.

JORDI

Look who we have here! Let's split up!

They split up and run furiously like a military commando unit. Jordi drops to the ground unnecessarily and rolls to hide behind a bush.

The boy stands up and looks around. Something in the ambience has changed. We are now deeper into the woods and we no longer hear the firecrackers. Everything feels strange.

We see a tall figure moving quickly in the background. It seems to be a half human half tree hybrid. Jordi looks at it sideways and screams. We see it's Professor Tanaka with tree branches tied to his head.

PROF. TANAKA

Firework war! Attack!

Jordi looks stunned. Nearby, Josué catches up to El Technician and shoves a firecracker inside his shirt. The boy jerks desperately until the firecracker falls to the ground and explodes.

JOSUE

Be careful, bed thief!

The popular kids hoot with laughter as they scamper through the trees. El Technician watches nervously as everyone runs away from him, suspecting that more attacks are still to come.

As the firecracker explosions quiet down, we hear another round of explosions coming from the nearby village.

The kids shout and cheer, but when the explosions repeat they exchange nervous glances.

FITO
Professor, those were fireworks
too, right?

The firecracker war completely stops as the kids look at each other fearfully. Now we hear a sound from loudspeakers in the village. It sounds like a distorted voice praying in a strange language.

Monteros, visibly tense, rings a bell and proclaims with imposing voice.

PROF. MONTEROS
All right, kids. Bed time! Now!

Everyone runs to the dormitory. In the gloom, the Teacher's Pets hold hands and walk very near Tanaka.

EL BOBO
(pressing close)
Why can't you sleep in our room
Tanaka?

Tanaka smiles ruefully.

PROFESSOR TANAKA
Well... You know what they say,
don't stay away from good things
that look like bad things!

12

INT. DORM. NIGHT.

12

The lights are off and the boys lie awake in their rooms, waiting for the teacher's footsteps to die away. Joaquincito observes El technician lit by the moon from his bed. He looks terribly sad.

We hear a kid coughing, someone shushes him, there is a giggle, someone shhhhes, then more giggles and several louder shhhhes, then a fart, more shhhhushing coming from all around the dormitory and all at once boys are clambering out of bed and shhhhushing in each others faces, then whispering starts, flashlights are switched on and before long a hubbub of activity is in full swing. We alight on several scenes:

CHI-CHI

So, you need to wait until midnight
and then light 100 candles in front
of a mirror and then you face the
mirror and recite the Hail Mary
backwards 13 times, then her
bleeding eyes will appear in the
mirror...

ALFREDITO

(Holding an electric bass
guitar)
But why are they bleeding? You know
the Hail Mary backwards?

CHI-CHI

Of course! Who doesn't?

The sound of Reggae music starts up nearby, Chi-Chi and Alfredito (the *Emo Kids*) rise to see what's going on. They calmly approach a ring of boys, Alfredito still wears his guitar, his movements are lazy, as though he is spaced out, his hair falls across his face covering most of his features. Fito, El Bobo, El Pinguino and Joaquinquito are listening to music from a bluetooth speaker, they look up and shift round to make room in the circle. Chi-Chi begins beat boxing to the reggae. Joaquinquito produces what looks like a fat blunt and starts to light it.

ALFREDITO

(momentarily impressed)
Woah! What's that you've got there?

JOAQUINCITO

(proudly)
Oh, it's a Cuban, with hints of
cardamom and pepper and earthy
undertones...

Alfredito snorts derisively. Joaquinquito takes a puff and immediately coughs.

CHI-CHI

You're not supposed to inhale
cigars, you dork!

Joaquinquito passes the cigar into Chi-Chi's outstretched hand. The boy takes a puff and blows out a string of smoke rings, everyone is impressed.

FITO

Let me try!

Chi-Chi passes the cigar and resumes beat boxing. Fito takes a puff then passes it to El Bobo who in turn puffs and passes it to El Pinguino who has been covering his mouth with his pajama sleeve.

FITO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
This would go well with a good
stiff drink, right?

EL PINGUINO
(waving away the smoke)
Ugh! Get that poison away from me!

Chi-Chi and Alfredito laugh loud and hard, Joaquinquito joins in the laughter.

CHI-CHI
Who let the grandpa into the camp?

Chi-Chi starts towards El Pinguino, grabs his head and licks the boy's ear.

EL PINGUINO
Uhhh! Yuk! Ear rape! Get off me!
I'm taking a shower! Disgusting!

Elsewhere in the dorm, the popular kids crawl under the bunk beds brandishing lamps. They reach El Techincian's bed. He is pretending to sleep.

JORDI
Who's been sleeping in MY bed?!

The popular gang grab the boy and shove him down and drag him trough the floor. Everyone in the room pays attention.

JOSUE
OK brownie, it's time for you to
get some work experience, because
if you're lucky your future career
will be cleaning our toilets.

They grab the boy by his thick long black hair and drag him to a urinal.

JORDI
So, show us how you'll clean up our
shit!

BOYS
DO IT! DO IT!

El Technician, who kneels on the floor, starts to polish the toilet with the cuff of his pajamas. The trio of bullies laugh.

JORDI

No, retard. The only way to get this bowl clean is to lick it!

They force El Technician's head down to the rim which already has traces of piss left by a dozen or so un-housetrained brats. The boy doesn't cry, he closes his eyes and begins to lick.

BOY AT THE DOOR

Ughhhh! Disgusting!

JOSUE

Not bad! And now it's time to get rid of all that pesky limescale.

(pointing courteously to Santi)

Partner, will you do the honors?

Santi steps forward and manhandles El Technician with the help of Josue and Mario until he is plunging headfirst into the bowl like a toilet brush. The exercise takes a lot of energy out of the boys. They pull him out and onto the floor. Jordi stands over him. He holds a penknife in his hand.

JORDI

Never forget where you belong!

He flicks open the pen knife.

JORDI (CONT'D)

I want a souvenir, we need to remember this beautiful occasion...

13

INT. DORMITORY. NIGHT.

13

A while has passed and the children sleep lit by the moon. The dorm looks like a war zone. Jordi sleeps in the conquered bed. El technician sleeps in one of the bathroom cubicles, covering his head with his hands.

The dorm door is open, we see Joaquincito smoking by the entrance. As he puts out the cigarette he looks out and sees a figure in the distance. He points his lamp toward it. He sees only trees. He puts the light out and suddenly the figure starts to move toward the dorm. Joaquincito gasps and runs back into the dormitory.

14 **EXT. CAMP PERIMETER. NIGHT.**

14

It's pitch black now, and we're far away from the bedrooms and in front of the Chain-link perimeter fence that surrounds the camp. We pass barb wire and several powerful reflectors which light high voltage signs. The height and protection measures seem excessive.

A group of silhouettes brandishing lamps move away from the fence in silence. We do not recognize them. The camera turns and we see in front of us a big hole has been cut in the fence.

15 **INT. DINING HALL. DAY.**

15

Next morning in the dining hall, there are no traces of yesterday's lavish dinner, the room is spotless, the tables have been laid with bowls of carefully sliced papaya, yoghurt, granola, eggs and hand-made corn tortillas. Professor Rosales moves between the tables stirring a few drops of some brown liquid from a small glass bottle into the orange juice jugs.

The students eat breakfast, excited about the new day; in spite of this we catch some of them yawning, others bear battle wounds from the previous night, a bandaged hand, the traces of permanent marker on a face, a few appear not to have slept at all.

Professor Sztuhr, all in khaki and looking like some desert-storm trooper watches the children from a corner, he doesn't eat, just stares silently. Israel stands at his side.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Hey you, new kid, take off your cap when you're eating.

El Technician takes off his cap to reveal that he has been given a new haircut during the night, a large chunk is missing from his previously perfect fringe.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (V.O.)

And sort out your sissy hair-do, you think this is Paris Fashion Week or something?

Jordi throws a half eaten piece of papaya at El Technician. Santi, Mario and the rest of the *Popular kids* laugh loudly, displaying their status in the pecking order.

Joaquincito, sitting next to El Technician and Diego Peña, gaze at the *popular kids* in silence.

JOAQUINCITO

I like your haircut, it's kinda...
punk rock... very rebel...

Silence.

Joaquin looks at him disappointed. The noise starts to raise and Sztuhr claps in order to make everyone quiet.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Children, I have a few
announcements to make.
It seems that some of you consider
this camp to be a good moment to
show off and "experiment" with
things you can't do at home... For
example lighting up a cigar in the
dormitories, or for example
encouraging other boys to smoke
it...

The kids murmur, some of them turn to look at Joaquin who is turning a deep shade of red.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (CONT'D)

I'm not going to go naming any
names. You know who you are, I'm
giving you a warning: one more
stunt and you'll be put in a taxi
and sent back to Mexico City.

The *Teacher's Pets* gulp their orange juice proudly, Joaquin gives them a hard stare.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (CONT'D)

I repeat. This camp is not the
place for "experiments", we came
here to strengthen our relationship
with each other, ourselves, and,
most importantly, with God our
heavenly Father.
Any more trouble and there'll be no
Flag Day! Is that message clear?

The boys gasp and murmur worriedly amongst themselves.

BOYS

Yes!

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Sorry?

BOYS

Yes, Professor Sztuhr!

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Good! Right! There's one final matter to raise, but for that I'll need to bring in an expert, someone who knows this camp better than the back of his own hand...

He moves aside and indicates Israel to come forward. The head of gardeners shuffles to the front, self consciously looking at the backs of his hands.

ISRAEL

Uhhh... Bon-apetit, kids!

The kids chatter amongst themselves. Nobody listens to Israel.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Silence! It is imperative that you pay attention to what Israel has to say.

The kids quiet down.

ISRAEL

Ok, so there's this village nearby and uh... maybe we think there are bad hombres there, not all are bad, some are good, but many are bad. We know cause we've lived there since it was just a small ranch, and well, that's why this camp is next to that place, and...

Israel is clearly not a good narrator and the kids lose their patience. They start to murmur amongst themselves.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Silence! This is not a joke. We believe that an intruder might have entered the grounds during the night. Carry on, Israel

There are some whispers. Jordi is very attentive to Israel's words.

ISRAEL

They made a hole in our fence. We discovered it last night. We looked all around the place but we found nothing...

Jordi seems nervous. He sips his juice in silence.

ISRAEL (V.O) (CONT'D)
 ...and we still think they do
 things, or want to do things...
 And we don't want the... erm... The
 tragedy to happen again, do we?

FITO
 What tragedy?

PROFESSOR SZTUHR
 OK, look, we don't need to go into
 details. It's under control, and
 for your peace of mind we have an
 armed guard patrolling the camp day
 and night. Everything will be fine!

Sztuhr displays one of his strange smiles, the kids look
 confused.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (CONT'D)
 ... As long as you stick to the
 rules and let us know immediately
 if you notice anything unusual.

KID IN THE BACKGROUND
 It's probably Jordi's bodyguards
 checking he's safely tucked in bed!

All the kids laugh, except Jordi, who remains serious.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
 OK, OK, quiet down and finish your
 breakfast, I want you all lined up
 outside in 5 minutes!

16 **EXT. NEAR THE DORMITORY. DAY.**

16

Near the dorm a large group of children look to the section
 of the fence where the hole is. It's being repaired by the
 twin gardeners ALFREDO JUAN and ALFONSO JUAN.

The Kids chatter while they wash their teeth.

CHI-CHI
 My brother told me they trade in
 body organs round here.

EL FLACO
 Holy shit.

CHI-CHI

Yeah, and they prefer kids from rich families because they eat better food or something... I heard some crazy shit went on in last year's camp.

Jordi and the *Popular Kids* stand in line listening to the conversation. Sztuhr and El Ruco walk to block the view of the hole from the children.

SZTUHR

Nothing to see here, kids. Go on!

17

EXT. CAMP GARDENS. DAY.

17

Jordi moves away from the group and walks to Israel who is pulling the thick hose to the center of the football field. In the background we can see kids going to their rooms.

JORDI

Hey, you! Hey! I said HEY!

Israel can't hear him, Jordi walks closer.

JORDI (CONT'D)

HEY, ARE YOU DEAF?!

Israel jumps, surprised. He cups his hand to his ear and bends towards Jordi.

ISRAEL

What?

JORDI

(taking a step back)

Uh... I was calling you from back there... The other kids are talking about kidnapping and stuff... Is that what this is all about?

ISRAEL

What's your name?

JORDI

I'm Jordi de la Torre, and my dad's a very important man, he wouldn't like it if something happened to me, and... I mean, if something were to happen to me I guess you'd be responsible, right?

ISRAEL

Are you afraid, Jordi?

JORDI

Of course not, I'm just telling you that, well, believe me, you don't want to piss off the head of the chamber of commerce...

Israel looks around. When he sees no one watching he rudely takes Jordi's arm and pulls him down.

ISRAEL

Well... You'll be glad to hear there was no kidnapping...

JORDI

Ok, great!

Just then Professor Gordillo who has crept up on them, chips into the conversation:

PROFESSOR GORDILLO

(interrupting)

No, Jordi, it's much worse than that...

Jordi backs away as Gordillo, with a mischievous glint in his eye moves closer.

PROFESSOR GORDILLO (CONT'D)

It's about blood and pagan farmers that would do anything to get their hands on your money. They hate you and your rich families because you stole their land. It's about organ trafficking, students dissolved in acid in this lawless country. They love the organs of blondies like you!

(coming closer)

Oh, and a little advice: If I were you I wouldn't trumpet my daddy's name to everyone... Not in this place...

Jordi pushes him back.

JORDI

Your breath stinks! Get off me! You've got no right to talk to me like this! You're in big trouble, believe me!

PROFESSOR GORDILLO
Am I in big trouble.... Or are you?

18 **EXT. FIELD. DAY.**

18

In the middle of field, a rectangular hole is being dug. They are the foundations of a future chapel, Professors Monteros, Sztuhr and Barquett lead the activities.

The gardeners Dante, Alfredo-Juan and Alfonso-Juan dig furiously in the hole, aided by some of the boys. They are sweaty and show signs of exhaustion. Santi and Josue remove mud from the edges of the hole and throw it to the other kids.

Jordi lowers his sunglasses looking at the gardeners. Dante removes his shirt and continues to dig. Jordi's eyes seem to light up as he sees the naked sweaty back of the gardener gleaming in the sun. He kicks a mound of dirt, it falls squarely on Dante's back.

JORDI

I'm bored of being a slave! How about a break?

Professor Monteros breaks off angrily from shoveling to speak.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Jordi... Let's see, dear. Why are we doing this?

Fito shoots his hand up.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (CONT'D)

Yes Fito?

FITO

Because this is the Survivalist Club Prof. Monteros!

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Right, but I need a little more detail than that... Anyone else?

JORDI

In case the kidnapers try to come back in, Sir!

EL PINGUINO

What kidnapers?

JORDI
(looking at the gardeners)
The farmers, you idiot!

The group breaks into conversation. The gardeners stop digging. Sztuhr signals to them that they should continue.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
OK, everyone stop for a moment.
There is no reason to be afraid as long as we stay together. Let's start again - what is indispensable to ensure our survival?

JOSUE
Smartphones!

FITO
Loyal servants!

EL BOBO
Peace and love, professor!

The kids laugh.

SANTI
My mum says plastic surgery is indispensable for her survival!

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
OK! QUIET! Children! Let's start AGAIN... Professor Sztuhr, what are the essentials for survival?

PROFESSOR SZTUHR
Oxygen, water, food, shelter and self-defense.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
Right, and so is there anything else we might need in our lives? Something that might protect us from evil?

JOSUE
Mmmm... Security cameras?

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
Something intangible that protects our order from damage?

EL BOBO
Pepper spray?

JORDI

Jesus...

Jordi was actually swearing to himself but Professor Monteros takes it literally, he looks so relieved that someone has finally made one of the connections he was hoping for.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Jordi! Yes! Bravo! Faith! God!
Jesus! There is no better
protection for us than our Lord's
word. Remember, kids. WE are the
owners of the world. It's our
responsibility to be wise about it.

Monteros kneels, the kids look at him. The situation turns dramatic. He takes two branches and shows them to the children.

PROF. MONTEROS

I know it might seem confusing, but
soon you will understand the
incredible power of protection
contained in this two sticks.

Monteros makes a cross with the sticks. Jordi and the others look on in amazement. As the camera backs away we see the kids kneel and make their own crosses.

19

EXT. HIGH FIELDS. DAY.

19

Sitting in the shade of an open structure next to the Christmas tree field, the decrepit Father Pelayo is covered in blankets struggles to read from a small black book aided by a magnifying glass. Next to him, the religious boys Diego and Jeshua sit on chairs. Edwin is behind the priest, massaging his shoulders. Diego notices Edwin's gaze fixed on the wrinkled neck of the minister.

FATHER PELAYO

(softly)

I will tell you which are man's
greatest treasures, so you will not
waste them: Hunger, thirst, heat,
cold, pain, dishonor, poverty,
solitude, treason, slander,
prision...

DIEGO

(rocking his head between
his hands)

Uhhh...

JESHUA

What?

DIEGO

Sometimes I wish we weren't stuck here reading "the book"... I mean, you would have thought they'd give us a bit of a break.

JESHUA

You must be kidding? This is perfect, I mean it's practically one-on-one tuition. In 3 days we'll cover more ground than we would in 12 full weekends at the Order's residence!

Father Pelayo continues to read.

FATHER PELAYO

22- Be strong, be a man, be ruthless, and later... be a saint.

JESHUA (O.S.)

Now look... We missed the beginning. Please, Diego, these words have the power to heal you.

EDWIN

Exactly!

Diego turns his head to look sadly toward the valley, the day is beautiful, a group of kids walk happily with Profs. Rosales and Gordillo who carry binoculars and seem to be bird-watching.

JESHUA (O.S.)

182- Let's drink up to the last drops of pain in this miserable life - What's the problem in suffering ten, twenty, fifty years if heaven lasts forever? Forever!

Diego looks on frustrated.

20

EXT. DEEP IN THE WOODS. DAY.

20

The "Bird Hunting Team" conformed by The Emo Kids, El Technician, Joaquincito and others is led toward the deep of the woods by Professors Gordillo and Rosales. They wield bows and arrows and are sticking together, seeming a little nervous.

PROFESSOR GORDILLO

Actually, if we search for tracks on the forest floor we may be lucky and find a clue about who or what made the hole... The earth is like a historical document, it has many authors and tells many stories...

Everyone directs their attention to the ground. We watch the earth too, suddenly it seems to be seething with slimy insect life: bugs and worms and ambiguous shapes that might be bones or bits of ceramics. Footprints of heavy duty boots can be seen as well.

PROFESSOR GORDILLO (CONT'D)

The ancient ones who lived here before your ancestors brutally wiped them out, were some of the most savage assassins of the Mexica empire. This land is made up of layer upon layer of indigenous weapons, indigenous kitchen tools, indigenous shit, blood and bones! Who knows? They may still be around...

Joaquincito stays behind, trumping mushrooms and hitting trees with his arrow. Professor Rosales looks to the tree canopy and puts a finger to his mouth requesting silence.

PROFESSOR GORDILLO (CONT'D)

Shhh! Children, look!

PROFESSOR ROSALES

Oh, wow... Look at that!

Everyone looks to where the teacher point.

PROFESSOR GORDILLO

(whispering)

Turdus Albocinctus! I thought they were extinct. Let's follow it.

The kids try to find the bird.

PROFESSOR ROSALES

Look there, it's black with a white neck.

Everybody directs their gaze toward a big oak trying to see the animal.

PROFESSOR ROSALES (CONT'D)

Turdus Albocinctus. Some consider it one of the most intelligent and vindictive creatures in the world. The Turdus steals, it murders, it even rapes! They live in forests like this and for thousands of years they have formed an hermetic society composed strictly of males. Despite this, males may mate with each other in secret, even with younger members of the group. A gift of food is usually presented as a kind of courtship. Alternatively force may be used! It's still a mystery to science how the species has survived without female participation.

KID

Where is it? I don't see it!

Joaquincito, bored gazes toward the deep wood and sees a pair of FIGURES walking in the distance. They are almost imperceptible.

PROFESSOR ROSALES

There, the bush with the branches like a great green casket. Identify the top... Now go to 7 o'clock...

We see the faces of boys frowning and trying their hardest to see the bird.

MONCARDO (O.S.)

I think I see it...

EL FLACO

Yeah, I do too, yeah I see it!

JOAQUINCITO

Where?

Joaquincito strains his eyes, everyone says they can see it except him, he looks ready to cry.

PROFESSOR GORDILLO

(irritated)

Here, take my binoculars Joaquin. It's right there amid the foliage... Got it?

JOAQUINCITO

Um, yes, maybe...

Joaquincito obviously has not seen it.

PROFESSOR ROSALES

Great, now Lock onto it, bring the barrels to the eyes, and there you go: Turdus Albocinctus!

JOAQUINCITO

(hesitant, obviously pretending)

Oooh yes, lovely!

We catch Professor Rosales smirking and winking quickly at Professor Gordillo.

PROFESSOR ROSALES

No wait, it's over there now, come on everyone!

Rosales leads the group onwards, all the time they look up at the canopy until they suddenly come up against the perimeter fence.

The great metallic serpent highlights the lush greenery around it. The kids run toward the fence and scatter about.

EL FLACO

Hey, look at that!

PROFESSOR ROSALES

Kids, we must stay together!

MONCARDO

Shit, guys! Come here, you have to see this!

PROFESSOR ROSALES

Children! Don't separate!

Chi-Chi and Alfredito separate from the group and reach the fence. The rest follow and they discover a second hole in the fence. The newly cut wires are stained with a dark grease that looks almost like blood.

CHI-CHI

What the fuck...?

JOAQUINCITO

Who made this hole?

PROFESSOR GORDILLO

All right, kids. We are leaving!

Alfredito kneels and touches the ground.

ALFREDITO

Shit...

He stares at his blood stained fingers. The others look at him in silence, turn to the hole and a sensation of panic starts gripping the group. A couple of the kids start crying.

The sound of a bell coming from the distant camp is heard. Gordillo's and Rosales' wristwatches alarms beep in unison.

PROFESSOR ROSALES

The Angelus!

21

EXT. CAMP GARDENS. DAY.

21

Father Pelayo pulls on a rope to ring the bell with great effort, after each pull he seems ready to collapse. He sounds the bell eleven times and stops breathlessly.

The survival and religious studies groups have gathered in a circle.

The bird hunting group arrives looking somewhat traumatized. Some of the students are crying and they approach Tanaka who receives them with a hug.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

My God! What happened?!

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Quiet, everyone! It's prayer time!

PROFESSOR TANAKA

But, professor...

Monteros begins the prayer in a strong voice.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

The Angel of the lord declared unto Mary...

The group recites the Angelus. It seems time has stopped. They are petrified.

The bird hunting group prays holding hands, their faces lowered to the ground. They are visibly affected by the finding of the hole.

BIRD HUNTING GROUP

And she conceived of the Holy Spirit

We follow the kids as they exchange gazes. The danger in the atmosphere is contagious. Some of them notice the blood in Alfredito's fingers.

EVERYONE

Hail Mary, full of grace.
Our Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy
womb, Jesus.

Jordi shivers involuntarily as he exchanges looks with El Technician

EVERYONE (CONT'D)

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Behold the handmaiden of the Lord

EVERYONE

Be it done unto me according to
your Word

TEACHERS

Pray for us, Holy Mother of God.

CHILDREN

So we can be worthy of the promises
of Jesus Christ our Lord.

As professor Sztuhr finishes the prayer we follow a Mantis which moves slowly along his shirt until it gets to the palm of his hand. It crawls back and forth looking to escape.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Infuse, Oh Lord, your holy grace
unto our souls for we have believed
in the incarnation of your Son as
it was announced by the Archangel
by the merits of his passion and
death so we can reach the Glory of
Resurrection. Amen.

24

As the mantis explores Sztuhr's dirty hand, he slowly and 24 firmly closes his hand squashing the insect.

22

INT. DINING HALL. DAY.

22

The shock of the hole's discovery has subsided. The kids from the bird hunting group, Chi-Chi, Alfredito, Moncardo, Ravit and El Flaco sit with some of the survival group participants talking about the hole. They seem a bit uneasy.

The survival group sniffs Alfredito's blood covered hand.

ALFREDITO

(in a low voice)

Dudes, this blood isn't normal! I swear! It smells stronger. Like rotten coriander. Besides, it was boiling hot when I touched it.

BOYS

No way!

At the table next door we see the *Popular Kids*, Jordi, Mario and Santi eavesdrop on the conversation.

CHI-CHI (O.S.)

The hole was made by the descendants of the Mexica because they are looking for the ghost of the Mexica kid who died in the camp a few years ago...

EL FLACO

Oh shit... that makes us the perfect target guys!

JORDI

Pfff! Mexica Indians my ass!

MARIO

Jordi, it's not bullshit, man. Everyone knows the kind of things that happen in this shitty villages... Gasoline thieves, kidnapers, murderers...

JORDI

Come on, man! We are not in a *Narcos* Episode!

At the next table we watch the *Teacher's Pets* eavesdropping on the *Popular Kids*. The scene becomes like a game of broken telephone.

MARIO (O.S.)

...and the governor and the police
and the army and everyone involved
in some massive bloodbath and the
villagers all into the Holy Death
and crazy stuff like toilets
blocked up with the flayed skin of
children...

SANTI (O.S.)

Yeah, and cut out vaginas and
nipples in the middle of the desert

The *Teacher's Pets* shiver collectively. Fito approaches
Tanaka.

FITO

(fearful)

Professor Tanaka, aren't you
worried?

PROFESSOR TANAKA

Of course not, Fito!
(laughing, speaking in
Japanese accent with
goofy teeth)
I know kung-fu!

FITO

But... What if the Mexica ghost
came? And what about the blood?

EL PINGUINO

Or if some villagers came with
knives or guns?

PROFESSOR TANAKA

Hey! What's up with you guys?
Where's all this coming from?

The *Teacher's Pets* signal to Professor Tanaka that the rumors
are coming from the next door tables. The *Popular kids* and
the *Emo kids* are now calling out between tables, exchanging
theories on the creation of the hole. Tanaka starts listening
closely.

MONCARDO

Look at the blood. Ghosts don't
bleed, eggheads!

JORDI

Maybe El Flaco has his period!

EL FLACO

Hey!

Everyone laughs, even the *Teacher's Pets*.

MONCARDO

I'm not shitting you. I'm sure
someone was killed....

Professor Tanaka becomes serious, he rises and walks towards
the adult's table.

EL PINGUINO

(to the rest of the kids)

Guys, shut up! Look!

The kids cautiously observe the Adults' table in silence.

Tanaka reaches Monteros and whispers something in his ear.
Monteros frowns. He slams his fist on the table violently.
The kids look up nervously. The headmaster takes out his
radio to communicate with someone as he goes out to the
garden but we cannot hear what he says.

Joaquincito is seating near the door and watches him as he
leaves. From his perspective it seems like the headmaster is
faking the radio conversation.

Monteros marches back in and taps his glass with his knife,
calling everyone's attention.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

OK everyone, this afternoon's
activities are canceled. Your
teachers and I must take care of
something important. We advise you
to pass the time reading,
meditating, and taking care of each
other, ok?

The kids look at each other, confused. Some raise their
hands.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (CONT'D)

Yes Jordi?

JORDI

Professor I think we should call
the police.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Jordi, calling the police? What
for?! Out of the question!

EL FLACO

Director, can we send someone to
the village shop?

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (O.S.)

You've already been told it's
STRICTLY forbidden to leave the
premises of the camp... And why are
you thinking of filling your belly
with more food when you haven't
even finished your lunch?

Some kids laugh. They watch Professors Monteros, Tanaka,
Sztuhr, Rosales and Barquett walking away in stiff silence.

23

EXT. NEAR THE DORMITORY. DAY.

23

The kids scam in and out of their rooms, eager to grab their
swimming gear and head to the pool. Edwin, wearing his Nurse
Vest, tries to dole out the kid's medicine, he makes a
hopeless imitation of Tanaka's cheery manner.

EDWIN

Hey Kids! Line-up! Line-up! It's
MMMMMM-Medicine time! Rodriguez,
Reyes, Calderón, Peña!

The kids surround him, they jostle and tell him to get a move
on. Edwin fumbles with a list and produces an array of pills
from a portable cooler, the boys quickly swig the medicine
down with water and run off.

Diego Pena, walking very slowly with one crutch approaches
Edwin.

DIEGO

(almost whispering)

Edwin, ummm... I'd rather not take
the pills today, I don't know if
they're doing much good...

EDWIN

Hey man, listen, I know all about
your medicine, I can assure you
personally they're doing plenty of
good! And well, it's not really a
matter of wanting or not wanting -
you need them! Or do you want to be
all *S.A.D.* again?

DIEGO

Please Edwin, just a few days! They
make me so sleepy...

EDWIN

(not listening)

Here you go... One Dolac.. One bedoyecta... Two of these green ones... Here's citalopram, and one sertraline. Be cool!

Diego stares at the capsules in his hand and the orange juice jug, covered in saliva. We hear shouting.

24

EXT. LABIRYNTH. DAY.

24

Inside the great oak labyrinth Alfredito and some other kids are playing at chasing each other like monsters. Their pockets are full of sweets.

EL PINGUINO

(shouting excitedly)

Run! It's the organ traffickers!

El Pinguino, Chi-Chi, Alfredito and El Bobo run frantically through the maze. Chi-Chi wields a caramel cane.

CHI-CHI

Danny! Danny! I want your blood! I need your organs!

El Flaco jumps trying to reach a sweet tied to a high branch. Mario and Santi shove him towards the bush. They discover it's full of sweets.

MARIO

Jackpot! The nest of flavor!

They fill their pockets with sweets.

25

EXT. POOL. DAY.

25

Another group of kids have chosen to spend their free time at the mud pool. They push each other to the thick mud, scream and squirt water pistols. Covered in ooze, it's hard to recognize who is who.

Edwin approaches shirtless, the whiteness of his bare chest is almost dazzling to behold.

As a group of boys prepare to dive bomb simultaneously into the mud, suddenly there is shouting and a flurry of activity, Jordi, waves his arms and sinks, then rises up gasping for air.

JORDI
Help! Help!

JOSUE
Oh my GOD! He's DROWNING!

SANTI
Edwin! DO SOMETHING!!!

Edwin gasps and stumbles as he runs to save the kid. He dives into the sludge and drags Jordi to the side in accordance with his first aid training, he pulls out the limp child and prepares to do mouth-to-mouth, taking a deep inhalation of air and bending forwards over the boy.

JORDI
(Leaping up)
Arrgh! Yuk! Get the fuck off me gay-boy! I was just practicing for a role!

EDWIN
But...

JORDI
He tried to rape me! Rapist! RAPE!

EDWIN
No, I never...

JORDI
Edwin, you have a boner?! Guys, check it out! Ohhh, that's gross!

The kids surround Edwin and make fun of him. He walks away humiliated and confused.

26

INT. OBSERVATION TOWER. DAY.

26

We see the pool scene from far away, through a window with a long lens.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (O.S.)
Jesus... Edwin is hopeless... He's like a stone in a shoe. He keeps stalling on committing to the Order and really... I wonder, is it worth pushing him?

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (O.S.)
Of course it's worth it, that boy's family is sitting on a gold mine.

Tanaka sighs.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

It's incredible what some human beings can tolerate. That kind of treatment for so many years and he is still here!

The camera scans the scene and finds Diego Peña sitting under a tree.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Ahh... Our dear Diego is following the same path, I think. I hope his process is faster, though.

From a bridge over the pool, Jordi fires a sweet cannon at the kids who gamely simulate dying. Someone throws Jordi a lollipop and it hits him in the head. There is a pause. The kid who threw it seems nervous - will there be retaliation? Jordi just "faints" dramatically swooning from the edge of the pool into the mud like a movie star from the 50's and all the kids laugh.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT (O.S.)

(laughing)

He's quite a comedian that boy! One day he'll land himself in some serious trouble though...

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (O.S.)

It's sad to see the teenagers this days... So miserable, off track... So much in need of people like us.

El pinguino runs out of the maze followed by others. They quickly disperse.

EL PINGUINO

The villager! He is coming!

El technician runs out of the maze and notices everyone is running away from him. He leaves the game and walks away.

KIDS

Hey! It was just a game!

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (O.S.)

That poor boy... He will sooner or later understand his place in the world...

El technician stops to look directly at the camera.

From his perspective, he sees the observation tower's tinted glass windows blocking the view of the inside.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 ... He will have to learn to live a
 life of service.

The camera follows the children having fun in the mud pool and the maze. Nearby, Joaquincito walks amongst the Christmas trees.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (CONT'D)
 What about that one?

PROFESSOR ROSALES
 The typical sceptic, professor. He
 could use an intervention.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (O.S.)
 Tea, anyone?

We see the gloomy interior of the observation tower, where the adults stand by the window looking out at the kids. Monteros puts down his binoculars.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
 Gentlemen?

The teachers form a circle around the table and bend in unison to take a cup. Each cup is connected at a central point by a metal chain.

Monteros nods, they drink from the cups and set them down in perfect synchrony.

27

EXT. OBSTACLE COURSE. DAY.

27

Joaquincito walks by himself. He hums a song and watches his schoolmates having fun in the distance.

JOAQUINCITO
 (singing)
*Strangers passing in the street,
 By chance two separate glances meet
 And I am you and what you see is me*

He approaches a small hut. The door is open. The inside is very dark compared to the sunny outside. Joaquincito slides along the wall and peeks inside through a slit.

Inside, Israel and the gardeners are sharing lunch. They laugh and make jokes.

GARDENER 1
They almost shit themselves, they
were so scared!

GARDENER 2
It hasn't even started yet hahah!

Joaquincito looks worried as he peeks through the slit. He watches the faces of the gardeners as they enjoy their meal and joke around.

GARDENER 3
I can tell they're already nervous.
You've seen how they look at us?

GARDENER 1
Everyone looks at you that way,
compadre. You are an ugly bastard!

Joaquin tries to climb on a log to get a better view, but it snaps, making noise. The gardeners become silent.

Israel looks outside the hut and sees Joaquincito blushing by the door.

ISRAEL
Hey, kid. Come in! Have a taco!

Joaquincito doesn't answer. The gardeners laugh.

GARDENER 3
Have one, kid. You're way too thin!

JOAQUIN
Thank you very much but I already
ate. Thanks, really.

Joaquincito walks off hurriedly.

28

EXT. CHRISTMAS TREE FIELD. DAY.

28

Joaquincito approaches a circle of children who seem to be hiding between the trees. Jeshua is in the center of the circle, kneeling before Diego Peña, with arms extended over the injured kid's casts. Joaquin sits with them.

JOAQUINCITO
Hey... Haven't you guys wondered if
maybe all this about the crazy
villagers and the evil town is pure
bullshit?

MONCARDO

What do you mean?

JESHUA

You can doubt all you want,
Joaquin. It's totally normal to
have doubts in dangerous
situations.

Diego Peña coughs nervously. There is a silence.

JOAQUINCITO

Right. But nothing bad has
happened, has it?

Jeshua ignores him, crosses himself and puts his hands
together in prayer.

JESHUA

(in a strong voice)
Let us pray.

DIEGO PEÑA

Jeshua, let him speak!

Jeshua murmurs a prayer as he gestures with his arms over
Diego's injured body. Joaquincito watches him distrustfully.
The other kids obediently close their eyes.

JOAQUINCITO

His bones are broken! Broken, you
idiot!

JESHUA

Well, my mother says I have the
gift of healing.

JOAQUINCITO

Don't bust my balls, man! See you
around!

Joaquincito rises and walks off. We stay with Jeshua's
trembling hands as they make passes over the casts.

29

EXT. STREAM. DAY.

29

Joaquincito goes deeper into the woods until he finds a
stream with a small pool. El Technician sits by it, still
wearing the school uniform and sweating profusely.
Joaquincito sits in a rock and lights a cigarette.

JOAQUINCITO

Hey... You want some?

He holds out the cigarette.

EL TECHNICIAN

No, thanks...

El Technician builds a little sandcastle out of the mud, he seems vulnerable and childish. Joaquinquito lays on his side, studying him.

Joaquinquito

It's much nicer here isn't it?

EL TECHNICIAN

It's all the same.

JOAQUINCITO

Aren't you hot? I'm burning.

EL TECHNICIAN

It's all the same.

Joaquinquito frowns a little and rises, he walks towards the water, throws down his cigarette, strips off his clothes and dives in.

JOAQUINCITO

Woow! It's so nice! Come on in!

EL TECHNICIAN

I don't really like swimming...

In spite of his statement El Technician, walks towards the edge, curiously, Joaquinquito swims joyfully in the water.

EL TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

They're gonna get mad if they see you...

JOAQUINCITO

Come on, take a chill pill man, nothing beats skinny dipping!

EL TECHNICIAN

Mmm, ok...

Technician hesitates but then takes off his clothes and folds them neatly over a rock. He carefully climbs into the water looking anxious. He does a little doggy paddle, it takes a lot of effort, he's clearly not a strong swimmer.

EL TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

Mmm, nice...

JOAQUINCITO

Told you!

Joaquincito splashes water at El Technician's face.

EL TECHNICIAN

Hey! You fucker!

El Technician smiles for the first time since he arrived. They have a mini water fight. Joaquincito drifts away to a tree that hangs over the water. He anchors himself to the tree with his feet and relaxes as water rushes by him. El Technician follows him.

JOAQUINCITO

Imagine, thousands of liters of water are gushing past our balls every second...

El technician laughs heartily and lies back on a rock. They both relax and share a moment of silence.

From the depths of the woods, Jordi, Josue, Santi and Mario watch the boys relaxing in the water. They are completely covered in mud like terracotta warriors. They pick up sticks and walk towards the swimming pair.

JORDI

(mocking)

Good afternoon! Hope we aren't disturbing anything lover-boys?

El Technician and Joaquincito remain silent, they feel helpless. Santi lifts up El Technician's clothes from the rock.

JORDI (CONT'D)

Don't you know it's against the rules to be a faggot in our school?

JOAQUINCITO

Go ahead and tell the teachers, we don't care!

SANTI

Ah! So romantic!

The popular kids laugh.

EL TECHNICIAN

Sorry, Jordi. We're not gay, leave us alone.

JOAQUINCITO
 (to El Technician)
 Sorry for what?

El Technician swims to the edge in his doggy paddle. He reaches the bank and tries to crawl out. Santi takes his clothes from the rock and throws them into the water.

SANTI
 Don't forget your clothes!

Jordi pushes Technician back into the water, where Joaquincito is already reaching for El technician's clothes.

JOAQUINCITO
 Let's go, man.

JORDI
 (to Joaquincito)
 Oh no! Don't stop seducing him on our account!

JOAQUINCITO
 What the fuck?
 (to El Technician)
 No man, wait...

JORDI
 (to Joaquincito)
 This is none of your business.
 Better leave.

El Technician is swimming across the creek, he stumbles out on the other side and starts to run.

The *Popular kids*, excited by a chase, rush after him. They pursue him through the woods whooping and shouting like savages.

We see El Technician cornered by the fence, he looks around furtively as the boys advance. He is loosing control and breathes heavily. Finally he picks up a large stick and wields it menacingly.

JORDI (CONT'D)
 Look, darkie, you must learn to take orders. You can't win!

Jordi, Mario and Santi hesitate but Josue approaches El Technician. The boy swings the stick with great force and hits Josue's face with it. The boy collapses to the ground, his nose a bloody mess. The rest stare at El Technician surprised. Joaquincito covers his mouth with his hands in horror.

30

EXT. DINNING HALL. NIGHT.

30

The sun is down and the fields fill with mist. In the gloom, the Christmas trees surrounding the dinning room look like menacing little gnomes. The atmosphere is mysterious and chilling.

From a distance, between trees, we observe boys and staff gathered praying the rosary.

ALL

Hail Mary, full of grace.
Our Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy
womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death
Amen.

The trance-like atmosphere is interrupted by the whirling blades of a helicopter approaching the camp. The children run to see the chopper. It's lights momentarily illuminating their faces.

Professors Monteros and Sztuhr walk out of the dinning room followed by El Technician and Josue (who has a large white bandage on his nose). Israel walks behind them, carrying a large suitcase. The helicopter lands.

31

EXT. HELIPORT. NIGHT.

31

The helicopter bearing government insignias is powering down and the passengers emerge.

JOSUE'S MOTHER cries out and runs around the car to embrace her son, she has dyed blonde hair and wears an expensive cashmere track suit. A BODYGUARD in full alert guards the vicinity.

JOSUE'S FATHER, a man in his forties with a lot of hair gel and wearing a quilted body warmer, talks with Professor Monteros as Israel packs the suitcase into the helicopter. El Technician shifts nervously behind the adults.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

We are sincerely sorry... You know,
boys will be boys, and this one's
new.

(in a low voice)

He's a scholarship kid, poor
family, no manners.

JOSUE'S MOTHER

Well, it's about time the little savage learnt how to behave.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Oh, don't you worry, we'll knock him into shape, madam.

(to El Technician)

Now say you're sorry...

EL TECHNICIAN

I'm sorry.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Say it again! Like you mean it this time. Look up, kid!

EL TECHNICIAN

I'm sorry.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Now, shake hands-

JOSUE'S FATHER

Oh, I don't think that will be necessary, Professor.

Josue directs a last poisonous look at El Technician and sits in the back seat of the airship, where a young INDIGENOUS MAID dressed in a housekeeping uniform hugs Josue.

As Monteros speaks with Josue's Father noises coming from the dinning room are audible; the boys have finished praying, we hear the sound of an amplifier and a electric guitar being turned and someone speaking on a mic in the Palapa - The Talent Show is getting under way.

JOSUE'S FATHER (CONT'D)

I wonder if... Professor, it's been what... 20 years? Those were the golden days! I'd love a quick peek, a trip down memory lane, and I wouldn't mind using the bathroom too.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

I'm sorry Mister Secretary, the kids just finished connecting with God and actually... seeing someone from the "outside" right now... It would break the spell, don't you agree?

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

I'm sure we'd all like to relive our boyhood, but better not to intrude no?

JOSUE'S MOTHER

Quite right professors! It's a fragile moment, the transition from boy to man!

El Technician looks at Josue's Mother as she climbs into the helicopter, she frowns back at him and screams before slamming the door shut.

JOSUE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Animal!

The blades of the helicopter start spinning. Monteros, Sztuhr, Israel and El Technician back away.

32

INT. DINNING HALL. NIGHT.

32

It starts raining. The dinning room's chimney has been arranged as a raised platform that functions as a stage. There are fabric screens either side to create a backstage.

Jordi, Mario and Santi, all dressed as women, are dancing on the stage, moving their hips provocatively. Mario and Santi are swathed in floral curtains torn down from one of the dormitories, they wear dish cloths on their heads with flowers tucked in, the outfits are a bizarre distortion of how a mature woman might look.

Jordi steals the show with black hot pants, a black t-shirt pinned so that it displays his midriff, sunglasses and a black head-scarf, all the boys have stuffed their tops so as to give the impression of having ample bosoms. Their skit is ending, we hear applause and the boys curtsey.

El Technician goes back into the dinning room and stays in the periphery. Joaquincito tries to sit next to him and whispers something we don't hear but El Technician rejects him and heads to sit next to the popular kids.

He sits next to Jordi, who realizes his enemy is sitting next to him. He remains silent and directs his attention to the stage. Joaquincito looks on from the distance with teary eyes.

El Pinguino, flanked by the Teacher's Pets goes on the stage. He adjusts his silk scarf, clears his throat and launches into a MODERNIST CHORAL PIECE.

His delivery is professional, the piece is disturbing and beautiful in it's powerful discord.

As the singing continues the camera moves in a tracking shot around the room. Amongst the teachers Barquett's eyes water, Tanaka wears a fixed smile, Monteros frowns, Rosales massages his temple with a finger and Sztuhr remains impassive. Edwin rocks very slightly back and forth. The dark disposition of the adults is contagious and it builds among the boys.

Suddenly, the lights go out leaving the space in complete darkness. The children scream.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Calm down, kids. It's just a power failure.

Mario shivers, Santi shuts his eyes very tight, someone is breathing in an erratic fashion - Jordi looks about anxiously toward the window and sees the lights of a truck approaching in the distance.

JORDI

Professor Monteros! What is that!?

Everyone turns to the window.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT

Easy, children! Don't be scared!

The children quiet down and gather around the teachers. We see their fearful faces until we center on Diego Peña who breathes faster and heavier. He is pale, shivering and sweating. He murmurs a prayer and stares fixedly at the space over his head.

The truck stops in front of the dinning room and two men wearing dark plastic ponchos get out. They look like ghosts in the dark of night. They use torches to light the inside of the dinning room.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

Be calm, children! Don't move!

One of the men walks to the main entrance and fumbles with the door. As he finally opens it the kids scream in panic.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Silence, children!

The man walks inside the dinning room lighting his way and the children's faces with the torch. We realize it's Israel.

ISRAEL

Good night, kids! Sorry, we were welding in the rooftop and had a small problem.

Israel walks to one of the walls where he fumbles with a fuse box. He lifts a switch and the dinning room's lights go back on.

The children are in shock. We see them hugging or holding hands. Edwin is crying.

Diego starts mumbling incoherently and violently shaking his head. His jaw tightens and his teeth grind as his voice becomes more erratic.

Israel leaves the dinning room as Monteros, Sztuhr and Rosales hold down the convulsive kid. A bit of white foam emerges from the corner of his mouth. Father Pelayo begins a prayer as the kids watch the truck move away.

33 **INT. DORMITORY. NIGHT.**

33

The children sleep in their bunk beds. The camera focuses on their faces. They look uneasy and they all twist and turn slightly, almost in unison. Some murmur incomprehensible words. They seem to be having a group nightmare.

We see the teachers are also sleeping here, on mattresses spread out on the floor.

34 **EXT. CAMP GARDENS. DAWN.**

34

The sun isn't out yet. The teachers are already awake helping the gardeners to stack boxes near the camp entrance.

In the background we see a great volcano, its peak covered in snow.

Monteros reads his watch and crosses himself. Then he rings the bell with all his might. The kids pour out slowly from the dorm still wearing their pajamas.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

All right, kids. Como here! Line up!

The children approach silently.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (CONT'D)

The plan for today is this: We are going on an excursion!

EL FLACO
This early?

FITO
But... where are we going?

PROFESSOR TANAKA
To the village.

The kids raise their voices to ask questions. They don't seem to think it's a good idea.

JORDI
Professor!

Monteros projects his voice over the hubbub.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
It's not up for discussion! This is for your own good!

PROFESSOR SZTUHR
Quickly, now! To the shower! We expect you clean, dressed in the gala uniform and lined up in the entrance in ten minutes!

35

EXT. CAMP ENTRANCE. DAY.

35

The children line up in height order next to the entrance.

PROFESSOR TANAKA
Hey everyone! Line up! Line up!
Everyone grab one of this packages.

Sztuhr walks making various hygiene and dress code observations. The kids are wearing the gala uniform including formal capes. They are silent and clearly nervous. The whole procedure is quite stressful.

The gardeners distribute cardboard boxes. Tanaka addresses the kids with seriousness.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
Charity is our weapon. When we are charitable and offer stuff to the needed, we keep our place in the chain. We keep the poor calm. Without hunger there is no war. But there is also a deeper reason: when they accept our charity they feel emasculated, they feel ashamed of this dependence.

(MORE)

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)

They lose their will and motivation to work collectively. I will ask you to be brave, we will try to calm the villagers down, ok? And please, take care of yourselves.

The children remain silent, not knowing what to say. A bustle starts with several kids talking at the same time, asking confused questions.

FITO

What if we are kidnapped?

Barquett orders Israel to open the camp gate.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

This expedition is not up for debate!

As the children begin leaving the camp in a line, Edwin approaches applying a thick layer of sun cream on his face. He looks worried and catches up to Tanaka.

EDWIN

Tanaka, if you ask me I don't think we should go... I think the village might be dangerous... I mean as camp nurse I feel responsible for...

Tanaka grabs Edwin by the arm and squeezes it tight with a fake smile.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

Ah! But I didn't ask you did I? Edwin, if you want to stay here shitting your pants like you've done since birth, then feel free.

Edwin is stunned by Tanaka's aggressiveness.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)

You know, your way is not clear Edwin. You need to realize this! What are you waiting for?! Have you ever made a single choice in your life? And for heaven's sake wipe that cream off of your face, you look ridiculous.

Edwin looks at Tanaka for a moment. A tear rolls down his cheek. It seems he is suffering from an intense inner battle.

We watch a choreography of kids and adults sliding down the path, trying to clutch onto bushes and rocks.

The group reaches a small clearing from which the village is visible: A set of desolate houses made mostly of concrete and corrugated iron with a few old cars dotted around. We can see the tower of a concrete church with a small cross inset with flickering purple lights - the only sign of life in what seems like a ghost town.

The kids at the front freeze to gape at the poverty stricken community. Some become uneasy.

Up above El Flaco grasps a thin tree while coming down and slips. The tree comes out by the roots and El Flaco slides down, out of control and colliding with the boys in front.

BOY
Hey watch out fatso!

EL FLACO
Sorry guys!

Jordi starts to fake an injury caused by the collision with the hefty boy. He throws himself to the floor as football player might when over-dramatizing a foul.

JORDI
He hurt my leg! Owww! Injury! Can't move! Can't continue!

Tanaka and Rosales crouch next to him, checking him over. Suddenly We hear a VOICE coming from the village's loudspeakers which diverts everyone's attention.

LOUDSPEAKER
To all the inhabitants of the village: Please gather at the central plaza. We will receive a visit from the students of Centro Escolar Los Pinos.

JORDI
It's a trap!

There is an awkward silence.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
Let's go, children. Be strong.

Diego is inside the rabbit cage. He kneels holding a carrot.

DIEGO PEÑA
Hi, little friend. Come here, I'm
not going to hurt you.

The rabbits surround the kid and he starts to feed them. He's so focused on the task that he doesn't hear someone approaching behind him. Edwin suddenly grabs Diego by the shoulders,

EDWIN
Boooh! Hahaha!

Diego almost jumps frightened and the rabbits try to escape the cage. He cries out in pain - Edwin had grabbed him hard and as a result he has twisted his already injured neck.

We see the face of Edwin, he wears a fixed and disturbed grin, something has flipped inside him. As the rabbits run away, he grins even harder. He doesn't seem concerned by Diego's pain. He closes the cage door from the inside.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
Hi, little friend. Come here, I'm
not going to hurt you.

Diego backs away toward the back of the cage.

DIEGO PEÑA
Edwin... Please, no....

Edwin smiles courteously at the boy. He kneels looking to make eye contact.

EDWIN
Ahhh, we are very much alike you
and I. When I see you I think of
myself at you age...

Diego looks horror stricken. He slides away from Edwin.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
You know your path hasn't been
easy, Diego. I understand how hard
it is when nobody gives you any
real love.... Am I right?

There is a long awkward silence during which Edwin looks coquettishly into Diego's eyes.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
I bet neither of us has made so
much as one decision in our entire
lives. What are we waiting for?
Today we have a choice!

Diego can hardly believe what's happening and blinks at the floor. The boy glances around him, feeling trapped, no one is around, Only the empty eyes of the rabbits look back at him.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Well, we have all the time in the world while everyone's away in the village! But first, it's medicine time!

DIEGO PEÑA

Again?

41

EXT. VILLAGE. DAY.

41

As the group enters the village, a door is slam shut, a curtain is abruptly closed, a car speeds away, some dogs bark. A flock of goats pass noisily next to the kids. To Jordi everything seems suspicious.

The popular kids are acting restrained and self conscious for a change. They look frightfully at every entrance.

Only El Technician walks calmly. A stray dog approaches him.

JORDI

Be careful! It's got the rabies for sure!

El Technician doesn't budge and lets the dog sniff his hand. The rest back away. Jordi smiles slightly.

A group of men stand further off. They are listening to banda music and pass around a plastic bottle with a transparent liquid. As they file past, El Flaco shamelessly stares at them.

VILLAGER

Hey! Fatso! Come! Help me! Come share your sweets! I'm starving!

The kids speed up their pace, looking away.

VILLAGER (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm talking to you, fatty! Piggy! Santa Claus! Whatever they call you! Give me my present, dick!

El Flaco throws an aid package to the ground and speeds up to join the others.

Alfredito, Chi-Chi, Joaquincito and Jeshua look inside the open door of a butcher shop.

Inside we see a large quantity of bloody internal organs strung up on hooks. The door swings shut but not before several boys have caught a glimpse inside. They gasp and nudge each other.

ALFREDITO

The organ traders house!

A wash of bloody water comes out from under the door. The boys back away and then walk faster.

42

EXT. VILLAGE PLAZA. DAY.

42

The church bell is ringing in the plaza. The whole village seems to be here. A trio of prehispanic music is playing: a dissonant trumpet accompanied by snare drums.

Monteros, the boys and the rest of the staff line up in the middle of the plaza. Tanaka points to the cardboard boxes.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

All right, let's pass them around.

The kids form a chain and start distributing the boxes to the villagers. They open them and scan their interiors. They pull out used caps and t-shirts and immediately try them on. They shake Monteros' hand and kiss Father Pelayos rings. The kids evade the villagers' gazes.

As the handout proceeds, the villagers' gratitude increases to ridiculous levels.

A CRAZY MAN kisses Monteros' hand repeatedly and hugs him like he were his father. Monteros seems ashamed. Joaquincito notices this weird exchange.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

All right, kids. Now the hymn!

The group sings the first lines of the school hymn, the music comes from the village loudspeakers.

43

INT. DORMITORY. DAY.

43

Diego Peña wakes up alone in the dorm. The shot is identical to the one we saw before.

The kid looks around him in confusion and sits at the edge of the bed.

He notices someone has left him a glass of chocolate milk and some cookies. The sound of wings fluttering captures his attention.

It's a trapped bird, hitting the window as it tries to escape the dorm.

44 **EXT. DUSTY TRAIL. DUSK.**

44

The group heads back to the camp. They move very close together at good speed. The sun is setting and the kids throw anxious glances behind them from time to time. We hear fragments of conversations about organ trafficking.

The kids sing the schools hymn to lift their spirits. Some pray or hold hands. They look like a battalion of vulnerable and paranoid soldiers.

BOYS

*We are the holy soldiers. Nobody
will stop us now. No one can stop
us when we compete, we win and win
and win again!*

45 **EXT. CAMPFIRE. NIGHT.**

45

The group huddles around the campfire. The orange flicking fire is reflected upon their tired faces, the ominously dark forest extends out beyond the light of the little circle. The teenagers, visibly burnt by the sun, sit amongst the teachers praying the rosary.

EVERYONE

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name:
Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread:
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass
against us.
And lead us not into temptation:
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power and the glory,
Forever and ever,
Amen

PROFESSOR BARQUETT (V.O.)

That's nine... one more...

Professor Barquett, sits amid the boys, wearing black trousers and a silk shirt. Next to him, Professor Tanaka prays with his eyes closed and arms turned upwards.

Edwin moves his leg to touch Diego's as they pray. Diego moves away. Edwin stares at him with very open eyes, loaded with an emotion so strong as to be almost tangible.

EVERYONE

Glory to the father, the son and the holy ghost. As it was in the beginning, now, always...

Suddenly we hear a series of explosions coming from the valley beyond. The group stops the prayer for a moment. The teachers exchange worried looks.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT

It's nothing, children... Let's continue.

The prayers repeat in a mantric style, and we can see the different reactions of the boys. Many of them are highly nervous, they look towards the darkened garden. We see that Fito and El Bobo are holding onto Tanaka's shorts. Jordi (looking way too cool in a white leather jacket, the Real Madrid shirt, hair gel and a red bandana around his neck) notices and points it out to Mario.

JORDI

(whispering)
Bunch of sissies.

Both laugh with their heads down and eyes closed.

The explosions repeat, this time closer.

Suddenly, we hear a great gasp coming from the other side of the circle. El Pinguino lets out a cry. Everyone stops praying.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

What? What's wrong?

The boys point hysterically and talk all at the same time, some of them are crying.

PROFESSOR ROSALES

What's wrong?

FITO

It's over there! Looking at us!
Something...

El BOBO
A creature! It's huge!

JOAQUINCITO
The crazy man! It's the crazy man
from the village!

Professor Rosales stands up to look where the kids point. It seems there's nothing, just the silhouettes of trees.

PROFESSOR ROSALES
No way, kids! We just made amends
with them!

BOYS
Don't you see him?! He's looking at
us!

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
(In an authoritarian
voice)
Keep praying! Just keep praying!

JOAQUINCITO
Professor Monteros, it's the crazy
man from the village! Your friend!

Monteros directs a venomous glance at Joaquincito who shuts up.

BOYS
In the bush! There!

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
Holy Mary, mother of god...

The kids resume praying, some of the whimper and hug each other each other. Boys huddle around Tanaka.

Rosales, Sztuhr and El Ruco scan the surroundings, they continue to pray in a low voices. Sztuhr takes out his radio.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR
(to the radio)
Lolo, come to the camp fire. NOW!

LOLO (V.O.)
(on the radio)
Yes, Sir. On my way.

El Ruco takes a flashlight out and shines it amongst the trees. We see its beam scan the forest. Sztuhr shouts directions:

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (O.S.)
 To your right, no the other right,
 yes, over there!

The kids pray and hug each other. Lolo, the night watchman arrives calmly to the scene carrying his shotgun.

JORDI
 Look... Finally they'll get what's
 coming to them!

Ravit and Moncardo eye Jordi with surprise at his bloodthirst.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (O.S.)
 No, Ruco! More to your right!

The light beam suddenly passes over a MYSTERIOUS FIGURE that lopes deeper into the forest.

EL RUCO
 There it is, The Demon!

PROFESSOR TANAKA
 Kids, keep praying!

Rosales, El Ruco, Sztuhr and Lolo run towards the woods, spreading out.

46

EXT. CITRUS FOREST. NIGHT.

46

The camera floats rapidly through the citrus forest, following the staff running hard amongst the trees. Lolo carries his shotgun in a "ready-to-shoot pose" and the others run with their torches. Beams of light bounce around amongst the trees.

They are gaining on the running figure as the rosary at the edge of the camp fades out and we enter deeper into the forest.

Suddenly it seems like there is something jocular in the way El Ruco, Professor Rosales, Professor Sztuhr and Lolo are running, is Professor Rosales laughing as he looks back at El Ruco? Rosales dodges around a tree, El Ruco tries to catch him and suddenly they are playing tag:

EL RUCO
 Gotcha!

Lolo giggles and does a little gallop. They keep on running but slow their pace, then all at once they come to a halt in a clearing.

Moonlight shines down on the face of SIRIUS, the crazy man from the village who was hugging Monteros. He is short, muscular and wild looking. He is dressed in tattered clothes, with an array of tattoos. The men stare at the lone figure who returns their gaze evenly, no one seems in the least bit surprised. They exchange nods, acknowledging each other.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Well, you really put some energy in it this time.

Lolo cocks his fire arm and raises his eyebrows questioningly at Professor Sztuhr who nods in confirmation. He fires a couple of shots at a nearby tree. The gunshot reverberates through the forest.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (V.O.)

(on the radio)

What happened?! Did you get him?!

LOLO

(on the radio, smirking at the others)

No sir, that sly beast, he ran off!

Sztuhr takes the radio.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

(to the radio)

Professor Monteros! He is loose inside the camp!

47 **EXT. TRAIL IN THE WOODS. NIGHT.**

47

Monteros, Tanaka and Barquett lead the horrified children through a narrow trail. They race amongst the brush.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Come on Kids, quick, quick!

The group hurries downhill. Diego Peña is struggling to follow leaning on his crutch. He stumbles and falls as he sees his classmates running off and leaving him alone.

48 **EXT. UNDERGROUND CHAPEL. NIGHT.**

48

The group reaches a great metal door embedded in the side of a ravine. It looks like the entrance of some sort of vault. Monteros takes out a large key ring and opens the door.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Watch your head!

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
I mean, it's late and well... I
don't think anything happened,
right? I mean, we're safe now!

FITO
You think your parents would
appreciate you calling in the
middle of the night to tell them
that you are safe?

JORDI
(exalted)
So, are we really safe? Is
everything really all right?

The door opens again, the children scream. Sztuhr and Rosales
come inside, sweaty and dirty.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR
Everything under control, kids.

Tanaka removes a chain from his neck. It has a BEAUTIFUL
STONE inlaid.

PROFESSOR TANAKA
Jordi, look at this stone. Where do
you think I got it?

JORDI
Beats me.

PROFESSOR TANAKA
Look at it closely. Look at the
colors!

Jordi looks carefully at the stone. Monteros, Sztuhr, Rosales
and Barquett also remove chains around their necks.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
Look at this ones.

BOYS
They look the same!

PROFESSOR TANAKA
These stones come from the nearby
river.

The kids pass the stones around, examining them carefully.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
Believe it or not, we were also
children like you once.
(MORE)

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)

And like you we also had our first year Los Pinos camp here. Maaany many years ago... Can you imagine?

The kids seem impressed.

PROFESSOR ROSALES

In our camp we also got to go to the village and we also lived through some difficult situations, like this one.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT

The most difficult moment was during flag day... Remember?

The teachers nod, remembering the past.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

We were all in the same team. We were doing great but we needed some camouflage to cover our approach to the last base. Suddenly we heard a voice crying: "*Help! Please help me!*". We saw a girl approaching from the forest. Despite being a villager she was very beautiful. "*Help me*", she said, "*My little sister is trapped in the mines! You have to help me!*"

Professor Tanaka adopts a high-pitched 'girlish' voice and switches his facial expression and posture so he seems like a demure cliché of femininity. His transformation is eerie. El Technician sits next to the popular kids. They seem to be enjoying the narration.

TANAKA

The girl startled us. Professor Sztuhr, or "The Kaiser", as we used to call him back then, slipped and fell into the river.

Professor Sztuhr lifts his trousers to reveal a large scar on his thigh.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

I landed on a very sharp rock, or perhaps a piece of glass. I could see a very deep wound, a lot of blood gushing out.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

She kept saying: *"Help! Help me! Oh please, you must come with me!"*

PROFESSOR BARQUETT

The truth is I was ready to go with her. You know I have a weakness for damsels in distress...

The kids laugh.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

I was the oldest in the group so I tried to reason with him. Sztuhr's wound needed attention, and besides, what could a group of defenseless children with no flashlights or ropes do to help? Clearly it was better to find a grown-up and ask for help. The girl threw herself down to our feet, crying and begging.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

"If you don't help me she'll die! There was a cave-in, some rocks crushed her! I'll do anything if you help me! Please!"

The teachers pause dramatically, frown and shakes their heads as though thinking hard. Everyone is riveted. They encourage them to continue.

KIDS

What happened?!

PROFESSOR TANAKA

She was ever so persuasive, but I stood firm and told her to wait at that exact spot, promising we'd return with a rescue party.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

I still don't know where I got the strength from but with the help of God I managed to carry this dude all the way back. We left a bloody trail behind us and Sztuhr seemed heavier with every step.

Monteros carries Sztuhr on his back, recreating the scene.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (CONT'D)

Hold on, buddy! We are almost there!

The other teachers jump in the improvised act.

PROFESSOR ROSALES

Shit! He's fainting! He's lost so much blood!

Monteros slams Sztuhr to the ground.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Hey! Not so hard...

The kids laugh. The teachers seem like friends, swearing in front of the kids, setting up an atmosphere of camaraderie. Jordi and El Technician link arms with each other.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

By a miracle we managed to get back to the camp and told Israel about the girl. He swore upon his soul there has never been a mine in the area... A group of teachers went looking for her anyway, but when they got to the river she was nowhere to be found.

The kids murmur between themselves incredulously.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT

Then, one of the gardeners told us he had heard stories like this before. It was a trick used by local kidnapers to attract victims.

There is commotion in the audience.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

We realized we were right to be suspicious from the start and were filled with heavenly gratitude. We explained to our teachers we had only done the natural thing... How could we leave our friend and comrade, he who I go to for counsel and transcendence, to die in order to help some unknown illiterate village girl?

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

That's right, young ones. That day I learnt an important lesson. It's the best kept secret of our order. Acting in one's own best interests, protecting oneself and one's friends, is actually the best response to any dilemma. To act selflessly without thinking can have grave consequences... And that is a law of nature.

JOAQUINCITO

Professor Tanaka, what about the stone? What does it have to do with this?

PROFESSOR TANAKA

Ah yes, the stone! Before we left the camp each of us took a stone from the creek where he fell, as a symbol of our fraternity and also our youthful stupidity... After that we resolved to be obedient, listen and respect our elders and we never broke a rule again... Each has kept his stone and as you can see we remain friends to this day.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

This camp united us forever.

Everyone looks at each other mesmerized. Like sharing a secret only they know about.

The stone is passed around the room and boys in smaller groups marvel at the story and wonder what they would have done if they had been in Monteros' shoes. Some of them debate whether his incredible display of strength might have been a miracle. They wonder if he will one day become a saint.

Before long the chatter dies down and boys begin to snuggle together, the camaraderie and warmth of the teacher's story sending them into a peaceful world of hopes and dreams.

53

EXT. FOREST. DAWN.

53

The breakfast bell sounds in the distance. Diego Peña wakes up huddled among some tree roots. His mouth and cheeks are full of chocolate. The first light of the sun touches the trees.

Diego walks through the forest and sees the open door of the underground chapel in the distance.

EL PINGUINO (O.S.)
Shit! Wake up guys!

We hear the kids from inside the chapel. They drowsily realize that the adults are all gone, and that they are late for breakfast. They start pouring out into the sun.

FITO (O.S.)
Why didn't they wake us?

EL FLACO (O.S.)
(yelling to the back of
the chapel)
Hurry up! Let's get breakfast!

Diego hesitates to join his mates, but he finally decides against it and heads into the forest. He breathes with some difficulty as he approaches the fence.

54

EXT. DINING HALL TERRACE. DAY.

54

The kids rush into the dining hall, where the teachers are dining on a tasty breakfast of steaming coffee and Huevos Divorciados. Rosales wears a T-shirt that says: "Never Trust an Atom, they make up everything". The background view of the snow covered volcano is idyllic.

The kids mumble their apologies for being late and sit down quietly at the tables, there is no cutlery or food laid out. They watch in silence as the adults eat and exchange pleasantries.

PROFESSOR GORDILLO
Can you pass me the bread please?

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
But of course, Professor! Gladly!

The silence is surreal, the kids are wide eyed and nervous. They whisper amongst themselves, eventually Fito stands to talk in the name of everyone.

FITO
Excuse me and good morning! We're sorry for being late, but we had a technical problem with our alarm clocks... But... We are here... We wouldn't mind having breakfast now.

At first the teachers pay no attention but then after a long silence Professor Tanaka rises.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

Fito, I can't begin to tell you how heartbroken I am.

FITO

But... Tanaka?

PROFESSOR TANAKA

I mean... I thought we were friends. I'm so disappointed in all of you. After everything we shared last night!

Fito starts to cry, El Bobo follows the cue. Professor Sztuhr rises.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Yesterday, during the night a chocolate cake was stolen.

Some kids laugh.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (CONT'D)

Shut up! You damn thieves! Do you think this is a joke?

Total silence. Sztuhr walks towards Joaquinquito, he talks to the group but it's clear that every sentence is directed at the new boy.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (CONT'D)

Do you think this is a game?
Perhaps a game called "Pretend to be good but secretly serve Satan?"
Do you think that's what Los Pinos wants to teach you? Do you think that's what your parents want you to become? A heretic? A GREAT BIG LIAR?

The kids are speechless.

SANTI

But professor, I mean... This is ridiculous... We were all in the chapel last night... Nobody could have stolen the cake! What cake?!

MARIO

Yeah! It's impossible!

CHI-CHI

I mean the only people outside the chapel were the gardeners, or that Satanic man...

JORDI

(speaking in a low voice)
Or yourself...

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

What did you say young man?

JORDI

I said you were outside, and we were inside. So I guess that makes you a suspect.

The teachers stand up from their tables, expecting the worst. Sztuhr's face turns red, a vein pops out on his forehead. He jumps at Jordi, grabs his chair, and pushes it with Jordi sitting on it in a violent manner across the dining hall, Jordi is frozen.

PROFESSOR TANAKA

(calmly)

This is not some whodunnit game, we aren't playing Sherlock Holmes. It's about having the courage to confess!

Silence, boys look around at each other

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)

Or maybe you prefer tortillas and water for breakfast, and then detention and finally, no Flag Day.

BOYS

What? No! Not flag day!

Professor Monteros throws a pack of tortillas on one of the tables, they spread out, they are hard, dry and cold.

55

EXT. DEEP IN THE WOODS. DAY.

55

Diego Peña walks along the perimeter fence.

The fence is imposing, it has barbed wire on top and looks impossible to jump over. Diego starts to dig a hole with his crotch but soon realizes it's futile. He sits on the ground, he looks about to cry.

He looks about in desperation and suddenly realizes a hole in the fence nearby which hasn't been repaired.

56 **INT. DORMITORY. DAY.**

56

The kids enter the dorm. El Pinguino, Fito and Bobo are watery eyed, everyone looks unhappy. Joaquincito sucks on the collar of his shirt.

EL FLACO

It's actually dangerous for me not to have breakfast... on account of my diabetes... My aunt says...

Moncardo chews on an old tortilla.

MONCARDO

If you really focus they taste like chicken enchiladas... With cream and everything...

EL FLACO

Do you remember the movie where the poor kids imagine a feast and then all of a sudden they're surrounded by multi-colored sweets...

PROFESSOR TANAKA

SILENCE! SIT! No one is to leave this room until you've completed a 3000 word essay on our founding father's thoughts on self-control and mortification.

Tanaka throws some sheets of paper and pencils to the floor and starts to leave the room, then seems to change his mind.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)

Ah... Joaquin Puente, could you step outside for a moment?

Joaquincito rises looking fearfully pale and almost visibly shaking. Tanaka walks out leaving Edwin supervising the boys. Joaquincito feels all his classmates' looks on him.

57 **EXT. CAMP GARDENS. DAY.**

57

Tanaka crouches down to talk with Joaquincito. Some distance off we see Professor Monteros watching the scene, Joaquincito glances nervously at the headmaster.

PROFESSOR TANAKA
How are you doing, my friend?

JOAQUINCITO
(stiffly)
I'm fine, thanks, how are you?

PROFESSOR TANAKA
Look... I want you to know that here at Los Pinos we dedicate our lives to ensuring that our boys grow into strong robust trees. It can be a tough process, Joaquin. But we are here to help. You are not alone in this. We're your friends, champ.

Joaquincito is on the brink of tears, he doesn't understand what's going on.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
And maybe sometimes it might seem like we're being too tough but I can promise you it's nothing like what you'll have to face in the real world... You can call it a kind of training, you don't think your Daddy got so far by being a softie do you?

Joaquincito looks uncertain but shakes his head silently. He glances across, close by Father Pelayo is being carried on a chair by the groundsmen, they position him in a sunny spot and arrange his blankets.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
Look, it would be for the best if you spoke up now, we'd have a little chat about it and then continue on The Way together... Uh-huh?

Professor Tanaka is nodding and smiling. Joaquincito bursts into tears.

JOAQUINCITO
But I didn't do anything! It's not fair! Why are you doing this?!

PROFESSOR TANAKA
(looking away and suddenly serious)
Well this is embarrassing isn't it?
(MORE)

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
I mean aren't you a little old for
crying?

JOAQUINCITO
(wiping his eyes)
Sorry.

PROFESSOR TANAKA
Look Joaquin, do what your heart
tells you... Now run along back to
your... "friends"...

Tanaka pats Joaquincito on the back and indicates he should
return into the dorm. Joaquincito looks afraid.

58

INT. DORMITORY. DAY.

58

The room is hot and stuffy. Joaquincito re-enters and
awkwardly takes a seat. All eyes are upon him. Someone throws
a bit of dry tortilla at him. Someone else hisses "Thief".
Fito suddenly stands and raises his hand, Edwin nods.

EDWIN
Yes, Fito?

FITO
Excuse me Sir, but the new boy
stole the chocolate cake.

JOAQUINCITO
It's not true!

Edwin smiles out at the angry faces nervously.

EDWIN
Sit down, Fito.

Fito sits back down and takes a deep breath. He raises his
hand again. Edwin tries to ignore him.

FITO
But I'm telling you, he stole it!
Tanaka called him! Why else?!

EDWIN
Go back to work Fito Salinas.

FITO
But we all saw him! Joaquin stole
the cake!

JOAQUINCITO

No!

EDWIN

Boys, Professor Tanaka has asked us write an essay and so that is what we will do.

All the kids raise their hands. Edwin looks up quickly then stares at his desk and writes something.

JESHUA

Edwin, where is Diego?

EDWIN

Ummmm...

Edwin looks anxious, he starts to count the children.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Easy, kids. He has to be around here.

JOAQUINCITO

Why are you blaming me? Maybe it was Diego!

JORDI

Don't change the subject, thief!
Diego can barely walk!

Edwin blushes even more, trying to contain his tears. He forces a smile and tries to open the dorm door, but it's locked from the outside.

Jordi climbs on a bed and points his finger at Joaquincito.

JORDI (CONT'D)

THIEF! It's your fault we won't have flag day!

MARIO

Let's get him!

The other boys raise a cheer. Edwin, effectively demobilized, buries his head tightly in his arms. Meanwhile Joaquincito is backing into a corner, he holds up a chair trying to use it to ward boys off. In response they begin to throw pillows and chairs at him.

59

EXT. DEEP IN THE WOODS. DAY.

59

Meanwhile, Diego Peña moves through the woods, he has discarded his crutch and hobbles along a ridge, the ground slopes away steeply to one side, a small stream runs down below.

We hear a voice coming from the loudspeaker in the village, we are closer to the source but it's impossible to hear with detail what it says. Diego seems unconcerned by the noises, concentrating on the path.

We watch Diego from behind and between the trees, feeling that he is being followed. This feeling grows as we move closer to Diego. We hear footsteps and breathing and the camera advances. Finally Diego hears the footsteps too, he turns, his eyes widen, he sees something and starts to try to run, he's clumsy with all his casts, he trips and stumbles and starts to roll down the steep bank.

A figure dives after him, strong arms grip the boy's body, we see that the child has fallen unconscious. Sirius, the crazy man, stout and muscular, slings the boy over his shoulder as though he were a feather and carries him away into the forest at a fast pace.

60

INT. DORMITORY. DAY.

60

Joaquincito is pinned to the floor. The boys stand around him. Jordi is on his chest and the rest of the kids stand surrounding them. In the background we see Edwin cradling his head in his hands.

JORDI

Tell me my mother's a whore.

Joaquincito looks confused...

JOAQUINCITO

What?

JORDI

You heard, do it, and we'll let you go!

Joaquincito speaks in a soft low voice:

JOAQUINCITO

(in a soft voice)

You're mother's a whore...

JORDI
 (Already smiling in
 satisfaction)
 Let him go!

The boys do as he says, looking a little confused.

JORDI (CONT'D)
 Now, get him! NO ONE CALLS MY
 MOTHER A WHORE!!!

The boys fall on him. Jordi pulls out his knife and hands it to El Technician.

JORDI (CONT'D)
 Go ahead.

El Technician eyes Jordi nervously. He approaches Joaquincito slowly, wielding the blade with both hands.

KIDS
 GUILTY! THIEF!

FITO
 (shouting in Joaquincito's
 face)
 You did it! You stole the cake and
 you don't fit in and you'll never
 be part of our group!

JOAQUINCITO
 (sobbing)
 I'm sorry, I'm sorry!

All at once there's the sound of a pick-up truck parking outside, loud Banda music comes from its speakers. The camera pans rapidly, Professor Barquett enters, he ignores the scene and smiles broadly. Outside, we see Alfonso Juan and Alfredo Juan removing two big metallic containers from the back to the truck.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT
 Everyone outside!

The group walk out cautiously as the camera pans back to the dorm. Edwin pauses to glance back at Joaquincito, who lies in a bloody mess on the floor.

He looks down at his reflective nurse waistcoat, considering his job as first aider. Just then *Tanaka's Theme Tune* starts up, Edwin turns and trots out to join the others.

Joaquincito begins to pick himself up, he wipes off the blood and straightens his clothes, he isn't crying any longer, he has a new look in his eyes, as though he has made some resolution to himself. He shakes his head, as though getting rid of some last trace of something and heads outside.

61 **EXT. CAMP GARDENS. DAY.**

61

Outside Professor Tanaka performs his dance routine, he cartwheels back and forth as the boys make synchronized dance movements in a shell-shocked daze. Tanaka finishes up in a jazz-hands pose next to the truck. The gardeners open the metallic container to reveal chocolate and vanilla ice cream. Joaquincito stands in the doorway of the classroom watching the scene in confusion.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT

Well... What are you all gawping at? Our friends the gardeners have brought some ice-cream... *He who is free from sin, can have a little ice cream...*

Everyone is quiet, waiting for him to continue.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT (CONT'D)

Helllooo! Did Edwin brainwash you or something? Like I said, if you think deserve it then enjoy! If you don't well... Don't.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

Needless to say, God is always watching.

The Kids look at each other, sensing a trap. Jordi walks over to the ice cream tubs. Other kids begin to line up as well.

JORDI

I'll take 2 scoops of chocolate and 2 of vanilla please Mr. Gardener. Thank you Mr Gardener and God bless you.

Professor Tanaka approaches Joaquincito, he smiles and puts his arm around him. Joaquincito looks at the floor.

JOAQUINCITO

(whispering)

Tanaka, I'm sorry. I'll take the blame.

PROFESSOR TANAKA
 Apology accepted, champ! The important thing is to have the courage to confess, to sacrifice. Well done! We'll yet make a good man out of you.

Joaquincito is speechless. Tanaka points at the ice cream.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
 Why not have some? I would say you deserve it...

Joaquincito thinks for sometime and shakes his head. Tanaka and Barquett exchange smiles. In the background Professor Rosales takes pictures of the kids eating ice-cream.

PROFESSOR ROSALES
 Smile, guys! It's for Instagram!

As the boys polish off their treat Mario starts hesitantly forward towards the teachers who stand in a group eating ice cream too.

MARIO
 Uhhh... Excuse me professors, but....

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
 (smiling)
 Yes Mario?

MARIO
 But... uhh, does this mean we will have Flag Day after all?

PROFESSOR MONTEROS
 (smiling more, appearing to think in a theatrical manner)
 Hummm! That's a good question Mario! What do you think Professor Tanaka?

The other children have gathered around, they are listening to the conversation, hanging on every word.

PROFESSOR TANAKA
 Well, that depends really Professor Monteros...
 (pause)
 Do you think the boys would like to have their flag day?

Edwin keeps looking around nervously, as if looking for someone.

The 7 Village Men seem uncomfortable, they stare at the ground with blank expressions, clearly they don't want to be here.

Professor Monteros holds the second team's flag, "*The Elites*". Upon it is the image of a white dove carrying a twig with green leaves in its beak, yellow rays of light shoot from the dove, directly behind the dove is a globe resembling the logo of the United Nations, all this is mounted on a royal blue background. Gathered around Monteros are Professors Rosales, Barquett and Tanaka. All of them wear glow sticks on their wrists and encircling their heads. Each has a walkie-talkie strapped to their waist and a hunting horn.

El Ruco holds the third flag, "*The Humans*", it is bright red, at the center is a white figure with its arms spread as though flying, the figure seems a little like an American super hero. At the figure's feet are other smaller white figures, lightning bolts and stars, the flag has a white supremacist aesthetic. All the boys are gathered around this flag. The team's faces are painted with white paint in a tribal abstract pattern. They all wear black trousers with bare chests. El Ruco wears a red beret and also has a radio.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Forward! No one receives a reward
but those who fight bravely!

The lord's my shepherd,
He leadeth me across craggy peaks
And through black forests,
And I, who want to follow in God's
footsteps, can I complain if I meet
suffering along the way?

The Lord my Father loves me
tenderly though he wounds me,
It's a sign of my divine filiation,
for he's treating me like his son.
Pain cannot crush you when you
purify your intentions, fortify
yourself with fraternity, and
follow The Way of the cross!

We watch the faces of the boys and staff, they breathe deeply, charged as they are with emotion.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (CONT'D)

Bring me my bough of burning gold,
Bring me my arrows of desire,
(MORE)

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (CONT'D)

Bring me my spear,
 Oh clouds unfold,
 Bring me my chariot of fire!
 This is the way of the Lord, Amen.
 Let the battle begin!

Professor Monteros blows the hunting horn, everyone blows whistles in answer. The group scatters, The "Humans" and "Elites" head in one direction and the "Zombie Villagers" in another.

As Monteros proudly walks away with his team, Edwin catches up to him.

EDWIN

Ummm... Professor Monteros...

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Edwin, not now!

EDWIN

Sorry, Professor but... I think it's important... Eemmm...

Monteros is already moving away.

65 **EXT. FOREST - ZOMBIE BASE. AFTERNOON.**

65

We witness the "Zombie Villager" team ceremoniously planting their flag at the entrance to their base camp, the cling-film den we saw built earlier.

66 **EXT. FOREST - HUMAN BASE. AFTERNOON.**

66

The "Humans" and "Elites" link hands around their flags outside a structure very much like the Zombie's camp except the graffiti reads: "HUMANS". They chant:

HUMANS AND ELITES

The power and the glory,
 For ever and ever!
 Fight the good fight!
 Drive out the devil!
 The power and the glory,
 For ever and ever!

They form a huddle to make final plans:

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

Remember, the Villagers are infected, but we can still their souls them if we work together!

PROFESSOR TANAKA
Hide your lights until we are in
position. And don't get caught!

EL RUCO
Ok, here's the plan...

67 **EXT. FOREST - ZOMBIE BASE. NIGHT.**

67

Meanwhile in the "*Zombie Villager*" base camp, Sztuhr points to the least agile of the group: Israel and a couple of elderly villagers:

PROFESSOR SZTUHR
You, you and you can guard the
Humans we catch. Use this,
(he throws them a rope)
Don't let them escape!

The men look passive and a little embarrassed to be part of this game.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR (CONT'D)
Alright, gang let's go Human
hunting! Fan out between the trees.

The zombies disperse leaving the three men in the gathering gloom, they light cigarettes.

68 **EXT. CITRUS FOREST. NIGHT.**

68

The rest of the "*Zombie-Villagers*" spread out, moving stealthily between the trees combing the forest in a long line. They remain silent, flashing their torches about as they advance. We see Edwin break away from the group, he looks increasingly unhinged, he calls in a quivering whisper:

EDWIN
Diego? Diego? Is that you?

Close by a group of "*Humans*" including Jordi, Mario, Santi and Professor Gordillo form a protective arch that conceals Professor Monteros, an *Elite* with the power to capture *Zombie Villagers*. They edge forward at a slow pace crouching low.

MARIO
(whispering)
I see them!

The "*Zombie Villagers*" are up ahead, still combing the woods with flashlights.

JORDI

If we wait here they'll walk right
into us. When I give the sign
everyone scram and Professor
Monteros can start saving souls!

We move with Dante, Alfonso and Alfredo-Juan in the *Zombie Villager* line. Suddenly they are startled by the *Humans* scattering from their protective clump around the glowing Monteros. The Headmaster is revealed in all his glory, he gives chase to the *Zombie Villagers* like a lion, making after a man from the village who gasps for air as he flees, Professor Monteros catches him with ease.

VILLAGER 1

Uff!

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

(smiling)

Be glad, your soul is saved!

69 **EXT. FOREST - PRISON. NIGHT.**

69

Monteros escorts the Village Man to another base: *The Prison*. As Monteros sprints off to re-join the game we watch the villager standing awkwardly in the gloom, he looks up to see Edwin passing in the foreground muttering to himself and crying:

EDWIN

My only friend! My best friend! And
now he's gone! Gone! Diego-Diego-
Diego-Go-Go-Go....

70 **EXT. CITRUS FOREST. NIGHT**

70

Jordi, Santi, Mario and Fito watch Edwin from behind some bushes. Edwin meanwhile has started to slap and punch himself in the face as he continues his mantra:

EDWIN

Diego-go-Diego-go- oooooh! My poor
injured Diego!

The boys watch with stunned expressions.

FITO

Ummm... What the fuck?...

JORDI

Where is Diego though?

MARIO

Dude, you're right... Has he been kidnapped?

71 **EXT. FOREST - PRISON. NIGHT.**

71

In the prison, we see another Villager Man has been captured, he is being tied to a tree by El Pinguino. El Flaco shines a laser pen in the unfortunate man's face, he screws his eyes up and tries to avoid the beam.

VILLAGER 2

No, please!

EL FLACO

Hey, Technician, finish tying him up will you?

Flaco and El Pinguino move away to play with the laser pen. Technician remains with the man.

VILLAGER 2

What, you think you're better than us now?

They break off from their conversation at the sound of a walkie-talkie close by, it is Lolo, the guard, he holds a pump action shot gun and stares fixedly ahead.

72 **EXT. CITRUS FOREST. NIGHT.**

72

In another part of the woods a band of *Humans* (including Joaquincito, Moncardo and El Bobo) move protecting Tanaka. El Rucó waves them over a hillock and down into a ditch, he seems like an officer in a 1st World War movie. The group protects Professor Tanaka. All at once 3 *Zombie Villagers* including Sztuhr and Dante appear from behind trees, they leap down into the ditch causing havoc, Sztuhr clutches 3 boys in his arms, they cry out in pain.

PROFESSOR SZTUHR

I've got 3 of em!

Professor Tanaka chases Dante but the man is fast and nimble, as he vanishes into the darkness. Tanaka curses bitterly, then trips and falls. All at once there is Joaquincito standing above him, he offers his hand to help him up and smiles shyly, Tanaka returns the smile.

PROFESSOR TANAKA
 (whispering)
 They wanted to put you with the
 Zombies but I said "NO"!

JOAQUINCITO
 (awkwardly)
 Uhhh... Thanks!

PROFESSOR TANAKA
 I knew you'd make a good human!
 Maybe one day you will make a good
 elite!

Joaquincito swells with pride.

PROFESSOR TANAKA (CONT'D)
 Here, take my talisman... You're a
 hero now.

Professor Tanaka hands his stone to Joaquincito, the crystals
 embedded in the stone cause it to glimmer and sparkle.
 Joaquincito's eye moisten with tears.

73

EXT. FOREST - ZOMBIE BASE. NIGHT.

73

Meanwhile Mario and Fito advance on Alfredo-Juan with sticks,
 the man looks nervous.

ALFREDITO
 Hey, no weapons allowed kids!

FITO
 The rules don't matter! We're in
 the business of saving souls!

MARIO
 Follow The Way! Surrender, villager
 scum!

Mario screeches wildly. The boys swipe the sticks dangerously
 close to Alfredo-Juan's head.

74

EXT. CITRUS FOREST. NIGHT.

74

We cut to Professor Barquett, he walks alone carrying his
 halo, he treads heavily and pants, his face glistens with
 sweat in the moonlight, he unscrews a hip flask while casting
 an anxious glance behind him. Smack! He walks straight into
 Father Pelayo who seems to have appeared from nowhere. The
 Father wears his white robes.

Father Pelayo sits on a tree stump looking up at the moon, wearing a glow stick halo around his head, seeming like some Renaissance painting of a saint in contemplation.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT

Ah!! Father, what are you doing out here?

Father Pelayo starts to murmur something incoherent about silent contemplation. Barquett interrupts.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT (CONT'D)

Listen, I need to fetch the first aid kit from the camp. Could you take my place in the game for a while?

Barquett is already leaving when the old priest grabs the professor's arm with unexpected force.

PROFESSOR BARQUETT (CONT'D)

Father, what...?

FATHER PELAYO

Where is he?

PROFESSOR BARQUETT

Where's who?

FATHER PELAYO

The kid with the broken bones... Professor Barquett, it's happening again!

Barquett starts to run off. They hear the voice of Edwin close by, he is still reciting Diego's name and beating himself, now his nose is bleeding.

EDWIN

Diego-Diego-Diego-Poor-Little-Helpless-Diego! Where did you go? What did I do?

75

EXT. ENTRANCE TO THE MINE. NIGHT.

75

We move quickly amongst the trees drifting further and further away from the voices, we see the light of a small fire and move towards it, the fire illuminates what seems like the entrance to an old mine, there are railways tracks and a few old rusty carts, there's a man crouched by the flickering flames. It's SIRIUS, the crazy villager who ran off with Diego in his arms.

He holds a knife in one hand and Diego in the other. Sirius brings the knife close to Diego's neck, and starts to saw at his arm cast.

SIRIUS
Careful now, keep still.

Diego smiles and nods. As we watch the Man sawing away at the cast we slowly realize that the boy is not in danger, then he lets out a giggle:

DIEGO PEÑA
Hey! That tickles!

Sirius begins to pull away the cast.

SIRIUS
Phewww! It stinks worse than hell
in there!

As he cuts away more and more of the boy's casts we realize that he isn't in any pain, and actually seems to be able to move his arms with surprisingly little difficulty.

DIEGO PEÑA
Wow... thanks...

Sirius smiles and leans back contentedly to watch the fire in silence for some time. Diego notices that the man wears an old jumper with the logo of Los Pinos, he breaks the silence:

DIEGO PEÑA (CONT'D)
Hey did you go to our school too?

Sirius looks up quickly at the school logo stamped in his chest.

SIRIUS
Don't ask too many questions kid!

They continue to watch the flames for a while but the mood has altered. Finally the Man speaks up.

SIRIUS (CONT'D)
Look, sorry, I just do some odd
jobs for your school... I don't
really like the work but it pays...
Speaking of which, I have to go.
I've got an early start...

DIEGO PEÑA
Should I make breakfast?

SIRIUS

No, I don't want to see you here
when I'm back, you can't keep
running, you've gotta go home kid!

DIEGO PEÑA

But...

SIRIUS

No, no "buts", I won't have you
haunting this hell-hole too... This
forest ain't big enough for the
both of us!

Sirius becomes light hearted again, he winks at Diego and produces a 10 peso coin from behind the boy's ear. He waves his hand, it vanishes, he throws his hands up in the air.

SIRIUS (CONT'D)

Check your pocket!

Diego checks his pocket and discovers the coin.

SIRIUS (CONT'D)

It's for the bus. You can ride to
the next town. Oh and what's this?

Sirius makes another 10 pesos appear, seemingly from thin air. Diego is entranced.

SIRIUS (CONT'D)

You can use that to call home.

76

EXT. FOREST - ZOMBIE BASE. NIGHT.

76

The *Humans* led by Professor Tanaka and El Ruco ambush the *Zombie Villager* camp, they attack from all sides, Israel and the villagers cower as torch light dances on the cling-film, the enemy approaches, then a rip appears, they exchange nervous glances.

The *Humans* pour in from all sides. They whoop and screech wildly. All of the Human prisoners are freed. In the frenzy Joaquincito wallops El Technician on the back of the head with a stick.

JOAQUINCITO

Oops! Thought you were a Zombie
Villager!

EL TECHNICIAN

(disappointed)
You're the zombie!

El Technician speeds up to join El Pinguino, they flee through the trees and fall panting into a ditch.

From the ditch they watch Lolo passing with his gun, then turn to each other with fearful faces. The back of El Technician's head is bleeding but he doesn't notice.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS (O.S.)
 (through Lolo's radio)
 I repeat, keep combing the area, he must be close!

EL TECHNICIAN
 This is really fucked up!

EL PINGUINO
 (half sobbing)
 Why doesn't the game end? It's been going on for hours! Why won't it end?

77

EXT. FOREST - PRISON. NIGHT.

77

In the prison, Jordi and a large group of boys including Mario and Santi are tying up the captive villagers with rope. Santi holds a stick, Jordi paces before them. Edwin is hunched on the ground and crying. All the other teachers seem to have vanished.

JORDI
 You must have seen him... You're just covering up for the organ traffickers!

SANTI
 Confess!

Santi thwacks the stick down on the nearest villager. Boys cheer and press closer, the men look frightened.

EDWIN
 Diego! His name was Diego! Blonde hair, fair, a lot of broken bones, very delicate!

Mario is a picture of fury, he's charged with an infectious energy, he punches a tree several times until there is blood on his knuckles.

MARIO
 You fucking zombie villagers stole our friend!

JORDI

They need to be taught a lesson by
us Humans. WE have the power! We'll
show them!

The other boys pick up sticks, punch the air and raise a
cheer. It seems like they have lost their minds, Their eyes
look empty, their white face paints are all smeared.

BOYS

YEAH! Revenge!

Jordi's eyes are alive with rage as he paces in front of the
boys and speaks with calm aggression:

JORDI

Forward! Only those who fight
bravely get rewarded!

(chanting)

Fuck 'em up!
Skin 'em alive,
Show 'em whose boss!

The boys chant enthusiastically:

BOYS

Tear out their hearts!
Skin em alive!
Show 'em who's boss!
Show 'em who's boss!

Jordi looks a little uncertain, he frowns at the idiotic
chanting.

JORDI

Silence! Follow me! To the Village!

78

EXT. FOREST. NIGHT.

78

Elsewhere in the forest, the teachers comb the area in a long
line. Monteros looks very nervous as he talks into the radio.

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

(to the radio)

... Team A go from north to south.
Team B from east to west. We have
to find him!

79 **EXT. VILLAGE. NIGHT.**

79

The very first glimmer of dawn is creeping up on the night as we see the group led by Jordi, their torches light the path that leads to the village.

JORDI

Ok S.W.A.T. Team... It's time for operation White-Wash!

The kids laugh and assume the role of SWAT team, moving sideways and making sound effects with their voices.

BOYS

SHWOOSH, SWATTT, SHOOOOM!

As they reach the impoverished village they start to hear the voice coming from the speakers. This time quite close. The kids stop and look at each other, lit slightly by a few spots of light from the community.

80 **EXT. VILLAGE. NIGHT.**

80

The boys fan out along the streets, we are reminded us of U.S. Troops entering some Afghani village. Someone has brought along the laser pen and points it around like a military commando.

They keep advancing amid shacks and cattle pens.

Jordi pauses and frowns, he turns to Joaquincito:

JORDI

Hey, maybe this is a mistake?

JOAQUINCITO

Are you crazy? There's no turning back now. This is THE moment to show 'em whose boss...

JORDI

You're right! To rip out their hearts!

The boys begin to attack the village, they smash windows, turn over bins and break down doors.

81 **EXT. DEEP IN THE WOODS. NIGHT.**

81

The teachers have divided to look for Diego.

In the light of dawn, we see the great hole that was dug as part of the survival club activities earlier. Santi, Jordi, Mario and the rest of the kids drag the Small Girl who struggles to free herself. Some of them in her to the ground as Jordi paces around, thoughtfully.

MARIO

Stop squirming!

Jordi snaps his fingers.

JORDI}

You and you! Bring her here
(he points to the hole)

Two boys bring the girl forward.

JORDI

Bury her!

They grab the girl and force her into the hole. They order her to kneel and push in earth, covering her body with soil up to her neck, they stamp down the soil, bringing their feet down dangerously close to her face. The girl screams in terror.

JORDI (CONT'D)

You and your people, you stare at us in stupid silence, you want our lives, our money, our clothes, our homes, you want our bodies, our hair, our organs, OUR BLOOD!

Jordi shines his powerful flashlight in her bruised and swollen face as the others continue to stamp, her eyes roll, she's terrified. Jordi tears away the ribbon that holds the girl's hair and starts circling and threatening her with a stick.

The rest of the boys circle her too, in a sort of macabre dance.

JORDI (CONT'D)

I'll hack out your heart and serve it with champagne on ice!
I'll drag your corpse through the streets of your village! I'll rip your head off!

Jordi stands next to the girl's head holding a stick, as if lining up to hit a golf ball.

BOYS

Yeah! Drag the corpse! Revenge!
Revenge!

Jordi swings the stick dangerously close to the girl's head.

JORDI

Damn! You're a lucky one...

He stands again in the golfer pose and gets ready for a second swing.

JORDI (CONT'D)

(in a cute voice)

Bye-Bye!

BOYS

Break the body!
Break the heart!
Own the mind!

Suddenly, the camp bell rings. The boys break off from dancing and chanting and look about, suddenly conscious of reality. They exchange glances and scatter.

Santi turns around, he grabs an upturned yellow BUCKET, covers the girl's slumped head with it and runs off to catch up with the others.

86

EXT. OPEN AIR CHAPEL. DAY.

86

A mass is celebrated in the beautiful open air chapel. The sun is barely out and a light mist spreads through the valley. The children and teachers sit on wooden benches.

The scene is idyllic. Cows and sheep wander around the chapel like in a biblical episode.

Father Pelayo delivers the mass in his usual mumbled droning tones, it is hard to understand what he is saying, the mass seems to mingle the sounds and melodies of Muslim, Hindu and Catholic prayers.

FATHER PELAYO

In the naaame of the Faaatheer,
And of thee Son,
And of the Hooooley Speeriiit.

ALL

Amen

FATHER PELAYO

Brethrennn, letuuus acknowledge our
sins,
Andsooo prepaaare ourselves
tooocelebrate theeee
sacredmysterieeeeees.

Jordi and the rest of the participants of operation White-Wash run inside the chapel and take their places on the back. They exchange smiles as they sit.

Father Pelayo approaches Edwin, who kneels in the first row. He produces a box from his cloth, opens it to reveal a golden ring and hands it to Edwin. He tries it on with great emotion. Pelayo lays his hands on Edwin's forehead.

ALL

I confess to almighty God
And to you, my brothers,
That I have greatly sinned,
In my thoughts and in my words,
In what I have done and in what I
have failed to do,
Through my fault, through my fault,
Through my most grievous fault.

The popular kids mechanically repeat the words. They don't seem to realize what they are saying.

FATHER PELAYO

Mayaaaalmighty God have mercionusss,
Forgiveuss oursins,
And bring us toevvverlaaaaaaasting
life.

ALL

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and
the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son is
worshiped and glorified,
I believe in one, holy, Catholic
And apostolic Church.
And I look forward to the
resurrection of the dead
And the life of the world to come.
Amen

FATHER PELAYO

Theeesiiis the miistery
uuufffaith:

ALL

Lord I am not worthy to receive
you, but only say the word and I
shall be healed.

FATHER PELAYO

ohhhhm-ooohhhhhmmmm-Innn-thuuur-
nayyyeuuuuf-thuuurfuuurther-
unnnnder-whhuurrrly-speeer-reeet-
allllaaaah-akkkbaaar-alllaaah-akbar-
alllaah-aaaamennn

The last part sounds more like the Muslim call to prayer than anything catholic.

The boys line up to be given the sacrament. Are the wafers they are being given "The Body of Christ" or just Chinese fortune cookies? We see a boy breaking open a biscuit and pulling out a slip of paper to reveal his future career "Supreme Court Judge". Jordi's says "Social Development Minister"

Professor Monteros stands at the front, the boys kneel on the prayer mats, heads bowed, Monteros projects his powerful voice:

PROFESSOR MONTEROS

The power and the glory, for ever
and ever! Amen

FATHER PELAYO

Let us all pray for Diego, who is
lost. May he recover his faith and
come back to us, like the brother
he is. The blessings of the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit descend
upon you!

EVERYONE

Amen.

A gong is struck to signal the end of the mass. El Pinguino, Fito and El Bobo break into song, it's a high pitch ballad that might be in Latin but at times sounds like a hindu warbling.

Joaquincito is sitting next to them, he clasps his hands together and sings energetically and with shining eyes when the chorus comes.

87 **EXT. PARKING LOT. DAY.**

87

Outside we see the staff and boys posing for a group photo, the *Human* and *Elite* flags are at the center, Jordi, Mario and Santi hold a golden trophy with red ribbons attached aloft with Professors Monteros, Rosales and Barquett behind them and the rest of the group arranged in 3 rows. It seems as though they have won. We notice that Jeshua is wearing the fluorescent nurse vest. Tanaka links arms with Joaquincito.

JOAQUINCITO

Hey Tanaka, where's the kid with all the plaster casts - Diego?

PROFESSOR TANAKA

Ah, don't worry. He went home! Hey, smile for the camera champ!

Joaquincito looks at the camera and smiles radiantly, other boys cheer and punch the air. Israel takes the photo.

88 **EXT. CAMP GARDENS. DAY.**

88

The boys line up to enter the big black bus. The driver greets the children as they enter. Monteros and Tanaka pat each boy on the back, shake hands and congratulate them as they climb aboard. They also give them a goodie bag full of sweets.

Alfonso-Juan, Alfredo-Juan and Dante sort the mountain of luggage and load it into the belly of the beast overseen by Israel. Once everyone is aboard, the gardeners and groundsmen form a line and wave in good bye. The kids wave back from the bus as it drives away.

89 **INT. BUS. DAY.**

89

The boys are exhausted, they haven't slept all night, many still have smudged faces covered in war paint. They collectively and instantly fall into a deep slumber, much to the driver's relief. The teachers sit impassively as ever in the back.

90 **EXT. CAMP GARDENS. DAY.**

90

The camp has regained some of its initial tranquility, the gardeners are cleaning up the mess left by the group.

As the camera continues scanning the grounds we discover the yellow bucket left by the kids. It is right where they left it.

As we move slowly towards it we get the impression that there is some sound coming from inside. The tension is tangible.

One of the gardeners approaches and casually lifts the bucket. The camera rises so we see the man's reaction but not the ground.

91

EXT. VILLAGE. MORNING.

91

A funeral procession moves slowly and silently through the streets of the village. We see it from afar. Many villagers walk crying and praying as they carry a small coffin.

In a corner, Sirius the crazy man jumps up and down and sings euphorically.

THE END

Mexico City, June 2019